

Dear Friends,

I feel blessed that I grew up in the United Church of Christ. It is definitely not perfect and wouldn't wish my confirmation experience on anyone. However, it was a place where I could explore and continue to explore my doubts, my ignorance, and change my mind and ways as I learn and grow. We are not a church frozen in time (except some of the responses in churches I have served), but have moved forward and worked through new ways, theologies, and justice work.

At times we resemble a 'heady and exasperating group', at other times, 'Utterly Confused Christians', and even 'Unitarians Considering Christ'. Though we have lots of different roots in our denomination from different areas of our country, we have focused on where the rubber meets the road, especially when it comes to justice work. That is also true here in our local congregation.

I appreciate that our church has the freedom to explore our faith and how we live it out. We have our historical roots to learn from and use, and we also proclaim that 'God is Still Speaking' giving us permission to try new things, even things we have never done before.

I met up with an old friend yesterday who pastors now outside of Kansas City. We talked about what the future holds and came to the conclusion that we don't know. But we are sure that however the church looks like after we retire, God will still be there, Christ will still be leading, and the Spirit will still be giving the body of faith what it needs to continue.

May we continue to covenant with God and each other as we walk towards the future, having hope and faith.

Peace