

A Voice in the Wilderness

Newsletter of the Church of St John in the Wilderness, Copake Falls NY
Easter in the Wilderness 2019

Thoughts from the Wilderness

“Faith is by no means a mere active choice, an option for a special solution to the problems of existence. It is birth to a higher life by obedience to the Source of Life... We believe, not because we want to *know*, but because we want to *be*. And supernatural faith responds to the mystery of that natural faith which is the core and center of our personal being, the will to be ourselves that is the heart of our natural identity. The higher faith is the will not only to be ourselves, but to find ourselves truly in Christ.” (Thomas Merton, *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, p. 19) Wisdom from Trappist (a type of Benedictine) monk Thomas Merton. It suggests many things. Faith is not an abstract, “spiritual” something disconnected from real life. We are blessed in creation (our own and all else), as well as in redemption (in the healing love of Jesus), as Matthew Fox elaborates well. Faith is not a burden, that when we struggle with, we are then to feel guilty about.

Faith is a gift, not for Sunday morning only, but also not a burden. Jesus says that we’re called to abundant life, life to the full. As Merton puts it, we have a natural faith at our core, “the will to be ourselves that is the heart of our natural identity.” We’re called to be who we are. Very simple in a way – children often do it. Yet in another way it may take a lifetime to grow in self-awareness and authenticity, where through life experience and God’s help we become truer, more courageous, more creative, and more loving. We become more authentic and more free. We develop and use our natural gifts. With God’s help, we develop and use our natural gifts not only for our own good but for the good of others and the world.

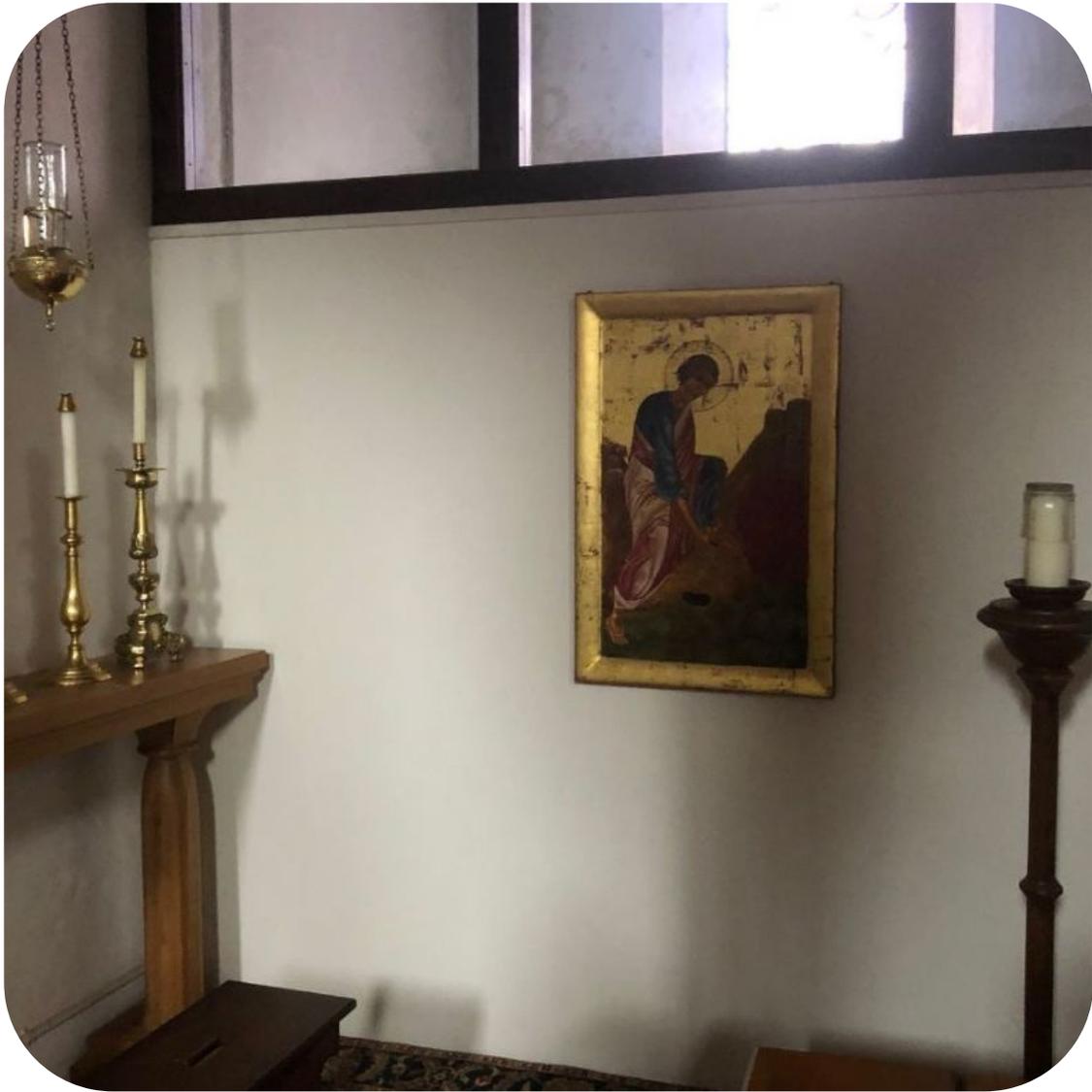
When I say with God’s help it is akin to Merton saying, “The higher faith is the will not only to be ourselves, but to find ourselves truly in Christ.” So that’s a way to describe authenticity or self-actualization or holiness or wisdom. When we are able, with God’s help, to be ourselves naturally and generously.

