

# THE CLOAK

FEBRUARY 1, 2009



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## WORDS FROM WINNIE,

### All shall be well

#### St. Martin's Episcopal Church Annual Meeting

January 25, 2009

#### Priest's Report

Introduction: It is a great pleasure to greet you today. Our past year together here at St. Martin's has been wonderful—filled with joy and abounding in grace. In July we started a new book of church records—the last one recorded 14 years of worship at St. Martin's, so this next book should take you to at least 2022, so keep up the good work. You have a lot to be proud of in your long history here in Fairmont, in your outreach activities, your Hispanic ministry, and your support of ECS. You are especially blessed to be the open, affirming, welcoming congregation that you are. If the whole church were like this parish the issues that are now troubling the Anglican communion would simply not exist.

There is good news to report about our parish. As you heard in the treasurer's report, we have made some progress in this past year toward improving our financial condition—more and higher pledges, lower deficit spending. However, in spite of receiving a vary generous bequest from Florence Swanson and making some progress with the diocese in reducing our diocesan apportionment costs, and raising our

pledges, we must face the reality that we cannot continue to do things the same way here at St. Martin's.

Our attendance numbers show a little increase in weekly attendance, but overall they are pretty steady. The good news is that there are more people in church on Sunday mornings and less in funerals: We had only 1 parish funeral rather than 5 in the previous year. (If you were not at the meeting, please note that last year's numbers, which reported an increase in attendance were wrong due to an addition error. In fact, the years 2006, 2007, and 2008 are all about the same.)

Comments: Our sacramental activities are good: baptisms, weddings, confirmations, and a quinceañera—as well as consistent weekly attendance—A good year in many ways. But to meet our goals we need to do more. This past week I attended a continuing education seminar on the theology of radical abundance and liberation. Nothing could have been more appropriate to our situation at St. Martin's because what the speakers mostly said was that we need to care more for all of the created order by learning to consume less and be more active stewards of this beautiful world that God has so graciously given us to tend. In short, to do more with less.

Our numbers show that St. Martin's remains right on the dividing line between being a very small, family sized congregation (Sunday attendance 10-50) and a pastoral-sized congregation of from 50-150.\* We are in good company because family and pastoral sized churches are the most common among Episcopal churches in the U. S. But these numbers do not show any growth in the parish roles in the last year. What is more, most churches as small as we are cannot afford full-time clergy and do not have them.

Last year I spoke to you about the importance of evangelism, and it is still just as important. The best way to grow the church is for each of you to bring a friend with you to church and invite them to join us. We can do seminars on church growth—and there are many great ones; and we definitely can do more with advertising; but personal invitations are still the most effective tool for growth. So what are you waiting for?

Well, maybe, like our economy, St. Martin's is at a point where growth is not the most likely or most desirable goal. Maybe it is time to be renewed and blessed by doing more with less.

This is the point that St. Martin's as come to. Even with our financial strengths—

## NOTICE:

**March Cloak**

**dead line**

**February 18th.**

**We need a volunteer to publish the March Cloak.**

and we do have them --it does not make sense for you to continue to pay me or anyone else as a full-time clergy person when the total cost of my salary and benefits is more than your yearly income (and I am cheap, being a new priest and only needing health benefits for one person.) Subsidizing the budget with the endowment as you have been doing should not continue until you are completely broke and then can only afford to maintain a building and an occasional supply priest and an organist if you are lucky.

St. Martin's has a long and proud history here in Fairmont. You are doing much better than many of the small Episcopal churches in towns all over Minnesota—some of them larger than Fairmont—which have closed their doors in recent years. You don't want this to happen to you and you can prevent it. You can prevent it by believing that with God's grace you can prevail. You can do this. You will have to change some things, but these changes will enable you to continue to be yourselves and do the good work that you do here as God's church.

Let me explain the personnel situation to you with regard to my position as your priest. My title is Priest-in-charge, which means that I was sent to you by the Bishop as a likely candidate to be your next rector. We signed a contract, a letter of agreement, that provides for us to have a period of from 18 to 24 months to discern whether we are mutually suited—if I am the right person for you to call as your new rector. Sometime between 18 and 24 months the vestry must decide what they want to do about me. Their options are basically to call me as your rector for an indefinite period of time—which I obviously would accept or decline after prayerful deliberation. If either the vestry or I feel that I am not the right person for a permanent job here, then they can start over, asking the

Bishop for another Priest in charge trial person. Or they could ask the Bishop to launch a full-fledged nation-wide search for a rector—a process that takes a year or more and is usually too expensive for a small church.

