

## *An Art Lesson*

Have you ever wondered who painted the vibrant and exciting artworks that adorn the walls of our parish hall? What is the artist trying to tell us? Both works are unsigned...more mystery! So, here is the rest of the story.

When the parish hall was newly constructed the walls were bare. Knowing that Cam's husband, Bill Hardy, was a painter, parishioner Don Blauhut urged him to create something beautiful to adorn the south wall. Bill was not really in the business of making religious art, but he took on the challenge, honing in on symbols, tone, colors, and composition that could hold in mutually supportive tension his abstract leanings, his Roman Catholic childhood, and a picture accessible to parishioners of every age. He says he chose the Virgin Mary holding the child Jesus as the centerpiece because it expresses to him the loving, sym-



biotic relationship of mother and child, Mary and Jesus, and of God and his children.

Close by the central figures are a chalice and host, representing the gift of Mary as the mother of God, the vessel of the holy child, and the gift of God himself in the child, "the gift of the sanctity of love

between the bearer of the gift and the gift itself." Bill says that "there is nothing more intimate, more innocent, and more loving than this relationship." He wants the viewer to feel that same intimacy, innocence, and love, in awe and in anticipation; to see this imagery as an invitation for us to partake of this holy experience. In the foreground we also see a shepherd and sheep, reinforcing the relational aspect of our Christianity, and a dove, representing the commitment we make in the Gospels to peace and justice.

The smaller angel painting, on the wall by the kitchen counter, honors former parishioner Clay Morse. Clay lost his first wife, Jane, to cancer. She was an Episcopal priest, and her collection of theological texts comprises much of the St. Peter's reference library. Bill was inspired to paint the angel for Clay after they developed a friendship at coffee hour, talking about books and art. (Their conversations even led to Bill's curating a show of Clay's collection of folios of *The Song of Solomon*, illuminated by Salvador Dali, at Millbrook School's Warner Gallery.) Bill chose, specifically, the angel Gabriel, who in Clay's words "lifted me up in a time of need" after his wife died. Jane was a scholar with a deep understanding of scripture. It is fitting that Gabriel is holding a book.



*Joann Schmidt,  
(with help from a friend)*

## From the Vicar's Desk



Dear parishioners,

Timing is everything.

We all love listening to those wonderful stories from couples we know, about how they met. Over the years these tales become gilded and can possess a magical or mystical interpretation, simply by being repeated. Recently a couple in the parish told me how they met almost 60 years ago. One began the story and the other, like a familiar antiphonal Psalm, gently took over. It went like this: A car accident occurred right outside *his* front door, and, when *she* came knocking on that door, he knew instinctively that they were going to marry and spend the rest of their lives together. Smiles and a twinkling of eyes sheltered more hidden, mysterious ponderings of why something so powerful could happen so randomly. I am sure there were challenges and obstacles at many stages of their journey together, but those were not part of the meta-narrative where something larger, they believed, was at work. Some might call it fate, or love or even God! These two young people believed they were meant to be together, and in the fullness of time their remarkable story proved to be true. They lived within their own mystery. This shared and fantastic story became the bedrock for their adventure in hope and commitment. By telling it to me they were retelling it to each other. Some stories simply never grow old. Perhaps, instead, we grow into our own truth every day.

Advent is the church's version of our story of falling in love (with God and God with us). Whether we see life as carefully predestined or filled with random encounters, the celebration of the birth of Jesus redirects our energies toward asking important questions of ourselves. Was it by accident that Mary and Joseph simply showed up when they did, giving birth to a child destined to change the history of the world? Over the next four weeks we will hear different interpretations of this well-known story from holy men and women in the Bible, like Anna and Simeon, who waited all their lives for someone to show up and make the world better.

We will encounter many personalities in this very familiar story, and our children will once again inhabit their costumes and characters to help us see

ourselves in the humble shepherds, the searching leaders, the grumpy yet accommodating innkeeper, and even in the adoring parents of Love's own mystery. For all parents it is easy to understand how love becomes flesh and blood in another human being. Was it all an accident or is there something larger at work in each one of us? These are Advent questions.

