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COVER PHOTO/BRIAN LEITHER

BASILICA is published twice per year by The Basilica Landmark. BASILICA accepts unsolicited manuscripts and photos from parishioners, but reserves the right to edit and publish such material at its discretion. Send submissions to:
Basilica Magazine, c/o Melissa Streit,
The Basilica of Saint Mary, P.O. Box 50010,
Minneapolis, MN 55405-0010.
All contributions become the property of BASILICA.

Circulation: 20,000
Printed in the United States of America
The Roman Catholic Church
FROM THE EDITOR

“Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours.”

— Teresa of Avila

IN the Gospel of Luke, Mary is visited by the angel Gabriel and says “yes” to bearing God’s son. Perhaps less profoundly but no less importantly, God invites us to say “yes” as well. In ways both big and small, we are continually invited into relationship — into communion — with God. And through our “yes” to God, we can be the hands and feet of Christ, using our time, talents, and treasure to seek the well-being of our city and our world.

For me, saying “yes” to The Basilica has been a meaningful part of my life and faith journey for more than two decades. My first “yes” was to participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) and become Catholic. Subsequent yeses included volunteering in a variety of roles, being on The Basilica staff for a time, and even making an annual financial pledge to the parish. More recently, the invitation to say “yes” has extended to my son on his faith journey. In all these ways, God’s invitation felt resounding and clear. I could not say no.

As we continue our parish’s year-long sesquicentennial celebration, this issue looks at some people at The Basilica who said “yes” to God’s invitations to service, using varied gifts to form one body in order to do Christ’s work abundantly.

One person provided beautiful bells to our parish, named after everyday saints who also answered God’s call. Some assist and guide our parish’s strategic planning and campus space initiatives. Others lend their voices to our Cathedral choir, performing in an interfaith Together in Hope concert. Many more help at Basilica events, including the 25th annual Basilica Block Party, the recent wedding reunion, or the upcoming all school reunion.

Woven through each of these stories, and through my own personal experiences, is the “yes” each person said in response to God’s invitation. Each of us is called, and part of our faith journey is to discern and answer that call. As Teresa of Avila wrote in the 16th century, “Christ has no body but yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours.”

— Melissa Streit
HERE have been more than a few occasions in my life when — despite having spent a significant amount of time weighing the options — I have been uncertain about a decision, or unclear about a direction. Most often these have not been huge or life changing decisions. On the other hand, neither have they been decisions that are inconsequential or without import. When I have encountered these times, there have been two things in particular that have been very helpful to me: prayer and talking with others.

I have discovered that when I bring something to prayer with an openness of mind and heart that often God helps me to see things more clearly or to understand something in a new way. Unfortunately, there are other times when I bring something to prayer what I really want is for God to “give me the okay” for a decision I have already made. At those times when I can acknowledge that things are not as clear as I would like them to be, and when I can bring this to prayer, it does make a difference. The key is to come to prayer with an openness of mind and heart. This openness is not just important, it is essential for letting God’s grace into our lives, and allowing the Spirit to lead and guide us as we seek to discern what we are being called to do.

The other thing that is helpful in trying to make a decision or set a direction is talking with others. In the give and take of an honest conversation, issues come into better focus and our own biases become clearer. On more than one occasion when I have been talking with someone about something they will share an insight or a perspective that has helped me to see things in a new light. If we allow it, these moments of enlightenment are great gifts and moments of grace as we seek to discern where God is leading us or what God is asking of us.

Now I mention this because for the past several months we have been doing a great deal of work at The Basilica in regard to strategic planning and campus space planning. This work has been done in a spirit of prayer and consultation and has helped us set a direction for the future. I don’t think it is an overstatement to say that it was a “labor of love” for those who were involved in these efforts. The result of which, is a new strategic plan, “Our Parish – Our Future.”

Also, through our efforts at campus space planning we hope to develop a master plan for The Basilica and its campus. Our strategic plan articulates our core values as a parish community and identifies strategic directions and areas of focus. Our campus space planning will help us determine the “physical” needs of The Basilica and its campus as we move into the future.

While none of us can predict the future, I am convinced that the prayer and consultation that was a part of our strategic planning and campus space planning will help ensure that our Basilica community has a future full of hope.

— Fr. John Bauer
There are many exciting meetings and conversations happening at The Basilica Landmark! Our Board of Directors have been overseeing the work of the Campus Space Planning Committee as we contemplate the future. A great deal of creative thought is being given to the overall campus including, not only The Basilica of Saint Mary but also The Basilica School, Cowley Center, as well as the Rectory, and how these facilities best interact with our broader faith community and neighborhood.

This work will provide a framework for the ongoing considerations of The Basilica Landmark not only to accomplish annual maintenance but also to plan for the long-term future of our iconic church and its campus.

Other exciting efforts include the preparation and planning for two of our signature Basilica Landmark events. Landmark Spark, formally the Landmark Ball, and the Cities 97 Basilica Block Party. Landmark Spark will happen on Saturday, May 18, 2019 at the Machine Shop in Minneapolis. As you may know this is a festive, celebratory night of dining, dancing, and bidding all for a great cause! Each year we focus on a Fund-a-Need project and this year we will raise money to refurbish Teresa of Calcutta Hall in The Basilica’s lower level. This space is utilized to address issues like homelessness, immigration support, interfaith collaborations, training seminars, art exhibits, and after Mass fellowship and beyond.

2019 marks the 25th anniversary of the Cities 97 Basilica Block Party. I hope you will join us on July 12 and 13 to celebrate this wonderful summer tradition with great food, beverages and, of course great live music including Grammy Award winner Kacey Musgraves, Jason Mraz, Semisonic, CHVRCHES, Dawes, HANSON, Metric, The Jayhawks, Anderson East, Johnnyswim, Flora Cash, Ruston Kelly, Lissie, and Yam Haus. Get your tickets today at basilicablockparty.org.

Your gift, whether to The Basilica Landmark Annual Fund, Landmark Spark, Basilica Block Party, or all three, is crucial to help us fulfill our mission to preserve, restore, and advance the historic Basilica of Saint Mary for all generations. If you have not done so already, please consider making your gift at thebasilicalandmark.org.

I can think of few greater gifts than preserving The Basilica of Saint Mary so that future generations not only enjoy the beauty but also the community outreach of The Basilica. Thousands of people come together to care for our treasured building, from board members, to daily volunteers, to the broad community offering support. My gratitude runs deep and your gifts will ensure The Basilica remains a beacon of hope for generations to come.

— Jim Jetland, President of The Basilica Landmark
The term “strategic planning” often conjures up images of big businesses and scores of people with spreadsheets and flowcharts. While perhaps not an inaccurate image, the value of strategic planning is just as real and important for organizations that do not exist to make money or sell products. As the saying goes, organizations don’t plan to fail but they can fail to plan. With that in mind, The Basilica leadership has undertaken a strategic planning process to identify what makes The Basilica special, what brings people here, and what can we do to make it more of those things.

The strategic planning team includes members of the Parish Council, Finance Committee, and administration plus Father Bauer. Early on, we brought in a small consulting firm, MacCallum Ross, to help guide the development of our base plan, using a methodology they have successfully used with other non-profit and faith-based organizations. Informed by our mission, vision, and values, the planning team identified what we could do to enable those to be lived every day.

