

A Voice in the Wilderness

Newsletter of the Church of St. John in the Wilderness
Copake Falls, New York
April 2014

Thoughts from the Wilderness

"Preach the gospel at all times. When necessary, use words." These wise and humble words are attributed to the great St. Francis of Assisi. After Jesus, Mary and Joseph and some of the first disciples, there is no more popular saint than Francis. We live in the information age, the computer age, the age of postmodernism, post-post modernism, postchristianity, neopaganism, hyper-capitalism, globalization, etc. There are many ways of looking at and dealing with reality. Information is increasing at exponential rates. Of course not all information is in the form of words. There is science and art. Many art forms from architecture to dance to music to painting don't necessarily use words. And good art, the result of human creativity, is more than the sum of its parts. Sacred art, explicitly religious or Christian art (and other art for that matter) is just one way of, as St. Francis says, preaching the gospel without words.

Yet the time which it takes for the amount of information in the world to double continues to shrink rapidly. We are overwhelmed with information. Of course in many ways this is good. With the Internet we have quicker and greater access to information than ever before. This can be helpful when we're looking for information for work or play. Smart phones allow us an unprecedented combination of connectedness, convenience, and communication. Now there is the smart phone/tablet combo called a *Phablet*.

Yet there are problems with our shrinking, connected world. Terrorists use the Internet to rapidly communicate and coordinate their plans.

Criminals use the Internet to steal people's money or even their 'identities.' So what's important is not how much information we can accumulate, but what we do with it. With so much information available, the gift of discernment becomes vital. We need to discern what's most important for us to learn or read or use or buy -- because life is short. And God calls us to discern his will. This includes discerning which information we focus on or gather; and also, of course, what we do with our knowledge or information.

Precisely because of the information explosion, there is the danger of not only losing our way in the morass, but becoming weary of it all. That is why it's good to pray -- God offers us both discernment and the energy to wade through with wisdom.

Another quotation attributed to the wise Francis may apply here:

Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.

Prayer helps us step out in faith and discern what part of all the information coming at us we actually need to pay attention to.

The poet T. S. Eliot said:

*Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?*

May God grant us all wisdom and discernment.

Thank you and peace,

John+



From the desk of the Senior Warden

Greetings my fellow parishioners! I hope this Lenten season finds all of you well and fulfilled. In a recent conversation with John+, I mentioned how much I was enjoying the Lenten meditations in our booklets from ERD. I found this year's theme of female empowerment and independence particularly interesting. Yet, most importantly, these daily devotionals remind me of what the Lenten season is truly about, and fill my spirit with the knowledge of God's sacrifice and love for me.

One passage which was quoted resonated with me as I thought of St. John's and our entire church family. *May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. - Romans 15:5-6*

How blessed I feel to be part of a parish which practices this mandate so capably! The most

recent example of this was the Whole Lot of Love Dinner hosted by the ECW. What a wonderful event it was, and a perfect example of what can be accomplished through the unity of our church women (and some wonderful men) to carry out God's will. Events such as these, which are organized in order to raise money for community needs and charitable givings in God's name, are a perfect example of what can be achieved when we strive to live in harmony through Christ. St. John's parishioners (such as Peggy, Jeanne, Tanya, Chuck, Bob C., Betsy, Harry, Regina, Janet, Mibs, Lucy, Wendy, and I am sure many others who I am forgetting to mention by name but who were an integral part of the success of this event) illustrated this for all of us on February 15th. I thank them, and I thank everyone who reminds me of this with every event at St. John's! Our love for each other truly is a reflection of God's love for us, and what can be accomplished through Him.

Rebecca Garrard

Episcopal Church Women Report

The ECW had their quarterly meeting on March 2 2014, with nine women in attendance. Many hands helped with the ECW's Whole Lot of Love dinner in February and it was hugely successful. Many thanks to all who made it happen. The ECW will be putting together the Lenten soup & bread dinner on Tuesday April 2.

