



THE BULLETIN

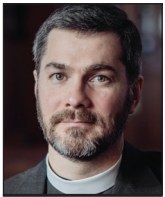
CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
An Episcopal Community in the Heart of Houston, Texas

AUGUST 2018
CHRISTCHURCHCATHEDRAL.ORG

AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCY CARE LINE | 713-826-5332

Body knowledge

The Rev. Scott Walters was a carpenter before going to seminary. (Carpentry has a pretty good track record in Christianity!) Scott tells the story of the first time his boss, Dave, sent him as an apprentice to install a door. Dave gave Scott all the information he needed to be able to complete the job, Scott says this:



THE VERY REV.
BARKLEY
THOMPSON

“When Dave returned an hour and a half later, he found me struggling at my task. I had all the information I needed, but in my inexperienced hands the seemingly rigid door behaved like a balloon. A push in one spot created a bulge somewhere else. Dave stepped in, gave a few knowing bumps and shoves, and in a matter of moments, all was right with the door.”

Why was Dave effortlessly able to accomplish what Scott, with hours of labor, could not? Because Scott relied only on his head knowledge, and as he reveals, “the goal of any apprenticeship is the transfer of knowledge to the hands.” Or, as we might expand the concept, to the body.

As you know, I love to study and teach. If there were two of me, one would do nothing but read all day. Sometimes I wonder that I may have been born seven centuries too late. Where I’d be most happy is in a musty medieval tower somewhere, surrounded by intricately illuminated books, reading by candlelight. All that is to say, I believe head knowledge is important.

That said, just as one can know all the rules of carpentry and yet be unable to plumb a door, one can know volumes about the Christian faith and yet fumble as a Christian. To be a carpenter, Scott Walters learned he must practice carpentry. There is no shortcut, no book on

BODY, page 3

Music excellence, commitment, outreach earns highest award

Houston Chamber Choir, led by our Canon for Music **Robert L. Simpson**, has earned the prestigious Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence from Chorus America, a pre-eminent choral advocacy, research and leadership development organization based in Washington, D.C.

The award recognizes how the organization “has grown artistically from a very fine regional ensemble to one recognized as one of the country’s finest,” says Simpson, who founded the professional choral group in 1995 and is its artistic director.

While Houston Chamber Choir is an independent, secular organization, Christ Church Cathedral has been generous in providing encouragement and in-kind support, he says, such as an office and space in Latham Hall for weekly rehearsals. Church members have participated on the community-wide board as well as attended the diverse performances.

The national award, presented in late June, recognizes artistic excellence, a strong organization structure, adventurous programming, innovative education programs, and lifetime

service to the choral art. It’s awarded annually and honors the memory of Hillis, founder of the Chicago Symphony Chorus, and her 40 years of professional achievement and outstanding contributions to the choral field.

Award recipients, whether a group or an

MUSIC, page 6



Canon for Music Robert L. Simpson accepts the Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence on behalf of Houston Chamber Choir; he is pictured here with Philip Brunelle, Artistic Director of VocalEssence. PHOTO DAN REST

New curate arrives

On August 1, the Cathedral welcomes the **Rev. Gregory Seme** as our new curate. Greg graduated in May from the Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) and was ordained in the Diocese of Southeast Florida. At VTS, Greg was involved with the Multi-Cultural Ministry Team and was a member of the Mission Society. He did his seminary field work at the Church of the Ascension in Silver Spring, Maryland. Greg is Haitian by birth and has lived most of his adult life in Miami.

Greg first felt called to Holy Orders in 2010, when a massive earthquake devastated Haiti. Returning to the land of his

CURATE, page 8



REV. GREGORY SEME

We celebrate with

☞ We celebrate with new members **Mr. Gregory Grinage** and **Ms. Jessidee “Jessi” Valdez**.

We extend heartfelt sympathy to

☞ the family of member **Winston Crowder**, who died on July 13, 2018, in Houston, Texas. Winston was the husband of member **Julia Crowder**, father to member **Judson Crowder** and his wife **Bon** and grandfather to **Kate** and **John Hunter Crowder**.

☞ the family of member **Don Mark Estes**, who died at home on July 10, 2018, in Cypress, Texas. Mark was the husband of member **Paige Hewitt-Estes**.

☞ The family of **Ardell Ray**, who died on July 11, 2018, in Houston, Texas. Ardell was senior sexton of Christ Church Cathedral for 40 years.

What is Brigid’s Place?

