

June 6, 2021

Dear Sanctuary,

After the last year and a half a report seemed too formal and unnecessary. The long and short of it is that we survived but in many ways we thrived in the pandemic. Thanks to Wendy and Tom we were able to continue to have Sunday morning services that were intimate and wonderful. Our children were able to participate in every service and are excited about God. We helped feed our neighbors and found new ways to share our love. It wasn't perfect but it was enough. Today, at the outdoor service it was wonderful to see so many faces in person after sharing so much together, apart. I teared up during the Lord's prayer because I had know idea how much I had missed praying out loud with others.

Last night I babysat for a friend and did not get home until 1:30 am. This morning as I was hurrying to get ready I remembered it was a potluck. Knowing I did not have enough time to get ready and bring food I was reminded by something my Mammie told me at church right before a potluck. She said the potluck is an important part of church because it reminds us that there is always enough. Sometimes you are in a place where you can bring more and in those moments you need to do so by bringing something big like pulled pork, or a pasta dish. At other moments you need to just do your best even if that is yogurt, fruit or store bought salad. Then she paused and said other times you need to remember that others will take care of you so even when you have nothing it is important to still come, so your friends and family can fill you up and you can be humbled by God's love. Today I was humbled and reminded that there will always be enough as long as you show up and trust in your community. On my way home today her story brought to mind Matthew 6 26-34, New Living Translation.

“Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.”

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As we move forward I want to encourage us to be like the flowers, the birds or a church potluck. We need to know that we are enough, that God gives us what we need, and we just need to trust and have faith in God. We have some really big questions to tackle as we figure out what post pandemic Sanctuary will be. We as your LC have nothing but questions but I am hopeful and excited to find the answers. These are just a few!

- Do we continue joint worship with Hillside?
- How do we use 458 High St with each other and our community?
- How does this weird, wonderful church become sustainable?
- What does our community need as we begin to reconnect?
- How do we build out and strengthen the relationships we already have?

I have no answers but after this morning I am hopefully excited and motivated to figure out what God has in store for us. My promise to all of you is that I will continue to show up! Sometimes with a lasagna and sometimes empty handed knowing that you my brothers and sisters in Christ will fill me up.

Love,

Joanna Begin  
Moderator