The next ECW meeting will be the first Sunday in June, 6/1/14. Remember if you are a woman and a member of the Episcopal church you

are a member of ECW, and we look forward to seeing you at the meetings. The meetings will happen towards the end of the coffee hour after church. Peg Anderson is currently the president and Jeanne VanHoesen the vice president. If you have any questions you can contact Peg at 329-1575 or Jeanne at 329-2620 or dreamjeanne63@yahoo.com.

Come help us aspire to be a God spark -- shining and sharing the love of Christ.

Jeanne VanHoesen

A Voice in the Wilderness

Editors: Louise and Dale Peterson

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

Upcoming issue dates for 2014: September 7, November 23

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

Portrait of Rebecca Garrard

Rebecca, our senior warden, is a New Yorker through and through. She was born in Manhattan, raised in Pine Plains, and went to school in Millbrook at Dutchess Day School, and Millbrook Junior High. She is a graduate of Dover Senior High School. Rebecca received both a Bachelor of Arts (in communication disorders) and a Masters of Arts (in elementary special education) at the State University of New York at New Paltz. While in college, she did clinical work at many places including Rhinebeck public schools, Taconic Developmental Disabilities Services and Sharon Hospital.

In July of 2013, she married Rosanne Persico. The family has adopted two girls, Everly, age 3 and Emerson, age 2. Before the advent of her young family, Rebecca loved to golf and liked reading (hobbies, hopefully, to commence again in the not too distant future!). Rebecca was a vestry member at St. John's for two years, and then became junior warden. Last summer she organized the successful fund-raiser, "Bands for Back Packs", (for food assistance for needy children attending Taconic Hills school

district). She serves on the executive board of the Webutuck Teachers' Association at Webutuck School where she is now in her 14th year as a speech-language therapist. Rebecca remarked that she loves working in a school setting and feels blessed to have found her niche helping children as a speech - language therapist



Speaking of blessings, Rebecca says that prayer is important to her, and so it is appropriate to include in this portrait the following prayer. The prayer is created from parts of 2 prayers from Jaimie Bowman's book entitled *Breathe*.

Lord, I want to serve You out of love – not out of obligation, duty, or frustration.

You are faithful to me, even in my weaknesses. I pray You would help me to have the right attitude and heart about my service today. Thank You for this honor you have given me. Thank You for Your love and Your compassion. Thank You for Your mercies that are new every morning.

Lucy Eldridge

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.

Calendar – April through July

April 17, Thursday

Maundy Thursday Eucharist, 7:30 pm, preceded by a Seder Meal at 6:00.

April 18, Friday

Good Friday, 10am and 7:30 pm services

April 19, Saturday, Easter Egg Hunt, 11 am

April 20, Easter, 8am and 10 am services

May 10, Weedless Gardening Lecture, Friends of Taconic State Park & Margaret Roach

May 17-18, Sacred Sites Open House Weekend.

Saturday

Community Seed & Seedling Swap, 1-4 pm

Jazz Vespers, 5:30 pm

Sunday

Tours of the church, 1-3 pm

May 24, Saturday (Memorial Day Weekend)

Driveway Bake Sale, St. John's, 9-11 am

May 25, Sunday

Winds in the Wilderness Concert, 3 pm

June 6-8, Friday – Sunday

Diocese of Albany Convention, Speculator, NY

June 7 – Saturday, Wildflower Lecture, Friends of Taconic State Park, & Margaret Roach

June 22 – Sunday, Church Picnic, 11am (celebrating Sunday School)

July 12, Saturday

Country Fair & Auction, 10 am

July 13, Sunday

Pork Barbecue, 1 pm

July 19, Saturday

Fund-raiser, with Winds in the Wilderness Concert benefit for Upjohn Preservation Fund

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

Copake Falls, New York

The Rev. John Thompson, Rector

Rebecca Garrard (2015) Warden

Lucy Eldridge (16) Warden

Vestry

Robert Dodd (16) Dale Peterson (15)

Brian Boom (17) Regina Shea (17)

Martha Glantz (16) Jeanne Van Hoesen (15)

Marilyn Kay, Clerk of the Vestry

Louise Peterson, Treasurer

Eucharists

Sunday, 8:00 AM (spoken)

Sunday, 10:00 AM (choral)

www.stjohnw.org

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