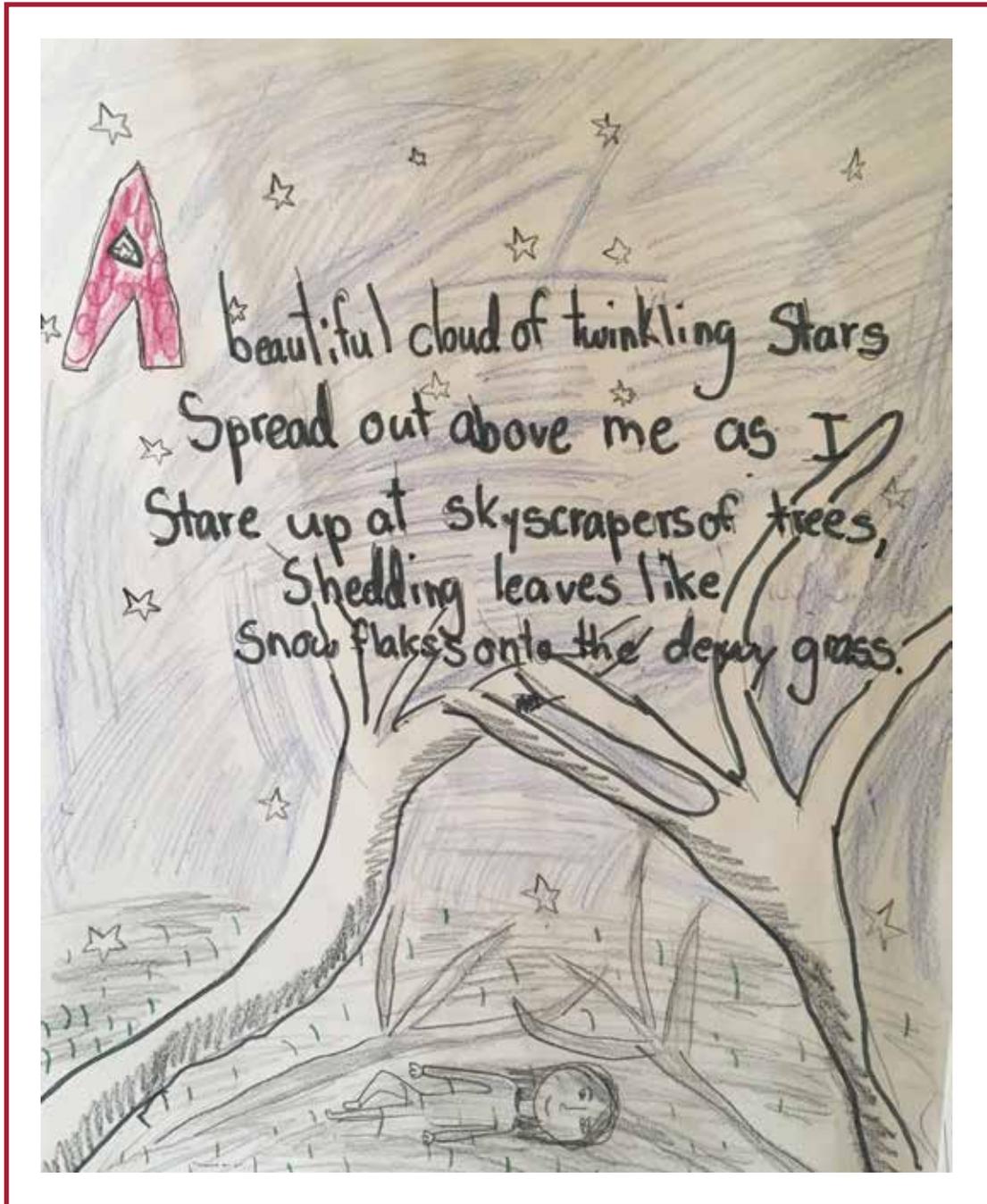




December 2015

The Quarterly Newsletter of St. Peter's Church, Lithgow



*A poem written by Florence Morlock (aged 9 1/2 yrs) after a recent school expedition to the Ashokan Center in the Catskills*



## ***The Ministry of Tent-making***

Dear members of St. Peter's:

We do not often think of Saint Paul as a *part-time* evangelist, working all over Asia Minor to build little church communities. When he was not getting arrested

and imprisoned for his inclusive theology, the other half of his life was working in sail cloth. He would have travelled all across Asia Minor with his tools and a passion to adapt and share the good news with those who crossed his path. He also made awnings for his clients (to keep the hot sun from burning them and their families) and could make a tent or a sail in a few days to pay his expenses and his prison fines! Where do you think he had the time to dream up all those ideas he wrote about? He was working!

