



CATHEDRAL VOICE

A NEWSLETTER FROM WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL • MARCH 2009

Deeds of Love

ANNUAL PALM SUNDAY PERFORMANCE OF ST. JOHN PASSION IS AT ITS HEART DEVOTIONAL

“There, after the surging waters of our flooding sins disperse, the fairest rainbow stands, God’s token of His grace and love.” (*St. John Passion*)

Join us Sunday, April 5, at 4 pm, for this Palm Sunday tradition as the Cathedral Choirs and Baroque Orchestra, directed by Michael McCarthy, perform J.S. Bach’s *St. John Passion*. When asked about the significance of this performance, McCarthy explains that, “Audience members can really spend time reflecting on the story of the Passion in the context of Holy Week. Intentionally part of the Lenten journey, we perform this concert firstly as a devotional work. The music speaks for itself, but whether you are a believer or not, the audience experiences what a true dramatic masterpiece this is.”

St. John Passion is designed as a drama. It runs approximately one hour and 40 minutes with no intermission, allowing the intensity of the story to play out through the orchestra, soloists, and choir.

The concert is performed in German, a special challenge for the young members of the Cathedral choirs. They not only learn the pronunciation, but the literal meaning of the German words and the phrasing of the text, which allow the integrity of the score to be preserved. A complete translation is provided in the program for the audience.

This year’s soloists include a majority of local, Washington, D.C.-area singers, reflecting a commitment on the part of the Cathedral music program to find up-and-coming musicians in the city for opportunities to perform at this national Gothic landmark.

The performance features Elizabeth Weigle, soprano; Roger Isaacs, countertenor; Matthew Smith, tenor; Bobb Robinson, bass; Ole Haas as Evangelist; and James Shaffran as Christ.

Best seats sell out early, so plan ahead when ordering your tickets. ❁



Tickets

Sunday, April 5, 4 pm
Tickets \$20-\$80; available through the Cathedral box office at www.nationalcathedral.org or at (202) 537-2228.

Signs of the Times

If you walk around the Cathedral Close this month, keep your eyes open for these signs of a change in season:

- ❁ Bulbs blooming on the apse: *Crocus*, *Scilla*, *Eranthis*, and *Muscari*
- ❁ *Magnolia stellata* blooming at the Cathedral Library
- ❁ Daffodils on the north slope
- ❁ Soft green new leaves on the trees and shrubs
- ❁ Turf starts to “green up” as the temperatures get warmer— it’s coming out of dormancy!
- ❁ Robins arrive in droves and eat all of the remaining holly berries
- ❁ Redbuds blooming between the Cathedral Library and College
- ❁ Tulips blooming in the Bishop’s Garden
- ❁ Dogwoods blooming at the edge of the Olmsted Woods



WASHINGTON
NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

Walking on Thin Ice

A LENTEN MEDITATION

Steve



A MESSAGE FROM CATHEDRAL VICAR STEPHEN HUBER

We enter Lent this year with a sober sense of the world. Many of our most basic assumptions like having a job, being able to pay the mortgage, and security in retirement are now in question. It can feel like walking on persistent thin ice, expecting and denying all at the same time that it will give out. It is not new news that much in our world is out of alignment, but until now many of us have imagined ourselves successful at keeping it at bay and away from our front doors.

St. Paul repeatedly urged the first Christians to lay their foundation in Jesus Christ rather than the wisdom of the world. “Do not deceive yourselves. If you think that you are wise in this age, you should become fools so that you may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God” (1 Corinthians 3:18–19). Perhaps more now than ever this resonates. But just how do we use this season of Lent to strengthen our foundation in Jesus Christ?

During the Ash Wednesday service we were invited to observe Lent by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, and fasting, and self-denial; and by meditating on God’s Word. These are all good places to start. One result of the economic crisis is that it provides a

powerful demonstration of the ripple effect of what also happens when we are out of alignment with one another and creation. Our need for repentance comes into sharp focus as we begin to grasp the impact of our sin on those known and unknown to us. The Litany of Penitence, also said on Ash Wednesday (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 267), helps us identify some of the sin that keeps us alienated from each other, and thus from God.

“We confess to you Lord, the pride, hypocrisy, and impatience of our lives,

Our self-indulgent appetites, and our exploitation of other people,

Our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves,

Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts, our dishonesty in daily life and work,

Our negligence in prayer and worship,

Our waste and pollution of your creation, and our lack of concern for those who come after us...”

“Many of our most basic assumptions, like having a job, being able to pay the mortgage, and security in retirement are now in question...”

