



A Voice in the Wilderness

Newsletter of the Church of St. John in the Wilderness
Copake Falls, New York
February 2015

Winter 2015

Thoughts from the Wilderness

Jesus said he came that we may have life, and have it abundantly. That's what I see at St. John's, a lot of life! People (in and outside the parish) often say to me it's amazing how much goes on at St. John in the Wilderness considering we're not a big congregation. St. John's is not a mega-church, but it's true, a lot goes on here. We are an active and alive congregation. There is, to quote Jesus, abundant life here. And it's God's gift to us.

The good news is we have accepted God's gift of life and we share it. With God's strength we've worked creatively and diligently, and so good things keep happening. We've had another blessed year at St. John in the Wilderness! Thank you all.

Just having restored our beautiful bell tower in 2013, the Building Committee determined that we would replace the church roof in 2014. The background work was done and the roof is already completed. It's another success. Thank you to everyone who supported this project for your good work and generosity. Thank you especially to the Building Committee (chair Dale Peterson, Bob Callahan, David Chittick, Bob Flynn, and Jane Peck) for their good work, and to Lucy Eldridge and Jane Shannon, for successfully securing grants for the roof project.

Members and friends continue to make our worship beautiful and inspiring, and generously give time, talent, and treasure in support of the many ministries and activities of St. John's. This includes our traditional Country Fair and Auction (led by Elen Freeston) followed by a delicious Pork Barbecue (led by Bob and Karen Flynn). We've hosted great music

like Jazz Vespers and Winds in the Wilderness, and great live theater. We had our 1st Whole Lot of Love version Valentine's Day Dinner (led by Tonya Carter) which was popular and fun. There were more Bake Sales, another great Copake Falls Day, and Harvest Fest (organized by Regina Shea) was a glorious fall day and a blessing for the whole community. And the September 5K Fundraiser for

Taconic Hills and Webutuck Schools' Backpack Programs organized by Rebecca Garrard was a great success, raising a large amount of money. I'm personally very grateful for the benefit in October (organized by Christine Parker and Pete Krane) which honored me with the love of my fellow parishioners including the great music of Jim Wann. I'm especially grateful that this event benefited the parish and another worthy cause – the Backpack Program at Taconic Hills School. Christine and Pete also organized with

help from the Stewardship Committee a delightful and successful Summer Sparkling Soirée which benefited the Upjohn Preservation Fund (supporting the roof project this year).

The Stewardship Dinner was a fun time and a full house, and the food was fantastic! Not to mention a great cause – St. John in the Wilderness. And one day in November, on the 9th there were 3 great events. We delighted in honoring Father Walt Zellely who celebrated the 50th anniversary of his priestly ordination, there was a special Veterans Day Ecumenical Service at Copake United Methodist Church, and there was another beautiful Winds in the Wilderness concert. All this on one day! Thank you to members and friends of St. John in the Wilderness



and many others in the wider community for supporting these many events.

In December there was Winter Walk, including a Hand Bell Concert. And we rededicated the flagpole in honor of Nancy Sheldon and in gratitude to Calvin Sheldon. We were blessed to have Jan and Mike Keefner, their daughters Whitney and Kayla, Bob Sheldon and other family and friends with us. December also included a fun and festive Parish Christmas Luncheon sponsored by the Episcopal Church Women. And we celebrated a quiet, meaningful Blue Christmas service and a wonderful, joyful Candlelight Christmas Eve service.

The popular Wednesday Centering Prayer/Divine Reading Group continues to provide midweek spiritual nourishment.

St. John's events and services are highlighted in our bulletins (done by Jane Peck and Mibs Zelle), parish newsletter (*A Voice in the Wilderness*, done by Dale and Louise Peterson), the media, and parish website (Charley Musselman, webmaster) – and by our creative Stewardship Committee (leadership from Lucy Eldridge). We continue to be grateful to our talented Choir/Music Ministry (led by Edee Hedrick), our Altar Guild (led by Elen Freeston), our Greeters, Ushers, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, and Acolytes (stalwarts Harry Koepfel and David Chittick) and more. And thank you to everyone participating in these committees: Graveyard (part of Buildings and Grounds), Finance, Birthday and Memorial Candle Fund (led by Babs Croteau), and the Episcopal Church Women (led by Peggy Anderson and Jeanne VanHoesen). And thank you to Jim Hedrick for leading the special Seder meal which precedes the Maundy Thursday service and Wendy Langlois for the Easter Egg Hunt.

