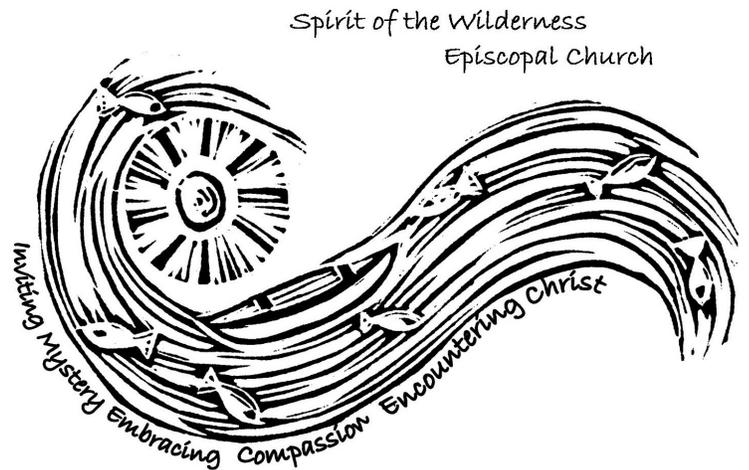


# Wilderness Words

Newsletter—  
December 12, 2013

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## Vicar's Report

Last Sunday Coralyn brought us a wonderful homily about John the Baptist. One thing she particularly left us with was an advent challenge to not simply wait, but to PREPARE. Doing this will look a bit different for each of us. How are you preparing for the coming of Christ?

This is true for us as a church as well. How do we prepare for what is to come? We at Spirit of the Wilderness are committed to keep looking outward—not being the kind of church that simply cares for itself and its own programs. Our *Good Samaritan Fund* keeps us focused in that way. We're finding, though, that giving 10% from our budget to the *Good Samaritan Fund* plus our 11% apportionment to the *Episcopal Church in Minnesota* is stretching us very thin, so the Bishop's Committee is looking at creative ways to deal with our budget and prepare for our future.

One thing we're considering is meeting more of our *Good Samaritan Fund* commitment by separate fund-raising—since it's easier to raise money for those needs than some of the more practical church-type expenses. We might do that with special appeals, fund-raisers, or through encouraging some of our members to volunteer at First and Second Thrift Shop and put their 'wages' toward the *Good Samaritan Fund*. You may have other ideas on this.....if so please pass them on to someone on the Bishop's Committee.

We are committed to outreach, and we're committed to being part of the *Episcopal Church in Minnesota*. And we have certain needs to maintain the running of the church. If you haven't turned in your pledge card yet, please do. (Or if you'd like to raise your pledge, we wouldn't say no.....)

Blessings, Mary Ellen

And how are the children?

Kathy summarizes our visit last Sunday in the second in our series of speakers to answer this question: Lucy Perpich from the Violence Prevention Center spoke about her work with the elementary children at Great Expectations and middle and high school students at Cook County Middle and High School. She and another adult begin discussions on safe dating, self care, and self respect. Included are the subjects of bullying, violence prevention and how to seek safe help. Although VPC doesn't counsel young people as part of their mission, these discussions and meetings are seen as Prevention. Lucy also shared what is available at the Violence Prevention Center and ways to access help.

### Coming up:

**Dec. 17th**—Centering Prayer at Schmidts—5:30 for 6:00 till 7:00.

**Dec. 22nd**—After church we decorate for Christmas.

**Dec. 24th**—5PM Candlelight carol service, followed by a potluck Christmas gathering at WindCradle.

**Dec. 25th, 10:00 AM**—Eucharist

**Jan. 26th**, Rolf Lowenburg-DeBoer (missioner for community outreach) will visit with us.

**Feb. 21st and 22nd**—Enneagram retreat at WindCradle.

**March 28-April 5th**—Entry Points to the Creative, Johnson Heritage Post.

### Look out for.....

.....a monthly forum beginning in January organized by Carol Mork.

...a social sleigh ride coming up in the next month—more info from Sara Stover!!

.....a SOTW t-shirt so we can be a little more identifiable in public!

**The Good Samaritan Fund is providing Christmas grocery gift cards of 25.00 for a number of our neighbors. These names were provided by Health and Human Services.**

Let's give thanks that we're able to provide in this way for others. If you'd like to make a contribution to this fund it can go in the regular offering with Good Sam Fund in the subject line.

### Would you like to.....?

- Be in a small group that will start meeting after Christmas? Contact Mary Ellen if you're interested...
- Be in spiritual direction or a spiritual direction group? Please let Mary Ellen know if you'd like to...
- Learn to lead the service? Speak to Lee or Val if you'd like to do this...

**Meeting Minutes** ( for annual meeting or monthly Bishop's Committee meetings) are available for anyone who wants to read them. Please email Val at [jfgroth@boreal.org](mailto:jfgroth@boreal.org) & she will send them.

This Sunday, the 15th, Spirit of the Wilderness does the service at the **Care Center**, from 12:30 till 1:00, followed by treats. Carol Mork will be leading the service, but it's great to have others there!

### Dec 15— Sunday service responsibilities

**Leading**—Lee  
**Homily**—Rolf  
**Presiding**—Carolyn  
**Music**—Layne  
**Treats**—Tom and Dorothy

### Our Directory:

**We're re-doing the directory—let us know if you have changes.**

With the new liturgical year—beginning on Advent One—we move into a new cycle or readings—year A.

Year A includes readings from Matthew's gospel.

Some churches are using a 'narrative lectionary'—to give a greater sense of the story of the Bible. What do you think?

### Sunday Lectionary Readings:

**Advent 3, December 15**

Isaiah 35: 1-10  
Psalm 146: 4-9  
James 5: 7-10  
Matt. 11: 2-11

In prison, John the Baptist is struggling to understand what's happening in the ministry of the Messiah—he sends word to ask. When have you found yourself doubting or questioning a calling? What helped you?

**Advent 4, December 22**

Micah 5:2-5a  
Canticle 13 The Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55)  
Hebrews 10: 5-10  
Luke 1: 39-55

This Sunday we consider Mary's 'yes' to God and her words—often called the Magnificat. How do you understand her 'yes'? How might you say this kind of 'yes' to God's call?