

CATHEDRAL LIFE



The Gift of Life

The Very Reverend Canon Anne Sawyer,
Interim Dean & Priest-in-Charge

Easter is around the corner! Spring has arrived, as rains continue to replenish water reserves. Perhaps this year, we are being reminded of the cycle of life in ways that are beyond our control. The gift of life, and bounties of creation. The gift of water that gives life, when it's the right amount and in balance. The presence of God with us as the forces of nature cause hardship, damage and destruction. The presence of God with us at life and death, and thereafter. The beauty of creation when water causes everything to grow and bloom, as it does every year.

I have used the metaphor of water twice now, during this time of transition at the Cathedral and the start of new beginnings, because somehow it fits. It's presence, energy, force, movement, constancy, the enduring gift of life that is essential for growth and transformation. While I promise not to get stuck on this imagery, I invite you to give it some thought as we move towards and through Holy Week to Easter this year. Knowing that there are people who are suffering greatly as a result of damage and loss caused by the rains, including death; and, we are washed clean with water in baptism as new life in Christ springs forth.

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On the cross, Jesus thirsted and was given sour wine. Jesus, human in every way as we are; and divine in his being, his relationship with God, his teachings and his giving of life on a cross, once for all. As Christians, we journey through Lent and Holy Week to remember what it means to follow Jesus, the way we are called to walk and to live in relationship with each other in community, the way we are called to forgive and to love, the way of the cross when confronting the powers of this world, and the way of being that allows God to shine in and through us.. Please join us this year for Holy Week and Easter as we make real Gods call to us. To live, to Love as Christ Loves Us.

We hope to see you, and I look forward to meeting you. Service times will be posted online and via online communications, and in print. May you be refreshed and blossom this year.

A Letter from the Warden

Erik Knutzen
Senior Warden

As we look forward to the good news of Easter, this Spring brings many changes to St. John's. First, it is my pleasure to welcome our interim dean and priest-in-charge, The Rev. Anne Sawyer. Dean Sawyer comes to us with a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to our Church's mission and values. We ask for God's blessing on Rev. Anne as she walks with us during this time of transition.

Our developers are in the process of assembling the consultants that will assist with the earthquake retrofit and other upgrades to the building. We're looking at a two to three year period before construction begins and I'll have more news over the summer.



Work continues on the sound system and I appreciate your patience. Disruptions in the global supply chain have meant that the replacement equipment we need is in short supply. The wireless mics we use are old and in need to be replaced and we have a few speakers that are out. Thanks to Hamilton Yang for all the work he has done overseeing work on the streaming and sound system and to Kelsey for doing such a great job every Sunday directing the livestream.

One of the best kept secrets at St. John's is Compline, which takes place on the first Sunday of every month at 8pm. Compline is a

traditional Christian service of night prayer that has been celebrated for centuries, and our cathedral service offers a beautiful and serene environment for this special experience. Our talented Canon for Music Ministry and Cathedral Arts, Dr. Chris Gravis, and the choir provide the music. This is a great service to bring a friend to and there's always a reception and chance to chat afterwards.

Lastly, did you know about the cathedral

Joy of Spring

Stephen Salts

Director of the Cathedral Choral Academy

The arrival of spring is one of my favorite moments in the Cathedral Choral Academy year. Now seven months into our practice, our young choristers have a wonderful momentum established in their weekly musical progress, they look forward to participating in festive services like Easter and Trinity Sunday, and they enjoy the rewards of the friendships they have built with one another.

With your support and encouragement, the Cathedral Choral Academy continues to thrive and grow during this time of transition at St. John's. In addition to preparing music for Sunday services, we take time each week to study music theory, foreign languages, and explore multifunctional learning tools like solfeggio and the Kodály method. We are especially grateful to Ada Galindo who thoughtfully ensures that the children have dinner together every Thursday evening in the Parish Hall.

As we look ahead to the remainder of the season, we continue to use an open enrollment system. We warmly welcome new children to join this enriching youth ministry at any time during the year. The most common age range is from 7 to 13, tuition is covered in full, and no previous musical experience is necessary. Please join me in spreading the word to your family, friends, and neighbors this spring. For information about the Cathedral Choral Academy, contact Stephen Salts at ssalts@stjohnsla.org

cats of St. John's who keep our rodent population in check? With the help of some community members and FixNation we managed to trap, neuter and re-release 4 of the 5 cats that live in the garden.

