

Report of the Temple Treasurer 2026

The position of Treasurer symbolizes “the responsibility to our storehouse of spiritual treasure filled with the jewels we have been given to use, to care for, and enhance.” I believe the restoration of Martin G. Bilger’s magnificent framed image entitled “Know Thyself” is an increasingly meaningful symbol of the spiritual journey, as we care for and enhance our shared Temple life and teachings. Those two words reflect the value we place on that spiritual storehouse and on the importance of seeing those treasures with fresh eyes, as we fulfill our inner responsibility to keep them relevant and alive.

“Know Thyself” was designed and executed by Mr. Bilger, a longtime member of the Meriden, Connecticut, Temple Square who became a Temple priest later in life. The impressive mahogany frame, with its detailed map of life, was installed at the center of the Temple’s east wall for decades. It was relocated to the second-floor offices of the William Quan Judge Library, I believe in the 1980s, before being returned to its original place of honor in 2024. It serves as a majestic anchoring element with the ornate oak table beneath, the two serving almost like a third altar on the East wall of the Temple.

While the intricate exterior frame had been beautifully restored and refreshed in 2024, it became apparent in the gentle Temple light that the *inside* of the frame needed a closer look. As one might expect after 110 years of incremental exposure to light, the paper had turned a medium amber color. In a collaborative effort, a small team gathered to assess needs, and the old wavy glass, mat board, and backing were soon replaced with museum glass and acid-free materials, which would protect the paper support that had been so artfully and painstakingly rendered by the artist. As part of that process, high-quality digital photos were taken of the paper’s surface, allowing the imagery to be captured clearly. On Convention Sunday afternoon, this masterpiece of spiritual and theosophical symbolism was reintroduced to us by Temple historian, Paul Ivey, and a beautiful companion pamphlet on Bilger’s masterpiece was released.

Let us extend the restoration of Martin Bilger’s “Know Thyself” to the here and now of the Temple Treasury. We are told that the higher purpose of the Temple work is “the preparation of a place where it might become possible for the overshadowing Christ to enter and send forth the message which the world has waited for so long.” That charge is the invisible connective tissue which binds us all together. It is the Golden Rule at work. It is our commitment to kinship as we “stumble on along life’s pathway.” It is the *Know Thyself* at the very heart of spiritual growth.

What called each of us to the Temple and Halcyon? Why are we here? Those are two of the most down to earth and meaningful questions we can ask our sisters and brothers on the Path. Each person’s life is a unique expression of the pushes and pulls of Heaven and Earth, and as we seek the deeper meaning of life, we are ever so much like Martin Bilger, inscribing our individual maps of Know Thyself. Our collective sketches of experience and revelation — of testing and application, of falling down and getting back up, of hurting and being hurt, of forgiving ourselves and others — are the

stumbles and dross that are gradually transformed into a framework of wisdom on this path of service.

The mutual recognition that we share this path can be life-changing. Convention allows us to sense the presence of those who came before us, as their heartbeats echo from these Temple walls. Convention also allows us to recognize that the most precious of all Temple treasures are seated right next to us, kindred spirits who share with us the richness, value, and meaning of what the Temple and Halcyon are about.

The true treasure is that we are the touch of God in this world, nudging each other to examine our own wavy glass, and offering support and renewal to every heart we touch — and that touches us — on this Path.

— *Marti Fast*
Temple Treasurer