**Reflection for Monday,**

**August 28, 2023**



When I looked out into the pews on Sunday before the service started, there was a lot of open space. I was a little worried. But it felt reassuring to hear Karen whisper, “Bless you!” to our acolytes as they began their walk up the aisle to the altar. During the welcome, I told those who were there that each person could have their own pew.

But then, as is our wont, people continued to arrive. Our choir clustered into the front of the church. Ava graced us with some stories about her service trip to Panama. Bob Orr’s son, Rob, came in and got to talk with people who knew and loved his dad. We remembered Kathi’s birthday, and Gene and Kathleen’s anniversary, and our friends who are watching via livestream. We sent loving prayers to people who are struggling with ill health. We sent, in fact, prayers around the world.

And we celebrated our life together with warmth and affection, which is the way every Sunday should be. When Bob began his comments about David’s twenty-five year tenure as our music director, I sure enjoyed the look of surprise on David’s face. And thank you, Nik and Judy, for a delightful musical interlude. We even got a lovely message from the church’s former pastor, Frank.

After the service, I found saw some candles lit in private prayer in the sanctuary as I tidied up. I heard laughter coming from the refreshment table. Gail and Chris brought a cake for David, and Janet had set out a delicious spread of fruit and cupcakes. Joy and Carl had sent a big box of pears to share and they went into many happy hands.

You’ll notice that I’m only using first names here, because that’s how I think of us: a community, a safe place, a place where we can lovingly tease upon occasion, a place we can sing our hearts out, cry if we need to, play, pray, and ask hard questions.

It turns out the pews don’t need to be full for the sanctuary to overflow with Presence.

You thought you arrived late? God’s been waiting, ready to let you know that whenever you arrive, you are right on time.

In faith,

Elizabeth

Announcements

Once again, a scammer is connect with people in our congregation. DO NOT share our roster with someone who asks for it in an email. And DO NOT respond if someone is pretending to be me and asks you for money or gift cards!

Our reading group is restarting, and we will be reading Thornton Wilder’s play, “Our Town.” OUR MEETING TIME HAS TEMPORARILY CHANGED! Our next meeting will be via Zoom at 10 a.m. on September 12. During that session we will be discussing the first act of the play. Contact Elizabeth if you would like to receive the Zoom link. All welcome.