I am now in my 17<sup>th</sup> month of serving as your clergy in charge, so this decision point is approaching fast. Unfortunately, I feel that the vestry would be very wrong to call me or anyone else to a full-time position, which would bankrupt the church in 2 years, and I or anyone would be equally wrong to accept such an offer.

What I will recommend to the vestry is that they form a Call Committee to discern what course they wish to take, both about whether to call me or another person and about what percentage of time you can afford to pay a priest. My recommendation is that St. Martin's could do perfectly well with a half time priest. I think an ideal way to do this would involve doing two things:

1. Hire a part-time parish administrator to keep the office open and running each day (at much less pay per hour than I receive).
2. Discern and call a team of volunteer leaders to do some of the work that a half-time priest could not do: perhaps some pastoral care, liturgy, preaching and teaching.

The savings in going to a half time person would enable you to balance your budget. And it would not detract from the weekly worship and pastoral care and teaching that happens at St. Martin's if you plan the transition well. To do this you will need to discern who in the parish has spiritual gifts in the areas I've mentioned—who feels called to serve the church with training and support as part of a team of volunteer parish leaders. These leaders could either be part of a lay ministry

team or they might be deacons—another way to staff the church more economically. Because St. Martin's has known the dedicated and talented leadership of a deacon, Alma Simpson, and is used to that model, maybe you will find the best course is to raise up new people for that role. How these roles develop will depend on the calls that are discerned, with God's abundant grace and loving guidance among members of our congregation.

The vestry plans to invite Canon Missioner Sandi Holmberg to come to St. Martin's soon to lead us through a gifts discernment workshop. They also are exploring the possibility of linking St. Martin's with another parish to share a priest, as you did with Windom. Both these initiatives need to go forward together to see which turns out to be the best option—or it may be a combination will be the best answer.

Discernment of a pastoral leadership team is vital to the success of changing to part-time clergy because that way you can continue to do all the things that you now do and more. You cannot simply say, well, Winnie, we can only pay you half as much but just go on doing what you have been doing. The Bishop would not approve a plan like that, and I know myself that I get very grumpy at the prospect of working full time for half time pay. So the planning is not just about how much to spend, whom to call, and whom to raise up. It is about knowing what all needs to be done and who will do it. We must combine action with thought and planning to provide a large canvas for the Spirit to work.

This is a big assignment for the future vestry but I have great confidence that they can do it. You can do it. You know yourselves well. You know what works here and what does not—

you probably even know who could do what jobs well. You have great strengths in your long history and your long associations together as a family in God--Our generous, loving God who will work the divine purposes of salvation through your hands and hearts. It will be an exciting journey!

I admit to you that when I came here this is not what I expected. I hoped to be called as your rector in the ordinary course of events and settle in for the usual spell of several years with you here in Fairmont. I did not want to have to help you reduce my job to part-time and to guide you through re structuring how the work of the parish gets done. But I now believe that is what God has called me here to do and that I am blessed to be a part of this stage of your journey with you—a journey that will surprise all of us with unexpected moments of grace and profound senses of purpose. We can do this and God will help us.

St. Julian of Norwich, a medieval English mystic, and one of my favorite saints, says that God cares for the world, holding the world gently as if it were a tiny hazelnut cradled carefully in God's hands. We will feel this care around us as we begin these tasks, and as St. Julian says all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well. Repeat this saying prayerfully and often!

Submitted with great fondness and blessings,

The Rev. Dr. Winifred L. Mitchell, Priest-in-charge

January 25, 2009

# FEBRUARY 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4 Choir 5:45	5 10:30 am Bible Study	6 ECW 1:15	7
8	9	10	11 Vestry 5:30pm Choir 5:45	12 10:30 am Bible Study	13	14
15	16	17 Worship & Lit 9am	18 Choir 5:45  March Cloak Deadline	19 10:30 am Bible Study	20 4pm Legal Services	21 Region 4 Meeting 10 - 3 Mankato Kids for Hunger 1 - 3 pm
22	23	24 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper??	25 Ash Wednesday Service 5:30 pm	26 10:30 am Bible Study	27	28

Please check the Half Cloak each Sunday for updates to the Calendar events!

