

Good morning. I'm Linda King. Before I start, take a moment to get comfortable. Place your feet on the floor. Take a deep breath – in and out. Close your eyes. Relax.

IMAGINE..... You have moved hours away from the place you called home for all of your adult life. You hope to meet people who will someday become as close friends as you left behind. You brought with you two cats whom you adopted when they were just kittens. They have been with you for close to twenty years. As elderly cats, they need much care on a daily basis.

IMAGINE..... As you are settling into your new home and life, you find yourself making frequent weekend trips to visit parents who are declining in health. These are emotional trips with hours of driving. You know there is not much time left with them.

IMAGINE..... It's the start of the holiday season and the desire to connect with a community becomes stronger. The holiday season can be a tough time for you and you know that helping others will help you get through the days ahead and perhaps even enjoy them.

What if you joined a small group of people to learn about an aspect of spirituality that you wanted to explore. What if this group became your friends and support structure you could reach out to when you feel vulnerable. How enriched your life would be!

What if you met someone who was willing to come take care of your cats on those weekends when you were away? They are willing to give them their daily fluids, feed them, clean up their messes and give them love. What if you are out of town dealing with the passing of one of your parents and a major snowstorm came through your new home town. You know you will need to deal with clearing the driveway when you get back. What if you called someone to ask about getting a plow so you can return to a cleared driveway? What peace of mind during challenging times!

What if you said "yes" when asked to help with a holiday fair and found yourself working with a large group of people to put on a community event that generated lots of holiday spirit? Afterward, you find yourself warmly welcomed to a pot luck holiday party. How that would make your holiday merry and bright!

These are a few of my experiences at North Parish. This is a community living our values in every day actions. Imagine how different your life would be if you were not part of this community.

Please join me in supporting the Stewardship Drive as generously as you are able.

Thank you.