

Deb Napolitan – Pastoral Team
November 5, 2017

Pretty much every morning as I leave my bedroom to start the day, I notice two pictures hanging right by the door: One, taken at Great Smoky Mts. National Park, is a beautiful path: it heads up a hill, surrounded by rock and fern. The other, taken at the Hoh Rainforest at Olympic National Park, is in lush green color, showing a bridge made of wood. Both paths, similar to the one we walk in our lives, lead to somewhere unseen and unknown.

As someone questioning, welcoming, being, needing, I visited here quite awhile back and saw many of you very authentically doing the same. And I chose to stay for really one reason: the deep opportunity for shared journey. Deep because of your genuineness, shared because of your generosity.

I have been so honored to be a part of pastoral team and to walk with them, and you, as we journey through this difficult and magnificent world.

I know I am imperfect; you are imperfect, we are imperfect as a community. We are more human than not, after all. But, oh, the gifts and beauty in this walking together:

-A little while back, my son's young marriage was unraveling. What to do with that heartache and concern? A generous soul from here (who did not know me well) and who had struggled with something similar, agreed to meet with me; she talked with me, listened to my sadness, helped me. *"Let me walk with you this while"*.

-Beloved friend Roland Stock, just a few days after his diagnosis of lung cancer, asking for my companionship as he and Melissa traversed the beautiful and poignant ending year or so of his life. *"Let me walk with you this while"*.

-Last Sunday at the service of remembrance, the procession to light a candle for those loved and gone from us. *"Let me walk with you this while"*.

-Communion Sundays, again a procession, coming forth to the table of grace and promise. *"Let me walk with you this while"*.

Through births and adoptions and the growing of children. Through cancers and illnesses, recoveries and passings. Through stumbling and risings. Through

comings out and through goings on. Through all of our beautiful imperfection.
“Let me walk with you this while”.

Monte Garber – Pastoral Team
November 5, 2017

My Symbol -

If the parrot is our visual symbol of the sacred, then the music of CMCL must be its song. The music and the musicians of CMCL are something that I treasure about our community. I love hearing and participating in our beautiful singing, but that’s only the beginning. Think of the many remarkable moments of music we’ve shared in this space. My first memory is of Pastor Vern pounding out blues riffs on the piano. I also remember Daryl Snider’s African thumb piano reaching our ears from some hidden place in the sanctuary. Or Pastor Susan suddenly breaking into song in the middle of a sermon. Have you ever watched Dean Clemmer’s face when he’s playing his guitar? During one of his exquisite solos, Mark Rast leaned over to me and whispered, “He’s in another place.” Were you here when Tim Baum played his oboe, accompanied by a turntable–driven guitar machine that he built?

There are so many individuals and impromptu ensembles and choirs and songleaders and young people making their debut...there is just not time to talk about them all. So instead I will simply offer a non-musician’s heartfelt thanks to all of you who create such a rich musical environment here.

Of course many churches have great music, but CMCL is a church where jazz lives. What a rare and beautiful thing to have the Jazz Sunday tradition. And so here is a shout out to our jazz musicians, including those who’ve formed the core of our jazz ensemble over the years – Ryan Kauffman, Daryl Snyder, Grant Huddle, Raj Iyengar, Larry Penner, and Tim Baum.

Can you recall a singular musical experience here that transported you? For me it was the service comprised of a performance of John Coltrane’s composition called A Love Supreme. When I heard that service, I knew I was home.

Luke Good – Pastoral Team
November 5, 2017

My symbol is a pottery piece called, “Circle of Friends” which I’ll refer to a bit later.

Now, I’m not a theologian by any stretch. But I’d like to suggest that the story of the parting of the waters (sometimes referred to as “Parting of the Dead Sea”) found in our scripture today is a significant story symbolizing the act of seeking out God’s voice in times of uncertainty. I think a big challenge for us in today’s uncertain times is to seek out God’s voice as well as listening to our many voices in carefully discerning how to proceed, especially when facing dilemmas or unusual situations. This calls for/almost demands that we can trust God and the persons around us during the process—when facing such situations.

