



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH & VISUAL ARTS

## Lenten Newsletter March, 2024

### Embracing The Wilderness



*photo: "Smith Mountain Lake, Virginia, by Jorin Hood*

***The Mission Statement*** of the Episcopal Church and Visual Arts (ECVA) is to encourage artists and organizations to engage the visual arts in the spiritual life of the church. ECVA values the significance of faith, and encourages those who are engaged in using the visual arts in spiritual life.

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Jeanne Harris Weaver - Newsletter Editor

Jorin Hood - Director of Video and New Media

*For their contact information and to find out more about them,  
please go to the "Contact" page of the website:*

<https://ecva.org/about/contact.html>

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## From The Editor

Welcome to the ECVA Newsletter. I think it is remarkable that ECVA has so many distinct artists who participate widely in the events organized by our volunteer artists. We are blessed. Through all our efforts our work is seen throughout the United States and beyond. We are able to learn new and old ideas and creations and discuss art related subjects through our *Conversations* and *Contemplative Artists*. Thank you so much for your contributions. Your Board of Directors continues to reflect on ways that we can support you.

One thing we will be doing in this new year is to publish 6 newsletters a year. Sometimes I will be looking for a featured artist and other times I will ask for art to be featured in the newsletter on a specific subject or medium. This was so successful in the Christmas Issue. Your Board is excited about this addition and always look to you, our members, for suggestions. In this issue you will find two Call To Artists. The Call, *Layers of Hope* which will be exhibited in April on the website. The second is the Newsletter Call, *Trinity*, which will be exhibited in the May Newsletter.

Please note you must be an exhibiting member to participate in the Call To Artists. You may join or rejoin ECVA here: <https://theartistsregistry.camp7.org/sys/website/?pagelid=289528>

I want to thank so many of you who took the time during such a busy season to submit not only a piece of art but also your created Collects and Prayers. Speaking of those Collects I must apologize that in my rush to get the newsletter out I misplaced the Collect written by Kelly Bourgeois. Consequently I have copied it here:

*O God, who rules over all the earth and the people and creatures who inhabit it, Give us peace and rest this season from war, hunger, illness, violence, storms, and all that may trouble us. Let this be a time of joy as we remember the birth of your son to the blessed Virgin Mary in a lowly manger, surrounded by the animals you entrusted to our care. Let us respect our planet, our home in the universe, so that generations to come may do the same. Through Jesus Christ our Lord who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever, Amen.*

--Jeanne Harris Weaver, Editor  
[ecva.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ecva.newsletter@gmail.com)



# Letter from the President

March 2024

*So many words come to mind when I think about Lent. Sometimes we speak of giving up something or, maybe instead, something we can do extra to be of service to others. We reflect on our faith journey, our discernment in hearing a call, maybe just not a sense of direction in what we should do next.*

*Sometimes, I think Lent may be a time to let some of the questions remain unanswered. Maybe it needs to be a time to pause and to listen closely to things we need to hear. Maybe it is a time to embrace our vulnerability. We are told that Jesus went to the desert for forty days. Well, that is all we are told. Maybe the desert is a metaphor for emptiness as in a state of mind. Then again, maybe it is literal— did he have an ice chest, maybe some wine, a sketchbook??*

*What would I do in a desert situation? As an artist, I need to paint. I reach a contemplative state when I paint or when I do exercises like yoga or when I do centering prayer. It is a strange combination of both emptying and filling back up.*

*I often do my spring cleaning as a Lenten project— going through closets and cabinets— what needs to go, what needs to stay? Sprucing things up a bit— making all things new— a little paint, some cleaning, it works. One thing you realize as you go through your house, that from year to year, your needs change, your taste may change or be fine-tuned.*

*(cont'd next page)*



*This year, this new grandmother, needed to add a baby bed to the decor. This artist needed to select some new paints. This Episcopalian found a new parish and is finding new ways to engage in the life of the church. This mama marvels in watching her own daughter as she is now a mama. So many blessings, so much gratitude. Yes, sorrows and regrets are still there, but so is forgiveness of self and others.*

*Maybe this Lent give up judging yourself and thank God for who you have become through God's help. Accept your vulnerability. Depend on your faith. And go out to love and serve the Lord.*

*Joy Jennings  
President ECVA*

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On Wednesday, February 28, the Contemplative Painters Guild discussed the following quote by Augustine of Hippo. The Presentation was made by Mel Ahlborn.

