



Oak Leaves



Vol. LXI, Number 10

JUNE 2019

“Reclaiming Jesus”

by Parson John

Beginning in Lent, a number of people have been meeting on Wednesday nights to talk about public discourse and what it means to be a Christ follower in our troubled and divided times. This is a faithful thing for Christians to do. Our Book of Confessions as Presbyterians is filled with examples of Christians doing just this work.

The document which we have been looking at was written by a wide variety of Christian leaders who felt compelled to speak out. They are troubled by what they see going on in our midst. It is composed of six faith affirmations and six corresponding rejections. It's the rejections which have teeth. The rejections include the resurgence of white nationalism, the demonization of the poor and vulnerable, authoritarian leanings, misogyny, lying, and extreme nationalism. Those who are troubled by these manifestations among us turned out. Those not so troubled did not turn out. As is the case in most churches and church gatherings, we find ourselves preaching to the choir. In our self-selecting culture, we surround ourselves with people and messages which confirm our biases.

Therapists observe that personal and spiritual growth requires a capacity for distress tolerance. The way my college friends used to frame this truth was with the phrase, “No pain, no gain.” Our college classes were demanding. They created suffering. We grew as a result, and most of us became dedicated to life-long learning. Athletes know that without training and suffering, they will not progress. From their discipline and sacrifice comes success and joy. Why would we expect anything less with our spiritual lives?

In last night's class, we reflected on our transnational faith and the nationalistic energies found cropping up throughout our globe, in the face of mounting pressures due to increased immigration. Everyone lamented the loss of community which we experienced in our youth, but which seems absent from our current context. I have heard liberals and conservatives lament this new reality. At its best, the longings of nationalism might be a longing to return to community. At its worst, these longings look for a simple answer to a very complex reality. Our world is becoming more global and complex. How do respond to our very healthy need for community in this con-

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Reclaiming Jesus (...continued from previous page)

text? One skill, I suggest that we need to develop, is to grow our capacity for distress tolerance. When we can embrace suffering with love, something new and better can emerge. Jesus made conscious suffering a central part of his life and teaching. It's called bearing the cross. It is a precondition for resurrection.

Of late, I have been exploring the paths and wisdom of monastic spirituality. It is a call to submit ourselves to God and to community. It challenges us to engage in daily examination and purification of our hearts. It calls us to commitment to a path and a community which brings us far beyond personal preference and likes. There is a cost to this path, which we have done away with in our consumer-spirituality culture. Spiritual community is not about making us happy. It is about calling us to a life of dying to self in order to birth the life of God within. The path of Christ is a path of welcoming distress in order to find transformation of our inner lives. Ultimately, it is a path toward joy. See you in church!



Worshipping Together

JUNE 2, 2019

Acts 16:16-34

"Jailhouse Rock"

JUNE 9, 2019

Acts 2:1-21; John 14:8-17

"Words That are True"

JUNE 6, 2019

Psalms 8; John 16:12-15

"A Sixth Sense"

JUNE 23, 2019

Galatians 3:23-29; Luke 8:26-39

"A Fearful Freedom"

JUNE 30, 2019

Galatians 5:1, 13-25; Luke 9:51-62

"The Measure of Spirit"

Welcome to Our Music Program!

Dear friends,

As always, we welcome any volunteers to join in creating music together, so please reach out if interested! I'm currently looking for soloists during the summer months.

One date to mark in your calendar:

Sunday, June 9th: Pentecost and Last day of Choir before the summer

A huge thank you to: the youth choir, parents, members of the Adult Choir, John Monroe & staff, all of the soloists and Andy Kirkpatrick for making this past fall/winter/spring such a joy! Looking forward to all the joy and inspiration the summer has to bring in music and worship.

Thank you, and looking forward to connecting in church!

Andreea Fegan, Music Director



Church School News



Happy June everyone! Hope everyone is enjoying sunshine! Hard to believe we are near the end and another year of Church school is nearly over.

Big thank you to Tiffany for helping out for the month of May! And thank you to Diane for co-teaching another informative lesson! Thank you to Heather and Tim Yockel for volunteering for this month.

Here's the schedule for June:

June 2nd: Victory Park Clean up . In order to tie together the month's past lessons on Genesis and what it means to tend to the Earth, students will take action!

June 9th: Pentecost/ Church Picnic/ last day of church school

June 16: Summer schedule begins! Worship at 9:15am

Please keep in mind that we will still be looking for nursery school volunteers for the summer months! Please reach out if you or interested or know someone that may be! Pay is \$25 for the hour. Big shoutout to our volunteers his month- Bree and Nicole! Thank you so much!

