



# SAINT JOHN'S Cathedral Quarterly

## LETTER FROM THE DEAN

*Let the wise listen...*

Proverbs 1:5

### DEAR FRIENDS,

It is my joy to present the first edition of the St. John's Cathedral Quarterly. In an effort to communicate more effectively with this church body, we are sending out a weekly e-newsletter, creating a new website and now we are launching this printed journal. This is intended to present conceptual issues that face the community. It is not a place for the announcement of events, but rather a place to ponder. The writings enclosed are designed to draw you into prayer and consideration so that we may grow together in the knowledge and love of God.

This first issue is dedicated to the topic of listening. As many of you know, I have invited the entire community into a *Year of Listening* in order to discern God's will for our future together. This *Year of Listening* began in May and it consists of the following components:

- ✦ A series of history lunches with parishioners who have been members here for many years. Please call the church office if you would like to attend. I learn so much from listening to your stories.
- ✦ Quarterly city-wide breakfasts on issues facing downtown Jacksonville (see Theresa Johnson's article on page 2).
- ✦ A Dean's Forum called *Cathedrals through the Centuries*, in which we study the role and function of Cathedrals throughout history.
- ✦ I am gradually meeting with city leaders to assess the needs of the city as a whole.
- ✦ A second Dean's Forum on the city of Jacksonville, including presentations from the mayor and others.

The first sign of wisdom is the ability to listen. We will never succeed in following God's will if we just charge ahead with our busy schedules and do not stop to ask what it is that we are supposed to be doing. God will speak to us in the language of liturgy, in silence and through the needs of our community if we just give God the space to speak. In the rush of our daily lives, this is the one element that is so often forgotten. We cannot do God's will if that will is not known to us.

I invite you to listen with me as we begin our ministry together.

In Christ's love,

Kate+



Kate Moorehead, Dean

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*Heavenly Father, in your Word you have given us a vision of that holy City to which the nations of the world bring their glory: Behold and visit, we pray, the cities of the earth. Renew the ties of mutual regard which form our civic life. Send us honest and able leaders. Enable us to eliminate poverty, prejudice, and oppression, that peace may prevail with righteousness, and justice with order, and that men and women from different cultures and with different talents may find with one another the fulfillment of their humanity; through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Prayer for Cities,  
The Book of Common Prayer

# We must learn to listen to our community

By Theresa Johnson, Cathedral Executive

At St. John's Cathedral, we are called to listen to the city in many ways. Judy Maurer, the gatekeeper at our reception desk, listens to the city every day as she fields requests from street people for cash, bus tickets, use of our phones and our restrooms. She is an excellent listener, and her ministry is one of discernment; discerning who is truly needy and how God is calling us to help. It is obviously not always best to hand out cash when someone asks that of us. But Judy knows just when a word of guidance, direction regarding community resources, a word of encouragement and a smile provide a message of respect and hope to those who visit the cathedral. I so admire the way Judy listens with respect and an open heart to those who need our help.

This is how we are called to listen to the city around us - on all levels. As Christians, we are directed very clearly to build God's kingdom on Earth. As a parish community,



we are a cathedral in the heart of a city crowded with needs. Within our parish, congregants hold differing perspectives on how best to deal with poverty, crime, public education, environmental challenges, economic troubles, racial divisions – all the challenges facing our city. None of us have all the answers. But as a community, I believe we are called to listen and provide encouragement so our community can move forward in positive ways.

*It is important that we reach out to these groups and listen, listen, listen to what the spirit is telling us about our place in this city.*

In our country today, we live in a polarized political environment in which discourse has been replaced by attack-dog punditry. Middle ground seems non-existent as elected representatives duke it out at the local, state and national level. We judge our neighbors by which candidates' names appear on the bumper stickers that adorn their cars. We set ourselves apart from those who disagree, rather than being open to compromise and enlightenment.

One of the beautiful facets of our Episcopal tradition is that at our best, we welcome healthy discourse. I love the idea that St. John's Cathedral, poised as we are at the highest point in the city of Jacksonville, may be able to encourage discourse that is above the fray, not just within our parish but also for a wide spectrum of our neighbors and fellow citizens.

The Cathedral's recently formed homeless coalition, under the direction of Rolland Kohls, is providing day-to-day help to St. Mary's Mission and to the Sulzbacher Center in the form of food, clothing and services for residents. At the same time, the group has begun discussion about the root causes of poverty and how to strategically align with groups that are attacking those root causes. The group has an appetite for learning about which groups in Jacksonville are working on this issue and what role we at St. John's may be called to fill. Other churches and groups

provide amazing ministries within walking distance of the cathedral, ministries that could benefit from partnerships with our St. John's congregation. It is important that we reach out to these groups and listen, listen, listen to what the spirit is telling us about our place in this city.