One of the hardest parts of any planning process is moving from the theoretical to the concrete. It was no different in this process. As consultant Patti Ross noted, “frequently in the theoretical stage you are entirely focused upon vast, abstract possibilities. It’s always wonderful to think things like ‘we are going to make a difference to racial reconciliation,’ but moving to the concrete stage requires you to face up to what actions are available to you, given your resources. The other thing about moving to the concrete is that possibilities and current activities are always left behind. And people never feel comfortable doing less or giving up something, as it requires saying ‘no.’ The natural tendency is to keep adding more.”
After many meetings and discussions, our planning team brought the plan to life around three specific areas of focus:

The Arts: Move, inspire, and transform individuals and communities through excellence in the arts and creative practices.

Inclusivity: Build a culture where people feel valued, welcome, integrated, and included.

Homelessness: Respond to the needs of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

It’s important to note that these areas of focus are not exclusive nor intended to replace or preclude the exceptional work that is ongoing every day at The Basilica. These are intended to be something of a lens, through which we can view, evaluate, and assess the work of our many ministries to help utilize our resources most effectively in support of our mission.

As Parish Council chair and planning committee member Mary Gleich-Matthews observed, “Our primary commitment during this process was to ensure that The Basilica of Saint Mary will always be a Catholic community with a rich sacramental and liturgical presence as well as a voice in downtown Minneapolis for justice and inclusion. Any decision made during the strategic planning had to be made with these principles in mind.”

As is always the case in a planning process, the heavy lifting begins once the plan comes together. The next steps, currently underway, include assessing what we are doing today across our ministries and where it fits within the newly defined areas of focus. Staff input plus feedback from volunteer ministry leaders and volunteers will all be critical.

As a parishioner and a planning committee participant, I’m excited to watch the plan brought to life. Will the many reasons I’ve chosen The Basilica as my church change as a result? More than likely not. What I hope will happen is that The Basilica will be even more of the church I love, that lives its mission and values for all of its many constituencies. A place that “seeks the well-being of the city” which it calls home.

In the eyes of Father Bauer, the strategic planning process has opened the door to the next phase of The Basilica’s history and legacy. He notes, “The future will happen whether we plan for it or not. So it’s vital that we plan for it. I believe our strategic plan is essential and will ensure that we will have a future full of hope.”

Bob Kleiber is a member of the Strategic Planning Committee and has been a parishioner since 2006.
As we continue to celebrate 150 years as a parish we have many events, activities, and exhibits to look back on the rich history of The Basilica. Throughout that time we have had many leaders, both lay and ordained, who have guided and directed our parish growth, becoming a “beacon of hope” in our community. Looking back gives us the inspiration and courage to look ahead and plan for the next 150 years.

One year ago, The Basilica of Saint Mary, with the support of The Basilica Landmark, established the Campus Space Planning Committee. The team represents our broad parish community and is comprised of individuals of all ages, representative ministries, and views of church in the 21st century.

Under the guidance of Fr. Gilbert Sunghera, S.J., our space planning consultant, we have been working to reimagine our campus spaces and create a vision for the future and a plan that supports that vision. Fr. Sunghera, an architectural designer and associate professor of Architecture at the University of Detroit Mercy, has been our teacher, our subject matter expert, and even our tour guide as we visited spaces around the Twin Cities with architectural and design elements that feature creative use of space, light, and materials.

At an early meeting Fr. Bauer posed three questions to each team member: “Why did you come here? Why did you come back? Why do you keep coming back?” Our responses to those questions started a robust discussion. We participated in a series of exercises that looked at the church in connection to the city, considered transitions into sacred space, identified accessibility constraints throughout the campus, and explored what church means to each generation. This resulted in a vision statement for the project that established the framework for our work.

A Selection Committee was established as a subset of the larger group, which this past Fall developed a Request for Qualifications (RFQs) that was sent out to about 50 firms. Many of those firms participated in a comprehensive tour of our facilities. We screened the responses using criteria we had developed, ranked the submissions,
The Campus Space Planning Committee visited architectural spaces and reviewed design elements.
and invited six firms to move forward in the process. Those firms were invited to visit our campus again in December for an on-site experience. Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were sent out after the visit and the response deadline was January 31. The RFP asked firms to collaborate with other partners so their responses reflected expertise in design, preservation, and urban/landscape planning. Some proposals included broader resources as well. We received six strong team submittals outlining an ambitious vision for our future campus. After an in-depth review and ranking of the proposals, three teams were selected for interviews by the Selection Committee.

It’s an exciting time in the life of our parish. We look forward to the weeks and months ahead as we continue to gather information and explore possibilities for our Basilica Landmark.

Kathy Andrus is the chair of the Campus Space Planning Committee and has been a parishioner since 2007.

Fr. Gilbert Sunghera, S.J.

A Parish for the Future
Building on 150 years

PROJECT VISION STATEMENT
If the next intervention to the physical campus does nothing else, it should...

Be a gateway that invites encounters in a dynamic environment that embraces tradition, provides refuge, builds connections, and inspires service as a catalyst to build inclusive communities.

A CONVERSATION WITH FR. GILBERT

Q: Why is it important for the project to have a vision statement?
A: The Campus Space Planning Committee was charged with looking at the whole campus and how it works for the current congregation. A century ago, The Basilica was surrounded by a close-knit walkable neighborhood, stores and business dotted Hennepin Avenue, and streets aligned. As our parish prepares for its next 150 years at this location, The Basilica needs to respond to the changing needs of the community. The vision statement articulates the goals and aspirations of our community. The vision statement makes it easier to determine what is needed, what are the priorities, and helps us communicate to the chosen design team the expectations we have for the design they develop.

Q: What excites you about the project?
A: The Basilica is a gorgeous landmark with an incredible liturgical life. Its stature gives it power in the urban landscape, resonating a sphere of influence on the larger civic life beyond our campus. The vision of building an inclusive community has the ability to touch the lives of the broader community to reflect a sense of the City on the Hill, the New Jerusalem. This environment has the potential of providing refuge for elderly escaping loneliness, young adults finding a place to unplug and discover community, the homeless finding a home. This master plan has the potential to help Minneapolis revive an urban fabric fractured by the insertion of the interstate, and strive for a more humane animation of the surrounding neighborhood.

Q: What are the next steps in the project?
A: Once a design team is under contract, they will start deeper conversations with multiple constituents to realize this vision statement for the whole campus, and generate conversations with surrounding institutions to strategize how to rebuild our neighborhood. They will dig into the practical aspects for restoring the original beauty of the worship space while bringing it to current liturgical practice, accessibility standards, and to enhance the celebration of all the arts. They will study how contemporary culture gathers and transitions into the sacred, and look at highest and best use of the various spaces on the campus given the needs of the breadth of ministries.

A fundraising consultant will also assess the capacity this community has to gather the funds needed to implement the vision. Parish leadership will embark on educational elements related to current liturgical needs, emerging art form, and even modern urban planning principles. Future opportunities will insure that the diverse voices of our community will be heard and that we as a parish meet the needs of the current and future generations who will worship and be served for the next 150 years.

