

Cornerstone

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Choosing Community

Marissa Mayer, CEO of Yahoo! since last year, has been working to turn around the performance of the Internet company, and has had remarkable success so far. Even more remarkable to me is the perspective she holds in what is largely a win-at-all-costs environment: "For me it's God, family and Yahoo—in that order."

For all of the progress Mayer has made at Yahoo!, by far the change she is best-known for is her decision to end telecommuting for almost all company employees. She has come in for some harsh criticism for this policy, as well as intense scrutiny of her own choices as a new mother.

Why would the CEO of Yahoo!, a company based in the Internet that makes telecommuting possible, go against the trend of increased flexibility for workers, the convenience of less time traveling to and from work, and the environmental benefit of a decreased carbon footprint? Simply put, she believes it makes the company better: "Some of the best decisions and insights come from hallway and cafeteria discussions, meeting new people and impromptu team meetings," said the company memo. Indeed research agrees that the serendipity of chance encounters and unplanned conversations increases creativity in people's work.

The Internet provides us many benefits, including the unprecedented convenience of being able to listen to or watch audio and video whenever we want. Online you could easily watch a service whose "production values" are higher than worship at St. Luke's—a more polished sermon, a professional choir, a fancier organ, more impressive vestments. But I think Mayer is onto something.

At church, we sit on pews that are less comfortable than our furniture at home, and in a room whose temperature in the summer is much less comforta-

ble than at home. But we choose to be in community with people from different age cohorts, races, backgrounds, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and political viewpoints. We call these people who are so different from us our sisters and brothers in Christ, and our focus on Jesus Christ overcomes the division that these differences can cause in the surrounding society.

The choice to physically be at church comes at a price, but offers a unique gain. Being an in-person community means regularly meeting new people, holding unplanned conversations, and experiencing the serendipity of chance encounters. In our case the goal is not creativity, productivity, or innovation for its own sake, but growing in Christ.

Simple greetings like, "How are you?" at the door don't often lead to deeper conversations, but occasionally provide that blessing. Seeing confusion or sadness on someone's face in person allows us to respond far more compassionately than we could when connected electronically. Someone we chat with while waiting for coffee and cake can help us see the image of God in an expanded way. And *not* seeing someone we are used to seeing at church on Sunday can lead us to reach out to him or her in Christian caring.

Gathering as a community is not the most efficient way to share information, and it carries with it significant costs. But the quality of relationships it builds and sustains—with God and one another—that is a treasure beyond price!

Rob Lamborn



The Rev. Robert Lamborn

I learned to pray, each time I entered the room of a patient whom I had not yet met, to ask for God's presence so that I would not feel alone and incapable.

From Seminarian Mike Watson



This summer I served as a chaplain in the Spiritual Care department of Greenwich Hospital in Greenwich, Connecticut. I requested that I be assigned to the Intensive Care department, and the Telemetry Unit,

which treats patients with serious heart, lung and other internal organ problems. I learned again the lesson about "be careful what you ask for, as you just may get it." During the twelve-week internship, I was the pastoral caregiver to 47 different families whose loved ones died during their final hospital stay. In my third day of caring for patients and their families, I had

four patients die in one day. It was hard enough to try to remember even just the names of the patients and their loved ones, much less find the words to comfort them.

At the end of that day, and throughout the remaining eleven weeks of my work, I became increasingly aware of my own human ineptness, incompleteness and inadequacy for a task, without having the Holy Spirit tagging along at my side. I learned to pray, each time I entered the room of a patient whom I had not yet met, to ask for God's presence so that I would not feel alone and incapable. I think I learned a lesson that I can apply to every day and every new situation I encounter; from this I know that I am never alone.

Mike Watson

Going to Honduras with Teadie Marie Becker



Teadie Marie Becker
in Honduras

One of my reasons for going to Honduras, besides checking out the town where my daughter Teadie had signed up with a volunteer intercultural organization to teach for a year, was security. There is a travel advisory regarding trips to San Pedro

Sula, the town nearest to Cofradia where she was to be located, and for Honduras in general. An unfortunate consequence of the progress in the drug wars in Colombia and Mexico, is that some of that element moves to other countries, Honduras being one of them. And that is where Teadie, who deferred her enrollment in the University of Rochester's graduate program in education, was eager to go.

