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Marguerite Johnston, A Happy Worldly Abode: Christ Church Cathedral 1839/1964



Christ Church, Houston Texas, Painted by Thomas Flintoff, March 26, 1852

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As we approach our 180th anniversary, this sacred place is even more vital to its members and to the entire community than it has ever been. We have enjoyed this special place as our worship

home, a magnet that attracts our extraordinarily diverse membership and creates the resources to radiate outreach to the needs of our community.

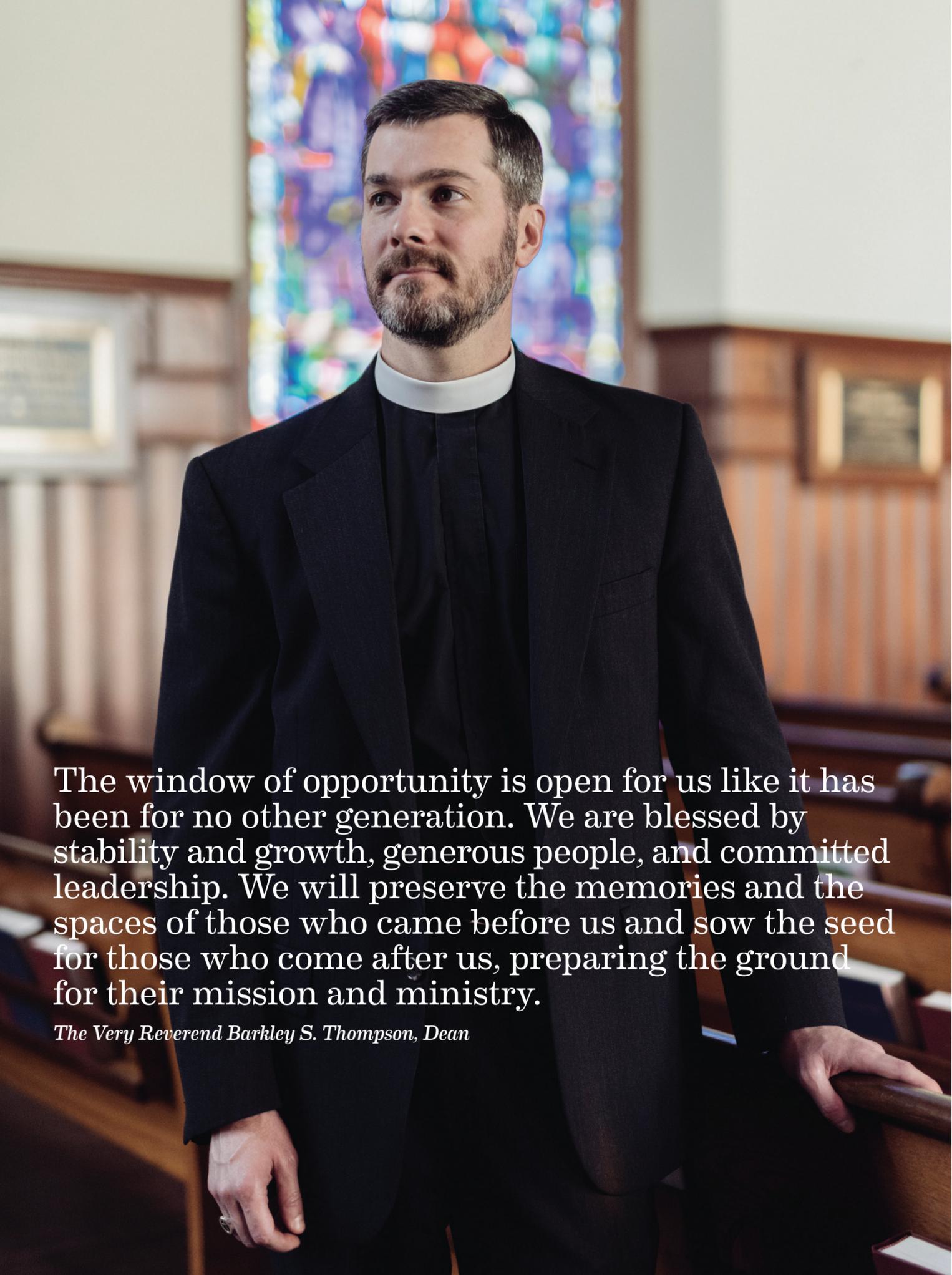
The effects of time, weather and use call on us to restore and renovate the Cathedral campus and to assure its future by strengthening the Tom Barrow and Stuart Hellmann Legacy Fund for Cathedral Preservation. Likewise, by enhancing the Mary and Walter Taylor Outreach Fund, we will sustain The Beacon and other vital outreach endeavors, continuing the Cathedral’s long legacy of supporting ministry to the community.

