



CATHEDRAL CHRONICLE

Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral
Louisville KY • July 2026



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

➔ a church in the heart of the city with a heart for the city ⇐

WELCOME

ccclou.org

502.587.1354

421 South Second Street, Louisville, KY 40202

Service Times

Sunday

9:00 am Bible study, 2nd Floor, Diocesan building

10:30 am Holy Eucharist in-person and livestream

11:30 am Coffee Hour

5:30 pm Contemplative Prayer in the chapel

Midweek

Tuesdays and major feasts during the week, 12:00–12:30 pm

Office Hours

Monday and Wednesday, 8:30 am–5:00 pm

Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00 am–1:00 pm

Friday, 8:30 am–12:30 pm

Parking

- Available on Sundays only: at the Louisville Surgery Center, 444 S. 1st St., (accessed from 1st Street), which is directly behind the cathedral
- At the Transamerica parking lot, adjacent to Cathedral Commons, at the corner of 2nd Street and Muhammad Ali Boulevard FOR A FEE OF \$7

Additional paid parking is available at the locations below on Sundays and during the week:

- YMCA Garage (555 S. 2nd St.)
- Marriot Garage (280 W. Jefferson St.)
- PARC Garage at 1st and Jefferson
- Meters are available on 1st and 2nd Streets

Staff

The Very Rev. Matthew Bradley, Dean

The Rev. Charles Myers, Associate Dean

The Rev. Dr. Eva Markham, Deacon:

Austin Echols, Director of Music

Susan Shockey, Parish Coordinator

Thomas Thill, Sacristan

Lay Leadership

Senior Warden: John Kiesel

Junior Warden: Graham Whatley

Secretary: Kent Echler

Treasurer: Kay Wilkinson

Editorial Staff

Members of the Communication Committee edit the *Chronicle*.

The *Cathedral Chronicle* is a quarterly newsletter that focuses on our work together in fellowship, ministry, and worship. We welcome ideas and contributions from parishioners. Please send submissions to cathedralchronicle@gmail.com

in this issue ...

From the Dean _____

Remembering Frazier Marsh _____

Semiquincentennial _____

Capital Campaign _____

Mary's Song _____

Interview with Fr. Charles _____

Departed This Life _____

on the cover ...

Mary – Mother of Mercy © 2016 Janet McKenzie
Collection of Carlow University, Pittsburg, PA
www.janetmckenzie.com

Christ Church Cathedral Land Acknowledgement

Christ Church Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of Kentucky gathers and stands on land which has been home, for over 11,000 years, to primarily Shawnee, Cherokee, Osage, Haudenosaunee Seneca, Hopewell and Adena peoples. Today we acknowledge the role our Church has played in colonialism's devastating legacy of death, stolen lands, dehumanizing removals, and forced assimilation of native people. We repent of our complicity in perpetuating the dominance of white European culture, even to the present day. We seek forgiveness. We honor the original peoples of this land and the presence of native people still living in Kentucky. We honor with respect their Elders, past, present, and future, their traditions, and the land itself. We commit to listen, learn, and walk in love.

Dear Friends in Christ,

Though it is difficult for me to imagine, I am now in my seventh year as the Dean of Christ Church Cathedral. That makes this the year in which I will take a sabbatical beginning June 15 and concluding September 8. The idea of a sabbatical may be foreign to some. And the purpose of a sabbatical often varies, depending on if it is taken in the context of academia, non-profit work, or the Church. As a result, I thought it might be helpful to give some background on sabbatical time for clergy in the Episcopal Church and let you know the specifics of how I plan to spend my sabbatical.

In our context, the purpose of sabbatical leave is rather open ended. Some choose to use their sabbatical for rest, recreation, and travel. Others take the time away from the parish for spiritual refreshment and deepening their relationship with God. And still others elect to spend their sabbatical in more academic pursuits, such as continuing education or writing. I will be blending elements of all three of these focus areas into my sabbatical.

The more formal aspect of my sabbatical time will be spent in self-directed continuing education focused on developing my skills in team leadership. Since I

was called as Dean, Cathedral and Diocesan leadership has worked with me to bring together a staff with the gifts our congregation needs for our present and future ministries. Over the past year, we added what we hope to be the

final members to that staff, calling Austin Echols to serve as our Director of Music and Organist and Fr. Charles Myers as our Associate Dean and Missioner for Outreach and Evangelism. They join Tom Thill (Sacristan), Susan Shockey (Parish Coordinator), and Deacon Eva Markham.

With our staff in place, I have found myself needing to learn how to lead in new ways. Rather than each of us working in our own ministry spaces and reporting back to one another about progress, we need a model of ministry in which we bring our different gifts and talents together so we are greater than the sum of our parts. The same skills which will shift our staff toward a more collaborative model will also help me foster greater coordination and mutual support between the various lay-led ministries and between the ministries and the staff.

My self directed study will center on several books, including *The Effective Executive* by Peter Drucker and *Good to Great* by Jim Collins. I will also incorporate some online learning as well as regular meetings with the Rev. Kelly Kirby, Rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, who has years of staff leadership experience.

I'll also be taking time to recreate, spend time with my family, and dedicate more time to prayer, study, and contemplation. The daily life of the Cathedral is busy, usually in so many wonderful ways that I enjoy. However, I allow my natural tendency to do more to take precedence over my need to be in communion with God through stillness. I hope, trust, and pray that I will return from sabbatical spiritually refreshed and stronger in my faith through a renewed daily practice of seeking the presence of Jesus and following where he guides me.

This sabbatical time would not be possible without the generous support of the Cathedral staff, Chapter, and other leaders, both lay and ordained, who are stepping in and taking greater responsibilities and work load while I am away. Please thank folks who are taking on expanded roles and be patient and understanding if there are occasional hitches due to my absence. That said, the sabbatical planning committee has put in a tremendous amount of time and effort to ensure that our ministry continues uninterrupted over the next three months.

