

## Ebb and Flow

Reversing Falls Sanctuary

Winter, 2016



On Dec. 20 the Reversing Falls community gathered for our annual Advent Spiral

walk, an opportunity to walk to the center of the universe, or to the center of our faiths, or to the center of ourselves, seeking healing or peace or justice for ourselves or for others. The spiral is a walk, not just for oneself, but a walk in solidarity with our friends and neighbors in the Reversing Falls community and with those who suffer in the world today.

This coming Sunday, Jan. 31, at 4 p.m., we will gather for a presentation on the Syrian refugee crisis. Kel and Sher House will present their first person, firsthand account of the arrival of Syrian refugees on the small Greek island of Symi and a report on that community's response. The island, the size of Deer Isle, is very close to Turkey and receives a steady stream of boats dangerously overloaded with refugees. Kel and Sher House live on Cape Rosier and spend part of each year on Symi. They are witnesses to this humanitarian crisis.

Come at 3:30 if you would like to walk the labyrinth which is painted on the floor of the sanctuary. Participants may have other reasons to walk, but are especially encouraged to walk the labyrinth in solidarity with the refugees from Syria, from other places in the Near East, from Africa, and from Central America as they take perilous journeys into an unknown future. Please bring one item you would carry.

In the face of this crisis, the countries of Europe are struggling with the question of how many refugees they will welcome. And this country, which bears more than a little responsibility for creating the instability that led to this crisis in the first place, is debating whether to admit any refugees at all. I find it interesting that when Rome fell in the fifth century, tens of thousands of refugees fled. Many fled across the Mediterranean to North Africa. Others found their way to Greece and Asia Minor. Christians everywhere opened their homes and took them in. This country, as we are reminded, is a nation of immigrants. We celebrate our diversity, our openness, and the contributions immigrants have made and are making to our life together. But we remember that there has been from the beginning a darker strand in this fabric we have woven. The Puritans passed the first law against the admission of aliens in 1637, and they famously persecuted, banished, and even hanged dissenters. Puritans themselves were banished from Anglican Virginia. In the nineteenth century there was an anti-immigrant party known to history as the "Know Nothings." In the twentieth century the KKK added hate for immigrants to their terrorist activity.

Perhaps Sunday's conversation will touch on which impulse in the American character will shape our identity in the twenty-first century, and especially, what we can do in response to the refugee crises around the globe. This desperate movement of refugee peoples presages what may be a much larger crisis ahead when climate change makes vast areas of earth uninhabitable. The Lenten Series this year will address climate change. See Tony's article below.



## **2016 LENTEN SERIES: CARING FOR THE EARTH, OUR COMMON HOME**

It's official. Both NOAA and NASA report that last year, 2015, was the warmest year on record, surpassing the previous warmest year of 2014, which itself had surpassed 2013 as the warmest. Are there rational conclusions that can be drawn from this and other findings, or are these simply normal variations outside of human control or activity?

This year's Lenten series will focus on the scientific data and the accompanying moral imperatives that Climate Change is presenting to humanity at this moment of history. Are we humans creating a world inhospitable to life, including our own? If so, what does that call forth from us? While the science of Climate Change is providing an invaluable record of alarming planetary events, it seems inadequate by itself to produce the societal groundswell necessary for us to alter our destructive course and turn towards a sustainable future for all life.

A number of luminaries, from Naomi Klein to Pope Francis, as well as leaders

of many wisdom traditions, speak of the necessity for a dual change: a basic change in world-view and a basic change in personal identity. Naomi Klein recommends a movement to the Native American world view which places the human in a tribal way of life, intimately connected to all of nature. As regards a change in personal identity, also referenced as a change of heart, a process of grieving what has been and is being lost can lead one to radical change. This involves an inner journey wherein one experiences a connection to all that is.

The 2016 series will call upon the power of art, poetry, music, parable, ceremony, ritual, story and community to supplement the scientific information, thus offering us the chance to become more conscious of Earth's suffering and more compassionate in our responses. We are the first generation in the history of the Universe to be given the scientific Origin Story. Surely, it is no accident that the Story has been given to us at this time of Earth's withering, a time when humanity is being called to undertake a Great Turning. The program will be held on the six successive Sundays of Lent at 4 PM.

- February 14 ***The Findings of the Science of Climate Change*** presented by Dr. Paul Mayewski, Director of UMO Climate Change Institute
- February 21 ***The Native-American Wisdom and Caring for the Earth*** presented by Sherri Mitchell, JD, member of and legal council to the Penobscot Nation
- February 28 **Laudato Si: Pope Francis' Revolutionary Ecological Encyclical** presented by Anne Ferrara, founding member of RFS
- March 6 ***Local Area Poets Respond to Climate Change, moderator to be Announced***
- March 13 ***College of the Atlantic Students report on the Global Climate Change Conference in Paris (UNFCCC COPS/21)***
- March 20 ***Community: The Antidote to Despair, moderator to be announced***

For descriptions of each session, go to [www.reversingfalls.org](http://www.reversingfalls.org)

Coming Events

Sun., Jan 31, 3:30 p.m. Labyrinth walk in solidarity with refugees  
4 p.m. Report on Syrian Refugee Crisis with Kel and Sher House

Fri., Feb. 5, 4 p.m. Community Sing

Sun., Feb. 7, 4 p.m. Women's Circle

Wed. Feb. 10, 4 p.m. Ash Wednesday service, Brooksville United Methodist  
Church

Fri., Feb. 12, 4 p.m. Community Sing

Sun. Feb. 14, 4 p.m. The Findings of the Science of Climate Change

Fri. Feb. 19, 4 p.m. Community Sing

Sun. Feb. 21, 4 p.m. The Native-American Wisdom and Caring for the Earth

Fri. Feb. 26, 4 p.m. Community Sing

Sun. Feb. 28, 4 p.m. *Laudato Si*: Pope Francis' Revolutionary Ecological Encyclical

Fri. Mar. 4, 4 p.m. Community Sing

Sun. Mar. 6, 4 p.m. Local Area Poets respond to Climate Change

Fri. Mar. 11, 4 p.m. Community Sing

Sun. Mar. 13, 4 p.m. College of the Atlantic Students Report on the Global Climate  
Change Conference in Paris

Fri. Mar. 18, 4 p.m. Community Sing

Sun. Mar. 20, 4 p.m. Community: The Antidote to Despair

Thank you Tony Ferrara for the climate change article and for putting together this year's Lenten series. Thank you Sheila Moir for leading the community sings in Carl Karush's absence. Thank you Anne Ferrara for the Spiral photograph. Thank you Chris Noble for the Labyrinth photograph.

For information about Reversing Falls Sanctuary, visit [www.reversingfalls.org](http://www.reversingfalls.org)