These are the sins that so often result from “the wisdom of the world” yet keep us enslaved and the world out of alignment. But in Jesus we see the life we were intended for where our relations with one another and creation

are just and compassionate and marked by self-giving love.

We need Lent this year. Make time during these next weeks, hectic as life can be and frightening as current circumstances might be, to take the Church up on its invitation to enter into a time self-examination, denial, prayer, and meditation on God’s Word. This intentional work holds the promise of helping us get our lives realigned with one another and creation, freed from the enslaved grip of our consumptive culture, and strengthened in Christ.

Blessings for a holy Lent. ❀

Cathedral Voice is published monthly by the Communications and Marketing Department of Washington National Cathedral. Send subscription and address information to subscriptions@cathedral.org.

Washington National Cathedral is a church for national purposes called to embody God’s love and to welcome people of all faiths and none. A unique blend of the spiritual and the civic, this Episcopal cathedral is a voice for generous-spirited Christianity and a catalyst for reconciliation and interfaith dialogue to promote respect and understanding. We invite all people to share in our commitment to create a more hopeful and just world.



Volunteer docent guides have been leading Cathedral tours since the 1940s.

Garages Make Good Neighbors

Opened in April 2007, the underground parking garage on the west of the Cathedral has spaces for both cars and motorcoach buses.

In the spring, the bus garage sees the larger share of traffic, welcoming groups of students and retired people to the Cathedral during the peak group visit season for Washington, D.C.

The garage provides a safe point of debarkation for bus passengers, moving buses and associated foot traffic away from busy Wisconsin Avenue.

Keeping the buses off Wisconsin Avenue, in addition to providing a more hospitable access point for visitors, also creates less traffic congestion on a very busy city street. While buses are parked in the garage, they do not idle, a source of much pollution and concern to Cathedral neighbors. With the reconfiguration of the curb lanes, bus access to Wisconsin Avenue is controlled, and travel through residential neighborhoods is drastically reduced. ❀



Visit Us

It's 10 am on a spring morning, and staff and volunteers are opening the Cathedral doors to begin a new day. Soon the flow of visitors will grow: from a scattering of individuals, to a steady stream of tourists armed with cameras and walking shoes, to a mighty torrent of groups dispensed from the tour buses in the underground garage. For the rest of the day families of all ages, energetic teenagers and visitors from far and wide will fill the nave. Many will linger only a few minutes. Some will explore the beauty of the building. Others will find a place to sit or kneel in prayer. As Dean Lloyd has said, "Hospitality lies at the heart of the Cathedral's life."

What does it take to warmly welcome these visitors and ensure that they have a meaningful and pleasant visit?

- ❀ Prior to the opening of the doors, housekeepers and sextons polish floors, arrange chairs, and dust and clean every surface.
- ❀ Bus garage personnel prepare to safely receive the daily stream of as many as 50 buses on the busiest days.
- ❀ Visitor programs staff publish the daily schedule of group tours, work to stay in touch with tourism colleagues, respond to the myriad inquiries throughout the day, and arrange special tours and presentations.
- ❀ Docents, from the corps of 100-such volunteers, arrive to don purple robes and blazers with comfortable shoes to prepare to guide dozens of tours about Cathedral art, architecture, and purpose.
- ❀ Greeters settle into the narthex and other spaces to smile and answer many of the same questions over and over, such as "May I take photos?"
- ❀ Cathedral Store staff open the lower level and the garage annex stores.

At the end of the day, as worship staff offers the last service of the day, visitor programs staff note the statistics that give evidence to the bustle of the day—some days as many as 2,000–3,000 visitors have passed through the west front doors, many leaving messages of appreciation in the Cathedral guestbook, and many more leaving generous donations. ❀

Easter Passes

Passes are required to attend the 11 am service on Easter, April 12. Passes are available through the Cathedral's box office at www.nationalcathedral.org and (877) 537-2228. A \$2 service charge per pass covers postage. Passes are not required for the 8 am Easter Eucharist or the 4 pm Evensong.

Exhibit Extended

The exhibit, "A Spiritual Home for the Nation," has been extended into the summer. Supported through the generosity of the F.I.S.H. Foundation, Inc.

Lenten Observances

Derived from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning “lengthening of days,” Lent is the penitential season which mirrors Jesus’ 40 days of fasting in the wilderness. Through prayer, self-examination, and meditation on Scripture, Christians prepare for the Easter resurrection.

