

DISCERNING *God's Call* RENEWING *Our Mission*



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DISCERNING GOD'S CALL - RENEWING OUR MISSION

by Carle Howell

Through the years, God has given me opportunities to feel his presence in my life. As a child, I prayed God would reveal Himself, and I then immediately thought "better" of it as I thought I would be afraid. One of those nights when I was feeling especially fearful, a warm, comforting light appeared at the end of my bed, letting me know there was nothing to fear. Another time, when I was completely financially strapped, I turned to God for the guidance and strength to carry on and felt his presence in this time of crisis. The third led me to Ascension. My mother was coming to town and asked me to find a church for her. At that, I wasn't attending church but simply believed God was in everything and everything was part of the universal God. Well, Ascension was just up the street from where I lived, and Michael Harmuth was preaching a children's sermon with Perry Lyons playing the devil. That day, I felt reconnected to the faith of my youth.

Writing this reminded me of the poem "Footsteps" by Roann Mathias; the last verse reminds us that Jesus always walks with us.

The Lord replied, "My precious, precious child, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."



Question for Reflection

How do I understand God to be calling me to serve and share with Ascension this year?



How do you know what God has called you to do? Sometimes God hits you over the head, and other times you actually sit down and ask, "How can I serve you, Lord?" My spirituality was re-awakened, and since joining Ascension in 1986, I have been trying to give back through various committees and services. Discerning how I can serve God through the church – singing in the choir, being on the pastoral care, liturgy, and property & plant committees, and serving on the vestry. Then discernment led me to become a verger.

Through serving in these ways, I gained insight into Ascension's financial needs, which are essential for providing for its parishioners and outreach. Each year, Mary Lou and I assess what we can contribute. We sit down together to decide how we can support our faith through both financial and volunteer opportunities. When I think about giving, I remember Luke 21:1-4:

As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two tiny copper coins. "Truly I tell you," He said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she had to live on.

How do you know what God has called you to do? How can you serve your Lord?



Carle is a cradle Episcopalian growing up on Long Island, New York. His family moved to Pennsylvania to start a riding resort. Carle moved to Florida, then to Texas, to further his insurance career. He joined Ascension in 1986, and Michael Harmuth married Mary Lou and him in 1990.

He has been involved in many ministries; he is currently in the choir and serves as a verger.