

St. John's Tide

2009

The
Christian Community
Movement for Religious Renewal
Greater Washington-Baltimore Area Newsletter
www.ccgwb.org

St. John's Tide

2009



Dear Friends,

Summertime – a time filled with sun light and sun warmth. Now, in the Summer, we experience the longest and the hottest days.

Summertime – a time to renew and refresh. Now, in the Summer, most of us choose to take time off from what we normally do during the year and do something else, go somewhere else – such as Australia, Greece, Germany, or the Dominican Republic. Children take a break from school to come back refreshed with greater enthusiasm to start a new school year.

Summertime – a time of movement, change and renewal. In nature, now is the time that connects the bursting, sprouting, and blossoming of Spring and the drying, falling and dying of the Autumn.

Summertime – a time of inner grace, and inner light in the season of St. John's tide. Here in our community, we have been blessed by the working power of grace. It works in us ceaselessly but because of its nature, it does not impose its presence on us. Only when we become conscious of its living presence, we realize how powerful it is, how sufficient its presence is for us and how thankful we can be for it.

Such summer grace has come to our congregation in the form of a second priest, that "sent out in two," our community might further thrive and realize its full potential. It has also come to us in the form of concrete offerings of financial support from our sister congregations in San Francisco and New York, who also wish to see us blossom. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to them.

As we soak in the grace of summertime we can't wait to see what fruits will be ready to harvest in the fall!

Our warmest greetings to you all,

Patrick Kennedy & Nora Minassian

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St. John's Festival

By Tina Daub

High Summer at the Christian Community was a wonderful celebration of St. John's with song, feast, fire, story, and vesper service. As the sun slowly set that evening, the children ran, played badminton, found frogs while the adults began to gather, dropping off the delicious food they had prepared for the potluck dinner. The youth group hung out on the porch excited about their upcoming trip to Australia. Guitars chords drifted in from the back and a sense of well-being permeated the place.

A concert followed with Patrick and Amos on guitar crooning Bob Dylan's "I Shall be Released" and songs about some bad men that kept the children riveted. Then the talented Tom Dews played guitar, (including his impressive steel guitar), the harmonica and sang his original songs which was a real treat. Lark organized the buffet along with some kitchen angels and we all sat down to an extraordinary meal outside in the late light.

To finish the evening, we sat around a roaring fire while Patrick told a story of a boy who had to prove himself and as the frogs were returned to their bog, the bats flew in and the deer bedded down for the evening,

Patrick concluded this inspiring evening with a close-of-day vesper service. We had welcomed St. John into us and we left grateful for the experience.



East Coast Youth travel to Australia for Conference

By J-Lee Newell



The East Coast Youth Group of North America has just returned from their epic journey to Australia. They joined young people from many different countries for an international summer youth conference in Melbourne, Australia. Thanks to the generous contributions of our congregation, the fund-raising efforts of the youth group and contributions from the wider movement, 16 teens and 3 chaperones went from the East Coast.

Their Australian adventure began with travel to Kangaroo Island for sightseeing and they ended their journey after volunteering for three full days with BlazeAid. We look forward to hearing more about their trip soon!



"Jump" The International Youth Conference 2009 in Melbourne, Australia

Cover art called "Winged Flight" is a painting by Jennifer Thompson who lives and teaches in Crestone, Colorado. To find out more about her work, go to:

<http://phoenixartsgroup.org/jennifer/index.html>

In Memory of Marcia Tatum

**By Colleen Shetland, with Cecelia Karpoff,
Rudolf Hierman, and Heather Tatum.**

Our friend and colleague, Marcia Tatum, crossed the threshold to the spiritual world on Monday, June 29. Marcia and her husband Bill Tatum had moved to the DC area in 1967, and Bill owned a camera shop called F/Stop in Annandale, while their two children attended the Waldorf School. They were connected with the Christian Community in the mid-90s, when their daughter Heather and son James were in the religious instruction classes. James was confirmed in 1995 in NYC.

