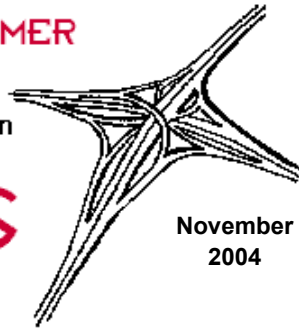




CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

A Christian Liberation Community
in the Episcopal Tradition

CROSSROADS



November
2004

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In This Issue ...

- The Rector's Response to the Windsor Report
 - From a Pastoral Assistant
 - No Place Like Home
 - Meet the Vestry
 - Spiritual Parenting - It Takes a Village
 - I Want to Be a Teacher
 - Pre-Confirmation Class Poetry
 - Author Review
-

I Love Being an Episcopalian at This Time The Rector's Response to the Windsor Report

by Phillip Wilson

Following the consecration of the Rt. Rev. Gene Robinson, the first openly gay bishop in the Anglican Communion, of which Redeemer and the entire Episcopal Church is a part, certain dioceses in Africa and in this nation cried "foul." They threatened to leave. They cited tradition and scripture condemning homosexuality. Clearly the Church had entered new territory just as it did when blacks and women were first ordained. In an effort to keep the discussion going and to forestall schism the Archbishop of Canterbury, the spiritual head of the Anglican Communion, convened a commission to study the issue and bring back recommendations for reconciliation. That report, titled the Windsor Report, was published this past week.

The report in over 100 pages made four major points. (1) Bishops from the conservative and anti-gay dioceses must stop entering other dioceses and undermining the authority of local bishop who supported the consecration of Bishop Robinson. (2) Bishops who supported the consecration of Bishop Robinson are to apologize for the hurt and pain caused to conservative dioceses. (3) The entire Anglican Communion is to work to create a voluntary covenant amongst themselves to handle controversial issues like this in the future. (4) The Episcopal Church in America is asked to adopt a self-imposed moratorium on any future consecration of openly gay bishops. The moratorium is only a temporary measure to give time for dialogue and reconciliation.

What is my response as one who sees the consecration of Bishop Robinson as modern-day acting out of the Gospel of Jesus and the preaching of the Hebrew prophets? Is there anything to apologize for?

I have always believed that leadership was about being clear about your commitments along with a willingness to act on them and accept the cost. At the same time an essential element of leadership is to remain emotionally and compassionately connected to people who feel wronged and abused by your commitments. A leader is one who is willing to hold on to his/her commitments and at the same time feel the pain of those who feel they are the losers.

This is what I hear within the Windsor report. I hear this in the comments of our Presiding Bishop, the Most Rev. Frank Griswold. He expressed regret for the pain that the actions of the Episcopal Church has caused but did not apologize for the consecration of Bishop Robinson. He said, "It is important to note that in the Episcopal Church we are seeking to live the gospel in a society where homosexuality is openly discussed and increasingly acknowledged in all areas of our public life. The Report calls for reconciliation but that does not mean a reduction of our differences to a single point of view. The fundamental reality of the Episcopal Church is the diverse center, in which a common commitment to Jesus Christ, and a sense of mission in his name to a broken and hurting world override varying opinions on any number of issues, including homosexuality. This

diverse center is characterized by a spirit of mutual respect and affection rather than hostility and suspicion. I would therefore hope that some of the ways in which we have learned to recognize Christ in one another, in spite of strongly held divergent opinions, can be of use in other parts of our communion."

Presiding Bishop Griswold sums up why I am so pleased to be an Episcopalian. Our union is not about agreeing with each other, but about loving each other. It is about walking side by side with widely divergent beliefs. It is about loving each other rather than judging each other.

I am so pleased that our church is forcing people of faith all over the world to discuss the issue of what it means to be a child of God, and is ever pushing wider the circle of inclusion. Most churches in a search for harmony push the issue under the rug. We are out in the open. And, as women were first ordained and forced the church to deal with it, so there is an openly gay bishop in the Episcopal Church and we are dealing with it.

Change is always messy and often painful. What is going on in the Episcopal Church is the result of individual people living out not only the Christian Gospel, but also their personal baptismal vows, which are "to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself and to strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being." No one ever said that it is easy to be a Christian.

