

CHALLENGE TOGETHER

To challenge ourselves to grow spiritually through worship, education, nurture, reflection, discussion, fellowship, and outreach. (From our congregation's Mission Statement)

Our church building, with its stained glass, wooden pews and raised altar, is a beautiful place to come and rest. I often picture weary beings dragging their broken pieces through the door to be mended. And while the mending in this building is beautiful, the beauty is not in the structure, but in Her people, the church. And the church challenges us to be the church beyond this structure. I tell myself each time I speak truth to power, each time my voice shakes as I raise it, “be the church.” And the church, for me, used to be a structure. A place where I would worship Her with reverence, on bent knees. Now, I worship Her in defiance, not on bent knees, but knees that shake a little. Nervous, knocking knees standing, marching, seeking bravery. And not in defiance of Her, but in defiance of the structures that deny Her people opportunity. In defiance of the dismissal and oppression of Her people. A different type of reverence. Your knees will shake, march anyway. Our God is there in all of it, but especially when we shake in the face of corrupt power, made up of people also in Her image, and we stand anyway. As the church, I pray that we each take our stand for justice and peace, using the courage She is always breathing into our bones. I hope we look for Her when our knees shake. And I believe we will always find Her when we shake, but do anyway.

Jess Girdler

