

Holy Hikes Report 2013

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.” – Psalm 19:1

It has been said that “people will protect what they love.” The ultimate goal of Holy Hikes is to help individuals be renewed in their love-relationship with the Earth, the Universal Church, and with their Creator. Holy Hikes invites people into a relationship with creation in a Communion-centered way through weekly liturgical hikes. Every fourth Saturday of the month we gather at 9:45 a.m. for a 10 a.m. hike during which we celebrate a stational Eucharist. The Rev. Thomas Berry writes, “There is no such thing as ‘human community’ without the earth and the soil and the air and the water and all the living forms. Without these, humans do not exist. In my view, the human community and the natural world will go into the future as a single sacred community or we will both perish in the desert.” Holy Hikes is one concrete way we are rebuilding our communion with the natural world.

Holy Hikes is established as a ministry of Saint Giles, Moraga, serving the Diocese of California and the wider San Francisco Bay Area. We hold hikes throughout the diocese in Alameda County, Contra Costa County, Marin County, San Francisco County, and San Mateo County. The location changes monthly in order to reach people throughout the diocese. This year we have visited Mount Diablo State Park, The Oakland Zoo (where we held a “Zoocharist”), Marin Headlands, Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve, Point Pinole Regional Shoreline, Coyote Hills Regional Park, Lake Chabot Regional Park, and Land’s End in San Francisco.

In June, the Rt. Rev. Marc Handley Andrus presided over a Holy Hikes outing at Coyote Hills Regional Park, a hike that drew over thirty people. We also celebrated our three-year anniversary this year with a liturgical hike at Land’s End, San Francisco, followed by a wild bird program offered by Native Bird Connections (www.nativebirds.org), a local nonprofit rescue for non-releasable birds of prey. The program was kindly hosted by St. James, San Francisco.

I have been serving as director of Holy Hikes since I founded the ministry in 2010 and am joined by a very diverse and talented team of associates including: the Rev. Sylvia Miller-Mutia (associate priest), the Rev. Lauren McCombs (associate deacon), Wesley D. Capps (associate lay minister), David Romain (associate geographer), and Matthew Lanier (associate music minister). We have many plans and dreams for Holy Hikes including the development of an annual or bi-annual retreat, more rigorous hiking adventures, satellite ministries outside the Bay Area, and possible overnight camping trips. We are excited about the growing support for this ministry and invite you to learn more online at www.holyhikes.org.

Respectfully Submitted by the Rev. Justin R. Cannon, founder and director, Holy Hikes™