



*Good Shepherd's new magazine for parishioners by parishioners*

## We Thank You, God, For Teachers

*WIE LIEBLICH IST DER MAIEN 7.6.7.6 D ("We Come as Guests Invited")*

We thank you, God, for teachers Who help us learn your Way,  
Who show by their example How we can serve and pray,  
Who find great joy in worship, Who listen with concern;  
For in their loving witness, They help us want to learn.  
We thank you, God, for children And older people, too,  
Who value times of learning And want to grow in you,  
Who seek your precious kingdom And wisdom from above;  
For wise ones of all ages Still seek to learn your love.  
We thank you, God, for families Of every kind and size,  
Who keep the vows they spoke when Their children were baptized,  
Who pray and read the Bible, Who love and serve the poor;  
They teach, by what they value, The way of Christ our Lord.  
We thank you, God, for churches That welcome one and all,  
That nurture every person In answer to Christ's call.  
So fill us with your Spirit, And give us life anew,  
That we may help each other Live faithfully in you.

*Tune: Johann Steurlein, 1575 ("We Come as Guests Invited")*

*Lyrics: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette (Used with permission)*

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Welcome to the Eighth Issue of  
**FLOCK QUARTERLY**

Good Shepherd's magazine for parishioners by parishioners

STAFF --- Graphics Editor Laura Rosato --- Content Editor Richard Reid

*Welcome to our eighth issue. In our Interview feature, you'll learn about the Education for Ministry program. We have five essays. Two cover amusements from the worlds of music and film. Two recall experiences in life: one satisfying, one cautionary. And one takes us on a journey to Africa. Plus, just a little bit of art this time. We hope you will enjoy it all. Your comments are always appreciated.*

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**Remember:** You're never too young or too old to contribute . . . material from our children and teens as well from adults of all ages are always welcome

Guidelines for Contributors

*Types of material . . .*

Essays; Humor; Bible Reflections; Interviews with Parishioners;  
Short Fiction; Original Photos & Artwork; Original Poetry & Prayers

General themes for any issue to inspire your submissions

family; hobbies; your vocation; religion; the weather; people/things/places you remember; a great day; something/someone you're thankful for; current events (but let's avoid being overtly political)

*Special issue themes appropriate for upcoming issues to spark your creativity*

Spring Issue Themes (published in February)

Ash Wednesday; Lent; Easter; Black History & Women's History Months; Valentine's Day

Summer Issue Themes (published in May)

Pentecost; Mother's Day; Father's Day; 4th of July; end-of-school; graduations; summer; vacations

Fall Issue Themes (published in August)

Pentecost; Labor Day; autumn; back-to-school; Halloween

Winter Issue Themes (published in November)

Advent; Thanksgiving; Christmas; the new year; the old year just ending; winter; Epiphany

Text submissions in Word format or handwritten - try not to exceed 2,000 words but don't feel intimidated by that number: shorter pieces are always welcome

Unsure of your article idea? The Content Editor is happy to discuss it with you

Please do not send any material in the PDF format

Please submit original photos only in the .jpeg format

If original artwork is 8 1/2" by 11" or smaller, it may be submitted for scanning into .jpeg

Issue Deadlines

Spring (by January 31st)

Summer Issue (by April 30th)

Fall Issue (by July 31st)

Winter Issue (by October 31st)

Email material to Richard Reid ([writer2363@gmail.com](mailto:writer2363@gmail.com)) or telephone (cell: 585-766-7254)

*You are part of the Good Shepherd flock . . . please contribute to Flock Quarterly!*

## INTERVIEW

### “Everyone Has a Ministry to Share with Others”

An interview with parishioner Kathy Stokes by Content Editor Richard Reid

*Editor's Note: Kathy grew up at the Church of the Incarnation in Penfield where both her children, Keisha and Spencer, were baptized. Her “church shopping” ended in October 1998, when they settled at Good Shepherd. She joined the Choir a year later and after that, the Chime Choir. At some point, she started lay reading. When Mary Jean Crawford retired from being the church administrator, she picked up the task of scheduling the lay readers. She was Vestry Secretary before joining the Vestry in 2018. She was re-elected to it in 2022 and serves on the worship committee. Her daughter, Keisha, is now an Episcopal priest with her own parish in Palmyra, N.Y. Son Spencer lives in Florida working as a mechanical engineer. Kathy considers her training in the Education for Ministry program to be “one of the most fulfilling activities I have done at Good Shepherd,” completing the four-year course in 2014. Fr. Lance later invited her to become an EfM Co-Discussion Mentor with him. He describes Kathy as “very skilled in leading . . . discussions and guiding the group,” as well as being “very accomplished at leading . . . theological reflection and the many ways we learn the process.” He particularly appreciates her “wealth of knowledge of the Bible, history, and an excellent background of the Episcopal Church.” For those who may need a quick overview of the EfM program, it is a discussion course developed for lay people to increase their knowledge of the Bible, history, ethics and contemporary issues and learning theological reflection. Its goal is to provide these basics to have a good foundation for the ministry of the laity. Each weekly seminar is in two parts. First is a discussion of the readings assigned for the week then it's learning how to reflect on everyday events through a theological lens. Year 1 is the Hebrew Scriptures. Year 2 is the New Testament. Year 3 is history and Year 4 is contemporary issues and spirituality. There are no tests or exams. This interview text has been edited for brevity and clarity.*

**RR:** When did you first take the Education for Ministry (EfM) course? What drew you to it?

**KS:** I participated in EfM during the years 2010-2014. I had heard about EfM from friends at Good Shepherd. I was looking for a way to build relationships with other parishioners, and it also appealed to my experiences as a life-long learner. EfM is a program that may help people to identify and act on their particular God-given strengths and talents.

**RR:** Is the EFM program a standard curriculum you receive and have to teach or do the leaders get to shape it according to the interests or the participants?