BY THE REV. MARTHA FRANCES

The operable question is *who* is Brigid’s Place? It is a community of women who have experienced personal and spiritual growth through the relationships and programming provided by Brigid’s Place, and it has been meeting for more than twenty years.

The mission of Brigid’s Place is to provide engaging, eye-opening, soul-nourishing moments with the self, others, and the Divine to empower women through spiritual connection and community.

This past February, about 150 women and men gathered at the Briar Club to celebrate the 20 years of Brigid’s Place and all that it has offered: a variety of activities, publications, explorations, and sometimes miraculous synergisms that have expanded and deepened the world of women. It celebrated those who reach beyond their present to discover what could be, not just what was already happening in their lives.

Our honoree and founder, the **Rev. Dr. Betty C. Adam**, set the stage by reminding us of the first years when she and others invited creative, women-centered theologians to help us all image God, our selves, and our communities in ever-widening ways.

Our keynote speaker, **Dr. Cynthia B. Kittredge**, Dean and President at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, spoke from her book *Conversations with Scripture: The Gospel of John*, highlighting some of the women and gender issues found in the Gospel of John. Inspired by her talk, Brigid’s Place formed two study classes on Kittredge’s book, one led on Tuesday mornings at the Cathedral by **Patty Turney** and the other on Thursday evenings at the Live Oak Friends’ Meeting House on 26th Street by **Mary McKerral**.

This kind of effort to expand and widen the ways women experience the Holy and their own holiness is typical of Brigid’s Place, which has hosted many renowned speakers, authors, and workshop leaders such as **Karen King**, **Sue Monk Kidd**, **Sr. Joan Chittister**, **J. Philip Newell**, local luminaries such as **Jeanie Miley**, **Kathleen Church**, **Pam Stockton**, **Deborah Lindeen**, and others who have challenged women and sometimes men to broaden their worlds and their communities.

Labyrinths, centering prayer, the Enneagram, Soul Collage, Holotropic Breath Work, interfaith dinners, the Anam Cara friendship group, the study of holy women through the Bible and saints through the ages, and the writing the Lenten meditation booklets have all informed us. Our study of Mary, Jesus’ mother, as preparation for Betty Adam’s *The Magdalene Mystique*, helped us learn scholarship techniques. The saints’ days we celebrate annually include St. Brigid about 1 February and St. Mary Magdalene near 22 July.

Several years after Brigid’s Place’s birth, women felt need to reach out to other women who had been imprisoned. This led to the formation of Brigid’s Hope, a year-long program for women to learn how to begin a new life with proper support from our



SAVE THE DATE FOR Come to the Table

Join co-chairs **Susan** and **Rob Reedy** and some of the finest chefs in Houston as we celebrate the work of The Beacon. The event will be Thursday, September 20, 2018, with a Garden Party reception at 6 p.m. and four-course dinner at 7 p.m. with a Live Auction. For tickets or table sponsorship, call 713-220-9736 or email jfalcon@beaconhomeless.org.

BODY, from cover

tape to which he could listen or degree-by-mail he could purchase. Scott had to feel the door frame in his hands. He had to pop the chalk line, tack up shims, and measure twice before cutting once. Only then did he become the thing he'd studied: a carpenter.

This is why worship is vital and not incidental to our formation as Christians. We can read that Jesus is God's son, but when we actually bow as the cross passes us, our bodies learn that Jesus is Lord of our lives. We can read that we are reconciled to God, but when we actually kneel for the Confession of Sin, our bodies (especially our aching knees) learn what a humbled heart feels like. We can read that in Christ all God's children are blessed and loved, but when we gather together indiscriminately, shoulder-to-shoulder at the altar rail, our bodies learn that the status granted by the world matters not to God.

On August 26, we will host Rally Day and move back into our blessed Cathedral, and I hope we'll each do so with a renewed commitment to worship. Worship is our apprenticeship. It is where we transfer the knowledge of our heads into our bodies. We engage in this apprenticeship each week so that we can go into the world not as people who know something about Christianity, but as Christians. We practice so that we understand the words once spoken by a wise priest at the end of Holy Eucharist: "The worship has ended, now let service begin."



