

The Messenger

The Church of St. John in the Wilderness, Copake Falls, NY
A Non-Network Church in the Diocese of Albany

SEPTEMBER 2007

Father Walt's "In the Wilderness Musings"

As most of you are aware, the Rev. Barbara Morgan, while remaining the Rector of the Church of St. John-in-the-Wilderness until she officially retires December 31st of this year, will be out on disability until her retirement date, and unable to function as our parish priest in the time that remains. The devoted pastoral care she has extended to all of us in the almost ten years that she has been our Rector will be long remembered and deeply appreciated. The vestry and other members of the parish family have devoted themselves to seeing that Barbara will be well provided for in her retirement, and in the months preceding it. I am happy to report that Barbara has settled comfortably into her retirement apartment in Great Barrington, and I am sure that you all would want to join me in thanking the many parishioners who assisted her in the move, and in decorating her apartment once she was moved in.

Negotiations with the Church Pension Fund resulted in our being able to provide her full salary while on disability leave, while providing the parish with adequate funds to provide priestly ministry at St. John's until the search process begins for a new rector after Barbara has retired. These negotiations have also made it possible for Barbara to receive the maximum benefits for her years of service by purchasing years when, because she had been serving Michigan parishes in a non-stipendiary capacity, no contributions had been made for her to the Fund. I take it as a good sign that Barbara requested after her move that I retrieve her golf clubs she had inadvertently left behind in the rectory entrance hallway, since she had been invited to play a few rounds with her neighbor. (I have not been indelicate enough to ask "Tiger" Morgan her score!) And I know that Barbara finds comfort in the fact that she's not that far from Copake Falls, and will have no difficulty maintaining the close friendships she has formed with members of our parish family and others in the Copake community. She's counting on your stopping by.

In the meantime it will be my privilege and pleasure to serve what, in Milbrey's and my retirement, has become our "parish home" as the "Assisting Priest", who will provide the liturgical ministries of celebrating the Sunday and Wednesday Eucharists, Baptisms, Burials, and Marriages, and other sacraments of the church.. I will also be spending my Wednesdays at St. John's, celebrating the midweek healing Eucharist, and spending the remaining of the morning in the office with administrative tasks and the afternoon with pastoral calling. Whenever you desire my pastoral services, please feel free to call me at home (329-2851) or leave a message on the church voice mail. I want it to be clear, however, that I am what I am - an "assisting priest", ready and willing to serve the parish family I love in any way that I can, but I am not "in charge" of the parish in Barbara's absence. As the Canon Law of our church specifies - the one "in charge" until a new rector is called in 2008 is the Senior Warden, Harry Koeppel, and when it comes to issues of parish administration his, in consultation with the vestry, is the final word.

For the time being, I'm the priest. Harry's the boss. In the meantime, I'm looking forward to sharing the care of this parish with Harry and with all of you in a mutually enriching ministry as we "rev up" for a full schedule of worship and activities in the days ahead. 'See you in church!'

Affectionately,

Fr. Walton Zelle, Assisting Priest

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Episcopal Church Women

Marge McClurg and her little band of women (ECW) met Tuesday, September 4th, and made their plans for the months of September through December,

Dorothy Bake has again agreed to be the co-ordinator from the Fall Ingathering of United Thank Offering. The United Thank Offering is for all members, including the children of St. John's. Collection dates for your UTO boxes will be October 1st through October 28th. Final cut-off date is October 28th.

Susan Molli has again agreed to be the Chairman of Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan's Purse. This is the shoebox project where shoe boxes are filled with small gifts and necessities and sent to children all over the world. Each shoe box packed by St. John's has to contain an envelope with \$5.00 in it for mailing costs. From St. John's it goes to several different pick points and finally on planes around the world. The ECW will start to pack boxes at their November 6th meeting. Cut off date for this collection is November 11th.

Finally, Marge McClurg and babs Croteau will chair the Christmas friends collections, purchasing of gifts, wrapping and delivering to the collection point. Collections for this project start November 25th and end December 15th. You will hear more about this later in the year.

The ECW would like to bring to your attention the good news that Jeffrey Baker is

now collecting bottles and cans and all the monies received will go to charity. He is being tutored by Art Royal and we thank both men for doing this great work for the community.

The next meeting of the ECW will be October 2nd at 1:00 pm in Burke Hall. Won't you come out and enjoy the great desserts served during a short meeting? Looking forward to seeing you!!

