



The S. Stephen

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany

2012—2013

Vol. 12, No. 2

From the Rector

My dear people:

Always one of my favorite seasons, Advent is not strictly about preparing for the coming of the infant Jesus at Christmas. It is that, to be sure, but so much more besides. The readings from the Old Testament prophets call us to identify with Israel waiting for the Messiah.

As Christians, we believe that the Jewish Messiah has already come once; yet we still await his coming in glory at the end of time. We cannot know, we dare not try to speculate, when this will happen or what it will be like. The Scriptures speak of it only in the most mysterious and symbolic language so that, to use the old saying, we will recognize when we see it, but cannot really describe exactly what it will be like beforehand.

The message of Advent is that the coming of Christ is the fulfillment of all our deepest human longings. The Advent themes of watching, waiting, anticipation, hope, and preparation are meant to put us in touch with the most profound desires of our hearts. We often suppress what C.S. Lewis aptly described as a near universal sense of an “inconsolable longing for we know not what.” The Season of Advent asks us to re-awaken this longing, so that we can begin to receive the joy of the Scriptural promise that its ultimate fulfillment is found in Jesus.

Having kept a good Advent, we find ourselves all the better spiritually prepared to welcome the Christ Child at Christmas. Integral to our Anglican tradition is the understanding that God saves the world by coming down from heaven and being born as a human baby in a particular place at a particular time. He shares in our human life that we may share in his divine life. Christmas is thus so much more than just the birthday celebration of a great person; it is the celebration of a key moment in the process of our salvation: “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth ...*” (John 1:14).

Our celebrations of Christmas begin on Monday, December 24, with the annual Pageant and Family Mass at 5:30 pm, and the Solemn Mass of the Nativity at 10:30 pm.

Both services are a highlight of our liturgical year, and a wonderful opportunity to invite friends and family to come to Church to experience something of our life together at S. Stephen's.

If Christmas is the celebration of the Word made flesh (John 1:14, quoted above), the Season of Epiphany, beginning on January 6th, takes up the theme expressed by the Fourth Evangelist in the rest of the verse: “... *we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.*”

Both the Feast of the Epiphany itself and the Sundays following reflect the wonderful ways in which Christ manifested the glory of his divinity during his earthly ministry so that we might believe in him and worship him as our Lord and Savior.

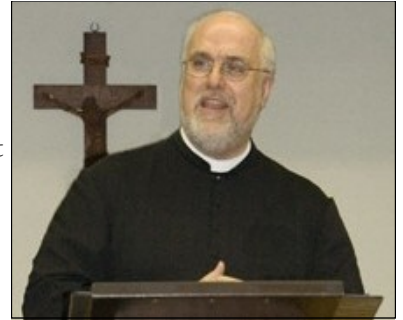
Finally, a reminder: our next “Baptismal Day” is January 13, 2013, the First Sunday after the Epiphany, commemorating the Baptism of Christ. This is one of the occasions of the liturgical year when we schedule baptisms at the principal Sunday Mass at 10 am; and if there are no baptisms we renew our baptismal vows. If you know anyone who is interested in having a child baptized, please let me know and ask them to contact me. Once we know of potential interest, we can schedule a preparatory meeting for the parents closer to the time. As a rule, I prefer to do adult baptisms at the Easter Vigil, but there is room for flexibility there as well.

This letter comes with all best wishes and prayers for a blessed Advent, a joyous Christmas, and an illuminating Epiphany. I remain, faithfully,

Your pastor and priest,

Fr. John D. Alexander +

Fr. John D. Alexander



*Virgin and Child
Detail from triptych panel formerly
displayed in the Lady Chapel*



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*



My old organ teacher, Mr. Faxon (George Faxon 1913 - 1992), was famous for, among other things, going into staff meetings at Trinity Church, Copley Square or faculty meetings at Boston University and greeting colleagues, yankeedry as possible, with the opener, "Whatever it is, I'm for it!" I've never quite been able to embrace that amount of unabashed submission (nor did he, actually) but I do consider myself a team player, just as I like and respect that quality in choir members and others.

The above is by way of recounting how I found myself involved at the Consecration of the Rt. Rev. Nicholas Knisely as Thirteenth Bishop of Rhode Island, last month, in the Field House of St. George's School. This was first manifested by a request that we supply Schola Cantorum to pony along the almost two hundred voices of the all-diocesan, ad hoc choir. Shortly after agreeing to that, I found myself appointed organist for that gathering. (One always thinks one might be an also-ran or last ditch effort when asked so late in the planning game, but never mind.) Generous gifts from John Chamberlin, Brian Ehlers, Alan Reniere, Tom Oakes and Julia Steiny helped make Schola's involvement possible, along with the Rector's support. Alan and Brian gave in memory of recently departed Schola member and friend Morgan Stebbins, which helped define and energize our involvement immeasurably.

Musical highlights for me were playing the hymns for the congregation of 2,000 who sang so robustly, and for our baritone Jonathan Nussman's tender singing of George Herbert's poem *Love Bade Me Welcome*, set by Vaughan Williams. I am grateful for the good will and fine energy from our choir for what was a long and very arduous day. They still sounded remarkably fresh the following morning at Mass.

On Sunday, December 2, our Advent I Service of Lessons and Carols was well attended and received. This service is customarily funded by a grant from The Rhode Island Foundation in memory of Morgan Stebbins's son, Cameron. This year, Fr. Alexander felt it appropriate to sing it

in her memory, as well. I received so many comments on Daniel Roehl's *Thou shalt call his name John* motet which was commissioned by Morgan in 2002 in Cameron's memory and which was, coincidentally, included in the programming which I planned last July.