## Birthdays and Anniversaries:

9 Cheryl Kraemer  
 9 Jasmine Sifeuntas  
 13 Michi & Steve Donnelly  
 14 Elizabeth Viesselman  
 17 Bill Busse  
 18 Leona Anderson  
 23 Randa Simpson  
 25 Marcia Borowiak  
 27 Steve Donnelly  
 27 Doug Wollam  
 27 Lia Cedillo

### February 1st

Head Usher: Randa S.  
 Lector: Gail I.  
 Intercessor: Pat G.  
 Chalice: Tom H.

### February 8th

Head Usher:  
 Lector:  
 Intercessor:  
 Chalice:

### February 15th

Head Usher:  
 Lector:  
 Intercessor:  
 Chalice:

### February 22nd

Head Usher:  
 Lector:  
 Intercessor:  
 Chalice:

*If you are unable to serve please find a replacement.*

**EPISCOPAL COMMUNITY SERVICES**



February Month of the "Heart"

Give your heart to God and your hands to work. St. Mary Joseph Rosello

Confirmands "have heart".

Congratulations to Elda Cedillo and Lizbeth De LaTorre who were recently featured in the Sentinel as Hispanic student-leaders. Elda and Lizbeth are involved in a group of Hispanic high school students who are interested in connecting their parents, the school and the community. It was great to see these newly confirmed young members of St. Martin's becoming leaders in their school community. It does our hearts good to know you.

Will your heart warm someone's hands?

In a recent communication from the ECS office in Minneapolis there was a request for gloves. The diocese office building offers noon sack lunches and a warm place to be during the week. Many of those who come, come without gloves to keep their hands warm. Could you spare or purchase a pair of gloves for someone in need? Men's gloves are especially needed. Giving a pair or two of gloves can warm YOUR HEART.

Our Kids have heart and will use their hands.

On February 21st a-team of 10, youth and adults, will participate in Kids Against Hunger. February 21st is the day when youth and adults from Martin County will be packing high-protein, vitamin-enhanced soy, rice and dried vegetable meals that will feed hungry people around the world. Some of these packs will be available at the Fairmont Resource Center for those needing assistance in Martin County. Show our youth that you have a heart for outreach. Support them by putting your hands into your pocket and support them financially.

**ST. MARTIN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN MINUTES**

Jan. 9<sup>th</sup> St. Martin's Church Women. Six members were present. Meeting was opened with prayer by Winnie. Sec. and Treas. Report accepted. A thank you from Winnie was read. The current project for Women Veterans at the VA facility in MPLS was confirmed there are 41 women. Mary and

Jannelle will purchase a variety of cosmetic type products with a total budget of \$150.00 - \$200.00. The VA will have a Valentine party with drawings. In the meantime we will send a Valentine to each patient.

A discussion followed re-

garding our mission and capabilities as our numbers shrink. It was decided that what our outreach we do will be for local needs. We request that if you have any gently used CD's or DVD's they can be included in the Valentine package to the Women vets.

**ST. MARTIN'S YOUTH**

Some St. Martin's youth will be participating in Kids against Hunger when it comes to Fairmont February 21st. See Diane Luedtke for more information and how you can help out. Diane's email address is di\_hair@hotmail.com

The dead line for the March Cloak is **February 18th**. Your articles need to be in the Cloak mail box in the Guild Hall or emailed to [cloak@smecmn.org](mailto:cloak@smecmn.org)

**The communications Committee:**  
**Chuck Johnson**  
**Rev. Winnie Mitchell**  
**Thom Peterson**  
**Jackie Ziemer**

## 2008 Annual Report from your Jr. Warden

First, I would like to thank everyone who helped out during the past year with church cleanups, decorating and other projects.

I am proud to announce that as of this date your church is in good condition.

Some of the projects that were done over the last year were:

- 2 church cleanups
- Replaced toilet in Handicap bathroom
- Full completion of lights and ceiling of the Narthex
- Painted Church Office
- Replaced several Roses in Rose garden

Looking ahead I see the need to replace the north side of the roof on the sanctuary in the somewhat near future.

