

JUNE / JULY 2023



THE
LION'S MARK

NEWSLETTER FOR SAINT MARK'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA

A COMMUNITY THAT GATHERS IN FAITH, SERVES IN LOVE, AND PROCLAIMS HOPE, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.



SAINT MARK'S,
THE OXFORD
MOVEMENT,
& THE FUTURE

FATHER SEAN MULLEN

By the 1830s, the British Empire was poised for a surge of its power and prestige; it was well positioned as the dominant power in the world following a notable setback on American shores in the previous century. The Church of England was along for the ride. It would be easy to over-simplify, but the fact remains that the church was deployed along with the forces of the empire wherever they went. Such a situation makes for complicated dynamics, especially when the Gospel of Jesus is involved.

In this context, a movement began in the 1830s at Oxford University that goes by a number of names and is often referred to as a “catholic revival” in the Church of England that extended to its daughter churches. It may come as a surprise to some that this movement was not primarily interested in vestments and liturgy at the outset—it was not about “smells and bells” at its inception. The match that lit the Anglo-catholic movement on fire in 1833 is generally regarded to have been a sermon preached in Oxford by John Keble. In that sermon, Keble asked, “How may a man best reconcile his allegiance to God and his Church with his duty to his country, that country, which ... is fast becoming hostile to the Church, and cannot therefore long be the friend of God?” Although he seems to be pointing the finger at the state, he was really speaking to the church about her own issues, and it was the church and her clergy that he sought to influence.

Keble saw how willing the church and her leaders were to function as the handmaid of the state and to bow to its authority, as though the Church of England was just another department of the British government. Failing to remember her true Master, the church could not carry out her true ministry. And although the specifics of the situation in England—where the Anglican Church is established under the authority of the Crown—did not apply to the Episcopal Church, the dynamics were familiar on this side of the Atlantic, too: a willing submission to the powers that be that left Christ and his apostolic heritage subject and subordinate to a secularizing culture whose aims were often out of alignment with the Gospel. How can we reconcile allegiance to God and his church on the one hand, and to an often-

hostile culture on the other hand? The question of how the church heeds Christ’s call to be in the world, but not of it has always been tricky. Famously, that question has been posed in terms of how Christ interacts with any given culture. The Anglo-catholic revival arose in large part in response to this question.

In Oxford they were asking what the church should do to address the question, and in Cambridge they began to ask what such a response should look like physically—what literal shape and colors and form the church should employ to live into her answer as to how Christ should interact with the culture of the mid-nineteenth century.

Both sets of questions came to bear on the founding of Saint Mark’s in 1847-48. The Industrial Revolution was in full swing, and Philadelphia was set for a significant expansion westward. And whether or not the citizens of new townhouses on Rittenhouse Square thought about it, the Underground Railroad was making stops in Philadelphia and the foment that would lead to the Civil War was well underway. There was real urgency to the need for Christ’s voice in the world.

Keble had provided an answer of sorts to the questions he posed in his sermon. “The surest way to uphold or restore our endangered Church will be for each of her anxious children... to resign himself more thoroughly to his God and Saviour in... the daily and hourly duties... of piety, purity, charity, justice.”

You can fit a lot in under the rubrics of piety, purity, charity, and justice—almost anything, I suppose. I want to propose that three specific expressions emerged from this rubric that guided the Anglo-catholic revival, and that still animate the Anglo-catholic expression of faith in the Episcopal Church today. Those expressions are: the centrality of the Mass as the essential Christian worship, the imperative of a vocation to social justice, and a commitment to beauty as a reliable indicator of interaction with the Divine. Saint Mark’s was founded to empower at least these three expressions of the Anglo-catholic witness. And these three expressions were meant to provide a framework by which the church could witness to Christ’s presence in the midst of the culture.

