

A Voice in the Wilderness

Newsletter of the Church of St John in the Wilderness, Copake Falls NY
May 2018

Notes from the Wilderness

We all have our particular interests, talents, skills and abilities. This makes life interesting and varied. And there are many things that need doing to which we can apply our talents and skills. From a Christian or spiritual perspective, we develop and use talents and skills not only for our own benefit or the benefit of our families or close friends, but we develop and use talents and skills for the benefit of the wider community. From a Christian perspective we use our gifts for the wider community because we believe that all people are children of God and that all of creation is a gift from God that we are responsible to steward, care for, use and benefit from wisely. A nonreligious person can have similar values and wider concern out of a commitment to human solidarity and a commitment to the health and future of the planet.

Tribalism, bigotry, narcissism and greed, among other problems get in the way of a flourishing, peace loving and creation caring humanity. Keri L. Day, a theologian at Princeton Theological says we need a new Pentecost. She writes, "Divisions mark our society—and our churches. What could possibly bring us together?" ([The Christian Century, May 3, 2018](#)). Good question, as the divisions certainly are there in both church and society.

Keri Day says that when she was a child she loved celebrating Pentecost in her home congregation. She says Pentecost is about the power of the Holy Spirit bringing diverse peoples with diverse languages together in community – a miracle she says. *Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?"* (Acts 2:5-8)

When you consider the divisions in the church and society today, it does seem like we need a miracle to bring people of diverse cultures, races and languages together.

Pentecost then is not only about gifts given to the church by the Holy Spirit like prophecy, teaching and healing – I invite us to be open to all the gifts that the Spirit offers. The other miracle of Pentecost is that the Holy Spirit, directly and through gifts of the Spirit, brought and can bring people together who are very different – people from diverse cultures, races, languages, etc.

When we consider our various gifts, talents and skills, the Holy Spirit can open our eyes not only to our own gifts but to the gifts and blessing of others who are different from us, people who endure visceral suspicion and bigotry. I think most members and friends of St. John in the Wilderness have a healthy pride about being open to diversity, open to people who vary in class, race, culture, language etc. After all, St. John's Mission Statement says we are "inclusive, a welcoming and supportive house of worship... 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."

Out of gratitude to God for giving them to us and helping us to develop them, let's continue to share our gifts, talents and skills with a wide range of people and for the good of God's creation – not only because it's generous, but because others need us to share our gifts and we need others to share their gifts with us. For we all have strengths and weaknesses.

John+
The Rev. John P. Thompson, Rector

From the Desk of the Senior Warden

Hello fellow parishioners,

As we begin the official summer season we are happy to welcome back our summer family. It is great to see our summer residents and also new faces of visitors in our congregation. Welcome home!

Every year at this time we turn our attention to our major yearly fundraiser. As many of you know, last year we sidelined our annual "Country Fair and Auction" in favor of "The Summer Sparkling Soirée." The soirée was a major financial success and also entailed much less physical work for our congregation. The major thrust of this event is to engage the community and bring in the money needed to meet our yearly budgeted expenses. While the financial success is recognized, the vestry has realized that the camaraderie and the sense of the parish working together on a common project was somewhat lost in translation. This year, we want to engage everyone to participate. We recognize that everyone may not wish to attend the actual event or have the ability to purchase a ticket. As a vestry, we want all parishioners to feel included. There are multiple ways to participate in and support this parish initiative.

The soirée committee has been divided into several separate groups. This is in many ways similar to the way we divided work for various sections of our country fair. The music will again be provided by Jim Wann, Wendy Langlois is in charge of food preparation, another group is working with Lucy Eldridge on decorations, Marjorie is working on donations for the silent auction, the Peterson's are in charge of invitations. We will need volunteers for setup, parking and clean up. We also need greeters and servers. Each of you has special talents and gifts. We need everyone on board to make this year's soirée another success. While all this sounds like just more work, I assure you that the volunteers doing the "behind the scenes work" are having fun and enjoying each other's company and conversations. We want each section to have adequate help to ensure that no one needs to be over worked.

As summer progresses we again expect a full calendar of events supporting our church and community. We are excited for the renewal of energy that our busy

season provides. As always we appreciate the close knit community of St. John in the Wilderness that continues to sustain us.

Thank you.

*Karen Flynn
Senior Warden*

Bishop Curry Gives Royal Wedding Sermon

Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry gave a powerful sermon at the royal wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle on May 19. He spoke of love and its power to change our personal lives and the life of our neighborhoods and communities. If you missed the sermon you can watch it [here on CNN](#). You can read the text of the sermon at the [Episcopal News Service](#).

Summer Sparkling Soirée on Bastille Day



Our Summer Sparkling Soirée takes place on July 14, Bastille Day, and we will have a blue, white and red theme and French finger foods. Once again, Jim Wann has kindly agreed to provide entertainment -- and he's invited his friends to join him in performing.

We have identified approximately 20 items for our Silent Auction: mostly consumable items and gift certificates. We would welcome a few high value and colorful items, such as artwork or jewelry. We would also love to have more volunteers for the day of the event, as we expect approximately 100 guests, which we had last year... Or more!

Marjorie Hoog

The Quilt Show was a Success



The springtime Quilt Show in Burke Hall was a great success. It features quilts from the collections of members of the church and community, including Judy Whitbeck, who is pictured above with one of her quilts from Mt Washington. The show ends on June 3 and is not to be missed. Thanks to Lucy Eldridge for organizing this great event in Burke Hall.

Jane Knox (1929-2018)

Funeral services were held on April 24, 2018, for Jane Knox, longtime member of St. John in the Wilderness. Father John Thompson officiated. Jane served as past treasurer and member of the Altar Guild. On April 21, 1956 at St. John's she married Charles H. Knox who pre-deceased her in 2013. She is survived by her son and daughter in law, Dean and Rose Knox of Ghent, NY and her granddaughter Ashley and husband Eric Schaible of Clifton Park.

Church Calendar - May through September

June 8-10, Diocesan Convention

July 14, Saturday, Soirée, 5:30 PM

August 18, Saturday, Copake Falls Day. Salad Bar. 5K in support of Backpack Programs.

September 16th, Sunday, Diocesan Bishop's visitation

September 22, Saturday, 10 AM, 5K, in support of Childhood Cancer

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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

Karen Flynn (1/19) Warden
Marjorie Hoog (1/20) Warden

Vestry

Jane Shannon (1/19)
Rebecca Garrard (1/19)

Susan Massarella (1/20)
Zita Kobos (1/20)
Elen Freeston (1/21)
Wendy Langlois (1/21)

Richard Peck, Clerk of the Vestry (1/21)
Louise Peterson, Treasurer (1/19)

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

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