We continue to be generous to those in need with: Thanksgiving Baskets, Christmas Baskets,

Christmas Friends (with leadership from Donna Platt), and donations to our local Food Pantry (with leadership from Connie Valden and Bob & Marya Dodd), to United Thank Offering (chaired by Dorothy Baker) to Episcopal Relief and Development, to the Backpack Program, and more.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee with help from Jeff Shea continue to do good work maintaining and improving our campus. And Dale and Louise Peterson, Lucy Eldridge, Harry Garrett, Bob Callahan, and others work hard making our gardens and grounds beautiful. Wendy Langlois with help from Rebecca Garrard, Rosanne Persico, Regina Shea and Hope Hewlett provide wise Christian formation, love and fun for the children coming to St. John's. And the garden that's part of Sunday school flourished again! Thank you to Hudson Valley Deanery Reps, Wendy Langlois and Janet Doherty. Everyone's hard work, high standards and dedication are much appreciated. And a distinct thanks to the Wardens, Vestry, treasurer and vestry clerk for their leadership: Rebecca Garrard (Senior Warden), Lucy Eldridge (Junior Warden), vestry members Martha Glantz, Brian Boom, Regina Shea, Dale Peterson, Jeannie VanHoesen, and Bob Dodd, treasurer (Louise Peterson), and vestry clerk (Marilyn Kay). Thank you also to David Webb, Investment Manager, Martha Glantz, Vestry Liaison for Investments, and Mibs Zelle, Pledge Recorder.

Thanks again to the Rev. Walt Zelle for most ably filling in at the Eucharist and in pastoral care when I've been gone. And we are grateful to all who make Sunday coffee hours times of good fellowship and good food.

Please consider yourself thanked if the ministry you are involved with or the committee you are on has been mentioned (celebrated!). If I've forgotten to thank anyone for anything please tell me so I can do so.

John+

A Voice in the Wilderness

Editors: Louise and Dale Peterson

Please send submissions including news of church members to peterlouise@gmail.com

Issue dates for 2015 February 1, March 22, May 31, September 13, November 22

Please submit reports, articles and news items at least one week prior to the issue date. Thanks!

From the Desk of the Senior Warden

We started out the new year at St. John's with our annual meeting on Sunday January 18th complete with a delicious brunch followed by an election to vestry of 3 members, convention delegates (Kent and Marilyn Kay, Wendy Langlois) and deanery representative (Janet Doherty). Reports were presented as included in the Annual Reports booklet. We welcomed new leadership members to the vestry, Ralph Platt, Madeline Tramm, and Tonya Carter. Martha Glantz will be our junior warden. Lists of the church committees were made available and those in attendance were asked to sign up for any of the committees. The next week we welcomed to the church participants in an Ecumenical Christian Unity Service with an all church choir on January 21st. We sang together, participated in a wonderful ecumenical service and enjoyed snacks in Burke Hall.

Events for 2015 have already begun...we look forward to the "Whole Lot of Love," Valentine's Day dinner on February 13, 4:30-7PM, as well as many activities throughout 2015 involving the church and community to follow. On February 19, March 5, and March 19, we will invite the parish and the entire community of Copake Falls to three Soup Suppers, at 5PM. The 2015 church calendar is posted in the narthex and on the website's Google calendar along with a copy in this issue of *the Voice*.

Many visitors to St. John's have remarked that we are a welcoming church. Our mission statement, posted on our website states the following:

Church of St. John in the Wilderness seeks to live into our Baptismal Covenant by being an inclusive, welcoming and supportive house of worship; a community that ministers to and with children and youth; a church whose doors are open to all our neighbors and which reaches out to serve Christ in all persons; a community that advocates for justice and peace for all, and respects the dignity and worth of every individual; a church which celebrates creation and shows reverence for the beauty that God has given us.

As the above mission statement indicates, we welcome all. The opening page of Christ Church Episcopal's website has the following quote from

Archbishop Desmond Tutu who states such a welcome very clearly and forcefully:

Jesus did not say, "If I be lifted up I will draw some." Jesus said, "If I be lifted up I will draw all." All, all, all, all. Black, white, yellow, rich, poor, clever, not so clever, beautiful, not so beautiful. It's one of the most radical things. All, all, all, all, all, all, all, all. All belong. Gay, lesbian, so called straight. All, all are meant to be held in this incredible embrace that will not let us go. All.

I would say that even during the church service as we read the Prayers of the People, followed by wishing each other peace, we are participating in a welcoming prayer. We look to 2015 as a year to "draw all," to the Church of St. John in the Wilderness.

Lucy Eldridge

Looking Forward to the 2015 County Fair & Auction

The Country Fair and Auction at St. John in the Wilderness is an important event in our church year. It's an event with a great history that attracts people from near and far. It's a great chance for people to visit us and get to know us.