**KS:** The EfM program itself is quite structured. There is a schedule of assigned readings and practices of Theological Reflection. Theological Reflection starts with a specific focus, and then moves through a series of steps to discover and deepen our understanding of God's presence in the situation. That being said, the mentors have the flexibility to determine the best way to approach discussions of the materials that suit the composition of each group. For example, sometimes we may feel that a certain topic or practice might be better to do with the whole group, rather than individually.

**RR:** It sounds as if EfM involves a lot of reading. Was that initially a challenge for you?

**KS:** There is a substantial amount of reading, but everyone takes on what they can handle. I had not yet retired when I participated in the program, and sometimes I just didn't have the time to devote to the assignments. There are no evaluations or tests, however, so I did what I could, and still participated in the group discussions and learned from others in the group. It is helpful to have more than one participant in each year of the program, so that they can share their ideas about the week's assignment. Fr. Lance and I will read along with someone if there is only one person.

**RR:** Were you a frequent reader growing up? If so, did you read much about religion?

**KS:** I read a lot as I was growing up. Biographies got me hooked on reading, and then I moved on to historical fiction. That is still my favorite genre. I did not read about religion, but I attended church regularly, and I was exposed to various theologies as an undergraduate English major. I had to read St. Augustine's *Confessions*, and I was not a fan of his ideas!

**RR:** One requirement of the EFM program is to write a spiritual autobiography. Can you tell us a bit about what this entails?

*Continued*

**KS:** A spiritual autobiography is basically just telling your story. The EfM program provides a lens to look at the experiences of your life, and you reflect on how God was at work during different eras. Many times, we don't know that God was at work until we look back and say, "Aha!" Sharing your story with the EfM group builds community. Everyone shares their spiritual autobiography every year of the program, and they are never the same from year to year. We grow and change and evolve into the people God calls us to be.

**RR:** Has the EfM program changed/evolved from when you first took it compared to now?

**KS:** The EfM materials changed during my fourth year as a participant. Prior to 2013-2014, everyone had a binder, and each year's participants were given the pages for that year, plus everyone got a common set of pages for full group discussion. Now, everyone in the group receives the same guidebook, and each year has specific books to read. The most recent change is that the purchase of the books will no longer be part of the registration fees. This can save people money, because they can borrow the books from previous EfM participants. There are multiple copies of EfM books in Fr. Lance's office and our church library has many as well. Anyone may borrow them, even if they are not participating in the program.

**RR:** Has the Theological Reflection process changed as well?

**KS:** Yes, the practice of the EfM Theological Reflection has changed during the years. There is a specific method/process that has been developed and used since the beginnings of the EfM program. This structure is still there, but in recent years, there has been a movement toward individual rather than group practice of this method. Fr. Lance and I believe that the group Theological Reflection can be quite powerful in allowing participants to hear other perspectives and thoughts that may not have arisen in an individual's practice of Theological Reflection. Because of this, we give time each session to discuss the assigned Theological Reflection or go through it as a group.

**RR:** When did you become a co-leader of the EfM program with Fr. Lance? What are some of your duties/responsibilities?

**KS:** I began co-mentoring with Fr. Lance informally in 2016. In the fall of 2017, I did the official mentor training, and since then I have completed the required trainings to continue to be a mentor through the University of the South at Sewanee which coordinates all EfM groups. Last year, I began the administrative aspects of being a mentor, which include facilitation of participants' registration using the EfM website, and filling out reports for Sewanee. On a weekly basis, I plan for the next session and send out an email to the participants to fill them in on those plans.

**RR:** Few mothers can say, 'my daughter, the Episcopal priest'. Just between you and me (and all our readers, of course!), did Keisha as a young girl strike you as someone who might become one? Was she ever in the EFM program prior to seminary?

**KS:** From a young age, Keisha always had the urge to help others. In school, she would get reports that commented that she was out of her seat often, checking on her classmates' progress when they struggled. As she grew, it was evident that teaching was in her blood. During her formative years, she was very active in activities at Good Shepherd, and people told her that the priesthood was in her future. Keisha did not argue with this prediction, but she thought it would be after she had taught for a while. What did I think? Well, I knew that she would be successful at whatever career path she chose. She is a very determined woman! She earned degrees in Elementary and Special Education, and Literacy, and had many substitute-teaching jobs with positive feedback from colleagues and supervisors. As tenured job opportunities seemed more and more unlikely, she began to feel God's call to turn to the priesthood. Keisha was in Year 4 of EfM when she started seminary at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School. Her studies there added a new dimension to our EfM discussions.

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**RR:** Is there anything else about the EfM program that we haven't talked about yet that you would like to mention?

**KS:** I want to note that anyone who participated in the program with the older materials may want to consider doing EfM again. The current texts are quite engaging, and it is interesting how the threads of discussion weave now among the four different years.

**RR:** Thank you for being part of the EfM leadership and for taking the time to talk about this fascinating program. It sounds as if EfM has to be one of Good Shepherd's best opportunities for both personal spiritual growth and for potentially building lifelong relationships at Good Shepherd with your EfM classmates.



A gathering of some EfM students, past and present in June 2021.  
 Front row (left to right): Jim Morse, Pauline Stebbins, Fr. Lance, Allison Mayer (graduate), Kris Murray (graduate), Patti Curtin (graduate), Chris Nuccitelli (graduate), Beth Dinan  
 Back row (left to right): Kathy Stokes, Erica Ragan, Julie Syracuse



## COLUMN

## A SAINT'S CORNER: JOHN AS AN EAGLE

by Denise Junker

John, the fourth and final gospel writer to be discussed, had the symbol of the Eagle assigned to him by St. Jerome and others. John is considered to have been the most eloquent and theologically focused of the four gospel writers. His book is one of the most influential books on what has become our Christian tradition. John is traditionally believed to have written the Gospel of John, the three Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation. Yet, many contemporary scholars do not feel that is the case. Due to the many books with John's name, his name has been annotated as St. John: the Apostle, the Evangelist, of Patmos, the Presbyter, and the Divine. Some argue all of these are the same person while others say each individual did or wrote different items.