Newsy chunks from Schola:

Advent I heralded the return of tenor Jason Connell after a couple of months on surgical leave - a sight and sound for sore eyes and ears. We were elated by this! Jason not only sings beautifully but is fine company on the 6:30 am Sunday trip to rehearsal. It must be noted that this Christmas Eve marks the thirty-fifth anniversary of cantor Peter Gibson's joining Schola. Peter was a bright young bass just out of Wesleyan with a love of music—specifically chant, and clearly was led early to his musical, as well as spiritual, home. I feel fortunate that our tenures have overlapped for so long; his friendship is a gift.

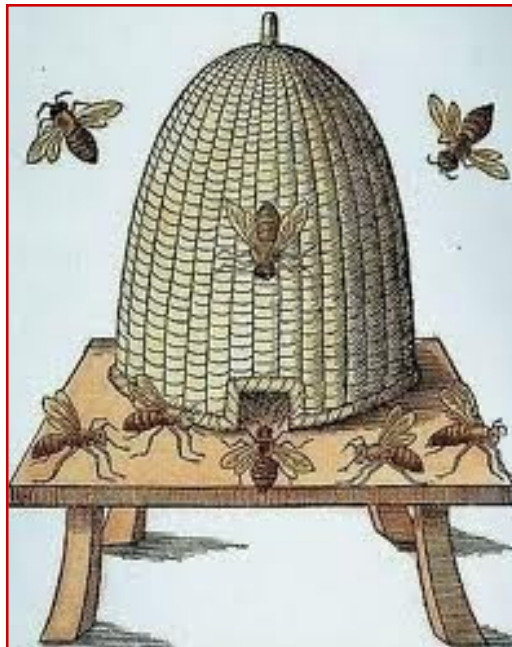
Last "Quodlibet" (October 2012), I started a running commentary, tendering the question, "why polyphony?" New choir man Stanley Chang generously writes:

Embedded into the polyphonic structure of sacred music is the notion that not all humans come to God in the same way or at the same time. The phenomenon of non-concomitant text sung in layered fashion gives to the listeners the symbolic freedom to attain the glory of God by way of their own personal journeys. The paths of all, however circuitous, lead inevitably to salvation and redemption at the end of time, and this final consonance is represented in polyphonic music by the harmonic completeness at the piece's conclusion.

Stanley is Associate Professor of Mathematics at Wellesley College. In addition to singing, he plays harpsichord, is an eager fencer, and a fine mixer - a welcome addition!

I am bound and determined to meet my editors' suggested deadline; I will consequently close with my wish for a meaningful Advent and joyous Christmass to you. See you in church.

—JCB.



BOOK REVIEW

THE LANGUAGE OF CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

Owen Hopkins, *Reading Architecture: A Visual Lexicon*. London: Lawrence King Publishing, 2012. 175 pages. \$29.95.

Denis R. McNamara, *How to Read Churches: A Crash Course in Ecclesiastical Architecture*. New York: Rizzoli, 2011. 256 pages. \$17.95.

James F. O’Gorman, *ABC of Architecture*. Drawings by Dennis E. McGrath. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998. 127 pages. \$16.95.

Reviewed by The Rev’d John D. Alexander

Two years ago, I had the good fortune to do some sightseeing in England and Ireland with my two then-teenaged sons. Visiting Canterbury Cathedral on a bright summer day, I couldn’t help pointing out some of its architectural features: the differences, for example, between Gothic and Norman arches, and between barrel, ribbed, and fan vaulting. Typical of boys that age, their faces remained impassive and they didn’t say much to encourage me to continue let alone expand in this vein. A week later, however, the three of us were on a bus riding through the center of Dublin – our destination the Disneysque Visitors Center of the Guinness Brewery – and as we passed Christ Church Cathedral my younger son exclaimed (correctly): “Look, the back of that church is Norman but the front is Gothic!” I sat back in my seat and smiled to myself, “Well, sometimes the effort really does pay off.”

This past summer, I decided to read some more about church architecture. Instead of launching keyword searches on Amazon, I took advantage of trips to Cambridge and Boston to browse in the Harvard Coop and the bookshop of the Museum of Fine Arts. Books on art and architecture depend so heavily on their layout and illustrations; one needs to handle them, feel their weight, flip through their pages, and look at their pictures, as integral steps in the process of deciding which ones to buy. In the end, I settled on three.

James F. O’Gorman’s *ABC of Architecture* is the most theoretical; and it is about architecture in general rather than the specifically ecclesiastical sort. Nonetheless, it lays an indispensable foundation for understanding what to look for in any building, sacred or secular. I cannot recommend it highly enough as an introduction to basic principles.

O’Gorman organizes his book around the statement of the ancient Roman architect Marcus Vitruvius Pollio that a building must be considered with respect to function, structure, and beauty (*utilitas, firmitas, venustas*). Function is an

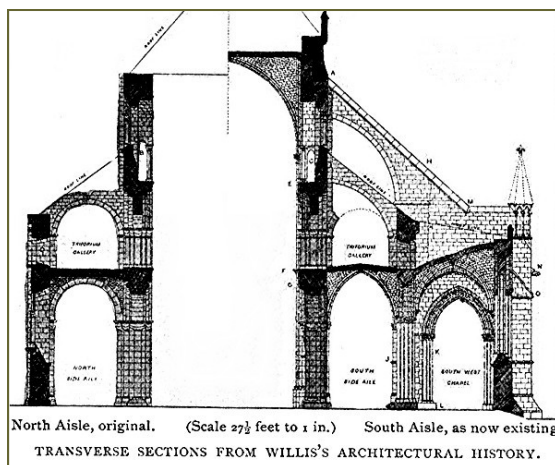
expression of the needs of the architect’s client. Structure is the material means of addressing those needs, the province of the engineers and builders whom the architect engages. And beauty (or, more generally, form) represents the architect’s design or artistic arrangement of those structures and materials to meet the client’s needs in an aesthetically pleasing way.