These three expressions of faith all find their own scriptural warrants in the New Testament, and they also fit nicely under another rubric that I take from St. Paul's First Epistle to the Thessalonians, and which has long been taken seriously here on Locust Street. Over and over again, I have found myself drawn to St. Paul's admonition to the Thessalonians to "work with your hands" (1 Thess 4:11). To begin with, this charge sounds so very practical! And in significant ways, the Mass, the work of social justice, and works of beauty are often, at their best, the work of our own hands. Certainly the founders of Saint Mark's would have found them to be so.

The Mass is, of course, a spiritual offering to God that comes from deep in the heart. But the Mass happens as a work of many hands. The hands of every priest at every altar in every place around the world are united in the celebration of this universal offering to God, and although there are many ways of receiving the Sacrament, the People of God very often receive the Body of Christ in their own hands. Many of us were taught as children that we should form a little throne with our hands in which to receive the Body of Our Lord, placing the right hand over the left to accept the Body of Christ in our right palm. Hearts and voices lift our praises to be sure, and many have received Communion on the tongue, but there is a sense in which all our hands are joined together by the Sacrament when we receive it.

We know at Saint Mark's that the work of social justice is also carried out with our own hands. Our ministries of care to those in need are ministries that the people of the parish organize and carry out with our own hands. We do the cooking, and the serving, and the cleaning up. We do the hugging, and the hand-shaking, and the hand-holding. We stack the cans, we pack the bags, we help our clients carry their groceries out with them. We hand out the mittens, and the boots, and the blankets. We don't simply make space for others to do this work on our property, or on our behalf: we do the work ourselves, with our own hands. When we were called to open a school at St. James the Less, we did the work ourselves. When we were called to help at the Church of the Crucifixion, over

many years, we've shown up with many hands to try to make the work light. When we felt called to be of help to our friends at St. Simon the Cyrenian, we showed up to put our own hands to work. Every mission trip we've ever organized was the work of many hands. Fighting the effects of deep intergenerational urban poverty is work that takes many hands, and Saint Mark's has been willing to show up to put our hands to work!

The beauty of the church building and its appointments is also a living testimony to the work of human hands. The needlepoint kneelers at the High Altar are a recent contribution of the hands of many people here, but there is a long, long tradition of similar work being carried out in this place. There are stitches, and carvings, and paintings, and glass, and metalwork all over the church that is the work of human hands. But most significant are the marks in every single stone with which Saint Mark's was built—stones that were left "undressed" as the masons say, so that the chisel marks of each worker would provide a visible testimony that this church is the work of human hands, the result of impressive human labor. Those stones tell the story of the human offering, made by human hands, which is a true labor of love, to build a temple to the God of Love. It is also a very unusual design choice—you won't find it repeated in many places—but I find it to be a radical expression of honesty that I guess may have been especially noticeable during a time when stone could have been cut and shaped by machines. But every stone in this church declares: this church was built by hand!

Well into the twenty-first century, Saint Mark's continues to ask how to heed Christ's call to be in the world but not of it; how faithfully to interact with the complicated and deeply secularized culture of our day, and still function as servants of the Living Lord of Love. It occurs to me that even in our own time the church has too often become divorced from these three expressions of faith that happen also to be work that we must do with our hands: the Mass, the imperative to social justice, and the witness of beauty as an indicator of the Divine. Which is to say, that the Anglo-catholic movement in the church is still moving against the prevailing

winds, and the call for the church to pay attention to these aspects of her life is as vital as ever—maybe even more so.

Keble said, “The surest way to uphold or restore our endangered Church, will be for each of her anxious children... to resign himself more thoroughly to his God and Saviour in... the daily and hourly duties... of piety, purity, charity, justice.” For 175 years Saint Mark’s has stood as the gathering place for a community that is called to attend to these daily and hourly duties. Keble’s assessment of an endangered

church populated by anxious children seems timely in our own day. And I suspect that his admonition to do the regular work of our hands and our hearts will be the way to uphold and restore Christ’s church in this difficult and dangerous world. I pray that Saint Mark’s will be here to nurture such a community for the next 175 years, or until Christ no longer needs us here to do this work. And I rejoice, during this anniversary year of celebration, to continue to do that work with all of you!



