

St. Wilfrid's Chronicle

A publication of St. Wilfrid of York Episcopal Church, Huntington Beach, California

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A meditation from our Rector

Fr. Nathan shares notes on God's work in our lives

Recently, my cousin texted me a photo from Christmas Day 1992. As was my usual tradition, I was wearing my favorite shirt and jeans without a belt. At the time, I thought belts were useless.

But as I looked at that picture, I slowly began to recall what was happening in my life at that time. I remembered the difficult time I was having transitioning into young adulthood. I remember feeling angry, rejected and sad. Friendships that I'd counted on changed and new friendships that I'd been hoping for hadn't yet developed.

It wasn't long, as I looked at that picture, before a sense of gratitude washed over me. I was so thankful for God's good and mighty work in my life. So thankful that I had been delivered from feelings of inadequacy and façade-building efforts. As I prayed my gratitude to God, I could not help but marvel at all of the good work that God had done. That God had taken someone who felt so broken and, even though I was emotionally difficult, God was gracious and kind to me.

I don't share this with you because I am bragging about how special I am, but I share this because upon looking at this thirty-plus year old picture, I see God's grace so clearly. God's work in our lives is really a marvel. God takes our brokenness, our self-centered and selfish ways of thinking and transforms us into ambassadors of Christ's love. Our lives, as we continue to follow Christ, shift from being about the self to being about others.

I wonder what would happen if you found an old photo of yourself and then, using your imagination, transported yourself back to that era of your life. What would you want to say? What do you think that God would say to that younger version of yourself? Where do you notice God working in your life that time? What about God's work causes you to marvel? How do you see God at work in your life following that photo?

Since we are only just a couple of months from Thanksgiving, I would encourage you to find an old photo of yourself, and then remember what was happening in your life at that time. Where do you now see God at work in your life that may not have been apparent at the time? What can you give thanks to God for? What specifically do you want to praise God for doing? And then, I would encourage you to tell God that you love God, that you are grateful for God's good and mighty work in your life, and then declare that you will trust God now, in this moment, for what you are currently experiencing. The same God who delivered you in the past will deliver you now. You are not alone. Not now, not ever.

Many blessings,
Fr. Nathan+



Beach Cities Interfaith Services carries on legacy of helping

When former parishioner the late Carol Sneary founded Beach Cities Interfaith Services (BCIS) in 2005, the vision encompassed service to lower-income, underserved members of our community. Since then, BCIS has undergone significant changes, but continues to serve, funded in part by the generosity of St. Wilfrid's parishioners.

Current BCIS President Barry Kielsmeier describes it as a "story of rebirth and continued service." Contributions from St. Wilfrid's—which continue today—allowed the outreach program to feed and clothe thousands and provide Christmas gifts for hundreds from 2005 to 2019. However, in 2019, BCIS itself became homeless, having lost its lease in downtown Huntington Beach. The organization was displaced three times but Carol and many parishioners still wanted to serve the community. In 2021, the team refocused its priorities to make prevention a priority, use one-time grants and harness the power of the community to keep succeeding.

Today, BCIS focuses on housing-related services—attempting to prevent homelessness by providing grants for one-time needs such as unexpected costs and rental assistance. For example, Michelle, a single mother of two daughters, lived in her car for four years. BCIS paid for a rental deposit, application fees and basic move-in costs. Today, one of Michelle's daughters has graduated from UCI and the other is studying to become a registered nurse. Michelle is now working full-time. "Many thanks also to the generous people at St. Wilfrid's who provided supplies for Michelle's apartment," Barry adds.

Barry is understandably proud, explaining "We can and have helped people in one to two days. The speed is due to the absence of bureaucracy and the private donations we receive. We can act quickly and avoid having 'hoops' to jump through with private donations. Some types of federal and state money have strings and are very helpful but not always appropriate for situations with a rapid timeline."

What will the future hold for BCIS? "At some point we can and will have an office but it will not be used to conduct client interviews. Those are conducted privately by referral partners," Barry says. "When we realigned for 2021-2022, we decided to take on the toughest role: providing direct monetary support for back rent or deposits for new apartments. We pay landlords directly. That does not require an office or storage space. We pass rent savings along to clients."

How can members of St. Wilfrid's help—right now, today? Barry says gift cards are always appreciated, as BCIS tries to give them to residents of CommUnidad in the Oak View neighborhood. Last year the organization donated \$2,000, \$50 at a time, to support food, clothing, Christmas gifts, and other necessities during the holiday season.

If you'd like to donate a gift card (or cash) for BCIS, it can be left at the church office. Tentative plans for a St. Wilfrid's fundraiser in honor of Carol Sneary and her late husband Dick are under discussion for 2026.