I hope you and your loved ones will journey with us and the wider universal church through the season of Advent and share more deeply in the church's love story. Children and parents, old and young, rich and poor, princes and visionaries as much as corrupt and selfish leaders, all of us shape the destiny of others. We are all here. Everyone has lines to learn, words that celebrate the mystery they represent. I love hearing the story of how my two love-bird parishioners met and how their story shapes their love and commitment in these special golden years. This story provides them a deep and timeless well of strength and renewal for a seemingly long, yet fleeting journey. The smells, sounds, and traditions of the season open us all up to a sense that life has been long and deep, yet seems to pass so quickly. It is in this paradox that the Christmas story resonates, as we remember our stories of how we all came to be together.

Blessings,

Albert

---

## The Christmas Services

**Sunday, December 18 —**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**8:00 am** *Holy Eucharist & sermon*

**9:30 am** *Festival of Lessons & Carols for Christmas, with choir*

**Saturday, December 24 — Christmas Eve**

**5:00 pm** *Sunday School Pageant*

**10:00 pm** *Candlelight Holy Eucharist, with choir*

**Sunday, December 25 — Christmas Day**

**9:30 am** *Holy Eucharist, with carols*

**Sunday, January 1 —**

**First Sunday after Christmas**

**8:00 & 9:30 am** *Holy Eucharist & sermon*

## *Harvest Hope*



**Parishioners at St. Peter's donated twenty-two bags of food and \$1,090 to project Harvest Hope. It will all go to Dover Plains Food Pantry to provide Thanksgiving holiday meals. They're grateful both for the bounty and for the hope it inspires.**

**We thank those who cheerfully coordinated aspects of the project: Cam Hardy, Juliet Heyer, Anne Gillis and Sexton Laura Licis; and thanks also to Nancy Vanderlee for the music selection for Harvest Hope offerings.**

*Cynthia Larsen*

### **Winter Weather Alerts**

If the weather is questionable on a Sunday morning, please call the Vicar's cell phone (845-443-3516) or check your email to find out if services will be held; we'll try to get word out by 7:30.



*Matt Borsch & Jim Tozer prepare the bar.*

*Lillian Corbin*



*St.*



*Barbara Rankin sings for the crowd.*

*Lillian Corbin*



*Zibby, Aura, & Mila*



*Betsey Battistoni stands next to one of the many extravagant arrangements she created for the evening.*

*Therese Balagna*



*Therese Balagna*

*A few of the 37 Auction items, ready for bidding*

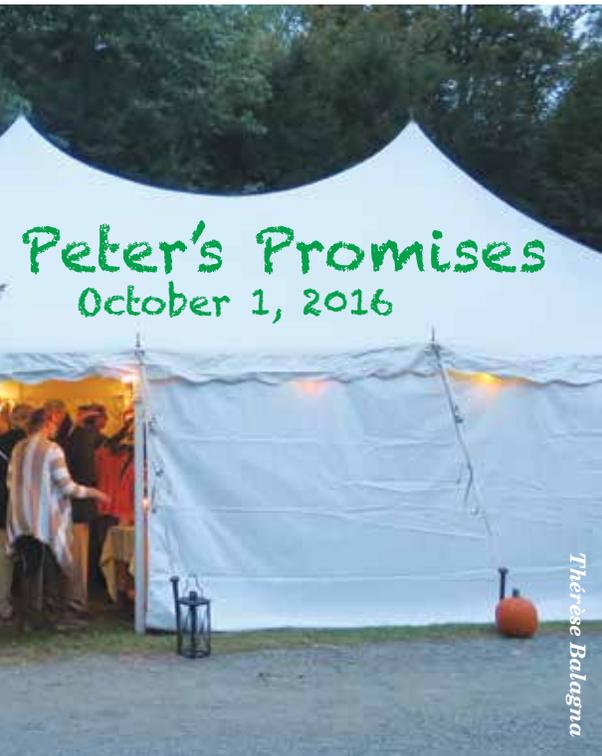
*St. Peter's Judges: Cecelia Morris & Betsy Shequine*



*Therese Balagna*



*Therese Balagna*



Therese Balagna



Therese Balagna

André Starrett, Albert Ogle, Betsy Shequine & Sally D'Arcy

The Honorees: Bindy & Stephen Kaye and Jessica Tcherepnine



Therese Balagna

Catherine Howard arrives with her food offering.