The cathedral's *Year of Listening* leadership breakfast series, funded by the Jessie Ball duPont Foundation, will begin in October. Each quarter, we will present a weekday panel discussion on one crucial issue facing the city. This series will mark an initial step toward fostering a listening culture based at the cathedral, not just for those of us who worship here, but for the whole city. My hope is that each of these events will spark action to make this city a better place.

It is, of course, important to emphasize that as a church, we are not a political organization. We do not endorse candidates. This is not our appropriate role. But we have responsibilities within our community. There is such wisdom in the prayer of St. Francis: *"Lord, make me an instrument of your peace; where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light."*

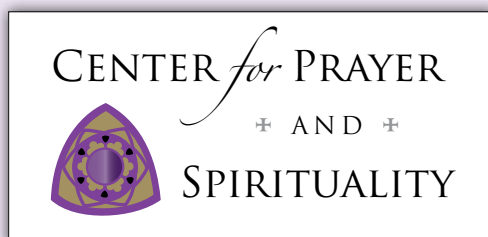
Just as cathedrals around the world are known for glorious stained glass windows that send light streaming inside their walls, cathedrals also are called to provide light to the cities in which they are located. Let us open our hearts and listen to all the ways St. John's Cathedral can be a light flowing outward to the city of Jacksonville. Let us listen with respect and open hearts to those who need our help.

If you would like to be involved in planning the cathedral's *Year of Listening* leadership breakfast series, please e-mail [tjohnson@saintjohnscathedral.org](mailto:tjohnson@saintjohnscathedral.org)

# Centering prayer:

## Listening for God in the peace of stillness

By the Rev. Louise Hardman



*Unless I am silent I shall not hear God, and until I hear Him I shall not come to know Him.*

Esther de Waal

**W**e are being called to a year of listening. The world is full of noise; we are constantly and relentlessly bombarded by it. How can we possibly listen in the midst of such noise?

Prayer invites us “to be still and know that I am God.” One translation of this verse in Psalm 46 says “be still and *learn* that I am God.” In other words, listen—and learn that the God-hidden-within-you is softly calling your name.

Centering Prayer is the ancient form of prayer called prayer of the heart or prayer without words that has been prayed over the centuries. It uses a word or a phrase to lead us into the silence within where God can be found. And the word or phrase leads back into the silence when the distractions of our monkey minds would prevent this.

It acknowledges that in the last resort, words are not really very important, not actually necessary at all. The heart of it all is attentiveness. Ultimately, then, praying is being fully attentive to the present moment and recognizing God in it. It is being aware of God in every aspect of our lives and opening up empty spaces in our hearts for Him to speak. As we listen to God speaking within ourselves we can more readily hear Him speaking to us in others.

How do we learn to pray this way? Here are some guides for being fully open to and aware of God:

- ✦ Find a place and a time when you can be in solitude without external distractions.
- ✦ Choose a sacred word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God’s presence and action within. Do not use the prayer word constantly but let it hover in the mind somewhat like a white sound (a phrase, word, scripture such as a Psalm, the Jesus Prayer, maranatha [Come, Lord]... whatever helps open our hearts to God).
- ✦ Sit comfortably, relaxed and with eyes closed, settle in briefly and silently introduce the sacred word.
- ✦ Center all your attention and desire on God and let this be the sole concern of your mind and heart. Let a spontaneous desire spring upwards toward God.
- ✦ Return ever-so-gently to the sacred word when thoughts engage you and distractions assail.
- ✦ Try to practice Centering Prayer for 20 minutes twice a day. (But you can work into that. Start with 5-10 minutes.)
- ✦ The method leads to awareness so that you are praying without ceasing.
- ✦ Diligence is key!

Listen for the heartbeat of God in yourself. Listen for it in others.

*Deacon Louise Hardman is director of the Center for Prayer & Spirituality. The Center offers a variety of opportunities for “being still” and listening to the One who speaks in the silence of our hearts.*

# Demonstrate the love of Jesus through pastoral listening

By the Rev. J. Perry Smith, Canon for Pastoral Care

*“Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak;  
courage is what it takes to sit down and listen.”*

Winston Churchill

Some might think that it is up to clergy alone to meet the so-called spiritual or pastoral needs of others and to be the only ones to use the traditional resources of faith, such as prayer, the bible and conversation, to provide care for others. This is simply not true. The “universal priesthood of all believers” is a fundamental Christian concept, and whether we are clergy or laity, we need to take this notion seriously. All Christians have a “priestly” responsibility to love and minister to others.

