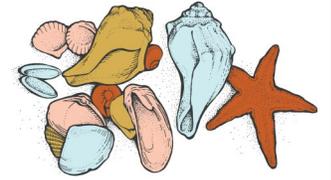




Oak Leaves



Vol. LXI, Number 11

JULY/AUGUST 2019

“Sacralizing Your Life”

by Parson John

In April, I was blessed to be part of a retreat for Living School students with Cynthia Bourgeault at a Benedictine Abbey in Hingham, Massachusetts. In many ways, the content was a review of spiritual material with which I was already familiar. Time for Scripture reading and prayer has been a part of my life since I was a teenager. I have been using a Centering Prayer practice of meditation for over eight years and have been pretty faithful in that practice. During our first session of Cynthia’s retreat, she made the remark that doing practice by itself is not enough. We need a rhythm in our lives to keep us awake and more deeply present to God and to our lives. This comment, almost an aside or throw-away line, hit me like a ton of bricks. My longing for greater closeness with God and greater awareness as I live my days is asking me to stabilize a spiritual sensitivity through a daily pattern and rhythm.

The Benedictines have created and followed such a pattern for over 1500 years, now. There just might be some wisdom there for my edification! Since then, I have been reading more about Benedictine life and experimenting with a Benedictine pattern. The basic pattern is quite simple. It consists of times of prayer and times of work, and doing prayer and work alone and with others. There is balance in this pattern. There is rhythm, with a goal of making all of life sacred.

In this pattern, there is invitation for us to examine our lives and to strive for better balance, health and awareness. For many, the balance is weighted heavily on the work side. For others, there may be little in the way of work demands upon them. But for most, I imagine, prayer is a neglected resource. Much of our free time is frittered away mindlessly, contributing to a sense of trivialization of our lives. Prayer is not to be some meaningless burden to appease a distant deity, or an ancient form of magic to convince this deity to do our bidding. Prayer is a practice of being more present to the depth, beauty and mystery of our lives. It is a time for bringing us out of the tyranny of our ever busy, worrying and judging minds, and a tasting into those capacities within us which commune with God in a language our minds cannot understand or manage. Prayer is a practice which bears much fruit within us, enabling us to

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Sacralizing Your Life (...continued from previous page)

experience peace, patience, and compassion for ourselves and others.

A part of Benedictine spirituality which I have begun to practice is chanting the Psalms. Benedict offered guidance on what Psalms were to be chanted and when they were to be. There is food for our spirits to be found here which is hard to explain. Maybe it lies in the rhythm of bringing our awareness back to God and back to the depths of life. We pause and remember again who we are and what our lives are about. There is also something about the vibration of singing which changes our consciousness, which opens our heart.

We can also inquire into our patterns of time alone and time with others. Can we strive for more balance here? Can we bring greater presence and awareness to the times that we are alone and with others?

These are the kinds of questions I am raising with myself. I am striving for greater balance and quality of awareness in my daily life. I share it as a pattern which might bring greater joy and compassion into your life as well. Enjoy this summer. See you in church!



Memorial Garden

A new display for plaques in our Memorial Garden is in motion. We have noticed that the plaques weather better when they are mounted on a slant than when they are flat. We have ordered three small granite blocks, each of which can hold twenty-eight plaques. The blocks will be placed in appropriate areas of the garden, with an eye to maintaining the natural beauty of it. The cost will be about \$5000.

We have received one generous gift to support this improvement and are asking for others. Any gifts which bring us above the cost of the new displays will go into a fund for the maintenance of the garden. This is very important for the garden. These past two years, especially, have created an environment conducive to weeds. We need a fund to support regular weeding, mulch and trimming of plants.

The Memorial Garden is a much used and appreciated part of our church grounds. Thank you for your support which will enable us to maintain its beauty.

