

NANCY HULBERT SAUSSY HOBSON

November 22, 1943 – October 22, 2021



A Celebration of Her Life

Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

Zabriskie Chapel

Saturday, May 21, 2022

2:00pm

Questions About Angels

Billy Collins

Of all the questions you might want to ask
about angels, the only one you ever hear
is how many can dance on the head of a pin.

No curiosity about how they pass the eternal time
besides circling the Throne chanting in Latin
or delivering a crust of bread to a hermit on earth
or guiding a boy and girl across a rickety wooden bridge.

Do they fly through God's body and come out singing?
Do they swing like children from the hinges
of the spirit world saying their names backwards and forwards?
Do they sit alone in little gardens changing colors?

What about their sleeping habits, the fabric of their robes,
their diet of unfiltered divine light?
What goes on inside their luminous heads? Is there a wall
these tall presences can look over and see hell?

If an angel fell off a cloud, would he leave a hole
in a river and would the hole float along endlessly
filled with the silent letters of every angelic word?

If an angel delivered the mail, would he arrive
in a blinding rush of wings or would he just assume
the appearance of the regular mailman and
whistle up the driveway reading the postcards?

No, the medieval theologians control the court.
The only question you ever hear is about
the little dance floor on the head of a pin
where halos are meant to converge and drift invisibly.

It is designed to make us think in millions,
billions, to make us run out of numbers and collapse
into infinity, but perhaps the answer is simply one:
one female angel dancing alone in her stocking feet,
a small jazz combo working in the background.

She sways like a branch in the wind, her beautiful
eyes closed, and the tall thin bassist leans over
to glance at his watch because she has been dancing
forever, and now it is very late, even for musicians.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

*Following the service, please join Nan's family for the Committal
in the Memorial Garden and a reception in the Parish Hall.*

PRELUDE "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring"

OPENING ANTHEMS (*All stand*)

I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.
Whoever has faith in me shall have life,
even though he die.
And everyone who has life,
and has committed himself to me in faith,
shall not die for ever.

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth.
After my awaking, he will raise me up;
and in my body I shall see God.
I myself shall see, and my eyes behold him
who is my friend and not a stranger.

For none of us has life in himself,
and none becomes his own master when he dies.
For if we have life, we are alive in the Lord,
and if we die, we die in the Lord.
So, then, whether we live or die,
we are the Lord's possession.

Happy from now on
are those who die in the Lord!
So it is, says the Spirit,
for they rest from their labors.

HYMN 680 "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

THE COLLECT

Clergy The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Clergy Let us pray.

O God, whose mercies cannot be numbered: Accept our
prayers on behalf of your servant Nan, and grant her an
entrance into the land of light and joy, in the fellowship of
your saints; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for
ever. **Amen.**

REMARKS Martha Manson

REMARKS Frankie Rollins

HYMN 482 “Lord of All Hopefulness, Lord of All Joy”

REMARKS Russ Hoyle

REMARKS Hartley Hobson Wensing

HYMN 287 “For All the Saints, Who From Their Labors Rest” Verses 1, 2, and 8

PSALM 139 Verses 1-17 (*Responsive*) Susan Hobson

LORD, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.

You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
and are acquainted with all my ways.

Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
but you, O LORD, know it altogether.

You press upon me behind and before *
and lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.

Where can I go then from your Spirit? *
where can I flee from your presence?

If I climb up to heaven, you are there; *
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.

If I take the wings of the morning *
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,

Even there your hand will lead me *
and your right hand hold me fast.

If I say, “Surely the darkness will cover me, *
and the light around me turn to night,”

Darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day; *
darkness and light to you are both alike.

For you yourself created my inmost parts; *
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I will thank you because I am marvelously made; *
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.

My body was not hidden from you, *
**while I was being made in secret
and woven in the depths of the earth.**

Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;
all of them were written in your book; *
**they were fashioned day by day,
when as yet there was none of them.**

How deep I find your thoughts, O God! *
how great is the sum of them!

If I were to count them, they would be more in number
than the sand; *
**to count them all, my life span would need to
be like yours.**

REMARKS Kathleen Hobson

GOSPEL John 14: 1-6 Ned Hulbert

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

People The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

HOMILY The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, Jr.