A new exhibit, *Lament: The Stations and Other Images of the Cross*, displays woodcuts by artist Margaret Adams Parker in the Pilgrim Observation Gallery on the seventh floor of the Cathedral. The show features the 14 stations, as well as other images portraying the cross in a modern context.

The Stations of the Cross are an ancient devotional practice inviting worshipers across the centuries to participate in Jesus’ journey to the Cross.

On March 13, an evening pilgrimage, “The Way of the Cross,” uses the images from the exhibit as an aid to meditation.

Sculptor and print maker Margaret Adams Parker has work in the collections of the Library of Congress, Duke Divinity School, Virginia Theological Seminary, churches, and other faith institutions across the country. Parker has served as adjunct instructor at Virginia Theological Seminary since 1992. She writes and lectures widely on the church and the visual arts; her work can be seen at www.margaretadamsparker.com. ❀



Cathedral Art

Sedilia Statues and Shields

Three new statues featuring John Donne, George Herbert, and Howard Thurman (shown above) are in place above the *sedilia*, the seats on the south side of the high altar used by officiating clergy. The statues of these prominent preachers and writers were sculpted by Chas Fagan, who also designed the Human Rights half boss in the narthex. The figure of John Donne was carved by Malcolm Harlow, and the figures of Herbert and Thurman were carved by Joe Moss.

Each statue is flanked by two shields, also designed by Chas Fagan, carved with symbols of the respective figure’s life and ministry. Together, they evoke the redemptive message of the incarnation and the sacrament of Christ’s body and blood, and, through his resurrection, the promise of eternal life. Cathedral stone carvers Sean Callahan and Andy Uhl carried out the carving work on the shields.

The figure on the right, facing the altar, is English writer and clergyman George

Herbert (1593–1633). Herbert was the rector of two parishes near Salisbury, England, and the writer of countless poems and prose, some of which are used in hymns we sing today. In the center niche is John Donne (c. 1572–1631), an Anglican preacher, poet, and mystic. Dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral in London, his fame as a poet was matched by his great popularity as a preacher. On the left, facing the congregation, is Howard Thurman (1900–1981), a great leader in the civil rights movement and prolific writer, whose book *Jesus and the Disinherited* was said to be a favorite of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He was dean at the chapels of both Howard University and Boston University, and founder of the first racially integrated non-denominational church in the United States.

All are welcome to attend a special Evensong on Wednesday, March 11, at 4 pm, to dedicate these works. ❀

Join Us

Exhibit: “Lament: The Stations and Other Images of the Cross,” open daily through Saturday, April 11, 2009

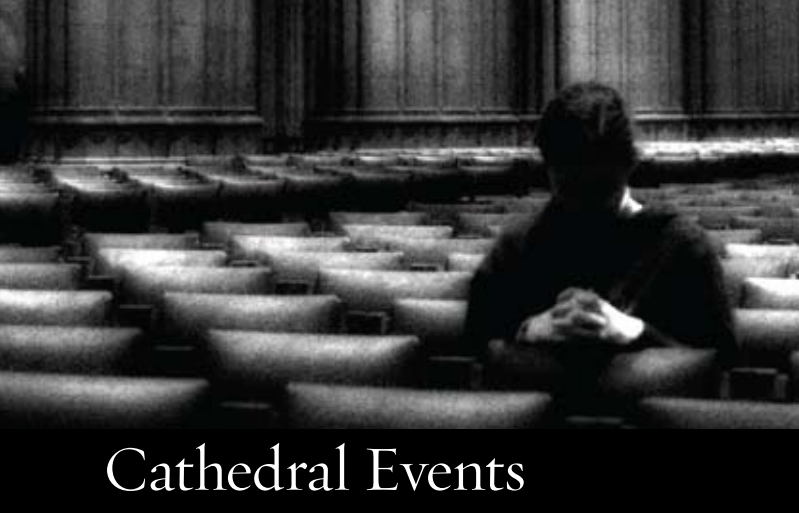
Pilgrimage: “The Way of the Cross”
March 12, tickets \$30, \$25;
pilgrimages@cathedral.org

The Practice of Prayer

Through the Community of Reconciliation, the Cathedral offers a series of conversation with Benedictine leaders to create a deeper understanding of the core practices of prayer, study, recreation, work, and hospitality.

On Saturday, March 21, at 10:15 am, Bishop Eugene Sutton, former Cathedral canon pastor, explores a more intentional approach to bringing balance into our daily lives and the transformational role of prayer to transform our spiritual lives, our families, our relationships, our livelihoods, and foster reconciliation in the world.