O’Gorman helpfully points out that the three principal types of architectural drawings – plans, sections, and elevations – correspond loosely to these three dimensions. Plans are horizontal slices through the building showing the arrangement of rooms, walls, doors, and other internal spaces; and they give a picture of the building’s *use* at that level. Sections are “vertical slices showing upright spatial relationships,” which tend to diagram *structures* (p. 12). And elevations are drawings of exterior or interior walls, diagramming the building’s overall *design*.

“Architecture, then, stands at the intersection of societal need, available technology, and artistic theory” (p. 16). This compact summary suggests what to look for in any building. To understand the needs it was built to meet, we need to know about society and culture at the time of its construction. As that society and culture has evolved and changed through history, moreover, we often find that the building’s uses have changed as well, reflected in various additions, subtractions, and re-arrangements down through the years.

To understand a building’s structure, we need to know about the technologies, engineering techniques, and materials that were available to its builders. Here O’Gorman gives a whirlwind tour of the history of architectural structures, which fall into two basic types: “trabeated,” involving horizontal beams laid on vertical shafts, from Stonehenge to the Parthenon to twentieth-century skyscrapers; and “arcuated,” making use of various types of load-bearing arches, elaborated in turn into soaring vaults and domes.

To understand a building’s design, we need to know of the different styles and visual elements made available by the long history of architectural forms and conventions. A fundamental choice is between designs that are symmetrical and formal, and designs that are asymmetrical and picturesque. The architect must make decisions about lines, spaces, texture, light, and color. The form of the building will determine aspects of its structure, and vice versa – the elements of function, structure, and design are all interdependent.



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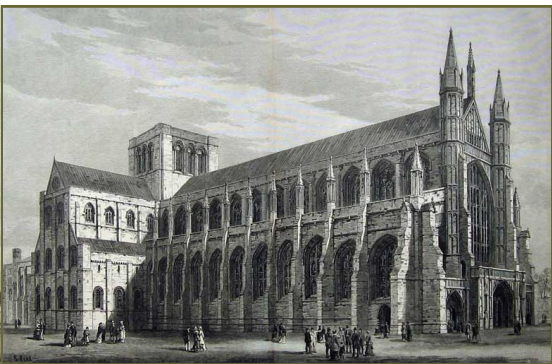
In a concluding chapter, O’Gorman writes of architecture as a form of communication. A neo-classical monument such as the Lincoln Memorial sends out a different message than, say, a gothic-revival church such as Washington Cathedral. Understanding this communicative aspect of architecture requires knowledge of the different styles of building associated with different periods in history.

Finally, to understand the “language” of architecture, we must develop a working knowledge of its vocabulary: “If you are going to understand a building, you must know how to describe its parts. The parts of buildings have verbal equivalents. To name is to understand” (p. 101). To the uninitiated, the specialized vocabulary can be intimidating, but here O’Gorman recommends spending relaxed and leisurely time with architectural dictionaries and other reference works.

A good place to start learning the vocabulary is Denis R. McNamara’s *How to Read Churches: A Crash Course in Ecclesiastical Architecture*. Written in the style of a field guide, its relatively small dimensions – 5½” by 6½” – make it a handy book to carry on trips. It is less a textbook than a picture book, lavishly illustrated with exquisite line drawings on every page. It admirably achieves its stated purpose of providing a handy reference “for architecture and history buffs, tourists, and churchgoers interested in decoding the styles and symbols of religious buildings.”

The bulk of *How to Read Churches* consists of chapters on the different parts of church buildings: floor plans; choirs and stalls; vaulting and buttresses; domes and cupolas; facades and portals; baptisteries and fonts; windows and traceries; towers and spires. The sixteen-page chapter on towers and spires, for example, contains definitions, descriptions, and illustrations of such structures as stone steeples, turrets, round towers, square campaniles, lattice spires, and pinnacles, as well as a discussion of the varying numbers of towers and their placement in different styles of church buildings.

Owen Hopkins’s *Reading Architecture: A Visual Lexicon* is more technical. While not confined to churches, it contains numerous photographs, drawings, and descriptions of various features of church architecture. Its relatively large size – 10¾” by



Winchester Cathedral

A good part of what is today called “Christian formation” entails becoming literate in the various languages of our tradition.

of the interior of the Church of Santa Maria delle Carceri in Rome, a typical “Renaissance Church,” with arrows pointing from text boxes in the margins to the features in the illustration they describe: “Corinthian cornice,” “fluted Corinthian corner pilasters,” “balustraded altar rails,” etc.

After an initial section on “Building Types,” two

more sections deal with “Structures” and “Architectural Elements.” Within the “Structures” section, I found particularly fascinating the pages on the classical orders of columns and piers – describing in detail the features and parts of Tuscan, Roman, Doric, Ionian, Corinthian and composite columns. The section on “Architectural Elements” is more eclectic, discussing such building features as walls, surfaces, windows, doors, and roofs.

While this book covers the architectural waterfront, it is an excellent reference work for anyone interested in church buildings.

Why study church architecture? A good part of what is today called “Christian formation” entails becoming literate in the various languages of our tradition. I put “languages” in the plural to emphasize their multiplicity and diversity. Boston University Professor Stephen Prothero has written of the urgent need for greater religious literacy in contemporary American culture. But religious literacy comprises a number of subcategories. Christian clergy and teachers today bewail the decline in *biblical* literacy among their flocks. *Theological* literacy requires a basic familiarity with the principal beliefs and teachings of the Christian faith; and *spiritual* literacy a working practical knowledge of how to pray, meditate, participate in worship, and receive the sacraments.

Yet, central as biblical, theological, and spiritual literacy obviously are to mature Christian identity, some of the more peripheral streams of Christian tradition also enrich our faith immeasurably. They are no substitute for faith itself, but they help us to enjoy the faith we have. (Here I make the characteristically Anglican assumption that religion is to be *enjoyed*.) Literacy in church music helps us appreciate the distinctive forms of plainchant, polyphony, and later choral settings of the Mass and other sacred texts. Literacy in religious art quickens us to the meaning and symbolism of Christian visual representations, from Byzantine icons to contemporary paintings. And literacy in the language of church architecture enables us appreciate the forms, structures, and ornamentation of the buildings that enclose the sacred spaces where we worship. In their different ways, these three books afford an excellent point of departure for learning that language.