St. Peter's has a long tradition of clergy who, like St. Paul, make their living by having more than one vocation. The first Vicar, Bishop Philander Chase, way back in 1801, was a part-time priest in two congregations in Fishkill *and* Poughkeepsie while managing to squeeze in a monthly visit to Lithgow to baptize and celebrate the Holy Communion with the community here. In more recent years, Vicars have shared different aspects of their ministries with the congregation at St. Peter's and the community around Millbrook and New York. Rev. Brewster Beech was a well-known Jungian analyst and his weaving together insightful theological and psychological frameworks helped so many people in their journey to love God, their neighbor and themselves. Rev. Ed Johnston brought his unique theological and biblical skills not only to the pulpit, but to the weekly bible study in New York. He still leads this important gathering at the House of the Redeemer in New York, where he continues to serve on the Board as a valued clergy leader.

In continuing this tradition, I bring a similar dual vocation in my expertise in international reconciliation and enjoy talking about it to illustrate sermons and biblical themes when preaching at St Peter's. While half my week is in Millbrook, half my life is now in New York city and elsewhere, building

upon the 40 years of serving as a priest in Ireland, Europe, Africa, the USA and, now, the first steps of a reconciliation project in Cuba. My two recent trips to Cuba were paid for by the St. Paul's Foundation for International Reconciliation. Recently, I helped to organize a two-week visit of Bishop Griselda of Cuba to New York and Washington DC and presented at an International Peace Conference in Cuba on UNESCO sites as places of healing and reconciliation. I have actually been published in this field and my postgraduate studies at Trinity College, Dublin prepared me for this honor to serve God as a priest and reconciler.

This is my other life. I hope St. Peter's will enjoy the journey and adventure as much as I am enjoying it. This is a wonderful time to be alive and live on this planet as we begin to see the challenges and opportunities of globalization. I am conscious how many of St. Peter's families also work internationally and travel a lot. I am sure the children in our Sunday School will, someday, visit and work in many of the places they are hearing us talk about from time to time. Many of them will speak four of five languages while the dominant culture in the USA 20 years from now as they uncover their own vocations, will be Hispanic.

This international work is my other job that God has called me to do. There may be some confusion about where St. Peter's fits into all of this and a sense that we are suddenly supporting Outreach efforts abroad. While some respondents to last year's parish survey indicated an interest in international Outreach, there has been no change in our complete focus on local initiatives. We have created a strong Outreach Committee led by Catherine Howard and John Allen and this Committee's recommended giving remains focused solely on local needs. There has been no change in the charities that St Peter's has been supporting in 2015, and the Vestry looks forward to hearing from the Outreach Committee on how the Vestry should allocate funding for local projects for 2016.

I do not expect many of you will want to come with me to Cuba, but some have already expressed an interest. I do not expect the Vestry will allocate funds to Cuba to assist people like Bishop Griselda, but there are others in the community who will be attracted to join St. Peter's precisely because of these international perspectives and relationships. For example, T and Lynn Nolan shared their trans-

formational trip to Cuba in November 2014, and you can watch T's sermon here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SYex83D6c4&feature=youtu.be>

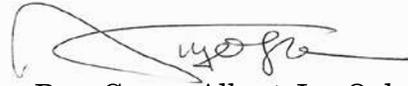
When we carried out the parish survey last year, the overwhelming majority of respondents wanted to support local outreach needs, while 5 of the 30 respondents wanted to support international ministries. For some like T and Lynn, this will focus on Cuba, but for others, this might involve Haiti or Tanzania, where the Diocese of New York already has a long relationship.

