

The S. Stephen

MICHAELMAS

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From the Rector

My Dear People,

The parish has enjoyed a good summer. For eight consecutive Sundays, we offered Mass in the Lady Chapel while renovations to the sanctuary and choir floor were underway. Although attendance dropped a bit as it does most summers, we held our own, and many parishioners commented that they enjoyed worshipping in the smaller space that seemed more intimate and sometimes almost crowded. We missed the organ, to be sure, but the team of cantors from the Schola did a splendid job of leading us in the singing of unaccompanied hymns and the plainchant melodies of the *Missa Marialis*.

We returned to the “main church” on August 23rd. The results of the floor renovation were spectacular. The altar party moved about on a smooth and shiny surface; virtually all of the underfoot creaking and groaning has been eliminated. Flooring contractor Allen Moitza of Middletown was able to repair and resecure almost all of the original cherry and maple tiles. It is a beautiful floor, now restored to something like its appearance when first installed in the early 1880s.

At the beginning of June, we welcomed Fr. Martin Yost as our new Assistant Priest and Episcopal Minister at Brown and RISD. He has learned the ropes quickly and is getting the Student Group under way again as the Fall semester begins. If you have not yet met him, please introduce yourself and get to know him.

At the time of writing, we have just mailed the 2015-2016 *Liturgical Music* and *Programs and Events* brochures. Some exciting offerings are detailed therein.

The choir returned on Sunday 13 September. Musical events during the coming year include a Lecture

-Recital by Peter Stoltzfus Berton, Organist at St. John’s Church, Newport, on the Improvisations of Gerre Hancock (November 8th) and a concert by Blue Heron, the Early and Medieval musical



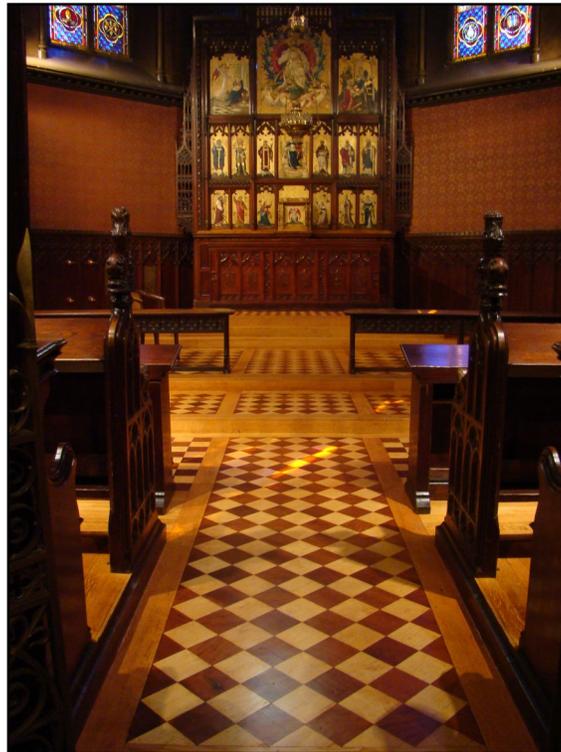
ensemble based in Boston and directed by Scott Metcalfe (December 20th). For a change, this year James Busby and musical guests will be playing the Memorial Recital in the Spring rather than in the Fall, on the evening of May 8th (which also happens to be Mother’s Day – just the opportunity for those wanting to take their mothers out for a special treat in the evening!)

Devotional activities include an Advent Quiet Day with addresses by the Rt. Rev. Daniel Martins, Bishop of the Diocese of Springfield, Illinois (December 12th), and a Lenten Quiet Day with addresses by the Rt. Rev. Russell E. Jacobus, retired Bishop of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Both bishops are

known for their inspiring meditations; both are scheduled to stay over and preach on the Sunday following.

During Lent of 2016, we shall be trying something new: a combined program of Stations of the Cross, Supper, and a Lecture Series on Friday evenings. Our hope is that this format, combining activities previously held on separate evenings, will focus our energy on one principal weekly event during the season and bring more parishioners together at the

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same time. For the lectures, I am planning a series of addresses on “Five Christian Ethical Traditions on War and Peace” – a topic drawing on my doctoral dissertation research last year.

We are pleased to announce that the Rt. Rev. W. Nicholas Knisely, XIII Bishop of Rhode Island, will be making his second official Episcopal Visitation to S. Stephen’s on Sunday, April 24th, 2016. If you or someone you know would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation or be received into the Episcopal Church, *now* is the time to let me know so that we can begin planning the appropriate classes.

We are continuing our reciprocal celebrations of major feasts with our fellow Rhode Island Anglo-Catholic parish St. John’s, Newport. In 2016, S. Stephen’s will host the Feasts of the Presentation, Visitation, and Transfiguration. St. John’s will host the Epiphany, Annunciation, and Assumption. (Check the brochure for the exact dates.)

This exciting program year offers multiple opportunities for growth in the knowledge and love of God. I look forward to seeing those who have been away for all or part of the summer in September and the months following. We all need to do our part and pull together – attending Mass and supporting our parish programs and events. With help and guidance from above, we will experience another year of the Lord’s grace and favor.

This letter comes as always with all prayers and best wishes. I remain, faithfully,

Your pastor and priest,

Fr. John D. Alexander



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TREASURER’S CORNER

By Ransom Widmer

We’re almost there!!!!

Near the end of 2012, we all gathered together at the Hope Club for a formal dinner to discuss the proposed Capital Campaign: one of the results of Vestry and parishioners meeting with consultant Peter Saros.

The objective of the Campaign was to raise funds for three projects: renovation of the Great Hall, repairing and refinishing the Sanctuary floor, and restoration of the north aisle stained glass windows.

Over the next few months we received pledges totaling \$111,940 to be paid over the three-year period 2013, 2014, and 2015. In addition, one-time contributions from non-parishioners were received in the amount of \$7,550 bringing the total expected giving to the Capital Campaign to \$119,490.

As of August 30th of this year, the Capital Campaign has received contributions in the amount of \$101,161 with 90% of pledges paid. We still have four months (11% of the three year period) to collect the outstanding \$11,329. Later this fall, each pledger will receive a statement as of September 30th showing the amount of pledge, contributions received, and (if any) contributions payable by year-end.

Renovation of the Great Hall was completed in September 2013; it is used for parish and outside events. The repair and refinishing of the Sanctuary floor was completed this summer. Although only minor repairs to the north aisle windows have been made, the Capital Campaign has funded our hiring of Julie Sloan, stained glass consultant. Julie and her crew have inspected the north aisle windows and delivered a full report on each window including recommendations for needed work. This report indicates that these valuable and rare stained glass windows are in very dire condition. As soon as additional funds are raised, we will request Julie to prepare bids for the contractors.