THE **175**TH
ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FOUNDING
OF SAINT MARK'S

SAVE THE DATE
FEBRUARY 9, 2024

Celebrate the 175th anniversary of Saint Mark’s at a gala celebration for everyone on the evening of Friday, February 9, 2024. An evening of fun, food, and music is being planned that will include families and kids, all the choirs of Saint Mark’s, dancing and revelry, and that will celebrate the diversity and breadth of our parish! The event will take place at the 23rd Street Armory. It will be the culmination (we hope) of a drive to raise funds for ministries with families and children at Saint Mark’s — about which you’ll soon be hearing more. Please put this date on your calendars now so we can all be together then!

ANNOUNCING!



IMPORTANT HISTORIC PRESERVATION OF OUR BUILDINGS

The scaffolding at the base of the Bell Tower is a regular reminder of the needed repairs to the masonry of the tower, which we estimate will require at least \$2 million. We are working on finding a government or institutional partner that will help us accomplish this important work, since it is of such significant scale. For safety's sake, we have to live with the "sidewalk shed" for the duration, while we work to raise that money. Please be patient as we navigate fundraising paths to tackle this project.

During the inspection process that led to the assessment of the Bell Tower conditions, we also clarified significant work that needs to be done on the exterior masonry of the Lady Chapel. We are happy to announce that we have received a grant from a private foundation that will allow us to begin to undertake this work almost immediately, with a view to completing the preservation of the Lady Chapel by the end of October of this year.

A new standing seam copper roof was installed on the Lady Chapel in 2012, at which time we also cleaned the interior masonry and installed new lighting. This current project will address all elements of the exterior masonry, including the intricately carved pinnacles, as well as some limited work required to care for the stained glass, and it will include the installation of exterior lighting for the Lady Chapel. Planning is already under way, and you should see signs of construction around the Lady Chapel within the next month or so.



**Example of
deteriorated
masonry to be
addressed during
the restoration.**



MUSIC AT SAINT MARK'S

ROBERT MCCORMICK



Write this after a gloriously busy several weeks!
Our Boy and Girl Choristers joined adults of the Parish Choir to sing at the High Mass on Sunday, April 23, when our Bishop made his annual visitation. Two days later, the parish choir sang for Saint Mark's Day, a glorious occasion that ushered in our 175th anniversary year. Musical offerings for April concluded with a service of Eastertide Lessons & Carols sung by the Saint Mark's Singers on Sunday, April 30. Less than a week after that, on Saturday, May 6, we hosted a treble festival for 60 children and teen singers, with our Boys' and Girls' Choir, the Boy Choristers of Saint Thomas Church Fifth Avenue, and choristers from three other area parishes. A day of rehearsing concluded with Evensong & Benediction sung that afternoon at 4:30. It was a glorious day of music-making, food, and fellowship, and no doubt was tremendously encouraging after so many years of pandemic (nearly a third of the lifetime of some of the children involved). On Sunday, May 21, the Saint Mark's Singers concluded their program year with a wonderful spring concert under the direction of Thomas Gaynor.

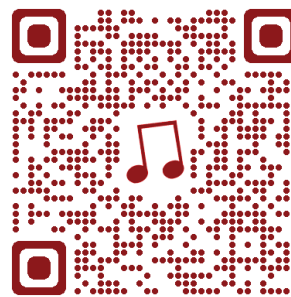
The choral season winds down in early June.

Evensong & Benediction was held on Trinity Sunday, June 4, and was the final service for our boys and girls. The Parish Choir concludes for the academic year on the following Sunday, June 11, the Feast of Corpus Christi. There will be a few quiet weeks, during which Thomas Gaynor and I both will attend the annual conference of the Association of Anglican Musicians (held this year in Dallas, TX) and each will have some vacation.

Summer Choir Camp for ages 3 and up takes place the last week of July, with Schola is for children ages 3-7 and Choir is for those 8 and above.