Marge McClurg, President

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Birthdays in September

September 4	Beverly Mitchell
	Jane Peck
September 9	Jessica Kay
September 27	Rebecca Briggs

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SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS!



Sunday School registration will take place on Sunday, September 9 and September 16 in Burke Hall after the 10 AM service

Classes will start on **Sunday, September 23**. If you have questions or are unable to come to registration call Wendy Langlois at 329-0262.

News from the Diocese and Beyond

The OK Corral: Update

The religious media and blogs are touting this month's meeting of our House of Bishops (New Orleans, September 20-25) as the Anglican equivalent of the 1881 Earp-Clanton shootout at the OK Corral. Although there are many other issues on the House of Bishop's agenda, the most important item is a response to a demand by the Anglican primates that our Church agree:

- 1) not to ordain or consecrate gay priests or bishops;
- 2) not to bless same-sex marriages
- 3) to allow the Communion to provide an alternative primatial overseer for those Episcopalians who will not accept our new Presiding Bishop.

Because the primates demanded a response from The Episcopal Church before September 30, this HoB (House of Bishops) meeting is very important. It is more likely to be a *shout*-out than a shootout, but it is significant enough that the Archbishop of Canterbury and some of his minions will be present.

The Episcopal Church's House of Bishops and Executive Council have already criticized the primates' ultimatum, so the HoB will almost certainly reject it, however politely. In anticipation of that outcome, the conservative provinces of Kenya and Uganda have just consecrated two former Episcopal priests to serve as "missionary" bishops in the US. They join Nigeria's Bp. Martyn Minns and Bp. David Bena, the latter, of course, our previous Suffragan.

What the fallout from the HoB meeting will be is unclear. However, the Common Cause Partners, a gathering of conservative-evangelical organizations that includes the Network and is headed by its leader, Bp. Robert Duncan, will meet in Pittsburgh between September 25 and 28. Determined to replace the Episcopal Church as the Anglican "franchise" in the United States, the Partners will no doubt continue to fight for that outcome and for the right of parishes and dioceses to take property with them when they secede from the national church.

What about Albany? Bp. Love will attend both the HoB and Partners meetings. The Episcopal Diocese of Albany is officially a member of the Network and the Common Cause Partners although the vestry of St. John's has stated that we are not. A supporter of both the Network and the Partners, Bishop Love has threatened to call a special diocesan convention if developments endanger Albany's relationship to either the national Church or the Anglican Communion. At a guess, such a meeting would, like the 2004 Diocesan Convention, simply show how deeply, bitterly divided Albany is. It's an outcome worth avoiding.

And our parish? Until the diocesan situation becomes clearer, no unusual action is required of us at St. John ITW beyond finding a new Rector to help us maintain and build our sturdy little parish. Like the citizens of Tombstone, we are weary of hearing the Episco-Earps and Anglo-Clantons go at each other and wonder when they'll get back to doing what Jesus was all about.

Bob Dodd

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Lectionary for September

September 2	112	Ecclesiasticus 10: 7-18 Hebrews 13: 1-8 Luke 14:1,7-14	September 23	138	Amos 8:4-12 1 Timothy 2:1-8 Luke 16:1-13
September 9	1	Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Philemon 1-20 Luke 14: 25-33	September 30	146	Amos 6:1-7 1 Timothy 6: 11-19 Luke 16: 19-31
September 16	51:1-18	Exodus 32:1.7-14 1 Timothy 1:12-17 Luke 15:1-10			

Lay Ministries - September

Date	Altar	Ushers	Lector	Prayers	LEM
9/2 8am	Knox	O Garrett			
10am		C.Fox L.Skelton	K.Kay	Eldridge	M.Dodd
9/9 8am	Langlois	JC Peck			Koeppel
10am		S. Mollo R.Dodd	M.Zelley	J. Peck	M.Dodd
9/16 8am	Zelley	Croteau			Koeppel
10am		J.Peck C. Fox	M.Kay	K.Kay	
9/23 8am	Skelton	Croteau			Koeppel
10am		R. Dodd S. Mollo	P. Royal	M. Zelley	M.Dodd
9/30 8 am	Freeston	O. Garrett			Koeppel
		L. Skelton J. Peck	K. Kay	P. Royal	M. Dodd

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! -

Saturday, October 6th - Time to be announced,
Planning Meeting for heads of all church organizations