Worshipping Together

JULY 7, 2019

Luke 10:1-11,16-20

“The Peaceable Kingdom”

JULY 14, 2019

Amos 7:7-17; Luke 10:25-37

“The Humbling Nature of God’s Love”

JULY 21, 2019

Amos 8:1-12; Luke 10:38-43

“Religion Beyond Ego”

JULY 28, 2019

Hosea 1:2-10; Luke 11:1-13

“Longing for God”

AUGUST 4, 2019

Sermon by Sue Smith

AUGUST 11, 2019

Sermon by Sue Smith

AUGUST 18, 2019

Isaiah 85:1-7; Luke 12:49-56

“Opening Our Eyes”

AUGUST 25, 2019

Hebrews 12:18-29; Luke 13:10-17

“More Than We Can Handle”



Music Program News

Dear friends,

I wanted to wish all of you a wonderful summer ahead! 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. You can email inquiries to andreeafegan@gmail.com



I look forward to having choir members rejoin over the summer as soloists! Additionally, I'll be asking some of my students to perform, as they really look forward to the experience. They always report back by saying, "everyone at the church is so nice!". They truly appreciate the positive feedback that comes their way, and I wanted to thank you all for welcoming them with open arms. I am grateful!

Thank you, and looking forward to connecting in church!

Andreea Fegan, Director of Music

Church School News



As you know, Church School is dismissed for summer break. I'd like to send a BIG THANK YOU to all of our volunteers this year!!!! It means so much to me, the kids and our whole community that you took your time to help! A couple of weeks ago, Tim and Heather Yockel kindly led a clean up at Victory Park. We spoke about planning a Beach Clean up in the Fall. There's no time better than right after summer to go in and clean up the leftover garbage from summer. Please email me with any thoughts about times so I can get the ball rolling with scheduling our clean up.

As you know summer schedule is starting June 16th and worship will begin at 9:15 am. We have been very lucky to have some volunteers step up to watch over the nursery this summer. THANK YOU SO MUCH to Bree Brown, Allison Garth and Megan Eustace!!!!

We still have the following Sundays open if anyone else is interested in volunteering- July 14th, August 11th and August 25th. As mentioned by John in a recent email, the pay is \$25 for the hour.

Lots of love and warm wishes for a happy and safe summer!

Marie Van Cleve , Director of Church School

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

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.

Contact **Rosanne Monroe** at
rosannecanore@gmail.com

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
mvanclave@rumsonpresbyterian.org
if you are interested.



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.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our...

Nursery Volunteers!

The Church School would like to thank all the people who volunteered to work in the nursery this past year. Your time and dedication to the youngest members of our church family is greatly appreciated.

Many thanks to: Bree Brown, Megan Eustace, and all the other unnamed but much appreciated volunteers.

Church School Volunteers!!

The Church School would also like thank everyone who took time out of their busy lives and volunteered to teach church school this year. It is through your efforts that we are able to enrich our children's spiritual lives and help them grow in faith.

Many thanks to: Andrea Huber & Josie Schneider, Tiffany Wysocki, Jody Sackett, Heather & Tim Yockel, Chris Yockel, Allison Garth, Diane Burke, and Marie Van Cleve, and all the other unnamed but much appreciated volunteers.

Ushers!!!

Congregational Life would like to thank all the wonderful people who volunteered to serve as ushers.

Our thanks to: Sue Bostic, Gordon Bostic, Nancy Bowe, Heather Taylor-Norton, Dick Cadman, Allison Garth, Meredith Brown, Linda Feeny, Andrea Huber, Pat Wallace, Linda Wallace, Dan Dorn, Judith Dorn, Jeff Wrightson, Nan Honsa, Virginia Adair, Hope Richardson, Tim Yockel, Sue Juncosa, Chris Yockel, Roger Yockel, Missy Potter, Bob Sparling, Deb Sparling, Diane Burke, Sue Brennan, Thomas Kiningham, Harry Hodum, Greg Spicer, Diane Burke, Roger Krouse, Karen Fulcomer, and all the other unnamed but much appreciated ushers.