The challenge for us at Redeemer is to love those who openly condemn and ridicule the commitments we hold and the support we give not only to Bishop Robinson, but also to all gay, lesbian and transgender people everywhere, who only want to live their lives fully and to claim the gifts that God has given them. The challenge for us is to remain strong in our commitments and at the same time to feel the pain and anguish of those who fear their church is being taken away from them, and feel that it has lost its moral center. The challenge is to always remember that it our job is to do the loving, and Gods job to do the judging, even of "those who insult you and persecute you and tell all kind of evil lies against you." (Matthew 5:11)

I love being an Episcopalian at this time.

Phillip

From a Pastoral Assistant

by L. Edwin Hamil

As the beauty of fall overwhelms our senses with its profusion of color, chilling breezes, and the acrid smell of decaying leaves, we begin to have thoughts of Thanksgiving -- the smell of roasting turkey and the warmth of hearth, family, and friends.

I hope that, as Thanksgiving weekend approaches, we can spend some time observing the beauty of autumn and, perhaps in a solitary moment or two, reflect on the true meaning of the holiday and on those things for which we, indeed, should be thankful.

Patrick Henry Reardon once wrote, "Suppose for a moment that God began taking from us the many things for which we have failed to give thanks. Which of our limbs and faculties would be left? Would I still have my hands and my mind? And what about loved ones? If God were to take from me all those persons and things for which I have not given thanks, who or what would be left of me?"

This Thanksgiving, let us truly be thankful for our many blessings, both great and small:

*It is good to give thanks to You,
O Beloved,
to sing praises to your holy name,
To affirm your steadfast love
in the morning,
and your faithfulness through
the night,
To the music of the spheres,
to the melody of the universe!
For You, Heart of my heart, gladden
my soul,
as I proclaim with joy the harmony
and beauty of creation.*

From Nan C. Merrill's Psalms for Praying

No Place Like Home

by a Long-Time Congregant

My family moved to New Jersey from Virginia Beach in 1974. My mother was very active in the church there, so it was very important to her to find the right church for our family. We first attended an Episcopal church in Denville. We attended for a while but it did not feel right or like a family. My Mother heard of a church in Morristown called St. Peter's, and decided to give that a try. It was the month of July and a priest named Sandy Cutler was doing the services there.

My mother loved his sermons and felt a connection. When the month of July was over Sandy Cutler went back to his church, Church of the Redeemer (My mom did not know that St. Peter's and Redeemer switched churches for the month of July and August.) So when this great man left St. Peter's my family followed, and there began my life at Redeemer.

My mother quickly got us involved in everything that was offered to the children. Before I knew it I was singing in the children's choir. We would practice every Sunday morning before services and also every other Wednesday night. I have to admit that the Children's Choir sounded pretty good. Not quite comparable to the adult choir but we were getting there! I also attended Sunday School on a regular basis. I am trying to uphold the same consistency for my two boys, but am finding it a little challenging to get them there every Sunday. That makes me appreciate even more the dedication and devotion my mom had towards the church.

I was an acolyte for quite a few years also. My brother and I would acolyte together for services. We were mostly all business when performing out acolyte duties; but behind the scenes is where some of my fondest memories lie. Back in the day the acolytes sat in the Sacristy until we were called upon to perform our next acolyte duty. After a while we got to know how much time we had between appearances. So...on our down time we would run across South Street to Baskin Robbins, with our acolyte vestments flapping in the wind. We would bring back ice cream for ourselves and no sooner then the last morsel was consumed it was time for the dismissal. That however lasted only a short time due to the fact that somebody discovered our little hiatus. From then on we were to sit in the church for the entire service.

Our fun did not stop there. Another one of my fondest memories was of coffee hour. My parents would stay at coffee hour for what seemed like much more then an hour. So my brother and I turned into explorers and discovered every nook and cranny of the church and the parish hall. The most intriguing of all was the beautiful bell tower. Back then the door was never locked. We would climb slowly up the spiral staircase and it seemed to go on forever till we got to the very top. We always thought someone would start ringing the bell while we were up there but lucky for us that never happened!

I also took my confirmation classes at Redeemer, and was confirmed by the Bishop. My sister Kathy and I also participated in the Christmas pageant every year.

I moved to Colorado in my early twenties for a short time. When I came back as an adult and ready for marriage there was no question which church I would be married in. And that is when we met Phillip Wilson. Phillip took over for Sandy Cutler while I was away. I had reservations about this new priest, but after our first pre-marital counseling with Phillip I knew we were blessed with another great man. Phillip married Craig and I in 1990, he has also baptized both of my children Collin and Bryce.