*In peace,
John+*

Day Visit to Holy Cross Monastery

A group of us from St. John's spent a retreat day, February 27, at the Holy Cross (Episcopal) Monastery, West Park, NY. It was a day of rest, attending morning, noon and evening prayer services with the monks, and joining in a delicious lunch and dinner. The monastery, built in 1915, sits on a 26 acre property and overlooks the Hudson River. Meals are taken in the dining hall with lovely views of the Hudson River from its tall windows.





We also enjoyed viewing the fine art work, throughout the complex. A feeling of quietness is felt in the monastery, recalling the Peace Prayer attributed to Saint Francis as quoted in Lenten Meditations, 2019 published by Episcopal Relief & Development:

Make me a channel of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love,
Where there is injury, your pardon Lord,
And where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Lucy Eldridge

From the Desk of the Senior Warden

What does one write when things are chugging along nicely and there are really no any burning issues to resolve, no large impending decisions to make and no disputes to mitigate? This is my dilemma. The new bookkeeper seems to be working well; Karen the new treasurer is on top of the issues and no crises appear on the horizon.

We DO need to encourage a few people to form a new building committee. We DO need volunteers for on-going tasks and events, though many are stepping up and

filling the needs. The Capital Campaign Committee will soon go public. The group organizing the summer benefit is working efficiently and you will be receiving your "save the date" card any day now. In summary, the Vestry is functioning well and we are blessed with a current calm.

*In community,
Marjorie Hoog*

Volunteer Ushers Needed

Every six weeks or so, we prepare a list of lay ministry assignments. Because of ill health, moves from the area, or long-term absences, the number of volunteers for ushering and/or reading has decreased in recent months, compelling us to lean too heavily on too few people. Choir members generously fill holes for readers, but they clearly cannot usher as well.

Our need for more ushers is critical. If you attend the 10 a.m. service fairly regularly, please consider volunteering for assignment. Ushers are active participants in the service. Their duties are few, and the "choreography" involved is simple.

Please join us!