Sanctuary Saints!!!!

The Church School would also like to thank all the people who volunteered to serve as sanctuary saints this past year. Your time is greatly appreciated.

Our thanks to: Sarah Pomphrey and all the other unnamed but much appreciated saints.

Coffee Hour Volunteers!!!!!

Congregational Life would also like to thank all the wonderful people who volunteered to host coffee hour this year. Many of you hosted multiple times! It made our job so much easier, and we truly appreciate your willingness to set up, clean up, and most importantly, provide our members with your delectable treats.

Our thanks to: Andrea Huber, Roger Krouse, Heather & Tim Yockel, Chris & Roger Yockel, Allison & Jihn Garth, Diane Burke, Andrea Fegan, Mary Kiningham, Ivone Ventura, Jeff Wrightson, Linda & Pat Wallace, Bob & Deb Sparling, Tiffany Wysocki, Lee Clay, Carrie Eustace, Rosanne Monroe, and all the other unnamed but much appreciated volunteers.





Please see the upcoming events with WATERSPIRIT

***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***

Words of Wisdom

“Forever is composed of nows.”

—Emily Dickenson

“Sometimes when you're in a dark place you think you've been buried, but you've actually been planted. Bloom!”

—Christine Caine

“Truly it seems that we are never so alive as when we concern ourselves with other people.”

—Harry Chapin

“I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in.”

—John Muir

“You can do what I cannot do. I can do what you cannot do. Together, we can do great things.”

—Mother Teresa

“Try not to become a [person] of success, but rather try to become a [person] of value.”

—Albert Einstein



www.rumsonpresbyterian.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

In May, Diane Burke led the Sunday School in thinking about what they hoped would still be around for future generations. They wrote their Dear Tomorrow messages, pictured below. You can see the poster in Wilson Hall!





Conscious Love : Love Is a Mirror

Thursday, June 20, 2019

Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM

For true love is given to mirror and manifest God on earth, and not for self-realization and personal happiness. With the acceptance of those terms, the path comes into being. —Cynthia Bourgeault [1]

Love is the ultimate reality. We can probably see this only through the inner dialogue we call prayer. For love is first of all hidden. We don't see it unless we learn how to see more deeply, unless we clean the lens. The Zen masters call it wiping the mirror. In a clear mirror, we can see exactly what's there without distortion—not what we're afraid of or wish were there. Wiping the mirror is the inner discipline of constantly observing my own patterns, what I pay attention to and what I don't pay attention to, in order to get my own ego out of the way, until I can be held by a foundational goodness and acceptance.

St. Teresa of Ávila (1515–1582) admonished: “For the most part all [our] trials and disturbances come from our not understanding ourselves.” [2] This is also the way St. Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897) practiced her “science of love.” She was always aware of how her own thoughts and feelings could get in the way of her “vocation” of love. We must learn to observe our own stream of consciousness and see how it blocks the natural response of love.

Actually, one could say that love is like a mirror. According to Zen masters, the mirror is without ego and mind. If a face comes in front of it, it reflects a face. If a table comes by, it reflects a table. It shows a crooked object to be crooked and a straight object to be straight. Everything is revealed as it really is, without self-consciousness on the part of the mirror. If something comes, the mirror reflects it; if the object moves on, the mirror lets it move on. The mirror is always empty of itself and therefore able to receive the other. The mirror has no preconditions for entry, no preconditions for acceptance. It receives and reflects back what is there, nothing more and nothing less. The mirror is the perfect lover and contemplative. It sees as God sees.

Love alone is sufficient unto itself. It is its own end, its own merit, its own satisfaction. It seeks no cause beyond itself and needs no fruit outside of itself. Its fruit is its use. I

Continued on next page...

Conscious Love : Love Is a Mirror (...continued)

love simply because I am love. That is my deepest identity and what I am created in and for. To love someone “in God” is to love them for their own sake and not for what they do for me or because I am psychologically healed and capable.