CAMPUS SPACE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Kathy Andrus
Terri Ashmore
Fr. John Bauer
Peter Crain
Felicia De Santos
Carol Frenning
Todd Grugel
Steven Kim
Katie McGraw Bookler
Tom Paul
Deb Pekarek
Colin Rouser
Johan van Parys
Bob Welch
Kate Wilson
Maggie Zawasky
Fr. Gilbert Sunghera, S.J.
Our Teresa of Calcutta Hall
A place of fellowship, service, and community

BY MELISSA STREIT

I vividly remember the receptions held when The Basilica’s lower level undercroft first opened about 18 years ago. Guests toured each of the new rooms with excited and grateful eyes, amazed at the thoughtfully designed spaces to enhance worship and community life. Many raved about the beautiful simplicity of the Saint Joseph Chapel which was inspired by Joseph’s trade as a carpenter. We marvelled at the abundant restrooms, the first ever in the church building itself. And we all rejoiced at the large and airy Teresa of Calcutta Hall, a beautiful space where large groups could gather comfortably and provide hospitality for a wide array of activities and events.

The Teresa of Calcutta Hall holds many personal memories. I remember my son as a preschooler, gleefully clearing plates and bowls after a Lenten soup supper served by the Faith Formation program families. (I am not sure if all the diners were finished eating before their dishware was energetically cleared.) We have served homemade meals for Families Moving Forward while my son played with the children of our guest families, hopefully offering some sense of “home” and continuity during their difficult period of homelessness. We’ve also helped at receptions large and small, volunteer service events, receptions for large groups, and many more activities means that the space is in robust use year-round.

Our maintenance team has diligently cared for the space. Despite their hard work and attentive care, the wear and tear is beginning to show on the floors and walls. At The Basilica Landmark Spark on May 18, the special Fund-a-Need appeal will be for new carpet and fresh paint in Teresa of Calcutta Hall. These much-needed rejuvenations ensure the vital space, used daily to advance The Basilica’s mission and ministry, remains a dignified and welcoming space for all who, in a wide variety of ways, experience the loving embrace of God and our community within our walls.

To make a gift to help support The Basilica Landmark Spark Fund-a-Need visit thebasilicalandmark.org.

Melissa Streit has been an active volunteer and parish member since 1996.
The Arizona Borderlands

Where humanitarian aid is being criminalized

By Chris Serres

North into the heart of the desert we hiked, close together and quiet, over rugged terrain that bore visible traces of the thousands of migrants who cross the Sonoran Desert each year.

Near an arroyo, or dry wash, was a sun-bleached t-shirt bearing the name of a popular Guatemalan soccer team. Nearby was an abandoned pair of slippers, lined with carpet-like fibers, that migrants wear over their shoes to hide footprints. And every few hundred feet was an empty water jug, colored black to prevent detection.

The short expedition was organized by volunteers with No More Deaths, or No Mas Muertes, a remarkable humanitarian organization based in southern Arizona that I was following as part of an investigative report on the multiple perils faced by migrants seeking to cross the Sonoran Desert from Mexico. I learned of the group through one of its leaders, Jim Marx, who was born and raised on a farm in St. Michael, Minnesota, and became involved in helping migrants along the border after moving to Tucson in 2007.

On this bright November morning, Marx and a trio of veteran No More Deaths volunteers trekked several miles through dense desert scrub until they reached a high ridge with a pristine view of the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. Here, they hung plastic jugs of water and several wooden rosaries on the branches of a large mesquite tree. On each of the jugs, the volunteers wrote hopeful messages such as "No estan solos," "Puedes hacerlo" and "Que Dios les Bendiga," "You are not alone," "You can do it" and "God bless you." The hikers unloaded their backpacks of food, including granola bars and canned beans, into a bucket covered with rocks, to protect them from desert animals.

Then the volunteers stopped to reflect and pray next to the drop-off site as thirsty ravens circled overhead. "Sometimes I wonder, if everyone had an experience with
a migrant, would they still feel such hate?” asked Lois Martin, a longtime volunteer with No More Deaths, as she made her way down the hill. “No matter who is out here, they all deserve water.”

Since its founding in 2004, No More Deaths has remained committed to a simple mission: To end death and suffering of migrants in the desert. In the past three years alone, volunteers with the group placed nearly 40,000 jugs of water along migrant routes in southern Arizona, covering a vast, 2,500-square-mile area. In 2018, the group also trained 230 volunteers and helped more than 400 residents complete their naturalization process to become citizens.

No More Deaths routinely ventures into a violent, punishing—and often deadly—terrain. More than 3,000 migrant remains have been discovered in southern Arizona between 1999 and 2018, according to data gathered by Humane Borders. The young volunteers with
No More Deaths are sometimes among those who have discovered these skeletal remains.

After the hike with No More Deaths, I visited the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner in Tucson, which has a massive and growing backlog of more than 300 unidentified remains. The morgue is so overwhelmed by unidentified bodies of migrants found in the desert that they recently had to expand and build a second, refrigerated unit to house them all. Chief medical examiner Dr. Gregory Hess carefully unzipped a body bag to reveal the badly decomposed skeletal remains of a body found days earlier in the mountains along the border. The bones were bleached by the sun and had visible teeth marks from scavenging animals that had gnawed on the remains.

John Reid, a volunteer with No More Deaths from Ajo, Arizona, has written poignantly about the experience of discovering the remains of migrants in the desert. “How does one ‘recover’ another who is dead? Another whose body parts are strewn about, bleached, clotted with dirt, or even intact, sun-seared and gray? Humans, even in death, shouldn’t look like this,” Heid wrote in a recent essay.

The thousands of migrant deaths in the Sonoran Desert are the direct result of U.S. border enforcement policies, argues Todd Miller, author of Border Patrol Nation. Specifically, the Border Patrol’s policy of “prevention through deterrence” has resulted in the diversion of migrants into ever-deadlier and more desolate regions. In 2005, the U.S. Justice Department began to require federal criminal prosecution of migrants crossing the border without authorization — a significant departure from past practice.

Yet, after more than a decade, the life-saving humanitarian work of No More Deaths — the very work that Jesus implored his followers to do — has suddenly become criminalized.

In the summer of 2017, one of the hottest on record in Arizona, four women volunteers with No More Deaths put out water and food on Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, a vast and remote area
near the U.S./Mexico border, in the hopes of staving off death by dehydration for people crossing the desert. They were charged several months later with misdemeanor crimes related to their work. Another No More Deaths volunteer, Scott Warren, has been charged with harboring undocumented migrants.

The criminal charges against the humanitarian volunteers have received national and international media coverage, and have become a challenge to people of conscience across the country. In the courtroom, an attorney for the four volunteers urged the federal judge to remember Chapter 25 of the Gospel of Matthew: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

Chris Serres is a reporter for the Star Tribune and has been a parishioner since 2014.

**BASILICA BORDER IMMERSION TRIP**

As we seek to grow in our faith, we are called to learn what is really happening in our communities, country, and world, and to reflect on this in prayer. We live with scripture in one hand and the newspaper in another.

To learn firsthand about the realities of immigration in our country, members of The Basilica traveled to the U.S./Mexico border in November 2018. Part education, part service, part formation, they spent three days hearing stories, learning about realities on the ground, and praying with people. They observed Operation Streamline in the Tucson Federal Courthouse and visited Southside Presbyterian Church where the Sanctuary Movement began in the 1980s.

