



ST. PETER'S
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

Summer at St. Peter's

June 14

- Last Day of Choir and Sunday School
- End of the Year Picnic, 11:00am

July 25

- Fisher Cats Faith and Family Night, 6:00pm

Aug. 16

- Sundaes Sunday, 11:00am

Sept. 12-13

- Fall Artisan Fair

Sept. 20

- Choir Resumes
- Sunday School Resumes
- Kick-Off Barbeque,

I was recently reunited with my poetry collection. Somehow, in the midst of the three moves I made last year, I forgot that half of my books were still in my brother's basement. It has been a delight to rediscover the poems and prayers that accompanied me through discerning a call, three years of seminary and my first five years of ministry on Long Island. Poetry directs me to God in a special way. It slows me down, and invites me to notice more deeply.

As much as I love poetry though, a little goes a long way for me. Poetry is like butter. It takes ordinary things, and makes them delicious. A piece of bread, toasted and spread with fresh butter can seem like a decadent treat. But a whole meal of butter sounds kind of gross. I could not live on a rich diet of poetry. One poem is often all I can take - but that poem can keep me thinking for days.

My feelings about poetry remind me of the teachings of Augustine of Hippo, the 4th-century bishop and theologian. He described the world as being made up of Things and Signs. Things are anything specific which can be enjoyed or used. Signs are anything that refers you to a thing. This can get very complicated, as signs can also be things, but that's a topic for another day. Our attempts to describe God are the classic example of a Sign. They point us in the direction of God, but should not be confused with God itself - and something very small can open us to something very big.

Whether we use or enjoy a Thing is the central question of Augustine's ethics. As Christians, the truest object of our enjoyment is always God. We get into trouble when we get distracted enjoying other Things. Food or drink, productivity, order, power and money are just a few of the Things that we humans can enjoy too much, pulling us away from God's path.

Augustine suggests that the Things of this world should rather be used: used to direct us to the enjoyment of God. For me poetry is like that. It's something I can use to point me in the direction of God, or simply make me stop and notice God around me. Pausing and noticing is the simplest, but possibly most powerful, way we come to know God better, making God's acquaintance, becoming friends, experiencing the great Creator and enjoying it.

This Spring and Summer, I wonder how you might enjoy God. Perhaps it's by reading a poem or two, like me. Maybe it's taking time to marvel at the world God has created. Or it could be telling stories of what God has done in the world. Whatever you choose, find a thing that will help you to enjoy God more.

Peace and Blessings,
Mary Beth

Priest-in-Charge to Rector Discernment

On June 4th, the Vestry will be meeting to vote on the topic of calling the Rev. Mary Beth Mills-Curran as our Rector. As you know, we began this process in November when we had a parish meeting to talk about how St. Peter's is doing. We received valuable input from you at that time and met in December to discuss our next steps. After that conversation, we wanted to take some time to reflect on and integrate what we learned from the congregation, and set a goal of continuing the process in the Spring.

Our Vestry Retreat in February included professional facilitation in creating a foundation for a strong and vibrant Vestry. It was a good experience for all of us. Since then, we have felt ready to continue the discernment process, understanding that within the Episcopal Church, the decision to call a Rector is made by the Vestry. We ask for your prayers as we move forward in this process. We have a good Church because of the good people that call St. Peter's their spiritual home. Thank you!



OUR MISSION

We seek to worship God, welcome all, and serve Christ in one another



This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it
Psalm 118:24





In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than receive." -Acts 20:35

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT

Surely you have noticed the clothing donation bins on the front porch of St. Peter's church. Maybe you were never quite sure what happens with those donated items. In fact, those donations support the New Hampshire Mutual Aid Relief Fund, also known as MARF.

The NH Mutual Aid Relief Fund is a grassroots effort of working-class people who believe that direct action and solidarity are the best ways to meet the material and social needs of our community. They are a 100% volunteer organization and their primary focus is their Free Stores. These are public events, typically held outdoors. They are similar to a food pantry but with a larger selection of items **focused on helping people survive and become comfortable in difficult situations**. Everyone is welcome at Free Stores. Free Stores currently operate in five towns across New Hampshire: Concord, Dover, Manchester, Nashua, and Rochester. St. Peter's donations end up at the Manchester Free Store event which happens every Sunday, rain or shine, at Veterans Park, 723 Elm Street from 1 to 2 pm.



Donation, including financial contributions, are always needed. You can find ways to donate at www.nhmarf.org/donate. 100% of proceeds are used to support Free Stores and other supply distributions. Needed items include:

- Food:** Shelf-stable items (high demand, especially during times when SNAP benefits are not distributed).
- Clothing:** Clean clothing, particularly socks, underwear, and t-shirts.
- Hygiene/Health:** Unopened toiletries, tampons, pads, and basic first aid supplies.
- Survival Gear:** Tents, sleeping bags, and hand-warmers.
- General:** Towels, linens, and batteries.

Update provided by Lee O'Connor



**DONATE
NOW!**





The Ambassador and the Litigator

Steve and Barbara Finamore-Young: “Love at first Sight”

An interview with Barbara where this writer learned about their life together and shares it with the reader.