We embark on a capital campaign, Sowing the Seed, which will enable us to demonstrate our commitment to this place and to continue its heritage of outreach.

It was with great expectation that we accepted the call to chair this campaign. Knowing the commitment and the generosity of our fellow parishioners gives us courage to join with you in meeting our goals. Please give as generously as you are able.

Margot and John Cater
Campaign Co-Chairs





The window of opportunity is open for us like it has been for no other generation. We are blessed by stability and growth, generous people, and committed leadership. We will preserve the memories and the spaces of those who came before us and sow the seed for those who come after us, preparing the ground for their mission and ministry.

The Very Reverend Barkley S. Thompson, Dean

God's Spiritual Agriculture

July 16, 2017

*Excerpts from God in the Midst of the City
rectorspage.wordpress.com*

The Very Reverend Barkley Thompson

Everyone recalls the life science project in which a child takes an egg carton, a handful of beans, and some potting soil. The child fills the cups in the carton with soil and then pushes a bean directly into the center of each cup of rich dirt. Soil is carefully brushed over the top of each bean, and the child then selects the windowsill with the best direct sunlight. Daily, a bit of water is added to the experiment, until to the child's wonder and surprise shiny green bean stalks rise from the cups, a windowsill lesson in the miracle of life. The experiment teaches an important lesson about sowing: Everything is precious. The soil, the sunlight, the water, and especially the seeds... nothing can be taken for granted. Each component, however small, is essential to the success of vitality, growth, and life.

A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the footpath, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they just as quickly withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. (Matthew 13: 3-8)

If the seed God sows is the Gospel, then each of the soils, it turns out, is a different kind of hearer. One hearer is the footpath, where feet trample the seed; another is rocky ground where the seed cannot take root; yet another is a briar patch, where thorns choke the new shoots. And only the fourth is good soil, where the beanstalks grow. Four different hearers; four different soils. And the question begged for each hearer of the parable is, which kind of soil am I?

The different soils are not different people. They are all me. And they are all you, depending upon the season of our lives. Faith is rocky, and thorny, and sometimes shallow, and can often be trampled underfoot. And the lived experience of our lack of attention, or our fickle and transient commitment, or of a world that seems to conspire against us, can be deflating. In those moments we might ask in near despair, as God sows the Gospel in the world, why would God waste precious seed on us?

And that is the very reason Jesus tells this parable. It turns out that God is not a careful farmer, and in the economy of God's spiritual agriculture, the seed of grace, while surely precious, is not scarce. You see, no matter what soil you are today, God sows grace upon you and within you.

In addition to miracle, Jesus' parable ends in promise: As people of faith, no matter what soil you were yesterday, no matter what soil you find yourself to be today, God is slowly and meticulously preparing you and enriching you. With love like sunlight, through the sacraments like nourishing water, and in the soil of this Cathedral, God tends each of us like the farmer tends his plants, so that the day will be (maybe even this day) when God's grace growing in you and in me will bear fruit one hundredfold, and when our very souls will bloom. Let those who have ears hear!



Sowing the Seed

You can cultivate the present and plant a seed for the future at Christ Church Cathedral.