At the Jesuit Kino Border Initiative in Nogales, Mexico they served the morning meal to recent deportees and listened to stories from women living in the shelter. At Home of Hope and Peace (HEPAC) they served lunch to Mexican school children and learned about the organization’s mission to create a healthy community in Nogales where citizens do not feel that their only choice for survival is to risk their lives in the desert in an attempt to immigrate to the United States.

On their last day, they joined staff from No More Deaths for a desert walk near Arivaca, AZ.

Thank you to everyone who prayed for these fellow parishioners on their journey. If you are interested in learning more or getting involved in The Basilica Immigrant Support Ministry, contact Janice Andersen at jandersen@mary.org.

If you wish to donate to No More Deaths, please visit nomoredeaths.org or make out a check and mail it to the address below:

**No More Deaths**

PO Box 40782

Tucson, AZ 85717
As Catholics, we’re familiar with sacred art. We have the privilege of a rich history of paintings and sculptures that reflect our many stories. You may have had a chance to experience one of these art mediums — iconography — during the beautiful and mystical Icon Festival The Basilica has held every November since 1995.

Iconography is a stylized art form depicting persons in their transfigured — rather than human — state. For centuries, icons have served as vehicles of prayer and helped bring a fullness to our faith. They are purposely two dimensional so that we, as the onlookers, create the third dimension as we are drawn in and given the opportunity to experience grace.

Moving closer to God through iconography is something which artist Debra Korluka understands well. “During my formative years,” she shares, “icons brought me joy and contemplation and transported me into a world where the laws of existence were far more harmonious than in our temporal world. The images spoke to me about this: everything visible assumes an invisible dimension, everything created assumes an uncreated perspective. Everything mundane becomes deeply mystical and timeless.”

Years of creating icons depicting the lives of the saints have taught Debra that “growth and wisdom experienced through suffering opens us to the source of life and love.” Her work flows into her everyday life as she “seeks the face of Christ in every individual I encounter.”

In Debra’s studio, while chant music plays softly in the background, natural light filters in and illuminates years of her Byzantine iconography work. Laid out on a table as a work in progress is a new icon, “Mary Untier of Knots,” which has been commissioned by The Basilica as part of the parish’s 150th anniversary celebration.

Fr. Bauer explains this icon’s history: “The devotion to this icon has existed for centuries. It is not based on an apparition of Mary. Rather it finds its origins in a meditation of St. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon, who was martyred in 202. He wrote about how Adam and Eve tied the knot of human disgrace for the human race by disobeying God, while Mary undid it by saying yes to God and becoming the Mother of Jesus.”

BY ELYSE RETHLAKE
This icon offers a relevant perspective for us today. “We all have knots in our lives,” Fr. Bauer reflects. “Knots of alienation, addiction, discord, hurt, fears, a lack of respect, or the absence of peace or harmony. Through veneration of this icon, we hope to invite people to invoke the powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin as we seek her assistance in untying those knots that hold us bound and keep us moving forward in our relationship with God.”

What a beautiful reminder of our relationship with and need for God; to acknowledge that as humans we can’t help but have discord or pain, yet we strive through prayer and God’s mercy to continually undo them.

While The Basilica commissioned Debra to create this icon, her artistic licensure doesn’t play a role in the piece the way it would in other art forms. Rather, her work adheres to the traditions that have been handed down over centuries in the Byzantine icon style. It’s the Holy Spirit guiding her brush. Debra parallels creating icons to the first verse of Genesis. “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’ and there was light.” She further describes her process as “contemplating an image for an icon is a movement of being ‘without form’ to the ‘being of Light.’ The beginnings of an icon gradually develop in the hands of the artist through many stages before becoming a clear and luminous image.”

When you have the opportunity to gaze upon this icon, or any other, allow yourself to be immersed and to contemplate your emotional response. Be absorbed into the image and the silent Word of God. Quiet yourself in prayer and open yourself up to evoke communication with the Divine.

While icons offer a chance to experience contemplation and grace, Debra also gently reminds us that “every person is created in God’s image and is desired by God to be a living icon through our lives of faith.”

In that respect, we are intrinsically woven together. We are both invited into and invited to become icons.

Elyse Rethlake is a parishioner and a volunteer BASILICA photographer.
Tell us a bit about yourself, Mary. Where are you from originally, and where did you study? What do you like to do for fun?

I was born in Cleveland, Ohio as one of five children. My parents are children of immigrants. My father’s family is Italian, while my mother is Polish. My father is an architect and my mother is an artist. The arts were always part of my life, including music. My parents took us to the opera and other musical events.

After completing school in Philadelphia we spent 10 years in San Francisco. Then New York called, so we spent the next 20 years there. And now we live in the Twin Cities. We have a 12 year old daughter who is very excited about the move. She goes to Wayzata West.

What attracted you to the Walker and the Twin Cities? Leaving New York for Minneapolis is not a small step.

The Walker is one of the exemplary institutions, if not the best, for one who works in contemporary art. It was a huge honor and opportunity to be asked to apply for this position. The Walker is renowned for its outstanding collection and the Sculpture Garden far beyond Minnesota.

Minneapolis is known to be open-minded and embracing of art. The very existence of so many arts institutions reflects well on the city and its citizens. All of that made it very appealing for an art professional to move here.

You transformed New York’s SculptureCenter into a force in contemporary art. How does the SculptureCenter compare to the Walker or differ from it?

What they share in common is a real commitment to artists. Both have a deep understanding of how artists work. Both institutions respond to artists and their needs, rather than merely collect art and figure out how to display it. Both share a great openness to new ideas.

SculptureCenter is quite small both in staff and space. They host one or two Exhibitions each year. They do not have a permanent collection. The advantage of this is you can be nimble and innovative and do things inexpensively.

The Walker is a totally different scope and scale. The collection is super interesting. I am slowly getting to know the collection and have been thinking about how to tell its story. The collection provides a great context for new artists to see and present their work during special exhibitions.
I am also very impressed with the cross departmental approach bringing different disciplines under the same roof. I look forward to an amazing future for the Walker.

I often refer to the Walker as a temple to contemporary art. I do that because I believe the Walker is on some level a sacred repository for contemporary art. I also do it because people often have the impression that only those who are initiated are welcome.

Artists are challenging all of us, even those of us who are passionate about contemporary art. Don't think that when you don't respond to a work of art you are not part of a secret club. It is probably because the art has challenged you and for some that is an interesting experience, for others not so much.

If artists were just decorators then all art should be nice and pleasing to everyone. But artists have a bigger role in society. Their task is to reframe the question. Think about how something comes to have meaning to you. Meaning evolves over time, as if it were revealed bit by bit. That's why you have to continue to be open and curious. In the end you will be rewarded for that curiosity.

From our end, we may not have done a good job of introducing art to people. We may have created a new, more permeable and welcoming entrance, but are we really welcoming? The Sculpture Garden is a great way for people to encounter contemporary art in a relaxed way. It is where the city and art connect. The Walker is mere steps away. How can we invite people in?

We have created so many silos: art, education, religion, politics. They all used to converge in the market square. Is there any way we can recreate that experience and much-needed dialogue today?

In Queens you were very involved in the community, beyond the world of art. Are you planning on doing the same in the Twin Cities?

Absolutely. Citizenship is important. I see it as our institutional and my personal responsibility to engage with the larger community and to get involved in the life of the city. You can only get as much out of democracy as you are willing to put into it. Democracy is both a right and a responsibility.

What do you think constitutes a good work of art, a masterpiece?

A great work of art operates in the aesthetic realm and opens you up to a layered experience. This experience is intellectual, but it is also visceral and even spiritual; and maybe not all of these at the same time. But you always want to go back to it because you know it has more to say.

You are quoted saying: “You can get to something through art that you might not be able to get to through science or other scientific methods.” I am very interested in this since religion seems to try to do the same thing.

First off, I believe that we learn in all kinds of ways. There is learning through logical, problem solving experience. There is also the aesthetic experience, the non-verbal experience when all our senses help us to become more who we are, more fully ourselves.

Though artists can be logical and set out to solve a specific problem, they operate in the aesthetic realm. If you can explain a work of art completely in an essay then it is not a good work of art. It is just an essay. Good art can never be completely explained. Good art continues to frame questions anew.

Artists are also engaged in some kind of research, they explore. They try to understand how materials function, how our environments affect us. Their works of art offer a hypothesis, a way of framing a questions.

Do you have any thoughts on the relationship, or lack thereof, between religion and art?

Absolutely. Art can touch on all aspects of life. Religion is one of them, especially when taking religion in a broader sense. True art also has to demand its own freedom. It can’t exist in service of someone or something. Otherwise it is propaganda. At the same time it touches on all aspects of life. Art has the ability to create a context for a spiritual or a social experience.

We are neighbors. Do you see any opportunities for us to collaborate in the future?

I am really excited to be here, in Minneapolis, in this neighborhood. And I look forward to getting to know the different communities and identifying opportunities to collaborate. Everyone has been so welcoming and supportive. Everyone I have met seems to want our institutions to thrive; they believe in them.

Johan M.J. van Parys has been The Basilica’s director of liturgy and sacred arts since 1995.
A special evening for couples married at The Basilica was held Saturday, February 23, 2019, to celebrate their marriages and connect with other couples who share the unique, beautiful experience of being married here. The evening began at 5:00 pm Mass with a blessing of couples, followed by a special reception in the Teresa of Calcutta Hall. This special celebration was part of the 150th anniversary year of the parish.

Over 160 guests attended the event organized by the Wedding Reunion Committee and staff. Julia Johnson, who co-chaired the event with her husband Michael, said, “in planning this event, our goal was to put on an event that supported individual marriage bonds, but also brought us together as a faith community, sharing common memories as couples married at The Basilica. The evening did just that, drawing couples married over 60 years and some married only a couple months. Photos, marriage advice, and stories were shared, bringing many smiles and laughs.”

The longest married couple in attendance was Dave and Barbara Gillham, married in 1956, with 63 years of marriage. Couples were invited to bring a framed photo from their wedding day to be displayed at the reception with the option to donate the copy to The Basilica archives—making them part of The Basilica’s official history.

Mae Desaire is the director of marketing and communications for The Basilica.

BY MAE DESAIRE
A special evening for couples married at The Basilica was held Saturday, February 23, 2019.
The Journey of Our Bells

Our invitation to the city

At the 1998 Christmas Eve Midnight Mass, the six bells of The Basilica’s west bell tower were rung for the first time. When composer Anne Kilstofte was commissioned to write a piece to be premiered at that same Mass, she paid careful attention to the pitches of our new bells. Those pitches are the flat keys of the piano, and the hand bells played during the Midnight Mass every year ring those pitches at the end of her magnificent Mirabile Mysterium. In 1998, the bells were rung to mirror what the choir was singing, and the doors of The Basilica facing Hennepin Avenue were flung open so everyone could hear the tonalities from the tower and feel the rush the experience evoked.

We came to have these marvelous pealers through the generosity of a parishioner who has wished to remain anonymous, but who was willing to speak with me in person about his gift. Once he found his spiritual home at The Basilica, he wanted to give back. He noticed that there was just one bell in the east tower which was never rung, so he worked with Michael O’Connell, the Pastor at that time, and Johan van Parys, the Director of Liturgy and the Sacred Arts, researching several foundries in Europe before choosing one in the Netherlands. At a crucial moment in the process of making of our bells, a group from The Basilica traveled to the foundry to watch a pouring of bronze over the form created for one of the bells.
When we spoke, the donor pulled a small brown object from his pocket—a tiny blob of dried bronze that he carries as an amulet to remind him of his relationship with God and his faith. When I asked him why he chose to support the bells, rather than some other aspect of The Basilica’s outreach, he spoke clearly and movingly: “Bells remind and invite; they invite us to enter a place where we can find God through liturgy and music. And they are part of a sensory deepening of our understanding of our liturgy.” Surely parishioners and guests respond similarly when we hear our special bells pealing through the day and as we gather to worship.

The bells are named for three women and three men, all of whom lived, worked their missions, and died in the Americas. They were considered everyday saints, people of generous hearts who served and often died for those less fortunate. By naming our bells for these role models, the church suggests that all of us can live saintly lives if we follow the teachings of Jesus. In 1998, only Katherine Drexel was canonized as a saint; but now in 2019, all but Blessed Pierre Toussaint have been canonized.” The largest bell weighs several tons while the smallest is a lightweight—only 900 pounds. A group of bells in a church tower is called a peal, though the word also applies to the bells’ liturgical range.

The process of casting bells of this caliber is neither easy nor quick. Ours were forged at the Royal Eijsbouts foundry in the Netherlands. First a false bell is made to serve as the mold for the final pouring of liquid bronze. To lower tonality, slivers of bronze are shaved off from the interior, and a mistake in this exacting procedure would result in abandoning the bell and beginning anew. Our bells are of such high quality that, though I live about four miles from The Basilica, on a clear, non-humid summer’s day I can hear them peal from my front yard. The sound causes my heart to leap with joy, as I feel mystically connected to my place of worship.

Johan van Parys says our peal is used to mark various sacramental moments such as weddings and funerals. Though they never play any recognizable tune, the electronic system is set so that we hear generous ringings if the event is festive and fewer ringings if the event is penitential. They announce any service about to begin at The Basilica, from a majestic Christmas or Easter Vigil, where many hundreds fill the pews, to an intimate daily Mass. My personal favorite ringing of the bells is just before morning prayer held every Thursday. These peals signal to those entering the sanctuary and to the broader Minneapolis community that something is about to begin at the big beautiful church at the edge of downtown.

Continued

(Below) 1998 bell installation. The largest bell weighs several tons.
THE BASILICA BELLS

Following ancient tradition, each one of The Basilica bells was given a name.

Bell 1: ELIZABETH ANN SETON (US) 1774-1821, worked tirelessly with the poor and founded the Sisters of Charity, the first group for religious women in the United States. She also established the first Catholic school in the US.

Bell 2: JUAN DIEGO (Mexico) 1474-1548, received a message from Mary, dressed as an Aztec princess, to build a church. She showed him roses growing in winter; when he showed the roses to his bishop, an image of the woman appeared on the cloak he used to carry them. A mosaic of this image is found at The Basilica in the Our Lady of Guadalupe chapel.

Bell 3: KATHERINE DREXEL (US) 1858-1955, from a wealthy Philadelphia family, she helped the poor, especially Native Americans, founding boarding school for Pueblo Indians and a high school for African Americans in New Orleans which became Xavier University.

Bell 4: KATERI TEKAKWITHA (US) 1656-1680, is the first Native American to be named a saint. Her father was chief of the Turtle clan of Mohawks and her mother was Algonquin. She became a Christian at age 17 and her family was so angry that she fled to a settlement in Canada where she did beadwork, cared for the needy, and died at the young age of 24. Her funeral was held on Holy Thursday.

Bell 5: ANDRÉ BESSETTE (Canada) 1845-1937, was able to cure the sick through prayer. Orphaned along with nine siblings, he became the doorkeeper at a high school in Montreal. He also was a religious brother of the Congregation of the Holy Cross. For forty years he was janitor by day, and worked with people who were disabled, blind, or dying at night. He died at age 91, and half a million mourners passed by his coffin.

Bell 6: PIERRE TOUSSAINT (Haiti) 1766-1853, was born into slavery, and became Catholic by reading classical sermons found in his plantation owner’s home. At age 21, he was brought to New York by that owner. In 1807 he was given freedom and became a well-known hairdresser in New York. A devout Catholic, he attended Mass every day and became a benefactor of the Catholic Orphan Asylum and the Church of St. Vincent de Paul. He and his wife provided shelter and education for African American children in need.

Toni McNaron has been an active volunteer and parishioner since 2007.
The Basilica’s Caring Ministries
How can we help?

If you ever find yourself in a season of hardship, you might want to connect with Wendy Cichanski Caduff. Wendy joined The Basilica last summer as the Coordinator of Caring Ministries. Her work centers around meeting the pastoral needs of our faith community, which includes funerals and grief support, communion for homebound parishioners, and the Emmaus Ministry.

“I offer people the spiritual support they need as they are journeying through life,” she shares. “For example, if someone gets a cancer diagnosis, I’m often the first person from The Basilica calling to see how they are coping and to connect them to additional support from our faith community.”

Caduff worked at two other parishes before coming to The Basilica, where she was responsible for faith formation and pastoral care. “At small parishes, you wear a lot of hats,” she said with a smile. “In my previous position, I coordinated marriage preparation, taught RCIA, led adult bible studies, and served as a liturgical coordinator in addition to my pastoral care role.”

Her work at The Basilica focuses on pastoral care for people going through difficult times such as illness, grief, or loss. Wendy appreciates The Basilica’s “outward-focused vision,” seeking the well-being of the city. “This community serves the needs of anyone and everyone who approaches us.”

She appreciates that The Basilica is “very intentional about everything it does, from creating strategic plans to sorting its trash; I love that intentionality.” She also notes efforts “to be inclusive of the entire Body of Christ, having courageous conversations about race, homelessness, immigrants and refugees, and the sex abuse crisis.” Caduff finds it “refreshing to be in a community that is actively discussing and working on the important issues of our day and drawing on the social teachings of our Church. I just see so much right relationship here at The Basilica, right relationship with God, with others, and with all of creation.”

She enjoys reading and being outdoors to find God in the beauty of the natural world and creation. Wendy’s husband, Ben, also works at The Basilica. “I really, really treasure my two kids and my husband. Both of our children are adopted and they are just such gifts. I didn’t think I’d be able to become a mother, and by the sheer grace of God these kids were placed into my life and into my care and I couldn’t love them more.”

Rachel Newman been an active volunteer and parishioner since 2017.
Together In Hope

The transformative power of music

WHILE the Catholic and Lutheran churches have been in official dialogue for over 50 years, the Together In Hope concert at The Basilica of Saint Mary provided a more melodic interchange between members of both churches for one Saturday night. On Saturday, February 9, 2019, 60 singers of both faiths performed the U.S. premiere of *So That the World May Believe: A Motet for Unity and Service* as well as *The Holy Spirit Mass* by Norwegian composer Kim André Arnesen.

The choir was welcomed by Fr. John Bauer. Archbishop Bernard Hebda and Bishop Ann Svennungsen of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provided an ecumenical greeting to the audience.

The Together In Hope Project was founded by Gary Aamodt and Celia Ellingson, two Lutherans who have a self-proclaimed “passion for advancing Christian unity and for choral music.” They firmly believe that the latter is great for the former. “I think we live in a very fractured world, especially within the Christian world, we live in a fractured tradition. We’re trying to address that,” explained Aamodt.

Music brings ecumenical dialogue to a different level. “We truly believe that music has the power to move people to a new understanding, an emotional response, to be open to new experiences with others, and ultimately to action,” said Ellingson.

The two commissioned pieces drew inspiration from both faiths. *So That the World May Believe* is based on passages from Ephesians and 1 Corinthians, interspersed with verses from *By Grace God Calls Us Into Life*, which was written for the 60th anniversary of the Lutheran World Federation. The piece was dedicated to Pope Francis for his efforts to promote reconciliation between faiths.
The Holy Spirit Mass is based on English translations of Veni Creator Spiritus; Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord, Martin Luther’s hymn; words from Luther’s Small Catechism; and the Ordinary of the Mass. The text also featured passages in Greek and Latin. “The words are all about unity, healing, and reconciliation,” said Ellingson.

While the music’s text drew connections, everyone involved with the project agreed that the connection points went beyond words. “These singers believe what they are singing. What comes through is not just through beautiful melodies, but their conviction,” said Ellingson.

The Basilica’s Director of Music, Teri Larson, was moved by far more than the choir’s music. During the choir’s trip to Rome, she saw a literal coming together of members of both churches. Larson was moved by “watching people interact with each other, learning about each other, dispelling myths, and relationships being built.”

Choir members understood that the music had a multitude of meaning beyond just the notes on the page. “It’s something much more deep than words. You put emotion behind the music. You are trying to convey the words in a way, the ecumenical idea of connection of love,” said choir member Roshan Rajkumar.

The choir members first performed both pieces at the 17th annual Festival Internazionale di Musica e Arte Sacra in Rome on October 31, 2018. The choir came back from the experience feeling inspired. “We were unbelievably impressed with what happened in Rome,” said Ellingson. They left Rome excited to bring the message back to the Twin Cities. “It was so powerful the audience was transformed,” said Aamodt.

“To make a choir that’s this powerful, because of how many professional singers are with it.” said Rajkumar, “To get us to be a part of the music, not just sing the notes, but live the piece. It’s a mix of overwhelming awe and mystery, and we’re making sure we do it right.”

The Basilica filled with music and message of reconciliation and unity for one evening, and there is hope that the two churches continue to grow in connection. “We hope that the practice of the church catches up with the theology. We realize for the credibility for the Christian witness in the world we have to come together,” said Aamodt.

The opening notes of the concert featured words from Ephesians 4: “There is one body and one Spirit.” Fortunately, there is also one thing that binds everyone who was involved with Together In Hope: “The music is in their bones,” said Ellingson. ⚫

Nick Hansen has been an active volunteer and parish members since 2015.
Two Strong Women
Leaders at the Pro-Cathedral

One of the great pleasures of preparing the 150 Faces exhibit, which will fill our Pope John XXIII Gallery and Teresa of Calcutta Hall this August, has been discovering stories of some extraordinary people. Two women stand out as leaders in both church and community and we are honored to call them parishioners.

FLORENCE BASHFORD SPENSLEY (1875-1942)

Mrs. Florence Bashford Spensley caught my eye advertising in The Pro, a monthly newsletter produced in 1921 and 1922 for the new Pro-Cathedral (now The Basilica of Saint Mary). Florence resided at the Leamington Hotel and worked as a Special Agent for the New York Life Insurance Co.