Meet Erol Woo—St. Wilfrid's own Renaissance man

By Nancy Davies, Senior Warden

Most of us at St. Wilfrid's know Erol Woo as a great chef. His desserts at our bake sales quickly sell out and his food preparation at many of our gatherings is divine. But Erol does SO much more than cook. He is a nurse by profession but he also sews, designs fashion, paints in oils, fixes cars, does plumbing and electrical work at home, and has even done some roofing. The breadth of his talent is quite impressive.

(Story continues on pg. 3)

Erol feels at home at St. Wilfrid's

(Continued from pg. 2)



Erol was born in the Philippines and came to the United States when he was 20. Initially he thought he wanted to be a cardiologist but ended up studying engineering in college. Once in the U.S., he began working at a semi-conductor company. After five years of working and after his mother having a heart attack, Erol knew he wanted to pursue a medical career. He went back to school and took EMT classes.

When Erol was laid off from his job at the semi-conductor company after 10 years, he was actually happy. He took the opportunity and went back to college. After 13 months he graduated as a licensed vocational nurse and started working in a long-term acute hospital. He then continued his education and became a registered nurse (RN). Once he became an RN, Erol switched to case management. He still very much enjoys being a case manager today.

Erol and Fr. Nathan met in 2004 and have been together ever since. Erol was raised as a Jehovah's Witness, but admits he never felt comfortable in that church. When he first came to the U.S., he was not active in any church. That changed after he met Fr. Nathan. He now regularly attends St. Wilfrid's and feels at home in the Episcopal Church.

Erol and Fr. Nathan enjoy traveling, (especially to historical places), antiquing, and listening to classical music. Erol particularly enjoys improving himself by trying new things and proving to himself that he can accomplish anything he sets his mind to. His array of talents proves that he has been quite successful in this endeavor.

A TASTE OF ITALY

DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION



Escape to Italy for an evening of Chef Erol Woo's Italian fare and a silent auction full of treasures.

Multi-Course Dinner

Artichoke & Olive Bruschetta
Shrimp Canapés
Zuppa Toscana
Pesto Pasta
Chicken Piccata
Amaretti Sprinkle Cookies
Cannoli Pound Cake

Silent Auction Items

Elegant Gift Baskets
Scrumptious Dinner Packages
Stylish Artwork
And More!

Opportunity Drawing

A myriad of options at \$5

Picturesque Photo Booth Available

Join us!

**Saturday, October 11th
5:00pm | Sacquety Hall**

Tickets: \$45

Limited Seating Available

**Tickets can be purchased
at the SCRIP table or in
the church office**

Lou Podesta is at home in the Episcopal church

By Nancy Davies, Senior Warden

Born and raised in Orange County, Lou Podesta has always been deeply involved in church communities. Before coming to St. Wilfrid's, Lou was a lifelong Roman Catholic. He loved the scripture and tradition of the Catholic church. In fact, for more than three years he was a Dominican Friar in Oakland, California. He likes to refer to Friars as "Monk lite."

After his life as a Friar concluded, Lou continued to attend and be active in a number of Catholic churches in Orange County. At St. Joseph's in Placentia, Lou was a youth minister as well as a music coordinator. When he started attending St. Anthony's in Anaheim, he was again called to be the youth minister as well as the music coordinator. At St. Ann's in Santa Ana, he worked for nine years in music. In addition to this commitment and involvement at church, Lou also taught high school English for 22 years. During much of this time, however, Lou was concerned that the Catholic church was not necessarily dealing with reality and all peoples' situations in life.



In 2022 Lou moved to Huntington Beach. He registered at St. Vincent DePaul and started attending, but one Sunday he thought he would try St. Wilfrid's. He knew he cared about the priorities of liturgy and music in the church and knew that the Episcopal church did as well. He also recognized that the Episcopal church includes reason as well as scripture and tradition in its tenets. After attending St. Wilfrid's for a few Sundays, Lou made the conscious, long-term decision to become an Episcopalian. He feels he has found a home in the Episcopal Church and at St. Wilfrid's. "Love as Jesus loves," says Lou.

In addition to being on the Vestry and being extremely active on our Building and Grounds Commission, Lou enjoys reading, taking drives, and going to the ocean.



Buildings and Grounds Commission—aided by tireless volunteers—keeps St. Wilfrid's in good repair

Have you ever wondered who keeps St. Wilfrid's campus in good working order? Say thanks to the Buildings and Grounds Commission, led by Zach Anderson. Zach and fellow commission member Lou Podesta are responsible for identifying problems with the church campus and determining how to fix them anytime something goes wrong with electrical, structural or other vital parts of the physical plant.