THE TREASURER'S CORNER

By Ransom Widmer

The center pages of this edition of *The S. Stephen* present a drawing of the remodeled Great Hall. In addition, much larger drawings showing the proposed work plan and the seating arrangement of the remodeled Great Hall when utilized as a theater are now on display at the rear of the church and in the Great Hall itself.

In preparation for the Capital Campaign, your Vestry officers interviewed several architectural firms to develop plans for remodeling the Great Hall and their related costs. Our remodeling specifications directed that the parish must be able to continue all its current functions (i.e. parish dinners, coffee hours, the Epiphany Soup Kitchen, educational series, etc.) and, in addition, offer other activities such as concerts, art exhibits and play readings. The result of the search was the selection of LLB Architects of Pawtucket, Rhode Island.

After several meetings with the Vestry offices, LLB presented a detailed plan for the remodeling project. The Great Hall's functionality will be increased by the construction of a platform system at the north end of the room (at the other side from the George Street end). The current stairs and landings will be lowered to approximately 3 feet allowing better access to the fire escapes; and a platform or stage will be constructed across the entire wall connecting the two staircases. Immediately beneath this platform will be a second platform which can be pulled out like a trundle bed to widen the stage or create a multilevel stage. Beneath the fixed platform and staircases will be storage areas for tables, chairs and anything else needed. The stage area will be lighted by several spotlights, and a ceiling projector will allow movies and computer presentations to be reproduced on a drop-down screen.

The work plan is divided into two phases: demolition and new construction. The demolition will include modifying the staircases and landing; preparing the wood floor for a new finish; concealing piping and electrical conduit where possible; preparing windows, walls, doors and radiators for repainting; and removing all existing ceiling lights, fans and exit signs.

The new construction phase will reconstruct the stairs and landings; install platforms with integrated storage below; provide a new clear coat finish on the floor; patch and paint areas of the walls demolished to conceal piping and conduit; paint and provide sealant and caulking as required for walls, windows, doors, radiators and exposed piping and conduit; install sound absorbent gypsum over the ceiling; install new decorative pendent lights where indicated by A on the drawing, new track lighting where indicated by B, new ceiling fans and new edge lit exit signs as indicated.

The estimated costs of remodeling the Great Hall are between \$150,000 and \$200,000. In addition to these costs, Capital Campaign pledges must cover reconstruction and repair of the north aisle windows, repair of the sanctuary floor and a reserve to fund the implementation of our Parish Development Plan. As my Co-Chair Susan Brazil writes in her article in this issue of *The S. Stephen*, we are off to an excellent start in raising the funds to make this vision a reality. Please join with your fellow parishioners who have already pledged to this effort by making use of the Capital Fund Drive gift pledge form also included in this issue.



SCHEDULE OF CHRISTMAS SERVICES

CHRISTMAS EVE
MONDAY 24 DECEMBER

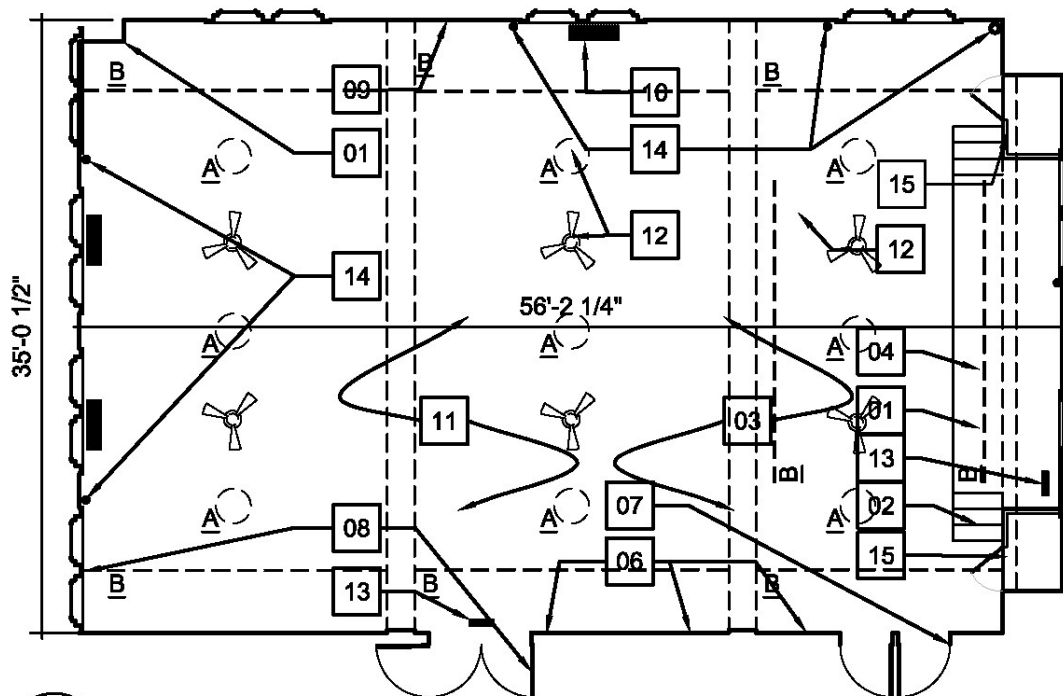
Children's Pageant & Low Mass 5:30 pm
Solemn Mass of the Nativity 10:30 pm