Due to budget cuts over the last year, we no longer have lawn mowing service and cleaning service. Please help in any way that you can in these areas.

Cost saving measures this past year include:

- Doing as much maintenance work myself.
- On the exterior lightning , replacing the burnt bulbs with florescent bulbs that last several times longer and use less en ergy.
- Keeping the thermostats at lower preset levels during non church use.

Thank you for allowing me to be your Jr. Warden the past two years. It's been my pleasure.

Chuck Johnson

Jr. Warden

### **ST. MARTIN'S SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER?**

This year the Youth group suggested that the Men's will not be organizing the annual pancake supper. If there is some one that would like to organize the supper this year many hungry pancake fans will be very happy. This would be a great time for some other group(s) to have a good time and fellow ship. It was

suggested that the Men's group step up and put this years pancake supper together. This could be a great start to a renewed Men's club at St. Martin's

## DIOCESEN NEWS

**Church Deployment Office Profiles Received**

*submitted by the Rev. Neil Willard*  
Your Search Committee for the IX Bishop of Minnesota met at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, St. Paul, on Saturday, January 24. This sixth gathering of the whole committee began with a meditation and prayer. After a presentation about clergy profiles from the Church Deployment Office (CDO), the committee reviewed 58 CDO profiles that were generated by a computer

search. More than 2/3 of those clergy from across the country will now be contacted and encouraged to enter our process of discernment. Other clergy whose names have been recommended by diocesan bishops are also being contacted this week. Those calls will continue to be made as diocesan bishops submit names. Perhaps most important are the connections that we, as the people of the Diocese of Minnesota, are making with friends throughout the Epis-

copal Church about this exciting phase of our search process. Simply direct them to our [diocesan profile web-site](#) and ask them to encourage gifted priests or bishops to consider a call to serve here in Minnesota. Applications will be received through February 18.

**UNFURLING OUR SAILS IN THE MIDST OF STORMY SEAS**

*by the Rev. Neil Alan Willard*

Many of us find ourselves doing a lot of introspection these days. We're going back to the basics. We're getting our financial affairs in order so that we can provide for our households and also be generous to our community. We're thinking about those things that are most important in our lives verses the things that aren't really as important as they seemed a year ago. We want to reach out and help our neighbors in need in the same way that we would want someone to help us too. Above all, we seek the grace to make wise decisions about our own lives and our life together in faithful congregations throughout the Diocese of Minnesota. That's certainly what we've been doing at St. Stephen's Church in Edina.

Believe it or not, there is good news to celebrate. We experienced a healthy increase in the total number of pledges this year. And our pledge income is on track to be about the same as last year, which is re-

markable under the current economic conditions. This is because the larger number of pledging units has balanced out a slightly lower average pledge.

But there are other realities that have already been reshaping our common life. Our total budgeted income for 2008 was about \$100,000 more than we can expect for 2009. That's because investment income and various assumptions built into our annual budget have to be adjusted to realistic levels. The Vestry has been wrestling with this harsh forecast over the last several months. They understand that our financial situation could easily deteriorate further. They also understand that we have to make strategic decisions at every step along the way for the sake of the whole community at St. Stephen's. So the Vestry passed without dissent and presented to the congregation a balanced budget that includes:

- Maintaining an office staff of only one full-time administrative person and one

part-time bookkeeper (after laying off in 2008 an additional administrative person). This level of administrative and financial support is for an annual budget of more than \$1.4 million for 2009.

- Funding the position of a 1/3-time priest for ministry to seniors via a special grant from our endowment, not replacing a half-time priest after the springtime departure of the current incumbent, and transitioning another priest from full-time to 80%.

- No raises or cost of living adjustments (COLA) for anyone on the church staff. This is a fiscal necessity in spite of the fact that the Diocese of Minnesota mandates a 2% COLA for 2009 that "shall be applied to the pay of all employees, clergy and lay, of the diocese, all congregations, and church-affiliated organizations."

- Programmatic cuts in the following ministry areas: continuing education for staff, contract musicians, adult formation, youth, children, music, and new member incorporation.



• Alternative funding for certain line items, including part of our costs for contract musicians and the entire program budget for youth ministry. Some of this alternative funding can be repeated in future years and some of it is only possible for 2009.