It gives me such peace and joy when I sit in that beautiful stone church after 30 years and know that there is...no place like home!

Meet the Vestry

by a Vestry Member

"And you may ask yourself-well ... how did I get here?" Well, I've asked myself that question often in the last three years. (And to restate a common Redeemer theme, it's all about the questions, not the answers.) But let me tell you a little bit about myself. I've lived in New Jersey my whole life (well, since I was a toddler), growing up in Morris Plains. I went to high school in Morristown, college in Princeton, and law school in Boston. I've known my wife since we were in high school together, but we didn't start dating until ten years after we graduated, when we got reacquainted at our tenth reunion. We have two children, a puppy (Joey, a Coton de Tulear), a guinea pig (Eve) and two fancy goldfish (Daisy & Henry). We live in Bedminster in a house, parts of which reportedly date back to the 1830s. (Fortunately it has modern plumbing, but when you visit, you can use the outhouse in the back, if you want to.)

I practiced law for a few years in Morristown, then transitioned to legal publishing as a legal editor. I'm currently Managing Editor for specialty legal newsletters for a publisher and legal education provider in Little Falls. In my so-called spare time, I'm a cruciverbalist (crossword puzzle enthusiast), guitarist, bibliophile, and chef.

I grew up in a Jewish home, but in a highly assimilated and Reform environment. We celebrated the major Jewish holidays at

home and with other relatives, but we never really belonged to a synagogue or attended services. (Bar/Bat Mitzvahs of friends and relatives were my primary experience of temple life.) I went to Hebrew school for only about a year, and in junior high, I attended a secular Jewish Sunday school. That experience piqued my interest in Jewish culture and folklore. We learned a little bit about the Yiddish language, read Yiddish literature (in translation: Sholem Aleichem, I.B. Singer, I.L. Peretz, etc.), sang Jewish songs, and studied some Jewish history.

I've always considered myself Jewish-at least, I always wanted to respect and remember my Jewish ancestry, and preserve Jewish traditions and practices for my descendants. God, however, was never part of my daily life, and for most of my teen and adult years, I considered myself an agnostic and a secular humanist. But I did sense a spiritual connection among people, the earth, and living things that I was not ready to refer to as God.

I've also always been sympathetic to "Christian" things-Christmas carols, the spirit of Christmas, the awesome majesty of churches and cathedrals, etc. I remember doing tech work for a college production of Godspell, and feeling that the teachings of Jesus really were meaningful and important. Yet I was baffled that most of what I knew of institutionalized Christianity bore little resemblance to the Kingdom envisioned by the biblical Jesus.

Religion was never an important issue in my life, but religious issues occasionally complicated my life. My wife was raised Episcopalian, and her great- and great-great-grandfathers were Episcopal priests, so arranging a suitable marriage service that wouldn't offend either side of the family was tough. We ended up crafting our own lovely and original service, officiated by a Presbyterian minister (a friend of my mother's) and a rabbi we located in the back pages of the New York Times Magazine. We rarely discussed the religious upbringing of our children, although the question did arise from time to time.

Then September 11th happened, and my wife strongly felt the need for some spiritual presence and comfort in her life and for our family. Personally, I was extremely reluctant to start attending any house of worship on a regular basis, let alone a church. But my wife had heard of Redeemer, and I visited the website. I was favorably impressed with the mission and spirit of Redeemer. (It was certainly more welcoming than a number of websites of liberal synagogues I had visited, which seemed to welcome intermarried couples, but also encouraged such families to maintain a strictly Jewish home life.) I had also heard Bishop Spong preach a few years earlier at St. Paul's in Morris Plains, when my wife's cousins were confirmed, and I was definitely an advocate of his vision of Christianity.

So one Sunday (in the Green Season) we visited Redeemer, and I had a great time! (I believe My wife found the liturgy more surprising than I did, since she grew up with Prayerbook-only services.) The service certainly reflected the Jewish roots of Christianity, from the opening lines adapted from the Haggadah (the service guide for Passover) to the quotations from the Shema, the fundamental prayer of the Jews. ("You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." You may recall Norman Salsitz telling us that when his father was cornered by the Nazis, he called out, "Shema Yisrael ...") I discovered I love to sing hymns, and the beauty of the sanctuary space, the organ music, and the stained glass made me want to seek "sanctuary" at Redeemer on a regular basis to refuel, spiritually. I hadn't even realized that I had that need.