St. Peter's is still discerning how we can more effectively serve God and help to heal the planet, beginning right here in Dutchess County. Already, with monthly education and a robust Outreach Committee, we have doubled the local Outreach budget to help projects like Rural and Migrant Ministries. As we finish our most successful ever Seaman's Institute knitting project (thanks to Barbara Lindsley's tireless leadership and her trusted band of knitters and donors like Alicia Adams) we are getting ready to help a local family who is experiencing a major health or life-changing issue over the holiday period. The Adopt-a-Family program is similar to a one-time emergency grant program, or it reminds me when I need to give a check from my discretionary fund to someone who has a health or family emergency. This is a very different need from some of the long-term economic goals of helping families attain self-sufficiency and the church will always need to have easy access to emergency assistance through Adopt-a-Family and the clergy discretionary funds. This is a very different purpose than the task given to the Outreach Committee where the congregation is asking for long-term impact and sustainable and measurable goals. As your Vicar, I am impressed by our mutual collaboration and commend everyone's effort this year, from the ministry of check writing to the ministry of discernment of the best way to use our limited resources for *"tikkun olan"*—repairing God's world. If everyone shows up and just does a little, our gifts and talents will be transformative.

I love the balance in my ministries between the local and congregational work—everything from preaching to preparing for meaningful liturgies and sharing our common spiritual journey together, as well as the wider regional and global work. I can only do the challenging global work if I am grounded at an altar and within a local community. I look forward to celebrating the holiday season with you all this year and hope you plan to be with us for Christ-

mas, inviting family and friends to one of the very special St. Peter's services marking this important moment in our Christian calendar.

Yours sincerely,



Rev. Canon Albert Joy Ogle  
Vicar of Lithgow

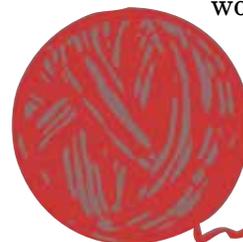
## CHRISTMAS-AT-SEA BONANZA

Knitters outdid themselves this year for the Seaman's Church Institute's Christmas-at-Sea program, which provides hand-knit items for merchant mariners worldwide.



Colorful caps and scarves, 49 of them, were presented at the later service Sunday, Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>. Local knitters from St Peter's and Grace Church participated, and a fine collection of baby alpaca knit caps came from Millbrook's Alicia Adams Alpaca shop. A total of 57 items, including a previous collection given to Head Chaplain Margery Lindstrom when she visited us in September, have been prepared for SCI headquarters in Port Newark, NJ for distribution. AND it is not too late for others to finish their knitting and bring it to the parish hall. We will not be sending the box until after December 1<sup>st</sup>. Knitting for this program is a year-long event. So keep wool, needles, and directions handy! I stand ready to help with encouragement and instruction.

*Barbara N. Lindsley*



## Eastern Orthodox Church

When I first came to the U.S. from Macedonia, people asked me about my religious background; I usually told them I was Eastern Orthodox. Many had heard of Russian and Greek Orthodox, and naturally assumed I belonged to one of them. Few knew about the intricacies of the Eastern Orthodox Church, so I thought it would be worthwhile to shed some light.

In 324 AD, emperor Constantin founded a new city on the site of Byzantium, an already existing city on the Bosphorus Strait. The city had several name changes, starting with Constantinople and ending with the name given by the Ottomans: Istanbul. The city became a capital of the Roman Empire, and one of the biggest and wealthiest cities in Europe. In the eleventh century, the Roman Empire split into Western and Eastern parts. While the Western Roman Empire continued to deteriorate, the Eastern Roman Empire flourished and eventually became the Byzantine Empire. The Roman Catholic Church emerged as a spiritual leader of the Western Empire, and the Christian Church in the East continued to refuse acknowledgement of the Roman Pope as the head of the Christian Church, thus vesting authority instead in the Patriarch of Constantinople, who was appointed by the emperor.

Thus the term “Eastern” is used to indicate that the highest concentrations of the Orthodox Church presence remain in the eastern part of the Christian world, compared to western Christendom (at first designating the Roman Catholic Church, later on adding on Protestant and Anglican churches).