This is a very large and expensive project! The parish alone cannot be expected to fund it. We have formed a committee, which, working with Julie, is looking for fund-raising sources outside the parish and exploring avenues by which to approach them. *The S. Stephen* will keep you informed of our progress on this urgent project.

Early next year we will publish an exhibit in *The S. Stephen* showing all Capital Campaign contributions received and expense paid. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to ask me directly.

FR. YOST'S LETTER

There is a poignancy to autumn that never seems to lose its appeal for me. There is a sense of excitement and anticipation that comes with the start of a new academic year as well as the resumption of parish programs and other activities. Being in a new parish and beginning a new ministry with the students at Brown and RISD makes all this especially true for me this fall. But the sense of excitement and anticipation that comes at this time is tempered by the reminder that the invigorating cooler weather of fall will be followed by the freeze of winter. The days are getting shorter, and the world around will soon lie dormant.

It is at this time that the Church enters the last part of her year. As the long season after Pentecost draws to a close, we look to the end and fulfillment of all things. This is the Church's harvest time. Two September feasts bring this theme especially to mind. The first is Holy Cross Day on September 14th. Here we see in the sign of Christ's victory over sin and death the consummation of God's saving work, the gathering up of all things in Christ. Then on the 29th is Saint Michael and All Angels, reminding us that beyond this world, yet also alongside and penetrating it, is the spiritual world. Saint Michael the Archangel leads the armies of God in apocalyptic battle, reaping the fruit of Christ's triumph through the Cross. These two feasts draw our attention both to where we are now and where we are headed. Christ indeed has won the victory over sin and death; yet he must conquer in the heart of each and every man and woman who will be saved. We are invited to enter into this mystery, this great drama of salvation at every Mass. Through worship we come to know and love and long for what God has in store for us.



It is my particular hope that members of our student community, who are at a point when they are certainly alive to the many possibilities this world has to offer, will find through our ministry at S. Stephen's a place to explore the larger questions of meaning and purpose, becoming alive to the possibilities of the next



world. Let us, then, for the sake of those whose lives we touch, be faithful witnesses to Christian hope by living each day with a view to eternity. In response to the love God has shown us in Christ, who offered himself for us on the altar of the Cross, let us be faithful in prayer, in self-examination and confession, and, above all, in "joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven" in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The time for these things is *now*. Life is short, and eternity is so very long!



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CIVILITY IN PUBLIC DISCOURSE PART ONE: THE HANGOVER FROM MODERNITY

By Fr. Alexander

It's been an uncivil summer. A disturbing stridency has marred political debates on topics ranging from marriage equality, to Confederate battle flags, to federal funding for Planned Parenthood. As the 2016 Presidential election gets closer, we can expect the debasement of public discourse to become more pronounced. At the time of writing, admittedly early in the campaign, one presidential aspirant has scored high public approval ratings by excoriating public officeholders as "stupid" and "losers."

I write this not to grind any political ax. Incivility infects the public pronouncements of protagonists at all points on the political spectrum: left and right, liberal and conservative, progressive and traditional. Symptoms include the almost pervasive use of *ad hominem* arguments, in which attacks on the intelligence and moral character of opponents substitute for substantive engagement with their positions. This tendency finds its logical terminus in the *demonization* of political opponents: dismissing them as representatives of an evil with which no dialogue, negotiation, or compromise is possible or desirable.

A similar incivility has marked the life of the Episcopal Church in recent decades. Debates over issues such as the ordination of women and same-sex marriage have not brought out the best in many church members, lay and ordained. Within the past ten years, hundreds of clergy, thousands of parishioners, dozens of parishes and (by my count) five dioceses have departed the Episcopal Church, prompting litigation costing millions and millions of dollars. The saddest aspect of this whole ordeal has been the vitriolic rhetoric and name-calling. The various parties have flung such epithets as "heretic," "apostate," "schismatic," "misogynist," "homophobe," and "bigot" at one another with abandon. As in the secular political sphere, so in the sphere of ecclesiastical politics, *ad hominem* attacks and demonization often came to substitute for dialogue and engagement.

The current ecclesiastical landscape is not, however, totally bleak. A hopeful signal from this summer's General Convention is the election of a new Presiding Bishop publicly committed to fostering reconciliation within the Church and extending a hand of friendship to those who have departed. The disagreements are still so intractable, and the wounds so raw,

that such initiatives seem unlikely to bear much fruit in the foreseeable future. But they are step in the right direction, and what seems humanly impossible to us is always possible with God. Another hopeful sign is what appears to be a trend of dioceses electing a new generation of what I like to call "post-ideological" bishops, who, while upholding the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Episcopal Church, are also demonstrating a genuine commitment to embracing a plurality of traditions and viewpoints within their dioceses. Our own bishop is a shining example.

The challenge before us is to promote civility in public discourse, both within the Church and in the wider sphere of secular politics. Many in the Church share this aspiration. One commentator remarked that this summer's General Convention aimed at "conversation, not debate." To move in this direction, however, it helps to understand why our public discourse became so uncivil in the first place. Then we can begin to devise remedies.

Much of our thinking is still unconsciously dominated by the assumptions of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, which in large part define the "modern" worldview. Part of our collective hangover from modernity is a tacit belief in what might be called a "universal rationality" – that is, the belief that what seems self-evidently true and reasonable to an intelligent and well-educated person in one time and place will also seem self-evidently true and reasonable to all intelligent and well-educated people in all times and places. This assumption works well enough in mathematics and perhaps some of the hard sciences. But it doesn't work as well in the humanistic realms of culture, art, ethics, politics, and religion. Its implicit corollary is that when other people disagree with what seems true, just, and reasonable to us, the only possible explanation is that they must be stupid, ignorant, or wicked. The Enlightenment belief in a universal rationality thus contains within itself the seeds of *ad hominem* attacks upon and demonization of our opponents – precisely the problem identified above as a defining feature of our contemporary political and ecclesiastical landscape.

A corrective to this assumption of a universal rationality comes from the movement known as post-modernism, which proposes that what seems true, just, and rational to us is much more the product of our for-

mation by our cultural, ethical, and political contexts than we are generally able to recognize. (The title of philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre's 1988 book makes this point: *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*) It follows that when the expression of certain opinions makes people seem stupid, ignorant, uneducated, or evil, they are not necessarily so. On the contrary: they are often extraordinarily intelligent, well-educated, well meaning, and *good* people. But their thinking is the product of *different* cultural and ethical traditions than the ones that have formed our thinking.

