

## *On the mind of the Rev. Canon Deacon Denise LaVetty...*

Childlike abandon, balance, mature contemplation...and some public nudity

Dear Friends,

I'm a very cautious person, especially when it comes to physical safety. Mostly, this is because I have way too much experience injuring myself, falling, getting mowed down by bicycles, etc. I attend an exercise class designed for us "seniors", which focuses on strength and balance. Good balance does not guarantee you will never fall, but will help in correcting a stumble and perhaps prevent actual contact with the ground.

Overall, I attempt to avoid physical danger. So, if you've ever had *this* thought about your deacon, "well, I know she spends a lot of time near the beach, I bet she's a surfer!", you're incorrect!

Not a surfer, never will be (internet, yes; ocean, no). But, I have lots of surfers and surfing to observe from my home in Long Beach, Long Island. It's year-round and many times I've stepped out (carefully) for a chilly winter's walk on the boardwalk and, despite the season, would spot a surfer or two, doing their thing, even in the dead of winter.

I've observed much about surfers. When arriving to surf, carrying their surfboard and making it look effortless to lug that big ungainly thing, they generally sprint across the boardwalk, then out over the sand, their eyes on the prize - the surf - totally focused on where they're heading and the opportunities for joy that come with each wave. If you attempted to stop one of them, at this point, that would be difficult.

When the surfing is done, still effortlessly lugging the board, they're not running, but walking, exhausted but in a good way, focused inward, reflective, gratified. I'm guessing they're processing all that the surf brought them, reliving a good ride, rethinking bad moves. If you attempted to stop one of them, at this point, that would be difficult.

Okay, here's something about surfing culture you may not have known. After surfing, there's a need to remove the wet suit and surfers seem to be a bit nonchalant about this. You can spot them in the corners next to facilities with outdoor showers, stripping down and hosing off (albeit quickly) and even standing between their car and another just getting it done (the male surfers only, it seems, maybe because the gals typically wear bathing suits under the wetsuit). So, obviously, public nudity as a misdemeanor does not apply to surfers. (see "Disclaimer")

Why am I sharing this, you ask? Well, I'm guessing there are varying degrees of modesty and vulnerability around the brief yet real nudity of the quick change out of a wetsuit. But I'm also thinking that these surfers are in such an altered mental state after the euphoria of surfing, a barrier is loosened, they make themselves vulnerable, yet rise above that.

Surfers are "in the moment" free spirits, I can sense it. Surfing involves lots of balance and I wonder if the act of utilizing physical balance helps to center spiritual and emotional balance. Do the balance exercises I do in my class help my balance in these things as well? And while I'd like to say (but it wouldn't be true) that I sprint with abandon to my exercise class, I can surely say I, at least, walk home exhausted in a good way, with a feeling of having done a good thing.

Wouldn't it be great if we could try to embrace a life where we open ourselves to new experiences, plunge into learning opportunities, grab onto our faith, let ourselves just believe without qualifiers, pray like it's the best thing we can do today?

Analogy – hey, you knew it was coming –

- Run with exuberant joy, lugging your burdens lightly.
- Keep your eyes on the possibility of joy to come.
- Be aware of balance.
- Dive in and let it all happen and take the waves as they come, knowing some will knock the wind out of you.
- Return, sated, filled, changed, focused, and let that free you up to let some barriers down (again, see "Disclaimer")

Your spiritual life, your work life, your family life, your social life – yes, run for it, embrace it, keep your balance, get exhausted with exuberant joy... repeat.

Deacon Denise

DISCLAIMER: Deacon is NOT advocating public nudity. Deacon is attempting an analogy.

---

## TODAY AFTER CHURCH

Visitors are invited to pick up a welcome bag at the back of the church. All are welcome to Coffee Hour in the Parish House following the 11:00 a.m. service.

## COMMON CHORD CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Pledges keep climbing for the Common Chord capital campaign for restoration of the organ.

- Number of pledgers/donors: **83**
- Total amount pledged: **\$749,009**
- Total amount received: **\$442,008**

Will you help us reach our \$800,000 goal with a pledge and/or gift to the campaign? Pledges are payable over three years. Pick up a campaign brochure and pledge card at the back of the church or go to [givingsites.com/commonchord](https://givingsites.com/commonchord) to learn more.

## LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING – HYMNAL DEDICATION

With our organ undergoing restoration, we are using the piano in worship. Perhaps you've noticed an expansion of our congregational singing repertoire? That's because the piano lends perfectly to pieces from the African American and gospel traditions found in the Episcopal hymnal "Lift Every Voice and Sing II" (LEVAS). Soon we'll be purchasing copies of LEVAS for the pews! We are excited to present these hymnals to the glory of God and for service in the life of our congregation.

You are invited to dedicate a LEVAS hymnal to honor someone special or a special occasion. The dedication cost is \$25 per hymnal, and there will be a book plate placed on the inside cover to note the dedication as well as the donor. To donate \$25 and dedicate a hymnal, scan the QR code below or go to [churchoftheincarnation.org/donate](https://churchoftheincarnation.org/donate) and select "Lift Every Voice and Sing" from the dropdown menu. Be sure to type your dedication in the memo line.



## ECCLESIA MINISTRIES

**Sunday, July 21, 12:30 to 1:15 p.m.** Come to the Parish House Dining Room to help make sandwiches and pack lunches for Ecclesia Ministries of New York, which serves those who are food and housing insecure. The Rev. Canon Deacon Denise LaVetty serves an Ecclesia congregation that currently worships in the courtyard of Church of the Transfiguration (29th Street, between 5th and Madison) every Sunday from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Parishioners are also invited to attend this 2:00 p.m. service of Holy Eucharist and then distribute the lunches.

## SUMMER SCHEDULE

Incarnation's program year runs from mid-September through early June. This means that our Sunday morning Bible Study, Children's classes, and certain other ministries go on hiatus for the summer. The Incarnation Choir also takes a break, and we enjoy individual soloists at the principal Sunday service. The 2024-2025 program year will start up on Homecoming Sunday, the first Sunday after Labor Day.

## WEEKDAY WORSHIP AT INCARNATION

**Wednesday Holy Eucharist:** Join us each Wednesday at 12:15 p.m. for this Rite I spoken service of Holy Eucharist, which includes a brief homily, organ music, and healing prayer with holy oil.

**Thursday Candlelight Communion:** Join us each Thursday at 6:15 p.m. for Candlelight Communion, a service of Holy Eucharist that incorporates chant and silence as well as elements of contemporary worship. This service is informal and contemplative, with music led by a Cantor and a brief reflection by one of the clergy. You can also stream this service at [youtube.com/churchoftheincarnation](https://youtube.com/churchoftheincarnation).

**Daily Office:** Services of Morning Prayer and Compline are held via Zoom. To view the weekly schedule, go to [churchoftheincarnation.org/worship](https://churchoftheincarnation.org/worship).