

**I Need To Take Up Fishing!**  
a Facebook post\* by Bill Menke, November 11, 2020



I need to take up fishing! The last year has been so stressful, so isolating, so full of tension. So many things that I used to do to maintain some sense of grounding have gone by the wayside. And there's precedent for my fishing! It wasn't so long ago - May 1957 - that I caught a flounder at Canarsie Pier. My father was so proud that he had it mounted (see below). My father deemed himself a surf-caster. He would stand hip deep

in the waves off Montauk Point, wearing his waders, casting, reeling in, casting, reeling in, all in the pursuit of the elusive Striped Bass. He occasionally caught his quarry; I remember one morning at the beach when he proudly displayed a forty-pounder that he had landed during the night. But I do not aspire to my father's style of fishing, both because he practiced it solo, and because I doubt that I would have the energy for more than a couple of hours a day of it - and that would not be enough. It would be too much like my current six-mile walks, which are about all I can sustain day after day. They are two hours of peace and beauty, but what about the other twenty-two in the day, during which the tensions slowly build? It proves that I need to take up fishing! My sister Lisa Stuart and her husband Todd are well-seasoned and successful anglers, pursuing Florida species like Red Snapper and Tarpon. They are my models! Except that while being on the water in their boat works for them, I think that I would prefer the land under my feet - a folding chair on a pier, with a bucket for my catch and gulls flying overhead. I need to make a whole day of it. Yes, I need to take up fishing!

\* last night at the Session (Church Board) meeting, we shared the stresses that we and our friends have been experiencing over the past nine months of the COVID-19 Pandemic, and how they have increased during the last two weeks during the very divisive US Presidential Election. I wrote this post this morning as a way of sharing my own feelings, expressing solidarity with my friends – many of whom are also suffering – and as a way of saying that dreams still matter.