

**THE WORKER SISTERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



# **BULLETIN**



**THE WORKER BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**



**THE FRUIT OF LOVE**  
**February 2024**

**Bulletin Cover - Photos used with permission from Sr. Diane Richards Facebook Account (bottom right photo is Sr. Diane)**

Sr. Diane's Trip to Guatemala. She worked with a Mission Group who built houses for families in need in the Panajachel area of Guatemala on the shores of Lake Atitlan.

*John 13:34 "A new command I give unto you: Love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another."*

**Community Communication Contacts:**

**Prayer Requests and News Notes for the monthly Bulletin** - email Ginny Berkey, Novice, WSHS, mollysnonna@gmail.com or see green sheets for her mailing address.

**Changes of address, phone numbers, email addresses** - email Sr. Shirley Evangeline at sr.shirleyevangelinpace@gmail.com or Sr. Christine at casturges@gmail.com or see green sheets for mailing addresses.

**Urgent Community Prayer Requests for email distribution** – email or call Sr. Kathleen Rachel (srkathleenrachel@gmail.com) or Sr. Wendy Samuel (srwendysamuel@gmail.com)

**Financial Contributions –**

Members residing in the U.S., make checks payable to WSHS/WBHS and mail to:  
Sr. Nancy Teresa, WSHS, Treasurer, United States, 12900 Glenwood Street, Apt. 108, Overland Park, KS 66209

If you pay any bills through your bank, you can easily send your contributions to WSHS the same way. Use the address above to send your check. You can make a one-time payment or a recurring payment. If you have questions, your bank will be happy to help you. And - you don't need any postage!

Members residing in Canada, make cheques payable to WSHS/WBHS and mail to Br. David, WBHS, Treasurer, Canada, 2170 Preston Road, Cavan Monaghan, Ontario, K9J 0G5 Canada

**Contributions to Haiti Clean Water Project – This project has been discontinued until the situation in Haiti is resolved.**

**Problems Receiving your Bulletin** - If you are not receiving the monthly Bulletin (by regular mail or by email), please email or call **Sr. Shirley Evangeline**, *not Trina*. Thank you.

**If a friend expresses interest in WSHS/WBHS, remember to direct them to our website, [www.workersisters.org](http://www.workersisters.org), [www.workerbrothers.org](http://www.workerbrothers.org)**

**THE WORKER SISTERS AND BROTHERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Web Addresses: [workersisters.org](http://workersisters.org) [workerbrothers.org](http://workerbrothers.org)

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**CALENDAR**

**CORPORATE COMMUNIONS  
REGIONAL GATHERINGS  
February 2024**

Below is a list of the monthly Regional Gatherings and Corporate Communions. Meetings are open to all members (Sisters, Brothers, Workers, Companions, Friends and Applicants). If you are interested in attending an online Regional Gathering, please contact the Zoom Host and she/he will add you to the group's email list.

**Regional Zoom Gatherings**

**February 24, 2024**

Eastern Regional USA & Southern Regional USA	Br. David, WBHS, brdavidwbhs1@gmail.com	12:30 PM ET
Central Regional USA	Sr. Catherine Marie, WSHS, sr.catherine.marie@gmail.com	2:00 PM CT
Western Regional USA	Sr. Wendy Martha, WSHS, wguyton17@gmail.com	10:00 AM AZ Time (Which is 10AM MST, 11AM CST, Noon EST)

**In-person Corporate Communions**

Pleasant Hill, Tennessee	Sr. Janeen Julian, WSHS	TBD
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**REGIONAL GATHERING/CORPORATE COMMUNION DATES**

**February 24 • March 23 • April 27 • May 18\* • June 22 • July 27  
August 24 • September 28 • October 26 • November 16\* • December 14\***  
*\* Date changed to 3rd Saturday due to the holiday*

**Call to Prayer.** Please remember our Community in prayer twice a day 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM in your time zone and pray for World Peace at Noon.



**8:00 AM - Prayer for our Community  
12:00 Noon - Prayer for World Peace  
5:00 PM - Prayer for our Community**



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**FROM YOUR DIRECTORS**

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At Retreat 2024, Erin Diericx and Janine Robbins will be admitted as Lay Workers. Ginny Berkey, Novice, will be invested as a Sister Ginny Francis. We asked each of them to write a few lines about their journey with WSHS. Please pray for Janine, Erin and Ginny as they prepare for Retreat.

**From Erin:**

My primary goal in life is to continue to grow closer to God. All of my other goals have to support my wish to grow closer to God. My discernment to be a part of the WSHS/WBHS community is a cornerstone to my constantly growing closer to God. My faith leads me to pray in all situations and to be faithful to the scriptures as well as always being faithful to what the Holy Spirit is directing me to do. The life commitment with the WSHS/WBHS is my forever Yes to God. This community has been a great source of love and support during all kinds of situations.

As a Worker [and a vocational deacon], I see my main purpose to be directing people to God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, not to myself or even my church. One way I direct individuals is to pray with them, especially through text messages and in person.

I love the WSHS/WBHS community. It is the family I didn't know I needed. I love my church and it has seen and supported me through extremely difficult times and has always built me back up again; however, I have to watch what I say politically due to my leadership role within the church. In the WSHS/WBHS community, we are able to discuss difficult political topics with such love and care that there is no hostility. Having an outlet to discuss the hot topics of the day without fear of being judged or disciplined for my views is such a blessing.

On a personal note, thank you for all of the prayers this past year with my hip pain and ultimately my hip replacement surgery. I can walk again! My mom was blown away with all the prayer warriors I had, and that was only a fraction of all of them. Thank you!

**From Janine:**

The Holy Spirit drew me to this Community in an extraordinary way. I had been studying the Bible, and about the Bible, on my own for quite a while and had exhausted my friends about what I was learning. I had no one to talk to about what I was learning. (I hadn't been to church in a long time.) So I found a church and met many wonderful people who loved Jesus as much as I do. It had been my thing to go deeper with God and pray all day and then through a coincidence I met Sister Brenda Faith. I already knew Sister Liz Agnes from my church and BAM the Holy Spirit directed me right to this Community that I love deeply. I've never been a part of any church group that I really clicked with until WSHS. I feel like I'm where I'm supposed to be. I have already made my life-long commitment to my Lord and am excited to join a Community that has done the same.

**From Ginny:**

As I look back over my time with the Worker Sisters of the Holy Spirit, I realize it began far earlier than I thought. Twenty years ago, my husband and I moved to Tucson and became members of the Church of the Apostles. I met Sr. Carol Matthew and Sr. Wendy Martha. What a delight and joy it was. We had Bible studies and wonderful vacation Bible schools and Sunday schools.

When changes came to the church, all three of us moved to different churches. Sr. Wendy and I transferred to Christ the King and Sr. Carol went to Grace St. Paul with her good friend, Sr. Alexandra. Our friendships and Bible study continued when I was invited to join the Worker Sisters of the Holy Spirit. With the deterioration of my husband's health, I found my spirituality deepening as I participated in our monthly meetings and annual Retreats. With Vic's passing, I realized what support I was being given by the Community and my prayer life was strengthened. As I proceeded on my journey, Christ was often beside me, bringing me both peace, resilience and ideas on how I could move forward.

Not only have I been very involved in the church from childhood to this day, but each year brings different ways to reach out to others in Christ's name. Lastly our Community has become the base of my outreach and my spiritual growth.



## COMPANIONS AND FRIENDS CORNER

Let us Companions and Friends pray daily for our Community.

*Holy Spirit, may your Breath be breathed into every member of The Worker Sisters of the Holy Spirit and The Worker Brothers of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

### **Christ's Christianity? By Peter Brook, Companion**

Did you ever stop to think that if Henry VIII did not want to marry Anne Boleyn in 1533, we as the Episcopal Church would not exist? We, as well as England, would still be Roman Catholic and not have the extraordinary religion that we sometimes take for granted. It began as a selfish act on the king's part to create The Church of England and break away from the Roman See because they disallowed divorce. What began as a self-serving act morphed into the all-inclusive, loving, non-judgmental entity we call the Episcopal and Anglican congregations. I do not think that I am alone in thinking that our extraordinary sect's beliefs parallel those of our Savior, Jesus Christ. He did not discriminate nor judge anyone. He is the very embodiment of love, acceptance and assistance to anyone who needs it no matter who you are, what color your skin, or your station in life. He IS the son of God and takes on the characteristics of God on Earth.

Admittedly I am especially sensitive to the teachings of Christ as we see them in the Episcopal Church since I am gay. My husband, Eddie, and I were married in a small chapel in our church that my friend, Lili Phillips and I designed and put together from a classroom. We were married by our Rector, Rev Winston Arthur, on October 29, 2019. We had been together 20 years prior to that. When you are one of a group that is excluded from many sects, you see it from the judged view.

In order to show that other sects, as well as our own, follow Christ's teachings as we see them, I was quite fortunate to visit President Jimmy Carter's Maranatha Baptist Church in Plaines, Georgia in 2014 and again in 2016, to hear him talk. He didn't give sermons but talked about how to live a good and productive life while following the teachings of Jesus Christ. Both Jimmy and Rosalynne not only talked about it but lived their lives in helping others on practically every continent and in every way. The fact that he was a former president allowed him in places and with people he wouldn't have otherwise had the ability to see. As a side note, the Maranatha Baptist Church separated themselves from the Southern Baptist Convention.

As a result of my research on this paper I learned a lot about how Christian sects and other religions stand on their acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community and women's rights regarding their ability to serve or not serve as religious leaders. The results were both exciting and disappointing as one might imagine as the combinations were endless.

In conclusion, I hope I have brought some things before you, with which you may agree, and I am not offended if you disagree with points I have brought forth. It is a catharsis for me to talk about things I think about quite often and I would be very happy to know that you might receive some form of pleasure in the reading.

I reiterate, as our God's son on Earth, Jesus was a holy man who was (and is) the epitome of love and acceptance of everyone.

I am a Companion, I live in Tucker, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta, I am a cradle Episcopalian and was quite fortunate to be baptized in Christ Church in Duaneburg, New York, a historic Episcopal Church that was established in 1768, eight years before we became an independent country. My passions are my church, traditional jazz, classical music, reading and architecture. I am a retired architectural designer.

--Peter Brook

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### Questions for Consideration:

- A) If I were to design a church out of an empty classroom what would it look like? How would I design it for worship of God?
- B) How do I respond when I'm excluded from a group?
- C) Regardless of my church affiliation, how does my personal relation with Christ help me to view & relate as Christ does to people who are different from me?
- D) Who are the people who are different from me? How is Jesus calling me to respond?

I hope you will respond to the questions...

Marya Pohlmeier, Companion    mayalovestravel@gmail.com  
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### SPIRITUAL SHARING

I received so many great letters and messages from our community as I work toward our April Retreat. The love and offers to help finalize the final steps have been overwhelming. During our Zoom meeting last Saturday I felt so much love and concern for all as we discussed our lives and the theme.

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So a new year begins. I will increase my time spent in Centering Prayer. I used to have time each day but after being sick in the middle of last year I got out of the habit. It can be very calming and for someone with such anxiety as me, it is very helpful.

I love how much the Community reaches out to anyone and everyone! I feel the same way, even when things seem fine or when we need thoughts and prayers.

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Our monthly Zoom meetings have deepened my connection to all our Zoom members. When someone is missing, it makes for a hole in our meetings.

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I find this volunteer job very fulfilling. It's the best thing I do all week. There is nothing like giving back to your community to give you an emotional boost.

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At our most recent zoom gathering I mentioned having many interruptions in my life. This week it struck me that perhaps the interruptions themselves are ministry. One example: A high-school friend with multiple urgent problems called and for 90 minutes I listened to her, offering affirmation that she has acted appropriately and that she's a good person. So I have to consider, are these interruptions or opportunities?

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I have the opportunity to lead services and preach which is very rewarding. God always brings things together from the music to the homily.



## FORMATION AND TRAINING

### The Fruit of Love By Sr. Diane Richard, WSHS



*Sr. Diane Richard lives in Huntley, Illinois during the winter months and in La Valle, Wisconsin during the summer months. She was admitted as a Lay Worker in April 2007.*

In the English language, the word Love is used for everything. I love this food, I love your shoes, I love this place, I love my job, and on and on. Many languages have a different word for different types of love, but alas, we do not. Thus the word is at times over used, trivialized, and often gets lost in the context.

So when we speak of the fruit of love, what do we mean, what kind of love are we talking about?

As I thought about it, what came to mind was the well-known piece of scripture John 3:16

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (English Standard Version)*

This is a love that, as a mother, I cannot imagine. Yet God, our Heavenly Father, did love that way. He loved us so much that he willingly gave up His Son Jesus that we might know this kind of love and share with him in everlasting life. So, how do I express love? Not just as a mother, grandmother, wife, and friend, (all of which are important and meaningful and appreciated by God), but in a way that says “I want to love You, Lord and say thank you.”

Several years ago, I went on a Mission Trip to Guatemala. We were to work with a Mission Group who built houses for families in need in the Panajachel area of Guatemala on the shores of Lake Atitlan. This is a beautiful place but also a very poor place. The family that we were building for had a father who was ill, several small children that included a new baby and an older daughter who lived with them with her new baby and husband. They had a small piece of land and we were going to replace their meager rooms that had no plumbing or electricity with a home of concrete blocks which included a kitchen that had a special wood burning stove and a purified water system. There would be a bathroom with a shower and a special sink on the porch that would serve as a laundry station as well as the one place they could get running water, do dishes etc. I think there were 4 rooms if I remember correctly.