Reducing by \$30,000 our 2009 Apportionment for the Common Good (ACG = contributions to the diocese), but repaying a long-time debt to the diocese in the amount of \$9,571. This means we are still planning this year to give the diocese a total of \$248,611.

These decisions were difficult, necessary, and imperfect. Alternative outcomes would also have been diffi-

cult, necessary, and imperfect. I see no way around the imperfections. What I do see, however, is the fact that we're all in the same boat together at St. Stephen's and throughout the Diocese of Minnesota.

My hope is that the challenges of 2009 will cause all of us to focus on our spiritual health as individuals, as households, and as a community. And remember this – remember that Jesus has already stepped down into the chaos and confusion and anxiety of our world. The Spirit of God is moving over all of that in the same way that “a wind from God swept over the face of the waters” at the beginning of

creation. So let's get ready to unfurl our sails, not to be driven by the winds of our own fear but by the very breath of God. The new life that we have been given begins today. It always begins today – in the Font, at the Table, through every little concrete act of love that is offered or received. Each of these is a sign of the new creation. Each of these is a light shining in the darkness. And we are promised that the darkness shall not overcome it.

Last Published: January 27, 2009 1:49 PM

The publishers of the Cloak will be on vacation for the March issue. We need some one to publish the Cloak for us. If no one volunteers to publish the Cloak there will be no Cloak for March. Please contact

Thom Peterson email: [mr@thompeteron.us](mailto:mr@thompeteron.us) ph: 507-236-2224 or

Chuck Johnson email: [ncountry1@yourstarnet.net](mailto:ncountry1@yourstarnet.net) ph: 507-236-2223

**COFFEE FILTERS.....WHO KNEW!**

**COFFEE FILTERS: Not just for making coffee....**

- 1. Cover bowls or dishes when cooking in the microwave. Coffee filters make excellent covers.
- 2. Clean windows and mirrors. Coffee filters are lint-free so they'll leave windows sparkling.
- 3. Protect China. Separate your good dishes by putting a coffee filter between each dish.
- 4. Filter broken cork from wine. If you break the cork when opening a wine bottle, filter the wine through a coffee filter.

- 5. Protect a cast-iron skillet. Place a coffee filter in the skillet to absorb moisture and prevent rust.
- 6. Apply shoe polish. Ball up a lint-free coffee filter.
- 7. Recycle frying oil. After frying, strain oil through a sieve lined with a coffee filter.
- 8. Weigh chopped foods. Place chopped ingredients in a coffee filter on a kitchen scale.
- 9. Hold tacos. Coffee filters make convenient wrappers for messy foods.
- 10. Stop the soil from leaking out of a plant pot. Line

- a plant pot with a coffee filter to prevent the soil from going through the drainage holes.
- 11. Prevent a Popsicle from dripping. Poke one or two holes as needed in a coffee filter.
- 12. Do you think we used expensive strips to wax eyebrows? Use strips of coffee filters.
- 13. Put a few in a plate and put your fried bacon, French fries, chicken fingers, etc on them. Soaks out all the grease.
- 14. Keep in the bathroom. They make great "razor nick fixers."



*For the month of February please pray for Province VI of the Episcopal Church. Also, pray for those who serve on the Diocesan Council, the Trustees, the Standing Committee, the Chancellors and for the Diocesan treasurer. Please pray for your own vestry or bishop's committee and all those who tend to the administrative work of your parish. For the month of February please pray for Province VI of the Episcopal Church. Also, pray for those who serve on the Diocesan Council, the Trustees, the Standing Committee, the Chancellors and for the Diocesan treasurer. Please pray for your own vestry or bishop's committee and all those who tend to the administrative work of your parish.*

**We are on the web**

**Smecmn.org**

**FEBRUARY 1, 2009**

**ST. MARTIN'S EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH**

102 N Park ST  
Fairmont, MN 56031

Phone: 507-238-2686  
E-mail: [info@smecmn.org](mailto:info@smecmn.org)

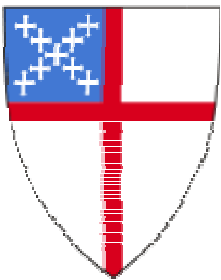
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Mailing Address Line 5



St. Martin's is a reconciling community of Christian people striving through worship, love and service to be a family in God and to bring others into the fellowship.