

## A Lent to Reconnect and Recommit



Already we've come back around to the season of Lent. Weeks ago, the staff and clergy began planning, talking about what we felt Lent should emphasize for us. We all felt thankful that the congregation has come together more over the last several months, reclaiming our sense of community after the long pandemic isolation. But we also each felt within us the lingering effects of the last few years, daily battles with laziness or irritability or a whole host of other habits that were keeping us from truly connecting to others. Lent, it seemed, could be a time to work on some of that.

Lent is a penitential season, but last year, we all felt a little too raw to emphasize that. This year, penitence feels exactly right — or more accurately, penitence for how we've allowed ourselves to maintain division from one another. This year's Lent, we hope, will help lead us all from isolation to true connection as God's family.

We have so much to be thankful for in our community, not least the renewal inherent in the renovation campaign. May this season help restore us in our love and commitment to God's Spirit in this place. — *Mother Kate*

## Doors Wide Open, Hearts Wide Open

The Doors Wide Open campaign has been greeted with "hearts wide open," DWO co-chair Beth Ann Day said during the launch presentation after the annual meeting on Sunday, Jan. 22.

Parishioners' heartfelt commitment to St. Michael's shone forth in a campaign video, the meeting's dramatic finale, with many parishioners testifying about — and showing — what this church means to them. (The video is available on the Doors Wide Open page on the St. Michael's website.)

The Phase I goal is at least \$2 million. Beth Ann drew rousing applause when she announced that the campaign has already raised more than \$1 million, through pledges from the clergy, vestry, the DWO leadership team and others.

"Now we're going to reach out to every one of you," DWO co-chair Lucy Culver said. She introduced the other members of the DWO campaign team: Mother Kate, John Avery, Stephanie Braxton, Walter Cain, Rick Hamlin, Kyle Okimoto, Peter Olberg, Gayle Robinson, John Stickney, Ariane van Buren and Eric Vigen.

The campaigners are contacting parishioners to set up one-on-one meetings to discuss how they can support DWO with a pledge that can extend up to three years. "DWO isn't



Lucy Culver, Beth Ann Day and Mother Kate show off the tote bags to be given to every Doors Wide Open pledger. The totes, designed by Gillian Okimoto, were manufactured in Brooklyn.

about going to a website and blindly entering a dollar amount," Lucy explained. "This is a chance to think and pray about all that our church and Parish House do for this community." All these DWO conversations themselves are also a kind of ministry to this parish.

Lucy and Beth Ann explained that our stewardship pledges help support church operations: paying the staff, maintaining our programs and keeping the lights on. The renovations budget is separate: It opens our doors wide to the future.

"It's important to all of us that this campaign reflect the ethos, the heart and the values of St. Michael's Church," Beth Ann underscored. "We're asking everybody to give in a way that's meaningful to you and reflective of your relationship with our church, without causing a burden or stress. We want the campaign to be truly inclusive. Our goal is 100 percent participation, and everyone's pledge matters."



The Doors Wide Open tracks pledges, and the temperature is rising. Also posted is a case statement that spells out the WHY and HOW of the renovation campaign.

## Arms Wide Open: Katy Blake and Barry Wilson

On Shrove Tuesday, Feb. 21, Katy Blake and Barry Wilson tended bar as usual. Two days later, a van arrived at their place on West 148th Street to move them to their new home in Savannah, Ga. They'll divide their year between there and Swans Island, south of Acadia National Park, in Maine, where Katy's family has had a cottage for half a century.

Katy, most recently, co-wrote and sang in the Christmas musical, "Jingle That," successor to the 2021 "Jingle This," at the Ogelbay Resort in Wheeling, W. Va. (The 2023 show is "Jingle All the Way.") Barry is an investment advisor. They came to St. Michael's via Intersection 10 years ago. Katy was raised in Danville, Va.; and Barry in Wichita Falls, Texas.

As ushers at the 10 a.m. service, Barry says, "We were honored and delighted to be under the direction of Juanita Jones." (Barry later served on the vestry.)