CHRISTMAS DAY
TUESDAY 25 DECEMBER

Morning Prayer 9 am
Low Mass 9:30 am

SCOPE OF WORK KEY

- | | |
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| <p>01 NEW WD PLATFORM WITH INTEGRATED STORAGE BELOW TO ALIGN WITH EXISTING. TOOTH IN NEW BOARDS AS REQUIRED.</p> <p>02 NEW STAIRS AND LANDINGS AS REQUIRED WITH WOOD TREADS TO MATCH PLATFORM</p> <p>03 PROVIDE NEW CLEAR COAT FINISH AT FLOOR.</p> <p>04 COORDINATE NEW WOOD PLATFORM WITH PROPOSED BUILT IN STORAGE BELOW.</p> <p>05 WOOD TRIM (TYPICAL AT ALL LOCATIONS)</p> <p>06 PAINT ALL SURFACE; PROVIDE SEALANT AND CALKING AS REQUIRED MATERIAL JUNCTIONS</p> <p>07 PATCH AND PAINT AT AREAS WALL WAS DEMOLISHED TO CONCEAL PIPING AND CONDUITE</p> <p>08 INSTALL SALVAGED DOOR ON REVERSE SIDE OF FRAME</p> <p>09 WINDOWS/ DOORS (TYPICAL ALL LOCATIONS)</p> <p>10 PAINT ALL SURFACE; PROVIDE SEALANT AND CALKING AS REQUIRED MATERIAL JUNCTIONS</p> <p>11 WALLS</p> <p>12 PAINT ALL SURFACE; PROVIDE SEALANT AND CALKING AS REQUIRED MATERIAL JUNCTIONS</p> | <p>10 <u>RADIATORS</u>
SCRAPE, PATCH AND PREP ALL SURFA
APPLICABLE FOR NEW PAINT FINISH</p> <p>11 <u>CEILING</u>
INSTALL SOUND ABSORBENT GYPSUM
PROVIDE MTL REVEAL AT ALL PERIMET</p> <p>12 <u>LIGHTING/ ELECTRICAL</u>
INSTALL NEW DECORATIVE PENDENT I
INDICATED ON DRAWINGS. INSTALL NE
B AS INDICATED ON DRAWING, RECES
PROVIDE BLOCKING AS REQUIRED. IN
AS INDICATED ON DRAWINGS</p> <p>13 <u>EXIT SIGNS</u>
INSTALL NEW EDGE LIT EXIT SIGNS AS</p> <p>14 <u>EXPOSED PIPING AND CONDUIT</u>
PAINT PIPING AND CONDUIT TO REMAI
APPROPRIAT PAINT FOR MATERAIL AN</p> <p>15 <u>NEW CHAIR STORAGE</u>
INSTALL NEW MILLWORK STORAGE AS
DRAWINGS</p> |
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A2 PROPOSED NEW SOPE OF WORK PLAN
A-1.00 3/32" = 1'-0"

A1 PROPOSED
A-1.00 1/4" = 1'-0"

LLB ARCHITECTS

Lerner Ladds Bartels

161 Exchange St.
Pawtucket, RI 02860

401.421.7715
www.LLBarch.com

ACES

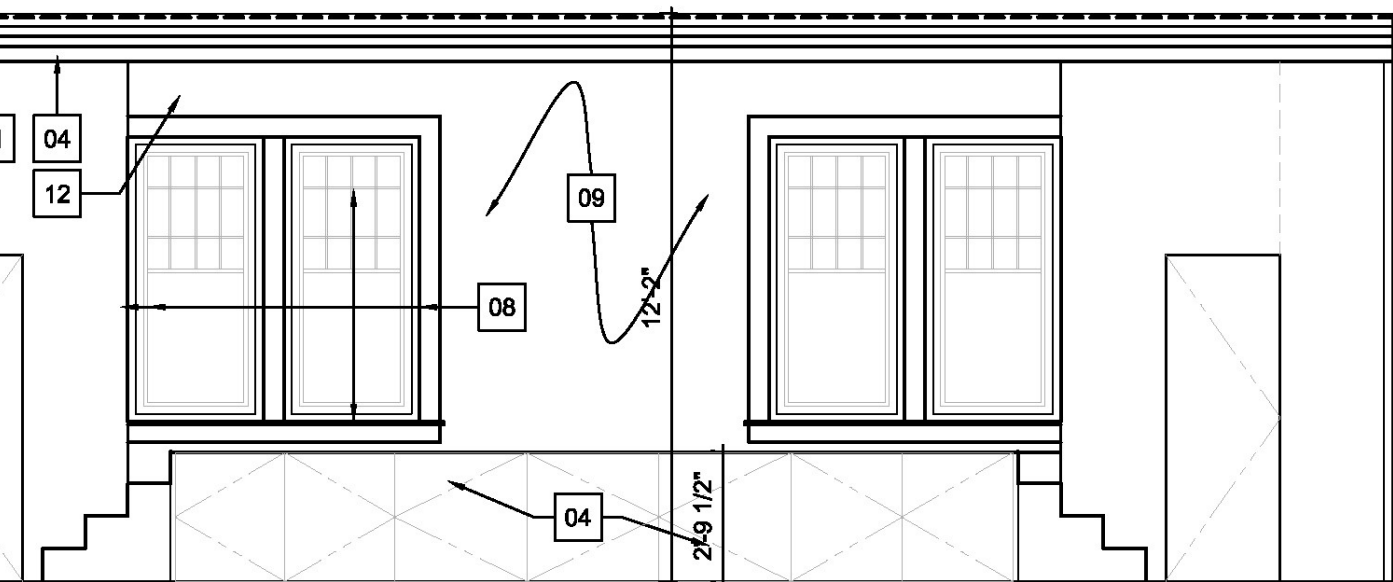
; TYPICAL.
TERS

LIGHTS TYPE A AS
EW TRACK LIGHTING TYPE
S TRACK INTO CEILING.
STALL NEW CEILING FAN

INDICATED ON DRAWING

N AS REQUIRED USE
D FUNCTION

S INDICATED ON



NEW SCOPE OF WORK ELEVATION

ST. STEPHEN'S
GREAT HALL STUDY
Project Number: 1224

11-06-2012

PROPOSED SCOPE OF WORK

A-1.00

ON NOT SELF-INTINCTING

By the Rector

Receiving Holy Communion is an intensely personal and, indeed, intimate moment of encounter between the worshipper and the risen Lord. For this reason, the clergy and chalice bearers administering the Sacrament are enormously reluctant to intrude when communicants do things that run counter to our Anglo-Catholic customs and practices. This makes it all the more important from time to time to explain our practices and the reasons for them.

