



## A Voice in the Wilderness

Newsletter of the Church of St John in the Wilderness  
Copake Falls NY  
**Advent 2019**

### **Thoughts from the Wilderness November 2019 Wisdom and discernment**

"Preach the gospel at all times. When necessary, use words." These wise and humble words are attributed to St. Francis of Assisi. After Jesus, Mary and Joseph and some of the first disciples, there is no more popular saint than Francis. We live in the information age, the computer age, the age of postmodernism, post-post modernism, postchristianity, neopaganism, hyper-capitalism, globalization, etc. There are many ways of looking at and dealing with reality. Information is increasing at exponential rates. Of course not all information is in the form of words. There is science and art. Many art forms from architecture to dance to music to painting don't necessarily use words. And good art, the result of human creativity, is more than the sum of its parts. Sacred art, explicitly religious or Christian art (and other art for that matter) is just one way of, as St. Francis says, preaching the gospel without words.

Yet the time which it takes for the amount of information in the world to double continues to shrink rapidly. We are overwhelmed with information. Of course in many ways this is good. With the Internet we have quicker and greater access to information than ever before. This can be helpful when we're looking for information for work or play. Smart phones allow us an unprecedented combination of connectedness, convenience, and communication. Now there is the smart phone/tablet combo called a Phablet.

Yet there are problems with our shrinking, connected world. Terrorists use the Internet to rapidly communicate and coordinate their plans. Criminals use the Internet to steal people's money or even their 'identities.' So what's important is not how much information we can accumulate, but what we do with it. With so much information available, the gift of discernment becomes vital. We need to discern what's most important for us to learn or read or use or buy -- because life is short. And God calls us to discern his will. This includes discerning not only which information is true, but discerning which information we focus on or gather; and discerning what we do with the knowledge or information.

Precisely because of the information explosion, there is the danger of not only losing our way in the morass, but becoming weary of it all. That is why it's good to pray -- God offers us both discernment and the energy to wade through with wisdom. Another quotation attributed to the wise Francis may apply here: "Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible." Prayer helps us step out in faith and discern what part of all the information coming at us we actually need to pay attention to.

The poet T. S. Eliot said:

Where is the Life we have lost in living?

Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?

Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?

May God grant us all wisdom and discernment of the true, the good, and the beautiful.

Reprinted from April 2014 with additions

*In peace,  
John +*

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### **Thank you from the Senior Warden**

In the month of Thanksgiving, here are a few "thank you's", all quite random, in no particular order or logical sequence. For those I didn't mention and forgot, thank you for your forgiveness.

**Vinnie Kobos:** Thank you for replacing the sign post on Route 22.

**Jane Peck.:** Thank you for taking notice that the sign needed replacement and letting us know.

**Bob Callahan:** Thank you for helping Lucy hang her exhibits, with painting and other such efforts.

**Lucy Eldridge:** Thank you for curating all the wonderful shows. Burke Hall always looks so dreary when there is no artwork hanging.

**Peggy Anderson, Lucy Eldridge, Elen Freeston, Zita Kobos, Wendy Langlois, Susan Massarella and Jane Peck.** Thank you Vestry members for helping me be a Senior Warden this year. An awesome all-women's team.

**Richard Peck:** Thank you for being the Vestry's clerk.

**Elen Freeston:** Thank you for the flowers in the church.

**Dale and Louise Peterson:** Thank you for publishing the Voice.

**Peggy Anderson, Brian Boom, David Chittick, Vinnie Kobos, Wendy Langlois and Lola Neill:** Thank you for being acolytes.

**Bob Flynn:** Thank you for being such an effective sexton, managing the rectory renovation last year and arranging all sorts of small repairs.

**Bob and Marya Dodd:** Thank you for organizing the Lay Ministries for so many years.

**Vinnie Kobos:** Thank you for taking on the Lay Ministries task.

**Karen Flynn:** Thank you for being the Church's treasurer.

**Choir Members and Organist:** Thank you for the wonderful music.

**Mibs and Walt Zelley:** Thank you for your moral support.

**Members of our various committees:** Pledge Drive, Capital Campaign, Soiree, Building: Thank you.

**All those who donate to our various events:** Thank you.

**Fr. John:** And thank you for your passion and constancy.

I'm truly and frequently amazed at how small a community we are and how much good work we manage to do.

