



THE LION'S MARK

THE NEWSLETTER OF SAINT MARK'S CHURCH

EASTER TIDE 2009

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CONFLUENCE

The school where I spent my teen years sat on high ground just above the meeting place of the Connecticut and Farmington rivers and every spring the playing fields that sat on the lower ground by the riverbank would be covered for a few days by water. Once in a blue moon, in very wet years, the waters of the rising rivers would surround the campus and isolate the buildings (and students and faculty) on a hilltop island for a day or two. The rising waters were actually good for the playing fields (once they dried out), and they also signaled the arrival of shad in the river, but of course they brought with them the seldom realized threat of a flood. Promise and risk, every spring.

This spring we have seen another sort of confluence at Saint Mark's: two processes that have taken a lot of time, energy, patience, prayer, listening, discussion, and thought. These are the processes of discerning Strategic Goals for ministry and arriving at a Master Plan for our buildings and grounds. As I reflect on the confluence of these two processes I am aware of the promise and risk that they seem to present to us. The Strategic Goals describe not only



an active, engaged and fruitful parish with lots of promise, they also envision demanding outreach, ambitious growth, and a commitment to doing everything we do with the excellence and style that are our inheritance, all of which also spells risk.

The Master Plan, arrived at after almost a year of consultation with John Milner Architects, similarly unfolds exciting possibilities for the care and enhancement of our beautiful buildings as well as more and better use of a great deal of space, but of course

brings with it the need to raise funds for that work during an economic slump, hence the risk that we will not do everything we want to do, that needs to be done, or that we simply get cold feet, find it all too hard and expensive and put the Master Plan away in a drawer somewhere and wish for more prosperous times.

Promise and risk are perennial in the cycles of nature, and in the life of the church, too. And we now face the challenges of embracing the promise while refusing to let the risk turn into fear. Can we respond meaningfully to the missional work of reaching out to those who need help, and who do not yet know the good news of the Gospel? Can we muster the energy, resources and courage to care for our buildings and grounds and use them well, and to pay for all this? There is plenty of promise and risk for us, now we are called to make the most of the promise and the least of the risk that we can.

In developing the Strategic Goals for ministry, the Vestry organized most of the ministries of the parish into eight Ministry Areas. The goals are available in their entirety on pages 8 and 9. —Father Sean Mullen

THE FOOD CUPBOARD

Last quarter, despite limited and declining resources, our food cupboard was able to serve 237 households. Almost 50 of those households had young children and over 120 were the homes of the elderly. All were grateful for the supplements from our parish's individual contributions. These seemingly small items helped round out our food packages and we sincerely hope that those who can will continue this practice—one or two extra items in your shopping cart.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CURATE

Spring seems to be arriving, and with it my thoughts turn to summer, with the beautiful garden just beyond my window, the lure of the roof deck on the apartment building I live in, vacations, time spent with family and friends. Perhaps it is just a memory of the eternal lure of summer during the monotony school year, but for me, summer always seems to have a different pace, even when the work doesn't really change.

I'm excited about this summer for several reasons. We have some great events planned for people in their 20s and 30s (or thereabouts...we won't check your ID). We are also planning a new curriculum for Children's Formation which is exciting. A group is also gathering to plan Adult Formation for 2009-2010.

I'm also excited because with summer comes vacation! Planning for a vacation reminds me that I've been the curate at St. Mark's for almost a year. What a year it has been! Moving to Philadelphia, settling into a new community, ordination, Christmas, Holy Week; all have been very full, momentous events.

I am required to report on my ministry in the past year to my Diocese and, as I have been gathering the information (masses celebrated, services led, etc.) I have been overwhelmed and overjoyed by the experience that the past nine months have been for me. Since I was ordained to the priesthood I have celebrated more than one hundred masses and have officiated at the Daily Offices fifty times. Most of my colleagues from seminary are at parishes where mass is said once a week, and they will be lucky if they say twenty masses in a year. Here, coming up on the summer, I feel immensely privileged to work at a parish where the worship of God celebrated in the Eucharist is what forms and feeds the community which gathers here.

