

Between a Rock and Hard Place

Gene McWhorter

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Thank you for letting me speak with you this morning about the idea of taking care of our campus.

I would like to thank the Festival Garden Team for taking a proactive stance to move forward with plans to reinvigorate the garden to serve people at those moments of greatest need in their lives. "The Festival Garden symbolizes a ministry in loving service to members and friends. Extended outreach to people in death is consistent with the mission and ministry of this congregation."

"The word "Festival" designates an occasion for celebration, especially related to a day or time of religious significance. The Shadow Rock Festival Garden is our symbol that as faithful people we affirm and celebrate the deep religious significance of all the rites of passage in life."

"Throughout history, it has been the function of the church to baptize us when we are born, and to bury us when we die. Throughout the ages cemeteries have always been adjacent to the church. Part of the vision of Shadow Rock Church has always been to nurture a return to the practice of burial near the church, to set aside an area (traditionally called "God's Acre") for those who choose cremation and inurnment for themselves and /or loved ones."

I share with you this morning that the conception, creation and delivery of this plan to reinvigorate the garden is through stewardship, care and giving apart from the Covenant Commitment that we all enter into collectively during this season of the year. The funds for the renewal of the Festival Garden come from their own coffers as they provide a service to families and set aside a percentage for maintenance, repairs, and renewal. Even though the money does not come from our general budget it contributes to a vision for our congregation. As the liturgy stated this morning as we take care of our household in this way, we can go forth and help take care of the household of the world. It is from this church and these grounds that we work together. It is from here at Shadow Rock that our children's educational and youth programs form sensitive and responsive humans in society who can go forward knowing their uniqueness and greatness.

The vision of the Festival Garden Team is to prepare this sacred space on the highest point of our campus to blossom and grow starting this winter and to bloom and flourish throughout the coming year and every year. With Advent approaching we are

engaging with what no longer is and the not yet. What no longer is, is a garden with spectacular views simply built on a rock, as read from our scripture this morning. The not yet that will be, are the plants and trees and shrubs that will be flowering throughout the entire year offering a peaceful healing place for all to come and celebrate. The immediate plan calls for the stabilization of the walkway to and around and the columbarium's easily defined as the walls inside the garden, The replacement of the current irrigation system which has been requiring continual repair for quite some time, the addition of plants mentioned earlier and a more easily useable gate for better access. It is through communication, connections, coordination and cooperation that this and other projects worthy of our best efforts are made possible.

The facilities team members are the stewards of the buildings and grounds. Over the years and continuing today we have planted, watered, trimmed and pruned. We have dreamed, planned, built, constructed, scraped, sanded, stripped, scrubbed, painted, hung, harnessed, molded, fabricated nearly everything that moves and doesn't move at Shadowrock! The facilities team introduced "green technologies" years ago by using low power and energy efficient electrical products, the irrigation and watering systems have been installed and plumbed for maximum usage with minimal water. We want to maintain our buildings and grounds and do it right which means we educate ourselves on how to implement and maintain all we are involved in.

We need a perpetual care fund that will allow for the continuing upkeep of our church which serves as our starting point from which to minister our visions and our missions. There is so much we do as a congregation at and from Shadowrock we must care, share and maintain our facility together. We will have some very large challenges in the very near future as we repair and replace air conditioning systems that are years past normal operational life, repair or reroof Smith Hall where our education programs and staff engage daily always pointed intentionally to the future, resurface our parking areas so all who wish may enter here. We invite everyone to join in, not just in maintaining what we have today but in intentionally building for the future.

Archimedes said, "Give me a lever long enough, a fulcrum strong enough and a place to stand, and I can move the world". This quote is on the flier from the Shadow Rock Foundation in the pew in front of you. We have a model, I believe, to work from, to establish a fund where principal moneys should be preserved and the facilities team mission can be accomplished from future earnings. You see, as much good work as the team does we are not capable of doing everything we will soon need the resources to accomplish. As a team we do have many skills that have served the buildings and grounds very well over the past almost two score years. But with the aging of our campus comes new challenges that time and talent alone cannot oblige. Reverend Robin Meyers told us last week that he never heard a call from speakers on a stereo like

his classmate in Divinity School. I share with you today that I have not had a spiritual call to stand before you but I have had a call.

The call that I have received is to do what I can, but not just in an emergency to repair or replace, not just to be here on the second Saturday of each month, and I do hope you or a member of your family can participate regularly, and not just when convenient. My call is to collaborate with the other teams of the congregation for the betterment of the entire congregation and the good works we support together.

The good works of the Adult Ed Team, Care Team, Children's Ed, Growth, History, Living our Faith, Music arts and Worship, Pastor-Parish, Personnel, The Shadow Rock Foundation, Financial Oversight, Funds Management, Stewardship Fulfillment, and Youth Team along with our Relational Groups- Breakstones, Choir, Facebook, Keystones, Older Boulders, Rainbow Rocks, Scrapbookers and Stepping Stones should not and will not meet, grow and go from Stonehenge...but from Shadow Rock.

Thank you for your time and support as we become greater than we are today!