Often we deflect or reject suggestions to help with pastoral care or some other facet of Christian care giving because we do not believe we have the skills or aptitudes. I sometimes hear excuses such as, “I just can’t deal with a hospital or somebody in pain. I wouldn’t know what to say or do.” In truth, most of us trying to care for those in some crisis or a period of illness, really do not know what to say or do. Just being present, saying the simplest of a heartfelt prayer, being kind and being a good listener seems to meet most people’s needs.

Listening, for example, is one of the most important skills we have. How well we listen impacts our work, our social life and the quality of our relationships with others, especially our relationship with God. We listen to obtain information. We listen to understand. We listen for enjoyment. We listen to learn. Sadly, however, we are not very good at listening. Depending on the study being used, we remember a dismal 25-50 percent of what we hear. That means that when we talk to others... our boss, colleagues, customers or spouse for 10 minutes, we only really hear 2½ to 5 minutes of the conversation.

When I was a lad growing up in Appalachia, we often spent evenings – summers on the porch and winters around the fireplace – listening to the “old folks” tell their stories. Some were better than others... more exciting perhaps or just plain funny... sometimes so funny we would laugh until we cried. My grandfather Ira Perry could “turn a word” or “spin a yarn” as they used to say about his tales. This tradition of storytelling and listening taught us to be active listeners.

Unfortunately, the noise of our world today has moved beyond deafening, so much so that listening has become something of a

chore, requiring a lot of energy. In addition, we do love to hear the sound of our own voices. The endless talking and screeching on radio and television give us few good models for civil conversation or lessons for listening.

Listening is a skill that we can all benefit from improving. The way to become a better listener is to practice “active listening”:

- Pay attention:** Give the speaker our undivided attention and acknowledge the message. Recognize that what is not said also speaks loudly.
- Show that we are listening:** Smile and use other facial expressions. Have an open and inviting posture.
- Provide feedback:** Our personal filters, assumptions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, our role is to understand what is being said. This may require us to reflect what is being said and ask questions.
- Defer judgment.** Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the speaker and limits full understanding of the message. Do not interrupt with counter-arguments.
- Respond appropriately.** Be candid, open, and honest in your responses and assert your opinions respectfully.

Consider listening as an important aspect of care (pastoral) giving and the next opportunity that comes to be a caregiver or simply a good friend, have the courage to say yes. We cannot be really human all by ourselves. We need other people to talk to and to listen to, to share our secrets with, to laugh and cry with, and when we get to know each other really well, even be silent together without embarrassment. In the final analysis, if we are as good a listener as we are a talker, there is somebody out there that needs our attention and love.

Christian caregiving is about love and how we love. This love can be found when we practice listening with the ears of our heart, as St. Benedict put it. As suggested above, we must listen empathetically and sympathetically. Love penetrates a heart or soul when we refrain from gratuitous commentary and judgment. Love shows itself openly when we are mindful and attentive to another. In short, it is about modeling how Jesus loves us.

# Reconstructing the Cathedral

## An Interview with Edward T. Potter

By Robert Hyde, Director of Properties

I stepped through a wormhole the other day and found myself seated on a chair on the porch of a newly constructed cottage in Riverside. The neighborhood was full of activity and houses seemed to be springing from the earth, but portions of the downtown remained devastated from the Great Fire of 1901. Next to me on a rocking chair sat a subdued gentleman who introduced himself as Edward Tuckerman Potter. A newspaper disclosed the date as late 1903, and I quickly realized that a special opportunity had been presented to me.

**Robert Hyde:** It's a pleasure to meet you and something that I've wanted to do for several years. I became curious about your work, thinking you were associated with Snelling & Potter who designed our current church. Then, I came across your drawings for the 1877 on the University of Florida Web site.

**Edward Tuckerman Potter:** My apologies, but I'm not familiar with the meaning of the term "Web site."

**H:** Pardon; my misstatement. What I mean to say is that I came across your pen and ink drawings for our second church and was stunned by their beauty. They seemed more suitable for framing and hanging as art, rather than making little red annotations.

**P:** That was the style in those days. By the way, to back up for a moment, there is some confusion about my role in your church now under construction. The firm of Snelling & Potter formed around 1895, as a partnership between Mr. Grenville Temple Snelling and my nephew, Howard Nott Potter.

**H:** I have seen you referred to as an "ecclesiastical specialist." How is that you came to concentrate on the designing churches, especially Episcopal ones?

