

## *WILDERNESS WORDS*

### Editors

If there is anything that you would like to have included in the Newsletter:  
 218-388-9903 and  
[dmc@chem.wayne.edu](mailto:dmc@chem.wayne.edu) or  
[pcoleman@chem.wayne.edu](mailto:pcoleman@chem.wayne.edu)

### Christmas Eve:

**5:00 Service at Maple Hill.**  
 Then potluck gathering at Kennedy's 6:30 - 8:00 PM.

**Leading:** Suzanne  
**Preaching:** Mary Ellen  
**Presiding:** Mary Ellen

### This Sunday:

**Leading:** David Coleman  
**Preaching:** Lori Babcock  
**Presiding:** Carolyn Schmidt

### Readings this week:

#### *First Sunday After Christmas Day*

**First Reading:**  
 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26

**Psalm:**  
 Psalm 148

**Epistle:**  
 Colossians 3:12-17

**Gospel:**  
 Luke 2:41-52  
 (Click on citation to go directly to the reading.)

### Vicar's Reflections:

A life boat dinghy in church? An elegant church, designed by Christopher Wren, called St. James in London has one hung up in the nave. The word "nave," the vicar explained, means ship (as in navigate) and that metaphor has been powerful in the history of the church--the church being a place that carries the folks within to safety.

This dinghy in St. James, however, is one that had been used to carry refugees from Samaria. Meant to hold 8-10, it had been in the sea with over sixty desperate people on board.

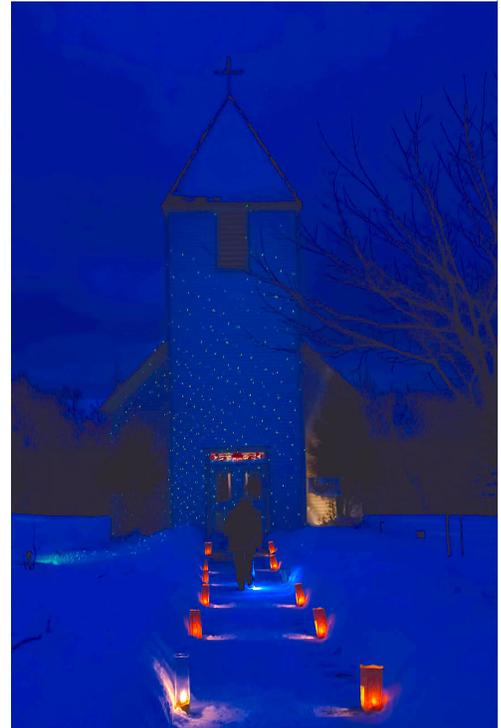
Why hang this boat in the nave of this respectable church? Especially at Christmas time?

The vicar pointed out that the real meaning of Christmas--beyond the stories that introduce kids to the story--focuses on God choosing to become flesh and blood in a turbulent world. We are not meant, she went on, to escape at Christmas, but to be forced to not just consider the theological implications....but to confront the reality of God's choice in its painful involvement.

Bringing the boat into their nave, the vicar went on, brought the world in its pain into the heart of their worship. She said all the carols they sang were different, because of this dinghy in church.

How can we move beyond the gentle glow-in-the-dark Jesus to remember that God's choice of incarnation demands that we follow, and walk in vulnerable, painful love with our fellow humans.

Peace, *Mary Ellen*



**Vicar:**

Mary Ellen Ashcroft

Phone: 218-387-1536

<maryellenvicar@gmail.com>

**Assisting Priest:**

Carolyn Schmidt

Phone: 218- 387-1806

<madrecj@aol.com>

[www.spiritofthewilderness.org](http://www.spiritofthewilderness.org)

[https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/SpiritoftheWilderness)

[SpiritoftheWilderness](https://www.facebook.com/SpiritoftheWilderness)

Box 1115 Grand Marais, MN 55604

**Save these Dates**

**Christmas Eve:** 5:00 Service at Maple Hill. Then potluck gathering at Kennedy's 6:30 - 8:00 PM. See Notes.

**Sunday, Jan. 3:** From 12:30-3:30, there will be a gathering for all of our preachers at WindCradle. We'll lunch and talk sermons.

**Notes:**

1.) Potluck Gathering at Kennedy's after Christmas Eve Service. 811 W 2nd Street (2 blocks up from the Rec. Park). Bring a holiday dish to share.

2.) Announcing the good news that Stephen Ashcroft has come through surgery with flying colors. Mary Ellen is giving thanks for all of you and your prayers. Now may the healing begin---and your prayers continue. Peace to all of you.



*DavidRJohnson.Zenfolio.com*