

Wisdom from the Woods – OneTogether

By Deb Hamilton

“Our service to the world begins,” is the charge Rev. Susan gives us at the conclusion of our worship service. From the first time I visited SPW, to when I was received in February into what Presiding Bishop Curry calls “the Episcopal Branch of the Jesus movement,” I knew I’d found a church home that provided the connection between words and actions, of hearing Jesus’ words of love and compassion and living into them.

The Bible in Acts 20:35 states that “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” “

It feels like eons since I was fretting over my crock pot oatmeal and hoping would be palatable to our guests at the hypothermia shelter. Now, almost 8 months later, with our daily routines significantly altered, I am so grateful to SPW for the many creative avenues provided for us to live into that charge of service to the world, and this is why I give to SPW.

Whether we are making blankets for pediatric patients, providing much needed food and school supplies for at-risk children, or contributing fresh vegetables from the giving garden, there is never a loss of opportunity at SPW to help our neighbors in need and make a difference in their lives, which in turn makes such a difference in ours.

And just as the flight attendant reminds us to put our own oxygen masks on first (remember flying?), SPW provides us so many ways to care for each other as we care for others. We’re leaving cookie surprises on porches, making phone calls to check on one another, and becoming “zoom” experts with so many ways to connect through coffee hour, book discussions, the Wednesday evening compline and adult formation, to name just a few.

Of course, it has been wonderful to attend worship services in person again; to see familiar faces and feel the smiles behind the masks. We know that one day, with God’s grace, we’ll be able to shake hands or hug once more, but while our sign of peace is a more little distant than we’re used to, our connections remain strong, because SPW is truly the embodiment of our stewardship slogan, “One Together.”