Lillian Corbin

The Co-Chairs: Lois Mander & Mila Tewell



Lillian Corbin



Lillian Corbin

# *Blessing of the Animals*

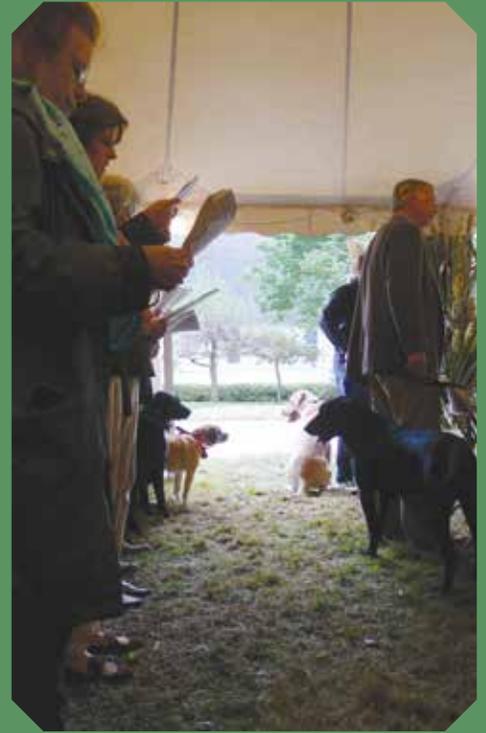
*October 2, 2016*



*Albert Ogle blesses Phoebe Fresne.*



*Usher Brian Johnston awaits the first arrival.*



*Marie Nightingale finds an easier way to bring her dogs to be blessed.*



*Lisa and Ian Plimsoll serve coffee for the crowd and treats for the animals.*



*Albert Ogle meets the Gndlachs' rabbit.*



*All photos by Lillian Corbin*

The following article is reprinted from the June 1995 issue of *Keynotes*. At the time, Curt Place was the Chairman of the Cemetery Committee. He had been a church warden for many years.

## Remembering St. Peter's

I have been asked to reminisce about St. Peter's when I was a young fellow. The thing that struck me first was that we would never think of going to church except as a family. There was always my mother, father, and then the three of us. My sister was the oldest, then my brother. I was the youngest.

In the winter there were eight or nine people in church. In the summer, the number could swell to fifteen or twenty. During the summer, the back doors were left open while the service was in progress. I vividly remember my father's three dogs running up the aisle, jumping on the minister and licking his face. My father did his best to shoo them out, to great hilarity.



*Patsy & Curt Place  
ca 2007*

Miss Beekman and Miss Bokay, two elderly spinster ladies, played the organ. It was the original pump organ, the outside case of which is still serving us. It was cleverly and beautifully fitted over the new organ by Brian Johnston.

The first minister I remember was the Reverend Thomas B. Hazzard. He was the first headmaster of the Greer School, which later became Millbrook Meadows. Many ministers came, stayed a while, and then moved on to greener pastures.

In the 1950s there was a feeling at Grace Church that St. Peter's was a nonentity and that it should merge with Grace. They had forgotten that St. Peter's is the parent church of Grace. One minister, the Reverend Bonacker, felt that we should merge. My father had the good Reverend in for cocktails one Sunday after church. My mother and my brother and I were there and I will never forget the Reverend Bonacker saying to my father, "Herman, if St. Peter's doesn't merge with Grace, I am going

to leave." My father leapt to his feet saying, "Ralph, you have just left St. Peter's. We are not going to merge with Grace." As you can guess, the cocktail hour did not continue much longer.