For this reason, debate among adherents of different traditions resembles a "dialogue of the deaf" (an unfortunate phrase, since actual deaf people generally communicate with each other very well). Proponents of competing political and ethical viewpoints don't really hear or understand one another; more often, they are "talking past each other." An apt metaphor is that they are "speaking different languages."

However, the language metaphor hints in the direction of a solution. We initially find someone speaking a foreign language unintelligible and incomprehensible. But that need not be the end of the matter. Foreign languages can be *learned*, and to some extent translated. Those who master foreign languages often remark that they open up whole new worlds, even making it possible to think thoughts and express ideas that are impossible to think and express in our own language.

The position that I am staking out is not relativism, the easygoing dismissal of all truth claims along the lines of "What's true for you is true for you and what's true for me is true for me." As a Christian and as a priest, I am committed to the conviction that there are absolute truths. But I am suggesting that many of our assumptions about what is self-evidently true and rational are in fact culturally conditioned; and, more fundamentally, that even genuinely universal truths can only be expressed in particular cultural languages, which must first be learned. When I begin preparing adults for Baptism, I routinely tell them that my task is to teach them, and their task is to learn, a *new language* – consisting of stories, symbols, and practices – that will enable them to interpret their lives and experience through the lens of a Christian worldview.

A first step towards achieving civility in public discourse, then, is realizing that political and ethical opinions that don't make sense to us *do* make sense in the context of the cultural traditions – the ethical "languages" as it were – in which they evolved and

took shape. Our problem is that we have not yet learned the languages that unlock their full meaning. This situation calls for enormous patience, forbearance, and hard work. We need to put in the effort to understand how what others are saying makes sense in the context of traditions that may be alien to our own. Before we rush to judge and condemn them wholesale, we need to determine whether they contain values that our own traditions would affirm. Even if we disagree vehemently with others' *conclusions* on certain hot-button issues, can we embrace any aspects of the reasoning that got them there? Can we learn anything from them? Might they offer correctives to our own blind spots? This effort to identify common ground despite continuing differences can lead to the further identification of areas where there might even be scope for cooperation.

The reader who has persevered in following the argument thus far is apt to object: But what about ethical traditions and political ideologies that are genuinely evil? Surely civility in dialogue was not called for with the Nazis, or with the Ku Klux Klan? Surely it is not called for today in dealing with, say, ISIS? It is one thing to avoid demonizing our opponents, but what happens when dialogue reveals aspects of their ideologies to be genuinely demonic? The point is well taken. Sin is a reality in human life. Sometimes the effort at mutual understanding will reveal not points of underlying agreement and potential for mutual cooperation but rather evils so wicked that our only option is to resist, fight, and defeat them. I hope to take up this point in the next issue of *The S. Stephen*.

For the moment, however, I want to conclude by suggesting that apart from these extreme cases, civility in public discourse is a core Anglican virtue, which we do well to retrieve and practice to the best of our ability. It may indeed be the principal gift that we are called to share with our wider ecclesiastical and political communities at this juncture in our history.



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RITUALISM: PART ONE, THE BEGINNINGS

By Phoebe Pettingell

When discussing Anglo-Catholicism, much has been written about the Oxford Movement, also known as the Tractarians—their theology and influence, and especially the interplay of intellect and affection among its three principal figures: the poetic John Keble (1792-1866); scholarly and austere Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882), and the brilliant but volatile John Henry Newman (1801-1890). The first stage of this new phase of Churchmanship ended with “the parting of friends,” when Newman lost faith in the power of their ideals to transform the Church of England, and converted to Roman Catholicism. Newman’s own background had been Evangelical to begin with. Keble and Pusey both came from High Church clerical backgrounds. The former, in any case, had never expected to effect a radical overhaul of a body so cumbersome as the Church of England. It was enough for him to plant a few seeds that might sprout in generations to come. To many, he seemed a kind of George Herbert, the epitome of the holy parish priest/poet, and his hymns soon became staples of worship. Pusey combined a realistic understanding of the Church of England with an idealism even loftier than Newman’s. Not until the Oxford Movement’s leaders had become saints comparable to the Early Church Fathers, he wrote, could it be expected that their teachings would have much impact. Nonetheless, he shouldered its leadership after Newman’s defection, unworthy though he felt himself to be, and if he lacked the other’s charisma, he nonetheless possessed a dogged steadfastness and depth of scholarship that made him seem a heroic and wise, if not very lovable figure. He was too solemn for that. In any case, the Tractarian Movement, so called because the founders produced a series of “Tracts for These Times” between 1833 and 1841, was primarily fueled by theology and principles rather than by dramatic changes in practice such as crosses or statues, manual gestures, wafers rather than ordinary bread at Communion, a mixed chalice of water and wine, or vestments and paraments.

It is often argued that these additions, which mostly followed later, added nothing to the movement,

and were unnecessary and sometimes needlessly provocative, although in reality they did not cause more controversy than the Tracts. My contention in these articles is that the Ritualists—as they came to be known—were, on the contrary, the true beginning of the Anglo-Catholic movement. Furthermore, not all of them were disciples of the Tractarians at all. In fact, in this series, I will go further and suggest that without the Ritualists, the Oxford Movement might well have been yet another intellectual flash in the pan like many other theological movements that deeply affected the English Universities in their time, but never had a lasting impact on the Church outside once the generation of undergraduates who had imbibed them passed from the scene. Anglo-Catholicism has continued to hold its own throughout most provinces of the Anglican Communion. Although premature obituaries have often been written for it, phoenix-like it continues to rise from the ashes. It might well have come into being even without the Tractarians, since the climate of Romanticism was fruitful for such a movement. As future articles will demonstrate, not all of its features came from the Oxford influence by any means.



John Mason Neale (1818 — 1866) Wearing Eucharistic Vestments

To lay the groundwork, it is necessary to say something about the Church of England before these sea changes, and the climate that inspired them. The influence of the English Enlightenment brought a kind of deist rationality to religion that substituted the Ancient Greek “Know Thyself” for Salvation, which, in turn, reduced the role of Christ as Redeemer, but emphasized the ethical teachings of both Moses and Jesus (those which accorded with English law and morals). To be sure, there remained a “High Church” Party, Tory in politics, wedded to the Divine Right of Kings and the importance of the office of bishops and the rubrics of *The Book of Common Prayer*. However, in 1838, the young John Wesley—who had hitherto been something of a spiritual seeker, beginning as a High Church cleric, then worshipping with the Moravians, experienced an “Evangelical conversion” reading Luther’s preface to Paul’s Epistle to the

Romans. Wesley's form of religion was a counter to the rationalism of the era. Christians were to seek their salvation through holiness of life, opening their hearts to their Savior and praying for "perfection." Although late in life, Wesley ordained a "superintendent" (i.e., bishop) and two clergy for the newly formed Methodist Church in the United States, neither he nor his brother Charles, the hymn-writer, ever left the Church of England, though a large number of his followers chose to. Methodism began as a revival movement, especially concerned with preaching to both the rural poor and slum dwellers—hence its condemnation of drinking and gambling, both of which kept those in poverty from getting ahead. However, by the 1830s, it was becoming the religion of the merchant classes, increasingly bourgeois and "respectable." That said, fewer than fifty percent of the population attended the Church of England by the 1830s, either because they opted for a more evangelical form of worship, because they felt no need for membership in any formal religious body, or because they identified themselves as agnostic or atheist.