Maria Van Cleve, Church School Director

Summer Mission

This summer the Mission Commission will once again be collecting school supplies for local schools. Your generosity in the past has helped a number of students remain prepared for their assignments, and they are truly grateful. Below is a list of supplies that would help students with their studies during the 2019-2020 school year.



- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Pencils | Colored pencils |
| Pens (blue or black) | Arrowhead erasers (for pencil tops) |
| Notebooks (1, 3, or 5 subject) | Block erasers |
| Pocket folders | Post-its |
| Glue sticks | Lined loose leaf paper (college ruled) |

There will be a collection container in the foyer, and we will be collecting supplies until August 5. Thank you.

Mission Commission

Save The Date!

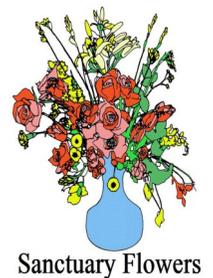
Sunday, June 9th is the Church Picnic

The picnic will be held in the **Oak Grove** immediately following the service (or in Wilson Hall in the event of rain.) Please use the sign-up sheet on the table outside Wilson Hall.



Sanctuary Flowers

Just a reminder that you are invited to have flowers placed in our sanctuary in memory of a loved one or in celebration of an important event or person in your life. The standard flower cost is \$25. Please either sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office or notify Steve Buchanan via email at sbuchanan@rumsonpresbyterian.org.



Sermons Online

Please note that you can listen to our sermons online by visiting our website:

www.rumsonpresbyterian.org.

If you have difficulty with this please contact the church office for assistance.

Ushers Needed!!!

We are in need of a few more volunteers to be ushers or alternate ushers. We try to maintain around 10 usher teams, and each team usually ushers 5-6 weeks each year. Thank you for very much for your support.



USHERS

Contact **Rosanne Monroe** at rosannecanore@gmail.com if you are interested.



Please keep in mind that we will still be looking for nursery school volunteers for the summer months! Please reach out if you or interested or know someone that may be! Pay is \$25 for the hour.

Contact **Maria Van Cleve** at mvancleve@rumsonpresbyterian.org if you are interested.

Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed!!!

We all enjoy the coffee and delicious treats served Wilson Hall after Sunday's church service. Congregational Life is looking for volunteers for next September and beyond to keep this WONDERFUL program running.



A sign-up sheet is located on the bulletin board.



Contact **Rosanne Monroe** at rosannecanore@gmail.com if you are interested.



All seniors welcome to attend a meeting of **Rumson Senior Citizens Club***

Rumson Presbyterian Church
2nd and 4th Monday of the month
11:00 am

Our only meeting this month will be on **June 10th.**

Any questions or for more information, please contact **Winifred Steele-Burnett** at **732-842-3989** or (cell) **732-687-3330.**

** All seniors are welcome.
Its not just for Rumson residents.*



It is with great pleasure that we are awarding the Peacemaking Awards this year to Grace Karagjozi and Kayla Bartram. These young ladies have exhibited qualities that reflect the standards of the Peacemaking Committee.

Grace Karagjozi is a senior at Rumson Fair Haven Regional High School and will be attending Villanova University in the fall. Her community service and extracurricular activities include volunteering for the Special Olympics, Salvation Army, Suicide Prevention, coat drives, captain of her PDA soccer team, and training children in soccer. Grace also spends time babysitting where, as she puts it, she "helps break habits that children don't recognize as cruel until it is too late."

Kayla Bartram is a senior at Shore Regional High School. She will be attending Rutgers University this fall. Her community service and extracurricular activities include Students for Animal Welfare, Lutheran Reformation Church food pantry, Medical Careers club, National Honor Society, and Shore Regional field hockey summer camps (volunteer and coach). Whether helping animals, discussing mental health, or working with student athletes, Kayla strives to "make a difference in the world around me, no matter how big or small."

Congratulations Kayla and Grace. We wish you well as you set out on the next chapter of your life.

Peacemaking Committee



Please see the upcoming events with WATERSPIRIT

WATERSPIRIT's Book Club

Wednesday, June 12th

6-8:00PM

"Explore Spirituality, Nature & Action" Join us for discussion, exploring and sharing as we read enlightening books that move our spirituality to action and Enhance our connection with nature and all life.

