

# A Voice in the Wilderness

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

## Advent 2015

### Thoughts from the Wilderness

Happy Thanksgiving and a blessed Advent to all! The holiday of Thanksgiving reminds us that Thanksgiving to God for his many blessings is a good attitude to have every day. I thank you all for your generosity of spirit in the many ways you support St. John in the Wilderness. Advent reminds us in its rich mixture of looking back 2000 years and of looking forward to the annual celebration of Jesus' birth and (in some of the Advent Sunday Scriptures) of looking forward to the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus – in this rich mixture of themes, Advent reminds us that a good deal of our life on earth involves waiting. Advent reminds us to have a positive attitude about waiting, which of course isn't always easy to do. But God will help us and God will always give us a fresh start.

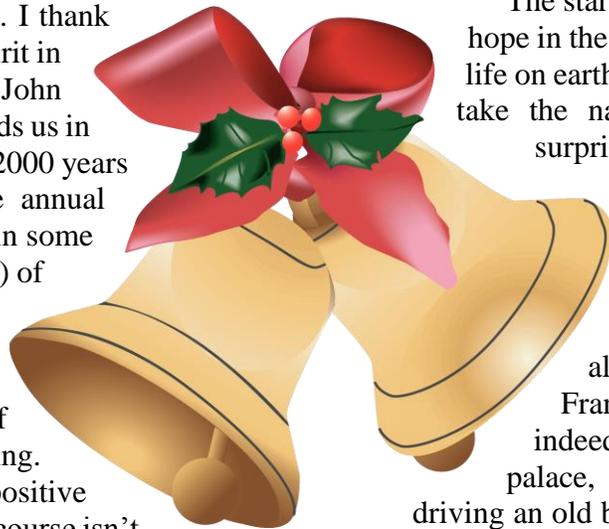
What we're really waiting for is the fullness of God's kingdom. God's kingdom is here in part and yet it's not fully present on earth. God's kingdom is, "already, but not yet." Every blessing in our lives is a taste of, an experience of, and a promise about God's kingdom. We can increase our joy and pleasure in every day blessings like food, shelter, a walk in the woods, or dinner with a friend by consciously thanking God during these experiences.

But we also have the painful aspects of waiting, the painful aspects of life. We may be lonely and hoping and waiting for a new love. We may be waiting for healing of an illness for ourselves or a loved one. We may be praying for healing of our grief after the loss of a loved one or the loss of a relationship. We may be praying for an increase of

faith in the face of doubts and sorrow after these losses.

The startling new Pope, Francis gives us hope in the midst of waiting, in the midst of life on earth. Francis is the first pope ever to take the name Francis. Perhaps it's not surprising in that popes for a long time have lived in palaces and St. Francis (Pope Francis' namesake) gave up riches and joyfully embraced a simple life. So taking the name Francis already gave a clue that Pope Francis would be different. And indeed he is, moving out of the papal palace, dressing simply (for a Pope), driving an old beater of a car, and calling us all to value people and God's creation as more important than accumulating money or power (at others expense).

Francis gives us hope in the face of two dire challenges that delay the full experience of God's kingdom. In the face of the horrors of terrorism and of the excesses of (if not the very existence of) war, and in the face of environmental degradation, Francis tells us that life has meaning, that it is not random. He reminds us we are created by God and that not only us but, "Each creature possesses its own particular goodness and perfection" (par. 69, *On Care for Our Common Home*, 2015). Francis reminds us of the Bible's sensitivity to this: "If you chance to come upon a bird's nest in any tree or on the ground, with young ones or eggs and the mother sitting upon the young one or upon the eggs; you shall not take the mother with the young" (Deuteronomy 22:6).



We and all of creation are consciously intended by God. “How wonderful is the certainty that each human life is not adrift in the midst of hopeless chaos, in a world ruled by pure chance or endlessly recurring cycles! The Creator can say to each one of us: ‘Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you’” (Jeremiah 1:5; Francis, par. 65).

This awareness of God’s love for each of us and for all of God’s creation gives us hope in the face of the terrible contradictions to God’s desire for the fullness of his kingdom of peace, care and love. Contradictions like terrorism and war, and also

pollution and unwise development which cause illness, extinction and a diminished quality of life. This hope can inspire us to actions which overcome the evil and sin behind these contradictions. With God’s hope, peace, and love in our fragile, imperfect, wonderful hearts, we can be peacemakers, diminishing the violence in the world, and we can care for God’s creation by various practices which promote conservation and reduce pollution.