Those who did attend the Church of England sat in private box pews if they had the money for pew rents, or on hard benches otherwise, to listen to the "parson" and "clerk" read Morning Prayer and the Litany, then later in the day Evening Prayer—all according to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. Music consisted of metrical psalms accompanied by a string quartet of varying ability, depending on the resources of the parish. Sermons generally lasted well over an hour. Much of the service was conducted from the pulpit, often a "three-decker," with the clerk on a lower deck. The "holy table" was movable and generally pushed out of the way except on those rare occasions where Communion was offered. The parson wore a black "Geneva" gown, even to celebrate, when he stood at the "north end" of the table. The bread came from an ordinary loaf, while the wine was unmixed with water, and the unused part often poured back into the bottle to be reused next time. Services lacked any visual interest beyond the unvarying appearance of the church interior. For the funeral of a wealthy parishioner, as much of the walls as possible were hung with black or purple crepe. Otherwise there were no hangings of any

sort, certainly no crosses unless the building was so old that it still had an undamaged rood beam that had not been torn down by the Puritans. However, the Sabbath was kept strictly. No work was to be done, even by servants, nor pleasurable activities. Food was eaten cold. Even little children were not allowed toys or picture books unless they were engravings in the family Bible or *Pilgrim's Progress*. Many a Victorian memoir recalled the tedious misery of Sundays, sitting in a parlor in uncomfortable clothes between long church services in overly cold or hot buildings (depending on the time of year), unable to play, exercise, or read anything but books related to religion. Many, if not all adults found Sabbaths equally dull.

The beginning of the Oxford Movement is generally dated from 1833, when John Keble preached his sermon on "National Apostasy". Most accounts of the vital renewal of Anglicanism in the 19th century credit the Tractarians at the very least with igniting the spark that caught fire throughout what was to become known as the

Anglican Communion, and reforming the way congregations worshipped, culminating in the late 20th century in the current generation of Prayer Books. Yet the year before Keble's famous sermon, William Palmer of Worcester College (Oxford) wrote *Origines Liturgicae* in which he argued that the use of the alb, chasuble and stole (which he illustrated) were ordered by the Ornaments Rubric of the English Prayer Book, which states that "*such Ornaments of the Church, and of the Ministers thereof, at all times of their Ministrations, shall be retained, and be in use, as were in this Church of England, by the Authority of Parliament, in the Second Year of the Reign of King Edward the Sixth*" [i.e., 1539]. Soon liturgical supply houses were offering them for sale. The Romantic Movement had already revived an interest in the Middle Ages. In 1839, while the Tracts were still being published, John Mason Neale, Alexander Hope, and Benjamin Webb founded the Cambridge Camden Society to promote the restoration of gothic churches along with such fittings as rood screens, stone altars, misericords and the like. In 1841, the year of Newman's controversial Tract 90, the Camden Society's new magazine, *The Ecclesiologist*, proclaimed their philosophy that the proper kind of building and furniture would lead to a theology that would



Three Decker Pulpit, 1813. Saint John's Chapel, Chichester, Sussex, England

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match it. An early letter states, “We know that [medieval] Catholick ethics gave rise to Catholick architecture; may we not hope that, by a kind of reverse process, association with Catholick architecture will give rise to Catholick ethics?” The Wikipedia article on the Cambridge Camden Society goes on to say, “The Ecclesiologists earnestly believed that medieval men were ‘more spiritually-minded and less worldly-minded’ than those of the modern world and that it was their duty to help return England to its former piety.”

Keble and Pusey largely distrusted these “innovations,” and the rituals that soon accompanied them. So did Newman until his conversion to Rome, and even then he never seemed particularly interested in the aesthetic aspect of worship. Nonetheless, music and visual interest excited many worshippers and helped create an enthusiasm for Anglo-Catholicism mere ideas might well not have. Especially among slum-dwellers, ritual worship conveyed a sense of the glory of God and an ordered creation to those whose lives seemed chaotic. Priests and Nuns willing to live among them and share their poverty while bringing them the hope of something better both in this

world and the next were inspirational to middle class followers in a different way. They rediscovered ancient Christian patterns of serving God and their brothers and sisters among the poor.

Not everyone took to these changes. Some were frankly appalled. The Tractarians reintroduced the practice of auricular confession, which especially upset the Victorian status quo. The notion that a man’s wife or daughters might be telling some priest the family secrets was especially offensive to the tenor of the age. Soon, Anglican Sisterhoods were being founded for the first time since the dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of Henry VIII. John Mason Neale at East Grinstead and Alexander Harriot Mackonochie at St. Alban’s Holborn—“Darkest London,” as William Booth of the Salvation Army had called this dreadful slum—put on “popish” vestments

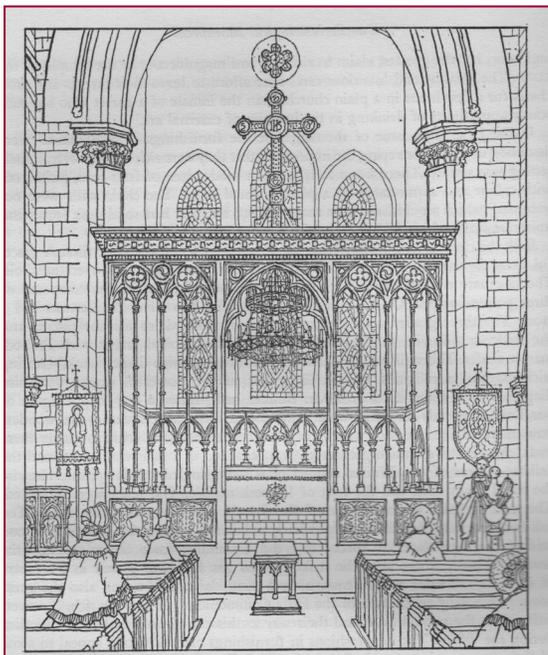
instead of a plain white surplice, and, facing east with their backs to the congregation (instead of sideways from the “north end,” as was then the custom), elevated the host and chalice during the celebration of the Eucharist. Although the Tractarians disapproved of these liturgical moves, both the Church and secular press began to call all Anglo-Catholic ritual “Puseyite”—a name that stuck throughout the rest of the century as a term of opprobrium for any practice deemed to be outré and “Papist.” Much of it would seem standard Broad Church today,

but this only reinforces how devoid of any kind of ceremony Anglicanism had become.