RECESSIONAL

✠ ✠ ✠

THE COMMITTAL

HYMN

“How Can I Keep from Singing?”

Leader: Lytle Brent

My life flows on in endless song
Above Earth's lamentation
I hear the real, though far-off hymn
That hails the new creation
Above the tumult and the strife
I hear its music ringing
It sounds an echo in my soul
How can I keep from singing?

What though the tempest loudly roars
I hear the truth, it liveth
What though the darkness round me close
Songs in the night it giveth
No storm can shake my inmost calm
While to that rock I'm clinging
Since love is lord of Heaven and Earth
How can I keep from singing?

** Repeat first verse **

Clergy

Everyone the Father gives to me will come to me;
I will never turn away anyone who believes in me.

He who raised Jesus Christ from the dead
will also give new life to our mortal bodies
through his indwelling Spirit.

My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;
my body also shall rest in hope.

You will show me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy,
and in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.

(While earth is cast upon the urn)

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life
through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to Almighty
God our sister Nan, and we commit her body to the ground;
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The Lord bless
her and keep her, the Lord make his face to shine upon her
and be gracious to her, the Lord lift up his countenance upon
her and give her peace. **Amen.**

Clergy The Lord be with you.
People **And with thy spirit.**
Clergy Let us pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Clergy Rest eternal grant to her, O Lord;
People **And let light perpetual shine upon her.**
Clergy May her soul, and the souls of all the departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

(Clergy adds additional prayers, then dismisses people with these words.)

Clergy Alleluia. Christ is risen.
People **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**
Clergy Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People **Thanks be to God.**

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Please join the family for a reception in the Parish Hall.

SERVING TODAY

Officiant The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, Jr.
Ushers Tom and Debbie Hewson
Crucifer Grace Hobson Wensing
Organist Dr. Jane Tavernier
Trumpeter Jason Covey
Flower Guild Volunteers Candy Levin, Sally Guy Brown, Connie Kurz
Reception by Nan's friends Martha Manson, Gilma Balcarcel, Donna Clausen,
Debbie Hewson, Wendy John, Connie Kurz, Jennifer Rooney, Laura Snow
Gravesite Preparation The Rev. Sam Sheridan and Chris von Schoening

MEMORIES OF NAN



Nan and Downie, Savannah

Wakeful at Night

*For Nan on her 55th birthday,
with love, from Jim*

Cheers for the changers, blest re-arrangers,
Praise for the hands that shape the bouquet,
The wrists that turn over, the fingers that sift
Topsoil and sand into ponderous clay.

All these years moving furniture, pictures re-hung
Again and again, paint chips tested in light
And shadow, new linens on the nuptial bedding,
Suggest adding a vow to the ritual wedding:
We take each other for richer or poorer,
In sickness and in health, at rest or in motion.

Cheers for the changers, blest re-arrangers,
Of world-as-it-is to a world that could be,
Who substitute hope for the habit of coping
And seed the horizon with trees.

How many times have I looked askance
At swatches of fabric on favorite chairs,
Balked at replanting shrubs to dappled shade,
Treated life as merely durable, obscuring
This ground of insurmountable opportunity
To cultivate alternative realities.

Cheers for the changer, blest re-arranger,
Who dreams in the morning, lies wakeful at night,
I'd sing you to sleep but dare not suppress
The works that emerge in the noon of your light.



REMEMBERING GRANNY

Walker:

Early in 2019, Elena was visiting and I decided to introduce her to Granny via video chat, since I wasn't sure the opportunity would arise in person. Granny's health had started deteriorating, but when speaking to Elena, she was clear as ever: "Is this the new member of the family?" asked Granny. It was as if she already knew that Elena and I would be together for a long, long time. Granny was perceptive like that: She could always tell what people meant to one another even when she didn't know the whole story.



Hattie:

Granny sent me emails, perhaps monthly, starting in middle school. Often, these were dispatches from the woods behind the house: "Grandfather and I saw two red foxes cavorting in our yard today." Sometimes, she sent me links to a comic strip, *Cul De Sac*, which we both loved. She identified with the four-year-old protagonist, Alice Otterloop, who experienced every day of her suburban Washington life as an adventure. "Every day, I test the boundaries of my domain," Alice declared.