*In peace,  
John+*

## **From the Desk of the Senior Warden**

Both quiet and energetic activities have marked the fall season at St. John’s this year; this pattern will undoubtedly continue into the Christmas season and beyond.

We keep on with our efforts to feed those in need in our community by quietly placing gifts of food in the Roe Jan Pantry Food Basket at church each week (so much food comes in that we are thinking of getting a larger basket!). And then, in a more energetic manner, we are helping to feed school children on the weekends. We held for the second year the successful 5K Run for the Taconic Hills and Webutuck Backpack Program in September. United Thanks envelopes were passed out as the annual fall drive to help people worldwide. The following quote from Proverbs 22:9, highlights these activities: “Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor.”

Gardening efforts (both quiet and energetic) continue: a dogwood tree was planted in memory of Ginny Boughton and a new herb garden was started near the back door of the rectory. A “joyous noise” is raised by St. John’s wonderful choir, now supported by the recently refurbished organ—thanks to the funds raised by the choir’s concert in May and by other generous donors. Children and their

parents from the hamlet of Copake Falls came to a spooky and energy filled Halloween party at a specially decorated Burke Hall sponsored by the Copake Falls Day Committee.

The Copake Falls Winter Walk, attended by the Roe Jan community, will happen on Sunday December 6. St. John’s will participate in Winter Walk by holding its traditional Holiday Bazaar in Burke Hall. And, we are happy once again to welcome back the Salisbury Congregational Church Handbell Choir to benefit the Backpack Program. As part of the Christmas season at St. John’s we will again hold a “Blue Christmas” celebration on December 16 for those who appreciate a contemplative service along with Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day services. We will end the year with our efforts to help feed those in need with donations to the community Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets as well as supporting Christmas Friends which distributes gifts to community children in need.

We are now entering our seventh year of quiet, contemplative prayer during the weekly centering prayer service every Wednesday afternoon. Of course, throughout the year, our church graciously opens its doors on a daily basis for

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

Editors: Louise and Dale Peterson

Please send submissions including news of church members to [peterlouise@gmail.com](mailto:peterlouise@gmail.com)

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

quiet prayer, welcoming all to our beautiful sanctuary.

*Lucy Eldridge*

## **Winter Walk and Handbell Concert**

This year's Copake Falls Winter Walk will be held on Sunday, December 6. There are events all around the hamlet, and many are right here at St. John in the Wilderness.

From 1:00 until 3:00, the Christmas Bazaar in Burke Hall will have boxes of Christmas cookies, table toppers, gently used Christmas decorations, walking sticks and other items for sale. Come and find special treats for the holidays.

Following the bazaar, we welcome the Handbell Choir from Salisbury Congregational Church for a very special Handbell Holiday Concert at 3:30. The music will be exceptional and is a great way to start the holiday season. Your \$10 donation will benefit the Backpack Program in the Taconic Hills School District, which provides food for weekends for local children -- many of whom would otherwise go hungry.

Please join us! The music's great and the cause is important

*Louise Peterson*

## **Christmas Friends**

Christmas Friends is a program that helps assure that each child in our area has a wonderful Christmas. Last year the parishioners of St. John in the Wilderness helped give twenty four children a merry Christmas. If you have questions, please call me at home at 518 329-0351 or on my cell at 518 929-0253.

You can help by making out a check to the Church and writing in the memo and on the envelope that it is for Christmas Friends. You can put it in the collection on Sunday or give it directly to Jane

Peck. Please make your contribution by November 29<sup>th</sup>.

Please find it in your heart to give a little or a lot – whatever you can to help make this happen. Thank you and hope you and your family have a wonderful holiday season.

*Donna Platt*

## **2015 Roe Jan Bike Ramble**

I want to thank all of the Church members that supported me, either in spirit or with a financial donation for the extension of the Rail Trail between Copake Falls and Hillsdale, for the Bike Ramble this past September.

While pedaling the 50 miles I started thinking of all the Church members whose homes I past. The trip started in Copake and went through West Copake, Ancramdale, Ancram, Copake Falls, North Hillsdale and Hillsdale. I past the following homes: Dorothy & Jeff Baker, Peg Anderson, Lucy Eldridge, Elen Freeston & David Chittick, Margie Hoog, Jeanne Van Hoesen, Jane Knox, Mibs & Walt Zelle, Dale & Louise Peterson, the Church and Rectory (almost) Roseanne Persico & Rebecca Garrard, Jim & Nancy Burns. (Hopefully I did not miss anyone.) I think this just shows how connected we are.