The Treble Choir in Canada

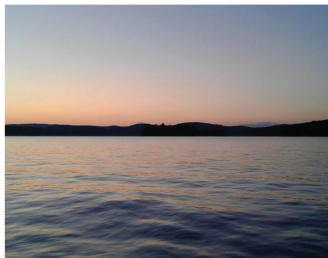
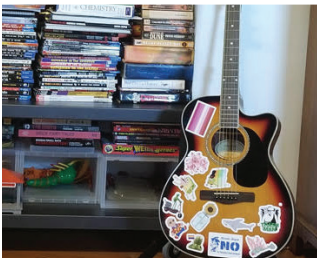
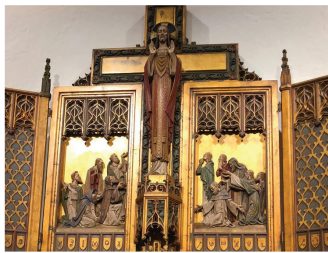
BY DAN MORGAN

The Treble Choir of Houston at Christ Church Cathedral, consisting of 29 singers directed by **Marianna Parnas-Simpson** and accompanied by **Mary Joy Silmaro** and five parent chaperones, left on Monday, July 2, to fly from Houston to Seattle, where they met their charter bus, which took them all the way north to Powell River, British Columbia. They rode two

ferries and drove for about ten hours from the airport to their destination. Why so far? To attend and participate in the Kathaumixw, a prestigious international choral music festival, which invites world class choirs from around the world.

This festival provided the choir an opportunity to share their beautiful voices with an international audience, and share them they did. They had a total of four performances and received roaring ovations after each one. They inspired many attendees, including one local resident who said, "Your choir moved my heart at a time when my husband and I needed it most. You will always be welcome in Powell River, and I hope you will return some day." The trip was a complete success. The choir members made memories to last a lifetime. Director Parnas-Simpson said, "They grew light years as musicians and humans."

Thank you to everyone at Christ Church Cathedral who support this choir and contributed to their efforts to make this trip happen.



In the Cloister Gallery: *Sacred Space Through the Eyes of Youth*

On view through August 23, the Cloister Gallery proudly presents a show of sacred places and spaces by the Cathedral Youth Group, curated by photographer Joe C. Aker. All photographs are for sale at \$200, with proceeds going to the youth photographer.

Costa Rica Mission Trip, Episcopal Night at the Astros, and more

IN PICTURES

Right: The cookout before Episcopal Night at the Astros was held this year in Nancy's Garden.



Above, below: Canon Como with the Costa Rica missionaries, who traveled this summer to do good works in San Jose. Read blog posts by the missionaries who were there at ccctreehouse.org.



Left, Above, Right: Youth with Summer Place have been all over volunteering at WHAM, seeing "Incredibles 2," and taking fl...



Above: More photos from a lovely cookout before the Astros game.

Below: CUSE (the Cathedral Urban Service Experience) getting ready to head out with leader Christy Orman.



Over town,
ight at iFly.



MUSIC, from cover

individual, may win the award only once.

Chorus America noted Houston Chamber Choir's "daring breadth of repertoire at the highest level throughout its 22-year history" and also cited how commitments to commissioning new works and partnerships with guest conductors have helped the group maintain a fresh approach to its art while achieving steady organizational growth.

Meanwhile, the ensemble's nearly 20 years of educational outreach has brought music to three disadvantaged schools and established an annual choral festival.

Simpson says the award "has great significance for us. It is a thrill to be recognized by one's peers and join a very elite group of former awardees."

He's pleased that the work of the musicians as well as staff and board has been recognized in this way.

"We will continue to strive to bring Houston the finest performances of choral music new and old — beloved masterpieces and new works designed to become classics," he says. Going forward, commissioning, recording and touring are high priorities.

Chamber choir tenor and board member **Jack Byrom** has expressed gratitude for unending support of choral music by Simpson and the board. Efforts by each and every singer, meanwhile, "has helped create something more than the sum of its parts," he says.

Follow the leader

Simpson says he founded the ensemble so local professional singers could earn part of their income as ensemble musicians — just as their instrumental counterparts do. "I also was excited by the idea of establishing a choral ensemble that would bring Houston audiences the same world class performances as they enjoy in other art forms." Given the city's dynamic arts scene, he says, professional choral music was "a natural addition."

The ensemble features 26 professional singers, most of whom studied at the top music schools and conservatories in the United States. These musicians — with full-time jobs in a range of fields — are selected through rigorous auditions from the finest singers in our region and are compensated for all rehearsals and performances.