Granny sent me many, many poems. She wrote, "Poems attempt to explain the ineffable. Not always easy to understand." When my Grandpa Ram died, she emailed me the last stanza of "Thanatopsis," by William Cullen Bryant:



So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and
soothed

By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

Hunter:

I remember waking up at Granny and Grandfather's house and crawling into bed with her to read together—rather, I would pretend to read, but I just wanted to hang out with her. I remember sitting in her lap at Stribling before bedtime, and she read William Steig books to me such as *Gorky Rises*. I felt calm and protected when I was with her. I also remember playing gin with her a lot, especially at Shrine Mont. She never tired of that game, and I



never tired of playing with her. She would come to visit sometimes, when our parents were out of town, and she would let us have all the junk food and soda we wanted. She was always obsessed with the cute little things, like little bowls and spoons. She gave me the habit of eating with small utensils. One time when she was visiting, she took all the tiny little toys and figurines she could find and hid them in high places throughout the house. I remember Granny these ways: as a reader, a protector, another parent, a playmate, and a prankster.

Lulu:

I remember just Nan and me driving in her Mini Cooper in Alexandria. She promised she would give me the car when I got my driver's license. I was maybe 8 at the time. We talked about what color we would paint it—hot pink—and how we would bedazzle it, putting fur covers on the head rests and painting flowers on the hub caps.

Another time in Alexandria, when I was maybe 6 or 7, I woke up early and went downstairs in my nightgown. Nan was in the kitchen. At first, I hid, because I felt shy, but she saw me and asked if I wanted a cup of coffee! It was the first time I'd

ever been offered coffee. She asked if I wanted cream and sugar, and because I had no idea what it tasted like, I said no. She gave it to me black. We sat at the table in the library and looked out the big windows facing the back yard and watched the birds at the feeders. I took very small sips of the coffee because I thought it was ladylike. I was nervous and so shy around everyone. It was difficult for me to have conversations, even with family. But Nan made me feel comfortable and grown up.



Robert:

Nan was one of the only people who made me feel like myself. She was silly, and we had fun giggling about random things, like people, birds, and animals in her back yard. We liked learning facts about them. I liked taking walks with her on the beach at Tybee. We would try to catch sand

crabs. I never caught one, but she was an expert. She probably caught a couple thousand. The rare times she went into the ocean—that was the most fun I ever had in water. I remember Nan and Grandfather coming to my tee-ball game in New York, and I struck out three times on the tee! The coaches gave me six pitches each at bat, and I still struck out three times. I felt so bad they came all that way to watch me strike out. Then we went to dinner. Nan told me I'd make the big leagues one day. She always made me feel good about myself. I love you with all my heart, Nan.

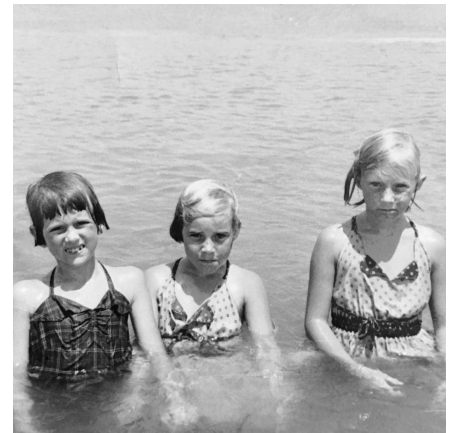


REMEMBERING HULLY

Mimi Daniel Cay, Savannah: We used to escape the heat of Nan's Tybee cottage in the summer by crawling out of a window and onto the roof of the porch below. There we would tell stories as only teenage girls can, rehash the day, and smoke cigarettes. Sometimes at night we would swim in the inlet, and if we were lucky the phosphorus would appear, outlining every movement of arms and legs. It was the perfect metaphor for the bright wonder we all felt. With Nan's death I have lost a friend with whom I shared a life for over seventy years.