Unfortunately, these cats are too feral to adopt out but, along with some folks from the cat rescue organization Luxe Paws, we keep an eye on them. Special thanks to Jaquie, Jeffrey and Morgan for helping us care for God's special felines.



The Ritual Meaning and Music of the The Great Vigil of Easter

Christopher G. Gravis, D.M.A., *Canon for Music & Cathedral Arts*

The Great Vigil of Easter is one of the most ancient and important holy services in our entire liturgical life. It is filled with specific music and ritual meaning. The Great Vigil is also one of the most misunderstood services, even for long-time Episcopalians. For people new to the Anglican tradition, Easter Vigil might appear to be like the Spring-time version of Christmas Eve midnight mass – a convenient service at which make our holy obligation the night before the “big day” (so we can get to the important stuff like egg hunts for the kiddos and brunch with friends and family the next day). In actuality, the Great Vigil is the crossover moment when we move from the dark shadow of Christ’s betrayal and crucifixion into the fulfillment of resurrection.

Historians and theologians understand the origins of the service survive in the ancient manuscript belonging to the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem. The liturgy consists of 4 parts:

1. The Service of Light.
2. The Service of Lessons.
3. Christian Initiation, or the Renewal of Baptismal Vows.
4. The Holy Eucharist with the administration of Easter Communion.

I will briefly explain each of these four parts, and provide some historical context for the music associated with each component. My aim is to encourage you to attend this profoundly beautiful service on Holy Saturday, April 8 at 8.00pm, and to enrich your experience with greater understanding of the rites and customs we observe.

THE SERVICE OF LIGHT

The Book of Common Prayer prescribes that the service be held anytime between sundown on Holy Saturday and dawn on Easter Sunday. This practice follows the Jewish custom that days begin with the setting of the sun. A fire is kindled in the darkness and the new Paschal candle is lit. The decorated Paschal candle will be marked with red pins marking Christ’s crucifixion. It will remain lit at all services for the fifty days of Eastertide, and be re-lit at all burial services held this year. The Deacon carries the candle to its stand, three times chanting what is known as the *Lumen Christi* – “The Light of Christ,” to which we all respond “Thanks be to God.”

EASTER EVEN

During the Procession to the Chancel, the Deacon sings:

Deacon



∇ The Light of Christ. ⚡ Thanks be to God.

This is sung three times, each time in a higher tone.

Now standing in the glow of the Paschal candle, the *Exsultet* is chanted by a cantor. The name comes from the Latin word for *Rejoice*, which is the first word of the chant. This is a proclamation that tells of the saving deeds of God throughout creation. We ask for God's blessing, and we even bless the honeybees that created the wax for the candle. The *Exsultet* extols the light of this Paschal candle as that light which overcomes the darkness.

THE SERVICE OF LESSONS

Still in candlelight, we now hear several Old Testament lessons that always include the story of Creation from Genesis, and of Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea from Exodus. At St. John's we'll hear four lessons this year, but in some places as many as 6-9 Old Testament lessons are read, each telling of God redeeming God's people. The choir chants a short Psalm or Canticle appointed for the lesson, and a collect is prayed. Up until this point in the service only plainsong has been chanted monophonically. At the end of the third lesson the choir will sing a polyphonic setting of Psalm 42, set to music by the Italian Renaissance composer Giovanni Perluigi da Palestrina. It is difficult to describe the aural experience of moving from the Medieval austerity of plainsong to the florid texture of four-part harmony. You can hear a recording of *Sicut cervus* by clicking [here](#). The joyful energy Easter is palpable at this point.

CHRISTIAN INITIATION, OR THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS

Now is the moment when those preparing to enter the Christian community receive the sacrament of Holy Baptism. The Paschal Candle is brought to the font, where it is ritualistically plunged into the water, sanctifying it and those who will be baptized. This year, at least two members of our community will be baptized at the service; and along with them, we renew our commitment to Christ.