"St. Michael's practices what the Episcopal Church says it stands for: 'All Are Welcome,'" Katy says. "This church embraces all levels of faith, income, race, gender and identity."

"Parishioners should treasure each other, treasure the diversity, treasure the open arms with which St. Michael's approaches the community."

"The vibrancy of this church is precious," Barry says. "Now comes this Doors Wide Open campaign, already halfway home. That's not us, that's God at work, that's the Holy Spirit among us, plus the preaching from the pulpit and the openness of this church that's got us there."



Barry Wilson and Katy Blake singing "I Am the Bread of Life" on St. Michael's Day in 2019, with Juanita Jones and Judy Simons.



## Laura Inman, from 'SNL' to Our Youth Choirs

Lucky the young chorister with Laura Inman in charge. She's very specific about what she expects; gives a good strong downbeat, and lots of body language to help while you're singing, and boundless energetic enthusiasm. She knows what singers can do, especially young singers, and what they can't. The kids love her, and having been a baby chorister myself, I can see why. You want somebody who can explain what it's about, in terms you can understand; who asks for just a little bit more than you thought you could do, and amazingly gets it; who points at you when it's time for that entrance you never quite understood. We're very fortunate to have Laura here at St. Michael's. She's raising up kids who will know something about music, and love music, and, let's hope, keep doing music when they're grown. — *Michael Smith*



At the annual meeting, John Cantrell invited anybody to drop in on a Wednesday children's choir rehearsal with Laura Inman, and the newsletter took him up on it. Laura, fresh from singing in a backup choir onstage for British rocker Sam Smith in his song "Gloria" on the Jan. 27 "Saturday Night Live," devotes herself to bringing out the best in the kids, here with the Angels. She knows their names, games and styles. "Sing so the person in the last pew can hear!" she says. At rehearsal's end, the Cherubs complain that the session is too short. "Be loving and kind to everybody you meet this week," she bids them farewell. The rehearsals are accompanied by "Mr. John" and Amelie Held. The program is free and open to all.

## Family News: Eva Now a Deacon, and a Diocesan SWAT Team



Mothers Eva and Kate



Diocesan SWAT team

On Jan. 13, at the Washington National Cathedral, **Eva Bogino**, our seminarian, was ordained deacon, with **Mother Kate** as a presenter. **Deacon Richard** is sharing duties with Eva. "I'm learning from him, for certain!" Eva says. She grew up in, and was sponsored by, Grace Episcopal Church in Silver Spring, Md ... A compliment to the parish is how the Diocese raids our talent, clockwise from upper left: **Susan Heath**, Commission on Ministry and Diocesan Discernment Facilitator, former trustee; **Mother Kate**, trustee, Human Resources committee chair, Secretary of Convention, Deputy to General Convention 2024; **Lucy Culver**, trustee of the Cathedral church and school, Development and Nominating Committee; **Kris Ishibashi**, planning chair of the Episcopal Asian Supper Table. Commission on Ministry, Transition Team for Bishop-Elect; **Mother Julie**, Diocesan Council, the Anti-Racism Summit planning committee, the Ecumenical/Interreligious Committee. Elsewhere: **Gayle Robinson**, trustee; and **Jean Ballard Terepka**, Absalom Jones Celebration Planning Committee, Communications Subcommittee.

## Naomi Bullard on Faith and Works

Our beloved elder Naomi Bullard died on Jan. 26, at age 99. Naomi and her late husband Abner served St. Michael's in countless ways since the 1980s, by works and by example, a legacy carried on by daughter Arlene Bullard. Two years ago, Naomi spoke to Gayle Robinson for the church's oral-history project, "Holy Wisdom." Near the end of the hourlong interview, Naomi reflected on her faith.



A memorial service is planned for Naomi Bullard on Wednesday, March 8, at St. Michael's. Naomi was celebrated by daughter Arlene Bullard and all parishioners on Elder Day, Oct. 15, 2017.