Marcia was very active as a parent at the Washington Waldorf School, especially in drama. She acted in several productions in the 1980s, and directed musicals in the 1990s. There was a Shepherds' Play featuring Marcia, Rudolf Hierman, and Jack Petrash; it still lives on in community memory. Marcia held a variety of jobs with other organizations, including working in the Washington Revels' office.

Marcia was a major force at the founding of Potomac Crescent School, the Waldorf initiative school in Arlington, VA. She and Bill generously offered their home as the first location for the school, and Parent-Child classes began in their living and dining rooms in September, 1999. For the next ten years, Marcia worked devotedly for the school in various capacities, until just a few weeks before her passing.

She served as Assistant in the Parent-Child class, first with Cecelia Karpoff, then with Alice Trembour. But her devotion to the school extended far beyond that role. After retiring from the classroom, she continued to serve on the board, and in the office. She was conscientious, enthusiastic, and willing both to study and to question. Her warmth extended to all—the children, the parents, and the faculty. One could say she was truly a “social artist.” As a colleague, she was reliable, loyal, and great fun to be with. She was a patient and perceptive listener, and many sought her out for comfort and advice.

At her funeral last Friday, a number of “communities” were present—circles which Marcia had touched. She had been active in the Lutheran Church near her home, in the choir and women’s groups. Faculty and parents from Potomac Crescent were there; Washington Waldorf faculty; as were members of the cast of “The Christmas Carol,” the last production she participated in, December 2008. Family members described the same tolerance, warmth, and joie d’vivre that Marcia had shared with Potomac Crescent.

The time from her first symptom of pain until her passing covered a span of less than two months. When she knew her time was near, she courageously refused invasive life-support measures, conscious and knowing she was choosing to cross the threshold. She told her daughter, “I want a happy funeral,” and crossed peacefully.

Her slender frame, upright carriage, gentle gestures, sparkling eyes, warm voice, ready laugh, precise diction, cheery smile—live on in our memory. And her warm heart, her open mind, her loving will, accompany us, as we accompany her with our loving thoughts.



*May love of hearts reach out to love of souls,
May warmth of love ray out to Spirit-light.
Even so would we draw near to you,
Thinking with you Thoughts of Spirit,
Feeling in you the Love of Worlds,
Consciously at one with you
Willing in silent Being.*

--Rudolf Steiner

Mary in the Midst of the Flames

A Personal Experience

By Luis Amadeo Hernandez

The first Sunday Celebration after our return from Spring Valley, NY, Rev. Patrick asked me, at the informal post-service gathering, to share my experience of the Pentecost Celebration. This was a sudden question, and I only could manage to retrieve and borrow the words of Reverend Franziska Steinrueck, who told us how worthy this celebration had been at the final meeting as we were parting.

Now, I will attempt to articulate the meaning of this celebration from a few personal experiences, bringing in just a few minutes of its some hours.

First, the celebration was not one of passively listening but rather I found myself subjected to a relentless demand for personal inquiry, yet, receiving from the participants their keen perceptions, their cleverly apt expressions of those connections between ideas that kept me amused and delighted.

This celebration reminded me of and reinforced what Steiner wrote for those who read *Theosophy*: “The spiritual scientific truths it contains must be experienced; that is the only way they can be of value.”

During the conference, I recalled a time in my life that I wanted to be a fisherman, perhaps after catching a tuna or a swordfish. A stumble came when I could not understand what my teacher told me; that the ultimate test is to be able to *release* an “Aiyu,” a small transparent fish that only can live in clear and crystalline waters up in the mountains of Japan, where the snow melts drop by drop, when the winter yields to spring. Finally I realized such a prerequisite of a pure, clear and transparent dwelling.

My mind and heart were sometimes with my son Riki, who soon was going to celebrate his eighth birthday and I had not found a “worthy” present for him. Each and every year I make the effort to give him something that he can keep in himself, but this year I was short of both ideas and energy to do it.