Many lecterns (the stand readers read from in a church service) are of carved wood of an Eagle but they are not considered to be recognizing John. The lecterns are a reference to the Eagle itself. The Eagle is mentioned over 30 times in the Bible. The Eagle is believed to be able to look directly at the sun and is a majestic bird that can fly far. Reading from an Eagle lectern is about spreading the Gospel as far as possible.

Some of these symbolisms fit John's gospel, too. The Eagle is considered the greatest of all birds as is John's gospel a favorite. As stated, the Eagle was believed to be able to look directly at the sun; many references are made in the Bible that one could not look directly at God without it effecting the individual painfully. If the Eagle can look at the sun, it is an apt metaphor for the Gospel of John's ability to present God's Word so directly. And since John's gospel is such an influence on Christian tradition, the gospel has taken flight and reached the world with its teachings.

A quick side note: the Eagle of John is a symbol in heraldry for many Catholic Monarchs. Queen Isabella of Castile and Catherine of Aragon are a couple well-known names who utilized the symbol.

I end my series on the Four Evangelists with an often-reproduced page of the Book of Kells, an illuminated manuscript of the four gospels made in about 800 AD in a Columban monastery somewhere in modern day United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland; it currently is kept at the Library of Trinity College, Dublin in the Republic of Ireland. The top left corner is the winged Man for Matthew; top right is the winged Lion for Mark; lower left is the winged Ox (or Calf) for Luke; and lower right is the Eagle for John.

Note: In the next issue, I'll be writing about the Ichthys symbol.



## ESSAY

### Unforgettable Moments

By Sharon Therkildsen

Here are some memories from my career in education that was enriched by the children I was blessed to know.

I began my career in a town south of Poughkeepsie, before moving upstate to a rural school where I moved from teaching to administration that culminated in my hometown of Rochester. Each place had blessings and challenges. I met many beautiful children and their families while I was able to work with dedicated teachers and center directors. There were also families struggling with poverty and addictions. No matter where I lived, I encountered many of the same problems and blessings. As with all stories, there is a balance between shadow and light in order for the story to have meaning and impact.

During my first year teaching I met a third grader I was positive would be a fabulous politician. He was a child that cost me sleep. While nothing he did was terrible, he always had an explanation for any infraction of school rules. When that did not work, he would complement me on my dress, shoes etc. He would ask where I bought them so he could let his mom know where to shop as he tried to derail the conversation about his actions. The next day I would receive a written apology and a promise. By the afternoon, I was receiving compliments again.

A few years later I met another third grader who left the classroom to go to the lavatory in the hall and never came back. I looked for him, called the principal who called his mother. He was found sitting in an apple tree behind the school. When I asked him why he left, he replied that he did not want to learn long division. Many years, the young man came to my office and asked if I remembered what he had done. We had a good laugh and he said that division was no longer a problem as he had a calculator.

One of my first memories as a principal was looking

into the tear-stain face of a kindergarten child who had been sent to me for some infraction of a school rule. When I asked him what happened, he said, "I used the bathroom outside." I explained that we had no bathrooms outside. Then the phone rang and the Superintendent informed me that one of my little angels – not his exact words - used his air conditioner as the bathroom outside. When you work in a rural school district there are bathrooms outside, just not at school.

On the first week of school one year, I heard crying that kept getting louder as it got closer to my office. I met a kindergarten teacher with her class on their way to music. The crying child refused to go. I often kept children with me if there was a problem, so we sat together and read a story and just got to know each other. He never did tell me why music class scared him. The next week he was back. This time I asked him to help me deliver some papers to the teachers so we went to a few classes and ended up at the music room. He looked inside and saw his classmates having fun. He told me he would stay but he would not skip. I told him he would not have to skip, so he decided to stay. Problem solved – not so fast. The next day he was back and refused to go to gym. I asked him why, and he said his brother told him it wasn't music class where you had to skip, it was gym class. We went to his brother's third grade classroom and had a little talk about scaring your little brother. I think the big brother was scared after that.

One day an enraged teacher and one her students came to my office. It seemed that the child was mad at her and had written a



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profane suggestion of what she could do on the back of her closet door. The teacher had matched the distinctive handwriting to the child, and he confessed. When I called his mother, she said, "I don't know where that little #%&\* got such \*&^\$ language. He must have learned it on the @# \$ school bus." I gave up.

While the stories are humorous, they also shine a light on the things that can frighten a child. Whether it is the fear of peeing your pants, not understanding long division, not knowing how to skip, or not being able to express anger, each story reminds me of a beautiful child struggling to see how they fit in the world. The decisions they made were their best attempts to solve their problem or express their feelings. We hear a lot about the power of fear in the world today. The insidious thing about fear is that it can take root in childhood and set a pattern for a troubled life if the adults in each child's environment fail to step in and help.

Sometimes the stories break your heart. I was in a state-funded pre-kindergarten classroom in Rochester where a teacher was reading a story about a visit to an apple orchard in preparation for a field trip. As she held up the brightly colored pages, she asked what the children thought when they saw all the bright fall colors. One four-year-old raised his hand and said, "Blood, my daddy's' blood. He was in the street." The child's father had died of gun violence in 2001. The children in the class moved closer to him and the

teacher aide hugged him. I was stunned that none of the children doubted his story. At their age they were well aware that violence was a part of life.