"Late have I loved you, O Beauty so ancient and so new, late have I loved You! For behold, You were within me and I outside, and I sought You outside and in ugliness fell upon those lovely things which You have made. You were with me, and I was not with You. I was kept from You by those things yet had they not been in You they would have not been at all. You called and cried to me and broke upon my deafness and You sent forth Your light and shone upon me and chased away my blindness. You breathed fragrance upon me and I drew in breath. I tasted You and now I hunger and thirst for You. You touched me, and I have burned for your peace."

# Call To Artists



***The Board of Directors of ECVA would like to announce our next Call to Artists for our upcoming exhibition, Layers of Hope, which will be curated by ECVA artist, Suzanne Schleck. Submissions will be open on February 29 and will close on April 7. We ask that you submit your artist bio in pdf format. If you are interested in selling your work, you may include your website and contact information so possible clients may contact you. The exhibition will be published online just before Pentecost so everyone can see the work and the many layers of talent that contribute to the spirit of our ECVA Artist community. Note: The complete Call To Artists can be found on the ECVA website.***

"So let us share how our art brings hope to a sometimes dark and chaotic world, and how our art expresses and contributes to the building of community." — Suzanne Schleck

Please check the link below to know where to send your submission, size your images and everything else you need to know.

## **Guidelines for submissions:**

<https://ecva.org/howtoexhibit.html>

# Embracing The Wilderness

*“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11: 28-30 NRSVA)*

The Lenten Season is often looked upon as a time of discipline and often a time of self improvement. What if it is also thought of as a time of refreshment, a time of renewal? The Wilderness of Lent may bring hardship or growth. It may be a time of reliance and prayer. It is a time to be open to God’s messages. It is a place of solitude and, through that solitude, divine encountering.

The word, Lent is derived from the old English word *Lencten* meaning “spring season”.

Artists were asked to submit art which embraces the positivity of encountering the wilderness of Lent.



***“Grand Canyon - Into the Wilderness” by  
The ‘Rev. Edward L. Mullins***

While visiting the Grand Canyon, I came across this man who seemed engrossed at the greatness of the view. This wilderness of rock and partial soil, blasted by the sandstones of time, reminds us all that God has given us this good earth to treasure and to care for and even during moments of reflection, a place to wonder at - during our earthly journey into God's presence.



*There are  
No Resting Places*

**36x72 in. Oil  
Triptych  
Claudia Smith**

“Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers...”

Isaiah’s powerful voice awakens us! Puts us on equal footing with the lowly grasshopper. Contemplating that placement is what Lent is all about: being open to God’s grace and mercy; humbly acknowledging and accepting who we are; and through prayerful renewal, identifying our quest.

My journey as an artist is a constant quest. My seeking doesn’t require it to be the season of Lent, but it appropriately intensifies during this time—increasingly cleansing and soul searching. Soul searching is art’s “bottom line.”

As someone who operates visually, I’m intrigued by a stark, white canvas. Its sometimes frightening emptiness beckons to be filled. I am called to embrace that wilderness—soul exposed and open to commitment—with what I believe is divine inspiration: to create art, as God intended me to do, where there are no resting places.

As poet David Whyte wrote: “Into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul.”



***Near To the Heart of  
God***  
**16x20 oil on canvas**

**Joy Jennings**



“Come to me all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest  
—“

“There is a place of comfort sweet, near to the heart of God— O Jesus, blessed Redeemer,  
sent from the heart of God, bless them who wait before thee, Near to the heart of God.”

This old gospel hymn comes to mind this Lent. For me, Lent is a time to simply rest in the presence of God. This time of stillness and solitude brings rest, brings comfort, and, also, brings answers——Answers of where to go from the wilderness experience to love and serve the Lord.



***Photo taken at Bernardo Wildlife  
Refuge north of Socorro, New Mexico,  
early morning***

***Photographer: Margaret Amada***

The thing that's been on my mind regarding wilderness experiences—both spiritual and physical—is that God always sends me both surprises and unexpected companions.

It's very different from a controlled “garden” experience, and much more magnificent and full of awe. Also there's a deep connection with the strange and alien, which become beautiful.

***Murmuration***  
oil over acrylic on canvas  
48x36"

by Ann Cameron Cutri



This piece is about the continued war in Ukraine and the resiliency of the people there. The sunflowers represent the story about the woman who was offering sunflower seeds to the Russian soldiers, so that when they died, a sunflower would grow. A symbol of the country's flower and hope during conflict. There is one of God's names in Hebrew which is Yaweh Rophe (the one who heals).