Intinction is a case in point. Most dioceses in the Episcopal Church allow communicants the option of receiving the consecrated Body and Blood of our Lord simultaneously. The standard procedure is to receive the host in the palm of your hand and then wait for the chalice bearer to retrieve it, dip it in the chalice for you, and place it directly on your tongue. In other parishes, however, a widespread variation of this practice is “self-intinction,” whereby the communicant dips the consecrated host into the chalice, and then self-administers it.

To put the matter simply, self-intinction is not permitted at S. Stephen’s.

At the altar rail, we try to be patient with visitors and newcomers who insist on self-intincting, because it’s probably what they’re used to from their home parishes, and they don’t know that it is not what we do here. By the same token, we expect those who settle into regular worship at S. Stephen’s to learn our practices and conform to our customs.

Why are Anglo-Catholic parishes opposed to self-intinction? The basic reasons are the following:

- The chalice may be inadvertently jostled or knocked, resulting in spills of the consecrated Blood of Christ.
- While the communicant is conveying the intincted host from the chalice to his or her mouth, drops of the Precious Blood may spill on the ground, the altar rail, or one’s clothes. (Chalice bearers are trained to intinct the host in such a way as to minimize the likelihood of this happening.)
- The tips of the communicant’s fingers may inadvertently come into contact with the surface of the consecrated wine, which is potentially far more unhygienic than everyone sipping from a metal chalice which is immediately wiped clean with a purificator.
- Above all, we come to the altar rail to *receive* Holy Communion, not to “take” it. Self-intinction necessarily entails *self-administration* of the consecrated elements to a degree that negates the spirit of humility and receptivity with which we are called to approach Holy Communion.

For these reasons, we ask that all regular worshippers at S. Stephen’s refrain from attempting to self-intinct. If you are concerned about not spreading communicable diseases, you may receive by intinction in the approved manner; alternatively, you are welcome to receive in one kind only. A basic principle of sacramental theology is that while receiving in both kinds enriches the symbolism of Holy Communion, nonetheless the full grace of the Sacrament is received as much in one kind as in both.



Morgan Stebbins RIP

By Cory MacLean

Friday November 9: in the mail on the chair in my office, I find an envelope from White Flower Farm. I receive their catalogues regularly, but this is something else. I open it and find a letter reminding me that I have an unredeemed gift certificate. It’s about two years old - still valid. And there, on the page, “...from Morgan Stebbins.”

I feel a pang. I think of Morgan often, but I haven’t been to visit her in a long time. The last time I went to Hallworth House, she knew me, but she didn’t. It was hard for her to focus. She couldn’t finish sentences. You could see her eyes drift away from the thought. She still smiled, though, and it was as genuine as ever. I was glad I went, but it was hard to see her that way. So I drifted away, too. And I’d been feeling guilty about it. I would go see her, soon.

By the following Monday, she had died.

I knew Morgan for a long time. We sang in Schola together forever. Her kindness is the aspect I remember the most – that, and her rose perfume. She was unfailingly appreciative of what I do here, and she expressed that appreciation to me on a regular basis. And she made gestures like the gift certificate, for which I was, and am, deeply grateful.

As I sort the music each week and file it away, I always find at least one copy of each score with “Alto” written at the top, the second line highlighted in yellow. That’s Morgan: perpetually present in the music we sing. She sang softly but she was there, generous, grateful, and I know she loved being one voice in the greater-than-the-sum-of-its-parts prayer we offer up each Sunday.

As to the gift certificate, which she gave to me two years ago for Christmas, I’ve decided on a yellow rose for my garden. In the language of roses, yellow stands for gratitude, friendship, and the promise of a new beginning.

From the Sacristy

By Phoebe Pettingell



As a child, I always experienced a sense of elation with the beginning of Advent and the new Church year. I still do. The endless summer of liturgical green finally broke, and the altar frontal and pulpit fall were dressed in a rich violet color (as were the clergy vestments on those rare Sundays where my parish celebrated the Eucharist in those days of “Solemn High Morning Prayer”).

Violet is the proper liturgical name for what we often call “purple.” It is the lowest visible primary color on the light spectrum (followed by ultra-violet, which is invisible to our eyes), whereas purple is a mixture of primary colors blue and red. In the ancient world, the dyes used to create violet—mostly made with ground shells—were precious and rare. Thus, the color became associated with royalty. It was also used in some cultures for mourning. Hence, it is used both for Advent—“the coming of our King”—and for Lent. Technically, violet vestments should avoid purple shades, but tell that to the liturgical supply houses.

In recent years, “Sarum blue” has become popular for Advent. As those of you who read the Edward Rutherford novel *Sarum* (1987) will know, this is the ancient name for Salisbury in England. “Sarum rite” refers to the liturgical usage instituted by St. Osmund in the eleventh century, and used until the reign of Mary Tudor (1553-8). It thus differs in certain ways from the continental practice of Rome. I’ll have more to say about Sarum at a later date, since its customs are uniquely English and have influenced Anglicanism at various points. However, there is nothing ancient about Sarum blue, which appears to be a modern innovation designed to sell new vestments. Nonetheless, since S. Stephen’s has a beautiful Advent Blue High Mass set, as well as a set of “Lenten Array”—unbleached linen with ox-blood red orphreys—it has been our custom to alternate them with our violet sets. Last year we used the violet, so this year we are once again using the Advent blue for this season of preparation. We stick to violet in the Lady Chapel, which is why you see different colored candles on the Advent wreath there.

