

I have been asking myself this question for the past several months. Today, I'd like to share with you 5 reasons why I continue to be here, to show up:

1. I watched and waited to see who would remain active and involved after Susan and Diane left. Fortunately, many thoughtful people who were visionaries, cofounders, early enthusiasts and later stalwarts of Bridgeport are still here, still working to heal this church and be this church. I have the utmost respect for them—they are part of the reason I am still here.
2. I came at a time when I was engaged in intense civil disobedience, protesting the war in Iraq. Bridgeporters accepted me without question though I am sure not everyone agreed with my approach.

I knew that the church was founded on principles of social action, justice and peace and that it was proud of its role as an open and affirming church. I still believe we have the potential to live out those principles and values and I want to be a part of living them.

3. Alan came to us when we called him be a partner in ministry. Then we changed his job description. He brought us his skills, his belief in Bridgeport's values, his years of experience helping churches heal and transition. Knowing he has successfully helped other churches in similar circumstances, I have hope that we too can transition, survive and grow. I value his leadership and his gentle approach to moving ahead. I see him as our anchor for a slow and steady voyage.
4. I have been in a lot of organizational transformations in my professional life but I have never before been part of a major church upheaval. What I know is that here, at Bridgeport, through the work of Alan, the Transition Team, and other wise persons, I find validation for my anxieties:
 - My feelings of anger and betrayal
 - My confusion and frustration
 - My sadness at the loss of friends and leaders

And I find space to have those feelings, share them, and ask for acceptance and healing from God and from the members and friends of Bridgeport.

5. Finally, and most importantly, I am still here because the church is not one person or personality; the church is us, we are this community. And the community is what sustains me.

Thank you.

May the Spirit continue to energize us in our journey...