

# THE LION'S MARK

The Monthly Newsletter of Saint Mark's Church, Philadelphia



THE VESTRY OF SAINT MARK'S

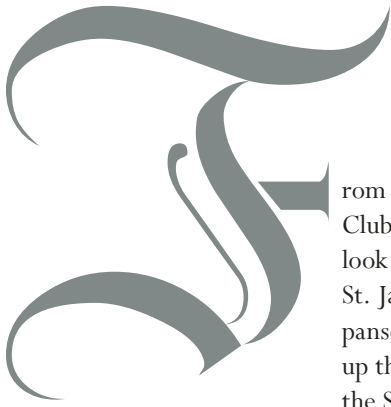
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SAINT MARK'S CHURCH  
1625 LOCUST STREET  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19103



*Saint Mark's is a community that gathers in faith,  
serves in love, and proclaims hope, through Jesus Christ.*

SEPTEMBER 2009: 'THE LION'S MARK'



From the windows of the Racquet Club of Philadelphia, you can look more or less straight down St. James Street and see the expanse of brownstone that makes up the north side of Saint Mark's: the Sacristy, the Cloister along-

side the Church, the Parish House, the Rectory. I'm a member of the Racquet Club, ostensibly to use the gym there and every now and then to play squash. I pay my dues, I get the newsletter, I have lunch there from time to time. By regulation and tradition I'm *not* a member of Saint Mark's; clergy aren't considered members of parishes, so that we may not meddle in the affairs that lay people should be tending to. (Neither the regulation nor the tradition actually prevents our meddling, but that's another story.) Still I support the work of this parish with my pledge, I get the newsletter, I have more than a few meals here.

#### THE PROBLEM WITH A CLUB MENTALITY

We know that being a member of a club means you may go in where others may not, it endows a certain privilege, maybe prestige, it separates you from the masses who are excluded from its company. Saint Mark's is (or was) surrounded by the Locust Club, the Acorn Club, the Union League, the Rittenhouse Club, the University Club, the Vesper Club, the Manufacturer's Club, and the Cosmopolitan Club. Doubtless many members of Saint Mark's have been members of these clubs, whose buildings still remain where they've been for a century or more.

Churches, especially the Episcopal Church, have sometimes too closely resembled clubs: places where some may enter, but others ought not. If not by design, the club mentality has set in through convenience or just plain human nature. Membership in a church denoted a separation from the masses who, by various means, were given the

message that they didn't belong. The Episcopal Church is trying hard to break out of this mold. I've tended to place little emphasis on formal membership in the church, as a reaction to the drift toward exclusivity. If you're here worshipping with us, I usually say, then you're a member! Let's not worry about formalities!

#### MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

True as that may be, I may have been missing a very significant thread of Saint Paul's teaching about the church: that she depends on a full complement of members who know themselves to be a part of the Body of Christ, to fulfill her work in the world. More simply put: Being a member matters; claiming your membership matters; owning your place as a member of the church matters.

Now and then I realize that I underestimate the people of God. This is a mistake, for God has formed people with gifts and talents and strengths that I can't imagine, all of whom have something significant to contribute to the working of the Body of Christ that we call the Church. Christ's Body is being knit together here on Locust Street not by my design, but by the merciful loving kindness of God, who knows that every member of the Body matters.

#### FROM A FAR PEW TO A FAR BETTER PLACE

Anyone who comes to raise even silent prayers from the remotest, darkest pew in the church is a member, in some sense, of the Body of Christ here at Saint Mark's. But I think the gist of Saint Paul's teaching has more to do with fully functioning and articulated membership. Even if you start in the remote, silent corners of the church, the hope is that you will drift or wander or march decisively—or perhaps be dragged—into a more active and committed kind of membership. Maybe Fr Ashcroft and I (who aren't members) and all of you (who are) should think more carefully about adding to our membership. Call this building up the Body of Christ, making it stronger, more diverse, nimbler, more ready and able to enact the Gospel message of love and care and hope.