Sometimes they do the repairs themselves; for other tasks, they call in professional contractors. Often assisted by Jim Schweitzer and Nick Fortune (frequent and tireless volunteers who spend several hours every morning working at the church campus), the team participates in campus "work days," when volunteer parishioners polish pews, clean chairs in Sacquety Hall, repair and replace padlocks, and innumerable other tasks that keep the campus clean, safe and in good working order.

Can you help? The team always needs willing volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer, email Zach at: zachbanderson@gmail.com. And who knows, if you're lucky, you might get one of Jim's tasty breakfasts!

Lynn Horton has a long history of activity at St. Wilfrid's



By Lynn Horton

Lynn Irene Richardson Matay Chiles Horton or lirmch64@yahoo.com, yep that's me. I was born during WWII and my dad, who was a navy dentist, was sent overseas for two years. During that time, I got my start in life surrounded by the most glorious women. There was my dear mom, Kathlyn, a dental hygienist, my grandmother Mamoo, and the best aunt, Lucy who loved a good water fight, and Marion too.

Dad came home and, surprise, I had a new baby sister and a move from Newport Beach to the Naval Ordinance Test Station in China Lake, California, the middle of the Mojave Dessert. I loved it there with my newfound group of boys. My highest lifetime achievement occurred when I learned to ride a "two-wheeler" before all the boys.

We then lived in Hawaii, which I also loved, Bethesda Maryland, San Francisco and lucky for me six years for junior high and high school in Coronado. During all this time we traveled on endless car trips. I threw up a lot, so I got to sit in the

front seat—poor Mom!

At 16 my parents sent me to London alone to visit friends. There I got an appreciation of art, Air Force Academy cadets, and good German beer. It was a good summer.

I went to USC and attended football games and parties and an occasional class. I got married in my junior year and my husband Mike and I managed a 19-unit apartment building until I graduated. Then we bought a house in suburbia. I was a substitute teacher and had my first two boys. Sadness struck when Mike died suddenly at work and I—pregnant with my third son—had to go on alone.

I was married a second time and was blessed with my fourth son.

At St. Wilfrid's, I served twice as senior warden and developed an annual parish slide show for 25 years. I was one of the first two female lay eucharistic ministers at St. Wilfrid's and served on two search committees. I was also head of the building committee during the design and development of the current church building. What I'm most proud of is being one of the architects of (the late) Fr. Charles Sacquety's success story and legacy.

The best news of my life was Vic Horton, whom I met at St. Wilfrid's. With my marriage to Vic, I inherited two girls and two boys which has led to 20 grandchildren who range in age from 33 to 9. They are all unique and beautiful. I now also have Delaney and Lucyne, two great granddaughters.

Now I am contemplating retiring from the travel business that I have been doing for almost 50 years. So what can I do for St. Wilfrid's? I still don't want to clean my house so sign me up for your committee and put me to work.

Elsie Rhoads has been a member for 63 years

By Elsie Rhoads

I became an Episcopalian by chance. St. George's Episcopal Church in Hawthorne was within walking distance of our home. My parents did not go to church but wanted their four children to attend. I started singing in the choir at age 8, along with my younger sister, and have been in a church choir for most of my life.

After my marriage in 1960, and the birth of our first son, Steven, we moved to Huntington Beach in 1962, because homes were less expensive. There were 11,000 people when we arrived. After settling into our home (and working in L.A. which was quite a commute as there was no 405 freeway) the holidays were approaching and I knew I needed to find an Episcopal church. I'm not sure how I even heard about St. Wilfrid's as there was no Google or cell phones. Perhaps the yellow pages? Anyway St. Wilfrid's was meeting at Smith's Mortuary in downtown Huntington
(Story continues on pg. 6)

Elsie Rhoads: 'I feel fortunate!'

(Continued from pg. 5)

Beach. We met in an upstairs room. The next Sunday we moved to our current location—which was a far cry from what we have now., just a house, some small cabins where workers used to stay, and a large barn. But it was St. Wilfrid's and it was full of wonderful people and lots of young families. I had found my church home.

My daughter was born in 1963 and was baptized in the youth building that was our church at the time. I was pretty busy raising children after another son was born in 1966, but was a faithful congregant as the church grew and a new church (now Sacquety Hall) was built. One day Fr. Caley, asked if anyone could type as Vicky Key, the first church secretary was leaving for another job. I said I could and thought I would just come in once a week to do the bulletin (one 8 1/2 x 11 sheet). The next thing I knew I was the church secretary. I came in three times a week for three hours and brought my two-year-old son with me. I used an old mimeograph machine and prayed each time I used it that the paper would not wrinkle. My office was a small room in the back of what is now the youth building. Because I was church secretary, they also made me Vestry Clerk. I was a Delegate to Convention many years ago which was a wonderful experience.



