

A Different Kind of Water Communion  
Reverend Carolyn Patierno – All Souls  
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If we listen carefully, Herman Hesse said that water is “the voice of life, the voice of Being, the voice of perpetual Becoming.”— *Siddhartha* In this time of perpetual becoming, perhaps the water gathered and shared at this year's water communion will be for us a reminder of the strength of our communion. As we enter a new season, we also enter what I'm calling the pandemic's “even sadder” moment - the part that brings the collective realization that we have miles to go before we can breathe and sing and *talk* unmasked and, in each other's company once again.

But we can do hard things. As we do; we give thanks for the ways that we *are* able to be together. Like a differently conceived water communion that we celebrated yesterday. Like the differently conceived way we are worshipping here, this morning, or whenever it is you are joining in. In all things, we give thanks.

We give thanks for water - so scarce now in the places where fires rage.

Water. So powerful now in the places where storms blew through.

Our bodies: over half of our physical selves is water.

With the water we gather for our Water Communion, we dedicate our children and we bless the dying honoring the circle of life.

Water as saving element. Water as ferocious reminder of the power of soft things. Water as life-giving. Water as blessing. We give thanks.

The water communion ritual was conceived by a group of women – activists, all - who gathered annually for reunion and restoration. They each brought a small bit of water from home. They poured the water into a common bowl as a reminder that together we are stronger. We need to be stronger than we ever imagined right about now. We need All Souls to be stronger than we ever imagined and we can't get complacent about nurturing the strength we'll need in the months ahead. Remember: we can do hard things – and we give thanks and rejoice.

In 2011, to the water communion ritual we added “Pies for Peace” – a way to hold close the necessity and the joy of the feast – even and perhaps especially – in the midst of injustice, danger, and anxiety. In all things we must tend to joy and hope, too. In this way, we nurture strength.

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