The Cathedral has not undertaken significant preservation and renovation work to our campus in more than twenty years. Meanwhile, the number of people who attend services and events, and the community outreach efforts they enable the Cathedral to support, have flourished and continue to blossom. When new members share why they joined Christ Church Cathedral, they most often cite the beauty of our sacred space and a desire to be part of a church engaged in significant outreach.

Today, the Cathedral campus is deeply in need of restoration and maintenance, just as its outreach efforts are ripe for sustaining support. To continue to provide inspiring worship and expand our

transformative ministry to Houston and beyond, we must improve our aging campus and prepare for mission and the future.

After careful study of our campus and ministries, the Cathedral Vestry has unanimously voted to launch a \$10 million fundraising effort, Sowing the Seed. Funds from the campaign will go toward:

- **Once-in-a-generation, imperative restoration and renovation for our campus**
- **The Tom Barrow and Stuart Hellmann Legacy Fund for Cathedral Preservation, to keep pace with necessary and ongoing major repairs**
- **The Mary and Walter Taylor Outreach Fund, to provide strategic support for The Beacon and other life-enhancing outreach initiatives**

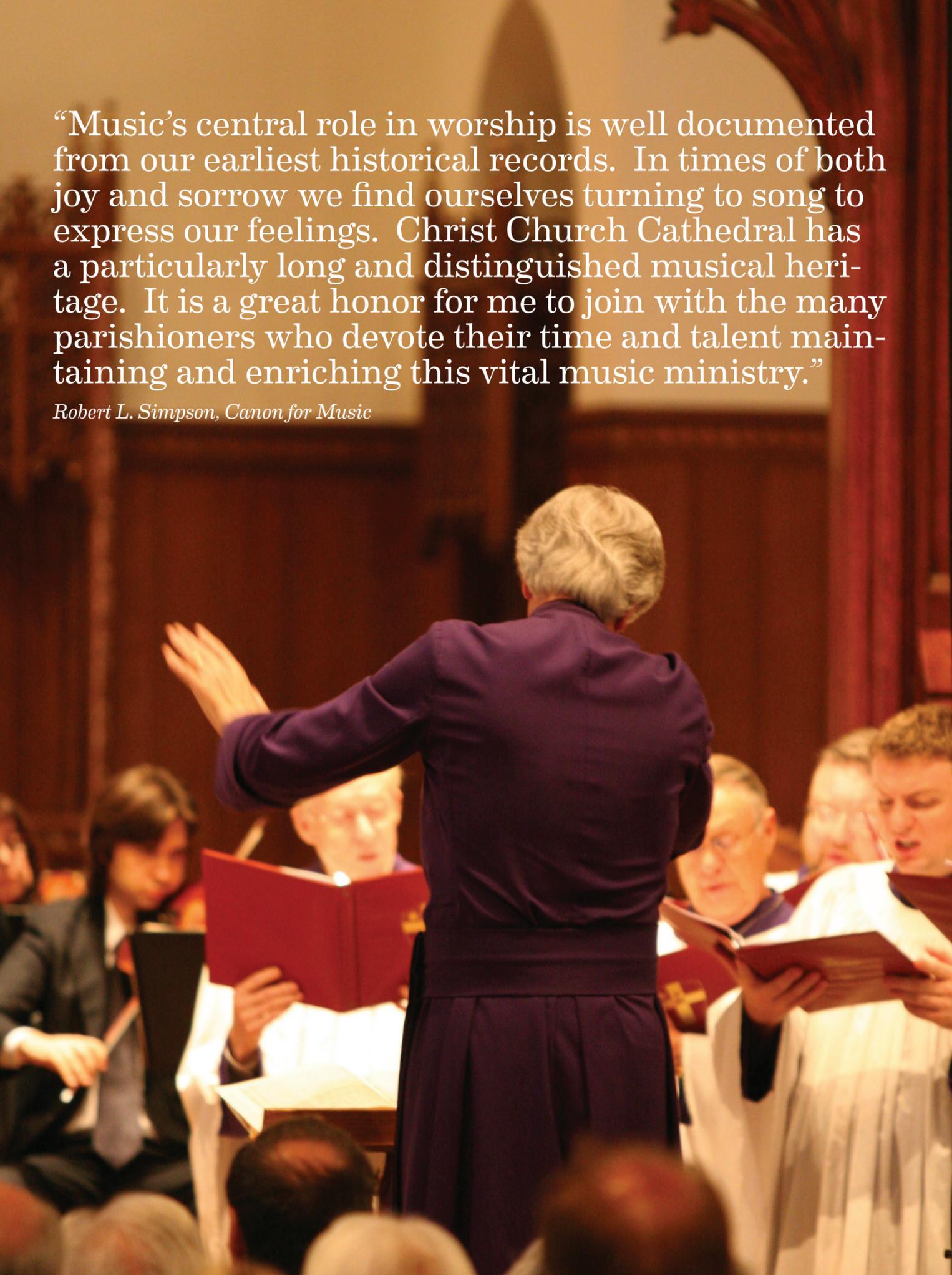
Like each earthly component that supports a seed's growth, each component of this campaign is essential to the success, vitality, growth and life of our parish.