*Thank you all.  
Marjorie*

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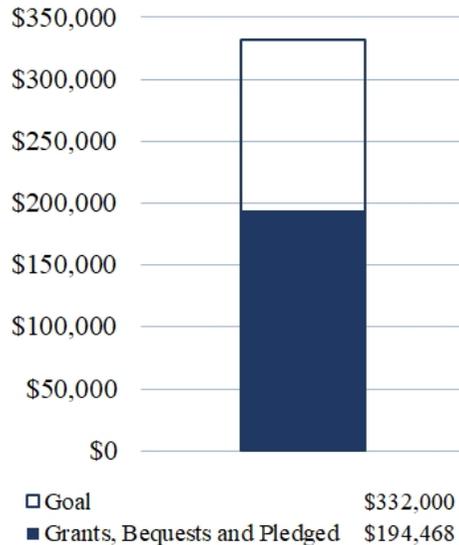
## **St. John's Capital Campaign Advances**

In the most recent issue (Fall 2019) of A Voice in the Wilderness, we announced that St. John's Capital Campaign, a three-year sustainability initiative with a \$332,000 goal, has been publicly launched. We also reiterated that the publication of the brochure Capital Campaign for St. John in the Wilderness: Sustaining People, Place, and Peace, 2019-2022. If you have not already received a copy, you may obtain one by contacting us or [viewing and downloading one here](#).

In that most recent Voice issue we also reported the excellent news that as of September 2019, 50 percent of the Campaign's \$332,000 goal had been achieved. Since then, the Capital Campaign has advanced with

additional pledges, gifts, and stock transfers, bringing the progress towards the goal up to 58 percent. Members of the Capital Campaign Committee continue to reach out to members of the congregation and individuals and businesses in Copake Falls and surrounding communities in New York, Massachusetts, and Connecticut to explain the objectives of the Campaign and the opportunities for ways to invest in the sustainability of the Church of St. John in the Wilderness.

Capital Campaign  
as of November 2019



The Committee is also exploring additional opportunities for support of the Capital Campaign from private foundations. As previously reported in the Voice, already St. John has received two grants from the Rheinstrom Hill Community Foundation, one for the now-completed refurbishment of the Rectory porch, and the second for a soon-to-begin refurbishment of the Sacristry. The additional projects outlined in the brochure Capital Campaign for St. John in the Wilderness also have elements that will appeal to other private foundations. But these funding sources require evidence of matching support from a broad array of stakeholders, both from within and outside the church’s congregation, which we have and continue to receive. For this reason, the Campaign is in a very strong position to approach additional foundations now that solidly more than 50 percent of the Campaign’s goal is pledged or in-hand, and that the Campaign has entered into its public phase.

*Brian Boom and Lucy Eldridge*

### Stewardship Pledge Drive

When I was asked to chair this year’s pledge drive, I looked up the term “stewardship” and learned that it means that it is an ethic that embodies the responsible planning and management of resources. The concepts of stewardship can be applied to the environment, nature, economics, health, property, information, and/or theology.

At St. John's we are all stewards of an amazing resource and that is the church and all it embodies. It is the physical plant that requires constant care and maintenance. It is the parish that brings the spirituality and heart to the physical plant. All of us make St. John's an integral part of the community

We are all part of a community means and we all have to give something to the church in terms of our time, talents, or treasures. Our pledge drive focuses us on the treasure part. For us to plan and manage this wonderful resource we have to develop a budget. While it is relatively easy for us to plan for the expenses, the income presents a bigger challenge.

The only major source of income that we can plan for is the pledges that each of us can make. Our fund-raising events can provide an important source of income although those are difficult to predict.

If you have made your pledge for 2020, we thank you. If you haven't already done so, we are asking all of to make a small increase in your pledges so that we can reach our goal of \$95,000. As of the beginning of November, we have received 14 pledges for a total of \$40,000 -- or only about 42% of our goal.

There are cards at the church if you misplaced yours.

*Martha Glantz*



## **Holiday Happenings**

Come welcome in the holidays at St. John in the Wilderness!

**Winter Walk**, Sunday, December 1, will be celebrated again this year in Copake Falls. Lots of fun activities will happen during Winter Walk with our annual holiday bazaar at St. John's, at the Roe Jan Historical Society and at the Taconic Wayside Inn. (see flyer).

Burke Hall will be decorated for the holidays and, as our tradition in years past, we will offer visitors to Winter Walk hot cider and goodies. For sale (12-4 PM) will be yummy Christmas cookies, festive holiday greens, evergreen wreaths, swags, and table arrangements. Also on offer

will be holiday ornaments, bundles of kindling and boutique items.

More holiday events at St. John's:

**Blue Christmas**, Wednesday, December 11, 6PM, a time to quietly reflect on the Christmas message.

**Community Christmas Pageant**, Saturday, December 14, 11AM. Presented this year at St. John's and followed by a visit to the toy show at the Roe Jan Historical Society.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**, Tuesday, December 24, Carols, 7PM, Service, 7:30PM. Come to this beloved community gathering!

