

## *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:** Suzanne  
**Preaching:** Ellen  
**Presiding:** Carolyn  
**Treats:** Ginny

### Readings this week:

**Seventh Sunday of Easter, 28 May, 2017**

**First Reading:** Acts 1:6-14  
**Psalm:** Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35  
**Epistle:** 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11  
**Gospel:** John 17:1-11

*(To link directly to the readings (click)*  
[http://  
 lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/  
 texts.php?  
 id=46#psalm\\_readingtexts.php?](http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/texts.php?id=46#psalm_readingtexts.php)



### Reflections:

By Mary Ellen

#### Open or Closed?

I heard some people on the radio discussing whether there is life on other planets. Person #1 said, "It's hard for me to believe that in the whole universe we are the only ones." Person #2 shot back, "I don't believe in extra-terrestrial life, because why would they only appear to weirdos?"



*Inviting Mystery, Embracing  
 Compassion, Encountering Christ.*

I was struck by this because it tells me about how predisposition can open to or cut off possibilities.

If I, like Person #2, take it as a given, *a priori*, that there can be no life on other planets, nothing will convince me. If others experience things beyond my understanding, then it's because they are weird.

This reminds me of some people's reactions to faith. Some are open to possibilities (like Person #1), to the fact that they may not understand or be able to take in everything. They realize that some possibilities are beyond our ken, like Shakespeare is beyond my dog Sophie's understanding. This seems to me to be a viable position—not claiming to know more or less than we can, but being open to God.

And then there are those who assume (like Person #2) that because they don't believe, there can be no evidence strong enough to convince them. Only weirdos believe; therefore there is nothing to believe.

The arrogance which says that nothing can exist outside my understanding is certainly not very logical or scientific. It is a statement of faith. Sometimes I'm bowled over by the ignorance and prejudice against faith, from wonderful, smart people!

**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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**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!

Most of us have friends who proudly proclaim their atheism. I believe that many of them have been hurt by religion, and therefore it's easier to write off any possibility of religious truth as for weirdos.

And yet it may be coming from a place of fear. We all know religious people who are pretty scary, gullible and aggressive. Religion attracts weirdos, yes, but we can't assume from that that there is no truth in religion.

People long for meaning and community and love. Paul calls those early followers to "Always be ready to give an answer about the hope that is in you." When someone asks, we can be ready to speak about our sense of the divine, and about the love in our faith community. But when it comes down to it, all we can really do is to love, love, and love.



Episcopal Church in Minnesota

Yesterday at 9:09am · 🌐

What are you doing this weekend? Did you know that you can take 5 free courses on Justice through the School for Formation? Time is running out - check out the course on Spirituality and Racial Justice taught by the Presiding Bishop - it'll take you about 45 minutes!



**School for Formation**

Online courses from School for Formation

[ECMN.PATHWRIGHT.COM](http://ECMN.PATHWRIGHT.COM)

Link: <https://ecmn.pathwright.com/library/>