WATERSPIRIT's "Summer Solstice"

Thursday, June 20th

7-8:30PM

Join us for an evening to celebrate water and the energy and warmth of the sun through prayer, reflection, ritual and song as we welcome this new season.

We pray with gratitude for the one water that is life and for the light, energy, warmth and food we receive so abundantly from the generous, self-giving sun. The evening will end with a time for refreshments.

Reservations preferred..Donations according to means.

Meditation for Earth

Tuesdays at 12:15 Noon

"Meditation for Earth" could become part of your lunch break on Tuesdays. We lead a simple meditation followed with silence, for a flourishing Earth. The meditation and silence is for approximately 30 minutes.

All events are at WATERSPIRIT

(co-located at the First Presbyterian Church of Rumson)

4 East River Road, Rumson, NJ 07760

Call or email for registration and information:

732-923-9788 or waterspirit981@gmail.com



www.rumsonprebyterian.org



We are an Earth Care Congregation!

Submitted by Diane Burke and Sue Smith

We share these articles each month to honor God's earth as part of Rumson Presbyterian's participation as an Earth Care Congregation. —**Diane and Sue**

Learning from Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities **By Sue Smith**

Originally published on the Eco-Justice Blog of the Presbyterian Hunger Program at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/eco-journey/2019/04/22/learning-from-environmental-justice-ej-communities/>

I was invited to the March Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee (MRTI) meeting. Instead of their usual meetings with corporate executives, they were meeting with frontline communities near New Orleans suffering from the effects of environmental degradation and climate change. Why was this the focus of an MRTI meeting? The committee is framing its work with the overture to the 223rd General Assembly: On Responding to Environmental Racism and to Promote Environmental Justice, which calls on the church to listen to the voices of those most impacted by pollution, those living in environmental justice communities (EJ), communities of color and of poverty, and to include responses to the voices most directly impacted by environmental racism.

Over the week we met with tribal villagers from Isle de Jean Charles, Pointe au Chien and Grand Caillou. While many Americans and Presbyterians are fairly distanced in their day to day lives from daily impact of climate change, here is a radically different story. Because of climate change, their land is literally disappearing from under their feet due to sea level rise. Their homes, their way of life, all vanishing. The government is funding a move from Isle de Jean Charles. Typical when money and a frontline community is involved, the voices of those being forced to move are not listened to. And typical of government funding, red tape and bureaucracy reigns.

We also met with people living in Plaquemines Parish, hard hit by Hurricane Katrina and still recovering. Commercial fishing, a way of life in the parish, has been negatively impacted. Rev. Tyrone Edwards said that they are rebuilding "despite environmental racism".

As I experienced all of this, I was hard pressed to compare the EJ issues in Louisiana

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Caring for God's Earth - Learning from EJ Communities (...continued)

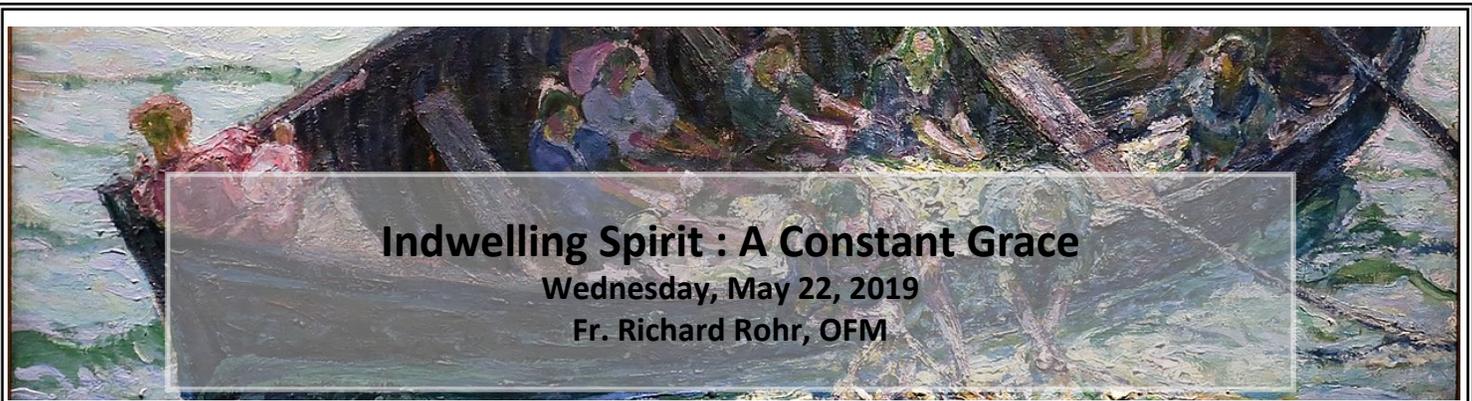
to the EJ issues in New Jersey. Both are feeling the effects of climate change and environmental impacts. However, there are some key differences. In New Jersey, rebuilding after Sandy was helped by national and regional corporations that showed up to help their own businesses recover. I did not see any presence of national and regional corporations in Plaquemines Parish to help with recovery. In New Jersey, EJ communities suffer most from particulate matter in the air, pollution from commerce. In Louisiana, it is the loss of land and loss of a way of life.