The clincher for the deal came after we attended an Inquirers' Class and stopped to speak with Phillip afterwards. "Whatever you decide to do, I hope you'll always continue to celebrate the Jewish holidays and traditions at home with your children-that's important," he said. And so we became members.

A little over a year later, Peter Arney called me and asked if I would consider joining the Vestry. I was honored, flabbergasted, and a little scared. "Uh, Peter, you know I'm Jewish, right?" "Sure, that's fine. We'd like you to consider being the Youth Education liaison." So after much thought and internal debate, I agreed, being 98% sure that I wouldn't be struck by lightning. What can I bring to the development of our Christian education program for children at Redeemer? For one thing, I have no preconceived notions of what Christian education has to include, or what Sunday School should be like. I've remarked before in these pages that the spiritual or religious education of our children encompasses much more than weekly Sunday School. Just being part of the Redeemer family is an education. As part of an inclusive community, our children (and we adults, too) have an opportunity to celebrate the diversity of humanity, to learn from others from different backgrounds, just by being among them. (Some children spend most of the week at schools and in neighborhoods with rather homogeneous demographics.) Walking in the AIDS Walk, helping on Parish Work Day, coming to Maundy Thursday Supper, taking Communion, and participating in some "Big Church" events are all ways that children can absorb some sense of the presence of God in our lives and the meaning of the Redeemer Mission and Vision.

What would I like our children to learn from their Sunday School and Redeemer experiences? I think it starts with "Tradition" (house lights down, cue Zero Mostel). We are, after all, "a Christian Liberation Community in the Episcopal tradition." Much of the Godliness in worship at Redeemer lies in the (mostly) traditional words of the liturgy, the sounds of the organ, the ancient hymn tunes, the perpetual cycle of the changing liturgical seasons. These all serve to connect us with the past. The Godly Play curriculum helps keep bible stories alive and meaningful for our children.

Some traditions, however, have to change in order for other useful and meaningful traditions to survive. (See, e.g., slavery, antimiscegenation laws, etc.) As Bishop Spong has said, "Christianity must change or die." I hope the Redeemer experience will give our children the resources to facilitate this change. That is why we drafted the five Tenets of Our Faith for Redeemer:

- We are on a journey to seek the mystery and light of God.
- We believe everyone is a child of God-our brothers and sisters.

- We are a people of love, justice, and compassion.
- We work to make our actions match what we believe.
- We hold up the life and vision of Jesus as a spiritual path for our lives.

This is not a catechism, but a set of principles underlying the Youth Education program. The stories, lessons, projects and activities that we undertake with the children need to flow from these tenets. I believe that this process will help our children keep Christianity alive in this new millennium.

Spiritual Parenting - It Takes a Village

by Mary Jane Wilkie, Director of Sunday School

From parents' comments on Sunday school registration forms, I learn that almost all want their children to experience God, to know about God, and develop a sense of things spiritual. Sometimes we adults talk about bringing spirituality into our lives as though it were a segment we can add to an already multifaceted existence. To draw an analogy with physical health, observe that health is not something we acquire, but already have. Our health may be good, average, or poor, and we can decide to take actions that move it in one or the other direction. Likewise spirituality, in that we all have some degree of it, which we can choose to nourish or neglect. We are constantly being formed culturally, morally, and spiritually, by influences pressing on us from work, school, peers, television and other media. Ours is the choice to be more or less intentional about this formation, and we can be intentional about the process for our children.

The faith journey begins with the child even if you're an adult when you start. For the journey to be rich, we must nurture it constantly. How? Through a discipline structured to expose us to situations having the potential to bring about a shift in the spirit. "Discipline" is not in favor these days, but this is what we do by setting aside Sunday for worship. Ritual is a tool in the endeavor, and effective use of symbol and silence is crucial.

To emulate "big church," our Sunday school offers a quiet and special place, a sacred place where children can meet and worship God. Here, we walk quietly and talk softly. Children, especially young ones, have an early experience of God that they might not be able to express. In our class, we help them develop language for expressing that experience. The stories we use are ancient, replete with symbols and metaphors that have spoken to people across the ages. In responding to these stories, children play, giving free rein to their imaginations and learning about themselves and life in the process. We are not information driven, nor is our goal a product, such as an identical craft project for each and every child. Our priority is rather the process whereby the child grapples with thoughts and feelings, interacts with other children and adults, and learns responsibility for our sacred space. We treat our classroom and each other with respect, modeling behavior that children will carry with them into the world.

