

Greetings Merging Waters,

January 26th, 2022

This week we have come to a place where the journey takes on a sense of depth, uncertainty, and promise, one that underscores the important role that faith has in our lives.

Today, I have spent time with members of two families within the Merging Waters faith community. These families have both experienced the death of a beloved child of God. These deaths have touched many of us with mixed feelings of pain for the loss of a sweet and loving person in our lives but also of gratitude for the love and kindness that each has brought into our lives and our community. Bathed in the love of these relationships we can find ourselves in sorrow and in thanksgiving all at once. I know that like the Holy Presence both myself and this community will be here for both families, and one another, in this time of celebrating lives well lived even as we mourn.

In a similar way many of us have mourned the church that has blessed our lives by the Spirit with the love, connectedness, and hope found in God through Christ. We often try to hold onto this connection, the blessings of the community, for fear of experiencing its loss. This sadly has led to many too afraid to let anything change to experience the blessings that are yet unknown. We can find peace in the many steps of the journey if we open our hearts to the experiences we have found. They were unknown before we encountered and embraced them, just as the questions of where or how our journey continues after death. The future after a loved one has died is filled with the unknown while still, we can celebrate the lives and loves that have touched us in how we choose to continue in our living and loving. Similarly, we can embrace the unknown of how to live as a church in new ways into the future, having been touched by God's love in community in the past being open to the new loves and blessings we have yet to meet.

This week we will ask ourselves, along with our neighbours all over the West Island and Laval:

- How do we get from being the church we are to being the church we are called to be?
- How does embracing change and continuing the journey honour those whom we have loved and shared with along the way?
- What can we do to help one another through times of loss even as they lead to the promise of God's future for us all?

As we find God's steadfast-loving kindness together today and into tomorrow we will journey together with courage and compassion giving what we have to God's purpose and mission in the world. Together let's answer God's call to love passionately, intentionally, and unabashedly in this journey with the courage, integrity, and steadfastness we find in the message of Christ and in one another.

Peace and hope,

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