When I was a child, Jim MacIntosh lived in the rectory with his family. At that time, the rectory had no plumbing of any kind. The hand pump that stands in front of it is over a filled-in well which was their source of water. There was no electricity. Heat came from a coal furnace and a wood-burning cook stove in the kitchen. Jim paid no rent, but in return he would light the kerosene lamps in the church for the Sunday service, get the coal furnace going, and clean the church. In the summer he mowed the lawn. Those kerosene lamps have been electrified and are still in use today.

The only Senior Warden I can remember, other than my father, was Mr. Issac Wheaton who owned a great deal of property in the area and lived at "Lithgow." The Wheaton family has always been closely associated with the church. Some years ago, one of the Wheaton sons gave the church a zero coupon bond which is due in 2017.

My father thought it would be a good idea to bring up the carol service from St. James Church in New York City. Each year, chairs had to be added in the aisle. One year, a member brought a very devout Catholic friend to the service who sat on one of these aisle chairs. During the service, it suddenly collapsed under him!

My brother and I used to teach Sunday School where we showed movies of the life of St. Paul among other religious people and events. These films very likely were the only movies the six or seven children saw all week, so it kept them very quiet. My brother and I felt they all got something out of it. (Remember, this was long before television.)

St. Peter's Church is very close to me as it has been my church for my entire life. My children were baptized, confirmed and married here. My mother and father were laid to rest from the church and I expect I will be, too.

If this little remembrance has interested you and you want to learn more about St. Peter's, I urge you to read a booklet called *The Landmark* by Louise Tomkins, written in 1971.

*Curt Place*

# “The Journey of the Magi”

by T. S. Eliot

## “The Magi”

by William Butler Yeats

Both of these poems deal with the magi of the traditional Christmas story but in very different ways. The magus of Eliot’s poem recreates from memory the physical difficulties he encountered on his journey to Bethlehem as well as the profound questions he faced upon his arrival. “Were we led all that way for Birth or Death?” He is not sure because his conventional notion of birth and death does not coincide with this new example of Christ’s Birth and Christ’s Death. He returns home, troubled by what he has experienced and by how alien he feels in his own culture. He even longs for his own death. In Yeats’s poem, the narrator is not one of the magi but rather Yeats himself, who describes in vivid language his imaginative vision of the magi as they make their journey. These men are not so much the three kings of the Nativity as they are timeless seekers of the truth. As such, they witnessed Christ’s birth, which they found mysterious, and Christ death, which they found turbulent and troubling. But unlike Eliot’s magus, who would be “glad” for his own death, Yeats’s magi are continuing their quest—“hoping to find once more” the meaning of Christ’s life and death. For them the search goes on.

*Charles E. Pierce, Jr.*

### *Journey of the Magi*

A cold coming we had of it,  
Just the worst time of the year  
For a journey, and such a long journey:  
The ways deep and the weather sharp,  
The very dead of winter.  
And the camels galled, sorefooted, refractory,  
Lying down in the melting snow.  
There were times we regretted  
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,  
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.  
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling  
and running away, and wanting their liquor and  
women,  
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shel-  
ters,  
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly  
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:  
A hard time we had of it.  
At the end we preferred to travel all night,  
Sleeping in snatches,  
With the voices singing in our ears, saying  
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,  
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;  
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the  
darkness,  
And three trees on the low sky,  
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.  
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the  
lintel,  
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,

### *The Magi*

Now as at all times I can see in the mind's eye,  
In their stiff, painted clothes, the pale unsatisfied ones  
Appear and disappear in the blue depths of the sky  
With all their ancient faces like rain-beaten stones,  
And all their helms of silver hovering side by side,  
And all their eyes still fixed, hoping to find once more,  
Being by Calvary's turbulence unsatisfied,  
The uncontrollable mystery on the bestial floor.

And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.  
But there was no information, and so we continued  
And arriving at evening, not a moment too soon  
Finding the place; it was (you might say) satisfac-  
tory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,  
And I would do it again, but set down  
This set down  
This: were we led all that way for  
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly  
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and  
death,  
But had thought they were different; this Birth was  
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.  
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,  
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,  
With an alien people clutching their gods.  
I should be glad of another death.