Finally, I ask you for your prayers during this sabbatical period. Please pray for me, my family, and our Cathedral community. Join me in asking God for this to be a time of growth for all of us. And know that I will be thinking of you and praying for you until I return.

Yours in Christ,
Matt+



Remembering Frazier Marsh

On January 25, 2026, our Parish family lost a dedicated parishioner and a truly one-of-a-kind soul, Frazier Marsh. In honor of his life, as a tribute to his indomitable spirit, and in sure confidence of the Resurrection, the Chronicle has compiled his obituary and some testimonials. These words can only dimly reflect his warmth and uniqueness.

Obituary

Frazier Marsh died on January 25, 2026, in Louisville KY after a short but brave battle with throat cancer. Frazier was predeceased by his parents, Ernest Young Marsh, Sr and Louise Frazier Marsh. He is survived by numerous loving friends far and wide.

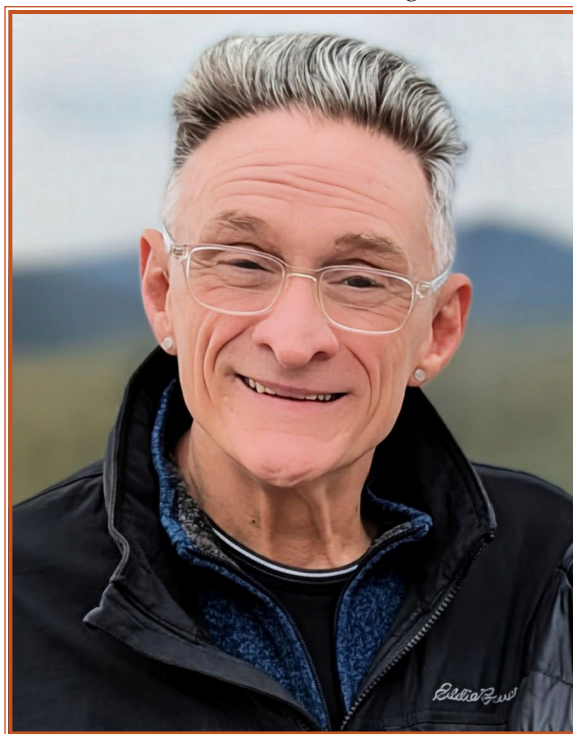
Born in Hendersonville North Carolina, Frazier graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Davidson College in 1976 and moved to Louisville as an acting apprentice at Actors Theatre of Louisville (ATL). He was hired in 1977 as assistant stage manager and worked with the company as stage manager, production stage manager, and production manager, coordinating all technical aspects of a play.

He directed hundreds of new plays and musicals at ATL in the Humana Festival of New American Plays as well as during the season. Frazier directed *A Christmas Carol* for 17 years. He toured throughout Kentucky as well as internationally in Czechoslovakia, Greece, Bulgaria, Russia, and Romania through the auspices of the United States Information Agency (USIA). Actors loved working with Frazier as a director and greatly respected his interpretation of text as well as his patience and sense of humor. As a production manager he was a role model and was awarded the Distinguished Achievement Award in Theatre Management by USITT (United States Institute for Theatre Technology) in 2006. During his 33 year-long tenure at Actors Theatre of Louisville he was an invaluable colleague, mentor and friend to generations of theatre artists. Frazier was a fierce fighter for all artists, apprentices and staff and was deeply respected by the top American theatre community. For him it was family.

Frazier was a proud member of Actors Equity Association (AEA) and the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC).

Frazier was an On-Site Reporter for the National Endowment for the Arts, Theatre and Musical Theatre Program, for over 15 years. Frazier served as Parish Administrator at Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral in downtown Louisville for many years. After retirement he remained deeply involved with the church serving as a volunteer as the Wedding Coordinator.

Once Frazier found Christ Church Cathedral, he became an integral and committed member of the community.



He was the person who knew how to make everything run and could answer any question. Things got done around the church without fanfare or a word. Frazier just took care of it. Frazier worked both as an employee and a member volunteer. He served on the governing board (Chapter) of the Cathedral and as a Eucharistic Minister and Lector. Frazier was an active member of the Sunday morning Bible Study and would Zoom in when he was traveling. Frazier lived his baptismal covenant by respecting the dignity of every person he met. Many of the visitors to the Cathedral during the week are unhoused and troubled. Frazier offered warmth and kindness.

In 2015 Frazier joined the Board of Directors for The Roy Cockrum Foundation which awards grants to support world-class performing arts organizations in non-profit professional theatres in the United States. He traveled extensively throughout the country seeing plays and meeting with the leadership of regional theatres.

Frazier was a deeply religious and intensely private man with an enormously generous soul.

Frazier also enjoyed working out at the Floyd County YMCA, traveling, and visiting museums and cathedrals. He was an active member and sponsor in recovery programs in New Albany and Louisville for 18 years.

from Jan Margerum

Frazier was already a fixture at the Cathedral from the moment I joined in 2013. He was everywhere, quietly and efficiently making things happen. We served on the Personnel Committee for several years and on the Chapter. His great gift was to be prepared with detailed questions about proposed projects and expenses. I always admired his ability to propose those questions in a business-like manner and to work toward solutions with dedication and thoroughness.

He was a bit of a ninja, moving with alacrity and purpose to get things accomplished, and then moving on to another task, never waiting for or expecting a thank you. I couldn't keep up with his energy and efficiency, and I hope that I remembered to thank him often.

During his years in the office as Parish Coordinator, he was a go-to person, along with Hollis and Paul Real, for any and all questions and needs. His heart as well as his mind were evident in his work with all callers, visitors, wedding planners, and with our urban neighbors. He was fair and firm, upholding the necessary rules of the house and providing myriad kinds of assistance, kindness, and support. I believe he was widely respected and appreciated by everyone who encountered him.