Yet in the balance of light and shadow, lies my favorite story. His name is Perry. I always followed his name with, "Remember, we walk in the halls." Perry always had someplace to go in a hurry. On the day before Christmas recess, Perry barreled into the school and into me. He handed me a paper bag, said it was for me, and was off. When I looked inside, I found a reused Christmas card with the sender's name scratched out where Perry had written his. There was also a paper mâché sculpture of Perry from his art class, a very small pencil, and a nickel. I immediately thought that Perry would need the pencil and the nickel so off to his room I went. I thanked him for the card and the sculpture and then held out the pencil and nickel.

He said to me, "Oh, no, these are for you. I gave you all I had."

I could not hold back the tears knowing that I had just seen the face of God in a child who ran through life with pure energy. I still have these gifts in a plastic bag and they are the first gifts I put under the Christmas tree as a reminder of a day I met God in a little boy who loved to run. If you come to my home during the holidays, I would love to show them to you.





# ESSAY

## MY STORY

By Anonymous

Hi, welcome to the Tuesday meeting of Gamblers Anonymous. Remember what you hear here, what you say here, but let it stay here.

My name is . . . and I am a compulsive gambler, I made my last bet on May 23, 1993.

This is how we open our meetings for gamblers anonymous so each person in the meeting will know who we are by our first name and the first initial of our last name. We do not use our last name as a way of keeping our anonymity. The anonymity is very important because members may have jobs in fields that may be sensitive to having these problem known.

We give our date of our last bet as a tool to help us build our confidence that we are getting our lives back to normal.

As the meeting continues, we will read literature from Gamblers Anonymous, part of which is the 12 steps of recovery. The steps are set up in a way to start your recovery with steps that ask you to admit that you are a compulsive gambler and that your life is a mess! To understand it is not a religious program but is based on spiritual beliefs. It continues with steps that help you understand to what and to whom you have harmed, this is for you, family, and friends. The last steps are to maintain your recovery and to help others to recover.

To better understand this problem, I will tell you a little about my story.

I started to gamble for money when I was about 11 years old. An older boy asked me to play blackjack for pennies and I liked it and wanted to play every day, and it only got worse from there. I was able to find poker games at the beach. While working setting pins in a bowling alley, I started bowling for money. When I turned 16, I was able to get into a pool room and play pool for money. This led me to new friends who showed me how to play craps and bet on horses, all before I was 18 years old.

My gambling continued to get worse and the amounts of my bets increased to amounts which were way over my financial means. My life and that of my family was always depending on my next win, but they were few and far between.

My gambling continued even after getting married and having children. I gambled without the thought of the consequences to my wife and children to the point of always being behind on my bills. I was borrowing money from family and friends until they were not my friends anymore. My family did not want to see me anymore because I always was looking to borrow money and was slow at paying them back. I would have to have another win to pay them.

The life of a compulsive gambler is like riding a roller coaster. There are great highs but even greater lows that can lead a gambler to depression, the loss of family, breaking the law and ending up in jail, and even to suicide. I was one of the fortunate ones who was able to regain a normal life with the help of my wife who demanded that I go to Gamblers Anonymous. I continue to go to this day. With the help of the Gamblers Anonymous program, I have been able to stop gambling.

It says in the Gamblers Anonymous handbook that this is a disease that cannot be cured but can be arrested, so that is how I handle it. I will have to be vigilant for the rest of my life. One slip-up

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could lead me right back to where I was all those years ago and history tells us that it would only be worse than it was before I joined Gamblers Anonymous.

I would like to give you some things to look for if you think that a person you know is gambling too much. Someone who is going to casinos and other gambling places or is betting on sports all the time will always say that they have won but never have any way of proving that they are ahead in money they have won. They may actually be showing signs of not having enough money for normal activities such as eating out or recreational pursuits. They will begin withdrawing from social interactions and become more of a loner. They will always have excuses for why they can't join in the activities they used to do and isolate themselves from family and friends.

Gambling is a compulsive disorder addiction in the same mode as drinking and drug use. Gambling can be harder to see in a person with a gambling addiction than that of alcohol and drugs. Friends and family may not understand how a person could do this and why they cannot just stop. With drug and alcohol abuse you can visibly see the physical changes in a person that is drunk or high on drugs, but a gambler does not show any physical changes. It is easy to hide a problem from family and friends and from themselves. If you see a family member or a friend who is or has already withdrawn from you, they could be in some form of addiction and need help. There is help out there!

I still attend Gamblers Anonymous meetings after 29 years because I will never be cured of this disease but I can keep it from coming back. By simply attending the meetings, I never forget what gambling had done to me and my family.

If you or someone you know may need help, you can find meetings all over the Rochester area or the United States by going to the Gamblers Anonymous website:

<https://www.gamblersanonymous.org/ga/>

for a list of meetings near you or by calling the Gamblers Anonymous hot line at 1-855-222-5542.

## The 5 Finger Prayer

Thumb: Those closest to you, your family.

Pointer: Those that point you in the right direction (teachers, doctors, priests) ask for wisdom & support.

Index: (tallest) Those that lead us, (Government) ask for guidance & wisdom.

Ring: (weakest) Those that are weak, in trouble, or in pain. We cannot pray too much for them.

Pinkie: (smallest) Our prayers for ourselves & our own needs.



# ART

## UNTITLED

By Jeff Taylor

Two parishioners –

Mark Matzky on the left and Gwen Brennick on the right

– welcome a sunset –

or is it a sunrise?





# ESSAY

## THE WORDS OF SILENT MOVIES

By Richard Reid

“In the beginning was the Word” – so begins the Gospel of John, one of the most familiar books of the Holy Bible. Those same six words may also be applied to literature: the first stories were oral, words spoken to others during a period of inactivity from the day’s toils. Those same six words could also open any book chronicling a history of the theater for the bare minimum that a great actor needs to hold an audience spellbound is his speaking voice. Movies are an altogether different matter: in their beginning was the Image.