Here's what a few members say about the chamber choir experience:

Soprano **Kelli Lawless**, a 13-year member of Houston Chamber Choir, says the weekly rehearsals require singers to "dive right in." As a professional choir, "we are able to get quite a lot of work done in a short amount of time. The high level of musicianship allows us to deeply explore the music very quickly, which is quite rewarding."

One anecdote from the rehearsal process: "Bob often says after one rehearsal of something, 'We could perform this today if we had to!' That is an exaggeration of course, but I do love being in an ensemble in which I can leave each rehearsal feeling like I was able to give my best and have the instant gratification of seeing it pay off."

Lawless has remained a member for several reasons: the level of music making, Simpson's choices of programming, and the talent of her colleagues. "There are no divas in Houston Chamber Choir; we are all here for the same reason. We want to make choral music at the highest level and share our passion for this music with the community."

Fellow soprano **Rebecca Heath** is a first-year member of Houston Chamber Choir, something she had aspired to as a member of Houston



PHOTO Courtesy of Houston Chamber Choir

A milestone for the canon of music

For 25 years, effective Aug. 1, Robert Simpson has created and shaped the music life of the Cathedral. As the canon for music at Christ Church Cathedral, he has administered the cherished music program, maintained its quality as a hallmark of the Cathedral, collaborated with organists and musicians, directed choirs — and attended many, many meetings about all of the above.

As the service milestone loomed earlier this summer, Simpson took a moment to reflect upon his varied roles over the years.

"I am incredibly lucky to be doing the things I love ... overseeing an active church music program, planning and conducting varied programs with a top professional choir [Houston Chamber Choir], and teaching church music to young organists at Rice University [Shepherd School of Music].

"It's a balancing act for sure, but these activities complement one another perfectly and combine to give me joy and extraordinary opportunities."

He believes he holds a unique position among his peers: "No one I know around the country has the depth of support or breadth of opportunities I enjoy here."

Simpson joined Christ Church Cathedral in 1993 and says he immediately "fell in love with the people and staff" here. Then and now, the Cathedral's do-it-all blend of serving others through ministries, Anglican tradition and love of music is a rare find, and he appreciates it.

A year after his arrival here, Simpson approached Dean Walter Taylor to see if he would be in favor of starting Houston Chamber Choir. "He was all for it,

as have the wonderful deans that followed him, Joe Reynolds and Barkley Thompson."

In 1991, Shepherd School of Music at Rice University asked him to join the faculty as church music lecturer. Simpson recalls how Reynolds "saw this as an appropriate way of taking the Cathedral's presence into a broader context, and so the third part of my professional activities fell into place."

Among Simpson's career highlights has been working with three extraordinary deans and talented staff: "My musical associates have been unparalleled in their talent, dedication and collegiality." Another great pleasure has been to go on tour with the Cathedral Choir every three years, he says. (The choir has sung in many of the great cathedrals of England and will be in residency at Salisbury and Canterbury cathedrals next summer.)

An appreciation of great music — spanning sacred music from its Renaissance to the music of today — is the Cathedral's hallmark and "in its DNA," he says. The program provides it at all levels, from the Parish Choir at the 9 a.m. service to Cathedral Choir at the 11 a.m. service to the Treble Choir of Houston (a choir of young women in grades six to 12 directed by his wife, Marianna Pamas-Simpson).

Instrumental ensembles join them throughout the year for special services and an endowment enables the Cathedral Choir to perform major works with an orchestra every other year, "a thrill for us all."

The Cathedral will have a special celebration of this anniversary on Sunday, November 18, during the Dean's Hour.

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Nov. 18, 10 a.m.

Children's Chorus, for young women in grades six to 12. When an opportunity to audition as an adult presented itself, she accepted.

Singing with the ensemble has been "nothing short of life-changing," she says. It's an honor to be part an elite choir, and the scope and variety of music has challenged and strengthened her skills as a singer and performer. "The professionalism, artistry, and passion of our director sets the bar high for all of us, and with the recent achievement of the Margaret Hillis Award for Choral Excellence, I know we're only going to raise it higher."

Mariam Khalili, the chamber choir's managing director, says the organization continually adds to the vibrancy of Houston, and is further proof that the city has some of the best artists and arts organizations in the country.

While rehearsals and programs are on hiatus during the summer, the chamber choir's upcoming season is gearing up, says **Grace Roman**, operations manager. The 2018–2019 season, "Art and Soul," has a diverse and compelling repertoire featuring collaborations with guest artists and scholars. It will also mark a special milestone: the 20th anniversary of its education initiative, Hear the Future. To learn more, visit houstonchamberchoir.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit christchurchcathedral.org or call **713-222-2593** to learn more about these and other events at the Cathedral.