This summer will be a time to enjoy the community of St. Mark's, to enjoy the garden and the outdoors, and also for me to recharge my batteries and prepare for the coming year. One of the little projects that I'm planning for my vacation is spending some time hiking on the Superior Hiking Trail which passes along the back of my family's property in northern Minnesota. The Trail runs for hundreds of miles along the shore of Lake Superior. As I spend some time hiking it (I'm thinking about taking Esme for her first camping trip), I have resolved to spend some time praying and thinking with thanksgiving about the past year at St. Mark's: for all the moments of worship and the encounters with Christ in the Eucharist, for all the "priestcraft" that I've learned and the people in this community who have come to be so important to me and to my family.

I hope your summer is a time full of rest, moments of community, experiences of the beautiful outdoors, and thankfulness and prayer.

—Father Andrew N. Ashcroft

SUMMER SERVERS—as we plan for travel and vacation, we should not forget that here at Saint Mark's we take no vacation from our worship. We continue to need servers for daily mass and are always searching for servers who can help us continue this valued tradition. If you can make the time, contact the Parish office. who can help us continue this valued tradition. If you can make the time, contact the Parish office.

PLEDGING IS A YEAR 'ROUND RESPONSIBILITY and at Saint Mark's it is no different. Our expenses continue during the summer and we rely on our pledges to meet our financial obligations. So, as you plan your summer festivities, **don't forget to keep up your pledge.**

ASCENSION DAY, THURSDAY, MAY 21

ASCENSION DAY is especially significant for Saint Mark's because this is the day we mark as the anniversary of the ministry of our rector, Father Sean Mullen. We mark the day with a Choral High Mass with *Messe Cum Jubilo* by Maurice Durufle and *Plainsong Propers*. Following Mass there will be a pot luck supper. Everyone is asked to bring a special food treat to share with your friends. We are especially hopeful that you will bring a food contribution without relying on others to bear the brunt of food preparation. We are also looking for help in setting up and especially in clean up. Please come to honor our rector, to share in the fun and share with active participation.

THE SPRING PICNIC SUNDAY, JUNE 14

MARK YOUR CALENDAR - Our annual spring picnic is scheduled for Sunday, June 14, immediately after High Mass. We will provide the burgers and hot dogs as well as the beverages and desserts. We are asking volunteers to bring salads and vegetable dishes. These events are always popular so plan to come and bring your friends.

Ministry at Saint James the Less

- **WE ARE RESUMING WORSHIP** at our mission parish, St. James the Less this afternoon at 5pm. Thereafter, Mass will be said on Sunday evenings, and, once a month, Mass will be followed by a meeting with potential partners in this endeavor. Come and worship!!
- Saint Mark's is partnering with the office of Youth Ministry of the Diocese of Pennsylvania to organize **CITY CAMP '09** – a nine day exercise in building community at our mission parish of Saint James the Less. The camp will take place June 20-28. During these nine days, teenagers from around the diocese and beyond will build a community (living in tents on the church grounds) whose purpose will be to engage in ministry in the area. Can you carve out some time to volunteer? Find out more about this ministry on page five.

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, THURSDAY, AUGUST 5

VISITING CHOIR THIS SUMMER

On Thursday, August 6, the Choir of Girton College Cambridge will sing Choral High Mass for the Feast of the Transfiguration at 7 pm. The Choir of men and women sings regular services at the college Chapel and has sung in cathedrals around England and abroad. It is directed by Dr. Dana Marsh, who became a friend of Fr. Mullen's when the two were choristers together at Saint Thomas Choir School in New York City. Dr. Marsh was, by far, the more talented of the two and remains so to this day! We will be looking for hosts to provide places for members of the Choir to stay for two nights during their visit to Philadelphia. Please be in touch with Fr. Mullen if you think you can provide hospitality.

2009 Parish Election

The Parish election is held every year on the Monday that is eight days preceding the stated June Vestry meeting. This year the date of the election will be Monday, 8 June 2009. In addition to voting for new Vestry members, parishioners also select three delegates to the yearly Diocesan Convention and two delegates to Southwark Deanery.

