

Wilderness Words



Spirit of the Wilderness www.spiritofthewilderness.org

Weekly News—November 1, 2012

Vicar's Notes

As you are aware, we at Spirit of the Wilderness are in the midst of a stewardship campaign. Growing a church is a great project, much more interesting than trying to “maintain a church” or “fund upkeep on the building,” which is more typical of a stewardship campaign. But it can be harder to see where the money goes, when it's not into bricks and mortar, or toward retiring a mortgage or toward getting new pipes for an organ.

Our investment is not in the tangible, but the intangible. Yes, we do rent the building week by week. We also pay for things like book-keeping, copyright permissions for music, printing. But much of our budget goes for a different kind of “church building”— by paying my salary!

I see my role at Spirit of the Wilderness as one of facilitating the church's growth in many ways. Here are some:

1. Growth of individuals as members grow in their faith life, and in the use of their ministries for the good of the whole church and community. This includes our being present to people at tough times in their lives.
2. Growth of our faith community, as we “grow up into Christ,” learning ways to deepen our prayer lives, communicate even when we disagree, discern God's will together. This includes helping folks to stay involved, even if they don't live in Cook County year round but count themselves as members, and those who are seasonal members, or occasional visitors.
3. Growth into the community through annual events like our art colony collaboration and Dragonboat, as well as writing for the paper, working with the ministerium, serving at the Care Center, and other ways we make Christ's presence known in Cook County.
4. Growth in numbers, not simply because we want more people, but because we believe that we are surrounded by folks who want/need/long for a community in which they can grow spiritually. This involves figuring out who these people are, and what is making it hard for them to find a church home.
5. Growth in terms of our impact on the world—through our Good Samaritan fund, our giving to the wider church, our involvement in the Episcopal Church in Minnesota's projects. In also includes the input we may have for the Episcopal church during this time of great change, as well as our ongoing listening about how we might have a relationship with Portage.

Much of this kind of growth is not readily seen, yet I firmly believe this is the kind of growth that really matters.

Blessings, Mary Ellen

Sunday, November 4 at 5 p.m. Carolyn and Milan are hosting an African Dinner at their house at 1633 Croftville Road. They will be serving food typical for Kenya. Want a recipe? There are some at <http://allthingskenyan.com/food.html> Or just come with a smile and be fed!

Thursday, November 8, Empty Bowls held at the Congregational Church. Bowl making is on Sundays and Mondays for the next few weeks. **Spirit of the Wilderness does clean up at the end of the evening.**

- Also, during that evening there will be an interdenominational Eucharist, (upstairs in the sanctuary) to emphasize our unity, after the election.

Monday, November 19th, Bishop's Committee 7 PM.

Wednesday, November 21st, 7 PM, Thanksgiving service at Maple Hill. Light some candles and sing some Thanksgiving hymns and be grateful.

Sunday, November 25th, 2 PM, Spirit of the Wilderness at the Care Center.

Thursday, November 29th, Light Up a Life service of remembrance at the hospital.

Sunday, Dec. 2nd, Blessing of our pledges in church.

Looking further ahead:

- **January 27th SOTW retreat 1:00-4:30 at WindCradle.**
- **February 28-March 2**—For our event with the Grand Marais Art Colony we will be bringing to native American priests to Grand Marais. They will be presenting and offering workshops, and leading our Sunday worship. We also hope to have an event or two at Grand Portage. Who would like to help plan this?

From the Stewardship Committee: (Reed Holady, Tim Kennedy, Karl Hansen)

Thanks to all who have been so great in making their pledge payments. Here at SOTW, our primary source of income is Pledge Income. Unlike many older church parishes we do not have endowments or large saving accounts. We have accumulated a small surplus (approximately \$5000) which along with the prepaid pledges allows us to use an optimistic growth plan as we budget our next year. Please pray, as you decide your role in helping fulfill our vision in Cook County.

Please contact a member of the stewardship committee if you have questions. To indicate your pledge either let one of them know, or bring your completed Stewardship card to church on December 2.



**Don't forget to
FALL BACK
this Sunday!**