In the mid-1890s when the projection of motion pictures began, an audience in a small room, sometimes seated, sometimes standing, wasn’t interested in talk. The sheer novelty of a photograph that moved – workers leaving a factory, traffic along a busy street, a sneeze, a couple kissing, a train coming towards you – all that was a thrill that required no explanation. As films got a little longer, adding two or more distinct camera images, the rudiments of a simple story coalesced. When the tricks inherent to film and cameras became known, adding imagination saw stories featuring eyepopping fantasy, such as the films of the French innovator Georges Méliès.

Still, films lacked recorded words. Thomas Edison had invented sound recording in 1877 so voices, music and songs could be heard almost anywhere without their creators being present -- except on film. When the nineteenth century ended and the twentieth century began, along came intertitles – printed text interspersed between the images of motion picture film to provide the audience with helpful information, including dialogue between characters, forever changing movies.

According to David Parkinson’s book, *100 Ideas That Changed Film*, “No one’s entirely sure when intertitles ... were first used, but captions linking the action appear in R.W. Paul’s *Scrooge* (1901) and began occurring more frequently after multiscene films became the norm.” (Robert W. Paul is regarded as the father of the British film industry.) Amazingly, part of *Scrooge* is still with us – you could even view it on Youtube. Here’s a captioning example of this adaptation of the beloved Charles Dickens story, *A Christmas Carol*: “Scene II - Marley’s Ghost shows Scrooge Visions of himself in Christmases Past.” (Yes, we all know: there were three other ghosts, not Marley, who took Scrooge on a tour of his life. The practice of movies changing the book has a very, very long tradition.)

Despite the loss of so much film from this first decade, one still feels the appearance of intertitles in films was infrequent, perhaps more a matter of someone’s preference. *A Holiday Pageant at Home*, a five-minute American film, also from 1901, used a few captions to set the scenes such as, “The Play”, and “The Author’s Reward”. One of the most celebrated American films two years later, Edwin S. Porter’s *The Great Train Robbery* (1903), got by without any for 12-minutes, so clearly delineated was all the depicted action. At least one of Porter’s 1905 efforts, *The Kleptomaniac*, made liberal use of intertitles. Seen today, we might easily question the need for many of them, offering no dialogue exchanges, just telling us what we were seeing (“Leaving Home”, “Under Arrest”, “Justice”).

For most producers in this period, a simple premise with a helpful intertitle or two when needed over the course of a one-reel film was all that was required. Concerning that length, the Motion Picture Patents Company (or the Trust, as it was often called) insisted on having only one-reel films, about 8 to 15 minutes, depending on the projection speed. In 1908, in a bid to maximize profits, Thomas Edison and others had created the Trust to use their patents to control the making

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and exhibiting of movies. Until the Trust's power eroded several years later and the public's appetite for watching a longer film grew, a one-reel film remained the norm.

A good example of this is the Kalem studio's somewhat ambitious 1907 film, *Ben-Hur*, a 14-minute rendering based on the best-selling book set during the time of Jesus of Nazareth. It was directed by Sidney Olcott, who would go on to a celebrated career in silents with films such as *Timothy's Quest* (1922) and *Little Old New York* (1923). Today, we largely remember this once-popular movie for its copyright lawsuit that extended a writer's literary rights to the medium of film. The movie's several intertitles established the scenes being witnessed, such as "Wounding of the Procurator". One who had read the book or perhaps had seen a stage adaptation could easily fill in the blanks (characters, motivation, etc.) but how many of the film's viewers had done that?

Making moving pictures from literary classics was common enough in the early silent period suggesting that audiences liked them, however truncated. Descriptive intertitles enabled an audience to make sense of a story even if the screened words failed to supply anything truly dramatic. The drama, such as it was, came from the visuals, typically shown from the perspective of someone in a theatre many rows from the stage by an unmoving camera and all squeezed onto one reel. If close-ups happened at all, they were at best medium shots. Beset with such limitations on creativity, how much longer could movies get by on essentially their sole selling point: novelty?

When D. W. Griffith started directing, his first film, *The Adventures of Dollie*, released July 1908, looked like everyone else's. As 1909 unfolded, in over 130 shorts, Griffith started dazzling audiences with innovations in story narrative, photography and film technique and the industry noticed. By mid-December 1909, Griffith had produced a polished 11-minute visual gem: *Corner in Wheat*, adapted from Frank Norris' novel, *The Pit*, that is still very watchable today. Its intertitles were sparse and simple, not adding anything terribly insightful. That would soon change.

In the century's second decade, especially from 1910 to 1912, a kind of spring awakening for the American movie industry happened. Learning from Griffith's films and from those by others, visuals improved, becoming more diverse as camera images brought places, and particularly faces, closer to the audience, enabling actors to better use their faces, gestures and other body language since their voices were still denied them. At first, intertitles had told us what we would soon see depicted, what today we might term "spoilers", but few seemed to mind. Now, intertitles began presenting a character's thoughts or feelings, even abstract ideas which opened up more complex ways to eventually tell stories in longer running times, including using dialogue between characters.

A fine example of the emerging power of these visualized words is D.W. Griffith's 17-minute Civil War short, *The House with Closed Shutters* (released August 1910). Its key plot intertitle, "The Girl Goes in Her Brother's Place to Preserve the Family's Honor", went beyond the usual expository type that summarized action – it also supplied motivation. After the sister dies in battle – everyone believes her to be the brother, even in death – the mother closes the house's shutters and confronts her cowering son (played by Henry B. Walthall, who in five years would star in Griffith's flawed-by-racism masterpiece, *The Birth of a Nation*). Her words appear on-screen: "You stay here forever for the good of the family name that the world may not know your sister died protecting a coward." Her on-screen words were not bracketed by quotation marks, a practice that would soon be ubiquitous when presenting dialogue on film. Coupled with the visual image of the closed shutters, the dramatic impact of the movie is still powerful today leaving us to wonder how much more so it might have been for long-ago audiences.