By making a **five-year** campaign commitment, you are cultivating the good soil of the Cathedral and Sowing the Seed for the ministries of the future. Every gift is precious. Please prayerfully consider yours.

We pray. We love. We help. We give.
We sow seeds for the future.

“Music’s central role in worship is well documented from our earliest historical records. In times of both joy and sorrow we find ourselves turning to song to express our feelings. Christ Church Cathedral has a particularly long and distinguished musical heritage. It is a great honor for me to join with the many parishioners who devote their time and talent maintaining and enriching this vital music ministry.”

Robert L. Simpson, Canon for Music



Cultivating the Good Soil

Christ Church Cathedral has stood at the corner of Texas and Fannin since the earliest days of Houston. For almost 180 years, the Cathedral has been a beacon of faith and hope for the fourth largest city in the country and the Diocese of Texas. This place was bequeathed to us by those who came before us; it is now our opportunity to ensure that it is here for those who come after us.

The Cathedral is one of the nation’s few large and growing urban Episcopal parishes. Our mission is to embody God’s hope for the world as we minister to each other, to our diocese and to our city. If our buildings and campus are not structurally sound, welcoming, and in working order, we cannot fulfill this mission.

We invite you to join us in sowing the seed for the future by preparing the good soil on the Cathedral campus. Your participation is needed to help support significant improvements identified in a recent campus-wide evaluation so that we can continue to meet the spiritual needs of the people who seek worship, peace and refuge on our campus.

Cathedral Restoration

Our church home is aesthetically beautiful and historically significant. The stained-glass windows are one of the jewels of the city. The Cathedral is enjoyed by more than 700 people each Sunday. Scores more come during the week for weekday worship, funerals, weddings, and other events.

The present Cathedral building has stood since 1893 and our parish has existed on this very block since 1839. This history is part of our identity. We are committed to continuing the work of the gospel here at Texas and Fannin.

Cathedral improvement projects include:

- Restore and repair bricks, mortar, and masonry on all four exterior walls of the Cathedral to prevent further decay or collapse.
- Assess and repair foundations and set up good drainage for the Cathedral and the Latham and Hines buildings, both built in 1951.
- Repair historic stained-glass windows (those not previously repaired).

- Restore floors and paint the interior.
- Enhance lighting.
- Maximize acoustic quality.

We must tend to our campus so that we can continue to minister to God’s people and plant the seeds of God’s grace. Consider how you can cultivate the good soil and help sow seeds for the future.

Historic Golding Chapel Aeolian-Skinner Organ Restoration

The Golding Chapel organ was built by the premier Aeolian-Skinner company to serve as a substitute in the Cathedral after the main organ was destroyed in a 1938 fire. Once the Cathedral had a new organ, the midsize Aeolian-Skinner organ was moved to the Golding Chapel where it is used regularly for worship, weddings, funerals, and mid-week baptisms. This historic organ is priceless, but it has never had significant restoration work done. A major overhaul is sorely overdue.