There is some little irony for me to realize that the one place I can't be a member is also the community where I am most alive, most challenged, most loving and most loved. It's also a place and a community where every person may come and go, and discover that you belong here. Will it be helpful if we ask more deliberately and more often: *Won't you become a member here?*

I tend to think we'd all be better off if you would. 



The community that gathers every day of every week at Saint Mark's is the heart of this church. Recognizing that the community is as varied and interesting a group as you're likely to find, The Lion's Mark will profile a member each month. It isn't that we're nosy (well, maybe a little nosy), but we thought you'd be interested to hear what Saint Mark's members have to say.

# People in the Pew

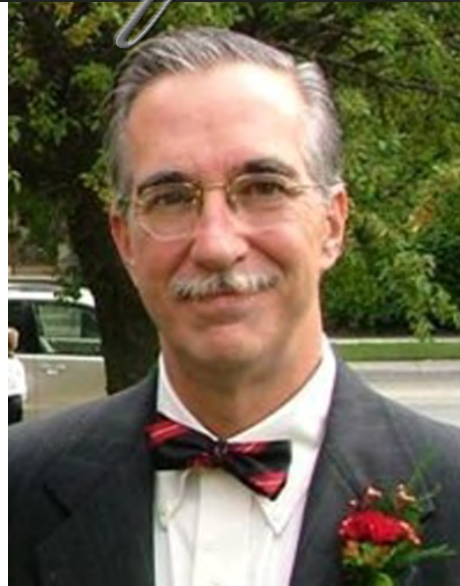
## DAVIS D'AMBLY

**TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF** I was born in 1948 in Devon, Pennsylvania. My mother was from Australia, coming to America as a war bride. There was a *War Bride's Club* in Norristown, a gang of Australian, British, Scottish, and French women; quite a collection. I grew up surrounded by them. (We assumed Davis had been born in England because of his accent.) My accent is a hybrid, really. But I'm very much an American.

When I was 12, my mother, two brothers, and I went to live in Australia for six months. All around were crazy Australian women—my mother, her sisters and my grandmother—what they called 'a weird mob.' Australians are the nicest, warmest, and funniest people in the world. But given the colonization of Australia (read: penal colony) and the fact that it's so far from everything, they have a very interesting look on life.

Even in the 1960s, the country was very much behind the times. We used dip-ink pens and inkwells in school. It was fascinating to be in that antique world and as I'm an old-fashioned kind of person, it really suited me.

**EDUCATION AND INTERESTS** I majored in painting and minored in art history at Tyler in Elkins Park. Designing vestments for the church is just one of my endeavors in the art world; I also do paintings and carvings. Working in the arts and



in the church has been an incredible struggle, I'll admit. I'd have made a much better living if I had minored in painting and become an art history teacher.

(But Saint Mark's would have been the loser. The west wall organ case was done by Davis, as well as a number of vestments, notably the *Passion red set*.)

**FIRST ATTENDED SAINT MARK'S** I've been coming here off and on from the time I was a teenager living in Devon, but I formally transferred on 1 January 1990.

I was always a very religious kid. My first conscious time in church is still with me. I was just past my third birthday and I'll never forget that day. I loved the church right then and have always wanted to make churches beautiful. That's all that I've really ever wanted to do."

**ROLES PLAYED IN THE PARISH** Buildings and Properties Committee and Vestry, for a total of 14 years.

**GREATEST CHALLENGE FOR THE PARISH** I actually think we are heading in the right direction. I have no quibbles.

**DESCRIBE THE PARISH TO A STRANGER** Saint Mark's is the most beautiful church with a wonderful community of people and a beautiful liturgy.

**LAST BOOK READ** Christopher Buckley's *Losing Mum and Pup*.

**HYMN YOU'D TAKE TO A DESERT ISLAND** *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

**WHAT PROFESSION, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, WOULD YOU LIKE TO ATTEMPT?** Nursing.

**WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR GOD SAY WHEN YOU PASS THROUGH THE PEARLY GATES?**

Welcome home!