I wanted the trip to dispel my concerns.

Upon arriving in Cofradias, we were given the tour of the town, poor by American standards but probably representative of the living standard in most of the world. It's about five blocks long and three blocks wide and the tour consisted of places for a good breakfast in the morning,

milk shakes in the afternoon, and a dinner in the evening. I found out that no restaurants or snack bars are open for lunch – everyone goes home to eat with the family. My days consisted of breakfast with my daughter for a as sum total of \$2, milk shakes, shopping at the local fruit market, and reading on the veranda of my hotel room.

It sounds like a cliché but the local people are warm, friendly, and eager to laugh at my attempts to speak Spanish. Teadie hopes to be fluent by the time she returns home. Her fellow teachers, , are all young, good looking and enthusiastic men and women, originating from all over the US, Canada, Britain, and Ireland – a very impressive group of people.

When I left, I felt better than when I arrived.

After one whole week in Honduras, Teadie posted to her Facebook page, "I'm here. I'm safe. This is the best decision I made in my life. Already thinking of staying a second year!" Carolynn and I hope to visit Honduras in the spring and combine a visit to Cofradia with a beach vacation on the island of Roatan, Honduras in the Caribbean, which fortunately for me is an English speaking part of Honduras since it was once a British colony.

As the kids say ... it's all good.

Bob Becker

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Welcome to New Members of St. Luke's



Addison Glick and Dad David

We are so fortunate to be able to add these brothers and sisters in Christ to our community!

They are: David & Erica Glick and their daughter Addison and son, baby Charles; Craig & Daria Culver and baby son William; Al & Jessica Miller, and their daughter Claire; Jim Walsh & Mike Boscher,

and their children Ethan and Abby, Jannie Nolan; Ken and Lillian Kolhof; and Graham Ashton. We are delighted also to welcome back David & Erica Glick and their daughter Addison and son, baby Charles; Luke and Antonella Coppedge and baby Christopher; and Dominick DiSanzo.

Now we have the opportunity to practice "the way of love, the way of reaching out" that Stephen Holton talks about in his sermon from this summer. Like Stephen suggests let's start by greeting them, by making a point of saying hello, how are you - by introducing ourselves, by inviting them to coffee hour.

These may seem just like simple greetings but as Rob suggested in his opening letter today, this can help us "see the image of God in an expanded way."

Hello David, Erica, Addison, Charles, Craig, Daria, William, Al, Jessica, Claire, Jim, Mike, Ethan, Abby, Jannie, Ken, Lillian, and Graham.

You are most welcome.

Betty Wald

During the summer we were fortunate to have the Rev. Stephen C. Holton, STM as a guest preacher and very much appreciated his inspiring sermons. This is just a excerpt of one for those who missed hearing him.

At the Edge of Ignorance - God's Love

Isn't awful to feel as if you don't know what to do next, in your career, in your family, in society?

One of my favorite quotes comes from King George VI – who read this as London was going through the blitz in World War II:

I said to the Man who stood at the gate of the year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way!' So I went forth and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night. And he led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.

I've often thought of that poem when I face uncertain times in my life. Then I literally lift up my hand and grab hold the way I used to when I was little and would lift up my hand and hold my Dad's hand, knowing that then I didn't have to pay attention to the future at all, but would be sure to get there safely. That is the hand that God offers,

We are at the edge of ignorance now. We look at the past, at the solutions that seemed to work then, but don't work now. We propose solutions, but they meet with disagreement and we get verbal violence instead of the physical variety; though sometimes that can feel almost as bad. So we do nothing. And things get worse. What do we do? Sit with it. Walk in the darkness of ignorance – with those people of other parties who are willing to walk with you – and see the breaking of day in the lone East.

This is what the disciples did. They asked – "Lord, teach us to pray." They saw Jesus turning to the Father in prayer when he didn't know what to do. And they saw him move forward with certainty.

Willingness to admit ignorance is the necessary precursor to asking a question if only we had the humility to admit ignorance. The disci-

ples had that. They knew that they didn't know, and were prepared to ask and Jesus gives them the wonderful Lord's Prayer.