Key to our interaction with the children is the use of "I wonder ...," as in "I wonder how it felt to be in an ark for forty days of rain." Children learn early to respond to adult expectations, to answer questions and supply information in ways they know will be pleasing to adults. If instead of supplying them with or eliciting specific answers, we engage in wondering with the children, we adults become partners in the search for meaning. Parents often express surprise to see children listening quietly in our classes, commenting, "today's children are accustomed to stimulation and fast pace." Children are most decidedly NOT accustomed to intense stimulation and fast pace. We adults force this circumstance on them through the world we have built: television and its intense visual and auditory stimulation, movies with their assault on the senses, computer games that reward a lightning response. Healthy spiritual growth cannot occur in such a milieu. As in "big church," silence and deliberate response take precedence.

We in Sunday school seek to form partnerships with parents, in which Sunday activities will promote the growth that is encouraged by parents at home. Just as one does not become proficient as a pianist by playing only at the weekly lesson, the spiritual discipline is no discipline if exercised only occasionally. Home rituals play a vital role in offering an experience of the sacred every day, and at multiple times during the day. Saying grace before meals, saying prayers upon rising and at bedtime, thanking God for the many gifts bestowed, help us all remember the sacred in our lives. Sunday school rituals are only a more formalized version of what must occur in the home. This intentional formation helps us all grow spiritually.

A strong sense of one's spirituality, one's connection with others and with the world, is the seed that bears fruit in the form of good and just actions. Children take their cues from adults, valuing the sacred from their observation of us at worship. They will emulate the behavior we model, and let no one be confused: children are always observing the actions of adults, any and all adults. We communicate our priorities by how we decide to spend Sunday morning, by our serious attention to the ritual, and whether we take time for others. These factors make a difference in the spiritual formation of a child, and it happens in the village that is Redeemer.

I Want to Be a Teacher

by a Former Sunday School Teacher

On the day in June when school closed I became the "teacher" in my neighborhood. At my home there were pencils, paper, chalk, and a pencil sharpener like the one in school. What else did I need? Children, there were none.

In senior high school each of my classmates had to take a turn for one week to report on the daily news. When it was my turn all the boys shouted, "We can't hear you ... speak louder!" Not a good example for anyone wanting to be a teacher.

On to the University of Wisconsin. I enjoyed my classes and was ready to graduate but had to have one semester of practice teaching. Guess who came to visit one day? My very own high school English teacher! That was not my favorite day.

My real teaching career began in northern Wisconsin, teaching English and Drama. My superintendent of schools came to observe one day and told me later "I have never been in a class before where oral English was fun for the kids." Hurrah! We did not have the usual class plays like Aunt Tillie Goes on a Trip. My favorites were Jane Eyre and Lost Horizon. Why? The sets, the costumes, the lights, and the students eager to help made it exciting. Remedial reading class was also special because of the positive results.

My last 17 years of teaching? Did you guess ... preschool! What age was my favorite? All of them!

One day I waked into Redeemer, 15 years ago, and was asked to teach the littlest. What did I know about teaching little Episcopalians? I came from a Dutch Reform Church. However, soon I realized our children came from many religions.

I have had the opportunity to spend time with our world's most precious and valuable resource - children - for I am a teacher. Waiting in a room for the first child to appear I felt a happiness and blessing I would otherwise have missed. Rarely does a person find the feeling of accomplishment that comes from making a difference in another's life. Teaching can make that happen.

P.S. Somewhere in the above 350 words I neglected to mention my name at Redeemer! To one child I have been Grandma Dotty before he was even born. One Sunday when Mary Jane Wilkie asked the teachers to stand up and introduced us my name became Grandma Dotty here as well. At age 81 I think that's great!

This previous summer, the Sunday it was my turn to teach was listed as "A Visit from Grandma Dotty", about which a student wrote about the butterflies and the Butterfly bush I planted 12 years ago. My Redeemer name is here to stay.

Pre-Confirmation Class Poetry

These cinquain poems were written by the pre-confirmation class on October 24, 2004, in response to the story of Abraham and Sarah. The lesson focused on the faith that Abraham had in God who promised, among other things, that his descendents would number the stars.