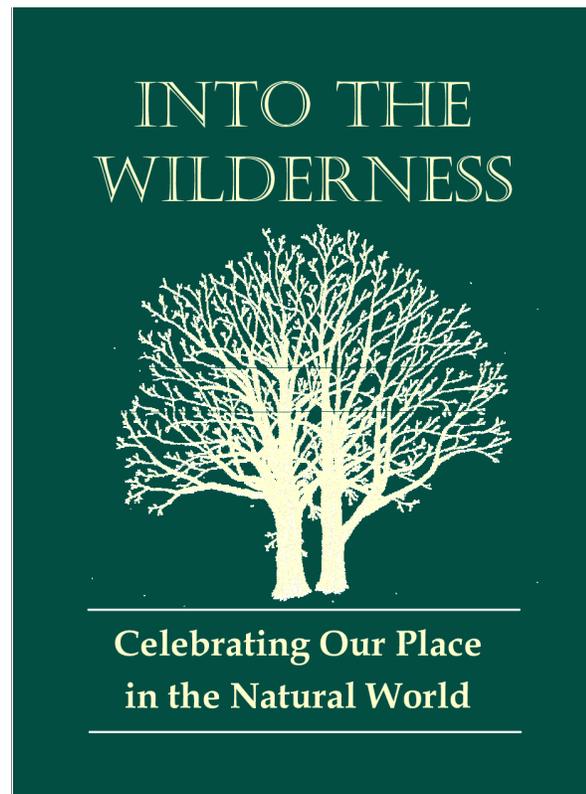
Marya and Bob Dodd
rdodd2@hotmail.com

Save
The
Date

Saturday

July 13, 2019

St. John In The Wilderness



Lambeth 2020

The international Anglican Communion, created in London in 1867, consists of 40 provinces and 85 million souls. All provinces therein have theological roots

that track back to the Church of England, and all recognize the primacy of the Archbishop of Canterbury. However, they vary widely in setting and culture, from highly progressive (e.g. The Episcopal Church) to very conservative (e.g. Uganda).

Coordination of the 40 scattered and diverse provinces is maintained, with more or less success, by means of decennial Lambeth Conferences that are chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury. “More or less” acknowledges that the 1998 and 2010 meetings were riven by deep fractures over gay bishops and same sex marriage. In 2010, for example, + V. Gene Robinson, our church’s first gay bishop, was unwelcome in Canterbury. (“While others met the Queen,” he quipped at a 2011 meeting in Trenton, “I had lunch with ten queens!”) Although these issues have been settled in The Episcopal Church, they remain very much alive in other corners of the Communion.

Four Lambeth Conferences have been held on the Canterbury campus of the University of Kent since 1978. Hence, representatives of the Communion and university met in August, 2018 and confidently planned another such meeting for July of 2020.

All seemed to be in order when, on February 15, 2019, the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion threw the university a curve. He announced on the Communion’s website that “it would be inappropriate for same sex spouses to be invited to the conference.” Britain’s popular press has suggested, plausibly, that this move, a surprise, was a sop to conservative African provinces that remain upset by progressive decisions made by The Episcopal Church and others of like mind.

The Communion’s decision on same sex spouses seems at first glance to violate Great Britain’s 2010 Equality Act, but in fact, it is legal, for the law grants waivers to religious organizations. However, exclusion of spouses raises major ethical concerns for a university that prides itself on full inclusivity. Swift, angry reactions by faculty, staff, community members, and – most vocally – students prompted the University Council to meet on March 22. The Council’s report, published on March 28, states:

“Council members were clear that exclusion of same sex spouses, on grounds of orientation, would be contrary to the values of the University. Council determined that accommodation will be available on campus for those spouses affected by this decision who wish to be in Canterbury with their spouses during the conference period. The University welcomes them and affirms its belief in, and commitment to, diversity and inclusivity.” (Emphasis added.)

The Council Chair and Kent’s president have requested a meeting t with Communion officials and the Archbishop of Canterbury to resolve the issue. Meanwhile, Archbishop Welby has sent a letter to the two affected North American bishops, ordering them to leave their spouses at home next summer. In response, our Presiding Bishop, ++ Michael Curry, has appealed to Abp. Welby to rescind that order.

There it stands as April begins. Will Lambeth 20 take place next July? If so, where? With or without gender-related restrictions?

Stay tuned or, better, visit Thinking Anglicans on the web to follow this and other news from the Anglican world.

Bob Dodd

Church Calendar
April through August 2019

April 10, Lenten Soup and Bread Supper, Our Lady of Hope, Copake Falls,
6:30PM
April 14, Sunday, Palm Sunday
April 18, Thursday, Maundy Thursday, Seder Meal, 6PM, Eucharist, 7:30PM
April 19, Friday, Good Friday, 10AM and 7:30PM services
April 20, Saturday, Easter Egg Hunt, 11AM
April 21, Sunday, Easter, 8AM and 10AM services
April 22, Monday, Earth Day

May 11, Saturday, Garden Lecture (Margaret Roach), 8-11AM

June 7-9, Diocesan Convention
June 8, Saturday, Garden Lecture (Margaret Roach), 9AM-Noon

July 13, Saturday, Sparkling Summer Soiree, 5:30PM

August 17, Saturday, Copake Falls Day, St. John's Salad Bar, 11AM

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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

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

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