A Sad Departure And Two Great Guests: Lara Lowman, Paul-Gordon Chandler, And Arthur Brooks

An article from the *Cathedral Times*
by the Very Reverend Samuel G. Candler
Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip

It gives me great sorrow to report that our dear Director of Communications, **Lara Lowman**, notified us this summer of her intention to resign her position at the Cathedral of St. Philip. Many of you already know of her plan to sail extensively with her uncle (a three-month tour) and then use some free and un-obligated space to consider her future.

Though I completely understand and support Lara's plans, I am personally saddened by her departure. She has been an enormously competent and generous member of the Cathedral staff for four years. She arrived as a Godsend when we had deep needs in the areas of stewardship and communication; she amazed us with a combination of high competence and warm grace. She was just what we needed, and I will always be indebted to her for such loyal service. As I told her in my letter, she represents the very best of what I hope for this Cathedral staff: graceful commitment, optimism, communication, and initiative.

I will forever be thankful for Lara, and to Lara, for her commitment here. Please do keep her in your prayers and thank her on behalf of this great parish! When she leaves the first part of September, the weekly Cathedral Times will be managed by Hillary Jones until we can find a suitable Director of Communications. George Maxwell and Ivory Wade will help with the search. We know Lara herself is irreplaceable, but we trust that God will lead the right person our way (And God might use you to point someone our way!)

It is sad to tell folks good-bye; but, meanwhile, I must also mention two guests who will be here in the Fall. One is my new friend, the Reverend **Paul-Gordon Chandler**, who will preach and address the Dean's Forum on Sunday, September 16. Paul-Gordon is an American Episcopal priest who grew up in Muslim West Africa (Senegal) and who has served the church as a missionary for the past years in Egypt. He was my host when I visited Egypt last January, and what a host he was. As rector of the Episcopal Church of St. John the Baptist, Maadi in Cairo (an international congregation of over 20 nationalities), he knows both the Anglican Communion and Egyptian culture quite well.

Furthermore, Paul-Gordon Chandler has got to know many of the intricacies of Muslim life. He has just published a book (which we will have on hand for the day of his visit and later) called *Pilgrims of Christ on the Muslim Road: Exploring a New Path Between Two Faiths*. As many Americans have begun to wonder more and more about the relationship between Christianity and Islam, I urge you to come hear someone who has been a faithful Christian in a Muslim country.

Our second guest is also a must-see. Those of you who read the Wall Street Journal regularly may recognize the name of Arthur Brooks, a regular contributor there, who has also written a powerful book called *Who Really Cares*. (The answer is that religious people, especially religious conservatives, but also religious liberals, give the most to charities in the United States). Thanks to David Rocchio, our Director of Stewardship, and thanks to our Cathedral Endowment Board who is helping sponsor the visit, Arthur Brooks has agreed to address our parish on the issues of philanthropy and financial generosity.

Arthur Brooks will discuss his previous book, but he will also speak about his new book, *The Happiness Gap: The Values that Make Some Americans Happier than Others*. We are absolutely thrilled to host him here (we must also thank Diversified Financial, who is also sponsoring his visit here). On Wednesday, September 19, Brooks will meet special members of our Endowment Board and Arbor Society at 6:00 pm and then speak to the entire parish and interested guests at 7:00. Book-signing at 8:00. Please plan to attend!

Sam Candler signature

The Very Rev. Sam Candler