

Wilderness Words



Spirit of the Wilderness www.spiritofthewilderness.org

Weekly News—May 8, 2012

Vicar Notes

I was at Clergy Conference last week and really enjoyed being with my clergy colleagues. One of the things that impressed me most was how Bishop Brian's way of leading church and encouraging us to do church is becoming a way of being in The Episcopal Church in Minnesota. His ideas—turning the hierarchies upside down so that the central offices serve the churches, empowering the clergy to encourage ministry within their churches, etc. is beginning to really happen.

Part of it comes out of a missional philosophy begun before Bishop Brian arrived—a philosophy that encourages churches to see where God is working and then join God there, which encourages ministry centered rather than clergy centered churches. One of the reasons Bishop Brian was selected was because it seemed clear to people that he would encourage and support the Mission Strategy committee's vision.

But the change is also being brought about by necessity. The church can no longer function as it once did—with many clergy doing most everything.....and with many administrators in central offices. With declining membership and lack of money, the church is being forced to do things in new ways. And I really believe this is a good thing.

For one thing churches like ours are held up as a paragon of the way to do things, rather than being seen as a threat!

But on another level it seems that (through Bishop Brian's leadership, through clergy beginning to believe in the new leadership, and through necessity) there's a real emphasis on mutual support in the diocese. For example, I'm going to be teaching a couple of sections of Deepening Roots one weekend a month in the Cities next year. As one priest said to me, "I'd love to hire someone at this church who could be in charge of Christian education and formation, but there's no budget for it. And you are able to provide this resource."

I'm sure we'll be called on over the next few years to share some of what we're doing at Spirit of the Wilderness. I was struck by the radical difference between city and rural at Clergy Conference. There are three regions encompassing the Twin Cities and they each had 20 or so clergy sitting around talking. Our region had four....

We are blessed to be able to follow God here in our corner of God's vineyard, to, as Layne reminded us on Sunday, "Love God and love those who are right in front of us."

Blessings, Mary Ellen

What's happening?

A deep discussion at the Seder Meal.



An easier way to pay your pledge—

We are setting up a system so that members can automatically have their pledges taken out of their accounts and deposited in our SOTW account. If you're interested, please talk to Reed. We will also provide slips for you to put in the offering so that our young ushers don't make you feel too uncomfortable!!

Five Years of Spirit!!

- July/August—We'll be celebrating the Fifth Anniversary of Spirit of the Wilderness. Would you like to help plan some celebrations?

Anyone feeling called?????

To organize greeters to welcome people coming through the door—making sure they have name tags and the right papers? This will be especially important with summer coming and visitors coming...

Mark your calendars:

- May 9th—Reaching Out book group discussing Scott Momaday's *House of Dawn* at the Congregational Church, 6:30 PM.
- May 15th—Worship Committee meeting—please phone any concerns to Lee, Layne or Kathy.
- May 16th—Bishop's Committee meeting—please raise any concerns with Rolf, Lee or Mary Ellen
- May 19th is our "Yurt Raising Day" at WindCradle. We have volunteers coming from a number of places to help, and then will have a party and music in the evening. Would love to have you there!
- May 27th—Pentecost!! Big celebrations of the Spirit's presence in our midst...
- June 4th—Potluck social at WindCradle. Alex Logan, a vicar from England, will share about her experience of working with folks on the outside.
- July 27-28—Dragonboat—sign up with Kathy Sullivan if you want to paddle. We'll have a tent full of music and fun, so plan to join in—even if you're not paddling...
- August 22nd—Dwight Zscheile (mission church expert who met with us early in the process) will spend an evening with us—potluck and meeting at WindCradle.
- Beginning in September—Would you be interested in a new *Deepening Roots* course starting up next year? Do you know someone you think might be interested in the course? Please let me know.....(387 1536).