It surely isn't too late to register—please reach out if you have any questions, scan the QR code, or visit SaintMarksPhiladelphia.org/summer-choir-camp.

CHOIR & MUSIC CAMP JULY 24 - 28



[SaintMarksPhiladelphia.org/
summer-choir-camp](http://SaintMarksPhiladelphia.org/summer-choir-camp)

I am most grateful to be making music with extraordinary singers and organists in this place just three years after everything was silenced. That was a terrible time to be a musician (or anything, I suppose), but God is always good, and here we are, once again singing and playing his praises. In particular, I remarked recently to Fr. Mullen that our routine in the Boys' and Girls' Choir, including recruitment of new choristers, is beginning to feel like old times again (in a very good way). (Please help us share the word about this amazing program!)

We anticipate installation of the new console for our Aeolian-Skinner organ, built by Kegg Pipe Organ Builders, in late summer, thanks to a most generous grant from the Wyncote Foundation. What a perfect gift for our parish in the midst of our anniversary year! I am grateful to and for the whole parish, and look forward to seeing you in church.

BOTA CON BRIO



SAINT MARK'S SINGERS SUMMER BOTA!

SUMMER BOTA FLIPS OUR
USUAL SUNDAY ON ITS HEAD!

Rehearsal becomes a chance to sing a particularly beautiful piece of music together, and Bota is extended to offer more time to share a snack and catch up with one another.

July 9

5:00-5:45 p.m. Choral reading session:
Haydn's *The Heavens are Telling* from *The Creation*

5:45 p.m. Bota con brio
Bring your angel wings as we sing this rousing chorus from Haydn's masterpiece, featuring archangels Raphael, Uriel, and Gabriel!

July 30

5:00-5:45 p.m. Choral reading session:
Dies Irae and *Lacrymosa* from Mozart's *Requiem*

5:45 p.m. Bota con brio
Mozart's Requiem is one of the most famous choral works out there – here's your chance to have a go at the foreboding Dies Irae and the poignant Lacrymosa.

August 20

5:00-5:45 p.m. Choral reading session:
Vivaldi's *Gloria*

5:45 p.m. Bota con brio
In an afternoon of Venetian splendor, we will sing the first two movements from Vivaldi's joyous Gloria. Transport by gondolas optional.

NEIGHBOR *Care* HAPPENINGS

FATHER STEPHEN MOORE

Members of the Northwest Philly Neighbor Care cluster stirred the pot for the Saturday Soup Bowl as a Lenten offering in March. They made enough soup to share as a meal together along with many extra quarts to share with guests of the Soup Bowl.



THURL HEADON, JIM FLAGLER,
CHERYL COJEREAN, KYLE
CHVASTA, JOSHUA COJEREAN,
BRUCE HEADON (CLUSTER
LEADER DAVIS DURE BEHIND
THE CAMERA)



TRANSITION OF CARE

HYACINTH IVERSEN
MINISTRY RESIDENT FOR OUTREACH

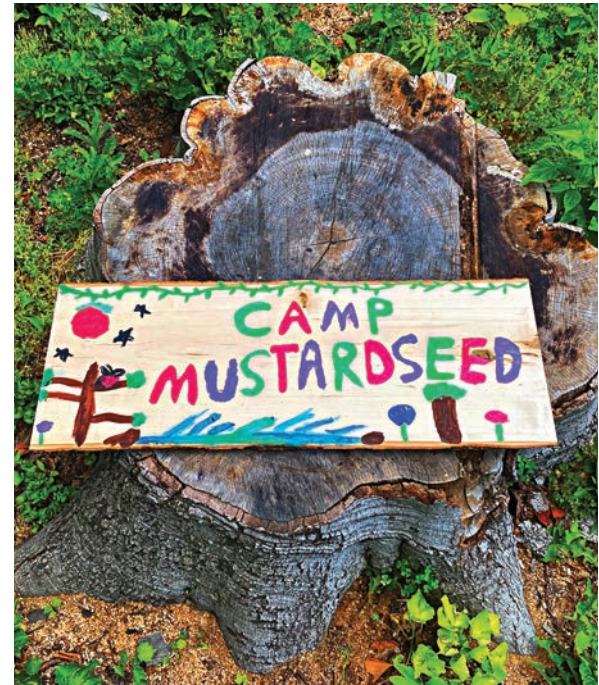
I find it difficult to believe sometimes that I've been at Saint Mark's for almost two years now, both because the time has gone so quickly and because my life before feels so far away. But in these nearly two years, I've had the privilege of shepherding the Food Cupboard, and it's been a true gift to serve God's people through this ministry.