*For this profile, The Lion's Mark modified a few of the questions used in The Actors Studio interviews by James Lipton, but we delicately omitted the 'Favorite Swear Word' question. We couldn't resist an off-the-record query, but alas Davis doesn't have a favorite, but when pushed—Maybe 'Rot!' he replied.*

# FOR THE LAST FEW WEEKS

I have been thinking about Sabbath and silence. When I'm on vacation, especially in a rural locale like northern Minnesota, I'm always struck by the time that it takes to adjust to the different pace of life which both vacation and non-urban, non-manic, rural pace of life brings us.

It's akin to the time that it always takes to adjust to the pace of a religious community when one goes away for a retreat. The routine of monastic prayer and worship doesn't fit so well with the structures and paces of modern society and culture. I find myself faced with the same difficulty when adjusting to vacation time.

**WE'RE UNABASHEDLY TERRIBLE AS A CULTURE** at taking time off. We are at a societal place in which people are more available and in which information of all forms is more available. Yet despite of our advances, no one seems to have more time, no one seems to comprehend or to understand any more than they did before, or to have moments of silence and quiet.

In *The New York Times Magazine* recently, a writer noted\*: "Since 1967, we've added 167 hours—the equivalent of a month's full-time labor—to the total amount of time we spend at work each year. . . Americans today spend more time working than people in any other industrialized nation—an extra two weeks or more

a year." If only we, as a culture, felt more fulfilled, or more productive, or more self-assured by the extra time that we're putting into our work, but I'm not at all sure that we do.

**I THINK THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE.** The more time we spend thinking about the meaning of what we do, about the value of our Sabbath time, the more we can feel stuck in a sort of confusion about work and Sabbath, about the monetary value of our time, and about the arbitrariness and coldness of the economic system in which we live; overwhelmed by the voices in our society which drown out the stillness in our lives.


**THIS IS NOT JUST A STANDARD CURMUDGEONLY GRUMBLE ABOUT MODERN TRENDS.** A great deal of what we are about as a people together on a journey is about stillness and silence. It is the context for our worship, the space for our prayers, the canvas for our speech about God, and the way in which we apprehend both our own being and God's.

Thomas Merton wrote that "Silence is the first language of God," and when I read Merton, I often feel slightly relieved because he had the same terrible struggle within him which I find within myself: the longing for silence and quiet, and the urge to be active, to work (or over-work) for justice and peace.

## THE SILENCE IN OUR WORSHIP AND IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD

is one of the great gifts that Saint Mark's has for our culture and for the world today. It's also a tremendous challenge, since we're speaking of high, high things of which people in our culture have less and less knowledge.

But our silence, our stillness reorients us; as we are swept in off the chaotic streets of Philadelphia, it's important that we gather and settle and come to orient ourselves not towards the chaos or informational overload of our culture and time, but toward the one who went away to a desert place to pray, the God who is present towards us in a still small voice.

I hope that I can keep some of the peace and stillness that I found this summer on vacation, as we enter into a new year of our life together. 

THE CURATE'S  
Column



\*Michael Pollan, "Out of the Kitchen, onto the Couch: How American Cooking became a Spectator Sport and what we lost along the way," *The New York Times Magazine*, 2 August 2009



*matthew glandorf*

After a refreshing time spent in the Motherland of Anglicanism, it's wonderful to be back at Saint Mark's. I had the great joy and privilege to hear and observe many fine choirs whilst away, including Rochester, Westminster, and Wells Cathedrals, the college choirs of King's, Saint John's, and Trinity and of course, at the Mecca of Anglo-Catholicism, All Saints, Margaret Street. (I was delighted to point out that our building was much older than theirs!)

I'm looking forward to the return of the choral season and offering our usual mixture of old and new sacred music.

