

FRIDAY, JANUARY 19TH, 2024



“All right, Mr. Demille, I’m ready for my close-up!” Bruce Dallaire and Max (wearing his monogrammed hoodie), being very attentive to the sermon. photo credit: Tom Anderson

Dearly Beloved,

Two Sundays ago, I preached about my childhood friends’ cancer diagnoses last month — both breast cancer and colon cancer, diagnosed a few days apart during her on-time, routinely-scheduled mammogram and colonoscopy. By Christmas Eve, she had undergone two separate surgeries.

For many of us, when so much is unknown, the first thing we want to do is to gain some measure of control by knowing something, as if knowing would soften the blow. I spoke with medical professionals among you and in my wider circle of friends, asking this question over and over: “Is it possible that these are unrelated cancers?” Every single person answered me with tremendous compassion, often laying a hand on my arm as they responded, “Well, it’s *possible*....” In other words, it was possible, but extremely unlikely.

Last Thursday, my friend’s pathology report came back: two separate cancers, each caught at the earliest possible moment. No chemotherapy, no radiation. Just tears of gratitude.

I am profoundly aware of the grace in this outcome. So many of us are living a different story — either yourself or someone you love. But it feels important to share this news with you and to implore you to take its lesson to heart: Please remember that simple diagnostic tests saved my beloved friend’s life and they just might save yours. If there’s anything I can do to support you, starting with picking up the phone to make an appointment, please let me know.

As you heard last Sunday morning, our Thanksgiving Miracle Sunday to defray the walloping, unbudgeted \$43,070.16 bill for last August's sewer pipe repair brought in an astonishing \$21,950.64! And then there was a second miracle: Last week, two wildly generous members of the congregation stepped forward to match our collective gifts! *The bill is paid in full.* Thank you so, so much! *You* are the miracle! This Sunday morning, I'll have more wonderful news of our generosity to share.

Guest collaborative pianist, Young Woong Cho opens our service with Grieg and Schumann and concludes with an excerpt from Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor*. Fun fact: This piece premiered in Boston! In between.... Hannah Shanefield (soprano) and Bek Zehr (mezzo soprano) sing a setting of Søren Kierkegaard's *Calm the Tempests of My Heart*. We'll all sing Heather Houston's *Re-Wild My Soul*:

Oh, river, re-wild my soul
Help me let go of control
Show my heart how to flow with ease again
I am ready, take me in

Oh, mountain, re-wild my soul
Show my heart how to lift mine eyes again....

Oh, forest, re-wild my soul
Show my heart how to trust this path again....

O, vast sky, re-wild my soul,
Show my heart how to be spacious again....

Oh, sunshine, re-wild my soul,
Show my heart how to shine with warmth again....

Oh, earth, re-wild my soul,
Help me let go of control
Show my heart how to beat with yours again
I am ready, take me in.

My sermon is called *Chaos*. Director of Music Mark David Buckles (guitar/vocals) sings Lamar and Bentley's *Breathe*, and Mark David conducts the Arlington Street Choir in singing Elizabeth Alexander's setting of Rev. Richard S. Gilbert's *Into the Silent Darkness*:

The Beyond from which we come
Is hidden in dark moist mysteries of primeval mud
And the silence between the stars,
Dwells in the recesses of the soul,
Beckons us into a wilderness,
Reveals itself at its own bidding.
From its vast complexity
Arises simple ecstasy.

We go forth in fear and faith,
Knowing not what we will find
We sing our alleluias into the silent darkness,
To the Beyond from which we come.

For our big finish, we'll all sing Holly Near's *I Am Willing*

Give me a mighty oak to hold my confusion
Give me a desert to hold my fears
Give me a sunset to hold my wonder
Give me an ocean to hold my tears

I am open and I am willing
For to be hopeless would seem so strange
It dishonors those who come before us
So lift me up to the light of change

*Faithfully yours, with love always,
Kim*

p.s. Do you have a question about my retirement (in June) or about the ministerial transition? Pru Chair Tom Anderson, Pru Co-Chair Alan Kemp, and I would love to answer your questions here in Snapshot! Please let us know.

Ministerial Transition FAQs + As

Q. How do we get an interim minister?

A. Rev. Keith Kron, Director of the Transitions Office at the Unitarian Universalist Association, will match Arlington Street with a small slate of ministers. Three to five members of the Pru will form a search committee to choose the interim minister that best fits our needs. The search committee will interview the prospective candidate and the Pru will hire them, as it does all staff members.

Q. If we like the interim minister, can we call them to be our next senior minister?

A. No; interim ministers spend two years serving a congregation, then move on to another interim ministry. An interim minister will work with the congregation for two years to envision what you want from your next senior minister and to insure that our organization is as strong as possible to support a new ministry.

Q. When do we get to choose our next senior minister?

A. After the first year of interim ministry, a search committee of Arlington Street members will be formed, made up of people from throughout the congregation, whose charge is to search for the next called senior minister. The search committee will interview ministers and bring a prospective candidate to the congregation. In late winter or early spring of 2026, the candidate will spend a week at Arlington Street, meeting members in person and on Zoom, and leading two Sunday services. At the end of the week, the congregation will take a vote, making the decision as to whether or not this is the person you want to serve as your next senior minister.



*Richard Marshall, Alan Kemp, and Darrell Waters at Comfort Kitchen ...
with a special guest*