***Wandering Through the Woods***  
Assemblage  
Alisa Clark

At eight, I accidentally watched "The Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima," a film whose essence—children finding something miraculous and receiving a special message—captured me entirely. This memory resurfaced when I stumbled upon a statue, likely of Our Lady, reminding me of my childhood wanders through the woods with my dog, discovering the "ordinary" magic of nature. These solitary adventures, though not as profound as the film's events, were equally enchanting. As a Lenten practice, I plan to reconnect with this sense of wonder by exploring the woods again, seeking God in the simplicity of the natural world. I've prepared a "shrine" with the statue and natural items to recall those days of innocent exploration. Before Easter, I must re-experience God's presence outdoors, reliving the childlike awe and gratitude for the ordinary beauty surrounding me. Before this Lenten season has a chance to get away from me, I must make it a point to go wandering in the woods with my dog in search of something miraculous.



***Absegami Ocean and  
Land***

**( Lenape word for  
Absecon Island, New  
Jersey, location of  
present day Atlantic  
City)**

**photographer-  
Phoebe M. Farris, PhD**

For me there is no “wilderness”. It is a term that I seldom use because it was used by European colonists to describe what is now North America or as we say Turtle Island; a land that was supposedly empty and available for development. But my ancestors were here and I/we are still here.

The ocean waters and sandy land are not empty. On the shore one can find small crabs and in the shallow waters small fish.

We/I are never alone standing on the dry sandy shoreline and then walking into the shallow ocean water, becoming wet. God/Creator/Spirit/Angels/Mother Earth/Father Sky are always with us.

**Lenten Prayer from St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD)**

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, that I may defend all that is holy.

Guard me, O Holy Spirit, that I myself may always be holy.

*Amen.*



# Outward Appearance | Inward Significance

— Mel Ahlborn



[Image: 'The Crucifixion' (detail) 1565, Tintoretto (1519–1594), Copyright:Public Domain]

Consider a painting of crucifixion, three crosses on a hill. This is the painting's outward appearance. To a viewer familiar with the story of the Crucifixion of Christ, the painting also has an inward significance - a flow of story woven with meaning. The inner significance may be a memory of Christ's passion, the mercy Christ showed to the other men on the crosses, the miracle stories, and so much more. In this way art is deeply personal and broadly universal, sharing a group understanding with others with whom the story is shared.  
(con't next page)



It is through these shared stories that art evolves into cultural identity, a locus of community and history. This is art's true inward significance - cultural art and architecture captivates the minds and hearts of entire nations, creates group identity, unifies those of shared history even if all are not of like mind. These works are precious, at times fragile, often in need of protection and preservation. When these landmarks are lost through accidental disaster or intentional destruction, the effect is greater than an absence of the painting or building - the loss is felt at the very heart of the people whose identity is formed by its memory.

It is vital that you, the artist, understand and accept your essential role, that you record your own visual narrative and share it with your community. Your vocation is to make apparent to the viewer what is invisible to their eye, to master through your art an outward appearance that carries a life-giving, forward-moving inward significance. Here are links to stories of works of art of great inward significance - stories of persistence, loss, triumph, and preservation.

#### 10 Heritage Sites Lost to Disaster and War

A look at cultural sites that have been bombed, flooded, destroyed, and built over

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/10-heritage-sites-lost-to-disaster-and-war/kALyuo79hhrkLQ>

#### The Rape of Europa

The Rape of Europa tells the epic story of the systematic theft, deliberate destruction and miraculous survival of Europe's art treasures during the Third Reich and WWII.

<https://www.amazon.com/Rape-Europa-Joan-Allen/dp/B00HHLJDMG>

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*Lord, remember those artists whom you have placed among us, for are they not, O Lord, the fellows of your inspiration? Do they not, Lord God, bring to your people great proof of your divinity and our part in it?*

*Amen*

*(from Jeanne Weaver's collection of prayers)*

**A Call To Artists**  
**For Entry in the May Newsletter 2024**  
**The Trinity**

Trinity Sunday , one of 7 major feasts celebrated in the Episcopal Church, takes place on May 26 this year.

Express through art, which may be accompanied by a self written prayer, how you experience the Trinity in your daily life. Please include, title, media, and size of art and an artist statement (100 - 200 words). Image should be 72dpi.

You may submit one piece of art which will be exhibited in the May Newsletter.

Please send your submission to [ecva.newsletter.org](http://ecva.newsletter.org) during the month of April.