The word “Orthodox” is a union of Greek words *orthos* (straight, correct, true, right) and *doxa* (glory). The pairing yields “correct belief” or “true worship” in the context of church worship. Together these express the core of a fundamental teaching about the inseparability of belief and worship and their role in drawing the Church together with Christ. In many Slavic languages you will hear the word *Православие* (Pravoslaviye): *pravo* means “correct” and *slaviye* means “glorification.” In English we know this as Eastern Orthodoxy.

The Eastern Orthodox Church has come to be the second largest Christian Church in the world, with an estimated 250-300 million members spanning multiple continents. The church is organized as

a fellowship of “auto-cephalous” (Greek for self-headed) Churches (independent of external authority). There is no one central authority, like a Pope or a Bishop. The Patriarch of Constantinople is the only autocephalous head who holds the title *primus inter pares*, meaning “first among equals” in Latin. The Patriarch of Constantinople has the honor of primacy, but has no real authority over Churches other than those of Constantinople.

There are fifteen autocephalous Churches: Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Georgia, Cyprus, Bulgaria, Serbia, Russia, Greece, Poland, Romania, Albania, Czech and Slovakia, America and a number of autonomous Churches.

Each Church has a bishop and a Holy Synod to administer its jurisdiction and to lead the Church in the preservation and teaching of the apostolic traditions and church practices. Each bishop has a territory

over which he governs. His main duty is to make sure the traditions and practices of the Church are preserved. Bishops are equal in authority and cannot interfere in the jurisdiction of another bishop. Bishops are almost always chosen from the monastic ranks and must remain unmarried.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church is united under the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia. Officially, it is part of the Serbian Orthodox Church autocephalous, though in the late '50s

and '60s there was a series of events that led to the Macedonian Orthodox Church announcing autocephaly and independence from the the Serbian Orthodox Church. This decision was denounced by the Serbian Orthodox Church, thus the Macedonian Church has remained unrecognized by the Patriarchate of Constantinople and all the other canonical Orthodox churches in defense of Serbian opposition.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church has about 1200 churches in Macedonia organized in 10 eparchies (a province of the Orthodox Church), whose bishops make up the Holy Synod of Bishops, headed by the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia. Official Church calendars follow the old Julian calendar, and use the archaic names of the months of the year instead of the common Latin-derived names which are in common day use ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonian\\_months](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macedonian_months)). The service is a mix of Macedonian and Old Slavic languages, with a lot of singing; a typical service is at least 3 hours long.

*Mile Petrov*



*The Macedonian Cross*

# *Blessing of the Animals*

*October 4, 2015*



*Lillian Corbin*

*Cari Swanson's Lily takes a bow.*



*Lillian Corbin*

*Jim Florack with Blue*



*Lillian Corbin*

*Diana King & Catherine  
Howard introduce their dogs.*



*Phil Balshi*

*Paul Schwartz, D.V.M., was  
the speaker at the service.*



*Lillian Corbin*

*Betsey Battistoni searches all of  
Dutchess County for the ingredients  
for her annual tent decorations.*

*The Altar*



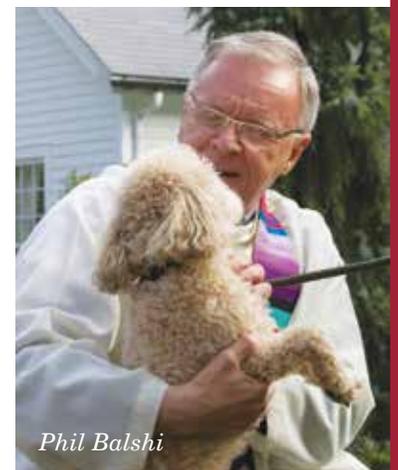
*Lillian Corbin*

*Becky Baldwin lines up to  
have her calf blessed.*



*Phil Balshi*

*Sarah Montague kisses, and Cam  
Hardy blesses, Grissom, an elder  
statesman representing  
the Sandanona Harehounds.*



*Phil Balshi*

*Albert Ogle with a  
just-blessed dog*

## Two Italian churches

On our last trip to Italy we saw a great many churches. Two stand out, not only for their singularity but for the depths of devotion their ancient stones transmitted to us as we walked gingerly across floors laid down so many centuries ago.