**P:** Yes, well it did help that my father was an Episcopal bishop as well as president of Union College in Schenectady, New York. I attended Union College for my junior and senior years and graduated in 1853. I became a student of Richard Upjohn, already a prominent church architect, and worked with him from 1854 to 1856. Then, I opened an architectural practice in Schenectady, where I stayed until moving to New York City in 1865 and opening an office on Wall Street that last until 1876. The writings of John Ruskin were very influential on young architects at that time.

**H:** What were some of the churches that you designed?

**P:** Over my career, I designed 66 churches, including many Episcopal ones, such as All Saints Memorial Church in Providence, Rhode Island, and three in the area of Hartford, Connecticut: Trinity Episcopal Church in Wethersfield, St. John's Episcopal Church in



ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL, 1877, SHOWN IN A PHOTO FROM 1894.

East Hartford, and the Church of the Good Shepherd in Hartford. The latter came about around 1866 when the wife of Samuel Colt grew disappointed with the design submitted by initial architect, Frederick Clarke Winters, that she had hired to design a church in memory of her husband, who had died in 1862, and four of their children. I retired from active practice in 1877 but occasionally resumed work, and one of my later efforts was the Colt memorial Parish House for the Church of the Good Shepherd in 1896 in memory of one of Mrs. Colt's sons.

**H:** Did you do more secular designs as well?

**P:** Certainly. Although many of my designs have been churches, I also enjoy more secular designs as well. You may be aware of my sixteen-sided Nott Memorial Graduate's Hall at Union College, and there was that rather interesting house that I drew for Mark Twain in Hartford. Well, actually it was at his wife's instructions and, I might add, built with her inheritance.

**H:** With much of your work being in New York and the North East, how did you come to design a church in Jacksonville, Florida?

**P:** Having an office on Wall Street near Trinity Church, I naturally had met Freeman Young after he became rector there in 1867, and by 1870 he was appointed Bishop of Florida. He contacted me to report that your Vestry had approved construction of a church that would hold 800 people at a cost of \$25,000.

**H:** Excuse me; you did say \$25,000, not \$250,000?

**P:** Indeed. We finished the plans that year but construction was delayed until 1873. Florida was still pretty remote in those days, as Mr. Flagler had not completed his railway along the Florida Coast; however, it was possible to commute back and forth by steam-

ship. Construction progressed well at first, and Bishop Young laid the cornerstone on April 7, 1874. You may remember that was the time of the great financial panic of 1873, and not surprisingly in the aftermath the church ran out of funds and little was done in 1875. However, work resumed in 1876 and the first service was held on Easter Sunday, April 1, 1877.

**H:** Then, the Mark Twain house was being built at the same time as St. John's Church?

**P:** Not really. His house was finished in 1874 and so there was slight overlap in construction, but the plans for both projects were drafted in the same time period in 1870.

**H:** I've always been curious about a couple of points about your design for our church. It is often said that the church built to replace your design was constructed on the same foundation, but when I examine the plans and drawing there seem to be some differences in the footprint, I mean the ground plan?

**P:** Yes, well, your Vestry initially had ambitious plans that included transepts and tower, as I believe the church was intended to serve as a cathedral. However, that proved to be unobtainable, and my design was largely rectangular with one entrance, a porch as we called it, projecting at the southwest corner by Duval and Market streets.

**H:** I've also notice that both ends were fairly blunt with flat with screens over the windows, giving it a somewhat formidable look.

**P:** Of course, heat was always a concern. The building needed to have adequate natural ventilation as well as protection against the sun, especially at the east and west ends. But you are correct that the look differed somewhat from my other church designs of that period.

**H:** I have also read that, in addition to their ornate details, your churches were characterized by architectural symbolism within the Episcopal tradition and strong geometric qualities, including the Golden Section and the hexalpa or six pointed star?

**P:** That is correct.

**H:** There are still surviving remnants of a coquina foundation to be seen under the current sanctuary. Was your foundation constructed out of coquina?

**P:** Yes. As was the practice in this region, the coquina was mixed with mortar to form a concrete masonry.

**H:** Various names have been applied to the style of your work, the most common being High Victorian Gothic, but I'm more interested in the term "polychromatism" that has been applied to some of your Connecticut churches. Was that an element of your 1877 church?

**P:** The Hartford churches certainly demonstrate my use of colors, but the dominant elements in your church were the roofline, similar to that of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Hartford, the red brick, and the arches and narrow windows. There was some design on the roof but not as dramatic as some of my other churches.

