



Spirit of the Wilderness [www.spiritofthewilderness.org](http://www.spiritofthewilderness.org)

Weekly News—May 15, 2012

### Vicar Notes

*Spirit of the Wilderness* is getting a reputation. Our reaching out money is meeting the needs of many who “fall through the cracks” here in Cook County. Some months ago several within our congregation felt God’s call to be systematically, routinely, and sacrificially giving to our neediest neighbors. This kind of giving improves the health not only of those served, but also of our small church. Churches that focus outward as well as inward tend to be much healthier.

Because of budget cuts and economic problems, people needing help have gone up dramatically just as there have been cuts in state and county funding. And so, our “tithe”—our 10% of our budget goes into a particular fund and we have been sending 200.00 a month to social services which they call “The Spirit of the Wilderness money.” It’s a need for those in dire need—for glasses, for propane, for tires, for food cards, etc. Social workers who have direct contact with people are the ones who see the need and make this possible.

A Reaching Out committee meets to work on this area as well as other areas of our faith community’s interaction with larger needs. As we’ve discovered that we have more money in the fund than we thought, we will be raising the amount we give to social services to 300.00 a month.

As we discussed all this at Bishop’s Committee last night, we realized that we need to communicate better about this fund. Often people want to give a little extra to express gratitude for some occasion—this is a perfect fund to give to! I’ve also noticed that in the community here, people are a bit flummoxed when they have a fund raiser about how to best get money to those in real need.

I believe that we need to get the word out so that this fund might attract other gifts. I’m convinced that a good name for the fund could make a difference....so that if there’s a community fund raiser, we could designate the \_\_\_\_\_ Fund; people could write tax deductible checks to the \_\_\_\_\_ Fund.

This does not mean that our uses of our tithe will never change or that other ideas are out. But it does mean that we have found—or God has found for us—a great way to connect meaningfully to those in need, and thus do the work of Christ. Grace (from social services) will be speaking on June 3 at SOTW about this work.

Blessings, Mary Ellen

Please send all name suggestions to Barbara Holaday or Hillary Freeman: ideas so far—Helping Hand Fund, Good Neighbor (or Samaritan) Fund, Love Thy Neighbor Fund, The Manna Fund.....

## What's happening?

### Five Years of Spirit!!

- July 1—Welcome and anniversary celebration—donuts before church and a barbecue after!
- July 14th—Tim Hodapp, Missioner for Mission in the Episcopal Church in MN will be with us for service, and then a potluck after...
- 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.

### Mark your calendars:

- 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! (If you can't bring your brawn during the day, just bring some food and/or liquid to share for the party at 5 PM!)
- June 4th—Potluck social at WindCradle. Alex Logan, a vicar from England, will share about her experience of working with folks on the outside.
- 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).

### 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!!

### The Episcopal Church in Minnesota (Carolyn Schmidt)

The 155th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Church will be held September 21-22 on the Lower Sioux Indian Community's Jackpot Junction Casino in Morton, Minnesota. <http://episcopalconvention-mn.org/>

Convention is our time to listen to one another, dream together, worship together and be The Church together. Although, of course, there is always some business to accomplish, for me the real heart of convention is the time learning about other places and getting to know other Episcopalians. The important focus of the work this year will be remembering the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragic execution of 38 Lakota people in Mankato, MN. Bishop Whipple Mission in Morton, MN has hosted some wonderful events in Southern MN. (I remember a great BBQ and picnic in the heat of August a few years ago.) I expect that this will be a time of learning, praying, and joining with our sisters and brothers to remember the past and to plan for a future of mission and ministry together.

The keynote speaker will be Bishop Mark MacDonald, currently the National Indigenous Anglican Bishop for the Anglican Church of Canada. He previously served for 10 years as the Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska and was Canon Missioner for Training in the Episcopal Church of Minnesota. He also served as vicar of St. Antipas' Church, Redby, and St. John-in-the-Wilderness Church, Red Lake. Mark is a wonderful speaker and a deeply spiritual leader.

The Rev Robert Two Bulls, Missioner for Multicultural Ministry, created the logo for the convention. It pictures a grieving Bishop Whipple surrounded by 38 nooses/tears. His reflection on that artwork is at [http://www.episcopalcafe.com/art/thirtyeight\\_tears\\_1.html](http://www.episcopalcafe.com/art/thirtyeight_tears_1.html) Milan and I will be going on a pilgrimage to Jackpot Junction in September. Can you come too? Everyone is welcome to come even if you are not a representative.