

Moment for Gratitude by Heidi Roman

I came to Northridge at a time in which I was seeking direction –both in my faith and in various aspects of my life. I had not been regularly attending church for some time and was having difficulty finding a church home in Dallas that felt right. This meant that I had also fallen away a bit from leaning on my faith as a guidepost when faced with life’s inevitable challenges. A dear friend, Nancy Kelly, knew I was church shopping and told me how much she loved Northridge and that she thought it might be a good fit. I find that Nancy has a lot of wisdom about a lot of things, and this was no exception.

From the first moment Andres and I stepped through the doors two years ago I had a sense that we had found our place. The warmth and kindness of this community is palpable. We have been welcomed just as we are. The first time I read the Northridge charge, and many times since, my eyes welled with tears. This was the kind of faith community I had been looking for. These are the values I want to share with my son. And here you all were- just up the street from our house all of this time. I feel deeply that God brought me to Northridge when he did for a very clear reason.

How then, is it possible to repay all of the gifts that God has given me through Northridge? I often feel my efforts to do so are wholly inadequate. A more than full-time job, an amazing 8 year old, and very rambunctious puppy keep me on my toes. Life is overfull and messy. When I think of the ways that so many Northridge members give of their time and talents, I am truly humbled. There are many times when I’ve had to say no, when I wanted to say yes. There are times I have had to say, I can’t right now, but maybe next year.

But I began to realize that are small ways that I can contribute now. My work schedule may preclude me from attending many meetings, but I can help with communion and I’m a pretty great dishwasher. I may not be able to commit to

weekly duties, but I can do things like donate backpacks and prioritize days of service like meals on wheels. I can contribute to the Northridge community by attending mission trips and retreats. I can be present. I can welcome others, as I have been welcomed. It is a start.

These are the first chapters of my story of what Northridge means to me. I know there will be many more. And I could not be more grateful.