**H:** How did you feel once you saw your creation virtually leveled by the Great Fire?

**P:** Of course, it was heartbreaking. But I have lived to see the beginnings of the birth of a new church on the same site. The church was not the only building that was lost in the Great Fire, and, as you probably know, a new rectory has already been completed according to a design by Messrs. Snelling and Potter. Mr. Snelling met with your Vestry last year to consider the ground plan for a new church, and construction is underway as we converse.

**H:** It's been a pleasure talking with you, and I have more questions, but first I need to take a break. Could you direct me to the bathroom?

**P:** Certainly. It's in the shed about 20 feet behind the house next to the chicken coop.

**H:** Oh, thanks. I guess I'll be back in a few minutes.



1877 CHURCH - PHOTO TAKEN AFTER THE FIRE OF 1901.



*Edward Tuckerman Potter died on Oct. 24, 1904, a year and a half before the completion of our current church. While this interview is imagined, the facts are established from several sources, except for a few conjectured answers regarding the design of the 1877 church. You may see his drawings in the Smathers Libraries at the University of Florida, Gainesville, or on its web site at <http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/manuscript/guides/potter.htm>. Most of the churches he designed are still standing. For a study of his life and work, consult the rare "Edward T. and William A. Potter: American High Victorian Architects," by Sarah Bradford Landau (Garland Press, 1979). Thanks to Ms. Landau for providing some information used in this article. The Hartford churches referred to above can be found at <http://historicbuildingsct.com/?tag=edward-t-potter.htm>.*

# Cathedrals through the ages

By the Rev. Dr. Robert Askren, Canon for Adult Education

From 550 to 850 AD, Anglo-Saxon people lived in villages, known as burhs. The settlements had mounds of earth around them to serve as a wall of protection from invaders. Homes were made of wood and thatch. Homes were cold in the winter and hot in the summer. It was not unusual for a whole burh to burn down from a cooking fire accident. Eventually, homes were rebuilt with stone walls to prevent fires. Wealthy people might even have had tiled roofs instead of thatch.

The local church was usually a monastery, run by a small band of monks with an abbot as their leader. The church was often called an abby. Monks at the abby cared for the sick, and educated the children of the village. The abby was the center of community life for the village. Since few people could read, the monks drew murals on the walls of the abby to teach Bible stories to the people. Daily prayers were offered in the Abby, and villagers stopped in to hear the worship services. They were all expected to attend church each Sunday, the Lord's Day.

After the Norman Conquest in 1066, the Normans built many castles to protect the burhs and the farming lands that fed the people. The Normans replaced the mounds of earth around the villages with stone walls, a moat and an entrance gate. They called the burhs "tun" which later became "town" in English.

The Normans also improved or rebuilt the Abby church in each town, building with stone instead of wood. If the church was the home of the local bishop, it was called a cathedral. It was an honor to have a bishop living in one's town. "Cathedra" was the name for the bishop's chair placed near the altar of the cathedral. Tradesmen flocked to these improved towns. Many family names derived from the trade of the family such as Goldsmith, Silverstone, Smith, Barber, Farmer, Gardener, Cooper, and Carpenter.

Cathedrals flourished during this time as the number of monasteries and convents grew. Some monasteries had more than 100 monks in residence. Cathedrals were rebuilt using stone and tile for the roofs. Colored glass was placed in the windows containing images to teach the Christian faith. Each nobleman would want his town and cathedral to be the envy of his friends in other parts of the country, so he would often hire craftsmen to create beautiful works of art in his cathedral. Holy relics were also a status symbol for a cathedral to display. These would draw many religious pilgrims to visit the cathedral and the merchants of the town, thus benefitting the local economy.

Each nobleman would expect taxes to be paid him from the merchants and farmers working his lands. The church also expected people to pay taxes to support their cathedral church and monastery since the church was providing services to the people.

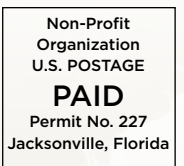
This was a difficult burden on the serf, who had no formal training except working on the land. During this time, there were only four ways for serfs to advance economically. They could join the church as a monk or a nun and serve the religious life. They would not grow rich, but at least they would have food and shelter.

Sadly, many poor families would simply turn over their children to the local monastery or convent to be raised. Eventually, these children could join the army of the local nobleman and might be sent to a distant battle; they could learn a trade and join a merchant's guild. They could remain on the farm, do common labor, and pray for a good harvest.

**Please attend the Dean's Forum beginning on Sunday, September 12 at 9 a.m. in Taliaferro Hall to hear the continuing story of "Cathedrals Through the Ages."**



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