

Church of the Covenant
State of the Church
2019 Annual Meeting
June 9, 2019

We have been on quite a journey this year. We have encountered intense light and deep darkness –both holy, both sacred. We have felt the joy of new beginnings and the pain that comes when things end. We have served alongside one another, and discerned our way forward – we have worshiped, and we have nurtured faith, we have celebrated and we have known despair. Together, we have walked through all of these things. Together, we still have far to go. Right now, we are in a difficult part of the journey – the uncomfortable middle – where things are uncertain, where we may feel unsteady, and where our deepest vulnerable places are often revealed. This is not an easy time to be a member of this community of faith. This year has not been easy for me. I'm sure, as we sit in this room today, that it has not been easy for many of you. Yet, as we have said many times before in this community, God never promised us 'easy'. God has always promised us faithfulness. As we search for a new Head of Staff and Senior Pastor, as we continue to work on the health of our relationships and community with Bill Appleton, as we look to the future and all the potential it holds for us, God is with us.

When the path feels long, or unfamiliar, or painful, we may take strength from the knowledge that God is already here, leading us forward, standing still beside us, holding us up, and calling us closer. This is the Journey of Faith.

As we live in the uncomfortable middle of this journey, it is my hope that we will not allow the darkness of fear to overtake us, but rather that we walk in confidence that the Spirit of God burns bright within each one of us. This Spirit gives us all that we need to walk unafraid through the darkest times and places. My hope for us as we move forward is that we can learn to cultivate trust:

Trust in ourselves, Trust in each other, Trust in the process that we are in together, Trust in the leadership of our governing body, the Session of this church.

Know that these women and men are working diligently on your behalf at all times. I am grateful to serve alongside them as they do the work of this body of faith. I am continually struck by how Thoughtful, Faithful, Intentional and Actively Discerning our elders are in all that they do. I am grateful to be a part of this community, to learn, and grow in faith with you when the path is easy and when it is challenging. I look forward to what the coming year has in store for us.

Thank you for all that you do! Thank you for all that you are!

Reverend Melanie Marsh Baum