**Christmas Day Service**, December 25, (quiet service), 10AM

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# **Winter Walk**

## **In the Wilderness**

### **Sunday, December 1st**

## **In the Historic Hamlet of Copake Falls**

- Noon – 4:00**    **Holiday Bazaar, Church of St. John in the Wilderness, Burke Hall. Hot Cider, Holiday Boutique Items, Wreaths, Cookies, Table Decorations, Swags and Kindling Bundles, “Night Walks” Paintings by Peter Nicholas Fritsch**
- Noon – 4:00**    **Holiday Open House at the Roeliff Jansen Historical Society Museum, Wreaths, Cookies, Books, Raffle, Special Holiday Exhibit Music and **Santa Claus!****
- Noon – 4:00**    ****Shop!** Raffles, Food and Vendors including Asia Luna, Crimson Leaf Alpaca Farm, Corner-Copia, Olde York Farm Bourbon, Great Cape Baking Company, Jacuterie, Original Sin Hard Cider, Bash Bish Honey, and more at the Taconic Wayside Inn**
- Noon – 4:00**    **Sweatshirts and more at the Taconic State Park Office**
- All Day**        **Stocking Gifts, Hot Chocolate and Fresh Baked Goods at the Depot Deli**

**Sponsored by the Copake Falls Day Committee**

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### **Burke Hall exhibition continues**

Night Walk, a painting exhibition of nocturnal views of Copake, New York, continues through December 16th. The artist, Peter Nicholas Fritsch, (aka “Nick”) following in the tradition of American Realism, has captured the quiet of the Copake night in the 25 landscape paintings exhibited. Poems with the theme of night are mounted throughout the exhibition. One example on view is the poem by the African American

artist and civil rights activist, James Weldon Johnson, (1871-1938).

### **Mother Night**

Eternities before the first-born day,  
Or ere the first sun fledged his wings of flame,  
Calm Night, the everlasting and the same,  
A brooding Mother over chaos lay.  
And whirling suns shall blaze and then decay,  
Shall run their fiery courses and then claim,  
The haven of the darkness whence they came;  
Back to Nirvanic peace shall grope their way.  
So when my feeble sun of life burns out,  
And sounded is the hour for my long sleep  
I shall, full weary of the feverish light,  
Welcome the darkness without fear or doubt,  
And heavy-lidded, I shall softly creep  
Into the quiet bosom of the Night.

Both parishioners and many visitors to Night Walk have been fascinated by Fritsch's paintings and we are indeed grateful for his participation in our gallery program.

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### **Bakers Needed!**



It's time to turn on the oven and start baking Christmas cookies. Please bake your favorites and bring them at 10 am on Saturday, November 30. We will spend an hour packing cookies for our Christmas Bazaar sale on Sunday, December 1. All cookies welcome!

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**Cor Del Hall**



Do you remember Cor Del Hall? About ten years ago he was a wee altar boy at St. John W. Just look at him now...crew chief for a U. S. Air Force Tactical Fighter F-16 aircraft. He is soon to be married to Mary Cano and is planning to come back to St John W for a special marriage blessing. Congratulations, Cor Del! We're proud of you!

*Mibs Zelley*

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### **At St. John we use our feet!**



Lucy Eldridge and Louise Peterson finished hiking the Massachusetts section of the Appalachian Trail. Jane Peck joined them for the last section, ending in Vermont.

Richard Peck ran in a marathon in Montreal.



Amanda Clark came to cheer him on.



Karen Wimmer finished the entire 800 km Camino de Santiago walk from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port in the French Pyrenees to the Cathedral Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, Spain



Mibs Zelley and a friend walk on the Harlem Valley Rail Trail in Copake Falls



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### Calendar November and December

November 17, Sunday, Winds in the Wilderness concert, 3PM, reception following

December 1, Sunday, Copake Falls Winter Walk, Holiday Bazaar, Burke Hall, 12-4PM

December 11, Wednesday, Blue Christmas, 6PM

December 14, Saturday, Community Christmas Pageant, 11AM

December 24, Tuesday, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, Carols,  
7PM, Service, 7:30PM

December 25, Wednesday, Christmas Day Service (quiet service),  
10AM

### **A Voice in the Wilderness**

Newsletter of the Church of St. John in the Wilderness (Episcopal)

Copake Falls, New York 12517

The Rev. John Thompson, Rector

Marjorie Hoog (1/20) Warden

Wendy Langlois (1/21) Warden

#### *Vestry*

Susan Massarella (1/20)

Zita Kobos (1/20)

Elen Freeston (1/21)

Peggy Anderson (1/21)

Lucy Eldridge (1/22)

Jane Peck (1/22)

Richard Peck, Clerk of the Vestry (1/21)

Karen Flynn, Treasurer Liaison

#### *Eucharists*

Sunday, 8:00 AM (spoken)

Sunday, 10:00 AM (choral)

[stjohnw.org](http://stjohnw.org)

518 329-3674

[261 State Route 344](#), PO Box 180, Copake Falls, NY 12517



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