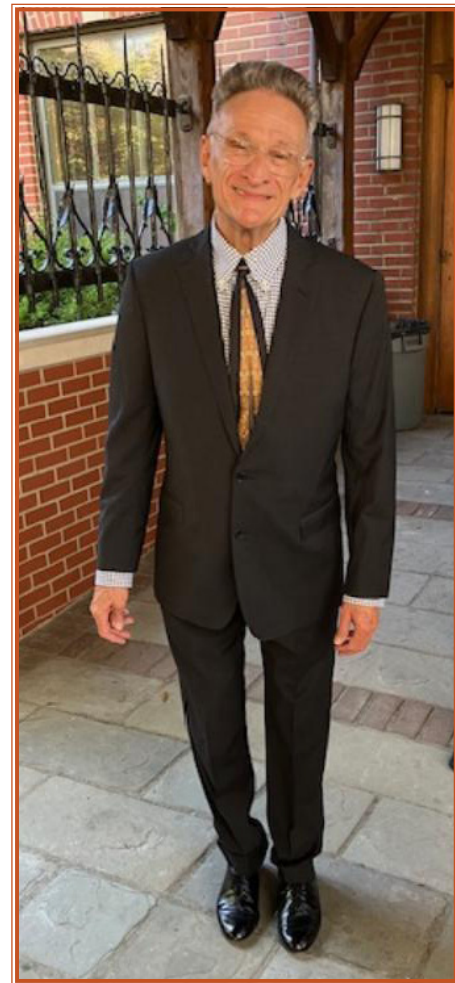
One of my favorite glimpses of Frazier was during the first weeks of Dean Matt's ministry, which coincided almost immediately with the COVID-19 lockdown. With only Matt, Frazier, Kay, and the occasional other human in the buildings, many challenges and changes to procedures arose. I believe that Frazier was indispensable in making quick changes and adjustments to every kind of interaction and communication. As Matt geared up to begin his ministry in that novel atmosphere, he and Frazier worked to see that worship continued in new ways online and that proposed changes in ministries were implemented. It is said that, several months into the lockdown, Frazier put Matt on an "idea diet" of three new ideas a week—fair and probably firm, too!

Frazier's love for the Cathedral and its people was brilliantly evident. He did countless tasks which we never saw or were even aware of—all done with his characteristic grace and precision.

We were so very fortunate to have him in our midst during his years with us. It is my sincere hope that there are things he can help organize, wherever his spirit now resides. No matter how he envisioned Heaven, may he be there in Light and Love. Thank you for everything, and miss you, Fraz.

from Dean Matt Bradley

Frazier was a beloved member of this Cathedral community. He welcomed folks in, regardless of who they were or where they came from, according to each, the love and dignity due to a child of God. As a lay leader and staff member, Frazier engaged the mission and ministry of the Cathedral with all his gifts of faithfulness, organization, compassion, and follow-through. He would anticipate an upcoming need and meet it, attending to all the details without drawing attention to himself or his efforts. Frazier was, in so many ways, the point of connection which held so much of our congregation's life together. Not a week goes by that I don't think of some question about which I'd like his input or opinion. Frazier's ministry, life, and love were a blessing to this Cathedral family—just as he blessed so many other fellowships of which he was a part.



SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL THE 250TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

— from *Song of Myself* by Walt Whitman (1819-1982)

I have said that the soul is not more than the body,
And I have said that the body is not more than the soul,
And nothing, not God, is greater to one than one's self is,
And whoever walks a furlong without sympathy walks to his own funeral drest in his shroud,
And I or you pocketless of a dime may purchase the pick of the earth,
And to glance with an eye or show a bean in its pod confounds the learning of all times,
And there is no trade or employment but the young man following it may become a hero,
And there is no object so soft but it makes a hub for the wheel'd universe,
And I say to any man or woman, Let your soul stand cool and composed before a million universes.

And I say to mankind, Be not curious about God,
For I who am curious about each am not curious about God,
(No array of terms can say how much I am at peace about God and about death.)

I hear and behold God in every object, yet understand God not in the least,
Nor do I understand who there can be more wonderful than myself.

Why should I wish to see God better than this day?
I see something of God each hour of the twenty-four, and each moment then,
In the faces of men and women I see God, and in my own face in the glass,
I find letters from God dropt in the street, and every one is sign'd by God's name,
And I leave them where they are, for I know that wheresoe'er I go,
Others will punctually come for ever and ever.

The observance of the anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence comes in 2026 as it has for the past 250 years, to a perplexing mix of discontent and hope, patriotism and resistance, with dreams for a better society, amidst the lurking and blatant perils of ambitious individualism. It comes with the bold decree of human equality and the nagging sin of unjust privilege. Into this mix is also stirred the long mystery of human faith, of countless ages, dogmas, and traditions. Religion indeed has the power to leaven, to inspire, and to liberate. But it can also cloy, make brittle, or even embitter. We see this today as ideals of equality, inclusion, and justice still vie with the old forces of domination, privilege, and exclusivity. We see it at the core of struggles between Right and Left, and between the Christian Nationalism of empire and the Gospel of God's universal reign.

Perhaps no poetic voice captures the American perplexity and the resulting struggle more than Walt Whitman, writing before the end of the first century of Independence, at a time of great crisis and hope.

"Whitman was a poet of inclusiveness and democracy—the poor, blacks, and women were celebrated equally in Whitman's poetry, and he was a firm believer in the beauty of the body, and the

holiness of its desires and urges. In his "Preface to *Leaves of Grass*," Whitman declares that America encloses the past and the future, and that Americans "have probably the fullest poetical nature. The United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem." This is because of the mix of races, of rich and poor, "a teeming nation of nations," where to be a poet is to be "commensurate with a people." (Poetry Foundation (poetryfoundation.org), essay on the Preface to "*Leaves of Grass*")

In 1855, Walt Whitman self-published "*Leaves of Grass*," including an untitled poem, which in the second edition the next year would be titled: "*A Poem by Walt Whitman, An American*". Later, it would be known as "*Song of Myself*". The long free-verse poem, divided into 51 sections, has come to be considered his most defining work.