At the conclusion of Baptism the Easter Acclamation is pronounced:

The Celebrant stands and pronounces the Easter Acclamation three times, saying...

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

This is the moment when all the lights are turned on, the organ plays triumphantly, bells are rung out, and all join in joyfully singing the first *Gloria in excelsis* of Eastertide. Before the passage from the Gospel of Matthew that describes the two Marys encountering the risen Christ, we join in chanting three times what is known as the *Great Alleluia* – a melismatic and flowing piece of ancient plainsong.

The choir sings a triumphant anthem at the offertory by the English composer William Harris entitled *Most Glorious Lord of Life*, setting the words of the sixteenth-century poet Edmund Spenser. You can hear a recording of the piece by clicking [here](#).



*Most glorious Lord of life,
that on this day didst make thy triumph over death and sin,
and having harrowed hell,
didst bring away captivity thence captive, us to win:*

*This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin,
and grant that we for whom thou did'st die,
being with thy dear blood clean washed from sin,
may live for ever in felicity:*

*So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought;
love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.*

After the communion all join in singing the great Easter hymn *Jesus Christ is risen today*. There is a sung dismissal by the Deacon, in which we chant our departing alleluias. An exuberant organ voluntary concludes the service and we retire to a celebratory reception.

I love everything about this service, from starting in dark solemnity and hearing the ancient Exsultet chanted, to welcoming newcomers to our community of faith through the sacrament of Baptism, to the opening of the triptych doors and the joyful strains of *Through the Red Sea Brought at Last*. It is a journey in which we are reminded that each of us is part of a long and rich tradition. I heartily invite you to all of the services of Holy Week; but this year, I especially invite you to our service of the *Great Vigil of Easter*.

A Deacon Does...

The Rev. Margaret McCauley
Parish Deacon

Every Episcopalian is introduced to the work of the Deacon in the Baptismal Covenant:

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself? I will with God's help.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being? I will, with God's help.



A vocational Deacon is called into a ministry of permanent servanthood; to the church, to the people whose gathering makes up the church. A deacon has one foot in the church and one foot in the world. Deacons are non-stipendiary, that is, they are not a paid position in the church. The diaconate is a call to a special ministry of "servanthood".

Scripture tells us that seven men were chosen by the Apostles who prayed for and laid hands them. Among those men was Stephen, described as being honest and full of the Holy Ghost, wisdom, faith, and the power of prayer. (See The Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 6 and 7). St. Stephen, deacon and martyr, is celebrated by the church on December 26.

Within the Eucharist, the role of the deacon is meant to symbolize the people's call to ministry in the world: Deacons proclaim the gospel, write the prayers of the people, set the table for the Eucharist, and dismiss the congregation into the world. Our preaching invites the congregation into the world to serve the needs, hopes and concerns of God's people. Finally, the deacon asks challenging questions: Who is not at the table? How does God ask us to care for others? Where is God calling us?

The charge at the ordination of a deacon (The Book of Common Prayer, page 543): *"In the name of Jesus Christ, you are to serve all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick and the lonely. As a deacon in the Church, you are to study the Holy Scriptures, to seek nourishment from them and to model your life upon them."*

I belong to the Association for Episcopal Deacons (<https://episcopaldeacons.org>). There are over 3000 deacons in The Episcopal Church. Visit our website to learn more about how you can support and strengthen diaconal service in the Episcopal church. Amen.

Spring Services Schedule

Said Mass | Sundays at 8:00 am
Followed by coffee hour. (In-person Only)

Candlelit Compline

1st Sunday of the month at 8:00 pm
Followed by Social Hour. (In-person and online.)

Choral Mass | Sundays at 10:00 am
Followed by coffee hour.
(In-person and online.)

Evening Prayer

Tuesdays & Thursdays at 6:30 pm
via Facebook Live



Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday

April 2 at 8:00 am and 10:00 am

Maundy Thursday

April 6 at 7:00 pm

Good Friday

April 7 at 12:00 pm

The Great Easter Vigil

April 8 at 8:00 pm

Easter Sunday

April 9 at 10:00 am

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Easter Egg Hunt

We will be having an Easter egg hunt for children following our Easter 10 am service.

All are welcome!



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