So we ask in our present spasm of violence, 'What do we do??? In the past after the Trayvon Martin verdict, I saw people of different races making a point of saying hello to each other on the street, showing an extra ounce of respect, and risking those deeper conversations.

That is the way of love, the way of reaching out, the way of allowing difference even if you do not understand it, even if you will never understand it. Released from the need to understand, we are free to love, to respect, to help one another.

Then that respect, will build up every person in that group and radiate outward as they – with that strength that comes from respect – will respect and love and help others whom they meet, and those people in turn will be changed a little bit, and take that love the next step and so build up our society. And it all starts with saying "Hello, how're you doing?" 'How can we have the same relationship with God that you do,' we ask Jesus. 'Pray to God the way I do,' says Jesus; 'and you will be filled with the same Holy Spirit that fills me' – the same Spirit of love, and the knowledge of what to do, and the strength to apply it.

And so we pray that prayer, and ask for that help, and go forth with our brothers and sisters – all our brothers and sisters – with God *our* Father, into the breaking of day in the lone East.

Amen

The Rev. Stephen C. Holton, STM

GIANT SALE AT ST. LUKE'S FRIDAY & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18 & 19! Well maybe not giant – but a **Fabulous** sale if Mary Zipkin along with Dorothy Ritsko have anything to do with it. They **KNOW** you have a lot of “stuff” around the house that someone would **LOVE** to help you “declutter.” Like grandma’s lamp you keep hidden in the attic. Or those books in good condition you’ve read; or that skirt. They’ll take it and if God is in His/Her Heaven, will sell it. All for St. Luke’s. So let’s go and help them fundraise.

Great to have everyone back this month – the Pikers from New Hampshire, Yvonne See from London and soon the Ritskos from Maine, Vickie Hall from Lake Chataqua which she highly recommends, having been going there for 20 summers. Then there’s Susan Walton who broke her wrist the day of her arrival at Cape Cod but bravely stayed on. She’s doing great! Another healing person is Mary Lee Fox Roe.

As the returnees came back, we said so long to the freshman who started their new college adventure: Victoria VanDemark left early for St Joseph’s in Philadelphia and received a blessing from Rob at the service on August 18. John Day said Meghan was so happy to leave for Manhattanville and he was glad to say God speed -it was her time to go forth. Morgan Williams left for Sullivan Community College and Ann felt a twinge of sadness. Matthew Kershner went on to Franklin Marshall where his parents are alumni/ae and keep in touch with other alum couples by sharing a cottage on the Outer Banks of North Carolina each summer. Now Shelley Smith is taking Wyatt, soon to be a senior, on that college visitation tour as is Karen Lucia with her youngest, Peter.

Thanks to Bob Becker and Dean Kim for their welcoming us back to our church community Sept. 22 with a wonderful brunch catered by all and inspiring talks by Dean, Bob, Ann Williams, Bethany Durkin and Rob. If only I had been taking notes with the pens given out by Bob – the 3rd click lights up and reminds us of the Holy Spirit. It inspires. Ann Williams may be leaving soon as she has accepted a job in Portland, Maine and plans on renting her home here in Katonah and just found housing in Portland.

Grapevine, Looking Ahead

GIANT SALE AT ST. LUKE'S FRIDAY & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 18 & 19! Well maybe not giant – but a **Fabulous** sale if Mary Zipkin along with Dorothy Ritsko have anything to do with it. They **KNOW** you have a lot of “stuff” around the house that someone would **LOVE** to help you “declutter.” Like grandma’s lamp you keep hidden in the attic. Or those books in good condition you’ve read; or that skirt. They’ll take it and if God is in His/Her Heaven, will sell it. All for St. Luke’s. So let’s go and help them fundraise.

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Saw Christine Harrington and Todd Hutchen in church with Daniel, adorable as ever, he’s almost 2 and at the 100th percentile in height and weight. No more keeping him still!