The following is the last stanza in a prayer and hymn written in the 11th century called "I Bind Unto Myself"

*"I bind unto myself today,  
The strong name of the Trinity:  
By invocation of the same,  
The Three in One and One in Three, Of Whom all nature hath creation, Eternal Father,  
Spirit, Word:  
Praise to the Lord of my salvation -- Salvation is of Christ the Lord!"*

For inspiration you may consider reading "Divine Dance" by Richard Rohr  
A few verses from the Bible:

Matthew 28:19

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*

Isaiah 48: 18

*Draw near to me, hear this!  
From the beginning I have not spoken in secret,  
from the time it came to be I have been there.  
And now the Lord God has sent me and his spirit.*

John 14; 26

*'I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.*

## What is Coming Up in Videography from Jorin Hood

Here are some details on what is in store in videography in March and April. Jorin Hood will join us in two *Conversations*. He will talk to us about Shooting a Video Sequence. “In these two sessions we will break down how to shoot and edit a sequence for video. We will take a simple process and examine how to visually explain that process. The sequence is the building block of visual story telling using video as the medium.”

A *Call To Artists* will be posted July 1 with a deadline for submissions to be August 15. The Exhibit Title is *What Are You Discovering?*

“This exhibit will encourage all photographers to show what they have been recently exploring. Whether new subjects or techniques, whether polished or a work in progress, we want to present our work with the emphasis of discovery- how we are learning.”

Two *Conversations* titled “Learning From Each Other” will follow the exhibit. We will build on the recent exhibit and share what we have learned about our techniques and subject matter.

***Check the calendar in this issue as well as emails for times and***





The ECVA Contemplative Painters Guild meets on the last Wednesday afternoon of each month to discuss our work, our inspiration, our faith.

This is offered through ECVA for our current members. If you are interested in joining us, you may contact Joy Jennings at [joyjenningsartstudio@gmail.com](mailto:joyjenningsartstudio@gmail.com)

## **CONNECT & CREATE THIS WEEK!**

**March 20 - Textile Treasures of The Episcopal Church with Marianna Garthwaite Klaiman, Part 2 WEDNESDAY**

**March 21 - Constructing a Video Sequence with Jorin Hood, Part 1 THURSDAY**

**These events are offered exclusively to current members of ECVA. We welcome your membership. To join ECVA please go to:**

**<https://theartistsregistry.camp7.org/sys/website/?pageld=289528>**

**Calendar continues next page**



# ECVA Online Calendar | Winter/Spring 2024

## Conversations

Wednesdays and Thursdays | 7pm Eastern, 6pm Central, 4pm Pacific

## Contemplative Painters

Wednesdays | 11am Eastern, 10am Central, 8am Pacific

**March 20 - Textile Treasures of The Episcopal Church with Marianna Garthwaite Klaiman, part 2**

**March 21 - Constructing a Video Sequence with Jorin Hood, Part 1 THURSDAY**

**March 24-March 30 - Holy Week**

**March 27 - ECVA Contemplative Painters Guild**

**March 31 - Easter Sunday**

**April 4 - Constructing a Video Sequence with Jorin Hood, Part 2**

**April 17 - Glazing Techniques and Demonstrations with Melissa Strickler**

**April 30 - ECVA Contemplative Painters Guild**

**May 15 - Finding Themes Within - Archiving and Publishing Your Art with Alisa Clark**

**May 19 - Pentecost Sunday**

**April 30 - ECVA Contemplative Painters Guild**

**UPCOMING - WATCH YOUR EMAIL FOR MORE INFO**

**- The Traveling Artist with Joy Jennings [June 2024]**

**- Summer Open Studio [July 10, 2024]**

***Mark your calendars now!***

## Did You Know

The color *Carmine* is one of the oldest colors of red. It was used by the Incas and was brought to pre-America by the Spaniards. It was used for royal robes, and on the lips of queens. It was a favorite of renowned British artist William Turner (1775-1855). But during Turner's time, the Carmine paint was not permanent or lightfast and would fade quickly. Carmine is made from the Cochineal Beetle which is the size of a fingernail and lives on the Prickly Pear Cactus. It takes 70,000 beetles to make one pound of dye. Although the Cochineal Beetle is still harvested; today, most paints are made from synthetic materials.

### CONNECT & CREATE

Learn More\* and Register at The ECVA Artist Registry

\*Please note that most ECVA Online Events are a benefit of ECVA Membership and are exclusively for ECVA Members.

Log in to your Registry account to view all upcoming ECVA Online Events.

If you are not logged in, only public events will be visible on the Events page.

Visit and Join the ECVA Artists Registry

Visit and Join the ECVA Artists Registry.

The Artists Registry | A Division of ECVA, Inc.

<https://theartistsregistry.camp7.org/sys/website/?pageId=289528>

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*encouraging visual arts in the life of the Episcopal Church*