Raphael: The Most Holy Trinity, with God Father, Christ between the Virgin and St. John the Baptist and the Holy Spirit in the centre

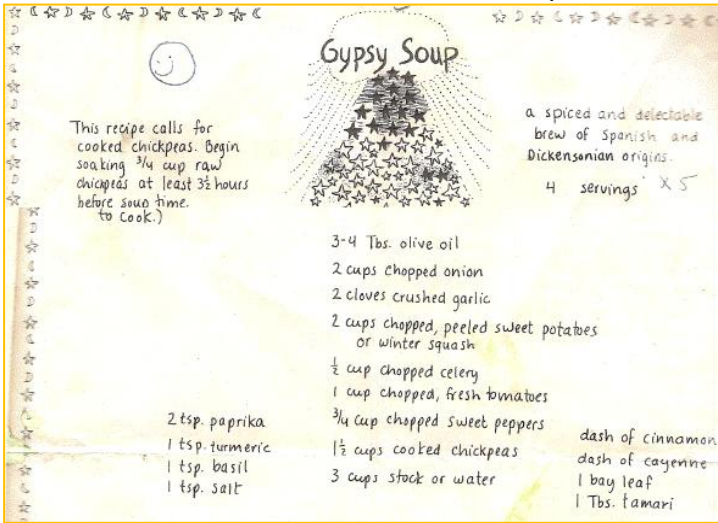
At the vespers, the first night, Rev. Carol Kelly mentioned a song that her students chose for their graduation, the Beatles’ “Let it Be.” Its performance at his party became a present for both of us.

We enjoyed singing with Rev. Kelly, who has a wonderful voice, eurythmy, amazing story-telling from Dagmar Iris, and clay work. The central event was the talk by Rev. Patrick Kennedy, *Mary in the Midst of the Flames*, whose notes resound still during our current celebration of St. John. There was space for poetry too. I remembered a poem that we used to recite in third grade, *Annunciation* by Juan Ramon Jimenez (translated from Spanish by me):

*Through a pure crystal,
Beautiful as enamel of ataujia,
From the gallery, svelte, She is seen,
Maria, virgin, shy and graceful, like a white lily,
To the heaven announcement leaned,
And, as the moon at the fresh dawn,
Gabriel’s white wings melted in the new sun.*

The Christian Community of Spring Valley was the kindest host and the food was wonderful too. I liked the Gypsy soup and dared to ask for the recipe that you can find at the bottom. I prepared the soup at home and it was delicious again. The additions were fresh chickpeas, fava beans, kabocha, and turmeric root.

After returning home, I was happy to see my family, even though engulfed in deep “saudade,” a seafaring Portuguese expression for a feeling of nostalgic longing for something or someone that one was fond of and which is lost, but whose love stay.



from the initial mindset we each had dictated by the practical needs of the day.

This shift can perhaps be expressed in Patrick’s words on one of the evenings when he asked the question of how one can approach the immensity and profundity of the Gospel of St. John in the midst of the mundane requirements of daily living such as “putting dishes in the dishwasher.” In other words, working at our jobs, raising our children, and operating a car requires us to be practical and grounded, with our minds no doubt focused on sensible life in this day and age. Yet, there also is no doubt that there is something clearly higher, spirit-filled, and of the utmost importance, indeed of all-importance. How to engage this higher thinking, realizing and acting while “putting the dishes in the dishwasher” was the question at hand. This is just one example of Patrick’s approach during our evening studies.

We ended our last study of St. John prior to the summer break with a discussion Mysteries of the I Am. The poetic and interweaving words of John 17 Verses 20-23 were read and meditated upon:

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one – I in them and you in me – so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

We all appreciated Patrick’s leadership and thought-provoking lessons as well as the space he created during our bi-weekly meetings. And we look forward to the continuation of our studies this upcoming fall.

If you are interested in joining the study in the fall, please contact Rev. Kennedy after July 18th, (240) 505-9960.

