



Greetings Merging Waters,

January 7th, 2021

I would like to start this first message of 2021 with gratitude: Many thanks to all of you who sent emails, texts, and cards so full of warmth and love to Luke and I this season. They have warmed our hearts and our home. Thank you to those who shared Christmas treats with us. It was so kind and so fun to get a text message here and there telling us that something was dropped off for us to enjoy. You did it safely and lovingly and, while our waistlines might not, we thank you for that. This has been a year where we all needed reminders of love and support to get by and we have all shared those together.

Another thank you is one for us all. I am so grateful that despite a pandemic, even, as we have lamented our time apart, missing the physical presence that has brought us joy we have worked with what we've got to be the best we can be. We have had a sense of privilege challenged we were reminded by a virus that we are all connected and none of us made immune by position, wealth, faith, or commitment. We have been reminded of the inequities in our health and care systems, and in the unjust treatment of racialized peoples. What we have done in response however, has shown who we are.

The work of Outreach, pastoral care, education, yoga, administration, and worship in showing our love for the Divine in all has continued despite the need for additional steps, physical distance, and the learning of new technologies. Our online discussions, Zoom Worship, and activities like the Twelve Days BEFORE Christmas allow us to continue to bring joy and community to so many. We have continued to lift up our song of faith in different ways and while they were not the same, we looked still to the future.

Aware that things will not always be this way and that we can find opportunities to continue to be relevant and who we are even in the face of sweeping change. God continues to call us into a vibrant and active life of faith and service to the world.

So, we let each other know that we miss one another and we use whatever tools we can to continue to share in community as best we can. To all who continue to show the world that we are a loving community ready to show love, even in new ways, Thank You!

This week as we join in worship, at the beginning of a year that offered promise and challenge, we will seek to remember the connected nature of our existence. Connected with the Divine, Creation, and one another we will ask:

- How do our choices show the connected nature of our lives?

[Matthew 25:40](#) will continue to inspire us this week to ask our questions and seek to understand the Divine in all.

Peace and hope, Rev. Ryan Fea, MDiv ryanfea.mergingwaters@gmail.com