Barbara was born in New Rochelle, NY where she lived until after completion of her undergraduate studies at SUNY and Harvard Law School where she satisfied her keen interest in Environmental Law, (Chief Justice John Roberts was a classmate). She was on her way one Labor Day weekend in 1980 to Washington, DC to begin a new career in the Dept. of the Interior and attend a wedding at the National Washington Cathedral. (She was about to meet the love of her life, Steve).

He and his parents knew the bride's family very well. Barbara needed a ride to the reception and one of the bride's family members offered and introduced Steve and Barbara. It was “Love at first Sight”.

Steve was born into a military family and was accustomed to moving throughout his formative years. He was preparing for his future by completing his PhD from the University of Chicago focusing on studies in Russian history and joined the US Foreign Services. While working on his dissertation, he spent some leisure time in Londonderry picking apples at Mack's, (who would have thought? I'm going to eat more apples). Along the way, Steve learned to speak fluent Russian and Chinese. His first assignment was to Taiwan for 18 months.

Meanwhile, back in DC, Barbara's new job was canceled by James Watt, who was the Interior Secretary. That didn't stop this quiet, determined woman who landed a job with the NRDC, Natural Resource Defense Council, which was one of the first environmental law councils. She remained with them for the next 40 years adding significant impact. Their long distance romance continued. Barbara joined Steve in Taiwan where the two climbed the highest mountain there. It took 3 days and was accompanied by heavy, stinging rain drops the entire time.

When the climb was completed, Steve proposed and Barbara accepted later when they were both back in the states. Barbara thinks the climb in the rain was a test but Steve has always denied it. (We all know she passed some kind of test).

Professions flourished. Barbara was hired to litigate the Dept. of Energy, DOE, (this is not an error by this writer). The DOE had 30 nuclear weapons production sites across the USA which were alleged to be contaminated by radiation and hazardous by-products. Citizens living in close proximity did not receive any warnings. Many became ill; some died.

A whistleblower, aware Barbara was seeking evidence, produced damaging documents with critical information.. Barbara successfully brought and won a path breaking case in Tennessee in 1982. The DOE did not appeal the lawsuit and continue to this day, a total of 50 years later, to clean those remaining contaminated sites. (Thank You, Barbara!)

In the spring of 1983, this energetic power couple married. The reception took place in her parent's home in the outdoors. (This writer dared to ask re the weather: YIKES, it rained, but not enough to dampen their love for each other).

Steve's job as an ambassador involved the obvious diplomacy and included moving every 2 to 3 years. Their marriage thrived for 30 years despite these restrictions.

-Their firstborn child, Michael was conceived while living in Russia in 1985. During her pregnancy, the KGB had been spreading powder on Diplomat's doorknobs, people's hands, steering wheels, etc. It was learned that the powder contents could cause birth defects and Barbara was sent back to the USA to give birth. Fortunately, Michael was born healthy, without any birth defects. Ironically, he was born on April 26,1986, the same day as the Chernobyl disaster. (Of note, today he speaks fluent Russian.)

-Their second child, a daughter named Rebecca, was born in 1989 in the USA. The family moved to Taiwan one week later. (Of note: she speaks math)

-Their third child, a son named Patrick, was growing in the womb while the family was living in Beijing. He too, was born in the USA. Mother and baby returned to Beijing when he was 3 weeks young. (Of note, today Patrick speaks fluent Chinese.)

Could there possibly be other achievements? Yes, as you shall read;

-Barbara started a China climate and clean energy program in Beijing at an NRDC office which is still thriving today and employs dozens of staff. The Chinese use and store solar and wind energy very successfully,

-Barbara participates in singing twice a month at various nursing homes,

-Barbara has been chairing the WoW group who meet every Weds. for the past year at Mammoth and #102 fighting for our democracy,

-She is a member of the Faith and Action committee here at St. Peter's.

-Steve's career included: US Ambassador in Kyrgyzstan; Director of the American Embassy in Taiwan, and Consul General in Hong Kong, his final career achievement. He retired in 2013.

-Steve is also a member of the Faith and Action committee and fights for democracy every Weds. on the corner of Mammoth and #102

-He enjoys being a devoted LEM at St. Peter's

-Steve recently celebrated his 75th birthday with family from near and far. He lives with serious medical challenges while keeping busy. Barbara is always at his side supporting him lovingly.

Steve's parents worshipped at St. Peter's. He and Barbara joined our congregation courtesy of them and the Holy Spirit. We benefit from each other.

Thank you very much for sharing your time and so much of your lives together. These stories are exciting, entertaining, learning experiences; even the terrifying ones;(e.g., the KGB powder spread and the DOE lingering contaminated sites in our country)

In Appreciation and Fellowship,
Marilyn Bragg, Interviewer

Fun & Fellowship



May, 2026

St. Peter's
Episcopal
Church
3 Peabody
Row
Londonderry,
NH 05053

Photos:

Clockwise from Top Corner

- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
- Rev. Mary Beth's Birthday Celebration
- Bowling
- Nasua Soup Kitchen
- End 68 Hours of Hunger
- Office Volunteer Luncheon
- Family Movie Night
- Bishop's Visit
- Chili Cook Off

Center: Palm Sunday

Join Us!
Worship
Sundays
9:30am