

Faith Journey
Rev. Kathryn Morgan

This will not be an exciting read. There are no Road to Damascus events in this journey. I was born and bred a Presbyterian. I grew up in a Presbyterian Church in my hometown of Pitman NJ. I do not recall a moment in my life when faith has not been present. I learned about Jesus and the Bible stories from wonderful nurturing teachers. I was confirmed in that church, there was never a time when faith wasn't present in my home and in my life. There were times when it was challenged and stretched, but it was never absent. Even during my mother's fight with cancer, we were surrounded by a faith community that although did not provide an easy answer to the question why, they answered by showing God in action their love and care. We were also fortunate to have a pastor who walked with us and talked and helped me to discern where I saw God in all of the struggles. My mom recovered and life went on with college and military service. During my time in the Marines, I experienced a deepening relationship with God. I was stationed in Scotland, land of Presbyterians! I attended the Church of Scotland in Brechin, sang in the choir and became involved in the church as much as I could. After the military I returned to Scotland to do a masters in history and connected to St. Machars church in Aberdeen. I became friends with the Presbyterian minister and his wife there and started to wonder if perhaps God was calling. I pushed that thought aside! After graduation, I returned home to teach and started attending First Presbyterian in Pitman again. I became more and more involved, finding greater joy and fulfillment in the work I did there, than in teaching. I became an elder, directed VBS, was elected moderator of Presbyterian Women in the local church and the Presbytery and began seriously exploring the idea of ordained ministry. My pastors encouraged to take time for discernment at Princeton Seminary. I loved every minute.

I realized that I had been feeling that restlessness for quite some time but hadn't been fully been aware of what it meant. Now I knew. Unfortunately at the same time my mother was diagnosed with colon cancer. That faith community was there yet again. Faith in action, living the way of Jesus, in action not just word but in every casserole and visit. It was an incredible, horrible, loving experience. I learned to trust God as never before. I leaned on God entirely and God gave me strength I didn't know I possessed. My mother died and the community gathered me in. I applied for seminary at the last minute. I trusted God. I was accepted. I didn't know how it was all going to work, I trusted God and somehow it all worked. I learned to trust God more and more and more and more. Sometimes I wonder what a Road to Damascus experience would be like, and I wonder if I'm missing something by never having had one, at least not yet. But I thank God for the journey that I have had. As I have learned to trust God more, my relationship has deepened and as my relationship has deepened, I trust God more and more. There is continual wonder at the presence of God all around me. It has required me to pay attention to the teachings and life of Jesus in new ways. It has required that I be alert for the restlessness, the urging, the peace of the Spirit. It has required me to live my faith in good times and bad. One phrase has always resonated with me from the Gospel of John, John 14:1 "Trust in God always, trust also in me." I've trusted as best I can and I am in awe of what God has done for me and through me.