The self for Whitman is not individual or egotistical, but universal, democratic, spiritual, and physical. This informs his view of God, present to all creation and all people, a God which one may view as consistent with the American Declaration itself: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.*"

Capital Campaign Closes Strong With More to be Done

The Campaign has progressed well. Thank you to everyone who has submitted a pledge! You are making this happen!

Beginning with a quiet phase in February and early March, the official Kick-off luncheon celebration on March 15 began a busy time for congregational Gift Workers. They have diligently met with their assigned fellow members and continue to follow up to ensure that any questions are answered and that pledges are submitted.

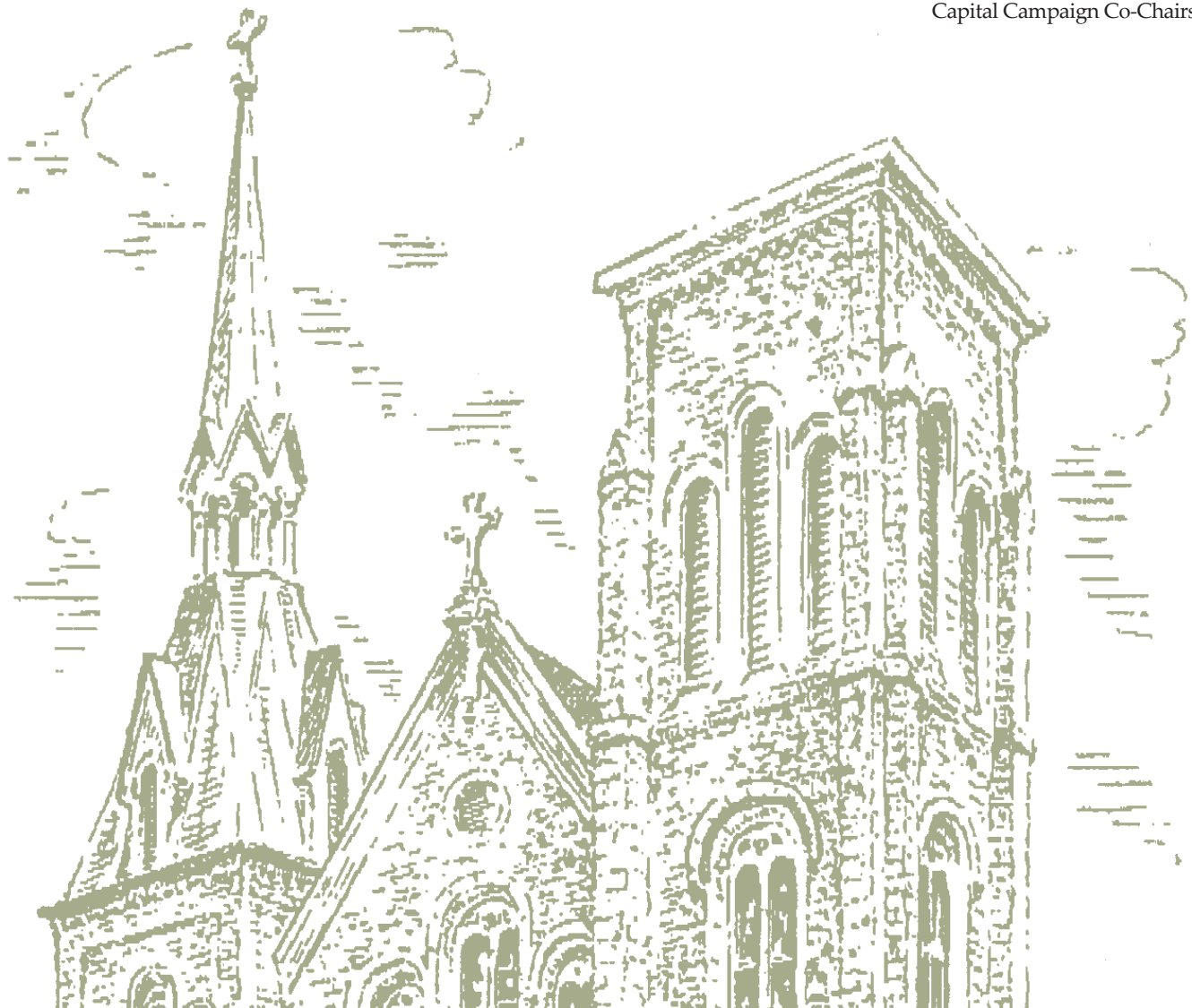
As of April 26, 2026, the congregation has pledged \$750,859.00. We are now in the final stretch of our effort to meet our goal of 1,000,000.00 in pledged gifts. That, added to the National Fund for Sacred Places match of \$500,000.00, will enable us to reach our campaign goal of \$1,500,000.00. This investment will ensure our historic building is able to continue to support God's mission at Christ Church Cathedral for years to come.

May 17 marked the end of the solicitation phase, so if for some reason you have not been able to return your pledge yet, please make every effort to do so! Every gift of any amount is essential for the success of our capital campaign. We will continue to provide updates on future pledge totals as well as possible broader outreach in the community.

Please offer a big thank you to all the gift workers: Jane Halliday, Bryan Platt, Jerry Brown, Tom Peters, Randy Peters, Athena Short, Bill Shelton, Tom Cooper, Susan Wettle, Tara Durnil, Whit Stodghill, Lee Cochran, Jan Margerum, John Werst, Cinthy Fanning, and Matt Bradley.

And a big thank you to Kay Wilkinson for keeping track of pledges and gifts as they are received!

