



## Together on the Journey

**Rev. Bruce Beisner**  
**Your Minister**

I began my first classes at Meadville Theological School in the winter of 2008. If you've ever been to Chicago in January, you know that it is brutally COLD! I remember talking one afternoon about the challenges of the weather with the wonderful Nan Hobart, who was then serving as the school's chaplain. Nan was a veteran of many Chicago winters and her advice was simple: "Do what you can do. Bundle up, wear your hat and scarf and gloves. And when you're out in the snow, just relax your body and your mind and realize that you're just going to be cold and there's nothing you can do about it."

I was thinking about that conversation the other day as I sat outside in the 98+ degree Houston heat. Those chilling days and nights of my seminary years seemed very far away. As I scrolled through the latest headlines on my phone about our president's summit with Mr. Putin, the arson fire at a local mosque and immigrant children still separated from their parents, Nan's words came back to me. And I thought, perhaps she was talking about more than just the weather.

The Buddha taught that our striving to control the uncontrollable is what brings about our suffering. He said the key to finding peace was to relax our body and our mind and accept that we're just going to be cold (or hot) sometimes. While I believe there is great wisdom in that approach, I also witness so many things that I just cannot accept and feel driven to resist. For me, I can't be at peace while the worth of others is being denigrated and our democracy threatened. Finding the right balance of acceptance and action isn't always easy. It's why Reinhold Niebuhr's prayer remains so powerful and popular: "Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference."

This summer, I am trying to relax my body and my mind and welcome the incredible heat and humidity that comes with living on the Texas Gulf coast. But I am also "doing what I can do," as Nan put it, and I'm calling my senators each week, reaching out to our Muslim neighbors, and offering my time, support and assistance to those in need. And I'm spending a lot of time playing with my new puppies.

I look forward to seeing you in church soon. And seeing you and your pets on August 19.

Blessings!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

*Rev. Bruce Beisner can be reached at [minister@bauuc.org](mailto:minister@bauuc.org) or 513-374-3926. He is usually in the church office on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and works from home on other days. Wednesday is Bruce's sermon writing day and Friday is his day off.*