To clarify the difference between the Tractarians and other Anglo-Catholics, it becomes necessary first to define the Oxford Movement’s accomplishments. They argued that far from an English “Reformation” at the time Henry VIII broke with Rome, the Church had merely continued the tradition of the ancient Catholicism of the British Isles as first established by St. Augustine of Canterbury. Against Calvinist Protestant doctrine that denied that the celebration of the Eucharist was sacrificial and that the elements changed from bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, the Tractarians appealed to the Church Fathers, arguing that when Christ said, “Take, eat, this is my Body which is given for you,” he meant just that,

not that this was merely a memorial of the Last Supper. Another of their points was that baptism was indeed the washing away of sins—the Evangelical wing of the Church denied its regenerative power, which, they believed, could only take place in the heart by accepting Jesus as one’s personal Savior. Furthermore, the Tractarians emphasized that the Prayer Book rubrics directed ceremonial acts, which had largely fallen into abeyance but ought to be obeyed. To promulgate their theology, they started publishing “Tracts for the Times,” facilitated by new, cheap printing techniques. These were widely distributed and read, and although some of them stirred a storm of controversy, they also influenced many young clergy.

They took as models the Early Church Fathers and the Caroline Divines. Enlightenment scholarship had paid little attention to the Fathers. Greek scholarship was



Saint Barnabas, Pimlico, London, 1850. Church designed according to Cambridge Camden Society principles. Drawing from Peter F. Anson, *Fashions in Church Furnishings 1840-1940* (London: Faith Press, 1960), p. 70.

still somewhat weak at the universities at the beginning of the 19th century, the Middle Ages was seen as a period of superstition and corruption, and in general England remained anti-Catholic ever since the break from Rome. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, though written in the 16th century, remained popular for its sadistic description of executions under "Bloody Mary," (ignoring the greater number of burnings later committed by her sister, Elizabeth) while Guy Fawkes Day, commemorating the foiling of a Catholic plot to blow up Parliament and the King during the reign of James I in the 17th century, was gleefully celebrated every November 5th with the burning of an effigy, often representing the Pope. The Caroline Divines—so-called because they flourished during the reign of Charles I (1630-1649)—had also argued that Anglicanism represented an unbroken tradition from the coming of Christianity to Britain, rather than a Protestant Reformation. Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud had tried to impose a more catholic BCP on the Scots—it is, in fact, the origin of the Prayer Book used by the Episcopal Church beginning in 1779. The Carolines witnessed to an English tradition neither Roman nor Protestant, but what came to be known as the *Via Media*, or Middle Way. Among the accomplishments of the Tractarians were English translations of the Church Fathers and *The Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology* (known for short as LACT), mainly the writings of the Caroline divines including Lancelot Andrewes, William Laud, John Cosin and Jeremy Taylor. Furthermore, the Tractarians came up with the "Three Branch" theory of the Apostolic Church—the thesis that there was an Eastern branch (the Orthodox), a Western branch (Rome), and a Celtic branch (the British Isles). This idea proved immensely powerful in convincing some Anglicans that their Church was, indeed, part of the universal Catholic body founded by the Apostles.

The Tractarians did more than devise theology and publish. As previously mentioned, they revived the practice of auricular (private) Confession, and began to found Anglican religious Sisterhoods. It must be noted that they were not the only ones to do this. Although they were reluctant to introduce too many innovations to public services of worship, they emphasized the im-

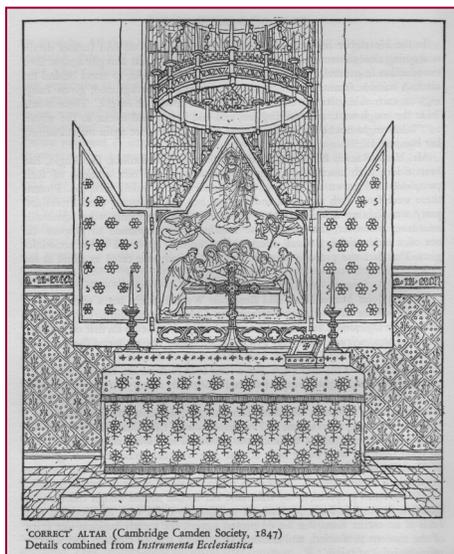
portance of frequent Communion (many people at this period rarely made them), and they were unafraid to introduce private spiritual practices such as making spiritual retreats, preferably at one of the new convents springing up, becoming an associate of a religious order, living by a Rule of Life, saying Morning and Evening Prayer daily, either at one's parish church if possible, or privately, and working for the poor by teaching or visiting the sick, not as Lady Bountiful out of a sense of *noblesse oblige*, but as the Apostles did to bring Christ's love to those He loves most—the ones who have least in this world. In order to identify more fully with those who have nothing, and also to subdue the sins of pride and envy, as well as the sins of the flesh, they kept strict fasts on the traditional days of Fridays, as well as during Lent and on the Vigils of major Feasts, slept on hard beds, while some of the more extreme wore hair shirts under their clothes or used a discipline—a leather, multi-strand whip with hard knots or metal heads. This kind of piety runs counter to contemporary tastes in our era and seems morbid to many, but in fact even the Evangelicals had their own strict practices, including those joyless Sabbaths. The popular objection to the disciplines of the Tractarians was not their severity but that they were "Romish."

At the same time, the founders of this movement not only had little interest in ritual, but distrusted it. Keble never wore vestments, and disapproved of attending Communion services without receiving, feeling that it might lead to a superstitious reverence for the mere celebration. Newman, before his conversion, followed the Puritan custom of his parish, St. Mary's, in handing Communion to parishioners in their pews or stalls. As for Pusey, as late as 1866, he told the English Church Union, "It is well known I never was a ritualist," adding,

We privately discouraged it, lest the whole movement should become superficial... we felt it was much easier to change a dress than to change the heart, and that externals might be gained at the cost of the doctrines themselves.

Even many of Pusey's avowed followers did not always agree with his emphasis on doctrines. When, in

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Cambridge Camden Society Design for a "Correct Altar," 1847. Drawing from Anson, *Fashions in Church Furnishings* 1840-1940, p. 54.

