
The People of God are Meeting Together! Alleluia!

I can hardly describe how wonderful the past month at the Cathedral has been for me! In meeting after meeting, and gathering after gathering, and Sunday after Sunday, I am seeing people again! I am being with people again! The people of God are gathering again! Alleluia!

Maybe I was with you two weeks ago, when the Foyers Ministry held their Fall dinner. Over seventy of you were there, huddled together, meeting new dinner companions, laughing and praying and smiling (we had no masks on, because we were outside!) I loved it!

Maybe you were among the people I was with, the next Sunday evening, when Rod Bunn gathered our Cathedral ushers together for the Emile Fisher "Ushers' Conclave!" Again, over seventy people were smiling outside, on the labyrinth, honoring the usher ministry and meeting new colleagues.

Maybe you were among the hundreds of people who are coming back to church on Sundays. Maybe you were with us at our first glorious in-person Evensong of the year. Maybe you were among hundreds of us as we blessed animals last Sunday on St. Francis Day! Thank you! Oh, how we have missed each other. Every Sunday, literally, I see someone returning to Sunday worship for the first time in months. And I thank God for your presence.

I remember when we conducted our first indoor service last Spring, and the words of Psalm 126 rang in my ears:

- 1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
we were like those who dream.
- 2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy;
then it was said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."
- 3 The LORD has done great things for us,
and we rejoiced.
- 4 Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses in the Negeb.
- 5 May those who sow in tears
reap with shouts of joy.
- 6 Those who go out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
carrying their sheaves.

Well, I feel like the Lord is restoring our fortunes again. Thank you!

This week, I am remembering another psalm, Psalm 133:

- 1 How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!
- 2 It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down upon the beard,
on the beard of Aaron,
running down over the collar of his robes.

³ It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion.
For there the LORD ordained his blessing,
life forevermore.

Finally, I hear words from the Epistle to the Hebrews: “let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another” (Hebrews 10:24–25).

Yes, it is good, so good, to be meeting together again, in all sorts of ways. Obviously, the Cathedral parish is meeting in many more ways than those I have just described. From Bible studies to support groups, from study groups to youth groups, from funeral guild meetings to acolyte training, from choir rehearsals to Sunday school classes –in all these things, the people of God are meeting together! We are loving on each other again! Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sam Candler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Very Rev. Sam Candler
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip