

STRENGTHS

Based on our own discernment process and input sessions with more than 20 groups affiliated with Grace Cathedral, we found that the following strengths were most frequently mentioned as treasures to be maintained:

- **The diversity of liturgical experiences is valued and more is desired.**
 - From the beauty of the formal 11 a.m. Sunday service to the more informal 6 p.m. service on the labyrinth, there is an appreciation for the variety and choices available.
 - “Sub-congregations” within the congregation exist for all the services: 8:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m., and for Thursday’s Evensong as well.
 - Many consider Grace Cathedral their spiritual home even though they never attend a formal service, but walk the labyrinths or come to be in the sacred space alone.

- **Great Liturgy, Great Preaching, Great Music Plus Great Physical Beauty Results in Spiritual Inspiration**
 - Different people may favor different aspects of the liturgy and at the same time, the totality of the experience creates the special spiritual experience.
 - People have “self selected” into a place that offers challenging, thoughtful words and an intelligent Christianity.
 - “Great music” includes the many forms that music takes – from the Choral Eucharist, the Choir of Men and Boys, the organ, Christmas Concerts, and other diverse offerings brought here.
 - The physical space includes appreciation for the labyrinth, the well-maintained building, as well as the inspired space. This is particularly important to visitors, community members who are not congregation members, seekers and tourists alike.

- **Grace Cathedral is a place of convening, conversation and community.**
 - Interfaith gatherings are a regular occurrence.
 - The Cathedral is seen as a civic gathering place. For example, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, people from throughout the San Francisco Bay Area spontaneously gathered at the Cathedral to be together in their time of shock and grief.
 - The Forum, a live event developed by the Cathedral and then translated into an audio, web-broadcast, features a wide range of religious and secular scholars, thought leaders and people of interest. It continuously provides “civil conversation” on important topics of current interest, and religious, social, artistic, political or scientific value.
 - There is significant desire to expand this notion of community and provide 24/7 access, more learning opportunities and more outreach.



■ **Grace Cathedral is lively and complex**

The challenge and joy of life at Grace Cathedral includes the following aspects, which can be viewed as tensions to be held in common:

- There is a respect for – and our practices are rooted in – **tradition**, while we practice **innovation** in our theology, liturgy and social outreach.
- There is a strong bias towards encouraging **intellectual engagement** in our “civil conversation,” education programs and preaching, in combination with a strong desire for **social justice outreach & action**.
- The liturgy is predominantly **formal**, while we continuously strive for **accessibility** and **community**.
- We are a **Christian** community and at the same time practice radical **inclusion** and welcome other denominations, religions, and those who consider themselves “spiritual but not religious.”
- The Cathedral is a **safe and neutral place to voice all perspectives** and at the same time we want to take **courageous positions** when called to do so.
- The Cathedral **appeals to all social strata** of the Bay Area and strives to **practice radical hospitality to every person**. We have no desire to be uniform or monochromatic in our common life.

■ **The Greater San Francisco Bay Area is a place where diversity is a way of life.**

- There is a rich array of educational and cultural institutions in the area; we are nourished by the large and small entities that feed the creative environment
- “Diversity” to us goes far beyond the usual definitions of ethnicity, age, gender and sexual orientation to include such things as perspectives, experiences and even dietary preferences!
- We have moved past “tolerance” of differences to an active embracing of them; the Cathedral is seen as inclusive and also acknowledges that we want to more proactively embrace some marginalized groups. We say, and believe that we want to be a “house of prayer for all people...without exception.”
- At the same time that all of the above is true, there is also a strong traditional/conservative streak within the generally progressive community.



CHALLENGES

Based on the same discernment process and input sessions, we found that the following challenges were most frequently mentioned as areas we strive to improve:

- **We are at the intersection of tremendous change – within Grace Cathedral, the Diocese of California, the Episcopal Church and the world.**
 - Within the last three years, we have seen the arrival of a new Bishop and a new Canon Pastor, both of whom followed long tenured predecessors (27 and 17 years respectively). As of February 1, 2009, an interim period began with the retirement of the dean, who had also been in place for nearly 24 years. The Bishop is currently serving as dean until an interim dean arrives fall 2009. The interim dean is scheduled to stay through Michaelmas 2010.
 - From the first of this year through summer, there will have been turnover in the leadership of three key Cathedral departments – Communications, Development and Music. The position of Canon for Communications was eliminated and the Canon for Development retired; the Canon for Music was recruited to become a visiting professor at Indiana University as of this fall.
 - The Communications function for the Cathedral and diocese are currently being integrated into a “shared services” arrangement. Communicating clearly and consistently in a time of such tremendous change and in a complex system is not easy and has been imperfect.
 - Development will have an interim manager so we can re-envision how that role will best serve our critical needs and potentially the needs of the diocese.
 - There is a good plan in place for managing the Music Department in the absence of the Canon for Music.
 - January 2010 will bring a new Chair of the Board of Trustees. There is a strong core of board leadership that has been in place, however, for a number of years.
 - The local community is largely secular and increasingly so. The need for a spiritual life is there, but the resistance to organized religion is strong. We strive, along with the larger church, to understand how to be “church” in this environment, and how to attract families and young adults.
 - The economy has impacted us, along with our donors and other organizations that we may want to partner with. At the same time, the need for what we can offer grows.
 - The struggles in the Anglican Communion touch us as well, even as the Cathedral continues to bless same sex unions.

- **Our location is both a gift and a challenge**
 - The beauty of the location and our physical plant is offset by the fact that it is placed firmly within the very well-to-do Nob Hill neighborhood. The address and building create the preconceived notion that we are for the rich and are not welcoming to others. We have to work hard to overcome this.
 - The Cathedral is on top of a hill, which is not an easy walk from other parts of the city. Parking is expensive and public transportation is comparatively weak.



Evidently, parking has always been an issue.

■ **Our income stream is complex and challenged**

- The congregation supports, through stewardship, approximately 20% of the total annual expenses. The congregation has not grown in the past few years.
- A considerable percentage (65%) of our total funding comes from outside of “church giving,” and in an increasingly secular world, that has become a more challenging task. The historically loyal community donors are aging. At the same time, the next generation is less interested in supporting a religious institution. Our fundraising skills must be honed, and we believe that we must make a stronger case for funding the “non-liturgical” attributes of the Cathedral and its work – the building, outreach programs, music programs and the like.

■ **We need to clarify how we live out our mission**

- There is broad interest in more external social engagement.
- There is a lack of clarity about how to realize this desire in concrete ways and in a strategic way that has impact.
- We do not believe it is our mission to become a social services agency, and yet there has been an oft-expressed desire to involve ourselves more thoroughly in the life of the community in large.
- There are differing opinions on the board about the Cathedral’s role in social justice issues. Some prefer the Cathedral remain a neutral place of conversation, while some look for the Cathedral to take a clear position on important issues.



■ **There are specific challenges within certain groups in the Cathedral family.**

- The relationship with Cathedral School for Boys (CSB) can and should be better leveraged to mutual advantage. CSB is a department of the Cathedral, yet operates autonomously. Over time, issues between the cathedral and the school have existed regarding governance and oversight. There is a desire to clarify the respective roles and responsibilities of the cathedral and the school in this regard, as well as to create a healthy spirit of collaboration for mutual benefit. The boys in the Choir of Men and Boys and their families are sometimes caught in the middle between the Cathedral and the school, as they live in both.
- A team approach utilizing cathedral and diocesan staff to minister to children, youth, and young adults has recently been announced by Bishop Marc in response to existing issues. This effort is vital to our ability to attract families and young adults.
- There is a strong desire for focused and effective management by the new dean. He or she will need to lead the Cathedral’s clerical and secular teams to work effectively together internally as well as with key external strategic audiences including trustees, diocese and clergy to meet strategic short and long term goals.
- The Cathedral needs to offer a more pastoral relationship to the congregation and related internal and external communities. In the past, the distinction of being a “Cathedral congregation” versus a “parish congregation” was important to the leadership. One of the outcomes was somewhat inconsistent pastoral care.

WHO WILL LEAD US? OUR CALL FOR THE 8TH DEAN OF GRACE CATHEDRAL

Qualities of the Dean – Who She/He Will Be

The following personal characteristics would help to enable the next dean to be successful. They are interdependent and we will look for someone to create balance with all of them.

- **Connecting communicator** – The next dean must be able to connect “externally” with the broader SF community, under-represented groups at the Cathedral and the media; and “internally” with the congregation, Board, Chapter, major donors, families, school, choir and Diocese. Additionally, he/she will need to be the kind of person who is proactive in generating trust and goodwill between these groups.
- **Comfortable with ambiguity** – This is a time of change within the Episcopal Church as a whole. And as noted above, Grace Cathedral and the Diocese of California are in the midst of significant leadership changes, as well as discussions about optimal relationships between the various stakeholders previously named under “connecting communicator.” The new dean will need to be comfortable with questions, issues and options as he/she leads through a degree of ambiguity not everyone would relish. The right leader will be attracted to this situation as it affords an opportunity to shape change.
- **Love of diversity** – To be a leader of an important institution such as Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, the new dean must not just tolerate, but must relish diversity in all aspects – diverse cultures, ethnicities, sexual orientations, perspectives, political persuasions and even foods! This love of diversity is not a sideline, but a vital and daily perspective the successful dean candidate will embrace. We want our leader to set the tone for healthy debate that makes room for many voices.
- **Self-awareness** – The next dean will benefit from finding and being secure in his/her center in the midst of controversy and busy-ness. He/she must have a deeply held, grounded spiritual practice. Honestly and humbly knowing one’s strengths and weaknesses as a human being and the willingness to reach out to others for teamwork or help will aid with relationship development, perspective and sagacity.
- **Vision** – The times call for a leader who develops and holds a vision for the role of Grace Cathedral in the city of San Francisco, not just for today and next week, but for the years to come. How do we remain relevant in these changing times when only six percent of people in San Francisco attend a church, temple or mosque? What is the role of service? How do we draw in a new generation? How will the changing times impact donations and financial contributions? How do we preserve our core worship – the preaching, music and space of spiritual transcendence – and still grow with the times?

ROLES OF THE DEAN – WHAT HE/SHE WILL DO

The role of the dean is a varied, complex and challenging one – at the same time leading and managing a complex organization, fundraising to support the mission, being pastor and teacher to the congregation and community, as well as working with and within the diocese. The successful dean will know what he/she needs to do himself/herself and what can be best carried out by others, and play a leadership and supporting role to that end.

What the dean will do is composed of two primary functions—those that relate to Mission & Ministry, and those that relate to Executive Responsibilities. Each is described below.

Mission & Ministry

- **Lead Liturgist** – He/she must have theological and intellectual depth as well as a humanist perspective that is emotionally connective. We value Biblical scholarship as well as an intelligent and generous Christianity. Our congregants want to be engaged with their heads *and* hearts on Sunday morning. We also need our next dean to be a presence at each of the services from time to time and not exclusively involved in the 11:00 Choral Eucharist. We want our dean to know what great preaching is, to be a talented speaker, and to instill that in others, and when he/she is not preaching, to help bring many voices from the Episcopal and spiritually-engaged world to the pulpit.
- **Lead Pastor** – He/she will need to model enhanced pastoral care to the Grace Cathedral communities including to the congregation, the Chapter, the staff and beyond. This will mean having a direct role in pastoral care, teaching others, and ensuring good pastoral care is in place throughout the Cathedral community.
- **Charismatic Engager** – He/she must be comfortable in conducting and closing fundraising dialogues, creating opportunities for more social engagement, and providing an active and exciting voice and vision for the Cathedral internally and externally. He/she will inspire participation.
- **Teacher and Learner** – He/she will ask good questions and evidence constant curiosity and will be a lifelong learner. He/she will embody and share learning about love, compassion, organization, leadership, theology and social engagement. We want a dean who is a great storyteller, and who speaks his/her truth.

Executive Responsibilities

- **Pragmatic Leader** – He/she will be comfortable managing a non-profit organization from a practical standpoint, and be able to understand a budget, oversee issues related to the building, run meetings, manage time and delegate. To this end, he/she will be able to bring out the best in volunteers, Chapter and staff with respect, care, humility, appreciation and most of all conversation. He/she will not shy away from difficult conversations or decisions, will be open and transparent about challenges or concerns and encourage others to be open and transparent

in return, and will have the wisdom to discern whom to involve, when to listen and when to lead.

- **Fundraiser and Chief Steward** – He/she needs to understand the extent of the Cathedral’s resources – our people, our real property, our funds – and ways to nourish and develop those relationships that are and continue to be the most significant ones for the Cathedral’s fiscal and mission-related health. He/she should also provide the Cathedral with a vision that includes financial resources necessary to safely navigate the Cathedral into the ownership of the next generation of worshippers and congregants.