But it's also a lot of work. And for years it has been our major annual fund-raising event.



It's important to the church – and we want to make it better every year. A better auction should mean less physical work and more money raised for our essential programs. But it all starts with better quality items for sale and more publicity for the valuable furniture that will be on the auction block.

Each year we have some wonderful pieces of furniture contributed for the auction. We are especially grateful to Kent Kay for the beautifully refinished furniture he provides each year. However we can really use more attractive antiques and popular high quality mid-century furniture!

The more quality donations we get, the greater our success in this all-church effort. It's that simple.

How can you help assure the growth and success of the auction?

- 1) Begin by thinking about what you can donate. Do you have furniture that others will be excited about? Do you know people or businesses who could donate one or two very good pieces? (Remember that donations are tax deductible and the church provides written acknowledgements of all gifts.) Let us know right away!
- 2) Can you help with storage? We need to find a place to keep our high-value donations. We need time to take good pictures and get the word out about the items available at the Auction. Can you provide a space for two or three pieces of furniture until the Auction in early July? Give us a call!
- 3) Do you have a truck? Help us pick up items for storage.

These are practical and simple ways you can help now. Elen can be contacted by phone at 518 329-1401 or by email at ballinamore@fairpoint.net. Louise can be reached at 518 329-1225 or peterlouise@gmail.com.

*Elen Freeston and Louise Peterson
Co-Chairs*

A Successful 2015 Pledge Campaign

We have good news to report: our recent pledge drive in support of the 2015 general operating budget for St. John's resulted in 8 new pledges. A total of \$75,750 was received in pledge income, which is a 6% increase in funds raised from the 2014 pledge total. We are grateful for this generous increase in support, showing a growing commitment to St. John's mission and activities. We thank you all for putting your faith and values into action.

Lucy Eldridge, Stewardship Committee

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

The ECW wrapped up a successful year with our annual Christmas luncheon. We were blessed to have other area churches join us. We were also blessed with a lovely Christmas story written and orated by Bob Dodd. In the new year we are looking forward to our second annual "Whole Lotta Love

Dinner" at the Copake Community Park building on Saturday, February 14th. Hope to see everyone there. Thank you in advance to everyone participating in this event.

The ECW is also sponsoring a women's retreat to be held on Saturday, May 2nd. There will be more information coming soon.

Our next ECW meeting will be March 1st, the first Sunday in March. Please join us. If you have anything you would like to discuss or talk about you can contact me via phone (329-2620) or e-mail (DreamJeanne63@yahoo.com).

Jeanne VanHoesen

Save the Date for the ECW Retreat

The Rev. Barbara Crafton will be coming to the Church of St. John in the Wilderness on Saturday, May 2, to lead a Quiet Day, an event sponsored by the E.C.W. for the women of the church.

Barbara is an Episcopal priest and author. She heads The Geranium Farm, an institute for the promotion of spiritual growth. The Farm publishes her Almost Daily eMos, a meditation read online by tens of thousands worldwide. She has served a number of churches, including historic Trinity Church, Wall Street; St. James, the American church in Florence, Italy; St. John's-in-the-Village in Greenwich Village; and St. Clement's in Manhattan's theater district. She was a maritime chaplain on the New York waterfront, and served as a chaplain at Ground Zero after the attack on the World Trade Center.

A spiritual director and author of many books, Crafton leads retreats and teaches throughout the United States and abroad. She makes her home with her husband, Richard Quaintance, an English professor, in Metuchen, New Jersey, where she currently serves as interim at St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

<http://www.geraniumfarm.org/dailyemo.cfm>

Mibs Zelle

Harry Garrett Wants to Look at Your Trees

There's no greater expert on trees in our area than Harry Garrett. Harry isn't cutting down trees himself these days, but he's ready to share his expertise.

The charge? Nothing – except a donation to the Church of St John in the Wilderness. You – and your trees – will be glad you asked.



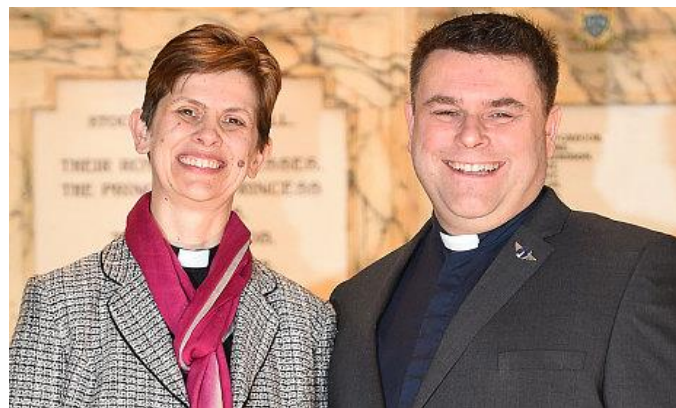
Beyond Copake Falls

After some months of neglect, it's time to up periscope for a look around the Anglican world beyond our parish. Here are some highlights from a busy news season.