Longhorn Legacy
Christ Church was established in its present location in the 1830s long before

Texas Avenue was paved. The story goes that while a herd of cattle was passing by, one of the cowboys lassoed a longhorn and said something to the effect of “this is my contribution for the building fund.” The diocese memorialized that early gift by adding a longhorn symbol to its official seal.





“I love the Cathedral - it is my spiritual home. When I reflect on the worship services, the glorious music, the variety of programs plus all the nonprofit organizations the church has founded over the years, I recognize our financial support of that ministry is leveraged well. Now we need to continue to sustain that legacy.”

Linnet Deily, Capital Campaign Committee

Cultivating the Good Soil

Worship Support Space Renovation

Our glorious worship is supported by more than 50 people each week, including clergy, Altar Guild, acolytes, and lay servers. The spaces in which these people vest and prepare for worship are cramped, outdated, and overused. The introduction of our very popular Sunday evening Celtic Eucharist, The Well, has made these deficiencies even more acute. As the Cathedral community continues to grow, it is essential that our “behind the scenes” spaces are restored and well-equipped to support worship.

This campaign will allow the Cathedral to renovate the sacristy, acolyte and server rooms, vesting rooms, and outdated restrooms so that accessibility is improved, there is ample storage space for vestments and materials, and the spaces are comfortable for staff and volunteers.

Underground Vaults

The underground vaults beneath the sidewalks along Prairie Avenue and half of Fannin Street house equipment for chilled water supply as well as important stored materials. The vaults have sustained

decades of water seepage, which has led to areas of deteriorated concrete creating a serious foundation issue.

To ensure the structural integrity of the vaults, work must be done according to recommendations from a recent engineering study.

Electrical Upgrade

The electrical systems throughout our campus were installed piecemeal over the years as new buildings were built and old buildings were renovated. Upgrades to these systems will be made in order to ensure safety and accessibility.

McGehee Building Maintenance

Repairs are needed to keep up with the enormous influx of generous souls who reside on our campus temporarily as they give of their time to urban mission work via the Cathedral Urban Service Experience program (CUSE). In 2016-2017, the Cathedral hosted nearly 500 CUSE volunteers over 75 nights as they provided more than 8,000 service hours to the Houston community.

