



THE CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION PARISH POST

APRIL 2024

A BEAUTIFUL ENDING



*The Rev. Bentley
Manning*

I'm sure you've noticed that each of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) tells the story of Jesus' life slightly differently. Not surprisingly, each author emphasizes particular aspects of Jesus' character, ministry, and actions in ways that might not present themselves in the other texts. Taken together, all four Gospels give us a fuller—more complete—picture of Christ.

The ending to Mark's Gospel is certainly unique, and in many ways, it is one of the most curious parts of the New Testament (if you have a Bible close by, I invite you to pick it up and look).

Mark's Gospel has three endings! First, there is the regular ending where Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome flee from the empty tomb in terror and amazement (and tell no one about their experience). The second, so-called "shorter ending," has the women "briefly" tell those around Peter what they have witnessed. And finally, there is the "longer-ending" where a lot more happens, like speaking in tongues and handling snakes (I'll let you read this one for yourself).

New Testament Scholars have devised various solutions to why the gospel ends this way. One main explanation is that whoever handled the original manuscript lost the last few pages—perhaps in a hurried rush from the house.

I usually worry about "picking and choosing" different parts of the Bible, but since we are given three "options," it seems we have no other choice. And given the "choice," I'd pick the first ending.

Throughout Mark's gospel, we are presented with three main groups. The disciples, who consistently miss the point and don't understand; the crowd, who is consistently amazed by Jesus but doesn't do anything about it; and the religious leaders, who always appear to respond negatively to Jesus. Each of these responses falls short of what Jesus wanted.

The fascinating thing about the first ending to Mark's Gospel is that it ends with a word that no other document we have in existence ends with - the word γὰρ (gar), meaning 'for.'

Ending a sentence with this word is the equivalent in English of ending a sentence with the words "and," i.e., "Susan walked into the shop and."

At the end of Mark's gospel, we are left with the women tasked with a response.

The ending of Mark's Gospel spills over into our lives and reality.

Mark says, "You have seen the various responses to Jesus' call. How are you going to respond to this news?"

Are you going to misunderstand?
Are you going to just be amazed?
Are you going to respond negatively?

Or are you going to respond to the call to follow Him?

My prayer, sisters and brothers, is that the joy of Easter would break into our hearts and that together, we might respond to Christ, not as passive observers but as those who have experienced the grace of God firsthand.



OUTREACH HAITI

As we enter a new season in the Church, the Easter season, you may remember the message that Bentley sent out at the beginning of the season of Lent about our almsgiving during that time. He wanted to let us all know that the money that we, as a church, gave during Lent was going to go to our continued outreach efforts in Haiti with the Church of the Transfiguration in Tierra Muscady and the school there.

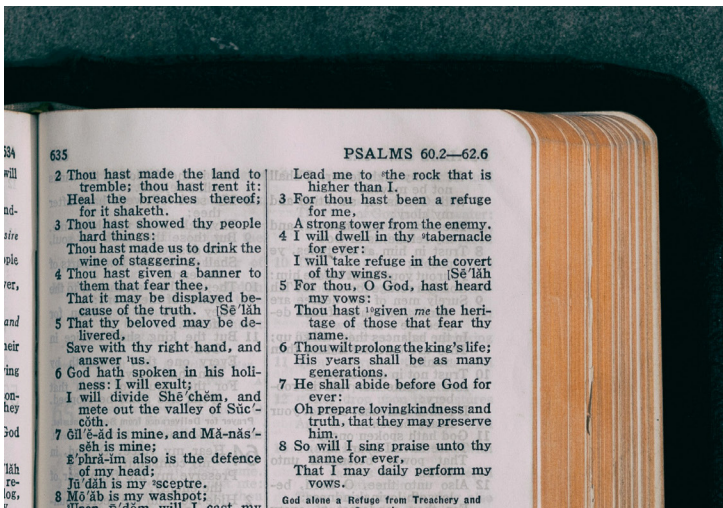
If you have been following the news coming out of Haiti recently, you know that most of it is not good news. The increasing gang violence has created political unrest (to put it mildly) and living conditions that almost anyone would consider unbearable. With so much violence and corruption there, you might be wondering about how we will be getting the money from Incarnation to the church and school in Haiti, and that is a valid question.

We have started working with Canon Serena Beeks, D. Min. and the Haiti Partnership Program through the National Association of Episcopal Schools (NAES). If you are interested in knowing more about this partnership program, you can learn more here <https://www.episcopalschools.org/about-episcopal-schools/haiti-partnership-program/>.

She has shared with us the protocols that are used to send monies to the Diocese of Haiti, who then get the money to the clergy, churches, and schools to which they are destined, and we have sent our first financial installment of 2024 to the church and school in Tierra Muscady using these protocols. It is a system with a great deal of transparency, and although no plan is perfect, we feel very good about having multiple sets of eyes on these funds as they make their way to the teachers and students at the school that has been at the center of our outreach to Haiti for so many years.

With our Outreach and Haiti Committees coming back together as one committee, it is helpful to remember that main, but not sole, focus of our outreach at Incarnation is education and childcare-both here at home through HCCDC and the preschool here at the church, and the continuing partnership with the Church of the Transfiguration and the school they have there in Haiti.

Look for more updates about Incarnation's outreach in our local community and our larger global community in the future.



