

Spiritual Journey Narrative for Eve Mahr

Continued January 2121

In February, it will be two years since I became a postulant. Rereading my spiritual biography from that time, I realize that I wasn't yet confident of a call. All the wonderful things God has done with my life in the meantime have built my confidence a great deal.

I find myself more open to the Spirit. For example, at St. Andrew's, bread for the Eucharist is home-baked, usually in the church. For a couple of years, my gluten-free friend, Becky, and I had discussed how we could prepare GF for the entire congregation, so she and others did not need separate elements. It sounded like a great idea, but she and I couldn't get traction to try it. Sometime in late 2018 I received a cookie recipe that used only oatmeal, no wheat flour, and started asking questions. A third friend was also interested. Next thing you know, three of us had looked up recipes on the web, acquired ingredients, and set a date to experiment. Though between us we brought several recipes, there was one recipe that two of us had found. We took that as a sign we should definitely try it, and long story, short: It was the best and two years, later, the parish continues to it. For a couple of weeks after our success, I had an almost constant earwig of that semi pop hymn, "Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place." Not only do I have a strong sense that the Spirit had led us to find gluten-free bread for St. Andrews at that time and place, it remains with me as reminder to listen for the Spirit.

I pray regularly and deliberately now. Actually, when I first began to question whether I was being called, it occurred to me that daily, formal prayer should be an element of an ordained person's life. Not that I didn't pray before, but outside formal services and table grace, it was an as-needed practice. I began, almost as a test to see if I could develop the discipline. I've settled in with morning prayer using one of my electronic devices (Kindle or cell phone). I started with *Mission St. Clare*, switched to Shane Claiborne, et al. *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals*, back to *Mission St. Clare* and now using *Daily Prayer* from Wellspring Church in Englewood, CO. Regardless, I include my own list of folks and groups that I think need a little prayer, and my days just feel more complete.

I've taken roles in liturgy. I also realized because I was content to worship from the congregation, never "near the altar," I hadn't paid close attention to any of the details. If I was to be a deacon, I needed to be comfortable "up there." I discussed it with Steve Godfrey, and one-by-one we added duties. First I joined the rotation of lay readers. I trained to be a lay eucharistic visitor, and though I made several attempts, never actually visited anyone yet. I began assisting with the chalice as a lay eucharistic minister, and took a few turns as an acolyte. All that practice and observation, came to a screeching halt with Covid, but I'm more confident that when I began.

I witnessed and recognized a miracle. I began working with a young family from South Sudan in the fall of 2018. Stephen, Julia, and their three daughters came to Des Moines so 5-year-old, Paulina, born deaf, could receive a cochlear implant. Stephen had to return to Juba after surgery, but mother and children stayed on at Ronald McDonald House. Paulina needed about a year's therapy and follow-up. Since my husband and I are grandparents of similar aged children who live in New York, we have a minivan with carseats for their visits. We were a natural to give them rides to worship and other activities. During the summer of 2019, I took the three girls to Lizzie Gillman's little music class at St. Andrew's. She opens the class sitting in a circle and asking name and a question. One day the question was: What's your favorite color? When she asked Paulina, she very decisively said. "Yellow." No, it wasn't well pronounced, but it was clear. I was excited because I had not heard her speak yet. But when I told her mother, she cried. She hadn't heard any words yet either! Needless-to-say, I made a point to share with Lizzie! How privileged we are to have witnessed God working through technology!

I completed the coursework requested of me—and more: I've included a list with dates. As you can