The faces of actors, increasingly seen in different movies, intrigued audiences who demanded to know the names of performers and to see certain ones in more movies. Intertitle possibilities

percolated in movie makers' minds, becoming a sort of structural steel upon which films, richer with better-developed characters and detailed storylines, could be constructed, which also meant longer films. Two- and three-reel films began appearing from all production companies as the Trust's power to dictate a film's length was crumbling. In late 1912, there was a five-reel, American-produced version of Shakespeare's *Richard III*, regarded as the first American feature film. Griffith tried to get Biograph to release his four-reel *Judith of Bethulia* in late 1913 but they delayed it until early spring 1914. Less than a year later, in February 1915, Griffith presented his 13-reel epic, *The Birth of a Nation*. The public made it the top-grossing film of the silent era.

Feature films were here to stay although silent-era Hollywood would settle on five- and six-reel films for the majority of its features with prestige pictures running longer. Technology finally caught up with films in the late 1920s when the "talkies" arrived. By mid-1928, the major studios concluded that the days of silent movies were over, that going forward, in all their new films when actors spoke, you would hear what they were saying, just like in real life. To capture as much money as possible, some studios made silent versions of their sound films for those small theaters in rural areas that had not yet converted but by late 1930, that practice ended. Only Charlie Chaplin held out, releasing two feature films in the 1930s without spoken dialogue. But, hey, audiences reasoned, it was the Little Tramp, and it's a silent movie – now that's a novelty today, isn't it?

Silent movies were the norm for about 35 years in America. For their first 15 years, they might best be described as a novelty and, as we all know, novelties generally have short appeal. Movies might easily have been relegated to that dustbin containing other once-popular entertainments like circuses and minstrel shows had not certain innovations taken hold. Intertitles, the visualized words of silent movies, was one of those innovations that enabled films to become a leading American industry and an international art form which continues well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



# ESSAY

## MY AFRICAN JOURNEY

By Jonathan Ragan

*Editor's Note: Jonathan, the son of parishioners Andy and Erica Ragan, spent 14 days during May in Senegal, a country in Africa. The trip was part of Allendale Columbia School's "May Term" program, designed to give a host family experience through Allendale's "sister" partner school, Enko Waca. Jonathan turned 18 on the trip. The village helped him celebrate the event with a drum circle with African dance and his Mom said he got a congratulatory handshake from the village's chief.*

Going into this trip, I expected a lot of new experiences that might be both positive and negative. There were about 15 students from my school, Allendale Columbia, with whom I traveled. Along with the students, we had two faculty members traveling with us, and one faculty member who was actually from Senegal, and who worked with us when we were there. I was blessed in going on this trip, for some of the students who participated were a couple of my closest friends, whom I had known for years. Along with the close relationships I had with some of the students, I also had a phenomenal relationship with two of the faculty on the trip as well. One had taught me and watched me grow up ever since kindergarten, and the other had been my French teacher for years. There were some students whom I did not know on the trip, but by the end, nearly everyone had banded together in an experience like no other.

I had never been on a plane before. I was not necessarily scared, but I was definitely a little bit worried to say the least. In order to get to Senegal, we had to take about a 30-minute flight from Rochester to the JFK Airport in NYC so I was able to get a feel for what it was like to be on a plane. I will never forget the feeling of taking off and landing for the first time -- just like a roller coaster ride! From there, we would then wait for about a six-hour layover, then depart from JFK and head about eight hours to Dakar, Senegal. The most difficult part as it turns out were the layovers. On the trip home, we were stuck in JFK for around 16 hours, due to a scheduling conflict. During these layovers, I was able to make myself busy doing work, and also sleeping. Overall, the experience of being on a plane was a positive one, and I cannot wait to travel again!

I thought that meeting a host family and staying with them for the week would be the hardest part for me because in general, I am usually an introverted person. Mame Saye was my hostess—a student one year younger than me who goes to the Enko Waca school with which we partnered. During the trip, I stayed with her and her family for a week. Her family gave me the warmest welcome I could have asked for -- my own room, delicious food, quality conversations, and an overall great time. Of her immediate family, she was the most fluent in English, and her English was spectacular. We conversed about many topics, including the differences between American and Senegalese culture, school, what we like to do for fun, and so much more. While the rest of her family spoke less English, they were still very proficient, and we talked briefly about a variety of things.

About halfway through the week, some of her extended family joined us at their house, and it was amazing talking with them! Mame Saye's sister goes to school in the States, and some of her cousins live there as well. Each person was assigned a host family, and they lived with them for a week. The home was a freestanding house, but it was enclosed in a gate. Some of the students that went on the trip had houses that had land around them, and others lived in apartment complexes. For the most part, my host family spoke French and Wolof, a native language. English was not very common, unless we were stopping in major tourist destinations such as Goreé Island or markets to buy souvenirs. For the most part, during the first week the language I heard most in Dakar was French, but when we went to the village during the second week, they spoke a lot more

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Wolof. Communication was easy with my host family, but if I had been alone, it would have been extremely difficult.

I think that the culture shock was definitely there, but honestly, it was not as different as I imagined before traveling. During our stay with the host families, we would have school in the morning, and then head home after. During the school day, there was usually some activity planned with all of the students. For instance, one day we took a bus tour of Dakar, while another day we visited Gorée Island, which played a major role in the 15th- to 19th-century Atlantic slave trade. We did not go into the wild very often unless it was to traverse to the next destination. One of the biggest differences I noticed was in the driving. Some people who call driving in Boston busy, would not believe how the traffic moves in Dakar. This was very important, especially when crossing a street, for a lot of the time the cars would not yield to pedestrians, which is a big difference in America.