● Registration recommended ▲ Registration required ✕ Registration closed ★ Childcare available (3 mo. to 12 yrs.) 👥 Bring a friend!

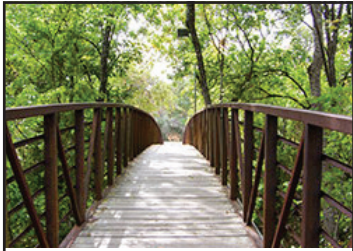
AUGUST

AUG 1 AND 8

WED

Learn to Play Bridge ● 👥

6:30–8:30 p.m., McGehee Conference Room. Learn how to play this fascinating and fun game. Register on our website.



AUGUST 4

SAT

Family Vacation Bible School in the Park 👥

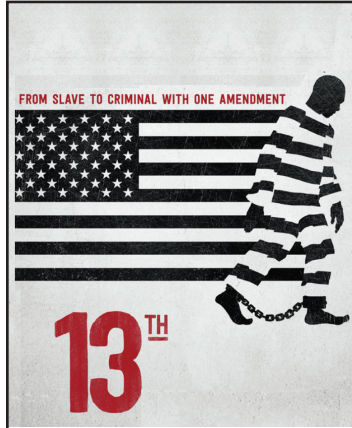
9 a.m. to noon, Terry Hershey Park 15200 Memorial Drive (77079) Almost a year ago, most of this park was completely under water. Look for the red balloons to find Cathedral friends for a morning of connection and fun.

AUGUST 3

FRI

Cathedral Bridge Night

6:30–9:30 p.m., McGehee Conference Room. Bring a dish to share with the group.



AUGUST 15

WED

Justice & Peace Documentary Night ★

6–9 p.m., Reynolds Hall. Free dinner, screening, and discussion of "13th," a documentary by Ava DuVernay exploring racial inequality in the United States.

AUGUST 16

THU

Mindfulness Workshops ● 👥

6:30–8 p.m., Hines Center. This six-course on mindfulness will help you learn to reduce your stress, focusing on understanding the way the brain operates and learning to let go of stressful thinking. Practices for insomnia are introduced, as well as ways to bring mindfulness into daily living with driving, walking, eating and other activities. In the last three classes, you will learn specific practices to deal with physical pain, emotional pain and challenging thinking. This course meets Aug.16, 23, Sept. 6, 13, 20, and 27. (\$)

AUGUST 19

SUN

LOTS Volunteering

6:15–8:45 a.m., Trinity Episcopal Church, 1015 Holman St. Serve breakfast to more than 250 people who attend Lord of the Streets church. Volunteers must be 16 years or older. Please sign up online on our website (under "Registrations") and call Cad Willeford at 713-818-5785 with questions.

Back to School Sunday ★

9 a.m., Reynolds Hall. Our annual back to school blessing of students, educators and administrators.

Meet your Shepherd Sunday

10 a.m. Cloister. An opportunity for parish members to meet their Shepherds and to learn more about the Pastoral Care Ministries.

AUGUST 26

SUN

First Sunday services in the Cathedral

8 a.m., 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 5 p.m., Cathedral. Rejoice with your Cathedral family as we return to the newly restored Cathedral.

WEEKLY

SUNDAYS

Summer Place ★

10–11 a.m., Downstairs in Latham Hall. Snacks, drinks, and fellowship sponsored by a different ministry each week: Children's Ministry Council (8/5), Jerusalem Peace Builders and CUSE (8/12), and Welcome and Evangelism (8/19).

This is My Story, This is My Song ★

10–11 a.m., Cathedral Bookstore. Hear Cathedral staff and friends read their favorite stories and sing their favorite songs.

SUNDAYS CONT.

Celtic Eucharist, "The Well" ★ 👥

5 p.m., Cathedral. Drawing inspiration and music from the Celtic tradition, this service focuses on prayer, silence, meditation, and grace.

MONDAYS

Centering Prayer ●

11:15–11:45 a.m., Hines Center.

Healing Service

12:05 p.m., Golding Chapel.

Bible "By the Glass" 👥

6:30–8 p.m., OKRA, 924 Congress. Fellowship at 6:30 p.m. and Bible study at 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAYS

Women's Morning Bible Study

9:30–11 a.m., Jeffers Conference Room. Please note this bible study will be co-ed during the summer.

