



A Voice in the Wilderness

Newsletter of the Church of St John in the Wilderness, Copake Falls NY
September 2017

Notes from the Wilderness

My friends, your rector enjoys life (and works hard). Sandra and I attended the Oldtone Roots Music Festival in North Hillsdale this past weekend. It rained some early on but the weather improved, the music was great and the setting was beautiful.

I say this because it's important that we keep our spirits up – with God's help – and enjoying life and doing good work are at the heart of that. If we are paying attention, we know it's been a hard year, if not for ourselves, for many in this country and in this world. As presiding Bishop Michael Curry just said, Whether it is the pain of the events of August 12 in Charlottesville, or Hurricane Harvey, or Hurricane Irma, or wildfires in the West, or an earthquake in Mexico, there's been a lot of pain, a lot of suffering and hardship. In times like these, it's easy to grow weary. It's easy to be tired. And it's easy to be downcast, and to give up. What can I do?

Bishop Curry points us to a helpful Scripture in the Book of Hebrews, chapter 10:

Recall those earlier days when, after you had been enlightened, you endured a hard struggle with sufferings, sometimes being publicly exposed to abuse and sometimes persecution, and sometimes just being partners with those who were so treated. For you had compassion . . . so do not abandon your confidence; it brings great reward. For you need endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised.

There is a lot of wisdom in this scripture. First we are called to be enlightened, to discern the true from the false, the real from the fake (e.g. the fake news). To be enlightened and discerning, we need to be honestly self-aware, honest about reality and prayerfully open to God's Spirit with which we can discern the real from the unreal. Too

often Christianity and other religions have been too rigid, too black and white, too focused on an in group and an out group – and this has often led to division and violence. An opposite error is to say everything is relative, everyone has a right to their opinion. True, we want freedom of speech, freedom to express one's opinions. But bigoted threats to harm others and destructive lies which harm others are not "opinions." These lead to things like the above scripture where people are publicly exposed to abuse.

My friends we are called to speak the truth in love, and to do so when it is popular and when it is not popular. Sometimes we need to stick our necks out and speak the truth at some risk to ourselves – as in the above scripture – being partners with those who were so treated [with abuse and persecution]. For you had compassion. It continues to be a time to stand up to pathological lies at the top, to say that black lives do matter, LGBT lives matter, Hispanic lives matter, women matter, people with physical challenges/disabilities matter, people who are poor matter. In fact we are all of equal value as God's beloved children.

When those who are supposed to lead deny the overwhelming consensus of science that global warming is real and is exacerbated by human behavior and that this is harmful to the planet and to lives – this willful and greedy ignorance is destructive and must be opposed, not normalized.

Of course we not only resist the negative, we act positively. As I said recently, we can do many things. We can speak against racism and bigotry. We can speak for equal rights. We can contact elected officials and we can vote for people who believe in equal rights. Or like thousands of people after Charlottesville and in the face of more hatred – 40,000 in Boston alone – we can protest in the streets, far outnumbering the bigots and racists. Closer to home this congregation feeds the hungry through the food bank which we are part of and feeds hungry schoolchildren through our support of the backpack program.



And as Bishop Curry also said, *It may be that we cannot solve everything, and we cannot do everything. But we can do something, no matter what. We can pray. We can give. If possible, we can sign up and go to work. We can pray for those who have been affected by Hurricane Harvey and Irma... And we can give. We can give to the [Hurricane Fund of Episcopal Relief & Development](#), for our donations actually help, they help in strategic ways. They really make a difference. If possible, we can sign up. We can sign up to volunteer through Episcopal Relief & Development, again, all on their web site, we can sign up, and when there are volunteer opportunities, we can know about those and possibly participate.*

Let's keep our spirits up. Our confidence, courage and compassion (as in the above scripture) will bring us great reward.

From the Desk of the Senior Warden

After the Hurricanes: Recovery and Reflection

As I write this article, I am listening on the radio to news of destruction and suffering in the wakes of hurricanes Harvey, Katia, and Irma. Heartbreaking stories! Hurricane José is menacing off the eastern U.S. coast, and the 2017 Atlantic Hurricane season extends to November 30th. The National Weather Service is predicting two to five major hurricanes this season.