For such a well-educated daughter of society to work as an insurance agent seems unusual for the 1920s. Her residence certainly does not imply financial straits—the Leamington was one of many fine “apartment hotels” in Minneapolis, which offered fashionable quarters with room service rather than full kitchens.

Florence Bashford was born in Wisconsin in 1875 to a prominent family. Her grandfather was a governor, her father a state senator, and her great-Uncle James a bishop in the Methodist church. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin in 1897. She and Frederic Spensley, also the child of a senator, married secretly on Halloween 1894, only revealing their marriage to friends in late December. They had two children, Robert and Sally, and lived in Madison until Frederic’s untimely death while returning from a business trip to Alaska in 1908.

Florence first appears in the Minneapolis society pages in 1915: hosting parties at the Leamington, entertaining her bishop uncle, and serving as chairman for Liberty Bond sales and other war aid events.

In 1918, Florence converted to Catholicism and was welcomed into the Church by Fr. Thomas Cullen at the Pro-Cathedral. She remained a parishioner until her death in 1942.

In 1929, Florence left the Leamington and moved into the 1203 Mt. Curve home of her daughter Sally (Mrs. Carroll K. Michener), who had earned a journalism degree at the University of Wisconsin in 1918. Sally and her husband, were extremely involved at Saint Mark’s Episcopal Cathedral across Loring Park.
ELLA STURGIS LAWLER PENNINGTON (1858-1925)

Mrs. Ella Sturgis Lawler, a widow, married Mr. Edmund Pennington in her mother’s home in St. Paul on July 12, 1906. Archbishop John Ireland officiated. At the time, Mr. Pennington was Vice President and general traffic manager of the Minneapolis St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway Company (later the Soo Line Railroad, of which he was President and Chairman of the Board). Mr. and Mrs. Pennington and her four children from her first marriage moved to 1004 Summit Avenue in the Kenwood neighborhood of Minneapolis.

Ella Pennington was active in society and the community. She hosted and was a guest at teas and luncheons with other ladies of Minneapolis society and introduced her daughters to Minneapolis and St. Paul society. At the Church of the Immaculate Conception (later The Basilica of Saint Mary), Ella hosted the annual Christmas tree party for 300 children at the Parish house. In June 1910, she gave a fishing and picnic outing for about 250 pupils of the Immaculate Conception school. They took a special train to Buffalo, Minnesota, were equipped for fishing, and each carried a picnic lunch basket.

In 1914 Mrs. Pennington was President of the Minneapolis Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women. She led the organization, held fundraisers, spoke at local conventions, and represented the Minneapolis Association at the national meeting of the Association in Washington, D.C., where the group was received by President Woodrow Wilson at the White House. Mrs. Pennington remained active in the Association until passage of women’s suffrage in 1919. When she voted in November, 1920, Mrs. Pennington told a reporter that she never believed in suffrage, “but now that it has been given us I would be a traitor in the cause of good government if I failed in exercising my duty.”

Mrs. Pennington was also active in the Minneapolis chapter of the Red Cross, acting as chairperson of committees supporting the war effort, organizing the sale of poppies to raise money for soldiers’ relief, and raising money for war orphans. She continued to be active in these and other charitable pursuits until illness caused her to limit her activities. She died at her home on January 29, 1925, and was buried at Lakewood Cemetery.

Kathy Szczek is an Archives research volunteer, genealogist, and prayer shawl crocheter at The Basilica from Minneapolis. Heather Craig is the archivist for The Basilica.
The Basilica Block Party

25-years of rock on the block

“Tell me this is going to be OK.”

The caller was Archbishop John Roach. The date was Tuesday, May 30, 1995—the day after Memorial Day. And the reason for the Archbishop’s call to former pastor Michael O’Connell? The first ever Basilica Block Party.

The planning committee worked with local firm Odney Advertising to create a public service announcement (PSA), basically a no-cost advertisement, promoting the new event to be held at The Basilica. Over the slow holiday weekend news cycle, the PSA played repeatedly on television. Stations had call-in polls asking people what they thought of a Catholic church hosting a rock festival. The Basilica Block Party was born.

Over more than two decades, young adults have come to the event in droves and filled our pews on subsequent weekends. Each year, more than 1,600 volunteers devote time and energy to help the event run smoothly—doing everything from picking up the bands from the airport to picking up the trash at the end of the night. A dedicated committee of more than 75 people work year-round to ensure each Basilica Block Party is a fun and safe event for people of all ages.

The Basilica Block Party has shaped our parish beyond just the two nights every July. Couples have met through the block party and gotten married, friendships have been formed and deepened, and families have grown up volunteering together. It has become part of the fabric of our parish and community.

The event has evolved and adjusted with the times. A “green team” helps ensure the recycling of cardboard, glass, plastic and aluminum, and also separates organic trash for composting. These efforts reduced the event’s trash by more than 80%, bringing the actual trash produced from 16 tons to under 3 tons now. Committee members all participate in extensive “See Something, Say Something” safety training in conjunction with the City of Minneapolis and the Department of Homeland Security.

This year, for the 25th anniversary, we have a great lineup of new artists and old favorites for an amazing weekend of music and celebration.

Originally the event raised money for the structural restoration the church building. Decades of harsh winters took a terrible toll on the incredible structure. Years of deferred maintenance led to a desperate situation in the early 1990s when The Basilica’s condition nearly caused it to be closed. Through three major capital campaigns and funds raised at the Basilica Block Party, The Basilica building and campus have been preserved.
But our historic building and campus need constant care and upkeep. Today, proceeds from the event benefit The Basilica Landmark, a separate 501(c)(3) charitable organization which preserves, restores, and advances the historic Basilica of Saint Mary. A portion of the event proceeds supports the St. Vincent de Paul outreach ministries at The Basilica to assist our neighbors in need.

In 1995, the idea of holding a rock concert at a cathedral church was difficult for some. But the Basilica Block Party has proven to be a widely successful and anticipated summer event for many in the Twin Cities. Indeed, Archbishop Roach, everything was more than ok.

Melissa Streit has been an active volunteer and parish member since 1996 and was the Special Events Coordinator from 1997-2001.

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For those who help organize the event each year, working on the block party committee creates deep friendships and lasting memories. Hear from some of the volunteers and staff who helped start the event and sustained it over 25 years.

Twenty-five years ago, my wife Kris and I were preparing to get married at The Basilica. They told us of a new event — the biggest and best fundraiser ever. We were hooked and kept volunteering each year. I remember bringing our oldest son to committee meetings in his car seat; he’s now in college. The most rewarding part has to be the friendships made over 25 years. To see the children of committee members that now participate in this event just goes to show the commitment of all involved.

— BRIAN McBride, Logistics Co-chair

I had experience running large-scale events, but even I was surprised by the first year’s success! I was in my third trimester of pregnancy and the planning crew was gracious enough to provide me with a golf cart. We gave tours of The Basilica to the bands; the lead band (10,000 Maniacs) dropped to their knees at the altar and we prayed together.