Baltimore Study Group

By Jeff Bronow

Beginning last fall, a small group in Baltimore led by Reverend Patrick Kennedy convened every other Thursday evening to study the Gospel of St. John. Patrick would usually begin the study with preparatory words outlining the subject at hand, creating space for us to fill in the topic or theme, allowing it to grow. Soon after this introductory exercise, the mood would transform into one of reverence. The reverence would fill the space in the silence and calmness that often ensued, a clear shift

A new beginning

By Barbara Cousens

Sunday, June 28th, had an exciting air about it -an unusually large crowd gathered for The Act of Consecration of Man and simultaneous departure of the Youth Group to Australia but the real news was the arrival of our new priest Rev. Nora Minassian who, together with our Lenker, Rev. Oliver Steinreuck and Rev. Patrick Kennedy presided over the service. Another first for our community was the fact that Nora, who was born to an Armenian family in Aleppo, Syria, and has lived in CA, was the first female graduate on the US continent from the Chicago Seminary. Nora continued her seminary training in Stuttgart, Germany and completed her practicum year in South Africa.

From her home community in San Francisco, our community received their special good wishes and a much appreciated donation. Welcoming Nora with all the bounty the community could muster was indeed a warming experience. A welcoming song by the youth, very genuine-touching words from the Board and heartfelt poem (See on page 7-The Power of Two), and expressions of love manifested in various gifts and messages seemed a fitting tribute to our new priest whose own biography reflected the colossal steps she had taken to arrive at this new beginning.



Michael Anderson, Nora Minassian and
Bruce Chamberlin –
Photo by Barbara Cousens

A word of Thanks

By Nora Minassian

Thank you to everyone who has in many creative, playful, practical and generous ways been making it possible for me to join this community – such as sending a surprise welcome package to Berlin, setting up the room in the Parish House, baking bread, offering a ride, looking for a house, looking for a car, lending a car, putting together a big basket of beautiful gifts, sharing a beautiful basket of tropical fruits, accompanying me with your warm thoughts and good wishes from far and near.

I very much look forward to get to know the community here as well as its satellite communities, to work closely with Patrick and to serve and celebrate with you.



“Concerning all acts of initiative and creation there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans; that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would otherwise not have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision raising in one’s favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you do, or dream you can do, do it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.”

--Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

The Power of Two

By Bruce Chamberlin

He sent them forth in two's
those once fearful and slightly
ragged men,
to carry a light that was not
their own
into a world that had not yet
heard His Word.

“Take but one shirt and make your way,
and stay only where you are welcomed,”
He said.

“Carry me with you and give me away
to all who will have me.
Then go on, and on.”

At the end of each day, the two
would shake the dust from their sandals
and together turn to the Lord's
cool embrace, filling them again
for the journey.

In this way the Word went forth,
Spirit Light dawning in each heart
like one candle lit from another,
a succession of souls carrying
the flame in His name.

Gratitude

By J-Lee Newell

It is with deep gratitude that I share the news that our sister congregation in San Francisco, Nora's home congregation in the Christian Community before joining us, has pledged \$1200 to support us in this new phase of our lives as a community with two full-time priests. The community in New York City also has pledged \$5,000.

In addition, the Pamphalon Foundation, which supported our children and youth program last year, has made a contribution of \$10,000.



**Christ and the Pilgrims of Emmaus
Medieval Spanish School**

Mostly though, as I have continued the interim-Treasurer role, I am so impressed and grateful for the support our own community provides as we grow and develop. Pledges and contributions have increased and volunteers keep us within our budget.

Thank you.

Need a pledge form? Please contact the Parish House or pick one up when you attend a service or event at the Parish House. Pledges help the Board make conscious decisions about spending.