Our natural immediate, compassionate human response to the aftermath of these hurricanes is to help with the recovery of people and communities, directly if we are in the regions affected, and indirectly by donating to relief efforts if we live elsewhere. The



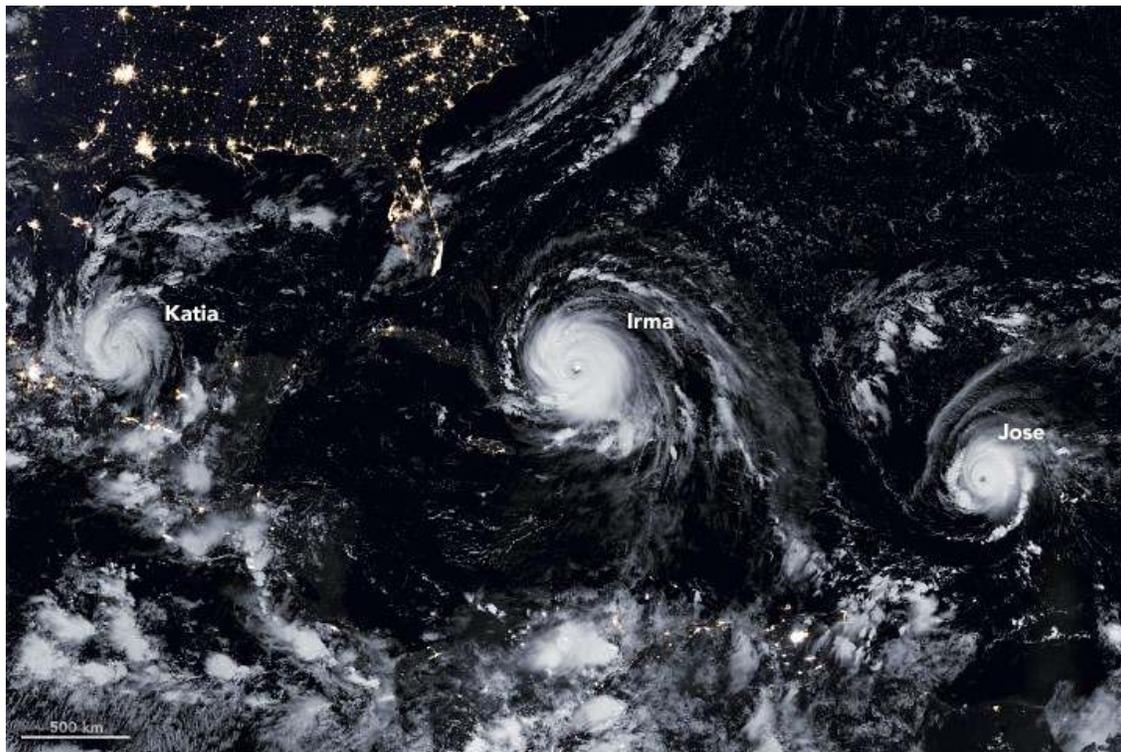
Episcopal Church makes it quick and easy to donate money to help hurricane victims through Episcopal Relief & Development, which established a Hurricane Relief Fund: <https://support.episcopalrelief.org/hurricane-relief>.

For people who want to register as a possible volunteer for future hurricanes or other disasters, Episcopal Relief & Development (ERD) has established the [Ready to Serve database](https://www.episcopalrelief.org/what-you-can-do/volunteer/ready-to-serve) (<https://www.episcopalrelief.org/what-you-can-do/volunteer/ready-to-serve>); ERD staff share the lists with dioceses when they are ready to recruit external volunteers.

It will take weeks, months, even years for hurricane afflicted areas to return to normal. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry offered this Prayer for Those Affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma:

We stand with you, but not only we. The Lord who sacrificed His life for us all and was raised from the dead is with you. Remember that we are your brothers and sisters, and we're in this together. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you and give you His peace, this day, and forever more. Amen.

In addition to helping victims recover from the hurricanes, we also should want to reflect on what may be causing massive hurricanes such as Harvey and Irma. Both were category 4 storms (sustained winds > 130 mph) when they hit the United States, setting a record as the only two Atlantic hurricanes this powerful to make landfall in the continental U.S. in the same year!



A line of three hurricanes at the same time in the West Atlantic Basin, observed on September 6 – 9, 2017. Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/>, Three simultaneous Atlantic hurricanes (2017).

What's going on? A short answer is that the world is getting warmer, and this likely leads to more numerous and more powerful hurricanes. An excellent, full essay on the topic appeared in Time magazine online on September 8, 2017, *5 Ways Climate Change May Be Making Hurricanes Worse*, <http://time.com/4933743/hurricane-irma-climate-change-global-warming/>.

In my June 2017 column in The Voice, I emphasized that environmental stewardship is one of Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's priorities, and that issues around climate change mitigation and adaptation are paramount. But what can we do as individual Episcopalians about such a global issue? The Episcopal Church's Office of Government Relations has web resources on a range of environmental matters:

<http://advocacy.episcopalchurch.org/environment?o>.

