



The Rt. Rev. Gregory H. Rickel
Bishop of Olympia

May 29, 2010

To the People of God at St. Mark's Cathedral,

Warmest greetings in the name of the living Christ. I first want to commend you on your faithfulness during this transition period in the life of the Cathedral. It was my intent that this interim period be utilized for stabilizing, refining, and solidifying some fundamental organizational activities and to begin to look, in a deeper way, at what St. Mark's strives to be in the days and years ahead for this community and the greater Church.

This past Tuesday I presented the following timeline to your Canon Missioner and Vestry. The timeline moves us into a new phase of this endeavor: a process to strengthen the culture of St. Mark's. This process will be highly participatory at many levels, and will move us, as you will see, to a profile of St. Mark's, and eventually the search and call of the next Dean.

Before that call can be made, I believe we still have some internal work to do. The ultimate hope is to have the healthiest environment for the next Dean to begin his or her ministry and for this reason I hope you will make a special effort to interact with this process as you are able.

This will not be easy, and perhaps not always comfortable. To do this well, we will have to ask some difficult questions, be challenged to envision a new and better future, and stay engaged with one another. This is not something I can do by myself; neither can the Canon Missioner or the Vestry. It will take the combined leadership, patience, and trust of all who call St. Mark's home.

In my experience, and in the occasional struggles I have witnessed as your Bishop, I have learned that one serious threat to success in such an effort is not communicating openly, honestly, and in a healthy way. It is so important that we take the time and effort to clarify assumptions, and give the benefit of the doubt, before making judgments; to talk **to** people, not **about** them. With all of that in mind I want to also provide the "10 Rules for Respect" just recently published in the *Rubric*.

I have asked Canon Melissa Skelton to oversee this process. She will be recruiting a team to work with her. In the beginning her team will come from outside St. Mark's, however, as you will see in the timeline, the plan is to train a team from St. Mark's to take this over and be able to keep it as an ongoing process. Meanwhile, Canon McClain, Staff, and Vestry will be freed to focus on operations.

We are sure to make mistakes, but we believe in the One that can redeem, and I believe strongly that all at St. Mark's, even if and when we disagree, desire the best for our community. If we stay focused on that we will be stronger and better. Let us be about that.

Blessings,

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