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the 1840s, the Church of England convened a panel to consider whether the rubric requiring the use of the Athanasian Creed on 13 designated feast days named in the BCP, Pusey felt this was essential to preserve the faith. However, the one Tractarian appointed to the commission, the Rev'd T. W. Perry, was perfectly happy to agree to the substitution of the Apostles' Creed.

Many of the Ritualists disagreed with the entire Tractarian emphasis. John Mason Neale felt that reviving the symbolic language of the Middle Ages in Church art, architecture, and hymnody would teach and safeguard the faith far better than emphasizing doctrines. As for Mackonochie, he argued for pluralism. Why should not Evangelicals be allowed to have evening prayer meetings while Anglo-Catholics celebrated the revived office of Compline? Both were praising God, and so what if neither of these was a Prayer Book service? In 1867, the Rev'd John Edwards preached a sermon arguing that when the first generation of students to sit at the feet of the Tractarians preached their doctrines in their own parishes, they were largely met by indifference. "It seemed as though the movement were stayed. . . . At length, it was seen that the Church's Ritual is the best exponent of Her Doctrine." Archdeacon Dennison wrote that "after many years experience, that Catholic Truth, however carefully taught in the Church, in the School, and from house to house, but not accompanied with its true and appropriate ceremonial, had failed to reach the hearts and influence the lives of my people." He added that once he began to practice the ritual "the remedy has been largely blessed."

What of the argument that, today, some parishes have all the trappings of Anglo-Catholic worship, yet without the substance of the Catholic faith? Even at the time of formation, some devotees of Ritualism seemed to embrace aesthetics with no particular sense of doctrine—Walter Pater, a vociferous opponent of Christianity in his novel, *Marius the Epicurean*, nonetheless toward the end of his life began attending St. Alban's Holborn and receiving Communion there, while continuing to pen essays hostile to the faith. Yet, on the other side, many onetime passionate followers of the Tractarians, such as the cleric, biographer and literary critic Mark Pattison, later turned against its principles. Some became frightened when men like Newman and Manning converted to Rome. Others repudiated what they perceived as their adolescent enthusiasm. No form of catechesis, be it dogmatic or ritual, can prevent backsliding or superficial understanding. The parable of the sower has much to teach in this regard about seed fallen on shallow soil.

The problem with histories of the Anglo-Catholic movement has been that the press, both religious and secular, along with the many enemies of both movements, conflated Tractarianism with various forms of Ritualism or saw the latter as the second generation of the former. In certain cases, this last notion had some truth to it, although in others it was wrong. Certain Tractarians have also dismissed Ritualism as a lesser undertaking, continuing to define Anglo-Catholicism as a set of theological principles. Yet Colin Stephenson, in his wildly humorous yet perceptive *Merrily on High* (1972), wisely observed that it is really an ethos rather than a system of beliefs, covering a wide spectrum of practices and theological nuances. There are certain constants, such as the belief that the Church is divinely ordained, not a "man-made institution," a clear ontological distinction between the role of the ordained clergy and the laity, and a belief in the power of the Sacraments. However, within these parameters lie more variations than outsiders, or even many Anglo-Catholics, are necessarily aware of.

The after-effects of 18th century religion, where the majority of worshippers had sat in churches largely devoid of ornamentation for hours on end to be preached and prayed at from the pulpit, had been to wear out interest in the niceties of doctrine. Readers of the press might be whipped up into feelings of indignation about confession or turning back the teachings of the Reformation, but many churchgoers found themselves starved for the beauty of stained glass and music and statues of saints and fascinating explanations of the symbolism of it all. Such parishes provided not only Sunday and weekday services, but classes, opportunities to serve by sewing vestments, teaching Sunday School, visiting the sick and poor and shut-in, learning about new ways of prayer, spiritual retreats, devotional guilds—a panoply of exciting activities. The fact that many people in England continued to see this kind of religion as transgressive was not the least of its appeals. One could see oneself as an early Christian, exposing oneself to persecution yet forgiving enemies "for they know not what they do." The more the Church *status quo* tried to suppress Ritualism, the more it fought back. In the series to come, I will be discussing the sometimes ridiculous lengths to which the State Church went, including prison sentences, to stamp out practices we now take for granted. There were heroes, heroines and martyrs in this movement, whose memories we continue to honor. And this series will trace the coming of the Ritualist Movement to the Episcopal Church and the role S. Stephen's has played in it.



THE 2015 GENERAL CONVENTION

By Father Alexander

The General Convention of the Episcopal Church took place in Salt Lake City from June 26th through July 3rd. (At seminary, by the way, I was taught that it is properly referred to always as "*the* General Convention," never merely as "General Convention" as is the universal usage these days. I seem to be a minority of one on this, but old habits die hard.) In any case, since the actions of General Conventions do have some potential impact on our life together at S. Stephen's, it seems opportune to review what happened.

First, a bit of background. The General Convention is the Episcopal Church's legislative body. It does necessary things like setting budgets and enacting laws (known as "canons") for the Church, as well as debating issues and passing resolutions, which are essentially expressions of opinion, and not binding on anyone (except when those resolutions direct commissions, committees, and task forces of the General Convention itself to take certain actions).

Like the United States Congress, the General Convention comprises two Houses: the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies. (The Episcopal Church was, after all, set up by pretty much the same people who wrote the United States Constitution.) Each diocese gets to send its bishop(s) to the House of Bishops, and four clergy and four lay deputies to the House of Deputies.

The General Convention meets once every three years, in recent decades always in the summer, for well over a week. It is an enormously expensive undertaking involving thousands of people from all over the United States and a number of other countries descending upon vast convention centers and dozens of downtown hotels. Some commentators think it a cumbersome, unwieldy, and inefficient way of conducting business. But it's the only system we've got, and so far no one has come up with a better one.

Below, in no particular order, I list some of the 2015 Convention's principal actions, along with my own editorial comments.

A New Presiding Bishop. The Rt. Rev. Michael E. Curry, currently Bishop of the Diocese of North Carolina, was elected to succeed the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schorri for a nine-year term as Presiding Bishop beginning this November. (The office of Presiding Bishop is the closest thing we have to an

Archbishop, but the founders of the Episcopal Church were leery of anything smacking of Old World ecclesiastical hierarchy, so they avoided the term.)

Comment: Curry's election is very good news. He will be the first African-American Presiding Bishop, a welcome development. According to all reports, he combines enthusiastic Jesus-focused preaching with administrative competence, pastoral sensitivity, and a heart for evangelism. He has pledged to foster reconciliation within the Church and to reach out to those who have departed for other jurisdictions – precisely what those who elected him were looking for.