Welcome Bees

**By Camilla Lake
For the Grounds Care Group**

Dear Friends,

I hope you will join me in welcoming our newest community members. I am referring to the BEES who arrived late this spring and who, despite exceedingly wet weather, are now busily building their respective hives including making some very delicious honey! I would like to publicly thank Barrett Anderson (my uncle) for his generous donation of the hives and other miscellaneous equipment. He provided the initial inspiration for this project. Andrea Daney and Judith Graff also deserve our thanks, for without their personal experience with beekeeping, we would not have had the confidence to pursue this project. Their interest and advice have been invaluable. Finally, thanks go to Jane Parker and Amos Dancey for taking on the primary care of our bees. Both completed a county extension course on beekeeping and are committed to the ongoing health of the hives. So bees, WELCOME and THANK YOU for your wonderful example of cooperative community and your tireless efforts, which support the invisible fabric of the land. Our new priest, Nora, witnessed one of our first inspections of the hive and has included several photos. In September we will open up the hives again for interested parties to get a closer look. Thank you all for your support of this project.

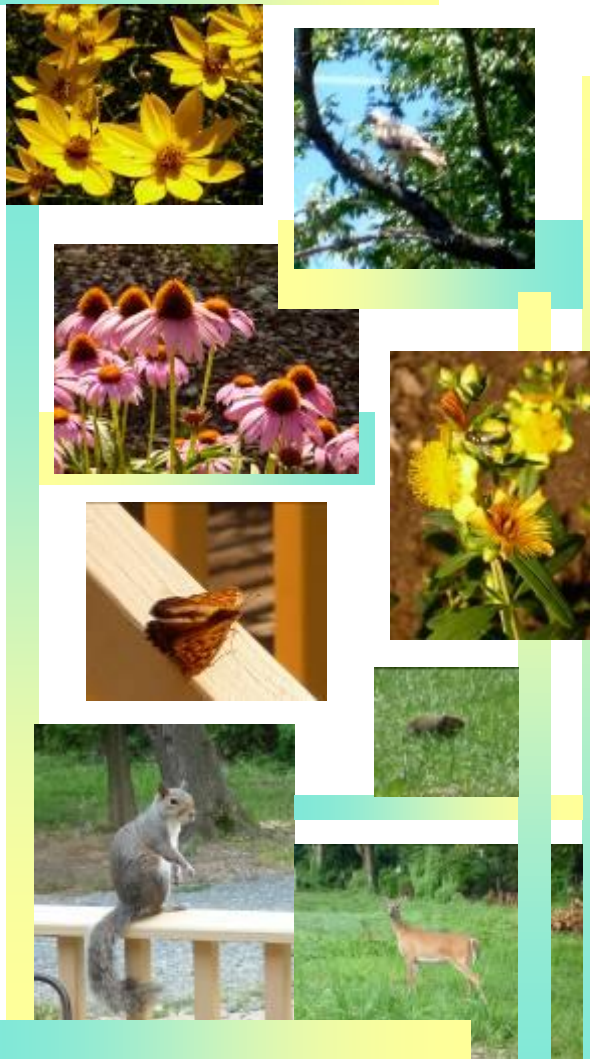


**Camilla Lake, Jane Parker and Judith Graff
checking on the bees**

Prayer of the Bee

**By Carmen Bernos De Gasztold
Translated by Rumer Godden**

"Lord,
I am not one to despise Your gifts.
May You be blessed
Who spread the riches of Your sweetness
for my zeal...
Let my small span of ardent life
melt into our great communal task;
to lift up to Your glory
this temple of sweetness,
a citadel of incense,
a holy candle, myriad-celled,
moulded of Your graces
and of my hidden work.
Amen."



Building Community-Serving

By Nora Minassian

As the bees are busy working hard outside on our wonderful property, the Service team is busy working hard inside. This means ironing the vestments, refreshing the flowers for the altar, dusting and vacuuming the sanctuary and the community room and, best of all, preparing the Parish House for Sunday by leaving our own little individual touches here and there as we come and work together, as we have little conversations with each other, and as we get to know one another a little better.



Left – Susan Klein and Bettina Hinde
Right - Mary Brauer refreshing altar flowers

Soon we come to realize that a certain feeling of care has grown in us for that little moment which made it possible to know the other better, for that little conversation we had, and for the little corners we touched.