Our transformed consciousness sees another person as another self, as one who is also loved by Christ with me, and not as an object separate from myself on which I generously bestow my favor. If I have not yet loved or if love wears me out, is it partly because other people are seen as tasks or threats instead of as extensions of my own suffering and loneliness? Are they not in truth extensions of the suffering and loneliness of God? And really of the whole world. There is only one love and only one suffering, as so many of the saints say. We are all participants, willingly or unwillingly.

References:

[1] Cynthia Bourgeault, *Love Is Stronger than Death: The Mystical Union of Two Souls* (Monkfish Book Publishing: 1997, 2014), 125.

[2] Teresa of Ávila, *The Interior Castle*, The Fourth Dwelling Places, chap. 1, section 9. See translation by Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez (Paulist Press: 1979), 71.

Adapted from *Richard Rohr: Essential Teachings on Love*, eds. Joelle Chase and Judy Traeger (Orbis Books: 2018), 134-135, 138, 189.

Image credit: The Good Samaritan (after Delacroix) (detail), Vincent Van Gogh, 1890. Kröller-Müller Museum, Hoge Veluwe National Park, Otterlo in the Netherlands.

Inspiration for this week’s banner image: When we’re conscious, we will always do the loving thing, the connecting thing, the intimate thing, the communion thing, the aware thing. —Richard Rohr



Center for
Action and
Contemplation

John’s summer office hours are Monday - Thursday from 9:00 am - Noon and 1:00 - 5:00 pm.

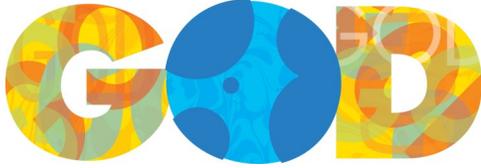
Steve’s summer office hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday from 9:00 am - Noon.



Time for Reflection

God Is Everywhere

We are living in a world that is absolutely transparent, and God is shining through it all the time. This is not just a fable or a nice story. It is true. If we abandon ourselves to God and



forget ourselves, we see it sometimes, and we see it maybe frequently. God shows himself everywhere, in everything — in people and in things and in nature and in events. It becomes very obvious that God is everywhere

and in everything and we cannot be without him. It's impossible. The only thing is that we don't see it.

A Guide for Giving

I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc. is up to the standard common among those with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditures exclude them.

—C. S. Lewis

We Are Riverbeds

“I think of the love of God as a great river, pouring through us even as the waters pour through our ravine at floodtime. Nothing can keep this love from pouring through us, except of course our own blocking of the river.”

“Do you sometimes feel that you have got to the end of your love for someone who refuses and repulses you? Such a thought is folly, for one cannot come to the end of what one has not got. We have no store of love at all. We are not jugs; we are riverbeds.”

—Amy Carmichael

The Master's Works

As a skilled inventor, John Muir was a prized factory employee in Indianapolis. If not for an industrial accident in his 20s, he may have spent his life making things indoors. But after recovering from being temporarily blinded, Muir headed on a 1,000-mile walk to “consider the lilies.” He then began doing that literally, as a botanist.

To his résumé, the 19th-century Renaissance man added naturalist, glaciologist, conservationist, founder of the Sierra Club, and Father of National Parks. Yet when Muir was asked what he did, he replied simply, “I study the inventions of God.”

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~Please check our website at www.rumsonpresbyterian.org for calendar updates~

JULY 2019

Jul 2 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm
Jul 4 Thu INDEPENDENCE DAY
Jul 9 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm
Jul 16 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm
Jul 23 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm
Jul 30 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm

AUGUST 2019

Aug 6 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm
Aug 13 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm
Aug 20 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm
Aug 27 Tue Meditation* 12:15pm

July 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

August 2019						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**WATERSPIRIT sponsored event. All are welcome*