

Wilderness Words

Newsletter—

January 8, 2014

www.spiritofthewilderness.org

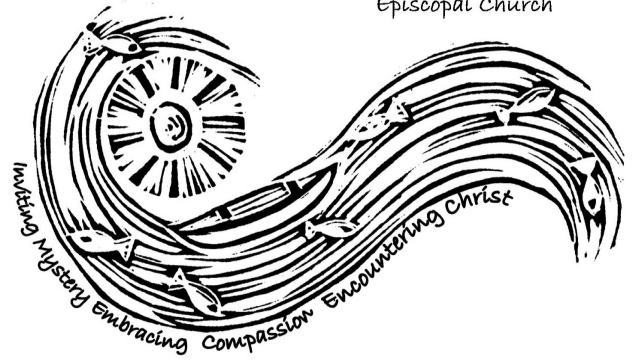
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Spirit of the Wilderness
Episcopal Church



Vicar's Report

On Saturday I had the opportunity to Bless the Dog teams for the Gunflint Mail Run dog sled race. I've been to a number of sled dog openings and I knew how noisy they can be—so I thought long and hard about what might work for this unique liturgical opportunity. (The BOOK OF OCCASIONAL SERVICES was useless!)

In the end I wrote this prayer:

May you run with wonder and delight, as you journey under the sky.

God keep you safe.

And may God give us all even a touch of your energy and exuberance. Amen.

I made enough copies so that we could hand the blessing to mushers, handlers and others. We moved from team to team, handing out, loudly acclaiming the blessing, and then scattering some “holy snow” on the dogs. People seemed to really appreciate the blessing.

Last night at our Bishop's Committee meeting, we, as usual, shared our “most life giving” moments since our last meeting.

As people spoke—about worship services, about providing support, about knowing they are being prayed for, about blessing sled dogs—I was struck by how much each of these “life giving moments” are basically about our doing and being what we are called to be and do at Spirit of the Wilderness.

For me, reading a fine sermon written by one of our lay preachers, helping to facilitate care for one in need, blessing sled dogs—these all ring true to me as who we are. It's like when you use a tuning fork and get a string (on a guitar or violin) to match that A440 vibration. These activities are “in tune” with who we are.

As we gather for our retreat on January 18th, this is part of what we'll be doing—sharing around who we are and what we do—how these are ‘in tune’ with our vision. And we'll also be considering how we continue to resource this—not only financially, but also in terms of how we feel about our involvements. And we'll be looking at how we express and communicate who we are. (See questions on the other page of this newsletter.)

So many of my clergy colleagues serve in churches which don't have the flexibility we do—who are often captive to expensive buildings or huge choirs.

Please pray about and ponder the questions on the Retreat notice on page two of this newsletter. Then be sure to be there on January 18th as we process these.

Blessings, Mary Ellen



South Africa Book and Movie Group—CCHE

Save the dates and **invite a friend.** 6:00-8:00

Jan. 8-- Background to literature/film of South Africa. Watch Athol Fugard's *Master Harold and the Boys*

January 15-- Discuss Alan Paton's novel-- *Cry the Beloved Country*.

Retreat !!! (Any input on this, please let me know)

On Jan. 18th we'll go after church to Hedstrom's House of Holy Happenings. Here's a rough schedule:

12:00-12:45 Appetizers

12:45-3:45 Retreat work—this will include approval of our budget, time thinking about gifts of time and talent, considering our responses to the questions about what we are passionate about, and what we are best in the world at. (see below)

4:00-5:00 We eat dinner together.

If a few people will volunteer to bring appetizers, we'll have everyone else bring a dish to share for dinner.

5:00 following? Sometimes we've watched a movie together, such as "The Vicar of Dibley." Anyone have ideas about this? I wondered about "Lars and the Real Girl" which focuses on community.

For the retreat time, think about these questions:

1. Does "Engaging Mystery, Embracing Compassion, Encountering Christ"—still fit for us? What would you change?
2. If someone asks you about Spirit of the Wilderness, how do you answer? In other words, what is your 'elevator speech' about Spirit of the Wilderness?
3. Do you have time and/or talents you'd like to give to SOTW?

This Sunday:

Leading—
 Preaching—Ellen Stubbs
 Presiding—Mary Ellen
 Music—Bob and Karen
 Treats—????

(If you want to bring treats for next Sunday, please contact **Beth Kennedy—387 1314.**)

Lessons for First Day after the Epiphany

Genesis 1: 1-5
 Acts 19: 1-7
 Mark 14: 1-11

Epiphany means 'making manifest' and our readings are about light and the Holy Spirit. How do you think about light's relationship with the Spirit?