

Sermon & Congregational Sharing: The Faith We Give
March 13, 2022
Rev. Laurel Gray

Our theme for the month of March is “Renewing Faith,” something that perhaps feels both difficult and, thus, well-timed. March is mud season in New England, that liminal time between phases - the festivity of winter has waned, but the vibrant liveliness of spring has not yet sprung.

So, too, are we in a confusing stage of pandemic life - a tenuous return to togetherness, laced with both relief and strangeness, confusion about masks and hugs and snacks.

And in the world beyond, we see the horrors of war - humanity at its most violent bound up with heartbreaking generosity. Perhaps you, too, have seen the photos of baby strollers left lined up at train stations, anonymous gifts for Ukrainians parents fleeing war with little more than the children in their arms.

Like the story of our chalice, that kind of creative generosity gives me faith, inspires my trust that goodness and kindness and creativity are not diminished by violence, that, in truth, they multiply and expand and find a way.

Faith is defined as a state of complete trust and confidence, one often associated with the sacred, with something that transcends our individual human experience.

And this is one of the blessings of community - this congregation is always bigger than any one person, a thing that’s made up of all of us and defined by none of us, something that existed before we arrived and will continue to exist after us.

Being part of a congregation gives us the capacity to have experiences that we couldn’t have on our own, to participate in a mission that we shepherd together, as members of a collective, never as lone individuals.

There is so much love here, so much kindness, so much faith. Maybe you hold a concept of God along with your faith, or maybe you call it faith in humanity, or love, or mystery, or, as the great Mr. Rogers called it “the helpers.” “When life gets scary,” he said, “look for the helpers.”

We often share stories on Members & Friends Sunday, and today I’d like to invite you to share stories of times when this community renewed your faith, however

you define it. I'll walk around with the mic in the sanctuary. If you're online, please hit the raise hand button and we'll ask you to unmute yourself - I'll ask Lisa to watch the zoom screen.

(congregational sharing)