Thanks again for your support

*Jane Peck*

## **ECW Christmas Luncheon**

Episcopal Church Women are hosting their annual Christmas Lunch on December 13 at The Pond Restaurant in Ancramdale. 'Everyone is invited –women and men from our church and friends from throughout the community. A reservation form is included in this copy of the Voice. It should be completed and returned to Jeanne VanHoesen by December 4.

## 2016 Pledge Drive News

### Wendy Langlois highlights the importance of church school

As she discussed the importance of stewardship during the Sunday service on November 15 Wendy talked about the impact of church school on childrens' lives. She was joined by Jacky Boyd who talked about her experience in the church.

#### ***Stewardship Drive: What our Church means to us? Thoughts from the Sunday School.***

*I feel, with all my heart, children really need to come to church. They need to be a part of a church family early on. Their church will come to feel like their second "home." A child should learn and, more importantly, feel their church is a place of refuge. It's a place where they can feel both safe and strengthened. Their church is a place they can return to for fellowship, comfort and support. The lessons children learn and the experiences they have here will stay with them in their hearts forever. More importantly, as they grow into young adults....eventually going out into the big world...those memories of the times spent here at St. John's will help them cope and navigate safely through the ups and downs in life.*

*I understand that children grow up and sometimes grow out of wanting to come to church every Sunday. Other activities become more important, attending church is not a priority. That's pretty normal. My hope is one day, when they grow up, the memories of the time spent here at St John's will help bring them back to both church and to*

*worship. Our job is helping them understand how loved they are -- by God their Heavenly Father, by Jesus and by their "Parish Family" here at St. John in the Wilderness. And I know we do that.*

*Thank you, Parish Family, for all you do for the children,*

*Wendy*

After church, Harry Garrett said *"I so enjoyed Wendy and Jacky's words about Sunday School and love of our church, in the 10:00 am service on November 15."*

### Pledge drive report

Wendy's words highlight the importance of St John's in the lives of children. They remind us why we pledge to support our church's ministry here in the Roe Jan area.

This year's pledge drive has been very successful. As of November 18 we are at 93% of our \$80,000 goal. Pledges are the foundation of our church's financial help and enable everything we do: Sunday Eucharist, great music, support for members of our parish family and service to our community. If you haven't had the opportunity yet to pledge, please consider it prayerfully. If you have questions please contact me, Lucy or John+. We're hoping that everyone in the parish will pledge to our mission in Copake Falls in 2016.

*Dale Peterson  
2015 Pledge campaign chair*

## 5K Run Benefits Local Kids



On Saturday, September 26, St. John's hosted a 5K fundraiser for the backpack programs of Webutuck and Taconic Hills school districts. This program sends food in backpacks home each weekend to families in need (\$167 feeds a child for an entire school year).

Our 5K, which was a family friendly walk/run, utilized the same route as the one held on Copake Falls Day. Raymond Doherty provided

help in setting up the course and loaning us supplies such as tables and water jugs.

On this sunny day, staff and students manned the water stations and registration area. As a result of the generosity of participants and donors, I am proud to share that we raised a total of \$3,544 for this worthy cause! Many thanks to all of those who helped to make this possible.

*Rebecca Garrard*

## Susan Mollo Marches in Veteran's Day Parade

Susan Mollo marched in this year's Veteran's Day Parade in Manhattan, helping carry the Ground Zero Flag.

The 30'x60' Flag was unfurled on a building overlooking the World Trade Center site offering strength and inspiration to rescue and recovery workers for months after the attacks of September 11, 2001.



# Beyond Copake Falls

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## Passing the Torch

On All Saints Sunday, 1 November, +Michael Bruce Curry, Bishop of North Carolina, was installed as the 27<sup>th</sup> Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church in Washington National Cathedral. He succeeds +Katharine Jefferts Schori as Presiding Bishop (picture).

Born in Chicago in 1953 and raised in Buffalo, NY, Bp. Curry graduated from Hobart College with high honors in 1975 and received a Master of Divinity degree from Yale in 1978. He has since received honorary degrees from Sewanee,

Virginia Theological Seminary, Yale's Berkeley Divinity School, and the Episcopal Divinity School.

Bp. Currie, who resides in Raleigh, NC, with his wife and two daughters, had parish ministries in Winston-Salem, NC, Ohio, and Baltimore before he became Bishop of North Carolina in 2000. He has served the wider Episcopal Church in many capacities, most notably as board chairman for Episcopal Relief and Development. A compelling speaker, he has preached on the radio and in churches throughout the country.



