



“What We’ve Learned”

Rev. Paige Getty

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For me, much of the past year’s experience has served as a humbling reminder of how precious is the good fortune with which I live. There’s a general weariness underlying everything, but all-in-all, I am really fine—‘covay’, as my friend Cheryl says ... okay for covid times.

Truthfully, I am more than fine. Our immediate family members have remained healthy so far; the extended family members who’ve been sick are recovered; the students in our household are handling virtual school with grace and resilience; with the help of YouTube, one of those students has even taught herself a variety of new skills and is crocheting some impressive and whimsical things.

So, perhaps the greatest personal lesson is about my own privileges—like Dianne observed earlier, this year has exposed layers of privilege that I’ve long taken for granted, beyond the obvious privileges of race and class and marital status and cisgender identity.

For me, this past year’s lessons have come less from direct experience or explicit teachings, and more from observation of others and of my own internal processing—observation that has either revealed new insight or reinforced things I know already.

I have learned or re-learned...

- that not all extroverts are miserable being homebodies, and that introverts aren't necessarily happy about intense, extended isolation
- that Zoom fatigue is real ... and that the Hide Self View option is a valuable game-changer



- that a leisurely, conversational walk around a Columbia lake is one of my favorite ways to connect with UUCC members
- that racism and transphobia and sexism are no less intense or real during a time of physical isolation from one another; in fact, those evils are exacerbated by the pressures of the pandemic
- that the congregation is not defined by its building, and that the physical plant is an important and tangible place that feels like home to many of us; we miss it
- that our Sunday morning hugs and 30-second check-ins on the way in and out of the sanctuary are even more valuable than I knew before
- that fear and worry and anxiety may not be tangible but are very, very real—and they deserve attention and treatment
- that doing any of this alone—without colleagues, psychotherapists, highly skilled staff and lay leaders—would be essentially impossible

I have learned that most of us are strong enough and resilient enough to withstand even more than we might have thought we could.

I have learned that busy-ness is not the same as productivity and that a slower pace allows for deeper understanding of ourselves and of each other.

I have learned that you, UUCC, are filled with grace and humor and love and generosity. (Of course I knew that already.)

And I've learned that there's so much I don't know about what lies ahead. We're still learning. And this pandemic isn't over—we're still in the 3rd lap, as Rev. Hewitt wrote.

But if I remain grounded, nourishing the roots, strengthening and stretching the muscles that provide balance and flexibility, then I will have the capacity to withstand what comes.

May it be so for us all. Amen.