

THE LION

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Issue 4

Message from the Rector

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die...”

(revisited)

Hebrews 9:27

Every few years I am asked to once again revisit a topic that I have written about many times: the planning of one’s funeral service. Or, more precisely, the planning of *your* funeral service. Since Lent is rapidly approaching, the time when we, among other things, reflect on our mortality – “Remember O man that dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return” – I thought this might be an appropriate time to once again address this topic. I would like to once again start by comparing two accounts, both of which are true.

Here is the first story: a woman and her stepdaughter came in to see me. I had only met them briefly a few weeks before. They visited our church one Sunday morning, and as they were walking about the door they told me that they were “looking for a place to hold a funeral.” The woman’s husband had not yet died, but was expected to do so any day. After that particular Sunday morning I never saw them again until, many weeks later, they were sitting across the desk from me.

“I am looking for a traditional service,” the new widow said. “What I want is a Rite I service.” I asked her if she realized that we weren’t Episcopalians (a “Rite I service” was my first hint that perhaps she didn’t) and that there were certain things that we could and could not do during the service: aside from Altar flowers, no flower arrangements are to be inside the church; no eulogies given by family and/or friends; the hymns must be chosen from the hymnal; etc. I wasn’t trying to be obstinate – the only thing we have to offer is a *traditional* Anglican service – but those things that have become popularly associated with funerals and memorial services are foreign to that tradition. By the end of our discussion – that turned out to be rather brief and more than a bit uncomfortable for the three of us – she left obviously upset. I will save you her parting words.

Here is the second story: the husband of one of our parishioners died. We had met over a year before in order to plan their funeral services, so I already had facts and figures, a biographical sketch of both of them, a draft of an obituary, the type of service they were looking for (“Just the *Burial Office*, thanks”), hymns, Psalms, and favorite readings. More than a year later, the meeting with the new widow was equally brief, but very relaxed. The real work had been done, and all I needed to do was fill in a few blanks here and there. It was an easy meeting for both of us, and the service I officiated was strictly within our Anglican tradition with no surprises for anyone – as will be hers when the time comes.

What is the difference? Planning!

This topic is a frequent one in my Rector’s column, but there is a reason for that: to avoid scenarios like the first one mentioned. And it is a scenario that can be easily avoided by planning your own funeral service well in advance.

As I have mentioned in previous columns, I still have very few service plans for our members, so please let this be a gentle reminder that *all of us* need to plan our services. Will the service be a straight Burial Office from the Book of Common Prayer or will there be a Requiem? And what’s the difference? Will there be music, and

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Message from the Rector - Continued

if so, what hymns will be sung? Will there be any special music that needs to be considered? Will there be a homily or not? Will your body be in the church? Ashes? No remains at all? Will your remains be brought to the church for the service then interred elsewhere, or will they be interred in our own memorial garden? Do friends and family members understand that it is our custom that only clergy speak at the service, and that family eulogies are best left for the reception? Will there be a reception in the parish hall? Is everyone aware that our tradition limits flowers in the church to the two arrangements near the Altar? What about memorial gifts (i.e., “In lieu of flowers...”)?

And speaking of memorial gifts, the rubric on the bottom of page 320 of the Book of Common Prayer says, “The Minister is ordered, from time to time, to advise the People, whilst they are in health, to make Wills arranging for the disposition of their temporal goods, and, when of ability, to leave Bequests for religious and charitable uses.” The “religious and charitable uses” in that sentence is intended to remind God’s people to remember the church in their estate plans. A bequest may be general in nature (to be used in the day to day operations of the church) or it may be restricted for some specific purpose (e.g. an endowment to help fund capital projects, improvements, or something of that nature). Regardless of the form, please remember St Mark’s in your estate plan.

And if you don’t have a final resting place, why not consider our memorial garden where your cremated remains may be interred? It is located on the southeast side of the church between the church and parish hall. If you are interested in the memorial garden, or have any questions, please let me know.

I know that I have written about all of this before, and will probably do so again in light of the fact that I still have very few pre-planned services in my files. Please both think *and* do something about that. Familiarize yourself with the Burial Office found on page 324 of the Book of Common Prayer, pick out six or eight appropriate hymns from our hymnal, decide which Psalm or Psalms you would like to have read, then sit down with me to sketch out the service. There will be questions that will need to be answered, and suggestions that will need to be discussed, and decisions that will need to be made. Once the format and content of the service has been set, I will keep it on file in the church office. Believe me when I say this: doing a little planning now will not only save your loved ones the task of having to make what are often very difficult decisions at a very difficult time, but it will also go a long way towards avoiding any misunderstandings and/or hurt feelings regarding the particulars of our Anglican tradition.