Then I remembered what Dr. Nicky Sheats said at a local Sierra Club meeting. The 'enviros' (large environmental organizations, mostly white, well-funded) care most about big-picture environmental issues. The EJ organizations (small, mostly people of color, not well-funded) care most about community. That is the link between environmental racism in Louisiana and New Jersey – caring about community.

EJ communities care most about effects on community. The Native American tribes trying to create sustainable communities in a new land. The people of Plaquemines Parish rebuilding, where the newest and largest buildings are the community center and the high school. And the NJ communities that care about the health of the residents of their communities. All of these communities need to have their voices heard.

As Christians, community matters. Jesus traveled in community. Our congregations are community. Those of us benefiting from white privilege can learn a lot from front-line communities in our environmental work. As we work to confront climate change, yes we can talk about big picture, long-term changes, public policy, corporate strategies, and even personal changes we can all make to lower our carbon footprint. However, in all these things and above all else, we should remember why we do any of this. We do it for community.





Indwelling Spirit : A Constant Grace

Wednesday, May 22, 2019

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM

The work of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to reveal to us the truth of our being so that the way of our being can match it. —Wm. Paul Young [1]

The love in you—which is the Spirit in you—always somehow says yes. (See 2 Corinthians 1:20.) Love is not something you do; love is something you are. It is your True Self. Love is where you came from and love is where you're going. It's not something you can buy. It's not something you can attain. It's the presence of God within you, called the Holy Spirit or what some theologians name uncreated grace.

You can't manufacture this by any right conduct, dear reader. You can't make God love you one ounce more than God already loves you right now. You can go to church every day for the rest of your life. God isn't going to love you any more than God loves you right now.

You cannot make God love you any less, either—not an ounce less. Do the most terrible thing and God wouldn't love you less. You cannot change the Divine mind about you! The flow is constant, total, and 100 percent toward your life. God is for you.

We can't diminish God's love for us. What we can do, however, is learn how to believe it, receive it, trust it, allow it, and celebrate it, accepting Trinity's whirling invitation to join in the cosmic dance.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1090–1153) wrote, "Inasmuch as the soul becomes unlike God, so it becomes unlike itself." [2] Bernard has, of course, come to the same thing I'm trying to say here: the pattern within the Trinity is the same as the pattern in all creation. And when you return to this same pattern, the flow will be identical.

Catherine LaCugna (1952–1997) ended her giant theological tome *God for Us* with this one simple sentence:

The very nature of God, therefore, is to seek out the deepest possible communion and friendship with every last creature on this earth. [3]

That's God's job description. That's what it's all about. And the only thing that can

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Indwelling Spirit : A Constant Grace (...continued)

keep you out of this divine dance is fear or self-hatred. What would happen in your life—right now—if you fully accepted what God has created?

Suddenly, this is a very safe universe. You have nothing to be afraid of. God is for you. God is leaping toward you! God is on your side, honestly more than you are on your own.

[1] Wm. Paul Young, *Trinity: The Soul of Creation*, session 7 (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2017), MP4 download.

[2] Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons on the Song of Songs*, 82.5. This translation is from William Harmless, *Mystics*, (Oxford University Press: 2008), 55.

[3] Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (HarperSanFrancisco: 1993), 411.

Adapted from Richard Rohr with Mike Morrell, *The Divine Dance: The Trinity and Your Transformation* (Whitaker House: 2016), 193-194.

Image credit: The Miraculous Haul of Fishes (detail), Henry Ossawa Tanner, between 1913 and 1914, National Academy of Design, New York, NY.

Inspiration for this week's banner image: When the Spirit is alive in people, they wake up from their mechanical thinking and enter the realm of co-creative power. —
Richard Rohr

Neighbor to Neighbor



**Food
Collection**

We request and continue to accept donations of the following items: CANNED GOODS, TOMATO PRODUCTS, PASTA, RICE, BEANS, and FRESH GARLIC.