I give an example of a situation that recently confronted our Pastoral Team. As Pastor Susan and I were about to enter the courtyard entrance of CMCL for a pastoral team meeting, a woman approached us. She reported her family (we later met her husband and two kids, ages three and five) had nowhere to stay for the night, that Water Street Mission was full and there was no family to help. What were we to do? You need to understand I’m not the kind of person who is manipulated by panhandler types. But in good conscience, could we abandon this family to the streets for the night? Long story short, after consulting together as Pastoral Team, listening to each other’s angles and concerns, and after confirming that the mission was full for the night and that this woman and her husband had an interview with Tabor’s TLC program the next day, we decided to provide lodging for the family at a local hotel located along the bus route for transportation to their Tabor meeting the next day. Were we manipulated and used? Maybe. Could there have been a better alternative? Perhaps. But as a team, we listened to each other’s voices (and as I like to say, God’s voice or direction inside each of us), trusting our judgment and discretion in making the best decision we could with the information we had.

Reflecting on this “Circle of Friends”. To me it’s a symbol of listening to each other’s voices, expanding our circle of friends—both within our CMCL community and beyond, in discerning the voice of God. (We as Pastoral Team look forward to these listening times that we are scheduling for any CMCLers that wish to participate, starting today after our service.)

Carol Spicher – Pastoral Team
November 5, 2017

Good morning; my name is Carol Spicher Let's look at the final line of the call to worship: ***And O God, let us not forget to be kind***

What does that mean to you? How do we express kindness to each other? How do we teach younger children to be kind?? (I remember trying to tell our 2 year old son to "use his words" to express his feelings, instead of biting!)

The symbols I chose to share today are: "forever" stamps and a collection of sympathy cards, along with a knitted scarf for a college freshman (taken out of Lin Bowman's hands this morning).

I would say that RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE are what gets me out of my pajamas and to worship on Sunday mornings. I treasure and cherish the relationships/ the tangible ways that we, as a congregation, reach out to say "I care" during times of pain, celebration, or transition. In my younger days, as a new member of CMCL, we showed up to help each other move from apt to house, we still share meals (chicken corn soup) when babies are born or parents die.

I've always enjoyed writing and sending cards. Jim and I dated for 5 years in college and med school ; and some of those years we were geographically separated: Costa Rica, Western PA vs. Lancaster, EMU vs. Goshen. Hershey, PA vs. Richmond, VA; We both wrote lots of letters then.

I admit: I have this strange fascination with stamp designs. Life is too short for me to use "flag stamps". I often walk to the local post office to purchase the newly released stamp designs. My daughter in law, Jennie, jokes that they've not had to buy stamps since they were married 6 years ago.

In 1990-1992, Jim and I were new attenders here at CMCL. I remember coming to church, announcing that I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes and then in the following year, to announce that we had multiple miscarriages. (TEARS surprised me here) I wonder how we can be honest with our needs; it takes courage to be honest and vulnerable!

I remember receiving cards and meals.... They were both methods of soothing that pain and loss.

But it wasn't until my mom's sudden death 3 months ago, that I, once again, was reminded what it was like to be on the "receiving" end of prayers, well wishes and support coming in the form of cards, flowers, candles, walks with friends and the pleasant surprise of coming home to meals delivered to our door. I want/need to THANK YOU as a congregation for expressing your care and concern in those ways.

Being a member on pastoral team gives me opportunity and responsibility to send more cards and notes... This is NOT a job for me; I enjoy it. Other avenues of caring: Sending notes in the care packages to the college students...I'm on the YAEF committee (young adult endowment Fund); we get to write notes and send checks to young adults in the 18-25 year age group.

IF note writing is your mode of expressing kindness,...

But I'd like to challenge each of us to take just 10 minutes a day to put down our electronic devices; and write a note of encouragement or gratitude to someone that crosses your mind, to the choir director, those struggling with addictions, the person who's running the sound system, to the person leading worship, or hosting pot-luck meals, to those who provided special music or create the worship environment, to those who are recovering from surgery or receiving treatment for cancer, Express appreciation to Susan, Amanda and Malinda for their service as pastors. to the college students who might be struggling with mid-term exams, to the Sharp family serving in London.

This is what keeps me connected to the folks in the community here at CMCL; this is one way I was taught to be kind.

I'd invite you to reflect on that and share later this morning...how do you choose to show kindness??