— GAIL DORN, Co-chair of the Inaugural Basilica Block Party

A few months after joining, [inaugural event co-chair] Kevin Morris asked if I would help with a parish "party." I thought this would be a great opportunity to meet more people. After the first meeting, it was clear the event scope far exceeded the parish picnic I had envisioned. The most rewarding part of the first year was, and still is, the friendships that were established. We worked hard and we worked together for something that we all deeply loved and believed in — our faith community. And I will always remember my parents driving in to the Cowley parking lot with a van completely filled with McGlynn’s hot dog buns. We enlisted the help of absolutely everyone to pull off the event that first year!

— CAROLYN BALDUS, Inaugural Sponsorship Chair and Co-chair of the 3rd Basilica Block Party

Continued
Meet Holly Dockendorf, Special Events Coordinator

HOLLY began working at The Basilica in 2015 as an Events Intern and then as the Development Assistant. She became the Special Events Coordinator in 2017 and oversees the many committee members, volunteers, and consultants who work on the Basilica Block Party each year.

She graduated from Becker High School and the University of St. Thomas with a degree in Communications and Journalism and a minor in Recording Arts. At St. Thomas, Holly was Station Manager for the campus radio station KUST and had her own radio show. She managed the inaugural UST Sampler compilation CD project, showcasing student musicians and original songs, plus a release party with live performances. She also interned at First Avenue and was Volunteer Coordinator for Doomtree Zoo, a local rap collective music festival.

Not surprisingly, Holly likes to attend concerts and music festivals in her free time. She also follows various music journalism platforms, enjoys learning about music history, and collects vinyl records. Other interests include travel, reading, and spending time with her nieces and nephews. Holly says she is “an avid watcher of The West Wing, a big fan of meat raffles, and always excited to try new restaurants and breweries.”

What drew you to working at The Basilica and with the BBP?
The Basilica Block Party was the first music festival I ever attended and introduced me to one of my favorite bands. I started to learn more about the Minneapolis music scene and jumped at the chance to intern with the event. I was drawn to an event that creates such special live music moments for guests.

Please share a Basilica Block Party memory.
There are moments I look forward to each year. I love watching the attendees experience live music and the joy it brings them. It is great to help create a setting for those musical moments. A few of my favorite memories include watching Walk The Moon perform from backstage, watching sound checks, and having my favorite high school teachers on-site to experience the event in person.

What is the most challenging part of coordinating the event? The most rewarding?

There are so many different facets of the event, including logistics, food, beverage, bands, production, etc. My role connects these different areas together to make the event flow. I have the honor of working with a great committee, and the most rewarding part is watching it all come together.

Seeing everyone on the Basilica Block Party weekend, after planning it for so long, is one of my favorite parts. It is also pretty spectacular to curate a band lineup and then see it come to life.
Ask Johan

Dear Johan,

I am glad The Basilica is so committed to the arts. That is one of the reasons I am a member. Do you have a favorite piece of art in our collection and why? I sure do.

Gentle Reader,

Apart from a couple iconoclastic hiccups, the Catholic Church has always been a great promoter and supporter of the arts. Early on we realized that the arts could be a great ally in the celebration of our liturgies as well as in the spreading of the Gospel message. The Basilica of Saint Mary has a great tradition of celebrating the sacred arts. Starting with the building itself and including all the other arts. Just think of the glorious music we experience at our liturgies and the exhibits we host in our gallery.

Your question is difficult to answer because I love so many of our pieces of art for so many different reasons. I love the Homeless Jesus by Timothy Schmalz for its moving and thought-provoking representation of Jesus. I love Lucinda Naylor’s abstract Stations of the Cross because unlike the representational stations, they make us think deeper. I love our Icon Cross because not only is it very beautiful but it is layered with rich symbolism. I love Our Lady of Guadalupe and Our Lady of L’A‘vang because they speak to the diversity of our Church. I love our icon of Mary of Magdala because in it she is represented as she truly was: the Apostle to the Apostles and not as the repentant prostitute.

I could go on and on, but since you asked to select one piece of art I will oblige: The Hospitality of Saint Julian by Cristofano Allori (1577-1621). I love this painting for of a number of reasons. First, Saint Julian is a very interesting saint. Second, there is quite a bit of mystery surrounding our version of this painting. Third, the painting perfectly embodies our mission as a church.

The story of Saint Julian is complex and long. Our painting illustrates a specific moment in the life of this saint. Julian had decided that he was done helping people and going forward would only care for himself and his wife. One day a young person asked him for help. As Julian angrily refused to help the young man he suddenly realized that the young man was Jesus. He immediately rushed to his aid and recommitted himself to help those in need. Incidentally, Jesus during that encounter forgave Julian for killing his parents, but that is another story altogether.

Cristofano Allori painted several copies of this painting, one of which is lost. We had always considered our version to be a 19th C. copy. However, further study revealed that this painting is not done on a typical 19th C. mechanically woven canvas but rather on an earlier canvas dating possibly to the 17th C. Though it is doubtful that this is the lost Allori painting, it is still intriguing to consider this possibility.

We hung this painting in our Teresa of Calcutta Hall where we serve many people in need. We did this for two reasons. First, the painting enhances the room thus creating a beautiful and welcoming atmosphere for our guests. Second, it reminds us of our obligation as Christians to do as Christ did and to do it because in each person we meet above all those in need, we meet Christ himself.

Over the years we have been able to accumulate a great collection of paintings, prints, and sculptures. Some of these were purchased by The Basilica but most were generously donated. Many are on exhibit in one of our buildings, but some, especially our seasonal art, is in storage. Since 2015 we have a dedicated space for professional storage of art on the fourth floor of the Reardon Rectory thanks to The Basilica Landmark. And, as our new strategic plan affirms, we will continue to celebrate the arts at The Basilica for years to come as they greatly contribute to the life and mission of our church.

Now that I have shared one of my favorite pieces with you, I am very curious as to what your favorite piece of art is in our collection. When you have a chance, please let me know.

Johan M.J. van Parys, Ph.D., has been The Basilica’s director of liturgy and sacred arts since 1995.
KEEP THE FLAME ALIVE FOR OUR BELOVED BASILICA ICON.

MAY 18TH, 2019

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THEBASILICALANDMARK.ORG/SPARK
Bring them up generously.

Generosity is taught by example. With a donor advised fund, it’s easy to have your children experience the joy of philanthropy right alongside you. Talk about it, plan for it, then give – as a family. You can even name your children as successors to the fund to carry on the charitable legacy you began together.

Call us to learn how a donor advised fund can help you bring your children up generously.

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TALK ABOUT IT
What values do you hold as a family that you want your generosity to reflect?

PLAN FOR IT
Which causes or charities apply these values to their mission and work?

THEN, GIVE
With a donor advised fund, it’s easy to advise and schedule grants.

Catholic Community FOUNDATION OF MINNESOTA

CITIES 97.1 BASILICA BLOCK PARTY
July 12 & 13
basilicablockparty.org

25TH ANNIVERSARY
Behold the Party 25 Years in the Making.
The Basilica Landmark’s Mission
is to preserve, restore, and advance the historic Basilica of Saint Mary for all generations.

The Basilica of Saint Mary
is a community rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As disciples of Jesus Christ we:
• Practice biblical stewardship
• Share our faith with others in word and deed
• Pursue ecumenical and interfaith relationships
• Extend Christian hospitality, and
• Rejoice in rich diversity.

As Co-Cathedral of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis we are committed to provide:
• Inspiring liturgies and sacred arts
• Transforming life-long learning opportunities
• Engaging service to one another and justice for all.