

Guide My Willingness to Respond

In September, Heath Rada invited us to ponder how we use our resources for non-essential expenditures for one month. Beyond housing and other fixed costs of living, he suggested that we consider the percentage of income spent for entertainment, travel, dining out, etc., and to think about that amount in light of our pledging. It was helpful to me to see those numbers and, in particular, to sit with how easily I make decisions to see yet another movie, buy another book, order a second glass of wine. It informed my pledging.

As we entered Advent, I found myself thinking about this again (thanks, Heath!?) with each purchase, travel plan, decoration purchased and priorities arrived at. What are my choices saying about what I most value? For me, when a recurring thought keeps surfacing, I know Spirit is troubling the waters yet again (both prayed for and resisted!). I don't know where all of this is leading, but a poem this season is guiding my contemplation of these matters.

You hollow us out, God,
so that we may carry you,
and you endlessly fill us
only to be emptied again.

Make smooth our inward spaces
and sturdy,
that we may hold you
with less resistance
and bear you
with deeper grace.

Jan L. Richardson, Night Visions

In this season of Advent, am I willing to lean more fully into what it means to bear the Savior with deeper grace? How would that growing commitment impact my worship, work for justice and giving? What stops me?

Hollow me out, God, and guide my willingness to respond.

Nancy Gaskin

Stewardship Committee