Living in the Community

By Nora Minassian

At first glance, I saw the open field surrounded by tall trees and I was left with a feeling of being in an isolated wilderness. However, after living here for only few days, I slowly started discovering, little by little, more than just the grass and the trees. Different life forms started revealing themselves from different corners of the beautiful back garden of our community property. There is an amazing play of hide and seek among these beings. They appear and after few minutes disappear. Above, you will find a few pictures of those who allowed me to witness their moments of seeking and appearing.



Coleen Shetland ironing vestments and Kathy Chaney freshening up the flowers for our Festival Table

CC Service Teams/Monthly Assignments

Support still needed where you see a blank line. Please contact Carol Petrash and let her know where you can help, (301) 946-9465.
Summer Service teams are forming now for July & August. If you can help out even for just one Saturday, please contact Rev. Nora Minassian at (240)381-8557 or e-mail at ChristianCommunityDCMD@gmail.com

Blue Team – December and May

Jane Parker
Michael Anderson
Camilla Lake
Bruce Chamberlin

Yellow Team – March and October

Wende Patton
Wendy Jackson
Michele Coleman

Red Team – January and June

Carol Petrash
Jack Petrash
Kathy Chaney
Kathy Dews

Purple Team – April and November

Mary Brauer

Green Team – February and September

Lark Anderson
Trish Mooney
Sandra Doren
Patty Deuster

Orange Team – Confirmation Parents – Once a month when confirmation class is on a Saturday

Mattkes
Manskys
Romans
Jane Janotta
Lisa Gray
Colemans
Mooney-Johnsons
Hills

Happiness cannot come from without. It must come from within. It is not what we see and touch or that which others do for us, which makes us happy; it is that which we think and feel and do, first for the other fellow and then for ourselves.

Helen Keller

Upcoming National and International Events

East Coast Children's Summer Camp

August 6th- 22nd

For information please contact Rev. Carol Kelly at: (845) 426-3144

Summer Youth Conference

In Pennsylvania

Aug. 24th-28th

Contact Rev. Patrick Kennedy at: (301) 935-2727 or e-mail: cckennedy2006@gmail.com

FUTURE NOW!

is the world conference of The Christian Community taking place in Dortmund at Whitsun 2010. It will be a wonderful event!

For information contact

Miriam Roger by email info@futurenow2010.org

The web site is

<http://futurenow2010.org/typo3/en/future-now.html>

Fall Open Courses at the Seminary in Chicago

Seeing our 21st Century World with Different Eyes: Lincoln and Darwin at 200, King at 80

with John Alexander

September 28th-October 2nd

The Transition from the Old to the New Testament

with Rev. Oliver Steinruck

October 5th-9th

Christ and the Earth

with Daniel Hafner

October 12th-16th

Gospel of Matthew – Awakening to the Holy Spirit

with Rev. Georg Dreissig, author and co-director of the Seminary in Stuttgart, Germany

October 19th-23rd

COLOR: The Deeds and Sufferings of the Light

with Daniel Hafner

November 30th – December 4th

Advent: The Second Coming

with Rev. Richard Dancy

December 14th-18th

Cost for the courses: \$350, includes room and board, breakfast and kitchen use. For more information please call or e-mail Gisela Wielki (773) 472-7041 giselawielki@sbcglobal.net

Three one-week Open Course Seminary Retreats
Spring Valley, NY
Fall 2009

The Evolving of the Human Being and the Angels

With Rev. Gisela Wielki

November 2nd-6th

Encountering Evil: Explorations into the Task of our Time

With Douglas Sloan, Prof. of History & Education, Emeritus

November 9th-13th

Christology

With Rev. Erk Ludwig

November 16th-20th

We are making a contact list of those community members and friends who would like to host a guest visiting the community for few weekdays or for a weekend.

If you live in Washington DC area or in Chapel Hill and would like to be a host, please call Rev. Nora Minassian at 240-381-8557 or e-mail at ChristianCommunityDCMD@gmail.com

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Submissions can be sent to

ChristianCommunityDCMD@gmail.com for next editions

by the following dates:

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