Serving on the Vestry is a wonderful opportunity for ministry. Since the Vestry is responsible for the temporal affairs of Saint Mark's, each member is expected to provide leadership in three important areas of parish life. The first is the stewardship of our resources: people, property and finances. The second is to provide leadership and support to the missions and ministries of the parish with particular attention to growth, outreach, community fellowship and financial wellbeing. Finally Vestry members provide leadership through their own discipleship as fully participating members in all aspects of parish life.

There are 12 positions on the Vestry and the term is three years. Stated meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month and begin at 6:30pm. Four positions must be filled this year. If you are interested in running for one of the Vestry positions you must be eligible to vote (see below) and have twenty eligible voters sign a nominating form supporting your candidacy. Blank forms are available at the Ushers' table. You must submit the completed forms to the Secretary of the Vestry, Stewart Dalzell, by 5pm Monday, 25 May 2009. A list of all eligible voters will be posted in the parish hall and on the ushers' table at the back of the church by Sunday, 10 May 2009. A Vestry Nominating Committee, appointed by the Rector, insures that all nominees meet the qualifications and are willing to run. The Committee can also propose candidates. The Committee this year consists of David Marshall, (Chair) Denise Glinkowski and Ken Pearlstein.

The Secretary of the Vestry insures that ballots are mailed to all eligible voters no later than Friday, 29 May 2009. Voters must mail or bring their ballots back to the church by 5pm Monday, 8 June 2009.

Eligibility to vote is from the By-Laws; Section 3. To be eligible to vote for members of the Vestry in parish elections, one must be a communicant in good standing in this Parish as defined by the national canons of the Episcopal Church. A list of all persons qualified to vote under this section shall be posted in the church building by the secretary at least thirty (30) days before the election, and the rector shall resolve any question as to anyone's eligibility to vote no later than twenty-four hours before the ballots are mailed.

Delegates to Deanery and Diocesan Convention are not Vestry positions. Their term is for one year. Deanery representatives attend Southwark Deanery meetings four times a year. They represent Saint Mark's and help select both the Dean and Deanery representation on Diocesan Council. Meetings are held in various parishes in our area. Deanery representatives review Diocesan business prior to Convention in the form of resolutions and also discuss specific concerns of member parishes and ways to resolve them. The representatives report back to the Vestry when necessary.

Delegates to Diocesan Convention meet on the first Saturday of November to vote on convention resolutions including the Diocesan budget. They report back to the Vestry when necessary. If you have any questions about serving in any of these positions, please ask any member of the Vestry or nominating committee.

City Camp 2009

Saint Mark's is partnering with the office of Youth Ministry of the Diocese of Pennsylvania to organize City Camp '09 – a nine day exercise in building community at our mission parish of Saint James the Less. The camp will take place June 20-28. During these nine days, teenagers from around the diocese and beyond will build a community (living in tents on the church grounds) whose purpose will be to engage in ministry in the area. The kids will be working in three areas of ministry:

- they'll run a Vacation Bible School day camp for kids from the neighborhood as well as kids from Saint Mark's, Saint Mary's and Holy Trinity.
- they'll work on the renovation of the sexton's cottage, and 1870s building on the church grounds in need of extensive repair and renovation, that's being supervised by professional contractors.
- they'll work on community projects organized by the local community association.

The kids will also have an evening program of fun, learning, worship and growth.

But City Camp is not just for kids! We need lots of adults to help support the life of this community. Saint Mark's is taking the leadership in making sure the community is fed, cared for and cleaned. We are scrounging up tents for kids to live in, looking for nurses to volunteer, organizing teams to do clean-up each day. And parishioner Ray Moderski is working with Bea Nichols to organize all the catering for up to 150 people some days. Every day we'll need cooks, servers, dishwashers, a trash team, and more to make sure the community is fed, and nurtured so they can get on with their work. Soon we'll be circulating a schedule and asking people to sign up for all this work, but if you have questions in the meantime you can contact Ray or Fr. Mullen.

There is also work for anyone who wants to volunteer a day (or more) of their time to help with the cottage renovation, do other work on church buildings, help with community outreach projects, or more. These day-volunteers won't be spending their nights at the camp, but will be a very important part of the work that gets done there. A sign-up sheet and information for these volunteers will soon be available too.

