

Greetings Sisters,

April 18, 2012

Welcome! We are so glad that you have set aside the first weekend in June to join with one another and the beauty of God's creation at Pilgrim Lodge for the Women at the Well weekend. Your deans, Deborah and Anne are ready and eager to greet you for this sacred time apart.

This year's theme is "Sacred Stories". As we hear the sacred stories of scripture and share our own sacred stories, we hope you'll find bread for the journey and rest for your souls. We invite you to read our book choice "Dreamers of the Day" by Mary Doria Russell. Agnes, the main character shares this....." *My little story has become your history. You won't really understand your times until you understand mine.*" Of course we know how busy life is, so don't worry if you can't get it all read before camp. Bring it with you, along with your journal and mission money.

Speaking of mission, the project this year is "The Telling Room" a non-profit writing center for children and young adults in Portland. As a special treat, we will not only learn the stories of the young people, but also have the choice to participate in a writing program of our own on Saturday afternoon. The facilitators will share their talents that we might become better tellers of our own stories and in so doing; realize the sacredness of them all. Reading, writing and sharing sacred stories is the very fabric of our faith and will bear much fruit in the renewal of our spirits.

Some helpful details: Let's all try to bring a *white* shirt for our group photo. Some of you may be attending PL for the first time so plan on bringing: bedding or a sleeping bag, towels, clothing that can be layered, swimwear, a flashlight, rain gear, bug repellent and sunscreen. If you have special dietary needs, special food, milk or juice they may be left in the kitchen refrigerator. Things not to bring include drugs, alcohol, or pets. (Service animals are welcome but we need to know in advance.) Pilgrim Lodge is a tobacco free zone as are all Outdoor Ministry sponsored events. Regarding cell phones: disconnecting from the world is part of the joy/challenge of a retreat event. If you need to keep in cell contact, please keep phones on silence and use them privately so as to respect everyone's experience. Any other questions will probably be answered in the PL registration pages either on line or in the brochure. But know you can always contact us or Karen in the PL office if you need info on something you can't find.

Our time together will begin with supper on Friday June 1st and ends with lunch on Sunday June 3rd. You may arrive at camp anytime after 4pm on Friday June 1st to get settled in your cabin. Many have asked about coming for only the day on Saturday and needing to leave early. We have really struggled with this issue to be as inclusive as we can so that many women can attend. We know that scheduling is a GREAT challenge for everyone! Our intention is to create a community for one brief weekend. All participants are a sacred part of the event. Arriving after Friday evening and leaving early creates gaps in community that affect all participants. We respectfully request that you take this into consideration as you make your plans. If your schedule will not work in early June perhaps you can join us in September. (Or why not indulge and attend both??!?) We will enjoy the added indulgence of having the entire camp to ourselves for the weekend.

We've taken advantage of many great suggestions that were offered in the evaluations to create a balanced schedule with opportunities for community and quiet time, activities and reflection,

time for leisure and time for focus. Sharing in worship leadership is encouraged! If your group is interested, please let us know. And of course, our options time on Saturday afternoon is a great time to share a fun activity or craft with the group. Feel free to bring an old shirt to make a fabric basket...directions will be available. If anyone else has something to offer, please feel free!

If digging in the dirt is what you relish, we can help with that too! For the past few years many of you have blessed PL with gifts of potted annuals and perennials. Others have shared their skills in planting. This effort to beautify PL is always appreciated. But remember only if you want to.....No requirements....just offerings of love and color!

If you have special housing requests please send them to Anne at the email below. Also please remember to send in your payment to the PL office at least 2 weeks prior to camp. You do not need a doctors' signature but we do need to have you complete the health form. And bring it with you at registration.

New this year! Please bring a few of your gently used books to swap with others. We will have a table set up for the books to be swapped. Any books not claimed during the swap will need to be taken back by their original donors so Pilgrim Lodge does not have to dispose of them.

Also, we need you to bring a small container (pill bottle or small baby food jar) of water from a special place near your home. We will be using it during a worship service. We are in need of leadership for both the chapel and vesper services on Saturday; if you are willing to create and lead one of those services please contact us.

Well, we certainly hope that covers it!! Just come, and enjoy and relax....hey, why not bring a friend along? We are looking forward to greeting you on Friday June 1st at 4pm. Dinner will be served at 6pm. Please let us know if you will need to arrive at a later time. We are anticipating our time together with joy and look forward to spending an exciting and relaxing time of renewal with all our Sisters at the Well.

Faithfully,

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