Katharine Ellis Elsas, Atlanta: We were celebrating my birthday about 15 years ago at a Mexican restaurant near Turners Rock. Mimi, Nan, Katharine, and my brother Charlie who brought a huge sombrero. We had many margaritas, sang happy birthday, traded the hat round and round. Laughing and dancing and singing, Nan loved it. She was the hit of our little party.

Caroline Walker Hill, Savannah: It was 1956, in the summer before we all turned 13, and we were regularly marauding around Ardsley Park after midnight in the typical intense heat and humidity. Nan thought that we—Nan, Libby, Mimi, Caroline—should go to her 80-year-old grandparents' house on 49th street to have a Coke and cool off. She said they were out-of-town but was sure they wouldn't mind a bit, and she knew where the spare key was hidden. Well, the key was not there so Hully (Nan) got an enormous ladder from the garage and we put it up to their open second-story bedroom window. Hully went up first, and as I was about to follow, we heard "Naaaaan, Naaaaan, is that you Naaaaan?" in her grandmother Bucky's melodic voice. Nan was caught with one foot in the window. Of course we ran off, and poor Hully was punished for two weeks.



Caroline, Eileen, and Nan at Tybee

Lucy Scardino Lamb, Los Angeles: I remember being at Nan's home on Isle of Hope as a teenager. I'll never forget her laugh. What a bright curiosity she had.

Libby McIntire Rogers, Houston: I think of Nan and our idealistic youth. Nan and I started out life together at Pape School kindergarten. Pape turned into Country Day, and we remained there until the 11th grade. I spent many weekends at Isle of Hope with Nan and her wonderful family. We would wander all over Isle of Hope and would often end up at Barbee's, a Terrapin turtle farm. Nan would stay with me or another in our group and we would all meet at the 45th Street park where we would play kick the can or do the mess around. At dusk we would throw things in the air to see if the bats would follow them to the ground. If we weren't in the park we were usually at Kitty's or the Cay's Casino. I think we all smoked and got into harmless trouble. In the summer we would go to Tybee and spend endless hours at Chu's looking at their remarkable and odd selection of everything imaginable. We often had Nan's younger brothers in tow. We would sneak out at night and meet on the beach, usually get caught and be punished. We spent hours on the beach, swimming and sunning ourselves covered in baby oil and iodine. We were and still are a tight-knit group. We still think we are the funniest and cutest people around. We love each other.

Kitty Comer Proenza, Charlottesville: I made notes about Nan's laughter. After a sailing mishap we were being towed into the Yacht Club by Ralph Bowyer who had a Snipe (sailboat) with red sails. Instead of being embarrassed like her cousin Eileen, who was frantically trying to shush her, Nan was leading us in "Red Sails in the Sunset" at the top of her voice, off-key and making up the words about our adventure as folks came out to cheer us in. She thought the whole day hilarious. She loved it.

REMEMBERING MOM

December 22, 2021, Asheville, NC

Thank you all so much for coming to Mom's funeral, especially in this time of Covid worry and Christmas busy-ness. I'm Kathleen, and these are my sisters, Caroline and Susan. I'm speaking for the three of us. We wanted to tell you a little about the Mom we knew growing up.



It's fitting that Mom's funeral was at Christmas, because Mom loved Christmas, and she went all out. She had the perfect qualities for Christmas awesomeness. She loved the Baby Jesus. She loved decorating and throwing parties and making delicious food and wrapping presents. Composing gift tags was a late-night, post-church marathon of punchy hilarity. She would laugh until she cried. We got gifts from the likes of Ross Perot and Wayne Newton and Tammy Faye Baker.

Christmas dinner was always divine, and it was often Beef Wellington, but Christmas is not the only occasion for which she pulled out all the stops. For a child's birthday, Mom might do a *gâteau de crêpes*. For grown-ups-only dinner parties, she favored risky dishes like roasted, stuffed quail. In the disco era her signature party hors d'oeuvre was little cheese-filled phyllo-pastry triangles called tiropitas that took forever to make. Mom was a great cook, maybe the best we ever knew. But she also understood the value of a simple tomato sandwich on skinny bread with an ice cold Coke. She loved cheese grits, Brunswick Stew, pick-and-eat shrimp, and Hoppin' John. It's amazing, how well we ate, growing up.