After a visit to the splendid 12th-century Duomo in Spoleto we were taken to a cemetery where we walked through an avenue of crypts to the Basilica of San Salvatore



*Facade of San Salvatore in Spoleto*

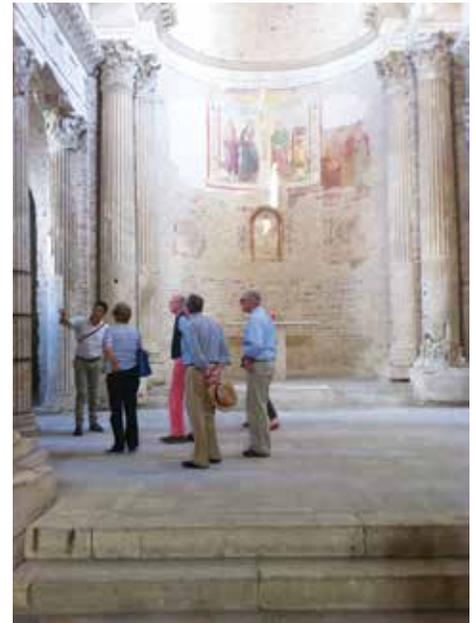
work is simply a patchwork of found and recycled material, yet it also showed a unity of intention. The interior was all bare stone with little decoration. The rear wall and apse had Romanesque arches. The bare simplicity suggested that the Lombards, who were thought to be the original builders, had few pretensions, that the practice of Christianity was simple. The façade's fenestration displayed a triptych, thought to be the influence of the doctrine of the Trinity made official at the Council of Nicea in 325. One could feel something primitive, or elemental; this building was built by Christians using their bare hands. They were not hired craftsmen, the building is barely square, the windows are not symmetrical, yet it has stood and is still used as a place of worship. The floors were "borrowed" from Roman buildings, a patchwork of old marble. The narrow church is but a shade larger than St. Peter's, and has that kind of intimacy.

ca of San Salvatore that is thought to be from the fourth century. Its façade bespeaks the effort to find materials in the period of imperial collapse. Its stonework includes pieces of many Roman buildings; its interior has columns from different buildings, as no more than two are alike. The capitals showed a variety of styles. The stone-



*St. John Lateran—  
the Pope's chair*

At the end of our trip we had a day in Rome with our guide, Alessandro Celani, who took us to the astonishing Papal Archbasilica of St. John in the Lateran. Alessandro began his description by explaining that the Laterani were an ancient Roman family whose property we were standing on. The property passed to Constantine through his marriage to Fausta, a Roman lady whose family had acquired the Lateran Palace. Constantine gave the property to the Bishop of Rome somewhere in the vicinity of 313. This place was where the early Roman Church took form, where the first Popes were installed, where organized Christianity had its beginnings. What we saw, however, was not an early church, though it was on the place of an early church; what we see today is an impossibly complex mixture of periods that embrace the Roman and early pre-Christian periods through the early Church and well into the 18<sup>th</sup> century and perhaps later, layer upon layer of magnificence accumulated and accreted. There are columns taken from Roman temples; the bronze doors came from the Roman curia; the marble floor is also Roman; there are mosaics made by Byzantine craftsmen; there are stairs



*Interior with columns from Roman buildings being explained by our guide Alessandro*

thought to be taken from the praetorium of Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem by Helena, Constantine's mother; she also acquired relics now encased in a reliquary. The church was plundered, burned, rebuilt age after age. It is a composite, a collection of art

and artifacts from many periods, including and most obvious, the Baroque.

The size is overwhelming. A human being is but a tiny object midst the vastness of this space. It is built to accommodate thousands of human beings. The apse—the area behind the main altar—is a marble hall that reminded me of a railroad station, a very large one. At the end of the apse is a chair, or more properly, a throne, reserved for the Pope. This is a place designed for crowds. Here the individual is merged into something much larger; a place where power and wealth are on display. We are awed.

Alessandro points out a slab of white marble in the floor in which a column is inlaid in back. It is the mark of the Colonna family whose palace we would visit later that day. It signifies that the family had a hand in rebuilding the basilica at some later phase of its existence.