We think this is going to be a very exciting project that is good for Saint James the Less, good for its neighborhood, good for the diocese, good for Saint Mark's, and good for anyone who spends a day coming together for a time of growth and fun, work and joy. Please keep your eyes open for the schedules and sign up to help as you are able!

A CHILDREN'S PLAY GROUP IS NOW OFFICIAL

Jennye Ashcroft has started a children's play group at St. Mark's which meets on Thursday afternoons in the parish library at 2 pm. She is still looking for gently used children's toys or a couch or loveseat. For additional information please contact Jennye at jennye.ashcroft@gmail.com.

ANOTHER NEW MINISTRY!

THE QUILTING MINISTRY is now official and there will be a meeting on Sunday, May 17th in the Library following coffee hour (about 1 PM). Everyone is welcome to join and lack of experience or talent should not dissuade anyone with any interest.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION IN THE COMING YEAR

Plans are underway to strengthen and increase participation in our Christian Formation programs. A group of parents and teachers have already begun to plan out a Godly Play curriculum for our Sunday School next year. Godly Play is a Montessori-based program that teaches children using all their senses and introduces them to many of the stories of the Scriptures. Over the next few months we will begin collecting the supplies that we will need for Godly Play, and learning the curriculum and the teaching methods.

A group has begun to meet to plan out the **10 AM SUNDAY FORUM FOR 2009-2010** as well. Our goal is to offer a wide range of educational and instructional lectures and discussions, which are interesting, challenging and instructive, and which compliment our worship as a parish community. Look for a schedule for next year sometime in the early summer.

May 10 - We continue our exploration of Christian Practices next week with a discussion of the practice of Confession led by the Curate.

May 17-- The session will be led by the Rev'd Violet Little, Director of the Welcome Center at Church of the Holy Communion, a ministry to homeless people which is supported by St. Mark's Church.

THE 20S AND 30S GROUP has also started to plan out our summer activities and our programming for next year. We are planning to have a three-pronged approach to our activities: social, service-oriented and programmed. The following events are being planned:

Beginning on Thursday, May 14th, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. the Ashcrofts will be hosting "Drinks on the Deck" on the roof-deck of their apartment building every Thursday. This is a good time to have a drink with other young St. Markans after work, looking out over the beauties of Rittenhouse Market and Square.

The 20s and 30s will also be having a St. Mark's "Film Festival" in the West Garden on occasional Saturdays during the summer. The event will be entirely BYOB (Bring your own beverage and bring your own blanket). Our first movie will be on Saturday, May 23rd at 6 p.m. We'll start with an 80s classic "The Goonies". Other movies planned are "Rear Window," and "The Princess Bride."

If you are interested in helping with any of the planning, or have specific ideas about Adult or Children's Formation, don't hesitate to contact the Curate (anashcroft@saintmarksphiladelphia.org or 215-735-1416)

COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION

As is evident throughout this newsletter, there are a number of exciting things happening at Saint Mark's. In order to keep everyone informed, we are putting a great deal of effort into improving our communications, but we need your help!

Over the course of the last year, we have consolidated all of our data into one, centralized system that will power all aspects of outgoing information in multiple formats. We now have the ability to send The Lion's Mark, quarterly contribution statements and other communications via email, through the Postal Service, or both. We want to communicate with you in the way that best fits your style, so please let us know what you'd like.

Below is a form which is duplicated on our website (titled "Update Personal Information Form"). With this form, you can let us know how you'd like to hear from us, and you can submit changes to your address, telephone or email address. We look forward to hearing from you!

Name and Contact Information

Last Name _____
 First Name _____
 Middle Name _____
 Title _____
 Suffix _____
 Address Line 1 _____
 Address Line 2 _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Date of Birth _____
 Marital Status _____
 Family Position Head__ Spouse Child__ Other_____
 Primary Phone _____
 Alternate Phone _____
 Primary Email _____
 Alternate Email _____

Communication Preferences

Newsletter Preferences

Email _____
 Mail _____
 Both _____
 None _____

Statement Preferences

Email _____
 Mail _____
 Both _____
 None _____

Directory Preferences

You may publish my address _____
 You may publish my phone number _____
 You may publish my email address _____
 Please do not publish my information _____.