Inclusion in the Church of England

++Justin Welby inherited several looming problems in March 2013 when he succeeded ++Rowan Williams to become the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury. One was solved in July, 2014, when all three of the Church of England's Houses (Bishops, Clergy, and Laity) approved the ordination of women as bishops by the required two thirds majority. Archbishop Welby, a strong advocate for female bishops, was delighted.

On December 17, the Church of England announced the appointment of its first female bishop. The Revd. Libby Lane, whose husband, George, is



also a priest (picture above), is now the vicar of two small parishes in Crewe. She will be consecrated on

26 January and will serve as bishop suffragan in the Diocese of Chester, of which Stockport is a part.

The ordination of Revd. Lane is an important step toward full acceptance of female bishops by the Church of England. The next step – ordination of a female diocesan (entitled to her own cathedral and qualified to sit in the House of Lords) – may be taken by the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham this year, for two women are on its short list.

In anticipation that female bishops will soon be numerous (Abp. Welby hopes for equal numbers of male and female bishops within 15 years), the House of Commons has proposed legislation to expedite their consideration for appointment to the House of Lords. Under present rules, candidates for the 26 Lords Spiritual seats in that house must wait for a vacancy to appear because of resignation or death. With 40 candidates in line now, female bishops would have a very long wait absent what the *Telegraph* newspaper calls “a limited form of positive discrimination.” Commons proposes, and both Archbishops support, a 10-year waiver of the rules to give women a fair chance.



Archbishop Welby

Another issue of inclusion – marriage equality – will be a much harder nut to crack. Same sex marriage has been legal in the United Kingdom since July, 2013, when the Queen gave her Royal Assent to positive votes by the Houses of Commons and Lords. The first same sex marriages in the UK took place eight months later, but the Church of England’s policy – one man, one woman – remains in effect today. Worse, “ ‘shared conversations’ on scripture, sexuality, and mission,” intended to help the Synod reach a positive conclusion, have struck a reef. Reform, a leading conservative-evangelical organization, has withdrawn from the conversations and has urged its members not to participate.

While the established Church struggles to decide whether to sanctify same sex marriages, the government of the United Kingdom is creating protocols to convert same sex civil unions into marriages. Meanwhile, the Scottish Episcopal Church has warned gay clergy and lay leaders that they will risk punishment if they try to elevate civil unions to marriages. Progressives north of the border are, to say the least, furious. Indeed, some priests have threatened to stop conducting *any* marriage services as long as the SEC’s ban remains in effect.

The equality cauldron continues to bubble in the UK. For an excellent overview of the theological, historical, and legal case for marriage equality, I very

strongly recommend Bishop Alan Wilson’s 2014 book, *A More Perfect Union?* Wilson, the progressive Bishop of Buckinghamshire, is very well informed and writes beautiful prose with frequent flashes of wise humor. He and his new book are first rate!

Scotus to Weigh in...Maybe

On January 16, the U.S. Supreme Court announced its intention to hear four cases that will test states’ right to declare same sex marriage illegal and to refuse to recognize same sex couples who were married elsewhere. A 90-minute session for arguments is scheduled for April. A decision is expected by June.

Same sex marriage is now legal in 36 states and the District of Columbia, making it available for 70% of American citizens. It would be astonishing – and devastating -- if the Supremes (specifically Justice Anthony Kennedy, the swing vote) backed away from the Court’s recent progress toward full acceptance of gay constitutional rights. A positive outcome is very likely.

As Susan Russell wrote in the *Huffington Post*, “The truth is that today the Supreme Court took a big step toward taking a giant step.” Indeed it did!

Bob Dodd



Rededication of the flagpole honoring Nancy Sheldon and in gratitude to Calvin Sheldon

Calendar 2015 – Church of St. John in the Wilderness

February 14, Saturday, “Whole Lot of Love,” Valentine’s Day Dinner, ECW 4:30-7:30PM, Copake Park Building

February 18, Ash Wednesday, 10AM and 7:30PM services

February 19, Thursday, Community Soup Supper, 5PM

February 22, (1st Sunday in Lent), ERD, Episcopal Relief & Development Sunday

March 4, Ecumenical Lenten Soup and Bread Supper and worship service, 6:30PM

March 5, Thursday, Community Soup Supper, 5PM

March 19, Thursday, Community Soup Supper, 5PM

March 29, Palm Sunday, 8AM and 10AM services

April 2, Maundy Thursday, Eucharist, 7:30PM, preceded by a Seder Meal, 6PM

April 3, Good Friday, 10AM and 7:30PM services

April 4, Saturday, Easter Egg Hunt, 10:30AM, pizza & prizes, 12 noon.

