



August 2, 2023

A Note from Rae Guthrie

Hello, friends!

My name is Rae Guthrie (they/she) — some of you may have seen me or met me in worship over the last few weeks, and if you haven't, I look forward to meeting you!

At the end of August, I will begin my third year of theological studies at Methodist Theological School in Ohio (MTSO), pursuing both a Master of Divinity and a Master of Arts in Social Justice.

This semester is my opportunity to complete an internship as part of my field education, which allows students to practice ministry alongside our academic learning — a way to bridge the gap between the brain work and the heart and body work. I am excited to have the opportunity to be an intern here at HUMC. Being a friend and co-learner of Molly Collier, it was an easy choice to be a part of this congregation as part of my educational process.



A little bit about me: I was born and raised in Wichita, Kansas. After college I began an adventure that has resulted in 12 moves in nearly 10 years — living in Florida, Kansas, and Nebraska before landing in Ohio — whew!

Discerning seminary and ordained ministry have been an even longer endeavor.

I first felt inklings of vocational ministry as a high schooler. I was active in my church youth group and had a deep interest in mission, service, and — because of my youth pastor's influence and care — youth ministry. I went to college for just that.

During college, I also was coming to terms with my queerness, which really messed with my clear calling for ordination as a deacon in the UMC. (Most simply, deacons bridge the gap between the church and the world and are called to word, service, compassion, and justice.)

I knew that the church would not ordain me as a queer person, and a person of faith that I spoke to about this was not affirming. This led me to decide not to go to seminary directly after undergrad in 2007.

If the church did not want me, what was even the point in spending the money on the educational requirements? I decided to move on and find other ways to be involved in justice work.

I began rekindling my love for the church around 2016 and felt the nudging of God once again to pursue ministry. It was a slow journey, with at least 2 moves in the mix, but surprisingly, COVID gave me opportunities to attend online open houses with all of the United Methodist seminaries. I also began the formal process for ordination, and that led me to MTSO and Ohio.

I have deeply enjoyed the academic rigor and deep thinking that goes along with it. Through my studies, many of my “secular” interests — like science, space, nature, and environmental concerns — were making their way into the theological conversation.

I had always been interested in the intersection of science and faith, but I was unaware that that bridge had already been traveled on by many theologians before me.



I quickly made Ecological Justice the concentration for my MDiv. Courses like Ecotheology, EcoFeminism and Food Justice, and Field Theology: Water and Watersheds have continued to shape and inform my spirituality and my calling.

One of the themes that comes up often is interconnection. Interconnection has informed so much of what I want to do after graduation. **My big overarching dream is to help folks reconnect with nature, the land, their food, and the Divine.** To help folks see God in all created things and in turn work toward eco-justice and fighting climate change and food apartheid in local communities.

Contemplative practices are some of the disciplines that helped me rekindle and re-hear my call, and I enjoy finding ways to incorporate ecological themes into these practices. I hope to share some of these with you at HUMC. I am excited for the ways that we will journey together.

One of the proposed projects for the year is planning, with a team, the addition of a garden space and outdoor labyrinth as a shared space with the preschool, congregation, and community. If this is an interest of yours (and even if it's not or you have questions about anything I've written), I would love to connect with you!

I'd like to leave you all with a poem to use in your prayer and meditation time this week.

Begin with sitting in a comfortable position and focus on your breathing. Take some deep inhales through your nose and long exhales through your mouth. Spend some time breathing and settling, noticing your body, giving extra breath to those places that hold tension. Read the poem. Sit with the words in silent meditation for 1-2 minutes (more if you're comfortable!). After your silence, reflect on what came up for you while you were present with God and the words of the poem. If you journal, you may want to write down your reflections.

Remember

by Joy Harjo, Indigenous (Muscogee (Creek) Nation)
Poet Laureate of the United States from 2019-2022

Remember the sky that you were born under, know
each of the star's stories.

Remember the moon, know who she is.

Remember the sun's birth at dawn, that is the
strongest point of time.

Remember sundown and the giving away to night.

Remember your birth, how your mother struggled
to give you form and breath.

You are evidence of her life, and her mother's, and hers.

Remember your father. He is your life, also.

Remember the earth whose skin you are:

red earth, black earth, yellow earth, white earth brown earth, we are earth.

Remember the plants, trees, animal life who all have their tribes, their families,
their histories, too.

Talk to them, listen to them. They are alive poems.

Remember the wind. Remember her voice. She knows the origin of this universe.

Remember you are all people and all people are you.

Remember you are this universe and this universe is you.

Remember all is in motion, is growing, is you.

Remember language comes from this.

Remember the dance language is, that life is.

Remember.



Peace,

Rae



Rae Guthrie
MTSO Seminary Intern
nguthrie@mtso.edu



God Loves You  No Matter What

5445 Scioto Darby Road
Hilliard, Ohio 43026 | 614.876.2403
info@hilliardumc.org
www.hilliardumc.org