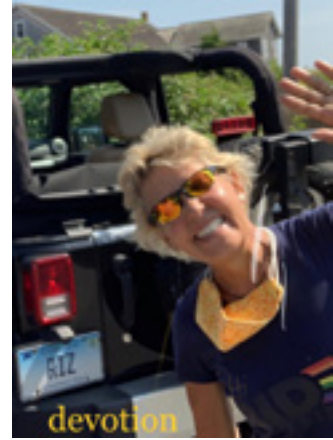




SATARDAY SEPTEMBER 5, 2020



Dearly beloved,

Someone just asked me, “Remember May 4th?” I open my phone to look; May 4th doesn’t stand out as an unusual Monday, actually. I’m stumped.

“May 4th is when everything was going to reopen and we’d return to normal,” they said. “Remember? We were just shutting down for couple of months, at the most.”

Well that didn’t happen.

That didn’t happen, and so, so much didn’t happen as we imagined it might ... and as the months wore on, things happened that we couldn’t have imagined.

We know there are lessons in this. Let’s keep surfacing them and sharing our insights. The Buddha taught that the spiritual path begins with suffering. *Let’s not waste this opportunity to grow our souls!*

We’ve done an extraordinary job of creating new rituals together during this time of enforced apartness - physically but not socially distancing. Easter, Covenant Renewal, and a Sunday celebration of Pride were all *beautiful!* Next up is In-gathering, the Sunday following Labor Day. Traditionally, we would be planning for our Water Ceremony, in which each of us brings a little water gathered during the summer and pours it out into a communal bowl to use (after it’s sterilized!) for baby dedications throughout the coming year. That’s not happening, either.

In its place, during this pandemic year, I propose a Celebration of Gifts.

Each of us brings a spark to the flame of our chalice. It takes all of us - every single one of us - to create and sustain our beloved spiritual community. It would not be the same without you - without each and every one of us. And so here is my question for you - spiritual homework!

What is the gift you bring to this community?

Is it kindness? Money? Jokes in the chat, music, poetry, hard questions, wisdom, whole-hearted participation? You say!

Just one word is fine. If you have several, that's fine, too. I'm going to ask you to write your gift in **BIG** letters on a plain piece of paper; hold up your paper; take a selfie or ask someone else to take a picture of you; and send it to office@ASC-Boston.org by **5:00 p.m. this coming Thursday, September 9th**. You can also write right on your photo. Thanks to Rev. Beth (featured in the photo above in the Beth-Kem-Kim pod, sharing our gifts), in place of our water ceremony procession-
al, we're going to enjoy a little slideshow as we Zoom worship together - a Celebration of Gifts!

This summer, it's been wonderful to be with so many of you for tea each Wednesday afternoon.

Thank you to our summer worship leaders (Al Ingram is up tomorrow!), to our summer musicians, to the Tech Team, and to those who held the space for virtual summer gatherings! On Sunday, September 13th, our executive minister, Rev. Beth; Director of Music Mark David Buckles; and I are looking forward to celebrating the start of a fabulous new church year with you.

When we look back on this time, we will be amazed. You. Are. Amazing!

Faithfully yours, with love always,

Kim





DON'T GIVE UP ON THIS YEAR.
KEEP FIGHTING FOR THE GOOD.
KEEP SHOWING UP.
KEEP LOVING.
KEEP GIVING BACK.
KEEP BEING KIND.
KEEP BEING BRAVE.
KEEP CARING.
KEEP TRYING NEW THINGS.
KEEP SHOWING GRACE.
KEEP ON.
THIS WORLD NEEDS YOU
TO BELIEVE IN THE GOOD.

RACHEL MARIE MARTIN
FINDINGJOY.NET
THE BRAVE ART OF MOTHERHOOD