Same-Sex Marriage. In the same week that the United States

Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional laws prohibiting same-sex marriage, the General Convention voted to remove gender-specific language from the canons governing marriage in the Episcopal Church. Up to now, these canons had defined marriage as between a man and a woman, but that will no longer be the case. The General Convention also authorized three trial-use liturgies for same-sex marriages. Depending on the results of such trial use, one or more of these liturgies could become the Church's official marriage service in the future. Each bishop has the choice whether and under what conditions to permit use of these trial rites in his diocese; if the bishop does *not* permit them, however,



The Rt. Rev. Michael Curry
Presiding Bishop Elect

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he is required to make arrangements to give members of his diocese access to them in neighboring dioceses. All members of clergy retain the right to decline to solemnize any marriage.

Comment: While marriage equality is here to stay, we find ourselves in a period of transition marked by significant confusion about the relationship between secular marriage understood as a legal contract and Holy Matrimony understood as a Christian Sacrament. I've long wished that we could adopt the practice of some European countries where couples first go to the town hall to contract the legal part of the marriage and then come to church to get their marriage blessed. This would free the clergy from the burden of functioning as the state's agents in solemnizing the marriage. And only those couples who are really serious about wanting the Church's blessing would bother to come for a second ceremony before the reception. In any case, the trial rite known as "You will be a Blessing" appears to solemnize and bless a same-sex marriage – understood in the legal and contractual sense of the term – while avoiding the sacramental language associated with Holy Matrimony. The other trial rites take the more far-reaching approach of translating the traditional wedding service into gender-neutral language so that same-sex couples are married using the same rite as opposite-sex couples.

A New Prayerbook and Hymnal. The General Convention did not, as was widely reported, authorize the writing of a new Prayerbook or the compilation of a new hymnal. Instead, it directed the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) "to prepare a plan for the comprehensive revision of the current Book of Common Prayer and present that plan to the [next] General Convention." Another resolution did the same with respect to hymnal revision. According to Bishop Matthew Gunter of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, these resolutions effectively direct the SCLM to come up with "sets of criteria," which, if approved, would serve as agreed-upon guidelines for Prayerbook and hymnal revision *if* future General Conventions decide to move in that direction. (But the plans might not be approved and future General Conventions might decide *not* to move in that direction.) The "Explanation" attached to the resolution on hymnal revision notes that beginning the process now, "it would probably be 2025 before we held a new hymnal in our hands, at which point the 1982 hymnal would be 43 years old."

Comment: I have zero confidence in the ability of the present-day Episcopal Church to come up with a Prayerbook or hymnal acceptable to traditional Anglo-Catholics. Too many theological agendas out there are at variance with the Catholic faith. In the past, when Anglo-Catholics found the Episcopal Church's officially authorized liturgical texts wanting, we never hesitated to enrich our worship with supplemental texts such as *The English Missal*, *The American Missal*, *The Anglican Missal* and, more recently, *The Anglican Service Book*. But the wider question is whether the Episcopal Church is currently too fragmented – theologically, spiritually, and politically – for any new Prayerbook or hymnal to gain the widespread acceptance necessary for it to become truly "Common Prayer."

The Future Shape of Worship Materials. As an aside, one driving force behind the push for liturgical revision is reportedly the desire for new formats more adaptable to electronic media. It is said that the days of Prayerbooks and hymnals in the pews, and printed bulletins handed out in the narthex, will soon be over. Instead, on arriving in Church we will download the program for the day's liturgy to our tablets, smartphones, or similar devices, and follow along with our touchpads.

Comment: I'd welcome paperless church! Whether it will happen on my watch, I don't know. When I arrived as Rector of S. Stephen's fifteen years ago, I instituted the current system of printing in the *Kalendar* the entire 10 am Mass (minus hymns) in an effort to make the service more user-friendly for newcomers and visitors – compared to the old system in most parishes of a folded single-sheet bulletin with a sequential list of page numbers, scripture citations, and hymn numbers, which required the worshipers to fumble with Prayerbooks, hymnals, lectionary books, and insert sheets. I think that the current format of the *Kalendar* at S. Stephen's achieves its objectives well, but it is expensive and consumes ridiculous amounts of paper. Making the same information available in paperless format seems a logical step forward. (Figuring out how to stop people reading Facebook or playing Angry Birds when they're supposed to be following the service will be another challenge.)

Revision of Calendar of Saints. What the General Convention did here was a bit complicated and the sort of thing that is of interest mainly to liturgy geeks. (So you might want to skip ahead to the next item.) The list of optional commemorations of saints in the 2006 edition of *Lesser Feasts and Fasts* remains the authorized calendar. Added to that, a new "resource"

called *Great Cloud of Witnesses* will be made available, replacing the trial-use volume *Holy Women, Holy Men* that featured a plethora of new saints that many people found controversial. (As a point of local interest, Rhode Island Deputy Melody Shobe made a significant contribution to the debate, moving the substitute resolution that passed in place of the original one.)

Comment: On a cursory reading, *Great Cloud of Witnesses* takes a sensible approach. For each of the authorized commemorations, it provides a Collect in both Rite I and Rite II language. But instead of prescribing a unique set of scripture readings for each individual saint, it indicates an appropriate “Common” – that is, a set of readings for a particular category of saints – e.g., “Common of a Missionary,” “Common of a Monastic,” etc. This move simplifies the lectionary for weekday celebrations considerably. None of this is likely to have any impact on the daily Mass at S. Stephen’s anytime soon, however, because we follow our own local calendar, compiled from traditional Catholic, Anglican, and ecumenical sources. We can do this because once we move beyond the Major Holy Days specified in the calendar of the *Book of Common Prayer* – which we are indeed required to keep on the dates indicated using the prescribed propers – all further commemorations of saints (lesser feasts) are optional, and can be ignored or indeed added to (using the Commons), according to local needs.

Investments and Disinvestments – In a move aimed at environmental responsibility, the General Convention voted to instruct the Episcopal Church’s various investment agencies to disinvest in fossil-fuel companies, and reinvest in clean, renewable energy sources. (Significantly, however, the House of Bishops amended the final resolution to exempt the Church Pension Fund from this rule.) Another resolution, seeking to promote justice in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, called for disinvestment in companies doing business in the West Bank; this resolution was overwhelmingly defeated in both Houses after it was pointed out that the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, Suheil Dawani, has repeatedly said that such disinvestment hurts rather than helps Palestinians.

Comment: Overall, these debates on investments seem to have been conducted sensibly and responsibly. How we deploy our material wealth is a moral and spiritual issue, which the bishops and deputies were taking seriously.