Our mission crew was the first of many week-long mission crews that would be involved in the building of this house. On our first work day we all gathered in the yard to meet the family, all of whom would help as able. As we stood in two groups facing one another, the family introduced themselves and spoke of what this would mean to them and the father said something that I will never forget. He could not believe that there were people that would give up their time and vacations to travel all that way at their own expense to help them build a home. He was so humble and so thankful, as I looked around wiping tears from my eyes I saw every other person on that trip doing the same, including the teenagers that were there. The love that was felt in that small yard was bigger than anything I had ever felt. It was different and it was of God. It was a very Holy and Special time and that feeling stayed with us the entire trip. When the mother wanted to help, we sometimes could hold the sweet baby or engage the little ones in some game or help them in the process of helping us. We mixed cement, pounded and bent rebar, built cement block walls, painted and many other things. Most of us had never done work like that and we would return to our lodgings tired to the bone but happy and exhilarated and anxious to start a new day. I was able to share this special trip with a grandchild, some church friends, a best friend and a WSHS friend, Sr. Linda Thomas.

I use this experience as simply an example of how God’s love touched me and how I experienced His overwhelming presence. We cannot all go on Mission Trips nor do we have to. We can experience this love in our homes, among our neighbors, and with strangers. We just need to be open to the Holy Spirit and to Her work within and around us. I look at our angry, broken world today, and wonder how God, in His great Love, sees us. His beautiful creation is in trouble in so many ways. How do we, as mere individuals, help heal our world? I believe it can only happen with Love. A love that surpasses our understanding. A love that comes from God and is available to us all. It starts small, with us looking at places and persons that need God’s healing love. It begins, I think, with prayer and an openness to hearing His voice and following His lead. It can then grow and I believe it will. I think Love is contagious. It is my prayer and my hope that this new year of 2024 can be the year of Love. God’s all-encompassing love, God’s healing love. This has to begin with us.....you and me.

### Questions for Reflection

*Please remember it is not necessary to answer all of the questions  
Choose one or two that speak to you and perhaps you would like to share.*

1. Do you have special words for certain types of love? Would you care to share?
2. When was a time that you felt God's presence and His love in an overwhelming way?
3. How do you see the world today and how would you like to see and experience Love? Do you see it as broken or angry?
4. What is the Fruit of Love to you?



## FORMATION AND TRAINING

### An Experience of Belonging

A Community which seeks to promote Christ's unity through our diversity.  
A Community of joy and friendship where members receive as well as give love.

#### Sr. Shirley's personal reflection on Belonging:

Don't we all desire to belong to a mutually accepting group? It feels good to be among others who accept us with welcoming, open arms and have the warmth of conviction along the same lines we do. I found this "home" immediately in the WS/WBHS Community. I fit in. I felt like I belonged. I was welcome.

#### **Community**

*Gather to me my faithful ones. (Psalm 50:5)*

Need for a deeper spiritual commitment, desire to be with others who share that desire, discipline, structure, order, support.

Feeling of belonging, acceptance, a place of trust and deep caring.

Love, genuine deep caring, trust, forgiveness, unity, accountability, hope, Compassion. Need for a deeper spiritual commitment, desire to be with others who share that desire, discipline, structure, order, support.

#### **Spiritual Friendship**

*I shall not call you servants anymore because a servant does not know his master's business.*

*I have called you friends, because I have made known to you all that I have heard from my Father. (John 15:15)*

Jesus made the distinction between servants and friends.

One of the beauties of having both women and men in the Community is the opportunity to develop valuable friendships between the sexes.

The sharing of our lives, based on the realities of our personalities and our interfacing in the context of our spiritual journeys, lead us to intimacy with Christ.

From such depth evolves the concern and caring compassion for others.

### **Separation**

*My little children, I shall not be with you much longer. You will look for me. Where I am going you cannot come (John 13:33)*

Jesus must have felt the pain of separation as he began to try to tell the disciples he was going to part from them.

A characteristic mark of the Community is geographical separation.

Distance challenges us to wrestle with the reality of separation and how to foster a close sense of Community.

### **Communion of Saints**

*After that I saw a huge number, impossible to count, of people from every nation, race, tribe, and language. (Rev 7:9-17)*

They are remembered on the anniversary of their death and at our Annual Retreat in a deeply meaningful service. These members have molded and shaped the Community we have become and are a part of ourselves.

*This excerpt of An Experience of Belonging was taken from our Community Rule. Those of you who have the big white Rule may read it in its entirety; those of you who do not have the hardcopy Rule may find it on our Web site if you wish to dig deeper.*

### **Your personal reflection on an Experience of Belonging**

1. What does “relating to the Community” mean to you?
2. How are you experiencing from others a sense of belonging and how are you conveying that sense of belonging to others in Community?
3. Reflect on the impact made upon you of one of our Community saints?