Bilingual Eucharist

6–6:30 p.m., Golding Chapel.

THURSDAYS

Youth Summer Shade 👥 ●

Every Thursday this summer, Cathedral youth venture out for movies, outings, and service projects: New Hope Housing (8/2) and Galveston Pleasure Pier (8/9). More on the youth section of the website (Under "Learn").

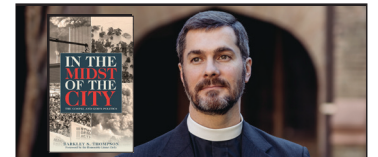
UPCOMING

SEPTEMBER 9

SUN

Sunday School starts ★

10 a.m. Cathedral. Sunday School for children, youth, and adults starts today.



SEPTEMBER 16

SUN

In the Midst of the City ★

10 a.m. Reynolds Hall. Dean Barkley Thompson presents his new book, which discusses the Gospel and God's politics.

SEPTEMBER 23

SUN

Every Member Canvass Kick-off Dinner and Skit ★ ▲

6:30 p.m., Reynolds Hall. Join Cathedral friends and family for a fantastic night of song, celebration, and community in support of Christ Church Cathedral.



AUG 26

SUN

Rally Day ★

10–11 a.m., Reynolds Hall. Fun activities for all ages as we celebrate and explore the Cathedral's ministries. This will also be the first Sunday we are back inside the Cathedral.



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

ESTABLISHED MARCH 16, 1839

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Did you know you can read **The Bulletin** on our website? If you'd like to go "online-only," contact Ramona Sikes at rsikes@christchurchcathedral.org or call her at 713-217-1347.

BRIGID, from page 2

community and others who wanted to become involved. Today, Brigid's Hope provides 15 women at a time housing, a therapist, a mentor, classes for reentry into society, support for working, and a host of other opportunities for these women to contribute to society.

For the past six years, our most exciting offering has been Easter in Memory of Her on Holy Saturday, bringing together five of the women who had accompanied Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem through his crucifixion and were mourning his death on that dark, hopeless-feeling Holy Saturday. Professional singers speak and then sing of their desolation, asking the congregation to join them in the choruses to wait and watch for the dawning of a new creation on Easter.

Brigid's Place continues to seek to fulfill the needs of those in the city where the Divine Spirit must certainly be fully at work. To learn more and register for events, please visit brigidspplace.org.

CURATE, from cover

birth in the earthquake's aftermath, Greg witnessed the suffering of many, and through that experience God called Greg to the priesthood. During his discernment process, he served as vice-president of a Haitian expatriate organization dedicated to alleviating the suffering of impoverished families in Haiti.

At Christ Church, Greg will work primarily with **Canon Simón Bautista Betances** and the Latino congregation. Greg is married and has two daughters. **Dean Barkley Thompson** says of Greg, "When we the Wardens and I interviewed Greg, his love for Christ and for people who suffer was self-evident. The addition of Greg to our Cathedral staff will grant us a new avenue to hear about and experience God's grace."

Senior Warden's quarterly vestry report

This summer has been a season of transformation at the Cathedral and a unique time to experience the services of worship in the beautifully adapted Reynolds Hall.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee continues to update the vestry on the restoration project. Bellows has divided the project scope into five areas: Sacristy and Vesting, Cathedral Interior Restora-



SENIOR WARDEN
CATHERINE
RANDALL

tion, Exterior Restoration, Cathedral HVAC Replacement, and Site Work/Storm Drainage. A proposed schedule for the completion of the project is as follows: Interior work in the Cathedral completed August 24, landscaping installed by mid October, complete exterior renovation of Reynolds Hall and Latham Building by mid October, complete the Sacristy and Vesting Areas by mid November, complete the exterior restoration of the Cathedral by the end of November, and

completion date of Sidewalk Vault and Emergency Generator still to be determined. Please know that

answers to frequently asked questions about the status of the renovation project can be found on the Cathedral's website.

Over the past few vestry meetings, the Religion and the Arts Council, Children's Ministry Council, and Community Life Council presented positive

detailed summaries on their ministries. The Cathedral is enriched by the good works of the councils, and through them, it continues the mission of proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ through word and deed.

Vestry members have been busy making comfort calls to fellow parishioners, and I sincerely hope we were successful in our efforts to contact everyone. I hope the summer season served as a respite from hectic schedules.