— Jan Margerum & Lee Cochran
Capital Campaign Co-Chairs





He has cast down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up the lowly.

Most scholars agree that the four Gospels in the New Testament were written sometime during the last decades of the first century and the first decades of the second, in a time of war, genocide, and existential questions. The Jerusalem Temple had been destroyed, the city and region were laid to waste, Mediterranean Jewish communities were attacked, and millions of Jews were killed. The Jesus movement had become a growing network of diverse communities within Judaism. Some were increasingly open to Gentiles and at times in conflict with other first-century Jewish parties; however, the notion of a Christianity separate from Judaism would still be decades, if not a century, in coming.

Under Roman occupation, especially during the desolating wars of the first and second centuries, the people of Israel all faced the same dilemma: Where is God in all of this? How does God call us to live in resistance to the empire? What do we do now that the heart of Israel's worship, the Temple, has been destroyed? Is everything lost?

People of the Jesus movement saw the answer to these questions in the story of Jesus and in the story

of Israel itself, not in a new religion, not in war, but in a renewed understanding of God's presence and covenant. The Gospels are to be read in light of the destruction of Jerusalem, Jewish genocide, and the ongoing conflict of empire and faith. Author James Carroll argues, "That the oral traditions of the story of Jesus, combining memory myth, interpretation, and literary invention, began to find written form at this moment was no coincidence.¹ How did they face what was happening? They told the story of Jesus.

Scholars believe Mark was the first of the four Gospels to be written, followed by Matthew, Luke, and finally John. Each of the canonical Gospels begins the story of Jesus in their own way. Mark begins with John the Baptist in the wilderness as Jesus comes to be baptized by him. John begins the story at that same point, but after a poetic prologue extolling Jesus as the pre-existing Word of God and the true light that enlightens all people. Matthew and Luke both begin the story with Jesus' birth. Matthew leads into it with a list of Jesus' ancestors beginning with Abraham. Luke begins the Gospel, I think, like a play or a movie.

Scene One

The Empire: Herod the King

Luke's Gospel sets the stage for the story of Jesus with a juxtaposition of opposites. On one hand is Herod, who reigned with Roman support from 37 BCE to 4 CE. Herod was ethnically Arab. His ancestors from Edom² were thought to have converted to Judaism a few generations earlier during the rule of the Hasmoneans. Some Judeans considered them half or 'not quite' Jews. His father, Antipater the Idumean, had gained favor with the Roman General Pompey, who conquered Judea in 67 BCE, and then with Julius Caesar, who defeated Pompey in a civil war. Antipater served as client governor of the province of Galilee, a position he passed on to his son Herod upon his death. Herod, through various intrigues, conquered Jerusalem in 37 BCE and was named "King of Judea" by the Roman Senate. He ruled through subservience to Rome and, amid increasing local opposition, with brutal violence until his death in 4 CE.

Herod, of course, was eager to please Rome. Under his reign, Roman and Greek influences increasingly shaped Jewish life and religion. Taxes were demanded from the people to pay the Emperor. This made him unpopular with most of the people he ruled, even as it secured his power with the empire. Herod also wanted to prove his Jewish faith and loyalty to Israel, to win, if not the love, then the fear of the Judean masses. And, Herod desired, perhaps more than anything, to establish his legacy as a mighty leader and master builder. He engaged in prolific construction projects, most notably the expansion of the Temple, making it much larger, taller, and more impressive than ever before. With gleaming white stones, large columns, and courtyards, it would become known as the Temple of Herod the Great, one of the wonders of the world. The Jewish historian Josephus says that in the eighteenth year of his reign (20–19 BCE), Herod

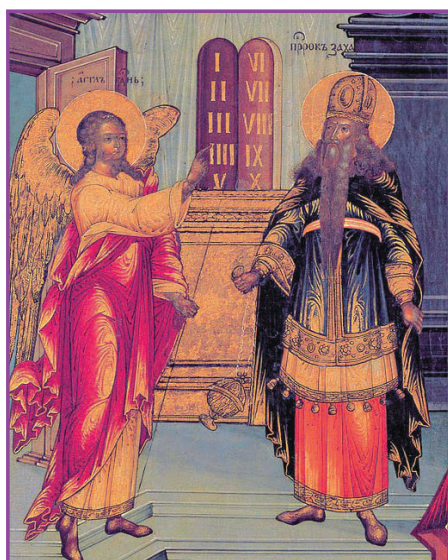
gave a speech to the people in which he proposed to rebuild the temple in gratitude for the fact that he had, “by the will of God, brought the Jewish nation to such a state of prosperity as it has never known before” (Antiquities 15.383)³.

Herod represents power, empire, and brutal control.

The Temple: Zechariah and Elizabeth

On the other hand, we see an elderly couple, Elizabeth and Zechariah. Zechariah was a priest of the temple and part of a rota of priests that went to Jerusalem twice a year on tour of duty to offer sacrifices and perform priestly services. Priests were descendants of Aaron, the brother of Moses. Luke tells us that Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. So, we see this couple has a long and venerable history within Judaism and Israel. We might assume they are rather old school, humble, dutiful, and faithful to God and one another. Year after year, they have been living their simple life, fulfilling their vows.

