

## Do Not Worry

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your God feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the gentiles who seek all these things, and indeed God knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and God’s righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. -Matthew 6:25-33

*Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the gentiles who seek all these things, and indeed God knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and God’s righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. -Matthew 6:31-34*

The first time I set foot in this sanctuary was May 14th, 2000, for my grandmother’s memorial service. I was all of 11 years old, and our current Parish House had yet to be built. Little did I know that I was stepping into a place that would become my home, where I would be baptized, confirmed, and where I would get married, But most importantly where I would find the community to whom I turn in joyful times, and the people who I depend on in hard times. The next time I returned was in September of 2001, less than a week after I learned that my parents were divorcing. Now, I’ve lived my whole life in rural Vermont – and never on a paved road. I’ve always known my neighbors well, And I thought I understood what community was. In this place, I was given a crash course on community, starting with Richard Brock, who learned my name before I had any idea who he was. Now, I’ve learned that that is just who Richard is, and exactly why he makes such a wonderful greeter on Sunday mornings.

This particular Sunday was Gathering Sunday, and my uncle nudged me when it was time to go to Sunday school.

*Sunday school? Me? What?!*

I went, begrudgingly, (ok, maybe more than just a bit begrudgingly) not knowing what I was getting myself into, having never been to Sunday School before, not knowing where it was I was supposed to go, anyway, but mostly because my cousin, Emma, was only four, and I knew I was setting an example for her. Maybe, somewhere in the back of my mind, I knew that my uncle was on the right track sending me down to Sunday School.

I'm certainly glad he did.

*Therefore, do not worry...which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life? Matthew 6:25 & 27*

Ok, friends, here is the part where I admit to those of you who do not know this about me yet - I am very, very good at worrying. Give me a thing to worry about and I have got it covered. I joke about this, but I also have an anxiety disorder. So, this verse could easily say: *Therefore do not worry, saying, 'Who will preach the sermon on this date?' or 'How will we keep track of all the details?' or 'How will we be sure that visitors are welcomed?'* and I could still worry. I could, and yet, I do not. I do not worry because this is our home, because I trust that in this place, we will seek God.

What twelve year old me found in the blue room on that early September Sunday in 2001, were fellow middle schoolers, Brian Vachon, a bottle of Tropical Fusion V8 Splash, and a box of Entenmans donuts. Over the next two years these were the people with whom I'd discuss the world's happenings with, and where God was in those happenings, starting with 9/11. They became my friends, and then my fellow confirmands. Almost 25 years later, often on Christmas Eve, or at funerals, times when those who have moved away return, it is in this place where we reunite. This sanctuary holds our joys, sorrows, and our befuddlement.

I've been here through many transitions in leadership - I arrived while Susan Cooke Kittredge and David Conner were at the helm, and have been here for the arrivals, departures, and retirements, of Rona, David, Elissa, Mary Colleen, Marisa, and Rameen. And now, this time, when we have been without a minister since mid-July, and week by week, as a community, we have managed to keep track of all the moving parts. We have been blessed to have had good leadership in this community, for as long as I have been here, whether it has been ministerial or congregational.

*And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life?*  
Matthew 6:27

So, I will not worry. This place, you all, have taught me, over the course of all these years, that in this place, I can trust that we will go forward seeking God, that we will continue to create a place that can hold our joys, sorrows, befuddlement, and everything in between.

A place where I can meet a fellow confirmand, who I've only kept in touch with on social media, and not seen since our highschool graduation and greet each other with a hug, as old friends.

This place has been the stable home to which I have returned in bright times and in dark, since almost childhood, and I trust that it shall be so as long as times continue.

Benediction:

Jesus said that we ought always to pray and not to faint.  
So do not pray for easy lives, pray to be stronger people.  
Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers, but for power equal to your tasks,  
For then, the doing of your work will be no miracle,  
You will be the miracle.