

A Voice in the Wilderness

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

Thoughts from the Wilderness

As I reread my *Thoughts* from the April issue of the 'Voice', it was clear that there'd be continuity with this current article. God is good and the source of all good. According to Scripture we're all offered God's goodness, the fruit of God's Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). These virtues can grow in us like a baby. The difference is they can grow longer than nine months; they can continue to grow in us for a lifetime. I emphasized last time that wisdom is more important than knowledge, that what's important is not how much information we can accumulate, but what we do with it. The fruits of the spirit seem to be even more basic than wisdom since they are planted in us by God and as such are at the root of our character. One's habitual attitudes and behaviors are essential to one's character. The fruits of the spirit (Galatians 5:22-23 above) grow out of the seeds planted in us by God and are the source of virtuous habits. They mature by God's grace and our response to it into the fruit and flower of a good or virtuous character, the character of one who habitually and increasingly manifests these nine fruits of the spirit. Since it takes a lifetime for these fruits to ripen, we are always (on this earth) imperfect in every one of them. It is a relief to know that we don't have to be and in fact cannot be perfect. It is also a relief to know that we can continue to grow, with God's help.

When I say that the fruits of the spirit are more basic even than wisdom, I mean that wisdom is a result of receiving and practicing these fruits, these virtues. For example, as we grow in one of them, patience (perhaps the most difficult one of the

nine), we become more patient with ourselves about our failure to perfectly manifest any of these fruits on any given day. In other words we maintain a level of love, joy, and peace since we realize we don't have to be perfect about it. We are patient with ourselves. And then we transfer this patience to everybody else! We let everybody else be imperfect. There is a paradox in that even though



we are imperfect, if we take the fruit of the Spirit seriously, we will grow in goodness, and sometimes others will even notice! On the other hand, as we continue to grow, some others may not understand us and find us threatening and give us a hard time for the very practice of these virtues. Or they may have an alternative perspective on the same fruit/virtue.

For example, as Jeffrey Bullock says in his new book, *Practicing Christian Patience: Encouraging Community, Establishing Peace*, peace and generosity may not have the same meaning in the state as they do in the church. He says that, "When the secular world speaks of peace, we usually mean the absence of conflict in order to carry on the exchange of goods and materials." The church, e.g. Jesus, means something deeper by peace. The church and Jesus mean "shalom... the peace that's infinite, unbounded, and marked by harmony and eternal rest." This may include the absence of conflict, but it's deeper and more holistic. He says similarly that from a Christian perspective patience and generosity have a deeper meaning. I would say the difference may be one between actively loving and tolerating someone or the difference between giving with and without strings.

As important as knowledge is, wisdom is more important. As basic as wisdom is, the fruit of God's Spirit is its source. Remember another Scripture, "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1st Corinthians 8:1). God please inspire us to pray

that the seeds given and planted in us by you may continue to grow and ripen into good and beautiful fruit.

Thank you and peace,

John+

From the desk of the Senior Warden

Greetings fellow parishioners! I hope this summer season brings everyone countless opportunities to enjoy God's blessings which are resplendent in our beautiful surroundings. Our church calendar for July and August is full of exciting events which will unite members of the church and surrounding communities for fundraising, fellowship, and fun! St. John's crowded agenda is a testament to the hard work and faith of our congregation, and offers further evidence of not just our presence but our relevance within Copake Falls and its surrounding communities.

As I reflected on our calendar, it occurred to me that I knew very little about Episcopal events which take place in other dioceses or at the national level. Apart from the information we get in our bulletins or Sunday sermons, I realized my awareness of our extended church family is fairly limited. Various factors cause St. John's to be somewhat isolated from our Episcopal brothers and sisters outside of our parish. Therefore, in this issue of the Voice, I would like to highlight some of the events and programs which exist in some neighboring dioceses and at the national level.

Established in 1995, the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Committee (JPIC) facilitates "communication and collaboration between the Executive Council and ministries throughout the Episcopal Church and Church Center units which



address issues of peace, social and economic justice and the environment". JPIC is described by The Episcopal Diocese of Central New York as a ministry which equips Episcopalians to "strive for peace and justice and respect the dignity of every human being". Under the JPIC umbrella, The Diocese of Central New York operates Jubilee Ministries, which is the "grassroots organizing principle for hands-on local community outreach", and whose centers "are engaged in mission and ministry among and with poor and oppressed people". There are seven Jubilee Centers in the Diocese of Central New York.

Episcopal City Tutoring (ECT) operates within the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts. ECT offers high quality SAT prep and tutoring to high school students within struggling schools. ECT currently offers tutoring at discounted rates or free of charge to Massachusetts students in four areas within the state.

The Global Women's Fund of the Diocese of New York was created in response to Millennium Development Goal #3 "To promote gender equality and empower women". As of March of this year, the Diocese of New York has provided scholarships to 24 women in eleven countries, and has enabled 300 women to attend seven educational seminars in four countries.

The Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut has

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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!

its own You Tube video channel. The most recent upload is one which describes a parish in Glastonbury, a community with a large farming population. This parish, St. Luke's, holds several Sunday services outdoors which bless the fields and welcome the community. Another video describes Camp Hispaniola, which is operated by members of the Diocese of Connecticut and provides missionary work in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Due to the Episcopal Church's vote in 2012 which changed its nondiscrimination canons to include "gender identity and expression" so that

transgender people could become priests, Rev. Dr. Cameron Partridge made history on June 22, 2014 as the first openly transgender priest to preach at Washington National Cathedral. Rev. Dr. Partridge told congregants that he was proud to be part of the Episcopal Church which advocates for "acceptance of all people, regardless of sexual orientation or identity."

As always, I feel so very proud to be an Episcopalian. May God's love bless us all!

Rebecca Garrard

The Country Fair and Auction 2014 – Saturday July 12th

Our Annual major fund-raising event is upon us and we hope to see another successful fair. In recent years we have changed the structure of the fair somewhat. We have expanded the garden shop as it has proven to be popular. We have also attempted to focus on the auction as that is where most of the income is generated. The Country Fair and Auction generates income for the general fund that maintains the everyday operation of the church.

It is helpful to remember that, just like our own homes, there are utility bills, insurance costs and all of those things that become increasingly expensive with the passing years. I remind everyone of this to encourage our participation in all of these events. Every penny we earn helps to insure the future of the church, the community of which is so important for so many of us.



The fair is labor intensive but can be a great day of camaraderie for the congregation. There will be a snack bar, salad bar, linen shop, children's activities, Boutique, Garden Shop and Auction. The sign-up sheet for helpers has been posted in the

narthex and we hope you will consider helping out. The more help we have the less strain it is on individuals. We can always find a job for you. It is a great way to get to know everyone better. If anyone needs to reach me, please e-mail me at ballinamore@fairpoint.net or phone me at (518) 329-1401

Don't forget the Pork Barbecue on Sunday July 13th. The food is fantastic and the day is always a fun one. There will be sale items from the Fair and fun watching the guys and gals at the grill. Hope to see you all there.

See you in Church.

Elen J. Freeston, Chairman

Choir Recognition

Sunday, June 29th, members of our choir and our choir director were honored for their contribution to our worship service. Madeline Nicholson has recently rejoined the group. Harry Garrett was introduced as the “grandpa” with 42 years with the choir. Others recognized were Walt Zelle (12 years), Mibs Zelle (16 years), David

Chittick (17 years), Elen Freeston (18 years), Jim Hedrick (23 years), Karen Flynn (24 years), Pauline Royal (25 years), Kent Kay (27 years), Marilyn Kay (27 years), Edee Hedrick (30 years) and Connie Valden (35 years).

The parish family is thankful for the “joyful noise” we hear every Sunday.

The Roof Project

Challenge Grant Received

St. John's has received a challenge grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation toward the Roof Project (new roof is estimated to cost \$35,000). Once we raise \$10,000, the Pomeroy Foundation will award us \$12,500. As many of you remember, Dawn Pomeroy Lewis, a direct descendant of Lemuel Pomeroy, a founder of our church, attended St. John's 160th Anniversary, along with a staff member of CXtec, William Pomeroy's tech company based in Syracuse, NY. We are grateful for this generous support from the Pomeroy Foundation.

Sacred Sites Program of the New York Landmarks Conservancy

A grant application to Sacred Sites seeking support for the Roof Project was submitted May 31st. Jane Shannon helped with the editing of the application and Dale Peterson supplied photographs of the church's interior, exterior and roof condition. We had a fun Sacred Sites Open House Weekend in May with a community Seed and Seedling Swap, organized by Regina Shea.

Summer Sparkling Soiree, July 19 at 5:30pm at the Church.

Parish members and friends of St. John's are invited to a gala summer party to help raise money toward our Roof Project. The evening benefit will

begin with a Winds in the Wilderness jazz concert featuring John Myers on guitar and Pete Toigo on base. After the concert, we will have a fun party under the tent with delicious hors d'oeuvres and sparkling wines and punch. Guests are invited to bid at a silent auction of over 20 items including a share in Sol Flower Farm, a dinner prepared by the “The Catering Ladies,” a children's bike from Bash Bish Bicycle, fine prints, etc. Many people have signed up for the Soiree and tickets at \$40 are available on line at www.stjohnw.org or pay by check. We look forward to seeing you at the Soiree!

Benefit Brunch at the Greens with Jim Wann

Jim Wann, singer and Broadway composer, has offered to perform at a benefit for the Roof Project. We will hold the benefit at the Greens Restaurant at the Copake Country Club on October 26. We look forward to this event and thank Jim for his generosity.

Contributions to the Upjohn Fund roof project are welcome. Please make your check payable to the Church and indicate that it's a contribution to the roof project.

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.

Events for July and August

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 to benefit the Upjohn Preservation
Fund

August 16, Saturday

Copake Falls Day

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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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