Restructuring. In the year or so leading up to this General Convention, there was much talk about radical restructuring of the Episcopal Church’s national

organization. In the end, the most substantive action was the elimination of all but two of the General Convention’s standing commissions (Liturgy and Music, and Government and Structure). In future, each Convention will have the power to appoint committees and task forces for the coming triennium to do the work previously done by the standing commissions.

Comment: All sounds good.

Reconciliation. The General Convention approved a resolution acknowledging and affirming “the faithful efforts by dioceses to reconcile with and welcome those individuals who have left the Episcopal Church and wish to return.”

Comment: While this resolution voices a laudable sentiment – and in the past year or so a few individual members of the clergy who left for such bodies as the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) *have* returned – it says nothing about efforts at dialogue and eventual reconciliation with the entire *dioceses* that have left. While the departed dioceses are currently far from ready even to think about rejoining the Episcopal Church, a door needs to be left open for their possible future return – just as after 1865 the Episcopal Church welcomed back the nine southern dioceses that seceded at the beginning of the Civil War. In other words, the process of reconciliation needs to be corporate as well as individual.

Communion without Baptism. Both Houses overwhelmingly rejected a resolution calling for the formation of a task force “to study and facilitate church-wide dialogue concerning the practice of inviting all persons, baptized and unbaptized, to receive Holy Communion” and report its findings to the next General Convention. The current canons of the Episcopal Church specify that only those who have been baptized may receive Holy Communion.

Comment: Sound sacramental theology prevailed! This gives me renewed hope for the Episcopal Church. And on that note, it seems fitting to bring these comments to a close.

For further reading. The foregoing summary provides my necessarily selective and somewhat idiosyncratic take on the 2015 General Convention. To explore further and form your own opinions, go to the General Convention website, generalconvention.org, and download the PDF document “Summary of Actions of the 78th General Convention.” From there, the texts of individual resolutions can be found fairly easily by googling their titles.





Quodlibet

by James Busby

quodlibet (kwäd'lə bet') *n* [ME fr. ML quodlibetum, fr. L quodlibet, fr. *qui* who, what + *libet* it pleases, fr. *libere* to please] 1. a piece of music combining several different melodies, usually popular tunes, in counterpoint and often a light-hearted, humorous manner - *Merriam Webster*



4th September 2015...

Your writer attempts mostly to live in the present as there's lots to do and plenty of interests, but occasionally circumstances beg a little gambol down the misty paths of time. This seems an annual occurrence when the carton from Little Rhody Press manifests itself in the front office, packed with the season's musical prospectus of what I purport to dish out. Yesterday it arrived. Here goes.

Thinking back to my first season at S. Stephen's - 1993 - having been hired, mandated to produce a schedule in the late summer, and clueless as to who was going to sing it, was a time of staying one step ahead of each week! My interim predecessor had left rather a mess (it was long enough ago to speak with some impunity), the Schola had dwindled and that predecessor had decamped church music in general.

Within reason, I like to prevail, and the first smart thing I did was re-engage Peter Gibson, who had been relieved of his duties some months earlier. Peter has proven himself estimable and loyal help with his love of the Parish Church and Church Music as it adorns The Mass, particularly chant and Renaissance polyphony, and I am so grateful to have him continuing on the team. My gratitude for his faithfulness should never be underestimated.

Joining us this season will be soprano Ariel Halt who writes... "[Ariel is] new to S. Stephen's this year as she has just relocated from Boston where she completed her Masters degree in opera performance from New England Conservatory. There she sang the role of Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte*, performed in master classes with Barbara Bonney and Rudolf Piernay, and won the Boston District Metropolitan Opera National Council competition, where she then moved on and competed in the New England Regional finals. In Providence, Ariel lives with her husband, Steven, who is an orthope-

dic resident at Brown University. She is currently engaged with Opera Providence and will continue to audition for young artist programs throughout the year." Also an alumna of University of Michigan, Ariel graced the soprano section at Church of St. Michael and St. George in St. Louis before heading east and I'm so happy to welcome her.

Never one to fix what isn't busted or poke just for the sake of poking, the brochure you've received in the mail looks awfully like the 1993-1994 season one with slightly different paper and ink. There are a few things to which I'd draw your attention - please mark your diaries and support!

On 4th October at 5:30 pm we will sing Solemn Evensong for St. Michael and All Angels after keeping The Feast of the Dedication that morning. The service at Evensong is that of Henry Purcell and is right jolly as well as good foil to Byrd and Parry of the morning.

8th November at 4 pm the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will present

Peter Stoltzfus Berton, Organist and Choirmaster at St. John's, Newport, in a recital and lecture on "The Improvisations of Gerre Hancock". Gerre Hancock (1934-2012) was Organist and Choirmaster of St. Thomas Church, New York City from 1971 to 2004 and was a service player of the highest order. He frequently appeared as clinician and recitalist at John Nicholas Brown and Hollis Grant's St. Dunstan College of Church Music founded at S. Stephen's and spoke to me of his great fondness of this place. Listen to Gerre's wonderful hymn playing and improvisations on YouTube and you'll see what I mean! Peter had the honor of serving as Gerre's assistant for a time and I thought this would be marvelous for us to co-sponsor. It is open to the public in general, and as RIAGO is a



Peter Stoltzfus Berton
Organist/Choirmaster
St. John's, Newport



Gerre Hancock
1934 - 2012

“select” (small crowd won’t you join me there?

My annual Fall Memorial recital is in May.

29th November, Advent I, we will sing our Lessons and Carols and I’ll write more on that in a subsequent issue of *The S. Stephen*. Later in Advent we will host the vocal group Blue Heron in a concert of Medieval English Christmas Music. I’m so glad their conductor Scott Metcalfe is interested

in Providence as part of their season and he’s especially happy to be in the neighborhood as his undergraduate connections were with Brown in Sciences before becoming so influential in the field of Medieval and Renaissance music. More on that to come.

Much of this season’s repertoire is new to us; visually the resemblance to the 1993 brochure is limited to the cartoon for the depiction of the Protomartyr on our High Altar reredos. Oh, that, and the Stefano Bernardi *Missa “Praeparate corda vestra”* with which I elected to start that season we’ll sing on 13th September. The Latin text is based on 1 Samuel 7:3...

“Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve Him only.” The pursuit of church music continues a good and pleasurable business. —Yrs, James



Ariel Halt, soprano

SOLEMN EVENSONG & BENEDICTION

SAINT MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS



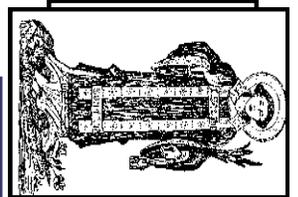
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