The Ballard Youth Center in the McGehee Building, affectionately

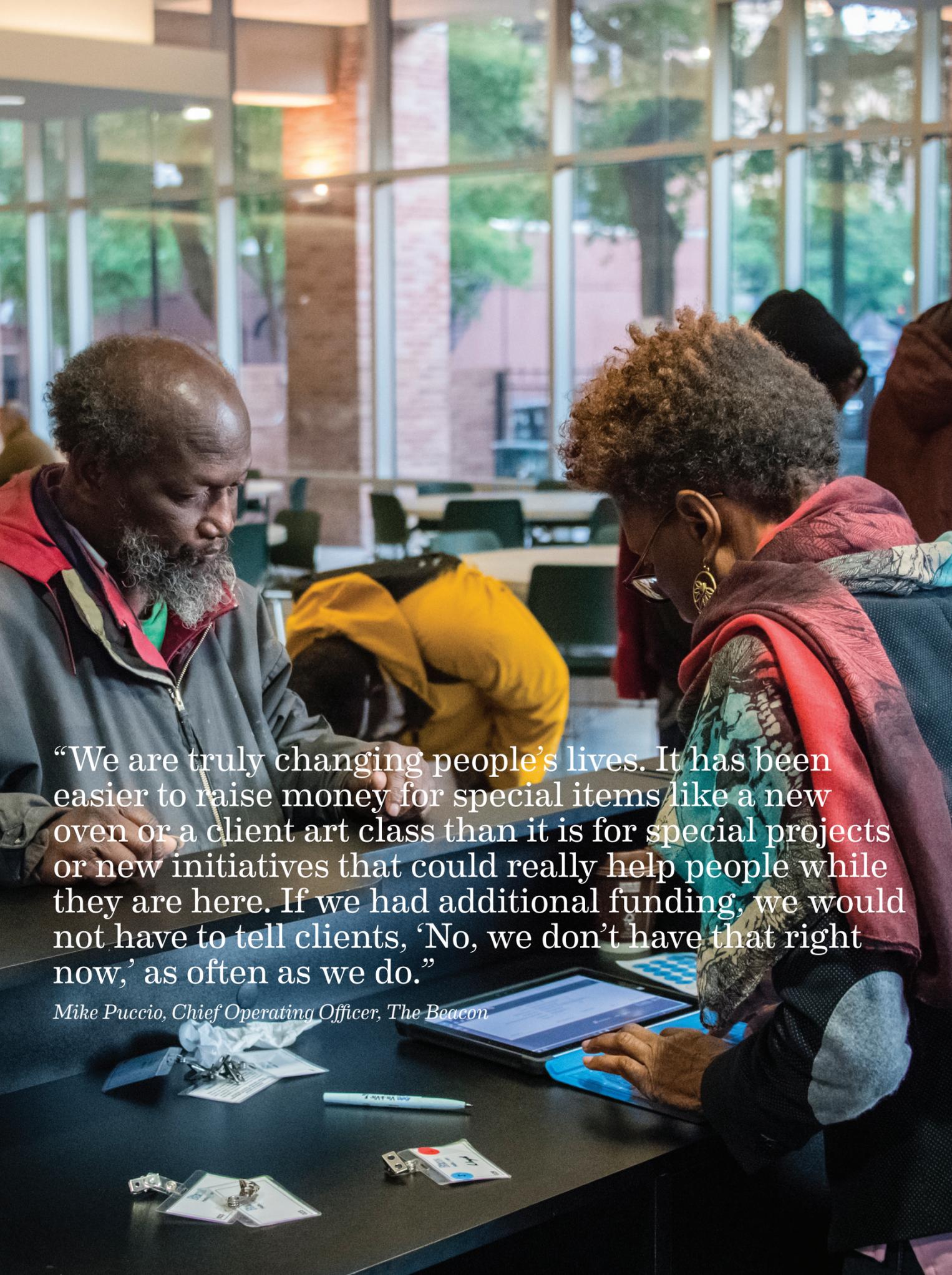
known as “The Treehouse,” must have upgrades to kitchen and meeting spaces in order to support the thriving and faithful CUSE program, as well as our own Cathedral youth groups.

Tom Barrow and Stuart Hellmann Legacy Fund for Cathedral Preservation

The advantages of historic buildings can also bring disadvantages, and the Cathedral campus must have a way to keep pace financially with the schedule of necessary repairs and replacement projects on campus. The Barrow and Hellmann Legacy Fund has been enormously helpful, but it has proven not to be enough to handle the burden of our aging Cathedral campus. A significant boost for preservation funds for planned and unplanned maintenance and emergencies is required. The Cathedral Vestry will continue to add to the Legacy Fund each year. This capital campaign will enable the Legacy Fund to stay ahead of capital maintenance issues in the future and ensure that we continue to be faithful stewards of our historic sacred space.

Barrow and Hellmann Legacy Fund

In 2014, through the foresight by the Vestry and Endowment Fund Trustees, a fund was created with the intention of providing future resources to cover major maintenance projects or improvements. Annually, the Vestry commits to contribute a minimum of \$50,000 from the Cathedral's operating budget to the fund. On December 9, 2014, the fund was renamed in honor of Tom Barrow and Stuart Hellmann.



“We are truly changing people’s lives. It has been easier to raise money for special items like a new oven or a client art class than it is for special projects or new initiatives that could really help people while they are here. If we had additional funding, we would not have to tell clients, ‘No, we don’t have that right now,’ as often as we do.”