He has performed recitals across the country, including postlude concerts for the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and l'Orchestre National de France on the concert hall organ at the Kimmel Center. He has also been a regular



performer on the world's largest outdoor organ, the Massey Memorial Organ at Chautauqua Institution, and the world's larg-

est organ, the Wanamaker Grand Court Organ in Philadelphia. In May 2007, Joshua traveled with the Curtis organ department to Paris, where he had the rare

addition, he will lead an open rehearsal on Saturday, 3 October from 11 am to 1 pm, followed by lunch and a lecture about church music. All are welcome to attend.

Born in 1934 in Chingford, England, Barry Rose grew up accompanying the choir of his parish church. After a spell as organist at St Andrew's, Kingsbury, at the age of 25 he became the youngest cathedral organist in the UK when appointed Master of Music at Guildford Cathedral. In 1974 he was appointed sub-organist at St Paul's Cathedral in London and Master of the Choir in 1977 and is remembered particularly for conducting the choir at the wedding of Lady Diana Frances Spencer and the Prince of Wales in 1981.

In 1984 he became Master of the Choirs at the King's School, Canterbury. From 1971 to 1986 he was Religious Music Adviser

# Music & Choir News

## **NEW ASSISTANT ORGANIST: WELCOME JOSHUA STAFFORD**

I'm deeply grateful to be able to welcome Mr. Joshua Stafford to assist me at the organ and with the choir. Mr Stafford is a full scholarship student at the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music where he is a fourth year student of Alan Morrison (organ) and Dr. Lionel Party (harpsichord).

A native of Jamestown, New York, he began piano studies at the age of six. His interest in the organ was sparked at a pipe-organ excursion held by the Chautauqua American Guild of Organists (AGO) he attended at the age of ten. Joshua has won numerous awards and prizes including first prize in the 2007 Philadelphia AGO Competition for Young Organists.

opportunity to play many of the city's beautiful and historic instruments, including the organ of Notre Dame Cathedral.

Joshua's former positions include organist of St Luke's Episcopal Church in Jamestown, New York and the Episcopal Church of St. John in Bala Cynwyd, Pennsylvania, as well as Organ Scholar at the historic Washington Memorial Chapel in Valley Forge.

## **BARRY ROSE RETURNS**

It's a delight to announce that Dr Barry Rose, a renowned choir trainer and organist, will serve as guest conductor of the Saint Mark's choir for the 11 am Mass and Evensong on Sunday, 4 October. In

to the BBC, a position that included booking the choirs for the weekly 'Choral Evensong' broadcasts. His last post, from which he retired in

1997, was as Organist and Master of the Choristers at the Cathedral and Abbey Church of Saint Alban.

In 1998 he was awarded an OBE for his services to church music.



# Saint Mark's MINIS

Every month we'll include news of interest and importance from the eight ministry areas you'll see on these pages. Not every issue of *The Lion's Mark* will include an update for every area, but after a few issues you'll have an idea of what's occurring in eight critical contexts in the life and work of this parish.

## OUTREACH

One of our principal outreach activities

is the Food Cupboard.

Due to the economic crisis of the past year, our client base has increased

by 12 to 15 percent. We're most appreciative of the parishioner response bringing in canned goods to supplement our program. As summer draws to a close, we're approaching the annual SOUTHEASTERN UNITED WAY pledging period. May we suggest that you consider a payroll deduction to support our efforts? Our UW agency number is 706. Through the generosity of our parishioners and friends we'll continue to be able to meet this growing need.



## BUILDINGS AND PROPERTIES

Summer has been a busy time for the Buildings and Property Committee. With the completed Master Plan in hand, our group is sifting through the document in order to set priorities that address safety issues as well as the needs of the parish as it grows. Thanks to the roof restoration

project, we have a number of high-priority issues under our belt and with the help of the staff at *Milner+Carr Conservancy*, we've already identified what may be the first discrete project generated by the Master Plan.

