

January 27, 2019

I Corinthians 12:12-31a

The Apostle Paul was inspired when he wrote these words to the church in Corinth. What a creative way to image the church. Each person is “differently-abled”, if I may be so bold as to describe our diversity in this manner.

And, I saw something new in this passage this week. When I read, “Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body’, that would not make it any less a part of the body”, it came to me that Paul could just as easily have been speaking about different faith traditions, such as Hindu, Buddhist, Islam. Each faith, seeking to understand and reveal the Divine, is a member of the human faith community. Just saying one doesn’t belong to my part, doesn’t make them “any less a part of the body.” But I will leave that for you to work out on your own.

As I was reflecting on those joining today (and at least two more who will be joining soon), I was struck by how diverse a group it is, and yet how similar. The similarity for me is both their humanity and their desire to be part of faith community connected to the United Church of Christ and all the things that brings with it. In thinking about the diverse gifts these new members bring with them, I thought it would be a great idea to introduce them to you by saying something about them that is more than their name. And I will in a little bit, but first ...

These reflections brought me to some of the other “body parts” in this particular Body of Christ; ones which I am so familiar and comfortable with I sometimes overlook their uniqueness. I found myself naming them in my head:

Roger Gauthier, an administrative guru, with an attention to process and detail, with bulldog-like tenacity

Maryellen Castro, all-business, all-the-time (which is not completely true), a very efficient lawyer

Barbara Holmes, quiet, blending in, giving and serving all the time, and those who know her are not surprised: a high school cheerleader par excellent

Eunice Durfee, strong, determined, never-give-in, and what a baker (cranberry squares, an Amicable trademark)

Martha MacNaught, interior design (everywhere in the church building) artistic, funny, faithful

Julie Lohr, artistic, organized, creative, caring

Kim Poulton, always willing to help, giving, present just about everywhere

Simonsons – the clergy couple who have found a church home in retirement and are working hard on leaving it much better than they found it

Elliott Whitney – unafraid to state his opinion, a man of integrity, honesty, served the church, wherever he lived, his whole life

George Papineau – wise spirit, mechanic, gardener, a person who will give you the shirt off his back if you need it

Oh, how I could go on and on by just looking around this room, if time allowed, because this Body of Christ, Amicable Church, has gifted-saints galore. Each of them a member of the Body of Christ; each vital to the success of our mission of transformation by sharing the love of God with the world.

But now, let me introduce to you those who have committed themselves to this particular Body of Christ.

I begin with

Helen Andromalos and Anne Pratt

James Aiello and Ray Medeiros

Racheal and Wesley Roy, Maxwell and Oliver

They are the Body of Christ. You are the Body of Christ.

We are the Body of Christ. Amen.