Luke doesn't tell us what Zechariah thinks of Herod, or the temple expansions, the brutal Roman occupation, or the increasing Roman and Greek influences on daily life and faith. We might suspect that he is not keen on any of them. It is doubtful that he would have approved of the increasingly commercial and transactional nature of Temple business and local government, the ballooning taxes, the increasing nationalistic propaganda, or the various new Jewish sects that were arising (Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots, etc.) with competing ideas of theology and of loyalty or opposition to Herod's regime. He may have, like many old timers then and now, seen things changing, but not for the better, and wondered what his years of faithful duty would come to. Where will all this end? He and Elizabeth have no children. No heirs to carry on their way of life. They represent an ancient family line, a simple faith, a modest yet well-honored tradition that seems to be passing away.



an angel appears to Zechariah

Luke tells us that Zechariah is making the daily offering of incense when an angel appears with a message that the old priest should not be discouraged. God is still at work! Elizabeth will bear a child! And this son will call Israel back to an earlier faithfulness and announce the coming of God's anointed one. Zechariah,

however, has seen much political and religious upheaval through the years. He scoffs at the idea. He and Elizabeth are too old to give in to foolish dreams. Luke tells us that because of his skepticism, he is struck silent. He goes home to wait with his wife for whatever God might be bringing. The first scene closes.

*A mad king is on the throne.
The old, dependable patriarchy
has fallen silent.*

Scene Two

Nazareth: Mary

Suddenly, a new scene opens. The spotlight falls on a young woman miles away in Galilee, in Nazareth, a town which most people in Jerusalem or Rome couldn't have located on a map, if they had one. She's not powerful, like Herod. She's not wise with age like Elizabeth. She's not a priest of the temple like Zechariah. She is certainly not wealthy or noticeably well-connected, although we do learn that she is a descendant of King David. She is certainly not someone

that any political or religious observer would identify as the future of Israel or the hope of the world. The angel comes to her, too. Mary, you have found favor with God. You will bear a son. He will be called "Jesus". He will be given the throne of Israel's great King David. He will reign from generation to generation.

She likely wonders, "Why me"? And she certainly wonders "how in the



an angel appears to Mary

world?" In short, Gabriel assures her that the Holy Spirit has it under control. God will make it happen and protect her. And so she says yes! I am your servant. Let it be as you say.

She's not grasping for power or control like Herod. Not cautious like Zechariah. She is humble but brave, wide-eyed yet confident.

*God is doing a new thing.
And yet, it is an old thing.*

Older than temples, more ancient than empires. It is not about the mad King or a religion that seems to be dying. It's about God living and working with and in

hoping, loving, and abiding from generation to generation. This announcement is a reminder of God's saving and liberating presence on which Israel's faith has been built from the beginning. Not power, not control, but faithful love.

If we are surprised that God's presence is announced in this way, to and through a young girl in an unimportant hill country village, we should remember that while the story of Israel and the world is one of Kings and Temples, thrones and conquest, wealth and titles, it is also the story of slaves and crafty midwives, of childless women, cast aside mothers, old men, foreign wanderers, of unlikely prophets, of young boys facing bullies, and widows demanding holy men stop and listen.

Scene Three

A Home in the Hills: Mary, Elizabeth, and a silent Zechariah

Now Luke brings us to the climax of the first Act. It is the event that the church celebrates on May 31, the Feast of the Visitation. Mary travels through the hills to visit her cousin Elizabeth, whom Gabriel has told her is also with child.

Now, on the stage, we see the two pregnant women, both of whom are unlikely mothers. One is old,



Mary visits Elizabeth

thought to have been barren, her best days behind her, and the other is a virgin, not yet ready to be a mother, her future uncertain in a troubled world. Yet, both are filled with joy, new life, and promise not just for themselves but for their own faith and people and for the whole world. Luke is saying that the future is not to be found in the Empire, or in the Temple, but in these two unlikely, joyful women.

Mary sings a version of a song strikingly similar to the song Hannah sang when she learned she would be the mother of Samuel, centuries before (1 Samuel 2:1-10). That had also been sung in a time when Israel faced an uncertain future. I suspect many Jewish women would have

known the song. That's why Luke gives it to Mary's voice. Here, it has a new freshness and urgency, yet it is still recognizable.

And it is radical, bold, subversive, even dangerous. Yet, it is deeply rooted in the very heart of Israel's liberation, covenant, and justice, even if it has been obscured at times by empire and patriarchy. Here is the core truth that has been sustained through centuries, not only in times of faithfulness and triumph, but also in times of uncertainty and doubt.

Here is the song, as it is translated in our Book of Common Prayer.

The Song of Mary • *Magnificat*

— Luke 1:46-55

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel,
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.*

After this provocative and climactic song, Luke tells us that Mary stays three more months with Elizabeth and Zechariah, then returns to Nazareth. The first act ends with the birth of John the Baptist. The old priest Zechariah regains his voice and sings a song of hope, deliverance, and a new dawn, drawing images from Genesis, Psalms, and Isaiah. It seems the old Patriarchy now may join in the women's song of Joy.

We have continued to sing the Magnificat through the centuries. It is sung daily at Vespers or Evensong in monasteries and cathedrals, and it is said or sung by individuals and small groups in chapels and in homes. It is sung in halls of power as a reminder and warning. And it is sung on the margins as a promise. I would dare to say that it is sung or whispered, in some version or another, by women and men in countless situations, wherever trust in God lifts broken spirits, or where

hope for justice and love provides courage to hold on, whenever people are emboldened to act with compassion and love.

Like Luke, we still live in a time of turmoil, of political upheaval. War, corruption, injustice, greed, hunger, and even genocide are all still around us. Things had definitely gotten much worse for Israel and the people of Judea between the time of Herod, Elizabeth, Zechariah, Mary, and their promised sons John and Jesus. John was put to death by Herod's successor, Jesus was crucified by the empire in Jerusalem, the Temple was destroyed, and the city and country had become wastelands. Things still may get worse for us. And yet, and yet Luke writes the story of a God who is present in all people, of Christ alive in the lowly, the needy, the hungry, the powerless, the outcast, the conquered, and all those praying, yearning, striving, hoping, and giving their lives for one another.

We hear Mary's song in the time of Herod. We hear it again in the time of the Temple's destruction, in times of colonialism, of slavery, of persecutions, bigotry, and hate. We think about what her song means in our own day, when class, race, gender, religion, politics, and ethnicity are all used to divide us, to empower some, and disenfranchise others.