SAINT MARK'S CHURCH
PHILADELPHIA

Strategic Goals for Ministry Areas 2009

OUTREACH

To maintain and grow current outreach programs, implementing the initiatives we have identified and strengthening those ministries to be self-sustaining. Further, to increase the percentage of the annual budget that is devoted to outreach ministries:

- Food Cupboard (current)
- Saturday Soup Bowl (current)
- Vacation Bible School (current)
- Mission Trips (current)
- Saint James the Less (initiative)
- The Welcome Center (initiative)

BUILDINGS & PROPERTY

To ensure that the buildings and grounds are well maintained, accessible, and fully used.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

To encourage and guide spiritual growth, engaging members and inquirers at every stage of development. Specifically:

- Strengthening Sunday School and other children's ministries
- Encouraging daily prayer and worship at church or at home
- Better integration of the Christian Formation program with the liturgical schedule
- Being intentional about a graduated approach to formation (i.e. providing resources at various levels of spiritual development)
- Enhancing the content and design of programs of preparation for Baptism, Confirmation and Reception into the Church

COMMUNICATIONS

To effectively and openly communicate at every level. Specifically:

- Developing and strengthening better communication both within the parish and beyond, by:
 - more effectively publicizing services and special events
 - more clearly presenting information about ministries and opportunities for involvement, volunteering, etc.
 - developing means of collecting and responding to feedback from parishioners and others
- Improving street presence and signage
- Strengthening our web presence and other forms of electronic communications
- Increasing visibility at neighborhood special events (like Rittenhouse Row)

Hiring a parish secretary to manage communications matters

COMMUNITY

To invite and integrate people into the parish community by welcoming, engaging, and caring for them in ministry. Specifically:

- Providing information about the community of St. Mark's to Newcomers
- Producing a directory of parish ministries
- Continuing to encourage broader lay leadership in all areas of ministry
- Increasing the number of volunteers in most ministry areas
- Being attentive to welcoming newcomers
- Improving accessibility to the church and parish buildings
- Extending hours the church is open
- Improving pastoral care program

STEWARDSHIP

To ensure the sustainability and growth of the parish through faithful and responsible stewardship, by:

- Increasing live giving; both the number of givers and the total amount given
- Adding capital to the endowment and focusing its purpose on capital expenses and ministry initiatives
- Establishing a planned giving program
- Including pledging information with newcomer's information
- Researching feasibility and desirability of a capital campaign
- Decreasing the dependence on endowments for operating expenses

WORSHIP & MUSIC

To strengthen the existing level of worship, resulting in greater attendance and participation, and to expand opportunities for worship to those not yet engaged by:

- Intentionally including children in worship
- Better connecting Sunday worship schedule to Christian Formation programs
- Increasing the number of Sunday services
- Expanding musical opportunities for those not able to sing in the parish choir
- Maintaining the highest appropriate standards of music and worship
- Encouraging daily prayer and worship in church at daily masses and daily offices
- Encouraging people to bring friends to church
- Identifying special Sundays

FINANCES

To effectively and successfully manage the parish's finances. Specifically:

- Continuing to increase overall transparency of financial operations
- Investigating moving annual parish meeting to winter
- Publishing our budget annually in winter (ie soon after its adoption, in conjunction with annual meeting)
- Researching feasibility and desirability of capital campaign
- Decreasing the dependence on endowments for operating expenses

VESTRY ELECTIONS

Balloting for four Vestry members will commence on May 29 and conclude at 5:00 pm on June 8. Our Parish by-laws provide that to be eligible to vote in the election, one must be a communicant in good standing in this Parish as defined by the national canons of the Episcopal Church.

In summary, the national canons only require that one receive Communion at least three times in the year past and have been faithful in working, praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

In the back of the Church until the end of May, you will see a list of all persons who the Secretary of the Vestry believes are qualified to vote consistent with the national canons' definition of communicant in good standing. If anyone believes there is any error on this list, please bring it to the Rector's attention at your first convenience.

S A I N T M A R K ' S C H U R C H
1 6 2 5 L O C U S T S T R E E T
P H I L A . P A 1 9 1 0 3
2 1 5 - 7 3 5 - 1 4 1 6

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