Speaking of candles, if lighting a votive candle at the Lady Shrine in the chapel or at the S. Stephen altar in the church is not already part of your spiritual discipline, you might consider it for this new liturgical year, just begun. Light-

ing a candle as you pray creates an outward and visible sign of your spiritual intention. While Anglicans rarely sing that old gospel song,

*This little light of mine:
I’m gonna let it shine*

this is, in fact what we are doing when we use votive lights. For me, when I have promised to pray for another person, or ask Christ, our Lady, or St. Stephen to help me with some spiritual difficulty, or want to express my thanks for God’s many blessings, that burning candle helps me concentrate my intentions. Happy New Year, as we await the season of the birth of the Messiah, and His Second Coming.

S. STEPHEN’S ANNUAL NEW YEAR’S DAY DINNER

**TUESDAY 1 JANUARY 2013
12 NOON**

*Start the New Year by
lending a helping hand
to someone in need.*

For more information,
call the parish office at
401-421-6702, ext.1.

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Acts of Spiritual Communion

By Bill Dilworth

Many Episcopalians are familiar with *St. Augustine's Prayer Book*, published for many years by the Order of the Holy Cross (OHC) in West Park, New York, but may not know that it is only one of a whole host of private Anglican prayer manuals. Such devotional manuals began to appear in the 1600s, and are an Anglican adaptation of a medieval phenomenon. Some strive for a wider embrace than others by providing morning and evening prayers, prayers during the day, preparation for Confession, prayers for use in sickness—much of the gamut of circumstances in a layperson's life that might call for prayer. Others have a more modest aim, and concentrate on preparation for Holy Communion: something that our spiritual ancestors took very seriously. Many of them contain a prayer that is probably unfamiliar to most Episcopalians today: an Act of Spiritual Communion.

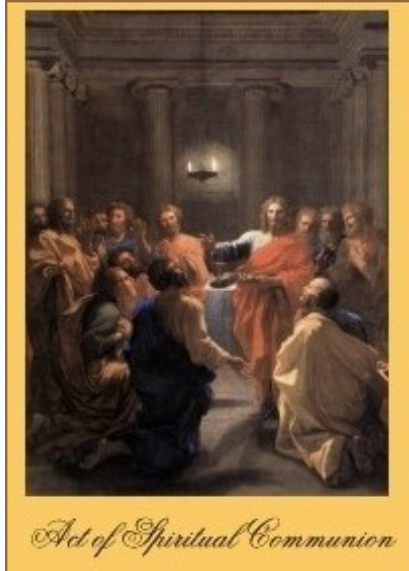
Making an Act of Spiritual Communion (as opposed to receiving Holy Communion sacramentally) is a response to finding ourselves unable to receive the Blessed Sacrament. We might be present at Mass but realize that we are not prepared to receive the Sacrament, perhaps by not being “in love and charity with [our] neighbor.” Maybe we are refraining from Communion because we do not feel well physically. Then again, these days Episcopalians sometimes find ourselves present at celebrations of the Eucharist in other Churches that do not welcome non-members to receive the Sacrament (the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches, for example). In the past, one was rarely welcome at the altar rail in another denomination, but ecumenism has greatly increased inter-Church contacts. Maybe we are travelling and find ourselves somewhere where there are no Churches of any kind, but still want the opportunity to worship God in the Eucharist. Spiritual Communion can be used in any of these situations.

The principle behind Spiritual Communion was carried over from pre-Reformation Christianity and enshrined in Anglicanism at a very early stage. The very first Book of Common Prayer's “Celebration of Holy Communion for the Sick” (1549) contained the following rubric:

But if any man, either by reason of extremity of sickness, or for lack of warning given in due time to the Curate, or by any other just impediment, do not receive the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood; then the Curate shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and steadfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the Cross for

him, and shed his Blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefore, he doth eat and drink spiritually the Body and Blood of Our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the Sacrament with his mouth.

This rubric has found its way in one form or another into later editions of the Prayer Book, including our 1979 one. The various Acts of Spiritual Communion contained in Anglican prayer manuals make it easier for us to act in accordance with this rubric.



We can make an Act of Spiritual Communion in different ways. At a Mass where we will not be receiving Holy Communion, we can offer a short prayer in our pew while others around us go up for Communion. In the absence of a worshipping community, we can use the readings and other parts of the Mass—everything except the Eucharist Prayer itself—to flesh out the Act of Spiritual Communion a little more. No matter how you use such an act, the idea is to unite yourself to Jesus Christ.

The Manual of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament contains a typical example of this prayer, reprinted in each intercession paper:

In union, dear Lord, with the faithful at every altar of the Church where Thy Blessed Body and Blood are being offered to the Father, I desire to offer Thee praise and thanksgiving. I believe that Thou art truly present in the Holy Sacrament. And since I cannot at this time receive Thee sacramentally, I beseech thee to come spiritually into my soul. I unite myself unto Thee, and embrace Thee with all the affections of my heart. Let me never be separated from Thee. Let me live and die in Thy love. Amen.

We receive the Blessed Sacrament much more frequently than our ancestors did. Still, we sometimes find ourselves in situations in which receiving the Sacrament is not possible, or not advisable. An Act of Spiritual Communion, while not being a full and satisfying substitute for the Blessed Sacrament, can help us in those situations and turn them to our spiritual benefit.

RESTORING THE PAST ENHANCING THE FUTURE

By Susan Brazil

Dear Fellow Parishioners and Friends of S. Stephen's:

As we enter the Christmas giving season and start making our lists and Holiday plans, I am sure many of us are underlining attending Mass on Christmas Eve at S. Stephen's: either the Children's Mass or Midnight Mass—each of which is magical and wonderful in its own right. Whether we attend Mass every Sunday or only occasionally, it is important for all of us to come together as a quasi-Family on this sacred Holiday. S. Stephen's is a constant in all of our lives. We count on our parish to be that beautiful place where, every Christmas, we gather to celebrate the Birth of Christ.

