

## The Reverend's Ruminations

Can it be that we're already a month into 2019? It seems as though Christmas was just a week or two ago, even if we enjoyed some browner winter weather in between. I pray that your New Year's resolutions are still in effect and perhaps have perhaps spawned some healthy new habits!

As many of you know, Ellen and I recently had the opportunity to fly to New York City and attend a taping of *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon* after winning a contest from KARE 11 TV in Minneapolis. It was fun to see how the show is put together, and amazing to realize that the majority of it is indeed "live on tape," recorded in one take. Occasionally Jimmy's words got tangled up and required a second take, but for the most part he is just as funny and spontaneous as he appears on TV! As a musician, I particularly enjoyed getting to hear the show's "house band," the Roots, play live.

It was a whirlwind tour to do in only three days, but we made the most of our time and took in some highlights of the "Big Apple" while we had the chance. After the taping on Monday night, we took in the crowds and myriad lighted billboards of nearby Times Square—a shining example of "the city that never sleeps." Tuesday we browsed around a bit in Chinatown, then spent several hours at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, a particularly impressive, and yet somber, reminder of the horrific event that changed U.S. history forever only 17 years ago. Of course we sampled some great food, including a slice of NYC pizza, snacks from a couple street vendors, and my personal favorite: a local bagel and smoked fish shop that I'm pretty sure would be my daily breakfast haunt if it were just a bit closer to Fairmont. Wednesday before flying home, we enjoyed touring historic Grand Central Terminal amid the hustle and bustle of its throngs of commuters.

All that action, with the never-ending crowds of people and constant onslaught of traffic (including frequent horn-honking), was fun to visit for a while, but it made me realize how nice it is to live in a small town where my "commute" is five minutes and generally includes only one stoplight! I count it as a blessing to be in a town and church small enough that most of us are acquainted with each other's joys and sorrows, and are genuine in our care for one another.

The apostle Paul, writing to his congregation in Rome, encouraged them (and us) this way: *"For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned... Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor."* (Romans 12:3, 9-10, NRSV) I encourage you likewise: continue to care for one another with the love of a Christian family, sharing a kind word or phone call and holding one another in prayer just as you are by others in this congregation. In this is the love which Christ models for us, given with the simple (yet sometimes challenging) command to do likewise to those around us.

Yours in Christ's service,

*Rev. Cory Germain*