This was not a place where prayer seems a natural response. It is not quiet. It is a very public space. Although many popes are buried here, it did not seem a place of rest. But in the apses, and in the small gems that one can find on close inspection, one feels the sense of devotion which is but another aspect of religious experience.

In that sense, it is a very Catholic space, and very special.

*Stephen Kaye*

### *More Outreach:*

*An excerpt from a note written to the Outreach Committee:*

I want to thank you again for inviting me to St. Peter's [Oct. 25]. What a lovely church and congregation. I felt truly welcomed and was happy to share more about Community Action.

Please let me know if there is anything else I can do for you and your committee. You are our strongest contributor and we would not be able to reach the people we do without your support.

Thank you again.

*Elizabeth Spira  
Dutchess County Community  
Action Agency*

### *Outreach:*

## **Can Giving Be Harmful?**

Can giving hurt? We didn't think so but the Outreach Committee read together *Toxic Charity* by Robert L. Luptan.

Through Mr. Luptan's writing we learned that indeed generosity, while *well intentioned*, can actually hurt more than help. Unwittingly we can destroy personal initiative by doing for people what they could do for themselves. By stepping in too often we can disempower an individual and increase their dependency.

Does that mean leave people alone to figure it out for themselves? Absolutely not! Instead, he recommends becoming part of the community one is trying to serve. Have a real relationship. Learn about their skills, talents, hopes and strengths. Help them build businesses by investing or loaning. Hire them.

But what about people who have lost their homes, as happened in Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy? Businesses and communities were wiped out! Shouldn't we help?

Yes, Yes, Yes...we should help. But when we do, we might consider aligning with an organization that has a future plan and boots on the ground all the time. To quote, "There is no simple or immediate way to discern the right response without a relationship" with those one endeavors to help.

It's a powerful read.

*Catherine Howard*



### *And still more Outreach:*

## **Warm Clothing Needed**

Dutchess County Community Action is in need of warm clothing (coats, hats, mittens) for ages 2-8. The blue bins in the old rectory office await your donations.

## Altar Flowers

The altar flower arrangements are produced by an amazingly responsible and creative group of women. They seldom buy flowers from florists because of a preference for seasonal material—and cost. Committee members find themselves pilfering from their own gardens and those of friends, and prowling slowly along back roads looking for choice wild selections. They become quite adept at knowing where to go to find material at different seasons. The committee is completely capable of making arrangements for weddings, baptisms, funerals and special requests.

Christmas and Easter are notable for their lack of frugality, taking up most of the flower budget

for the year. Funds come from the church and donations for memorial flowers—with enough donations, we can break even.

Several years ago Ed Johnston made a proposal that became quite helpful. It came in the form of a sheet (in the Parish Hall) on which people can sign up to donate flowers for special occasions or as an honorarium on a given Sunday, with a voluntary donation. The average weekly cost for flowers is \$50. That being said, a donation of any amount would be welcome.

Also, we invite anyone who would care to join the committee or offer an extra hand on the major holidays to lend a hand. Christmas is coming!

*Betsey Battistoni*



### The Christmas Services

#### Sunday, December 13 — Third Sunday of Advent

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist & sermon*

9:30 am *Morning Prayer & sermon*

5:00 pm *Candlelight Vespers service held jointly with Grace Church – followed by a chili supper in the parish hall*