If I can assist you in any way, please don’t hesitate to call, visit the church office, or I’d be happy to visit with you about it in your home. As you have heard me say before, none of us will live forever in this life, so let’s do what we can to help make our transition to eternity a bit easier on those we leave behind.

2019 ReMarkable Treasures Sale

Thank you, thank you, thank you. You got the flyers and signs out. You set up the parish hall. You picked up treasures from those who couldn't get them to the church. You brought treasures. You unloaded, sorted and organized treasures. You priced treasures. You prayed for God's blessings on our sale. You showed up before dawn to man the sale. You bought treasures. You cleaned up after the sale and got the parish hall looking like we had never been there. You never complained. In short, you are amazing, and we are honored, blessed and humbled to be among you. We could not have done this without you, and because of your efforts, we took in \$4,515.75, which will be used for in reach. In addition, you have helped our local community through Habitat ReStore and the VNA with the unsold goods from the treasures sale. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Ann Dozetos and Priscilla Reilly
Co-chairs ReMarkable Treasures Sale

Curate's Corner

Fr. Randall Russell



Among all the beautiful stained glass windows that can be seen at St. Mark's there are four windows that are each dedicated to one of the four evangelists: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. But how can we tell one evangelist from another? Well, that's easy! We know which evangelist is which by his specific Gospel symbol. For example, we know that the picture of the stained glass window on the left is of the evangelist St. John because St. John's Gospel symbol is an eagle and if you look right above St. John's head you can see an eagle flying above him. The reason St. John's Gospel symbol is an eagle is because John's Gospel begins with a rather "lofty" prologue that dives right into some of the deepest mysteries of the Triune God. "In the beginning was the Word," writes St. John, "and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. [...] And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." We can also tell that the picture on the left is of St. John because the evangelist is depicted as a young man with no facial hair. All of the other evangelists in the stained glass windows at St. Mark's are depicted with facial hair, but not St. John who according to Christian tradition was the youngest of the twelve Apostles. However, sometimes St. John is also depicted as an old man with a long white or grey beard because Christian tradition also holds that St. John lived to be a very old man.

Unlike the stained glass windows of St. Mark and St. Matthew, neither of the windows for St. John or St. Luke can be found in the sanctuary by the altar. Instead, both of the stained glass windows for St. John and St. Luke can be found in the side bell tower chapel. The inscription below this particular window reads: "For Ann Porterfield."

Music Notes

Kathleen Knott, Music Director / Organist

A Lenten Hymn / #147 The 1982 Hymnal

Vs. 1 Now let us now with one accord,
 In company with ages past,
 Keep vigil with our heavenly Lord
 In his temptation and his fast.

This Lenten hymn has a text that deserves attention and meditation. The words are attributed to Gregory the Great (540-604). Saint Gregory the Great was Pope of the Catholic church between 590 and 604 AD. He was born into a wealthy Roman family and was well educated. After his father's death he converted a family villa into a monastery. He preferred monastic life and referred to himself "as a servant of the servants of God." He established the first large scale mission from Rome to introduce Christ to the pagan Anglo-Saxons in England.

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Music Notes - Continued

Gregory is also called “the Father of Christian Worship” because of his efforts to reinstate the Roman worship of his time. The standardization of Western plainchant is also attributed to Pope Gregory. Hence, the name “Gregorian plainchant”.

In our hymnal the words of Saint Gregory the Great are set to the American tune “Bourbon”. This tune was first published in Freeman Lewis’ *Beauties of Harmony* in 1814. Lewis was a land surveyor and school teacher who wrote music on the side. We also sing this tune to “Take up your cross, the Savior said.”

Upcoming Holy Days

February/March/April/May/June Holy Days

February 2 (10:00 a.m.) – Feast of the Purification of St Mary the Virgin

February 25 (noon) – Feast of St Matthias the Apostle (transferred)

March 6 (noon and 6:00 p.m.) – Ash Wednesday

March 25 (noon) – Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

April 15-17 (noon) – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday in Holy Week

April 18 (6:00 p.m.) – Maundy Thursday

April 19 (noon) – Good Friday

April 22-23 (noon) – Monday, Tuesday in Easter Week

April 25 (noon) – Feast of St Mark the Evangelist

May 1 (noon) – Feast of St Phillip and St James, Apostles

May 30 (noon) – Feast of the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ

June 10-11 (noon) – Whit-Monday, Whit-Tuesday

June 19 (noon) – Feast of St Barnabas the Apostle (transferred)

June 24 (noon) – The Nativity of St John the Baptist

June 29 (10:00 a.m.) – Feast of St Peter the Apostle

St. Mark’s Anglican Church

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