Bishop Curry and Bishop Jefferts Schori at the installation



Presiding Bishop Michael Bruce Curry

## A Primates Meeting

You may recall that the new Archbishop of Canterbury, ++Justin Welby, mindful that several Global South provinces boycotted the last Lambeth Conference to his predecessor's great distress, decided not to call another such gathering until he has met with the primates of all 37 Anglican

provinces to determine what provinces would attend the conference and with what agendae.

With that goal in view, on 18 September, Abp. Welby invited the primates to gather in Canterbury in January, 2016, to meet face-to-face. The Af-

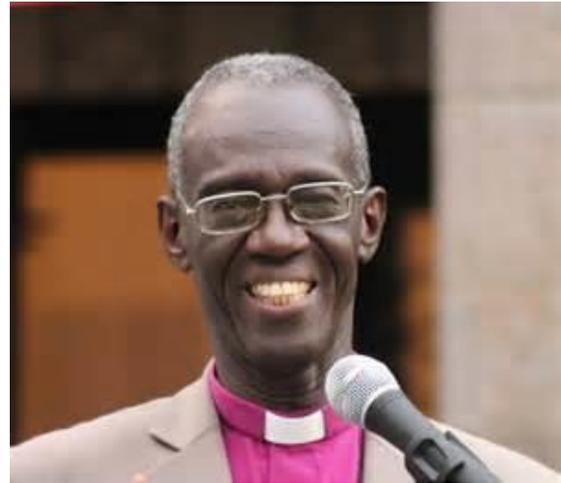
rican, Asian and Latin American primates who comprise the Global Anglican Futures Conference (GAFCON) at first refused to attend the meeting if our Episcopal primate was invited, but on 22 October, their leader, Kenya's ++Eliud Wabukala wrote Abp. Welby to accept his invitation on behalf of GAFCON. It is not now clear whether ACNA (Anglican Communion in North America) will be

disagreement, and even mutual criticism, so long as we are faithful to the revelation of Jesus Christ, together.” He added, “We have no Anglican pope.”

Abp. Wabukala: “There is now a shared realization that the time for dialogue is over and there must be a decision that will settle the future direction of the Communion and free us from being



Archbishop Welby



Archbishop Wabukala

represented and if so in what capacity. GAFCON recognizes ACNA, which broke away from our Church and The Anglican Church of Canada in 2009, as a third North American province. Canterbury does not.

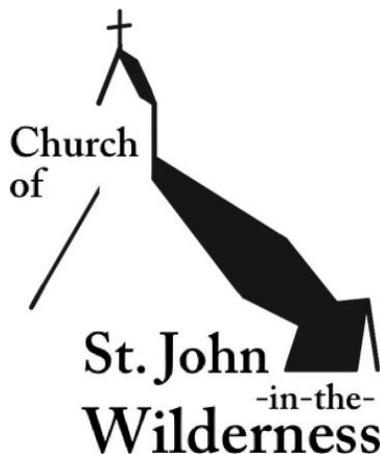
To appreciate how steep a mountain Abp. Welby must scale in an attempt to reunite the Communion, you need only compare the tones of his invitation and ++Wabukala's acceptance:

Abp. Welby: “A 21<sup>st</sup>-century Anglican family must have space for deep

dragged down by controversy and confusion.”

Lacking power to make or enforce decisions, this Primates Meeting cannot be expected to bridge a gap in the Anglican Communion that widened when our Church accepted same sex marriage and will widen farther if (when?) the Church of England follows our lead. That said, sitting down together in Canterbury beats hurling insults across the divide. As Winston Churchill reportedly said, “Jaw-jaw is better than war-war.”

*Robert Dodd*



*Richard Peck*

## Advent Events 2015 – Church of St. John in the Wilderness

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November 29, Sunday. Christmas Friends  
deadline.

December 6, Sunday. United Thank Offering  
deadline.

December 6, Sunday. Copake Falls Winter Walk.  
1:00 – 3:00, Holiday Bazaar.  
3:30, Salisbury Handbell Choir.

December 13, Sunday. ECW luncheon.

December 16, Wednesday, 6:00 pm. Blue  
Christmas service.

December 24, Thursday, 7:00 pm. Candlelight ser-  
vice. Carols and Eucharist.

December 25, Friday, 10:00 am. Christmas Day  
service.

### Weekly events

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#### 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.

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Newsletter of the  
Church of St. John in the Wilderness  
(Episcopal)  
Copake Falls, New York  
The Rev. John Thompson, Rector  
Lucy Eldridge (January 2016) Warden  
Martha Glantz (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)

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[www.facebook.com/stjohnwilderness](http://www.facebook.com/stjohnwilderness)  
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