Listening, Hearing, and Living Series: The Practice of Prayer with Bishop Eugene Sutton
Register at (202) 537-6217 or companions@cathedral.org. Tickets \$35 and \$20.



Cathedral Events

Lent, which began on February 25, is a season for reflection and anticipation.

through April 11

Exhibit: "Lament: The Stations and Other Images of the Cross" by Margaret Adams Parker, Pilgrim Observation Gallery, seventh floor

Sunday, March 1

10:10 am - Sunday Forum: the Rev. Dr. David Beckmann, "Why We Must Reform Foreign Aid"

11:15 am - Holy Eucharist

1:30 pm - Close Up Tour: "Forged in Fire: Wrought Iron," \$5

4 pm - Evensong with Mid-Atlantic Episcopal Schools Association Upper School Choral Festival

Thursday, March 5

3 pm - Close Up Tour: "Forged in Fire: Wrought Iron," \$5

Friday, March 6-Sunday, March 8

3 pm - Retreat: "Monasticism Today New Perspectives;" registration \$295

Sunday, March 8

Daylight Savings Time begins

10:10 am - Sunday Forum: Diana Butler Bass, "A People's History of Christianity"

11:15 am - Holy Eucharist

4 pm - Cathedral Choral Society Concert: "A Bicentennial Tribute to Abraham Lincoln;" tickets \$20-\$80

Wednesday, March 11

4 pm - Evensong with Dedication of Sedilia Statues

Friday, March 13

Pilgrimage: "The Way of the Cross;" tickets \$30, \$25

Sunday, March 15

10:10 am - Sunday Forum: the Rev. Jim Wallis, "A Pastoral Response to the Economic Crisis"

11:15 am - Holy Eucharist and Celebration of American Preaching, the Rev. Jim Wallis, guest preacher

For a listing of regularly offered services, tours, and programs, or for additional information, visit www.nationalcathedral.org.

MARCH 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
I	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Friday, March 20

5:30 pm - Evensong, Trinity Church, Stanton, Va., guest choir

Saturday, March 21

9:30 am - Central Tower Climb; tickets \$10

10:15 am - COR: Listening, Hearing, and Living Series: Bishop Eugene Sutton, "The Practice of Prayer;" tickets \$35, \$20

Sunday, March 22

10:10 am - Sunday Forum: guest to be announced

11:15 am - Holy Eucharist

5:15 pm - Organ Recital: "Credo," Christopher Jacobson, organist

Thursday, March 27

8 pm - Lecture: Elizabeth Gilbert: "Divine Sanity—Thoughts on the Creative Life;" tickets \$22, \$16

Sunday, March 29

10:10 am - Sunday Forum: Dr. John Haught, "Darwin and God: Exploring Evolution"

11:15 am - Holy Eucharist

Tuesday, March 31

6-9 pm - Cathedral Crossroads: Randon Billings Noble, "Writing the Spiritual Journey"



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The Sunday Forum

10:10 am in the nave
or streamed live at
www.nationalcathedral.org

JOIN IN

Each week the Forum features a conversation on a critical issue, followed by questions and answers. Submit questions in person, or online at www.nationalcathedral.org.

The Rev. Dr. John Polkinghorne and Dean Lloyd, February 8, 2009

The Sunday Forum

FOREIGN AID, THE ECONOMY, THE ENVIRONMENT, AND EVOLUTION

On March 1, Dean Lloyd engages the Rev. Dr. David Beckmann on “Why We Must Reform Foreign Aid.”

David Beckmann is president of Bread for the World, a collective Christian voice urging our nation’s decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad, and of Bread for the World Institute, which provides policy analysis on hunger and strategies to end it. He also serves as president of the Alliance to End Hunger.

On March 8, Dean Lloyd and Diana Butler Bass discuss “A People’s History of Christianity.”

Diana Butler Bass is the author of seven books on American Protestantism, including *Christianity for the Rest of Us*, *Strength for the Journey*, and *The Practicing Congregation*.

On March 15, Dean Lloyd and the Rev. Jim Wallis tackle “A Pastoral Response to the Economic Crisis.”

Jim Wallis is an internationally recognized author, activist, public theologian, and founder of Sojourners, Christians for peace and justice.

On March 22, Dean Lloyd and a special guest talk about environmental issues.

On March 29, Dean Lloyd engages Dr. John Haught on “Darwin and God: Exploring Evolution.”

John F. Haught is senior fellow in science and religion at the Woodstock Theological Center of Georgetown University and former chair and professor in the Department of Theology at Georgetown.