Power, domination, and transaction are what seem to make this world work. But God's reign has always been run on and always will be measured by other metrics. God's everlasting might reveals itself to us always in humbler, more resilient ways. God's promise continues through all generations, to all people, as empires rise and fall, even when we forget, or give in, or lose hope.

Mary calls us to listen to an older, more resolute, and resistant song. Mary invites us to sing it in our own age in solidarity and with defiant hope.



Luke writes the story of a God who is present in all people, of Christ alive in the lowly, the needy, the hungry, the powerless, the outcast, the conquered, and all those praying, yearning, striving, hoping, and giving their lives for one another.

1 James Carroll, *Christ Actually: Reimagining Faith in the Modern Age*, Penguin 2014

2 Edom was an ancient kingdom. Its people were in time pushed into southern Judea. They were also known as Idumeans.

3 Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 15. Chapter 11

4 The Abia division was one of 24 divisions established by King David, I Chronicles 24:10

5 Sarah Ruden, *The Gospels a New Translation*, note p.168, Modern Library Random House 2021



An Interview with Fr. Charles T. Myers

Fr. Myers answered the following questions put to him by Cathedral Communications Chairperson, Kirt Jacobs.

1. What drew you to the opportunity to join CCC's clergy leadership?

My tenure at my previous post was coming to a close, and my focus for the next season was working in a church that wanted to focus on outreach and evangelism in an urban context. For about a year or so, I applied to Parishes and Cathedrals that had similar openings, but they weren't exactly the right fit. I was looking at the Episcopal News Service and saw the opening at the Cathedral and read they were looking for someone with experience in ministry among our unsheltered neighbors, the recovery community, and community organizing, as well as evangelism and mission. I immediately applied. In my first meeting with the committee, we had an honest conversation about what the Cathedral needed in this season, and I appreciated their questions about how we could work together if I had the position. Then, I flew up to Louisville for an in-person interview with Dean Matt and the Committee. When I heard all the outreach and community connections the Cathedral was already involved in and heard Dean Matt's vision for the Cathedral as a resource center for the community, as well as the Diocese, I knew I wanted to come here if it was offered to me. During this process, my wife Monique felt that this was where the Spirit wanted us

before the official offer, and she usually doesn't talk like that. I also wanted to serve a place that would be a loving community for my wife and son, and have resources particularly for Moses. The Cathedral and the surrounding community have gone far beyond our expectations!

2. What do you find exciting about serving in ministry at CCC?

What I find exciting about serving here at the Cathedral is that first, we are a Cathedral that is rooted in Liturgy and Creeds, and socially progressive. No matter who you are, where you come from, how you look, how much money you make, or who you love, you are welcome at the Cathedral. This mix serves us well as a younger generation is looking for a faith with conviction inside the four walls of the Church and inclusive outside in the Public Square.

Second, to be part of a Cathedral that has a vision for the community and has been a part of giving birth to many ministries that serve the community, it is always exciting when you can join in Mission and Vision in progress and build upon it.

3. What opportunities do you see for CCC's community outreach and your clergy career in 2026 and beyond?

First of all, we continue to build and expand upon the outreach that we are already doing, such as First Sunday Breakfast, Pride, Room in the Inn, sponsoring NA groups, Central Louisville Community Ministry, Urban Partnership, and strengthen our ties with community organizations such as Kentucky Harm Reduction Community.

This year, I would like us to pilot and start Jubilee Dinner Church, a safe place for those who are seeking, returning to a Faith Community, the Nones and Dones, and those who are ostracized by organized religion. We would gather for music, food, scripture reading, homily or testimony, and Eucharist. I would like us to do this once a month and, as it gains traction, make it a weekly service. Prayerfully, this can become a model for other churches in the Diocese to contextualize in their communities if they choose to do so.

We are also in the process of working with other community organizations and faith communities to partner with in community outreach, community organizing around issues such as housing, racial justice, immigration, and LGBTQIA+ issues.

4. What drives you to excel in your area of ministry?

The Gospel: The Life, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus, who triumphed over the principalities and powers, is the Loving God's Liberating Word for humanity, and by the Loving God's Life-Giving Spirit we are empowered to live out that Liberating Word in the World.

Jesus' Manifesto in Luke 4:18-19 is my ordination verse: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has



CCC Room In The Inn

anointed me to preach the Good News, the Glad Tidings, the Gospel to the poor. He has sent me to announce release to the prisoners and sight to the blind, to bind up the brokenhearted, to loose the bonds of the oppressed, to set the wounded victims free, to announce the year of God's Jubilee.

St. Paul describes his missional priesthood: The grace that was given to me by God helps me to be a minister (liturgist) of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. I am working (serving) as a priest of God's Gospel (Good News, Glad Tidings) so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable (holy, consecrated) by the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:15-16.

When I feel like giving up or begin to think if it's worth it, the Palestinian Jewish African Jesus will not leave me alone! He shows up. He shows up in the Eucharist, he shows up in an encouraging word

of a parishioner, a thank you from someone in the community, in the face of a stranger, in the silence of contemplative prayer, in a lyric of a song, in the joy of a celebration, and in the tears of suffering whispering: "I am with you, keep pushing, you share in my priesthood, these are my people, and my Mission, the Mission of God is manifested through you by the Spirit."

5. When was the "AHA" moment that solidified your clergy career?

I had three specific "AHA" moments in my calling and vocation. My father was a southern Pentecostal preacher, and when I was four years old, I preached my first sermon at our local church in Georgia. I preached my second sermon at 6 years old in an African American Baptist Church, and this is where my calling to be a bridge builder across denominational and racial lines was rooted in me. Finally, my step-grandfather was Roman Catholic, and when I was around seven years old, I began to go to church with him when we would visit during the holidays. He was a Eucharistic Minister, and when he returned to the pew where we were sitting, he would bring me back a piece of his Eucharist. I knew this was special because I wasn't supposed to partake of the Roman Catholic Eucharist. I experienced the Real



CCC Ptide Festival Booth

Presence of Christ and fell in love with the liturgy. Years later, when my father passed away due to complications from HIV/AIDS, it was my exploration into the Anglican/Episcopal tradition that grounded and solidified my faith, uniting head and heart and my call to be a priest.

