

## Wilderness Words



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

Weekly News—May 30, 2012

### Vicar Notes

I've often wondered why Trinity Sunday follows so closely after Pentecost. If you think about it, there's no particular time that Trinity has to fall, since the Trinity is around all the time. AND after Trinity there are many months of so called "ordinary time," when we don't have anything particular to break up the church year! My theory has been that it's a way to take the focus off the unpredictability of Pentecost and the Spirit; to pull into something that is inherently more "churchy," more theologically based...

Not that the notion of Trinity is cooked up: it has deep roots in the experience of the first Christian believers, based on their experience of God, the risen Christ and the Spirit, along with their understanding of God's character in the Old Testament. In other words the earliest believers knew God to be multi-faceted and spoke about God as Father, Son and Spirit, before they had a fully developed doctrine of Trinity.

The doctrinal discussions that led to the doctrine of the Trinity expressed in the Nicene Creed comes out of much more complicated grappings that went way beyond experience to theologically trying to work out questions like—what is the relationship between the Spirit and the Son? How do we understand the origin of the person of Christ? How do we explain someone who was fully God and fully human? These questions (along with politics of course!) led to the discussions that led to the Nicene Creed. Which is why the Nicene Creed focuses as it does on the person of Christ—notice line after line "begotten, not made; one in being with the father, etc."

The worship committee decided to reinstate use of the Nicene Creed for a period after we've been using the Affirmation of Faith from the New Zealand BCP for some time. Both have some great points—the Nicene Creed ties us firmly into the historic church—down the ages and around the world. But the Affirmation of Faith is probably more like a Creed was meant to be—a faith response following the proclamation of the Word.

Many people have told me they really struggle with the Nicene Creed, that there are parts they cannot say or don't understand. Let me assure you: in the Nicene Creed we say, "**We** believe..." so it's not just up to you—presumably there's someone else to cover the parts you can't! It's also worth remembering that "believe" here doesn't mean "intellectual assent" so much as it means "trust." It might be more accurate for us to say, "We live on the foundation of our trust in....."

Pay attention over these next couple months as we use the Nicene Creed and let the worship committee know—what does it mean to use this rather than the Affirmation of Faith?

Blessings, Mary Ellen

## What's happening?

### Mark your calendars:

- June 4th—Potluck social at WindCradle. Alex Logan, a vicar from England, will share about her experience of working with folks on the outside.
- June 13th—Bishop's Committee—all agenda items to Rolf, Lee, or Mary Ellen.
- 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).
- Our book group—for increasing our cultural understanding—will be taking the summer off, and reconvening in September.

### Five Years of Spirit!!

- July 1—Welcome and anniversary celebration—donuts before church and a barbecue after!
- July 15th—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.

### Several Needs:

- With summer coming we really need folks who are willing to welcome people and make sure they have the right papers on Sunday mornings. This is one of the most important ways to help visitors feel welcome. If no one is doing this when you arrive, please step in and do it!
- For Dragonboat, a few church musicians from St. Matthew's are going to be visiting to be in our tent and then in services on Sunday. We're full up at WindCradle.....could you host a couple? (there will be two, I think.....)
- We now have a sign up slot for those who would be willing to pray for people during the administration of the Eucharist. (Look our for a course Patsy Coleman will be teaching in August on this!)
- We've added a prayer for visitors/summer residents during the Prayers of the People, but please look out for them and welcome them!
- Anyone willing to host a potluck after church on July 15th when Tim Hodapp, missioner for mission is visiting?

### Discussing Criminal Justice

The ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) has a draft of a criminal justice study which people can comment on. Criminal Justice affects all of us and this study provides a way to understand the system, the issue and the function of a faith community. There will be three Monday night sessions to walk through this document starting June 11, June 18 and June 25th from 7-8:15 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Hillary Freeman will be leading that discussion and there will be study guides available. .