

“This is Our Home”

Rev. Laurel Gray

June 13th, 2021

It's been quite a year. One filled with zoom links and mask wearing, confusion about what forms of sanitizing were necessary and what would ultimately be deemed overkill. And, from the survey we sent out a couple weeks ago, it has been a year when this community blossomed. So many of you said that you have gotten more involved in our congregation this year and that having this community was more important to you this year than ever before.

Our pledge campaign theme was “weathering the storm” but I actually think we've done a lot better than that. We aren't closing out this year of pandemic life weather-beaten - we come to this final Sunday with flowers in hand. And that's to say nothing of the storm, because the last church year included everything from a seemingly endless global pandemic to political turmoil and threats to our nation's democracy. Those are not light winds, if you will.

And, like trees in a storm, we realized how deep our roots here were, how much deeper they could become. Even more than all of the new skills we've learned in the last year, all of our adaptability, I'm most proud of how deeply rooted we were. In our principles, in our sense of ethics, in our commitment to each other, in our willingness to try new things like pods and virtual pageants and gift bags for all number of occasions. When we get to our bridging ritual in a few minutes, we'll return to the gift bags.

I'm proud of our generosity of spirit this year, our commitment to making sure this spiritual home still felt like home. I hope you're proud of that, too. Proud of all the ways you stretched to try new things - from all of the zooming to all of you who signed up to co-lead services. If my memory serves, the number of you participating in leading services this year increased by three fold. That's incredible.

As we look towards next fall, my hope is that we maintain that feeling of home, even as we shift again and figure out how to make congregational life accessible both in person and online. As we sort through all the details and find our way through the continually changing tides, I hope we remember just how resilient and creative and agile we have learned that we can be.

Amen.