**Naomi Bullard:** As I get older, I find myself talking to God a lot. Just talking, as if I was talking to somebody. I feel very comfortable, and I feel that he's always there. If I ask for something, and I don't get it right away — lots of people get very angry, but it doesn't bother me. I figure sooner or later it will come — or it won't.

And as you get older you don't pray about silly things. It's not a selfish prayer — it becomes more inclusive. You see somebody in the street who's in a bad situation, and you'll say a little prayer right then and there. You feel how vulnerable people are, and you just want to be with them, and help them. I saw a man on the street the other day, he had one shoe on, and he looked hungry. I gave him some money and he said thank you. I knew he needed it. He ran right into the store, and when I looked back I saw him on the sidewalk, eating. And I was glad that God made me stop and look at him.

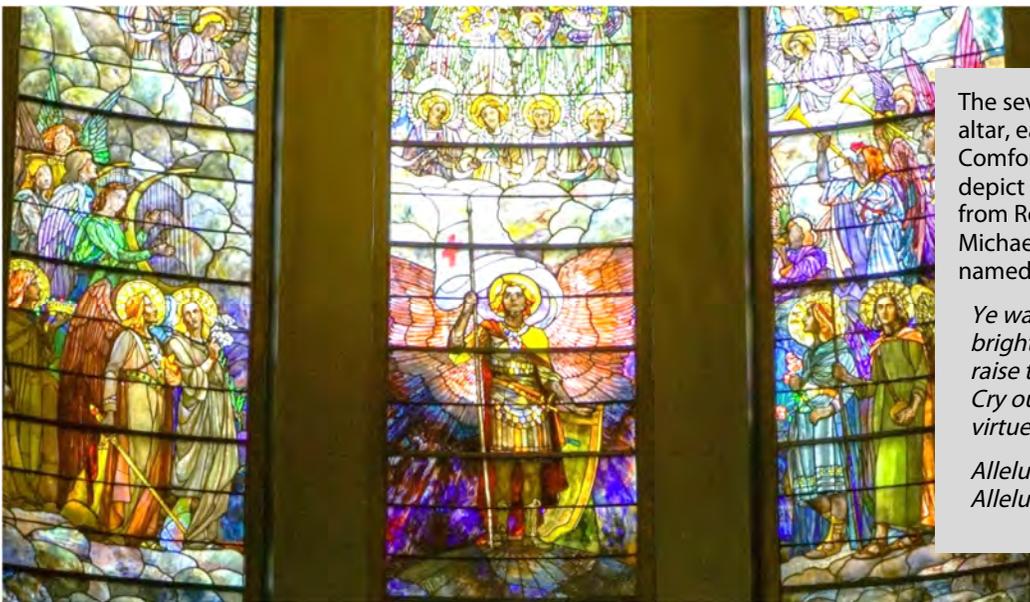
This empathy we have, I think it's in everybody. Sometimes people just don't recognize it or they don't allow it to come forward. People aren't usually nasty, they're helpful. So many times, when I'm crossing 72nd Street, I'll feel somebody's hand on my elbow, or they'll put their hand on my walker, to help me. And sometimes they say nothing. They've seen me and they've turned around, gone out of their way. Their goodness comes out.

**Gayle Robinson:** Years from now, when we're both in the columbarium, what would you like people to say about Naomi Bullard?

**Naomi:** I would like them to say that I was kind, that I tried to help people. That I actually truly believed in what I was coming to church to hear. And I tried to live it. — *Tom Phillips*

THEN & NOW

# Heavenly Visions: Take Your Pick



The seven apse windows above the high altar, each 5' by 25', designed by Louis Comfort Tiffany and dedicated in 1895, depict the victory of St. Michael in heaven, from Revelations 12: 7-12. Around St. Michael is a celestial hierarchy of beings named in the first verse of the hymn,

*Ye watchers and ye holy ones,  
bright seraphs, cherubim, and thrones,  
raise the glad strain, Alleluia!  
Cry out, dominions, principedoms, powers,  
virtues, archangels, angels' choirs:*

*Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

This is the first of a series of four Messenger articles by Keith Christiansen about the windows of St. Michael's. Keith acknowledges a debt to the pamphlet "A Brief Tour and Description of St. Michael's Church Interior and Windows," by our archivist Jean Ballard Terepka.

