Kindness & Compassion Vol. 1 Nov. 2026

Here are *Ripple* reader stories about kindness and compassion. I have included the full text of emails with some very light editing. Remember—we all ripple to each other. Enjoy!

ellie

From Virginia

I am the mother of a transgender daughter who came out to us, just over 4 years ago, at the age of 22. It was a shock, but as time has gone on, my reflections on her middle school through high school years, has provided me with multiple examples of gender unrest, but we didn't pick up on them. Both my husband and I were 100% supportive to her from the moment she told us, but since then, I have really had to educate myself.

As I embarked on this new journey as a mother, I needed people to tell who I knew would be affirming and many of those came through groups I was involved in with the ELCA church. The ELCA has statements being supportive of individuals in the LGBTQIA+ community, but unfortunately, what each individual church says they believe, isn't always true. However, I am happy to report that several groups have been supportive i.e. a compassion group I belong to and meet monthly with, my cohort and instructors as I trained to become a Certified Spiritual Director, and finally my church family.

When I first told our church family about our transgender daughter, most had watched her grow up in the church, baptized and confirmed in Christ. After we shared, a member asked that they be allowed to give us hugs and to thank us for our vulnerability to share. Members were so kind at that moment and several shared about transgender family members they had. At our state ELCA convention, my husband announced this "coming out" at our church as we were sharing experiences of being "broken open." The crowd clapped, he was hugged by many, and again, members came forward who also had transgender relatives. It's hard to "come out", but once you do to affirming people, the kindness shown is just overwhelming.

I want to pay that kindness forward. I am a Certified Spiritual Director and companion with individuals of no or any church affiliation. Often "the church" has failed people in the "queer" community, but I am trained to companion with those seeking to have a relationship with God despite being gay, trans, nonbinary, etc. We are all God's beloved children. Please reach out if I can be a source of kindness in your life.

With permission here is Virginia's email: virgunverferth@gmail.com

From Carolyn

When I think of the most recent kindness I have witnessed it is with my husband who often takes a walk in the morning with our dog. Occasionally, he'll take the walk with a bucket and a grabbing tool, and he cleans up all the trash he sees on the route. Every

time he does it, other walkers notice and say thank you. Any one if us could do that. He does do it.

From Karleen

My story of kindness happened last winter during the invasion of ICE and Metro Surge. I had been feeling angry and helpless about what was happening. I had made donations to multiple organizations but still wanted to do more.

Watching families on tv being taken from their homes, I wanted to provide a safe space for some families. I reached out to a friend who had connections to the immigrant community and told her if she knew of a family who needed safe refuge that we had room in our home. The next day she connected me to a woman who knew of a family of five in immediate need of safety as ICE had been outside the home they were renting and their landlord told them they had to leave. Within the hour my husband and I were on our way to get them.

Because of the risk of ICE still being there and possibly interfering or detaining them we decided we needed a decoy car. My husband waited in our car in a parking lot down the street while I and a friend went to the home to get the family. We parked in the neighbor's driveway and had them sneak out the back door and into our car. We quickly drove to the parking lot where my husband was waiting and transferred them to our car. All they had with them were some backpacks and duffle bags. Due to the language barrier, I had downloaded Google Translate to my phone. That would be my friend and conduit to communication for the next almost month during their stay. I told them they would be safe at our home and I tried to make them feel comfortable and a little less scared.

They were able to have the entire lower level of our house to themselves. Every day in the late afternoon they would all emerge from the basement and begin to prepare dinner for everyone. It was such a treat to have someone cook a fresh, home-cooked meal for us. Every dish was amazing! Fresh, homemade corn tortillas were our favorite!

The older of the two young sons became my little buddy—we became very close. At one point, he said to me that he wished that I could be his grandma. During their stay, he turned 8. We had a surprise birthday party for him. I bought him some gifts, along with some gifts for his little brother so he wouldn't feel left out. The woman who connected us to the family came to the party and brought cards from all his classmates. During this time, he couldn't go to school or be with his friends. He was a bit overwhelmed with everything and very happy and thankful. I had baked a cake and decorated it with dinosaurs for him. He loved it. Earlier, he had told me that he hadn't gotten any gifts for Christmas because they didn't have any money, so I know how excited he was to receive so much.

During their stay, I had reached out to friends for donations to help pay for some housewares and clothing since they had to leave everything behind when they escaped. We had so many people step up and help—we raised $5,000 in a matter of

days!! People in Minnesota are so good! We were able to pay for the deposit as well as the first month's rent on an apartment for them, we even had enough left over to get them some extra necessities.

After almost a month together, we agreed that it was safe enough for them to leave and move into their apartment. It was bittersweet the day we said goodbye. During one of our conversations earlier, the dad told me how thankful and grateful he was that my husband and I had opened our home to him and his family. I told him that they will always be a part of our family. We've been in contact with them since they left and this past summer they all came back to visit us.

This experience was life-changing for me and my husband. I'll forever be grateful for it. I'm thankful we had the opportunity and resources to help someone in need. My hope is that we do not experience another ICE invasion that tries to expel our immigrant friends and neighbors, but if we do my husband and I will be there to help.

From Denise

My nephew, I****, who is 25 years old is in training to be a firefighter at Lake Superior College in Duluth. One of his classmates was nicknamed "Jello-Man" by another because he was not as fit as others. My nephew approached the student who was name calling and told him to stop calling names and putting someone else down. The student apologized to my nephew. His response was, " You owe an apology to the person you were calling the name." The name calling stopped.

At any age, I think it is hard to call someone out who is behaving badly towards someone else, especially when you don't have a lot of life experience. The actions by my nephew is inspiring to me.

From Mary Jean

Since T-rump's nasty comments about all Somalis after one young Somali man was arrested for terrorist plans, and the increased incidents of hate crimes against Muslims and Muslim institutions all this year, Isaiah [a multiracial, multifaith coalition that unites faith communities] put out a request for non-Muslims to stand outside Twin Cities mosques before and during their Friday noon prayer services with signs of support.

Last Friday, I joined a group of about a dozen folks with signs like "Minnesotans Stand Together" and "We believe in 'Love your Neighbor as Yourself'" who stood outside a local mosque and greeted worshippers with "As-salamu alaykum" ("Peace be upon you"). Some of us, like myself, were new at this and some had been doing it regularly for almost a year, since the hate crime increase started.

We received back smiles and either "Thank you!" or "Wa-'alaykumu s-salam" ("And upon you be peace"). One man coming to the first service brought a box of donuts - and napkins - for us. The mosque itself had wonderful, spiced tea and sambuusas and gratitude for us between services.

We are all humans and need to have hearts of concern and respect for each other. I saw a lot of that Friday, from both sides.

From Jacque

My church has been meeting in an elementary school for 10 years now. I've been attending and serving on the Hospitality team for the last 6 years. We take care of lots of details that make it feel like a church instead of a school cafeteria - everything from refreshments to décor to the bathrooms - and it all must be unpacked and repacked every Sunday. I've been leading that team through all kinds of up and downs and changes for the last 4 years. We even had to contend with our storage trailer being briefly stolen a couple of years ago.

This year, I've been so exhausted and anxious and I knew that I needed to take a break from being in charge. But that is so scary to admit! What if no one believes I've earned a break? What if no one steps up to fill the gaps? What if the whole team falls apart? But I should have known that I didn't need to worry. When I announced to the team that I'll be taking a sabbatical at the beginning of next year, they were all so supportive of me taking time to rest. There are still details to figure out between now and then, but I'm learning to lean on my village and trust that they love me as much as I love them. Wish me luck!