To that end, earlier this summer Saint Mark's submitted a grant proposal to Partners for Sacred Places for a portion of the funding required to complete the project.

We expect to learn the decision sometime this fall.

## COMMUNICATIONS

You may have noticed a change on the cover of this *Lion's Mark* (not to be confused with the many changes inside!) Starting with this issue, you'll receive the newsletter monthly. We hope this schedule will help you find out about the goings-on at Saint Mark's in a more timely, meaningful way. If the increased frequency of *The Lion's Mark* changes the way that you'd like to receive it, update your delivery options at [saintmarksphiladelphia.org/update-personal-information/](http://saintmarksphiladelphia.org/update-personal-information/)

Cynthia McFarland, a new parishioner (who is Canon for Communications at the Diocese of New Jersey) is spearheading the new design and format, ably assisted by John Bilinski, Megan Gallagher, and Joy Tomme (for the *People in the Pews* profiles). We hope you like the revamped *Lion*!



## CHRISTIAN FORMATION

*Children's formation* this year is based on a curriculum called *Godly Play*, a Montessori-based Sunday School program that teaches the major stories of the Scriptures, the parables. Children interact and "play" with the elements that make up our experience of worship. *Godly Play* dovetails especially well with an Anglo-Catholic parish, since worship involves *all* our senses. We'll transform the current nursery room into a dedicated *Godly Play* room and the storytellers and greeters will welcome children into the play space. On *Homecoming Sunday* during an orientation session, parents are encouraged to come with their children, experience the *Godly Play* space, meet the teachers, and learn about the curriculum.

*Adult formation* for this coming year includes a wonderful schedule of 10 AM Sunday Forum classes called "Continual Growth in Thy Love and Service". On

*Homecoming Sunday*, we'll begin with a session led by Mother Marie Swayze about a new adult formation opportunity we're adding this year: group spiritual direction. The four sessions on following Sundays will be taught by Dr Roy Clouser, a member of the parish and a professor of philosophy, on the topic "Can We Really Know God?" And later

in the year Dr Ellen Charry, who teaches systematic theology at Princeton Seminary, will lead a series of classes on figures in the Christian spiritual tradition.

# TRIES

## EIGHT PORTALS INTO THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE PARISH

In addition, we'll have a month-long class on what we do and what happens during Sunday worship, classes on the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament and the Prayer Book, along with other topics.

On *Homecoming Sunday*, look for calendars with all these *Adult Forum and Godly Play* topics, so you can add all these splendid opportunities to your personal calendar.

### COMMUNITY

A hallmark of Saint Mark's is our keen sense of hospitality. We routinely celebrate our fellowship with a host of eating opportunities and the list, in aggregate, is eye-opening: about 100 coffee hours a year, at least eight suppers with the rector, two picnics, two pot-lucks, six special events, a parish brunch, a wine and cheese tasting, along with countless cakes, cookies, and other treats. One must ask . . . when do these people pray?

Well, our hospitality would mean very little indeed if Saint Mark's did not offer a robust prayer life. Hospitality is not so far removed from prayer as, at first, we might think. For having performed one of his greatest mira-

cles, Jesus proceeded to Bethany and "They gave a dinner for him there."

### STEWARDSHIP

Please see *The Last Word* for a message from this year's Stewardship Committee. And don't forget to mark your calendars for the *Commitment Sunday Mass* on Sunday, 8 November and the *Commitment Brunch* to follow at the Racquet Club!

### WORSHIP AND MUSIC

For more than a year the Rector and Vestry have discussed and prayed about the structure of Sunday mornings. For most people, their most important, lasting and meaningful experience is the liturgy and music that they participate in on Sunday mornings.