During my stay in Senegal, the weather was almost always the same, aside from one major outlier. Almost all the time, it was sunny and somewhere in the high 80s. At night it might have dropped to the high 70s, but it was still very warm. The major outlier was during one night on our way back to the Enko Waca School, there was a huge dust storm, where we could barely see a couple feet in front of us. This was very interesting because I have never experienced anything like it before. The hardest thing during the storm was that it became very difficult to see, and it also became slightly harder to breathe.

For the second week, all of the Allendale Columbia students and faculty stayed in a hotel, and in the mornings, we would depart to a village in Mbour Senegal to help build a school. The process of working on the school entailed a variety of different things. There were stations in which we worked, and after around fifteen minutes to a half an hour, we would switch stations. Some examples of the stations would be brick making, brick laying, brick transferring, leveling ground, creating rebar, retrieving water, transferring dirt, and transferring sand. During this week, all of the students worked on the school. I was most looking forward to the work aspect, because I love manual labor that has the ability to make change in someone's life. I have never made bricks or built anything like a school before, and when I was being taught the skills, I was able to understand just how much work goes into an operation like this, and how much time it takes to complete.

I think that the actual building of the school definitely lived up to my expectations. I thought that this would be the most fun, rewarding, and most impactful moment of the trip, and from what I saw and experienced, I was right. When we first arrived at the village, we were welcomed by the community with open arms, smiling faces, amazing dances, and great speeches. I knew immediately that this week would mean an extreme amount to me. As we worked each day, I could feel that we were working together to create something bigger than the trip itself, which is no doubt going to stay with me forever.

During this trip, a lot of the experience that one had was based on their own independence. Certain choices would make the difference between a good experience and a bad one. For instance, if I had never tried the fantastic food here, and gone out of my way to participate in all of the meals, I would never have had an opportunity to eat such food again. Another major way in which I used autonomy during the trip was with my mindset. Mr. Tepedino introduced a class one morning to the concept of growth and fixed mindsets, where one allows change and expansion and the other offers a more static approach. I took this lesson to heart and utilized the different mindsets throughout the trip, allowing a heightened experience. When faced with the opportunity to participate in something I may not be extremely comfortable with (playing soccer with a big crowd around recess in this case) I saw it as a moment where I could grow and have fun doing it.



During the trip, I felt the most relatedness to my host, Mame Saye, who guided me through my journey the first week, and who provided me with a phenomenal host family experience that I will never forget. One of the moments that stood out was when my host and I discussed school, and the similarities that we shared. While we both go to different schools in different countries, we still experienced many of the same stresses, classes, and overall feel of high school. My trip to Senegal was one that I will never forget. It was full of adventure, with almost every day being packed with things to do, people to meet, and experiences to be had. I still am in contact with my host family, and I let them know that if they are ever in Rochester, NY, they would have a place to stay. I hope to one day go back to Senegal, for it is a beautiful place with beautiful people.



Members of the Allendale Columbia School group. Jonathan Ragan is third from left and parishioner Sarah Zurell is on the far right



Playing soccer at Enko Waka



Making bricks to build the school. Jonathan is in blue



Lunchtime in Mbour. All eat from a shared plate



Jonathan with his host, Mame Saye (all the way to the right in the photo). Her two siblings are on Jonathan's right and her two cousins on Jonathan's left, The girl furthest left is a friend.



In Dakar with the impressive statue, African Renaissance Monument



# ESSAY

## SPRINGSTEEN AND US

by Mike Rosato

A number of years ago, there was a great documentary that came out called *Springsteen and I*, which portrayed the deep relationship between Bruce Springsteen and his die-hard fans. Because of a major oversight on the part of the filmmakers, I was NOT interviewed for that film, and so I jumped at the opportunity to write a piece for the *FQ* on my passion for the Boss and his music. I was going to steal the title of the film for my essay, but as you'll see the most profound impact of Springsteen on my life was literally in the trajectory and even the very make-up of our family, and so I titled this Springsteen and US. (but as you will see the these other titles work too: *The Lord Works in Mysterious Ways*...and *How I Met Your Mother*).

But let me go back to the beginning. Like many Springsteen fans, my fandom began in the mid-70's with the launch of the critically acclaimed album, *Born to Run*, still considered one of the greatest albums of all time. As a teenager, who, like, Bruce in early years, was dealing with the oppressions of Catholic school, I was drawn by not only the high energy rock and roll, but the adventurous themes of getting out of here and getting to a bigger life. I continued as a huge fan through college, gobbling up every album that came out and dancing at many a college party to his party songs like *Rosalita*. However, to this point I had not experienced the REAL power of Springsteen, that being his live performances. I was deterred by the immense difficulty, even back then, of securing a ticket to a concert.

It was not until 1985 when I was in the Navy that I would finally have achieved my bucket list goal of seeing Bruce live. By now, he had exploded to global superstar status with the release of the incredibly popular *Born in the USA* album. Tickets were harder than ever to secure, but with a little luck (or God's help?) I got my shot. I was in Communications Officer School in San Diego when tickets went on sale for the Born in the USA tour and the stop in LA. However, I couldn't get out of school to go get tickets when they went on sale. Mid-morning, one of the instructors came in and told us he had just secured some Springsteen tickets and there were many more available at the Navy Exchange (base store) where the manager had just had the foresight to get on the Ticketmaster machine and say.."buy Springsteen tickets". So, at lunch time, I was able to buy a whole bunch of tickets for me and my friends to see him at the Los Angeles Coliseum, in what turned out to be the final show of the World Tour...and a truly magical night! I was hooked forever!

You may not know this but right after that tour, at the height of his success, Bruce broke up the E-Street Band to pursue independent projects. It would not be until 1999 that he would get the band back together and tour again with them. It was during this hiatus that I met Laura and we started our family. It was also when the "indoctrination" program began for Bobby and Shannon. Whenever I was driving them around, you can be sure there was Springsteen music playing! I was hoping that by osmosis, or more like constant exposure, they would eventually share my passion for the artist and music. And in 1999, I took the first big next step in this "program" – and it failed.