Mom was a party person and we had a role in her productions from an early age. We learned how to shake hands, and look people in the eye and smile, by playing a game. First she'd play host and we'd play guest. She'd greet us at the door saying, "Oh, hello, Mrs. Potato Head! So nice to see you, come right in! May I take your coat?" Then it was our turn. Later, when we were older, she trained us to serve dinner. She was a gracious host. She wanted to have fun, and she wanted you—her guests—to have fun, and feel comfortable and appreciated, and stay as long as possible.

Mom was one of us, one of the gang. She was often there when our friends came over, and she liked them, and they knew it. When Mom visited us in college, she slept in our rooms, not in a hotel, because it was more fun for all of us.

Mom loved people, and people loved her—right away. "Nan always made me feel so good *just as I was*," one of our high school friends told us. Another friend, Susan's freshman English teacher, shared this memory: "It was on campus at Saint Agnes in my earliest days teaching. Nan thanked me for something she thought I was doing right. At the time I felt so overwhelmed, so unsure. Her words of respect made all the difference."

Mom loved being our mom, and told us so often. We were superlative in every way. We were so smart, so talented, so attractive—somehow always the best version of ourselves at all times. She was wrong, of course. But she honestly thought one of us might be President one day. When we got our own places, she praised our decorating decisions as if she couldn't see that most of our ideas



came from her. When we had children, they were the cutest and most amazing. Of course, she was right about that.



Mom was constantly reading books, always learning, always curious about other people and places. Our earliest memories—and our children’s—are of sitting in her lap reading books together. It was almost a miracle that many of our last sweet moments with Mom were also of sitting quietly with her, reading children’s books together. One of her favorites from this period was *Amos and Boris*, by William Steig.

Amos the mouse and Boris the whale meet by chance in the middle of the ocean, when Amos falls off his sailboat and

Boris happens to swim by. Later in the story, the mouse returns the favor when Boris is stranded on Amos’s home shore. These two unlikely friends have nothing in common but they develop deep love and respect for one another. “Boris admired the delicacy, the quivering daintiness, the light touch, the small voice, the gemlike radiance of the mouse. Amos admired the bulk, the grandeur, the power, the purpose, the rich voice, and the abounding friendliness of the whale.”



Granny Hobson, Nan, and the girls in Palo Alto

Mom admired people and told them so all the time. Here’s what we admired about Mom: her capacity for love, her friendliness, her curiosity, her graciousness, her laugh, her style, her irreverence, her joie de vivre, her appreciation for literature and the arts, her love of beauty and all of creation. We miss her like crazy, we love her to pieces, and we always will.



A FINAL WORD FROM NAN

Grand Marnier Sauce

5 egg yolks
1/2 c + 2 Tbs sugar
1/4 to 1/3 c Grand Marnier
1 c whipping cream

Mix yolks with sugar.
Beat for 10 minutes over hot water.
Remove from heat.
Stir in one half of Grand Marnier and cool in icebox.

When sauce is cool:
Beat whipping cream with 2 Tbs sugar.
Fold into chilled sauce.
Stir in rest of G M and put back in icebox to chill its brains out.





*All shall be well
and all shall be well
and all manner of thing shall be well.*

– Julian of Norwich

SCHEDULE OF SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, Zabriskie Chapel
3606 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA

9:00 a.m. Family Holy Eucharist, Zabriskie Chapel

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, Immanuel Chapel
3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA

Online

www.immanuel-on-the-hill.org
Immanuel's YouTube channel

PRIEST ASSOCIATES

The Rev. Dr. J. Barney Hawkins, IV

The Rev. Dr. Ruthanna Hooke

The Rev. Jan A. Maas

The Rev. John R. Smucker

The Rev. Canon Rosemari G. Sullivan

The Rev. Dr. Francis H. Wade

RECTOR EMERITA

The Rev. Dr. Margaret Ann (Sam) Faeth



MISSION STATEMENT: Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill is a Christian community in the Episcopal tradition, striving to be in relationship with God and each other as Christ has taught us, actively attempting to sense and to serve God's plan with great love. We are guided by Mark 16:15: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," to learn, discern, and proclaim the Good News by being active ministers in the various communities where we live and serve.

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