S. Stephen's is entering a very exciting chapter in its history. We hope that everyone will join us and assist us in the restorations that are needed so badly. We are hoping that everyone will join us in "RESTORING THE PAST" so that we can "ENHANCE THE FUTURE". For those who are not aware of our plans, we would like to refurbish the Great Hall so that when we gather on Sunday morning for coffee hour, after special events, student suppers on Sunday evening, or when the Epiphany Soup Kitchen hosts guests on Saturday afternoons, all will find it a warm and inviting haven. But we would also like to expand its use, so that we can invite the cultural community to host some of their events in our Great Hall as well, or invite others into the space to conduct seminars. We would like to share this space with the community more often.

We would also like to restore the beautiful stained glass windows in the north aisle so that they will continue to remind us of parishioners who came here to worship before our time; of the sacrifices they made so that their loved ones would be remembered for another 150 years. Finally, we would like to repair the floor of the sanctuary, so that we can restore the beauty of this holy area of our church.

As of Friday, December 14, 2012, I am excited to report that 26 parishioners have pledged to contribute to this vision: \$98,490, with an average pledge of \$3,778. By committing financially to this mission we will help insure that future generation will continue to gather and worship in this holy place, so important to all of us. Fr. Alexander and the Vestry, together with Ransom and me as co-chairs of the Capital Campaign project, will only be able to complete this restoration with your assistance. Please join us on this exciting journey. I assure you that we will all be pleased with the results.

I look forward to our continuing work together.
Thank you!
Sue.

Being an Acolyte

By Rose Callanan

As I stand in the sacristy before Mass I know that I will be missing out on whatever craft the Sunday school will be doing that week. However I also know my responsibility to God comes first. Also I know that I will not be alone; an altar-serving friend will be sitting next to me throughout the service.

I started my training to be an acolyte when I was in fourth grade. Mr. Hooks taught me what I needed to know. He patiently explained each part of the Mass and how I was to participate. Acolytes take part in the opening procession, the Gospel, the Eucharist, and the closing procession. Although Acolytes do not have a large part in the service it is important that they pay attention at all times so they don't miss their cues. You also must hold the torch with care or you might drip hot wax onto yourself.

My favorite part of the service is the Gospel. This is because I am right next to where the Gospel is being sung and the message inspires me. My brother Devon's favorite part of the mass is the procession because he feels like an active part of the service. Valexja's favorite part of the service is the breaking of the bread because it is beautiful.

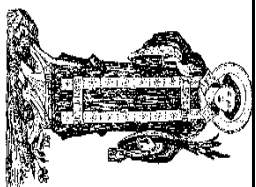
As an Acolyte I am able to see the altar up close. I often look at the stained glass windows and try to guess which scenes from the Bible they come from. Also on Sundays when there are musicians playing various interesting instruments it is fun to watch them. On one Sunday I watched and listened to a French horn and a harp.

During Sunday school we learn about the Bible, God, and our commitment to Him. As an Acolyte you learn about the same things in a different way. As an altar server you are serving God in the church, his holy house. You sing and pray to God.

Acolyting can be fun but it is also serious. Making the commitment to be an altar server means that you have to do your best during the service. Being an acolyte is a responsibility and a privilege.



Acolyte Rose with brothers Devon and Nathan



The S. Stephen

Advent/Christmas/Epiphany
2012-2013

VOL. II.

ARCHITECTURE

PLATE XVIII.

Structural arrangements of the Choir of Lincoln Cathedral

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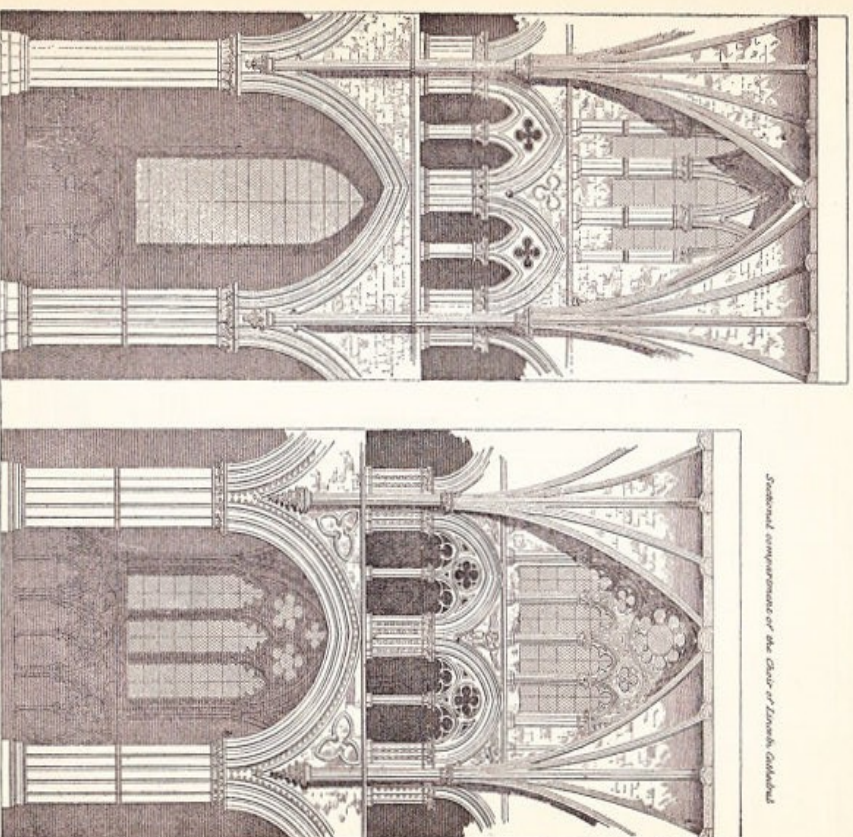


Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.



a



b

Designed by J. N. Prynne, Esq.



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