RECTOR'S BIBLE STUDY THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Tuesday • 10:30 AM
Church Library

BEGINNING APRIL 9TH

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER THANK YOU

It takes a lot of work and support to pull together our Holy Week and Easter liturgies. We give thanks for each and every one of you who contributed your time, talents, and dedication to make these past weeks so meaningful.

To the Altar Guild, your meticulous attention to detail ensured that our sacred spaces were prepared with reverence and care, setting the tone for worship and reflection. Your behind-the-scenes work is truly invaluable.

To the Flower Guild, your artistry brought life and beauty to our worship spaces, enriching our Easter celebrations with vibrant colors and fragrant flowers. Your creations added a sense of joy and life to our worship.

To the Fellowship Committee, your efforts in organizing gatherings and fostering community spirit helped to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for all who attended our Easter services. Your hospitality is deeply appreciated. To the servers, ushers, readers, and choir members, your dedication to your roles enriched our worship. Thank you!

Each of you played a vital role in making our Holy Week and Easter celebrations meaningful and memorable, and for that, we are profoundly grateful. Thank you for your tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to Incarnation. May the joy of Easter continue to bless and sustain you throughout the year ahead.



THANK YOU, INCARNATION!



Grace Church – Broadway

I remain grateful to the parish for providing time off and financial assistance for continuing education. This year I attended the American Guild of Organist President's Day conference in New York City. The venues for the conference were Grace Church – Broadway and The Church of the Ascension, both rich in history and renowned for their traditions of liturgical music.

The opening recital featured James McDonnell. Prior to joining the faculty at Yale Institute of Sacred Music, Mr. McDonnell was Organist & Master of the Choristers at Westminster Abbey. Most recently at the Abbey he provided music for the state funeral of Queen Elizabeth II and the service of thanksgiving for Prince Philip. Mr. O'Donnell was born in Scotland and is the first non-Anglican to serve the Abbey in this position.

Grace Church is located on Broadway and West 10th street in Greenwich Village. The architect was James Renwick, Jr. (little known at the time) who designed Grace Church in the English Gothic style. At the age of twenty-five, Grace Church was his first major commission. Mr. Renwick entered Columbia College (now Columbia University) at the age of twelve and graduated with a Master of Arts in engineering three years

later. Other notable edifices of his include the Smithsonian Institute and St. Patrick's Cathedral – the latter is considered his most notable architectural achievement.

The conference closed with a recital by Isabelle Demers at Church of the Ascension located on Fifth Avenue at West 10th street. A native of Québec and a doctoral graduate of the Juilliard School, Dr. Demers is Associate Professor Organ at McGill University in Montréal, Québec. Prior to McGill, she was Professor of Organ at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

Ascension Church, the first church to be built on Fifth Avenue, was designed by Richard Upjohn in the Gothic Revival style - similar to his designs for Trinity Church Wall Street. The interior was remodeled forty years later by Stanford White. Perhaps the most notable change during the White renovations is John LaFarge's altar mural *The Ascension*. This mural (measuring 30-foot by 35-foot) is considered to be one of his finest works.

While in Manhattan, I took advantage of attending Sunday & mid-week services of choral evensong and the 11:00 a.m. Sunday morning service. If your travel plans include Manhattan, St. Thomas is celebrating their 250th anniversary and has special tours available and a stellar exhibit in the chapel.

Thank you, Incarnation, for a wonderful and enjoyable continuing education experience.

Warmly,

Charles



Church of the Ascension - Interior

The Gifts of God

History, Theology, and Practice

April 7, 14, 21 in Jones Hall at 9am



Responding to many requests, a new class dedicated to exploring the Holy Eucharist is now scheduled! In this series of classes, participants will journey through the history, theology, and practice of this sacred sacrament.

Delving into the origins of the Eucharist, participants will uncover its roots in the Last Supper and its evolution throughout Christian history. From the early Christian communities to the present day, the Eucharist has been central to Christian faith and practice.

The class will also dive into the theological mysteries

surrounding the Eucharist, pondering questions of transubstantiation and the real presence of Christ. Through discussion and reflection, participants will gain insight into the deeper meanings behind this principle gift of Christian worship.

The class will also provide an opportunity for participants to engage in the practice of the Eucharist in a meaningful way. Our hope is that, together, we will discover the transformative power of this sacred ritual, finding nourishment for our souls and a deeper connection to God.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

1 - Michael Dupuis
2 - Gerry Bilbro
3 - Michael Lanzilotta
3 - Elizabeth Martin
4 - Cain Haley
6 - Brady Kittrell
9 - Austin Davis-Selph

9 - Miriam Skiles
10 - Joseph Cook
12 - Lyn Darden
12 - Madia Barber
12 - Sue Ratliff
14 - Cathryn Britton
14 - Sue Chicone

14 - Isabel Chambers
17 - Al Brady
18 - Cathy Mitchell
21 - Midge Rothermel
22 - Bonnie Pettway
23 - Susan Erbeling
23 - Alezndria Preda

23 - Tiffany Preda
24 - Liz Daughtrey
26 - Margaret Ridolphi
27 - Evelyn DeLaureal
27 - Bulluck Salzarulo
29 - Sue Redd

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT: The Church of the Incarnation exists to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through worship, love and service. As individuals and as a congregation, we dedicate ourselves to this purpose.