When Springsteen announced that the Reunion Tour would be coming through Buffalo, naturally I jumped at this and secured two tickets. Days before the show, my buddy who was joining me had to bail out, and so I had the brilliant idea that this would be a great opportunity to bring 8-year-old Shannon to her first big time concert. After all, she had been listening (and even singing along) to all those songs in the back seat. Suffice to say that while this might have created a lifetime memory for Shannon, it did not turn her into a lifelong fan. (And, by the way, parents with similar silly ideas should provide hearing protection for those young ears!!) With the release of one of my favorite albums, *The Rising*, in 2002, I got a chance to see a bunch of fantastic Springsteen concerts through the 2000's with Laura and with my brother, who was a crazier fan than I was. Steve had also lost his best friend and fellow Springsteen-nut on 9/11, and so the 9/11 healing themes of *The Rising* were particularly poignant, and created a number of special memories.

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However, it was in 2008, ironically on the “*Magic*” Tour, when the magic truly happened! I decided that for the upcoming show at the Rochester War Memorial, I would bring Bobby (now 15) to his first show AND I would get general admission tickets and try for the “pit” for the first time ever. Back then, the way General Admission worked is that up until 5pm, you’d get a wristband at the door and then at 5pm, they pulled a number and that become the front of the line. The first 200 or so lucky fans were going to get into the forward section right in front of the stage, which was known as the “pit”. I also prepped Bobby by loading up his ipod with a likely setlist (90% of the songs are the same show to show). I picked Bobby up at high school and we got downtown right about 445pm. When they pulled the number, we ended up 14<sup>th</sup> in line.... Bobby was going to see his first Bruce Springsteen show from the front row!! Of course, it was an incredible, surreal experience for both of us. Bobby even got his hands on Bruce’s guitar during *Born to Run* when Bruce lets close fans help strum the guitar. Most importantly, though, Bobby was hooked, and that set him down a path that would change his life.

Once Bobby taught himself ukulele and then guitar, he started to learn some Springsteen songs and would play them at an open mic at a local coffee shop. His performance of Springsteen’s *Atlantic City* caught the ear of the founder of the Fairport Music Festival who introduced Bobby to Chip Milligan, the lead singer of the band Northside Johnny. Chip invited Bobby to an Open Mic which he ran, and impressed with Bobby’s talent, he slotted him into the acoustic lineup for the Fairport Brewing Company stage at the 2016 Fairport Music Festival. Quite shockingly, during his final song, Springsteen’s *Rosalita*, there was a multi-car accident right behind him that I caught on film. That video ended up going viral and has been seen over a million times...but that’s not what changed his life...

One of Bobby’s new fans was the owner of Fairport Brewing Company, Tim Garman. Tim would ultimately hire Bobby to host an Open Mic night at the Brewery, and one of the regular attendees was Bill Bay, a member of the Monday Night Running Club. Bill was a huge Springsteen fan (and a fan of Bobby’s) and would often challenge Bobby to play a “deep tracks” Bruce song, which Bobby always obliged...but we’ll get back to Bill in a moment.

Meanwhile, Bobby had started to develop a steady lineup of regular music gigs, where he always played a good amount of Springsteen music. He had also started working for Fairport Brewing Company at their University Ave location. I had suggested to Bobby that he should get a group of musicians he knew together and do a night of Springsteen music with a full band at FBC University where he hosted Open Mic over the winter. Tim, the owner of FBC, agreed, Bobby rounded up the musicians, including our own Bruce Dunn on bass, and “*Bobby and Friends Play the Music of Bruce Springsteen*” was on for Jan 2019. So on a snowy Jan night, at a place nobody knows about that’s hard to find, with a no-name band that had never rehearsed together on a make-shift stage . . . 200+ people showed up and had an amazing time!

It was clear that this needed to become a “thing”, and Thunder Avenue Band was born! (credit Laura for the clever name—a mashup of the songs *THUNDER Road* and *10<sup>th</sup> AVENUE Freezeout*) The band scheduled their inaugural gig for Thursday May 23, 2019 at Fairport B-Side. When the band took to the stage that night a raucous crowd greeted them. In that crowd was Bill Bay (remember Bill, the runner?). He had brought his longtime friends and fellow-Springsteen nuts, Dave and Mary Beth Friel with him. (Both the Friels and the Bays had seen Bruce over 80 times!!) The Friels dragged their daughter along who came reluctantly, even though she is also a big Springsteen fan, and well, to make a long story a little shorter, Erica and Bobby met that night, and they are now engaged!!! (By the way, we also got some great new close friends in the Friels!)

A few months later, Thunder Avenue Band would take the big stage at the Fairport Music Festival, and another great Springsteen moment was created. As the band played Bruce’s biggest hit, *Dancing in the Dark*, Erica and Laura joined Bobby on stage a la Courtney Cox in an homage to the 1984 video. That great moment of joy is shown here. This would not be Erica’s last time on stage with the Thunder Avenue Band. In fact, she joined the band for the 2021 Fairport Music Festival. Her talent and their chemistry on stage took the band to a new level and made for an incredibly memorable night.



As we look ahead to a very exciting future which includes a couple of big Thunder Avenue shows (including this year's Fairport Music Festival), a Springsteen tour we will all share together, and of course a WEDDING, I can't help but laugh at how this beautiful future with this wonderful extended family was in part due to my initial passion for the music of Bruce Springsteen.



2008 photo from Bobby's flip phone. That's how close we were to the Boss and Clarence Clemens!



2019 Fairport Music Festival channeling our inner Courtney Cox



2021 Fairport Music Fest



August 27, 2022 Fairport Music Fest

