

On the Spiritual Side

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Caroline Oakes: Mind and Spirit The spiritual work of standing apart

"One of the gifts of maturity is simply this: You get tired of living someone else's life ..."

— David Anderson, former rector of Trinity Episcopal Church Solebury and husband of Pam Anderson, cookbook author.

"I did it!" my father announced excitedly, on the other end of the phone.

"Did what, Dad?" I asked. "Today I joined Knights Out," he said, with a tone of deep resolution.

As a West Point graduate, joining Knights Out meant that my father was publicly declaring his

support for OUT Knights, those cadets and graduates who identify as LGBTQ.

This was big. It was two years before the Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) policy was repealed, and only a very small minority of officers had declared their support for the then-controversial Knights Out organization. My father would be the only member of his 1956 West Point class to do so.

But he knew the consequences of DADT could be shattering.

He knew many of the young officers who were discharged from the Army when their orientation was reported, one of whom was a

classmate's daughter who had been serving on West Point's faculty for Leadership Development when she was discharged.

He had to stand apart.

Many of us resist "coming out" in this way, even to the point that we lead "false" lives, keeping our real beliefs and convictions quiet, pretending to espouse the same beliefs as our parents, our church, or our friends do, for fear of causing conflict or emotional pain.

But standing apart, speaking from our own experience and our own sense of authenticity, is an essential step toward emotional, spiritual, and psychological

growth, for ourselves and for those we love.

"You can read books on spirituality and go on endless retreats, but the real work of finding your soul waits upon this courageous and liberating act," said David Robert Anderson, author of "Losing Your Faith, Finding Your Soul: The Passage To New Life When Old Beliefs Die."

"You finally accept the fact that there's only one life you can change: your own," said Anderson. "You forgive the people who wounded you (even though they may have been doing the best they could) ... You're willing to accept

the consequences of living the only life you know to be right ... This is the moment when you finally have the courage to say, 'Now I become myself.' Now."

Caroline Oakes, a Bucks County resident, has a master's degree in Ascetical Theology. Follow her on Twitter @carolineoakes.

oakes.caroline@gmail.com

Note: There will be an author's reception and book signing for David Anderson at Trinity Episcopal Church Solebury from 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 12. The public is invited.

Creatures of all kinds invited to pet blessings

Tinicum United Church of Christ, Pipersville

Humans and their four-legged, furry or feathered friends are invited to a special event celebrating the Blessing of the Animals at Tinicum United Church of Christ, 310 E. Dark Hollow Road, Pipersville, at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 5.

All across the nation, animals and their owners will gather this weekend in recognition of St. Francis, the patron saint of animals, who believed that all of God's creations reveal something about the nature of God and God's love.

For everyone's safety, all pets should be on a leash or in a carrier.

For information, call 215-766-7368.

St. Philip's Episcopal Church, New Hope

St. Philip's Episcopal Church in New Hope hosts a pet blessing service from 2 to 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 6 at the riverside park next to Martine's in New Hope.

The Rev. Michael Ruk will bless animals in honor of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron of animals. The event is free and open to the public.

Bring your pet to the park on a leash or in a carrier for the pet's safety.

The blessing just takes a moment.



The Rev. Michael Ruk visits with a gentle friend.

It is a ritual dating back to the medieval Italian monk St. Francis, who loved all of God's creatures.

In loved years, Ruk has blessed dogs, cats, birds, lizards, turtles, and even a tarantula, at the church.

"I've seen it all," he said.

Saint Andrew's Church, Lambertville

Saint Francis' Day will be celebrated at 4 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 6, at Saint Andrew's Church, York and Main streets, Lambertville, N.J., with a special Evensong that will include a Blessing of Animals.

All are encouraged to bring their pets, either on leashes or in cages.

The ceremony of blessing animals celebrates Saint Francis of Assisi, the patron of all creation, who taught that living a life of peace includes living in harmony with all God's creatures, and especially giving

thanks for our domestic pets.

The Saint Andrew's choir, under the direction of Michael T. Kevane, will sing "Not One Sparrow is Forgotten" by William Hawley; "Seigneur, Je Vous en Prie" by Francis Poulenc (from 4 motets on texts by St. Francis); "Preces and Responses" by William Smith of Durham; "Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis in C Major" (from Op. 115) by Charles Villiers Stanford; "Phos Hilaron" by Robert W. Lehman; and "For the Beauty of the Earth" by Philip Stopford.

The Rev. Richard W. Townley, rector of Saint Andrew's Church, will preside.

For information, call 609-397-2425.

HAPPENINGS

Perkasie area leaders share vision

Perkasie Mennonite Church, 320 W. Chestnut St., Perkasie, hosts "Conversations and Coffee with Community Leaders," a four-week series of hour-long seminars.

Invited presenters include: Perkasie Borough Mayor John Hollenbach on Oct. 6; Harry Tucker, of FISH food pantry, on Oct. 13; Eunice Day, of Bucks County Community College, on Oct. 27; and Deb Ryan, of Penn Foundation, on Nov. 3. All sessions begin at 11 a.m. and conclude at noon.

The presenters will bring their perspectives on the ways their organizations impact Perkasie and the larger communities, and will welcome questions and discussion. They will also bring their experience to address the needs of the community and the ways these needs can be met.

All are welcome. Call 215-257-3117 or visit perkenno.org for information.

Needs of low-income residents discussed

The Peace and Justice Committee at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Doylestown welcomes Tammy Schoonover, director of training, Bucks County Opportunity Council (BCOC), to its 7 p.m. Oct. 7 meeting in St. Mary's Hall.

She will speak about the needs of low-income county residents, and how BCOC attempts to meet those needs. BCOC runs an economic self-sufficiency program, a food and nutrition network, and an emergency prevention and stabilization program, all structured to empower low-income families with the education, skills, and resources needed for self-sufficiency.

Schoonover will recount individual successes and failures from the BCOC programs, outline the problems faced by Bucks County residents and challenge the group to create a workable family budget from a typical below-average income.

For information, contact Rosemary Ramil at 215-340-0238.

"All Bach Sunday" held

Saint Andrew's Church celebrates an "All Bach Sunday" at the regularly scheduled 9:30 a.m. liturgy on Oct. 6.

The featured Bach work will be "Cantata No. 72, Alles nur nach Gottes willen, All things according to God's will."

Soloists for the Cantata will be Carolyn Viol, soprano; Katharine Baer, alto; and Richard Townley, bass.

A Baroque orchestra, harpsichord and organ will accompany the soloists and the choir of Saint Andrew's Church, which is under the direction of Michael T. Kevane, the parish organist and choirmaster.

During the service, the choir will sing excerpts from Bach's "Jesu, meine freude" (BWV 225)."

The church is located at the corner of York and Main streets in Lambertville, N.J. For information, call 609-397-2425.



A. CARL GLASSMAN

Kehilat HaNahar builds sukkah

Congregants of Kehilat HaNahar, The Little Shul by the River, in New Hope, complete the building of their sukkah, or temporary house, to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Sukkot. The biblical holiday began at sunset Sept. 18 and ended at nightfall Sept. 25.

Worship Directory

SALEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, October 6, 2013

The Rev. Dr. Tyson Frey, Sr., Pastor

9:30 am Worship / Communion / Sunday School

10:30 am Fellowship and Refreshments

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