There's a part of me that feels intensely protective of the Food Cupboard—I've lived and breathed it for the last two years. It is not an exaggeration to say that I, with the help of staff and volunteers, have hauled over 35 tons of food in my time here! (On average, 800 pounds of food are delivered about 45 weeks of the year, split over two years). I've broken innumerable fingernails, received dozens of papercuts (some from cardboard), and greeted over 500 people. The point? The Food Cupboard has become something precious to me that I care for deeply.

But I can't stay here forever, and it's inevitable that my successor will take over care of the Food Cupboard. So how do I navigate this transition of entrusting care?

The good news is I am applying the same amount of intentional care I give to the Food Cupboard to help set the next Ministry Resident up for success. I am leaving detailed instructions for my successor, as well as making myself available for any questions they might have for me. It has been some time since someone was in charge of the Food Cupboard for more than a year at a time. My extended time here has allowed me to clear out a literal decade of old paperwork, completely overhaul our database and filing systems, and firmly establish the Food Cupboard's ministry to the homeless.

I am very aware that my time stewarding this ministry has been relatively short compared to the fact that the Food Cupboard has been in operation for more than 40 years. And I hope that I've made my successor's job a bit easier. I pray that this ministry continues to bless and serve this community as long as the need for it exists—and not a moment longer.



CAMP MUSTARD SEED

As the summer draws near, the children's formation program is excitedly anticipating Camp Mustard Seed in the third week of June. Camp Mustard Seed is being held at Grumblethorpe Mansion in Germantown from June 19 to 23, where our children will learn about God's creation through games, crafts, science experiments, cooking, music, and time spent together. A historic landmark, Grumblethorpe Mansion was built in the 1700s by German immigrant John Wister, and is now cared for by PhilaLandmarks. The site has been dedicated to serving as a hands-on learning environment in history and agriculture. We are so happy and excited to continue our partnership with them for this year's camp.

A Word About the Budget and Stewardship

The Vestry passed a budget in January that included a projected deficit of nearly \$40,000, and presented that budget to the parish with clear indications that we needed to work to reduce that deficit by either increasing anticipated income or decreasing anticipated expenses. So far this year, our spending is just about on target, though we may be able to achieve some savings in the summer months. Fortunately, our income is now above the levels anticipated in the budget, thanks to pledging that has been even more generous than expected.

We now have 213 pledges (from families, couples, or individuals) that amount to **over \$600,000** of anticipated annual giving this year. The generosity of your gifts is what allows us to carry our mission to worship God and serve God's people in this place. Thank you!

The leadership of the parish, both clergy and lay, are committed to continuing to work to encourage growth in our parish: spiritually, numerically, and financially. We believe that God has called us to a vocation to grow, because when we are growing, we are healthier and better able to carry out the work God is calling us to do. Plus, there is room at Saint Mark's for more people to gather, to serve, and to be formed by the blessings of God in this community. As long as there is ample room in this place, why shouldn't we try to fill it? And, of course, we believe that Christ's ministry of peace, forgiveness, holiness, and blessing is dearly needed in the world, and that Christ relies on his church to carry out that ministry.

Remember that one of the surest ways to help the church to grow is to tell someone about it, and to invite someone to come to church with you. As we celebrate 175 years of ministry in this place, bring someone to Saint Mark's with you, and help us grow!