Mike Puccio, Chief Operating Officer, The Beacon

Our Love and Labor Bears Fruit

Mary and Walter Taylor Outreach Fund

The Mary and Walter Taylor Outreach Fund was created in 1994 and supports numerous Cathedral mission efforts each year as determined by the Cathedral vestry. The fund allows the Cathedral to support vital and effective outreach ministries on a year-by-year basis.

For decades, Cathedral capital campaigns have included a robust component that looks beyond the congregation to those in need. Since its inception by the Cathedral in 2007, The Beacon has grown beyond its original model of providing hot meals, access to showers and laundry services to Houston’s homeless men and women. As vital partner in the citywide homeless response system, The Beacon also offers housing case management, civil legal aid through its Beacon Law program and a 12-month intensive transitional housing program via its Brigid’s Hope program.

Sustaining funds for emergencies (such as we recently experienced with Hurricane Harvey) and for strategic initiatives among its programs are what The Beacon needs most. The Taylor Outreach Fund is the best means for the Cathedral to support The Beacon in this way. Support of the fund through this campaign will not replace the continuing support Christ Church Cathedral gives to The Beacon for operating needs. Of The Beacon’s \$2.5 million operating budget, the Cathedral provides \$100,000 annually, in addition to use of invaluable space.

On any given day, The Beacon is a primary central hub for access to essential and next-step services, with the ultimate goal of guiding and matching individuals to permanent housing. It is a place where people engage in their own recovery to move from homelessness into safe, supportive housing and it is an integral part of the solution to homelessness in Houston.

The Taylor Outreach Fund support will allow The Beacon an opportunity for more effective long range planning. The Beacon’s current budget provides no margin for new initiatives within its programs to further its mission, nor is it financially able to face emergency situations like Hurricane Harvey.

Hurricane Harvey demonstrated that emergency events can disrupt The Beacon’s carefully-crafted budget. After the storm, The Beacon was called upon by the City of Houston to open its Day Center seven days a week and serve three meals a day for those in need. The Beacon stepped up thanks to the robust support of volunteers from the Cathedral.

When faced with extraordinary moments like natural disasters, The Beacon is an important resource for the city’s homeless. It must be able to respond in those moments without hesitation. Waiting to see if the Beacon can afford a new project in the face of homelessness is tragic.