April 5, Easter Sunday, 8 and 10AM services

April 12, Sunday, Winds in the Wilderness concert, 3PM

May 2, Saturday, ECW Retreat with the Rev. Barbara Crafton

May 9, Saturday, Friends of Taconic State Park, Native Trees Lecture, 11AM, Workshop, Burke Hall, 1- 4PM

May 16 - 17th, Sacred Sites Open House Weekend, Community Plant Sale & Swap, Saturday, May 16th - 1-3PM,

May 17, Sunday, Winds in the Wilderness concert, 3PM

May 23, Saturday, Memorial Day Weekend Bake Sale, KOA, West Copake, 10AM-12noon

June 5 and 6th, Friday – Sunday, Diocese of Albany Convention

June 6, Saturday, FTSP, Broken Arrow Nursery, Andy Brand, 11AM, Workshop, Burke Hall, 1-4PM

June 14, Sunday, Sunday School Recognition Sunday & Bless This Garden, Potluck Church Picnic

June 21, Sunday, Bishop William Love visit

July 11, Saturday, Country Fair & Auction, 10-2, Auction at 11AM

July 12, Sunday, Barbecue, 1PM

July 15, Wednesday, Family Movie Night, 7PM

July 18, Saturday, Summer Sparkling Soiree, 5PM

August 15, Saturday, Copake Falls Day, St. John Salad Bar, 11:30AM, FTSP Ken Druse Lecture, 11AM, Workshop Burke Hall, 1-4

August 19, Wednesday, Winds in the Wilderness concert, 6PM

August 23, Sunday, Sunday School registration

September 6, Saturday, Bake Sale, KOA, West Copake, 10AM-12 noon

September 13, Sunday, First Day of Sunday School

September 19, Saturday, FTSP, Houseplants lecture, 11AM, Tovah Martin, Workshop, Burke Hall, 1-4

September 26, Saturday, 10AM, 5K run, for Taconic Hills & Webutuck Backpack Programs

October 11, Sunday, Harvest Fest, 1PM

December 6, Sunday, Copake Falls Winter Walk,

December 24, Thursday, Christmas Eve, Carols and Eucharist

December 25, Friday, Christmas Day service

December 27, Sunday, Winds in the Wilderness, 3PM

Weekly events

Sunday

8:00 am Spoken Eucharist.
10:00 am Choral Eucharist.
Sunday school at 10:00 am.

Wednesday

3:00 pm Divine Reading / Contemplative
Prayer Group.

2015 Church Committees

Altar Guild

Elen Freeston, chair
Jane Knox
Wendy Langlois
Jeanne VanHoesen
Mibs Zelle

Buildings and Grounds

Dale Peterson, chair
Bob Callahan
David Chittick
Jane Peck
Ralph Platt

Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

Jeanne VanHoesen, President
Regina Shea, VP
Peggy Anderson
Tonya Carter
Janet Doherty
Lucy Eldridge
Betsy Garrett
Marilyn Kay
Wendy Langlois
Susan Mollo
Mibs Zelle

Publicity

Dale Peterson
Charley Musselman
John Thompson
Elen Freeston

Worship

John Thompson, chair
Lucy Eldridge
Rebecca Garrard
Regina Shea

Finance

Martha Glantz, chair
Louise Peterson
David Webb

Stewardship

Lucy Eldridge, chair
Dale Peterson, chair of
pledge campaign
Elen Freeston
Karen Flynn
Martha Glantz
Louise Peterson
Richard Peck
Susan Mollo
Mibs Zelle

A Voice in the Wilderness

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

The Rev. John Thompson, Rector

Lucy Eldridge Warden 1/16
Martha Glantz Warden 1/17

Vestry

Brian Boom 1/17 Ralph Platt 1/16
Tonya Carter 1/18 Regina Shea 1/17
Robert Dodd 1/16 Madeleine Tramm 1/18

Marilyn Kay, Clerk of the Vestry
Louise Peterson, Treasurer

Eucharists

Sunday, 8:00 AM (spoken)
Sunday, 10:00 AM (choral)

www.stjohnw.org
www.facebook.com/stjohnwilderness
518 329-3674

261 State Route 344, P.O. Box 180
Copake Falls, NY 12517-0180