It’s wonderful to have our two choirs back singing their hearts out. Although I did hear some joyful noise during the summer – and the overall average parishioner count was close to 40. In summer? Can this be? Plus other wonderful happenings in church – the addition of several new folk as parishioners, more than have ever joined in my memory. Not only that but the adult education at 9am Sundays has been splendid and well attended. Co-led by Rob and Mike Watson, fellow members are taking on the job of co-leading. The topics are thought provoking and help put our faith into practice.

Sunday, Oct. 6 – don’t forget we’re a co-sponsor with the United Methodist’s Church’s showing of *The Bible Tells Me So* at 7 until 9pm. Rob and then Vestry has approved this movie about the stories of 5 people coming out to their families as gay or lesbian and how those involved respond through their faith. Thanks Ed and Ridgely Biddle for their help with planning and publicity, which includes a potluck supper at their home at 5:30.

The Women’s Book Group resumes this month on Wednesday, Oct. 30 at 1pm. This year our theme is Biography and we hope to start with Diane Keaton’s *Then Again*. Please let Charlou know if you are able to join us. We’d love to have you.

And moving on to November, don’t forget to come out for the Clean-Up Day, Saturday, Nov. 16.

Betty Wald



Warden's Report:

Start a change — you never know where it might lead

As wardens, Pat and I have always felt our prayers were answered when Rob joined our parish on May 2012. During his first year as half-time interim, he strengthened our church by addressing key elements of parish life: renewing interest in Bible study, caring for the pastoral needs of our parish, delivering spiritually enriching sermons, and tending to the less visible administrative tasks of an interim. In the process, we recognize that he devoted hours beyond those intended in a half time schedule. In July the vestry approved a resolution to extend Rob's interim contract for another year and to increase his time to three quarters. This additional time will provide Rob the capacity to further strengthen our church through increasing the depth of volunteerism, which has always been strong at St. Luke's. And he has already been successful in this new task.

Many parishioners have responded to Rob's gentle requests. Caroline Mason and Caroline Saxton have graciously agreed to teach the Outreach Sunday lessons for Sunday school this coming year. We appreciate Vickie Hall's willingness to assist Plant Patch next spring by arranging volunteers and assisting in the selection of stock. We have additional gratitude to Bob Becker who not only agreed to co-chair the Welcoming Com-

mittee with Dean Kim, but also agreed to chair the Stewardship Committee for this fall. The Pastoral Care Committee is being infused with new energy thanks to Maureen Hattasch, and energy keeps coming from Mary Zipkin who generously will be organizing the tag sale scheduled for October. Amanda Santos and Irina Vandemark signed on as crucifers and Olivia and Lucy Durkin, Will Kershner, Sydney and Avery Kim, as torchbearers. Ed Biddle and Mike Mason are now chalice bearers. Cheryl Santos is our newest usher. Thank you to Rob for reaching out to these parishioners and to these parishioners for being willing to accept the new roles.

To illustrate the impact that a fresh volunteer can make in new role, all one needs to do is admire the welcoming grounds around St. Luke's. The gardens and lawn look crisp and tended thanks to the generosity and energy of Kevin Durkin, who assumed the role of Buildings & Grounds chair within the past year. It was especially appreciated during our barbeque last spring and our two recent outdoor movie nights. The beautiful grounds surrounding St. Luke's contribute to an environment that says "welcome community, come worship with us some Sunday".

Sally and Pat

Church can be:



thought provoking



or instructive



or fun

Treasurer's Report: A Brief Financial Update

As we end the summer, relative to our budget, revenue has been very healthy and expenses in line with what the Vestry has approved. Our current expectation is for the 2013 operating deficit to be about \$25k.

Through August, parishioners are, on average, two to three weeks behind on pledges; not bad with the dog days of summer just behind us. Catching up in the Fall will be really helpful in enabling St. Luke's to meet its obligations without dipping into savings more than necessary.

Through June, our endowment of about \$500k showed a welcome return over 6%. The financial

markets have been less kind of late, so we will see where we end the year. But, with some luck, that return will cover all or a good part of the deficit.

Soon, each of us will hear from the Stewardship Committee asking us to consider our financial giving to St. Luke's in 2014. With that, the committee will share some detail and context on our current budget position. Please don't hesitate to ask your Treasurer any questions which come to mind.

Mike Mason

St. Luke's Episcopal Church

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Welcome Back Brunch