#### Sunday, December 20 — Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist & sermon*

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

#### Thursday, December 24 — Christmas Eve

5:00 pm *Sunday School Pageant*

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

#### Friday, December 25 — Christmas Day

9:30 am *Holy Eucharist, with carols*

#### Sunday, December 27 — First Sunday after Christmas

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist & sermon*

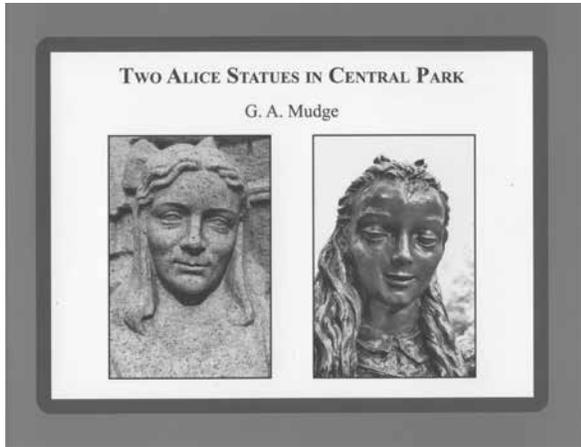
9:30 am *Morning Prayer & sermon*

### Department of Lost Articles

A 12" white oval deep baking dish with scalloped edges was left in the kitchen at the Potluck lunch over Indaba weekend (October 8). Have you seen it? If so, please let us know at [stpeterschurch@optonline.net](mailto:stpeterschurch@optonline.net).

## From the Editors' Desk

It's always a great pleasure to praise an author who also is a parishioner of St. Peter's, and here we are again, praising Moby Mudge who has written a second book about the Alice in Wonderland statues, *Two Alice Statues in Central Park*, by G.A. Mudge (Fotobs Books, \$24.95). The book contains 62 photographs of the two Alice statues and 28 of Sir John Tenniel's illustrations for the first publication of *Alice in Wonderland* in 1865.



Moby says in his Introduction to the new book, "Alice asked, 'and what is the use of a book without pictures or conversation?' We may ask the same of the two *Alice* statues in Central Park. This book provides pictures. It is up to the viewer to engage in conversation with the statues." Meet and greet the White Rabbit, the Hatter, the Dormouse....and many more. This book is, like its predecessor, a treasure.

You'll find many of your own favorite writers represented in a delightful new book about the Bible – *The GOOD BOOK – Writers Reflect on Favorite Bible Passages*, introduction by Adam Gopnik, edited by Andrew Blauner (Simon & Schuster, \$27.00). The Bible—the bestselling book of all time—has been translated into more than 500 languages. It sparks controversy as well as intense feelings of inspiration and joy. This fine book brings together novelists, es-

sayists, media figures, and social activists writing about passages in the Bible that inform the way they live and see society today. The book includes a new short story by Colm Toibin and a new poem by Robert Pinsky.

It's an edifying and entertaining anthology for readers of all faiths....and those who are "still looking." Garrison Keillor said of the book, "It's the Sunday School class you've been waiting for, the one whose members have thought hard about the texts and are free to say what they think." Browsers' heaven!

This book is in the Parish Library.

And what's a book column without a novel? I think you'll enjoy Michael Golding's "spiritual fable for the ages," *A Poet of the Invisible World* (Picador, \$16.00). It's a spiritual fable about a young boy in 13<sup>th</sup>-century Persia who embarks on a remarkable journey through pain and transcendence. There's also a story behind it, which sees author Michael Golding through a spiritual journey of his own. The result is a profound meditation on faith, identity, and change, inspired by the wisdom of mystical Sufi poets Rumi, Attar, and Hafiz.

Asked in an interview what inspired a Jewish American writer to write a novel set in the Muslim world, Golding replied, "The spiritual path is a journey from darkness to light, no matter the teaching through which it unfolds."

Happy reading!

Ann La Farge

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### Looking for Fresh New Faces....

on the Coffee Hour Hosts Team. This is a great way to get to know people in the congregation and continue the long tradition of chats over steaming coffee and crumpets. See the sign-up sheet in the parish hall.

### Deadlines for Keynotes

February 20

May 20

August 20

November 20

Please send submissions to: [alafarge@aol.com](mailto:alafarge@aol.com) & [acgillis@optonline.net](mailto:acgillis@optonline.net)



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*“Who wants it to snow at Christmas?”*



Walking my girls to school this morning, which sadly happens all too rarely, I was enlightened to the following Dutchess County folklore by my eight-year-old.

“Daddy, do you know how to make it snow at Christmas?” Although I have answers for most things, this was one for which I did not. “Well, on Christmas Eve you put your pajamas on inside out, flush an ice cube down the drain, and sleep with a spoon under your pillow.” Simple, really.



My point is, I am sure that there are other busy parents out there like me who need to be reminded of the importance of making the time to take our children to school more often. Who knows what you may learn and, hopefully, it will bring a smile to your day, as it has to mine.



William R. Morlock