MANY THANKS FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT!

Church Office Hours

John's regular office hours are Monday - Thursday from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm. John will be away June 4 - 6.

Steve's office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday from 9:00 am - Noon and 1:00 - 3:00 pm. Steve will be away June 24 -



Time for Reflection

What Rain Reveals



Unless you're a pluviophile (someone who loves rain), a stretch of sunshine-free days can seem drab and dreary. To make South Korea's long monsoon season more colorful, art students created murals on some Seoul sidewalks with hydrochromic paint. It's invisible on dry surfaces, but as soon as water hits, vibrant images appear. Rain transforms gray pavement into bright scenes of fish, whales and turtles.

Life's storms, whether literal or figurative, can dampen our enthusiasm and even challenge our faith. Yet adversity often reveals God's true colors — and ours. No matter what clouds pass overhead, God remains perfect, loving and steadfast. And by praising God "rain or shine," we, as his artwork, reveal that our Creator and his every brushstroke are trustworthy.

Summertime Prayer

In "The Summer Day," Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Mary Oliver (1935-2019) captures the season profoundly as a time to pay attention, especially to the wonders of Creation; to let oneself be idle sometimes; and to let one's time of quiet rest, meandering through meadows and gazing at grasshoppers, be prayer.

I don't know exactly what a prayer is.
I do know how to pay attention, how to fall down
into the grass, how to kneel down in the grass,
how to be idle and blessed, how to stroll through the fields ...

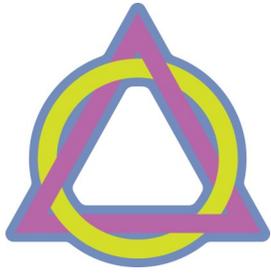
Search online to read the entire work. Let it inspire you for a walk with God through one of these summer days.

What a Wonder

"It is not the task of Christianity to provide easy answers to every question but to make us progressively aware of a mystery. God is not so much the object of our knowledge as the cause of our wonder.

—Kallistos Ware

Time for Reflection (...continued)



Christian Symbol : Triangle & Circle

Dating back to ancient Christianity, a circle symbolizes eternity, and a triangle, with its three equal sides and three equal angles, symbolizes the Holy Trinity. Placed together, they represent the eternal Three-in-One and One-in-Three: God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Reasons to Rejoice

Proverbs 11:10 (NIV) says, “When the righteous prosper, the city rejoices.” The Hebrew word for righteous, notes Timothy Keller, indicates people who, because they believe in God, “disadvantage themselves to advantage those around them.” In other words, people living righteously “will be such a benefit to the public good of the whole city that the entire populace will exult.”

Keller then asks: “Are you the kind of person, and is your church the kind of church, about which others in your community might say, ‘I don’t share their beliefs, but I shudder to think about what this city would be like without them’?”

“Do” Diligence

Against the backdrop of people who avoid work, cut corners and do half-hearted jobs, a diligent [person] stands out. Practicing diligence is an excellent way to stand out for Christ at home, in the workplace and even at church. Today, complete each one of your tasks, however big or small, with diligence.

—David Jeremiah

Words of Wisdom

“Too many of us have a Christian vocabulary rather than a Christian experience. We think we are doing our duty when we're only talking about it.”

—Charles F. Banning

“There is just one way to bring up a child in the way he should go, and that is to travel that way yourself.”

—Abraham Lincoln

“Jesus, like any good fisherman, first catches the fish; then he cleans them.”

—Mark Potter

First Presbyterian Church of Rumson NJ
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~Please check our website at www.rumsonpresbyterian.org for calendar updates~

JUNE 2019

Jun 2	Sun	Congregational Meeting	11:00am
Jun 4	Tue	Meditation*	12:15pm
Jun 5	Wed	Wisdom Group	6:30pm
Jun 9	Sun	PENTECOST SUNDAY CHURCH PICNIC	11:00am
Jun 10	Mon	Rumson Seniors	11:00am
Jun 11	Tue	Meditation*	12:15pm
Jun 16	Sun	TRINITY SUNDAY FATHER'S DAY	
Jun 18	Tue	Meditation*	12:15pm
Jun 18	Tue	Session	7:00pm
Jun 20	Thu	WS Solstice Celebration*	6:30pm
Jun 21	Fri	FIRST DAY OF SUMMER	
Jun 25	Tue	Meditation*	12:15pm

**WATERSPIRIT sponsored event. All are welcome*