



March 27, 2019

MOMENTS CAPTURED BY THE HEART....

Dear Church Family,

As I began writing to you, I could not help but remember a photography class I had taken years ago. One of my favorite things about this class was working with the film (yes, I said film) in the darkroom alongside other "amateur" photographers as we developed the pictures that we had taken with our 35mm cameras. Each one of us, working on the same assignment, but capturing and seeing the subjects of our assignments from our own unique views through the lens of our cameras. Each one of us eager to freeze frame a moment of time and capture its essence forever.

During those months of photography class, I never went anywhere without my Canon Eos Rebel 2000 35mm camera. I captured moment upon moment with that camera -- always anticipating the delight that came with watching as the photo solution washed over the images that were transposed onto the photo paper. Image after image recorded and brought to life in the hours I spent in the darkroom. I would closely inspect the photos. I would scan each photo for the details that I had hoped to capture -- the smile lines that traced the edges of my grandfather's eyes, the contrast of the gray granite terrain against the blue sky, a self portrait of a tired, but hopeful college student, a church steeple being illuminated by the moonlight, a birthday boy whose blue eyes danced as he prepared to blow out the candles on his birthday cake, a purple umbrella in a sea of black suits and sidewalks, the soft expression of a sleepy baby....

I can still close my eyes and see every one of the photographs that I developed in the few months of that class. I can also recall a number of moments that were simply not captured the way I had hoped. For there were many intimate and beautiful moments on the journey through that time that I had hoped to capture on film --but it seemed that those moments could only be truly captured and recorded perfectly by the heart. The true gift of those moments, was simply being able to be present in them.

Since those days of amateur photography, much has changed. I still own my Canon Eos Rebel 2000, but it has been replaced by a digital version. To be honest, most of my photos are taken via cell phone these days. There are still many moments that I cannot perfectly capture "on film" -- like the delicate wrinkled hands and feet of a newborn, or the awe on the face of my son as he sits beside me with his head tilted towards the heavens to watch a meteor shower, the gentle look on my husband's face as he holds a sleeping child in his arms, the view from the center of the sanctuary of the Hills Church as its faithful community prayerfully embraces a ministry to youth and families and installs a new Associate Minister...

I am humbled and simply grateful to have been able to celebrate together our shared ministry with the youth and families of the Hills Church at the Installation Service a couple of Sundays ago. I can

close my eyes and see your faces, hear the music, the words of scripture, the beautiful witness, the prayers, the sermon, the charge, the blessing... I can feel the love you shared through your preparation, presence, kind words, support and encouragement. The Service of Installation brought with it a beautiful blending of my own faith journey and the faith journey of our church. I will forever remember this sacred celebration.

I had hoped to capture more moments that day, but had left my phone in my office. I am beyond grateful for those of you who were able to snap some photos and share them with me. I had mentioned to a friend that I wish I had been able to capture more from that day of celebration -- and her response was, "Oh, but you did, dear one -- you captured every one of the moments from that day in your heart."

She was right. My heart will forever hold that day, your love, our promise to minister to our children and our youth together -- now and forever more.

There is nothing more enduring than those moments captured by the heart.

Thank you for the blessing of these moments and the moments yet to come.

Peace be with you,



Anne Marie Holloway

Associate Minister for Youth and Families