Adjusting our schedule will enable us to welcome more new people into our community — and we have room for more people here! So beginning Sunday, 13 September the morning schedule will be:

- 8 am *Low Mass (Rite I)*
- 9 am *Sung Mass (Rite II)*
- 10 am *Christian Formation for all ages*
- 11 am *Choral High Mass (Rite II)*

The 8 am Low Mass will be a said mass (Rite I) with a short homily.

The 9 am Sung Mass (Rite II) will take place at the free-standing altar beneath the Rood beam, in front of the Chancel gates. There will be hymns, a congregational-sung setting of the *Kyrie*,



*Gloria, Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus Dei*, and a sermon. The service will run about 50 minutes.

We realize that some people who currently attend the 8:30 Low Mass will feel displaced and may wonder how or where they will fit in. We ask for your patience and understanding as the entire community grows more accustomed to an expanded schedule, and we encourage you to explore all three of the Sunday liturgies as you discern how you can best worship God.

### FINANCES

The election of new vestry members often brings about a change in the roster of the Finance Committee. Because none of the committee members rotated off the vestry, this year Kim Williams, Fred Epting, Isabelle Benton and Stewart Dalzell will continue the work they began last year. They'll focus on completing the upgrade of our financial software and systems and continuing to increase overall transparency of financial operations.



# Something beautiful for God

Beauty is something any first-time visitor to Saint Mark's will notice and something long-time members of the congregation can't fail to miss. From the carefully tended garden to the Fiske doors, from the marble baptismal font to the Limoges panels depicting the Stations of the Cross, Saint Mark's is brimming with beautiful sights.

Add to that the liturgies and the choir, and we're only beginning to name the countless beautiful ways we celebrate the glory of God and God's love.



time providing for outreach programs, following the law Christ emphasized above all others: to love our neighbors as ourselves.

The current economic difficulties are real: lost jobs and frozen salaries, diminishing retirement funds and rising prices. It's a hard time to be more generous. However the very conditions that make it difficult for many of us to increase our giving also threaten our church's investments. The situation affects us all and makes

our contributions that much more important if we wish to continue doing what we are called upon to do.

The results of our efforts at Saint Mark's and in the wider community could fall short if our pledges simply stay level in 2009. We're faced now with a formidable challenge, but it's surely one that we as a community can meet.

## FROM SHINING SILVER TO CITY CAMP

Saint Mark's is not just an aesthetically pleasing house of worship, but a community committed to doing something beautiful for God. Some of these beautiful things shine as brightly as the silver-covered altar in the Lady Chapel. The Saturday Soup Bowl, the Food Cupboard, the adoption of Saint James the Less, and the expansion of Vacation Bible School into *City Camp 2009*, designed to reach even more children in Philadelphia. All attest to our commitment to build up the Kingdom of God and pay witness to Christ's love.

## IN TOUGH TIMES, OUR LEVEL BEST

Our congregation has recently shown an impressive level of dedication in keeping up with this commitment. In 2008, at a time when charitable giving declined across the country, our pledges remained steady. It's an accomplishment we can feel proud of and one worthy of our gratitude—because to do something beautiful for God, we must take practical considerations at home into account.

We need to keep roofs watertight and make repairs. We need to continue investing in our Sunday School and Adult Formation programs. We need to provide for feast day and other celebrations that allow us to come together and follow the commandment to love God with all our hearts. At the same time we need to con-

## SEARCHING OUR HEARTS AND OUR BUDGETS

To do something beautiful for God this year, we must search our hearts as well as our budgets—and the hearts of Saint Mark's parishioners are large, indeed.

If there were ever a time to see how you might manage an increase in your giving, that time is now. It's a crucial way to participate in the beauty that flows forth from our worship into our lives and into the world around us.

Please mark your calendars for *Sunday, 8 November* and plan to attend the Commitment Sunday Mass and the Commitment Brunch that follows at the Racquet Club.

Yours in Christ,

*Bruce Nichols, Ken Perlstein, Kathie Regan, Charlie Scott,  
Lawn Spagnoli, Rick Stoner, and Aileen White*