I taught Sunday School for many years, starting in the barn, and then in a converted patio. We were on good terms with the fire department. At one time we had more than 100 children attending. My husband, Dee, would pick up my children after Sunday School and I would sing in the choir at the later service. Finally, Rodney Jones (a longtime member of St. Wilfrid's) donated \$25,000 and we build a rectangular building with a reception area and an office for the rector and secretary along with six classrooms and restrooms. Everyone was so thrilled. My children were active in church activities, acolytes (only boys could serve as acolytes at that time) and choir and of course the Christmas pageant! One pageant I remember especially was when the baby who was to portray baby Jesus was sick and couldn't make it. Luckily in those days there were lots of babies and I was able to find a replacement quickly.

As the church wanted to start a preschool, a board was formed with Clyde & Dani Glasser, Jim Elder, Fr. Charles and myself. It went from a small beginning to what it is now. I was secretary/treasurer for many years and did all the payroll by hand (with the help of a typewriter), It was an exciting time to be part of that experience.

I have been involved in several activities over the years, Vestry Member, Office Angel, Kitchen Crew, Wedding Guild, Preschool Board, History Committee, Music Guild, Wisdom Committee, Sunday School Teacher. My first love of course is the choir. I was choir secretary for years and for me music is part of my worship experience.

As I looked at the picture of all the different priests we have had at our church at our history celebration, I realize how fortunate I was to be a part of all the experience they brought to our church along with all the members that have come and gone. I have been a member for more than 64 years and I have made wonderful friends who have been there during the joys and sorrows in my life along with our priests. My husband and son have their spots in our Memorial Garden where I will be one day.

Our church has offered me a chance to grow in my spiritual life and hold true to values that I hold dear. I became an Episcopalian by chance but remain an Episcopalian by choice.

*I became an Episcopalian by chance.
but remain an Episcopalian by choice.*

Godly Play for Everyone starts Oct. 5

Sunday, October 5 at 9:30 a.m. in Sacquety Hall

Exciting changes are coming to St. Wilfrid's Godly Play program! Starting on Sunday, October 5, we will be hosting three Godly Play activities each month. Traditional Godly Play is St. Wilfrid's Christian education program for children 4 years old through 5th grade. We now have a new formation opportunity: Godly Play for Everyone!

All ages are invited to wonder and explore together with Godly Play, a Montessori approach to faith formation. Through storytelling, wondering, and creative response, this intergenerational program does not provide answers, but aids in creating meaning and connections within our community - adults and children together, learning from one another. Starting in November, our new Godly Play for Everyone program meets on the second Sunday of each month. We will continue offering our traditional Godly Play program on the first and third Sundays of each month using the schedule below beginning in November.



Godly Play's Monthly Schedule

First Sundays at 8:30 ages 4 yrs-5th grade in Rm 9

Second Sundays at 9:30 intergenerational in the Hall

Third Sundays at 10:30 ages 4 yrs-5th grade in Rm 9

Blessing ~ of the ~ Animals



Saturday, October 4 at 9 a.m.

in the Rose Garden

Fur, feathers, and scales, oh my! All creatures, human and animal alike, are welcome at this special service taking place on the Feast Day of St. Francis, the patron saint of animals. This short service will be followed by individual blessings for each animal present. Treats will be available for all, humans and animals alike.

Celebrate at St. Wilfrid's, St. Francis style.



Healing service set for Oct. 12

We live in confusing and sometimes painful times. We often feel the weight of so many things that frighten, sadden or anger us—and sometimes it's hard to know where to turn for comfort and strength amid our burdens. Your Healing Prayer Ministry is eager to pray with you and for you.

Please join us Sunday, October 12 at 5:00 p.m. in the chapel for a healing service. This service will be hosted by the Healing Prayer Ministry. Our Healing Prayer Ministers are members of our congregation that have made a commitment to pray daily for our church family and friends in need. At services on Sundays, they are available during communion to anoint with Holy Oil blessed by the Bishop and to pray with those who would like a healing prayer. Our healing service will also feature personal prayer for those who want it, as well as selected readings. All are welcome, and your prayer requests are always confidential.



Sunday, November 2 | 5 p.m.

at St. Wilfrid's Episcopal Church

Sunday, November 9 | 4 p.m.

Neighborhood Congregational Church
340 St. Ann's Drive, Laguna Beach

Join The St. Wilfrid Choir & Orchestra along with the Laguna Beach Chamber Singers as we present Waters of Comfort, an evening of music that brings peace and solace through choral gems like John Rutter's beloved Requiem alongside works by Craig Hella Johnson, Amy Beach, Daniel Kallman, and Shawn Kirchner. Together, we offer a journey of reflection, healing, and hope through the beauty of music.

General Admission: \$30 | Students/Seniors: \$20

Purchase your ticket online at LBChamberSingers.org