

## *WILDERNESS WORDS*

### Editors

If there is anything that you would like to have included in the Newsletter: 313-673-6519 and [dmc@chem.wayne.edu](mailto:dmc@chem.wayne.edu) or [pcoleman@chem.wayne.edu](mailto:pcoleman@chem.wayne.edu)

### This Sunday:

**Leading:** Beth  
**Preaching:** Lee  
**Presiding:** Mary Ellen  
**Treats:**

### Readings this week:

**Sixth Sunday of Easter, 21  
 May, 2017**

**First Reading:** Acts 17:22-31  
**Psalm:** Psalm 66:8-20  
**Epistle:** 1 Peter 3:13-22  
**Gospel:** John 14:15-21

*(To link directly to the readings (click)  
[http://  
 lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/](http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/)*



### Reflections:

By *Beth Kennedy*

A couple of years ago, I was sitting with all of you at our cozy little Maple Hill church, thinking of how wonderful it would be if our grandchildren could be baptized here. It gave me such a warm feeling just imagining the scene! But I never thought it would happen--a sweet dream but so unlikely. Our grown children didn't even want to be a part of church: how would we talk them into baptizing their kids?



*Inviting Mystery, Embracing  
 Compassion, Encountering Christ.*

I went with Suzanne to a church conference two years ago. One of the topics was passing on our faith to our children, and I thought about that idea and wondered where did we as a church and as a family go wrong? Why, when I find comfort in God and community: why have I not conveyed that to my children? I thought I was being liberal and understanding when I didn't force them to go to church except for Christmas, but they took it a step further and decided church was not for them.

When Jen and Dan had Evelyn, I started to dream again of our family surrounded by our church and our friends while baptizing their baby, but I told myself it would never happen--quit dreaming! But then I heard Dan and Jen were to be godparents to their niece Morgan and my hopes fanned again. "So, when will you baptize Evelyn?" I kept dropping a few hints along the way.

Somehow a couple of months ago, my wonderful daughter-in-law decided and started looking for dates for her own church in Bloomington with the pastor she grew up with. This was not my dream, but certainly it was great that Evelyn would be baptized.

Then suddenly, the idea of baptism at Maple Hill church came up. Mary Ellen answered Dan and Jen's questions, coaxing them along gently. Hearing from Mary Ellen that the whole service would be built around Evelyn's baptism convinced them that, yes, they would baptize her at Maple Hill. Believe me when I say, this was my dream come true!

Like all small miracles, everything fell into place and it just happened that the date chosen was May 14, our 46th wedding anniversary and Mothers' Day. The sun was shining, as Jen's family and ours, and our friends filled the pews! My good friend Lee was willing to lead and Mary Ellen built a beautiful ceremony around Evelyn's baptism! Her sermon was wonderful and easy to relate to for everyone including the visiting Lutheran family members! The

**Forums: 2016 - 2017**

**Forums** — immediately following services we grab our coffee and treats and spend an hour learning.

**June 4** — Prayer by Milan Schmidt

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music lead by Karen and Bob touched everyone's hearts. By the end of the Baptism, there were many tears of joy in our dear church. The love in the room was easy for all to feel and touch! Yes, this Baptism was everything I had dreamed of!

So, you might ask, why the big deal about Baptism? Why did it mean so much to me?

I believe children need God and community. They need to be grounded in the faith of their fathers and mothers. In baptism, we join and feel the grace of new life, and we can almost touch the love of the ancestors—those grandmothers and great grandmothers who once loved us and now look down from heaven and send powerful spiritual protection to little ones. God shines his love on Evelyn's sweet smiling face in Baptism's holy water!

As a church family, we will help Evelyn grow spiritually by telling her our stories, of how having God in our lives has mattered. We will set an example for her as a church community in action as we go about our lives caring for others, whether that be fixing meals for the new mom or one who has surgery, or working Ruby's Pantry or other nonprofits. Each of us has our own special personal projects we do to make our community better and she will learn that caring for the world from our example.

We will smile as Evelyn grows to be one of the little ones dancing in our Maple Hill church some Sundays! Maybe she will learn from Ella about leading the service or from Liv or Thea about carrying the cross or learn from Freddie about carrying up the gifts! She will know the love of this church community not just at church but as she grows and goes about town, from coffee shop to clinic! And when times of trial come along, we hope she will reach for the God in her heart, and know she will have all of us all by her side to lean on!

This is why Baptism at Maple Hill church was my dream for Evelyn! And yes, my dream came true! Thanks be to God! Alleluia, Alleluia!

**Notes:**

1.) Mary Ellen requests that those folks who would like to plan our presence at the Art Fair meet after Church on May 28th.

2.) Keep a lookout for some of our summer folks returning soon!



Photos by Ellen Stubbs