6. What do you consider to be your most significant professional/or clergy triumph?

My greatest significant moment in ministry is that I am still here, I am still in ministry. I try not to measure ministry by success or failure but by faithfulness. Mother Teresa said that "God does not call us to

success but faithfulness.” My ministry (and everyone who has been in any type of ministry can testify) has been characterized by being God’s Holy Fool and God’s Holy Father. The Early Church said that those who bore the Spirit were God’s Holy Fools and God’s Holy Fathers. The Holy Fools’ foolishness was God’s Wisdom displayed to confound the wise, and the Holy Fathers’ wisdom was God’s Foolishness to also confound the wise because both were counter-cultural to both the Church and Society. To be faithful to the Triune God and able to look foolish and sometimes like a failure so that fruitfulness may come in the process is the way of the Cross and the Kingdom. My fruitfulness is the Triune God’s faithfulness working in me when the world and even the Church would consider me foolish for having a ministry that has been dedicated to the least of these, the marginalized, the oppressed, the broken, and those who do not fit the mold of the upstanding citizen or the perfect pew sitter. Faith is not the absence of doubt but stepping out despite the doubt; and Faithfulness is sticking it out despite the doubt.



Habitat For Humanity

7. What is the best piece of advice ever given to you?

Here are some pieces of advice that three ministry mentors have shared with me and I live by: My father, Rev. E. T. Myers, used to tell me: “Give and when you have nothing left, give some more because there is someone who has less than you.” And “Plain talk is easily understood.” And “You can have all the theology you like, but if you don’t have any kneeology, sit down and don’t preach.” This was his southern Pentecostal way of saying that prayer should be the foundation of all study and preaching.

Dr James Morris, CME Elder and Civil Rights Mentor, said to me: “Fr Charles, when you are in the chambers of commissioners (or elected officials) speaking about an issue, use your inside voice. When you are at the press conferences, use your preacher’s voice.” I now refer to it as my priestly voice and prophetic voice.”

Bishop Gregory Bowers told me: “Fr Charles, you are an intellectual gangster and your personality and words can cut like a sword to hurt, or a scalpel that heals. Be a scalpel!”

This advice has grounded my life and vocation in the Triune God and the gravitas of using my gifts for the greater good of the community.

8. What is it like to be Fr. Charles T. Myers, Associate Dean?

To be Fr Charles T Myers, Associate Dean and Missioner for Outreach and Evangelism, is to be on the move. Sometimes I am in meetings here at the Cathedral, and sometimes at lunch or coffee with

folk from the Cathedral or the Community. Other times, I am praying for people who come up to me on the streets, talking to our community ambassadors, or being a guest on a podcast discussing how the Church should respond to the issues of the day. On Sundays, I may be at the Cathedral preaching and celebrating Mass, or be at one of Urban Partner churches supporting them with pastoral supply. Every day I am with different people, having different conversations. One must be willing to walk into strange places and strange spaces to receive the Sacred and bring the Sacred to others; to be open to the Spirit to

speak through others with strange tongues and stammering lips, knowing that the other may be me. The Gospels come alive in a new way as, like Jesus, I go from place to place, conversation to conversation, person to person, seeing God work in them and me. Come go with me and see!

9. If you could wave a ‘magic wand,’ what would you like to accomplish during your tenure at CCC?

My hope is to be a faithful steward of what the Triune God has given me here at the Cathedral. I would like to see the Cathedral truly become a



Louisville Pride



The Myers Family

sacred space for seekers and saints alike. I would like to see a Cathedral Arts Program that not only includes our wonderful choir and concerts but also art exhibits and theatre, to name a few. I want our Cathedral to become a resource center training community organizers who are boots on the ground to integrate their spirituality and social justice using non-violent principles. I also would like to see the Cathedral be a place to train clergy and laity to organize, evangelize, and reach out to the community around them. I see a Cathedral whose worship and work in the community becomes a model not only for this Diocese but for the National Church. I see a Cathedral that truly becomes a resource in our Diocese for helping struggling parishes with supply priests, training, and development. Many of these things are already in the Vision and Mission that the Cathedral has or speaks about; they just have to be manifested by the Spirit.

10. Would you like to share anything with the Episcopal Diocese of Ky. and/or the CCC Community so that we can get to know you better?

I love to dance or at least make a fool of myself. There may be recordings of me in dancing contests, especially on certain cruises, but I will neither confirm nor deny such things. I like to sing Karaoke now and then with "Shout" by the Isley Brothers, being my favorite song.

Contrary to popular belief, I have a contemplative side where I sit and meditate, read books (just come see my office), and pray the Anglican rosary. I also work out by myself and listen to podcasts. To have charismatic expression, one needs contemplative substance, for both are the two sides of mysticism. My musical tastes can go from classical Gregorian chant to Gospel Music with Hip-Hop, Techno, and Pop in between in a matter of two seconds.

11. Are there any questions we have not asked you that you would like us to ask you, and you are free to answer them here?

I have been long-winded enough!

*Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting.*



DEPARTED THIS LIFE

*Let saints on earth in concert sing
with those whose work is done;
for all the servants of our King
in heaven and earth are one.*

WALTER LLOYD COLE, JR.
MARGARET "SISSY" WEBB LANIER

*You only are immortal, the creator and maker of mankind;
and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return.
For so did you ordain when you created me, saying,
"You are dust, and to dust you shall return."
All of us go down to the dust;
yet even at the grave we make our song:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*