Peace
Friendly, Cooperative
Loving, Caring, Sharing
Working together in life
Justice

Family
Mommy, Meme
Loving, Smiling, Caring
They are special people
Relatives

Faith
To Believe
Hoping, Dreaming, Inspiring
Something you can't prove
Trust

Friends
Everlasting, Energetic
Caring, Laughing, Smiling
We play sports together

Comrades

Faith
Belief, Miracles
Blessing, Loving, Trusting
Something not sure about
Destiny

Author Review

by a Young Congregant

Reading is a big pleasure in a lot of people's lives. Whether it's fiction or not, it brings out the imagination and makes you think about the book. I myself have a love of reading. The love of reading always starts when you're a child. Later in life, you may remember how it all started and read some of your favorite books from when you were maybe 9 or 10. Reading is special if you are doing it by yourself or reading aloud with your family, and the following authors are wonderful for older children or for adults looking to be young at heart again.

Lloyd Alexander is a well known author who's written a lot of books. The one I've read is *Time Cat*, a more simple but good story about a boy and his black cat traveling through the creature's 9 lives. His most known series is *The Prydain Chronicles*, including the last one *The High King*, a Newberry winner.

Eva Ibbotson is probably my favorite author of all time. Her books have character, wit, comedy, and adventure. Her most known books are *Which Witch?*, probably the funniest, *The Secret of Platform 13*, an adventure trying to find a prince of an enchanted island behind Kings Cross Station, and one of my favorites, *Island of the Aunts*. She has also written books like *The Great Ghost Rescue*, *Not Just a Witch*, and *The Haunting of Granite Falls* - a Scottish castle in the middle of Texas?

Brian Jaques is a very interesting man. During his younger years he worked at 13 different jobs and was very poor. But when he wrote his first book *Redwall*, a story about a bunch of mice monks who are defending their home from the evil Cluny, for the blind kids at a school in Liverpool, his life changed. It became a popular book and there are many Redwall books now. I liked the first book a lot.

Dianna Wynne Jones is a very well known kids author. Of course there has to be a reason why she's so known - she's good! My favorite books by her were the *Chrestomanci Chronicles*. Her other books include the series of *Howle's Moving Castle* and *Castle in the Air*, and also *The Dark Lord of Derkholm* and *Year of the Griffin*.

C.S. Lewis is a very well known author. He has a very classic writing style that's complex, and he is also very descriptive with detail. He has written many books, his most known being *The Chronicles of Narnia* series. They're stories about the magical land of Narnia, and the first one is *The Magicians Nephew*.

Jenny Nimmo is a fairly recent author, but she is very good. Her series, *The Children of the Red King*, is about some children at a school for gifted kids who are not gifted in the traditional sense, but have magical power. The main character is Charlie Bone, a boy who has the ability to hear people in pictures and photographs. They are thrilling adventures. Look for *Midnight for Charlie Bone* and *Charlie Bone and the Time Twister*.

Phillip Pullman is a very, very well known British author who has had a lot of best sellers. The one that struck me the most is *His Dark Materials* trilogy, a very complex story that you can't put one subject label on. Try it. I would really, really, really, recommend it. He's also written several weird books, whose names are *Clockwork*, *I Was a Rat!*, *The Firework-Maker's Daughter*, among others.

Lemony Snicket has written the best-selling series *A Series of Unfortunate Events*. The 11 books are about some very unfortunate, very intelligent, very nice Baudelaire orphans, Violet, a 14 year old girl, Klaus, a 12 year old boy, and Sunny a small infant female. In the first book, *The Bad Beginning*, their parents perish in a terrible fire. The children go from relative to relative who always die, and the mean Count Olaf is always after their huge fortune, which Violet will inherit when she comes of age. These are fun, witty books, and as Lemony says on the back of each book, "If you want a book with a happy beginning, middle, or end, get another book from the shelf."

Jean Craighead George is a very respected author. She is an environmentalist, loving animals and loving the countryside around her rural home in New York state. She's very well known for the trilogy of *My Side of the Mountain*, *On the Far Side the Mountain*, and *Frightful's Mountain*, books mainly about a boy who ran away in the wilderness, his pet falcon, and parts of his family. She's also written *Julie of the Wolves*, and *Julie*, which I've heard is very good. Also one of my favorites, *The Tarantula in my Purse and 172 Other Wild Pets*, is something I should recommend to you. She talks about raising her 3 children, and over the span of about 20 years had 172 wild pets like a hilarious crow named Crowbar, a bat in the refrigerator, and an owl who LOVED to watch television. She's a very good author.

These authors are really fun. You could see in my writing that I get all excited about them! Reading can take you places you never dreamed of going before.

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