The Beacon



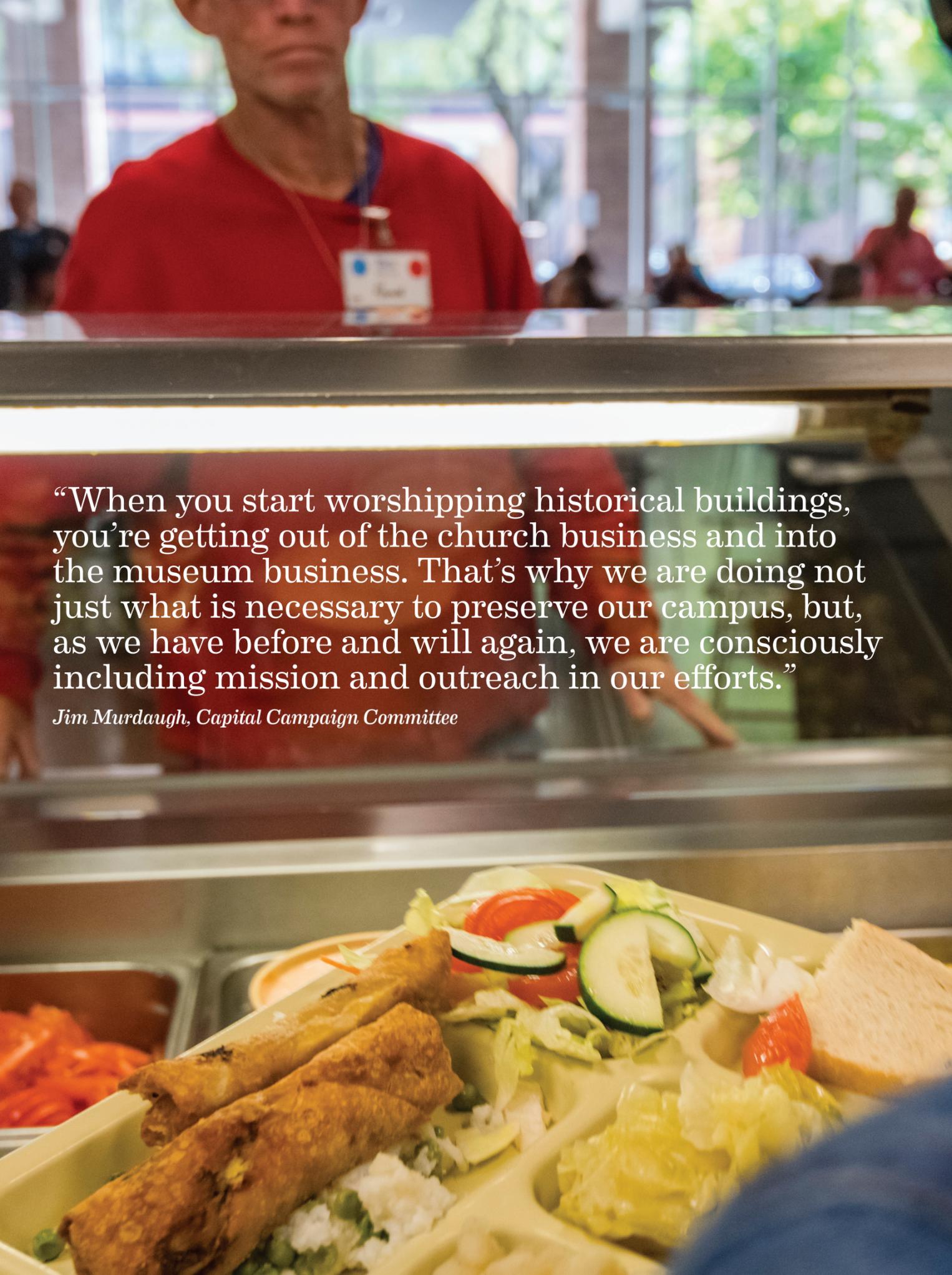
In 2007, Christ Church launched The Beacon. In 2016, The Beacon served 7,312 individuals through its Day Center and our volunteers helped prepare and serve 64,255 meals, clean and fold 28,079 loads of laundry. A hot lunch, access to showers and laundry services, are available Thursdays through Mondays each week.

The work of The Beacon plays a vital role in the City of Houston’s goal in reducing homelessness and the needle is moving. The Coalition for the Homeless’ annual survey shows a continued six-year trend in reducing homelessness, marking a 60 percent cumulative reduction since 2011.

Over the years, the Cathedral has planted the seeds for several leading area non-profits, organizations that since have blossomed and become independent organizations.

*COMPASS
New Hope Housing
Bering Omega Community Services
DePelchin Children’s Center*

Source: Coalition for the Homeless, homelesshouston.org



“When you start worshipping historical buildings, you’re getting out of the church business and into the museum business. That’s why we are doing not just what is necessary to preserve our campus, but, as we have before and will again, we are consciously including mission and outreach in our efforts.”

Jim Murdaugh, Capital Campaign Committee

Blessed with Good Soil

People come from near and far to be part of our congregation. Today we are blessed with the opportunity to preserve our historic and sacred home and continue meaningful outreach, both of which allow the Cathedral to operate as the hands and feet of Jesus.

Join us. Please consider making a **five year pledge** to this campaign. Give generously to help sustain and broaden the Cathedral's reach.

Sowing the Seed Campaign Components Summary

\$6 million
Once-in-a-generation, imperative restoration and renovations for our campus

\$1.5 million
Funds for the Tom Barrow and Stuart Hellmann Legacy Fund for Cathedral preservation to keep pace with necessary ongoing major repairs

\$2.5 million
Funds for the Mary and Walter Taylor Outreach Fund to support The Beacon and other Cathedral outreach initiatives

For more information, please contact:

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