Another great resource is the Stewardship of Creation site:

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/stewardship-creation>.

Through these sites one can get more informed about climate change and get involved.

Brian Boom



Soirée 2017: A great success

I want to thank everyone who participated in the great success of the 2017 Soiree fund raiser. It was a special evening as we honored Kent and Marilyn Kay for their years of service to our church and enjoyed Jim Wann's concert. Thanks to the small group who planned the event; the many volunteers who helped Wendy Langlois offer a fabulous buffet; others who donated special objects and services for the Silent Auction; and finally the ninety plus paying attendees who came to enjoy what we were offering and -- we were told many times -- had a very enjoyable evening.

We made almost twice as much as the Country Fair of 2016. We were blessed.

*With great appreciation
Marjorie Hoog*



165th Anniversary Celebration



We celebrated the church's 165th anniversary in Copake Falls with a parade from the Copake Irons Works to the church.

Stewardship

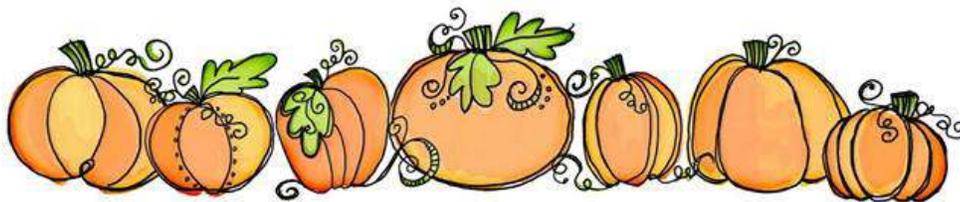
As summer turns to fall, the Stewardship Committee is busy working on the pledge drive which will kick off in early October. I am pleased that Martha Glantz has agreed to chair this year's campaign. The Stewardship Committee will be meeting after church on September 24. All are welcome to join us for this working session. In the meantime, please hold Saturday evening, November 4 at 6 pm, for our celebratory dinner.

Lucy Eldridge, Chair

All Church Picnic



Plan to join our all church picnic on Sunday, September 24, following the 10 am church service. Everyone is welcome; please invite your friends and family. Hot dogs and hamburgers will be provided. Please bring a salad or dessert to share.



Come for the fun at the ECW Fourth Annual

Harvest Fest

**Sunday
October 8, 2017
Noon to 4 pm**

**Church of St. John in the Wilderness
261 Route 344
Copake Falls, NY 12517
www.stjohnw.org**



**Kaptain Kraw
Puppet Show
and
Balloon Tying
1:00 - 3:00 pm**



**Pony Rides, Games, Vendors.
Bake Sale, Chinese Auction,
Lunch Bar**

Rain or Shine

**Faces by
Tracy
Face Painting
Noon - 4:00 pm**

For Information call: Tonya (518) 329-1036

Harvest Fest 2017

The ECW is sponsoring the 4th Annual Harvest Fest on Sunday, October 8, from 12-4 pm on the church grounds and volunteers are needed. Here are the ways you can help with this family community event:

- Volunteer to help at the bake sale table. Bake for the bake sale.
- Manage the chinese auction table. Contribute items for the auction
- Help at the snack bar.
- Help with pumpkin face painting
- Help manage children's games

Auction items can be dropped off in Burke Hall and there is a signup sheet in the narthex for volunteers. Vendors are welcome and a vendor form can be requested from me. If you have questions, please contact me at 518 329-1036 or at wildhair420@yahoo.com

Tonya Carter

Calendar September through mid-November 2017

September 23, **5K run/walk** to support research for childhood cancer, 10AM

September 24, Sunday, **Church Picnic**, 11AM

October 8, Sunday, **Harvest Fest**, 12-4PM

November 4, **Potluck Stewardship Dinner**, 6PM

We need your news and photos for future issues of the *Voice*. Please send your contribution two weeks prior to the publication date. The remaining scheduled publication date for 2017 is November 19.

Louise and Dale Peterson, editors peteroulouise@gmail.com

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Newsletter of the Church of St. John in the Wilderness (Episcopal)
Copake Falls, New York 12517
The Rev. John Thompson, Rector

Brian Boom (1/18) Warden
Karen Flynn (1/19) Warden

Vestry

Tonya Carter (1/18) Jane Shannon (1/19)
Karen Flynn (1/19) Regina Shea (1/17)
Rebecca Garrard Madeleine Tramm
(1/19) (1/18)
Richard Peck, Clerk of the Vestry (1/21)
Louise Peterson, Treasurer (1/19)

Eucharists

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

www.stjohnw.org

www.facebook.com/stjohnwilderness

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