## *A postmodern view of God*

I recently came upon the work of Vi Kai Nao, who writes poetry and novels and is now editing a new literary magazine, *Journal 69*. The following is an excerpt from an interview on the publication of her book of poetry, *The Old Philosopher*. Don't take it too seriously.

*Stephen Kaye*

VK: God loves postmodernity and visits me often in the sanitarium of my imagination. Whenever God visits me, God brings me flowers called yesterday, today, and tomorrow, and I smell God's flowers and I try, my best, in my writing, to engage with God's ephemerality. I would like to think that I could throw God's flowers into the trash bin and call it poetry, but alas, I grew up in a little village in Vietnam where hunger allows one man to tear the ear off of another over a loaf of bread for my eyesight to see. My mother loves the elbow of the baguette and I love nothing more than to give it to her. The Old Philosopher is born from nothing, which is the history I give myself when I am 80 kilometers from Saigon. What is nothing? You might ask. Nothing is a child of exile. Nothing is being born in Vietnam with 100 years of French domination and 1000 years of Chinese occupation. It means that I like to wear a white áo dài in my poems and it sets me apart from a shopping cart at Target, which also wants to wear an áo dài too, but doesn't know how to with wheels as its feet and with metal frames as its stomach. Based on God's lack of preference for Adam's rib, I had a feeling God would love pho.

*Editor's note: "pho" is a Vietnamese noodle soup.*

If you would like to read the full interview, please go to:

[http://www.americanmicroreviews.com/vi-khi-nao-interview?utm\\_content=buffer056be&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](http://www.americanmicroreviews.com/vi-khi-nao-interview?utm_content=buffer056be&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

## **Congratulations to our Confirmands!**

October was a month of celebration, not the least of which was the confirmation of eight parishioners. We were honored with the presence of The Rt. Rev. Andrew Dietsche, Bishop of New York, for his first visit to St. Peter's as the bishop. As he related to us all, he has enjoyed a long-standing and strong relationship with St. Peter's as the Canon for Pastoral Care and Bishop's chaplain. He "loves" St. Peter's and the dynamic and generous ways in which we contribute to the work of the Church. The service was spirited and meaningful as together we renewed our baptismal vows and our call to serve.



*Front Row: Max Gundlach, Augie Larson, Jack Borsch  
Second Row: Abigail Crisp, Caroline Bartley,  
Katie Salnikoff, Alana Adams  
Third Row: Rev. Cam Hardy, the Rt. Rev. Andrew Dietsche,  
Rev. Canon Albert Ogle  
Last Row: Will Hitchcock, Confirmand &  
T. Nolan, Eucharistic Minister*

---

## **Christmas Pageant Time already!**

Though our first was cancelled due to SNOW and an accompanying power outage, rehearsals for the 2016 St. Peter's Christmas Pageant are underway. Directed by experienced and able Liz Kuit and assisted by Sue McNish (music), Marie and Rev. Cam, this lovely tradition lives on! Rehearsals begin at 9:30am each Sunday, with a dress rehearsal on December 23<sup>rd</sup> (time TBA). Help with costumes and props welcome. Contact Liz Kuit ([lizkuit@gmail.com](mailto:lizkuit@gmail.com)) or Marie ([mscagnelli@aol.com](mailto:mscagnelli@aol.com)).



St. Peter's Church, Lithgow  
PO Box 1502  
Millbrook, NY 12545  
(845) 677-9286



*Eleanore Pitcher*

### **A St. Peter's Promise Fulfilled**

**Sarah and Alexander  
Saint-Amand put in  
one of the 2 winning  
bids for a milking lesson  
from Liz Baldwin of the  
Shunpike Dairy.**

**Here Liz shows  
Bezie Saint-Amand  
how to milk a cow. Bezie's  
mother Sarah said they loved  
the experience....and the milk.**