

St. Peter's Church

LITHGOW

P.O. Box 1502

Millbrook, NY 12545

September 22, 2014

Dear fellow St. Peter's parishioners,

Since the retirement of Ed Johnston in early June of last year, our parish has continued to thrive, led ably by our invaluable staff, and also by parishioners who have pitched in, as always, in a variety of roles, including the Altar Guild, the Flower Guild, the readers, the choir, the triennial auction committee, and of course the coffee hour organizers and volunteers, not to mention the Vestry, the Priest-in-the-Pulpit Committee and the Search Committee, as well as numerous others who assist in less visible ways. Week after week, for 15 months, parishioners of St. Peter's have gathered together – and not just in twos and threes – in this very special place, without a Vicar, but secure in the knowledge that St. Peter's remains a warm, caring and energizing place, what the Parish Profile produced by the Search Committee called “a sense of fellowship and community” within the parish.

We are very pleased to report that the day has finally arrived when the 31st Vicar of St. Peter's, Lithgow will be joining us in this very special community. As we announced at the 9:30 service this past Sunday, following months of exhaustive work by the Search Committee, the Vestry has unanimously voted to call The Rev. Canon Albert Joy Ogle, who will be joining us next month from St. Paul's Cathedral in San Diego, where he has served on the cathedral staff for the last six years. Albert was born and raised in Belfast, Northern Ireland and, following education and training at Trinity College, Dublin, became a priest in the Church of Ireland, an autonomous province of the Anglican Communion, until he left Dublin in the early 1980s to move to London and then to Los Angeles, where he joined the Episcopal Church in 1982.

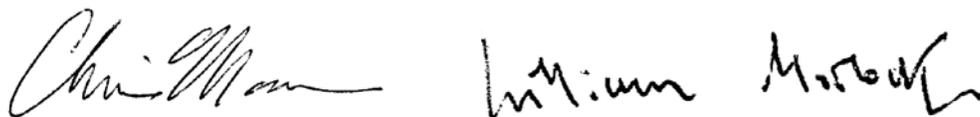
Albert has been serving as the President of the St. Paul's Foundation for International Reconciliation, based at the cathedral in San Diego, and will continue to play a role at the foundation, whose work is focused on reconciliation and health projects where there is an interplay between faith and human rights. Albert has had a varied career, including serving as clergy staff in Dublin, Belfast, Pasadena, Laguna Hills, California – where he served as Rector of St. George's Episcopal Church and Academy for several years – and most recently the cathedral in San Diego. The story of his life and ministry is a fascinating one, which the Search Committee and Vestry have enjoyed learning, and which he looks forward to sharing with the parish. In light of the self-study exercise that the Search Committee led, the Parish Profile that emerged from it, and our various meetings with Albert, both the Search Committee and the Vestry believe that Albert has the experience, skills and personality to lead our community as our new Vicar.

Albert, who has visited Millbrook several times and has spent a considerable amount of time with the Search Committee and the Vestry, is looking forward to spending his time with us as our parish priest focusing on preaching, teaching and pastoral care, as well as outreach in the general community. He will be joined in Millbrook by his partner, Mile Petrov, as soon as Mile, currently an engineer with Qualcomm in San Diego, is able to secure employment in New York City. They expect to get an apartment in the City, and Albert will spend part of his time there. The position of Vicar will remain a part-time position, and we expect Albert to spend 25 hours per week in his role as Vicar. We have signed a two-year commitment with him with a provision for rolling contract extensions, consistent with customary practice in the Diocese and our past practice.

Albert expects to be with us in the pews of St. Peter's for the first few weeks of his service, beginning on Sunday, October 12, and preaching his first sermon on Sunday, November 2. He will leave for a couple of weeks in November to complete the move but will rejoin us before Thanksgiving. Mile hopes to arrive in January. Albert and Mile are both excited about the move and are very much looking forward to getting to know the community and to participating fully in all that Millbrook has to offer. Please join us on October 12 to welcome Albert as our 31st Vicar. A formal installation ceremony, led by the Bishop, will be held at a later date.

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the entire Search Committee, led by Betsy Shequine and Woody Kee-see and consisting of members Colleen Dealy, Jim Florack, Brian Johnston, Bindy Kaye, Torrie Larson, T. Nolan, Will Morlock, David Parshall, Sarah Stack and Julie Turino, for all their hard work and wise judgment, as well as to our Priest-in-the-Pulpit Committee, composed of Matt Borsch, Sarah Bennison, Andrew Gundlach and Lillian Corbin, for bringing us a wide-ranging group of visiting preachers over the last year and a half, a practice we have agreed with Albert will continue from time to time, and of course to our Vestry. We are very grateful to our Assistant Priest Cam Hardy for her leadership of so many aspects of the parish over the interim period, and to our parish secretary Anne Gillis, who has provided irreplaceable institutional memory and has done so much to ensure the smooth running of the parish, as well as to Nancy Vanderlee, our organist, who has continued throughout the interim period to ensure the highest-quality music for our services, and to the other members of our staff.

There will be time to celebrate Albert's arrival, as well as to celebrate the enormous efforts of all the above, and the dedication, patience, prayers and support of all our parishioners during this interim time. Perhaps the most important outcome of this period has been the confirmation of the strength of the parish, the regard with which our parishioners hold each other, and the special place St. Peter's holds in the community. We look forward to welcoming Albert and Mile into our midst.

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Chris Mann' and the signature on the right is 'Will Morlock'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Mann and Will Morlock
Wardens