

Notes and Messages from
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Oxford, NY



September 2013

Hello everyone!

I trust your summer has gone well. I know for some, summer was not such a good time, so please remember to keep all those folks on our sick lists in your prayers.

Some weeks ago, in one of my sermons, I said a few words about one of my favorite Americans - Henry David Thoreau. Since many of you didn't get to hear it, and I preached from notes so there's no written copy, I would like to share what I think are some important insights to help us along on our Christian journey. For the past month or so, I've been quite impressed by a literary biography entitled *Natural Life: Thoreau's Worldly Transcendentalism* and written by David M. Robinson.

While I usually don't care much to read literary analysis (I much prefer just reading the work itself!), Robinson seems to me to offer succinct and accurate analyses of the Thoreau I love. And though Thoreau was an irascible person who wasn't too fond of his community church, I'm convinced he has some important lessons for us.

In the sermon, I read this gem, "In *Walden* [Thoreau] aimed not to deny the absolute claims of work but to reformulate the spirit and awareness in which work is conducted. He hoped to demonstrate that moral self-fashioning required an unremitting spiritual labor, and that the physical labor necessary to sustain our daily lives must also be considered an integral part of this larger pattern of spiritual work."

In that sermon, I also mentioned a hesitation I have about Thoreau - he seems to have been more than a little antagonistic towards any concept of community. Now that I've finished Robinson's book, I have to say that I'm sure that I was wrong. I'm convinced that in a very important way, Thoreau was keenly interested in community - the community of humanity and nature. I'm quite convinced that all his writings seek to bridge the all-too easy gap between human society and the natural world in which we inescapably live. But even more fundamental than that, I now appreciate just how deeply Thoreau came to care for humanity.

Robinson provides the insight into just how pivotal the event which initiated Thoreau's essay "Slavery in Massachusetts" was for Thoreau. After a Massachusetts judge ordered the return of an escaped slave, it was with the gravest sense of betrayal and loss of naiveté and innocence that Thoreau wrote, "I had never respected the Government near to which I had lived, but I had foolishly thought that I might manage to live here, minding my private affairs, and forget it." Robinson writes, "Even though [Thoreau] is not directly prevented from choosing and undertaking his own tasks, he finds their value undermined because they are woven into a national fabric that also includes the protection of legalized slavery."

Food for thought and prayer - not just the words, but the man himself. May God bless you all!

Blessings,
Fr. Dave

Upcoming Events:

September 1	11:00 AM - Morning Prayer
September 3	7:00 PM - Vestry meets in the Conference Room
September 4	6:30 PM - AA meets in the Conference Room
September 5	10:00 AM Holy Eucharist at the Vet's Homes
September 8	10:30 AM- Sunday School opens 11:00 AM - Holy Eucharist
September 11	5:30 PM – Taste 'N See Soup Kitchen 6:00 PM - Three parish Bible Study at St. Ann's Afton Fr. David at CREDO
September 9-14	5:00 PM - Spaghetti Dinner in the Community Center
September 14	10:30 AM - Sunday School
September 15	11:00 AM- Morning Prayer
September 18	5:30 PM - Taste "N See Soup Kitchen 6:30 PM AA meets in the conference Room
September 19	10:00 AM - Holy Eucharist at the Vet's Home
September 22	10:30 AM - Sunday School in the Rectory 11:00 AM - Holy Eucharist
September 25	5:30 PM – Taste'N See Soup Kitchen 6:30 PM - AA meets in the Conference Room
September 29	10:30 AM - Sunday School in the Rectory 11:00 AM - Holy Eucharist

Planning Ahead for Other Events:

Sunday, September 8th - 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm - Youth Group Planning Meeting at Zion. To be discussed: Fall outing plans. Contact Dan Wilson for more info! 607-713-4051

Sunday, September 15th - 9:00 am Church of the Epiphany, Sherburne Eucharist Service with Dixie Land Music followed by Brunch.

Saturday, September 21st - 9:00 am - 2:00 pm Contemplative Prayer - with Bill Redfield at St. Andrew's (New Berlin). Missed him at Emmanuel during Lent? Don't miss him again!

Saturday, October 21st - 9:00 am - 5:00 pm - Apple-fest is Back! Donations for Chinese Auction being accepted now. Quilt raffle is on-going. Volunteers are needed!

Saturday, October 26th - 9:00 am - 2:00 pm - Planned Giving a diocesan event at Emmanuel (Norwich). Presented by the Episcopal Church Foundation who will help us put together a planned giving program.

St. Paul's Fall Festival and AppleFest



Fall Festival

Saturday, October 19th
From 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.

Bake Sale

Take A Chance in a raffle to win
A beautiful quilt or an Adirondak Chair

Silent Auction

Face paintings and games for kids
Bring your friends and family for the fun and food.
A variety of apples and apple cider available for purchase.

Refreshments in our Café

Coffee, and Doughnuts
And
Chowder and Chili Dogs available for Lunch

St. Paul's Spaghetti Dinner

Saturday, Sept. 14th from 5-7 P.M.
In the Parish House

(Free Will Donation)

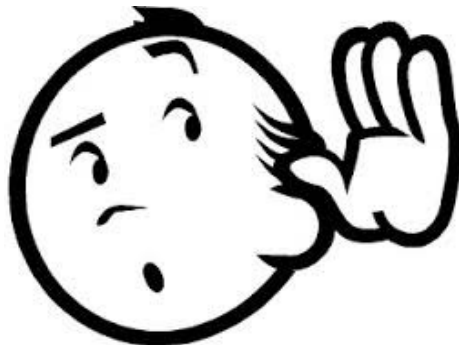
Everyone is invited.
We plan to make this a monthly event !!



Volunteers are needed
Call Dan Wilson: 713-4051

Sound System!

Our sound system is up and running. The more we use it the more we will be able to use it more effectively. Donations toward the cost of this system are appreciated. Thank you in advance for your consideration.



Sunday School

Sunday School opens for the fall on Sunday, September 8th at 10:30 AM in the Rectory. All children 4 and up are invited to join us.



Lessons for September:

September 8th – Life Outdoors – Focus: To celebrate living things in God's world.

September 15th – Storm! - Focus: To feel God's presence during stormy times.

September 22 – Cosmos Sunday – Focus: To wonder about the awesome mystery of space.

September 29 – New Directions – Focus: To learn from the story of Lazarus and the rich man how God wants us to care for one another.

From ECW:

Thank you to all who helped with the summer bake sales to make this endeavor another success!

Apple Fest Raffle Tickets:

Raffle tickets for the Quilt and Adirondak chair are available. See Val Hughes to purchase yours or to take some to sell!