Keith retired last year as chair of the department of European paintings at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. He and wife Mary are longtime parishioners of St. Michael's.



Keith Christiansen

Anyone who walks into St. Michael's on a brilliant Sunday morning can't help being awestruck by the seven lancet windows that fill the apse with a visionary scene as striking for its opulent colors —

like an exotic garden of orchids — as for the eschatological event it depicts: St. Michael's victory over Satan at the End of Time.

Michael is dressed in multi-colored armor, his gaze directed heavenward, his shell-pink wings gloriously unfurled and his banner of victory firmly planted on a terrestrial globe surrounded by clouds. Accompanying him are his six fellow archangels (their names inscribed in the haloes: Gabriel, Raphael, Uriel, Enogh, Barachiel, Jehudiel and Sealthiel ) and the celestial hierarchy of heavenly hosts.

*"It is as if the artist ... with prophetic eye had seen the time when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him."*

— M. Caryl Coleman, Tiffany Studios

Designed by Tiffany Studios and installed in 1895, the seven windows are one of the artistic treasures of the church. But taste is a funny thing. Only a few years earlier, less opulently colored, more clearly legible windows were preferred, such as the two magnificent windows, now in the west balcony, that were installed in 1893.

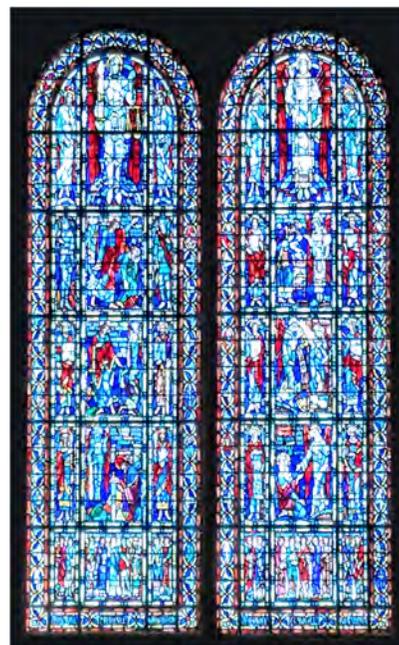
They were designed by Richard Lamb, who was British by birth. He and his brother Joseph established the New York firm J&R Lamb in 1857, just a decade after the production of stained-glass windows was introduced into America by another British expatriate, William Jay Bolton. J&R Lamb Studios are still in business in Midland Park, N.J.

These windows relate to the great Venetian windows of the late 15th century that 19th-century artists so admired. They're conceived like Renaissance paintings with clearly defined figures and an architectural and landscape setting. And they would be rendered old-fashioned with the creation of opalescent glass and the prize of an overall, shimmering beauty.

A quarter of a century after Tiffany's masterpiece, the preference was for a medievalizing style with a dash of art deco, as seen in the windows in the east transept clerestory designed by Charles Connick of Boston in 1926-27. The two southernmost windows have just been cleaned.

Some churches are characterized by a completely uniform styled interior. Not St. Michael's, where diversity rather than uniformity prevails. Something for everyone! Seems appropriate, yes? — Keith Christiansen

In the west balcony are two windows designed by Richard Lamb, a partner in J&R Lamb Studios and a parishioner of St. Michael's. At left, Mary is listening to Jesus while Martha is serving. The window is a memorial to Lamb's wife, Mary Knapp Lamb. At right, the angel appears to the women at the tomb after the Resurrection. The window is a memorial to Lamb's wife Mary and his mother, Elizabeth Clark Lamb.



The windows in the east transept clerestory, designed by Charles Connick, depict the archangels St. Michael and St. Gabriel, respectively at left and right. The windows were dedicated in 1927 to the memory of John Punnett Peters, our sixth rector, and his brother William R. Peters, a vestryman, warden and treasurer. The windows, recently cleaned, now look almost new in their radiance.



Detail of the cherubs from the top of the central lancet window.