

A kiddo screeched in excitement, having just completed his coloring page and was wanting to proudly show off his creation to those of us in the pews around him. I held my breath, dreading to see who would turn and stare incredulously. But then...

No one even batted an eyelash! What a wonderful affirmation I encountered here last year while visiting Emmanuel as a potential field ed site. The (lack of) response to the gleeful screech, along with other affirming details, are reasons why it was a joy for me to pursue the opportunity in becoming a part of Emmanuel's family as your newest seminarian.

From the get-go, I sensed an assumption that grace abounds between everyone here. A grace that allows each person to know they are welcomed and have a place in this community, no matter what. A grace that allows for everyone to be human while trying to figure out this whole being a follower of Christ's business. That grace was even evident from the get-go with the beautiful bulletin provided at each service that helps facilitate a joyful grace of learning and engaging with the liturgy.

I also chose to become Emmanuel's seminarian because of the chance to learn about parishes that have been able to go through some ups and downs, and come out with momentum. A momentum that has a strong intergenerational focus, something which I am passionate about and hope to develop more skills in for future ministry opportunities.

Another reason it felt right to join Emmanuel was because of the thoughtful, generous spirit the church must have had if both Gethin and Rick were on your team last year as seminarians. I have tremendous respect for the two of them and knew that it would be a good fit to be at Emmanuel if they too found it fit.

Of course, I can't forget to make note that the guidance and leadership opportunities Chuck offered, with Joani emphatically seconding them, was one of the main reasons why I chose Emmanuel. Even during my initial interview with Chuck, I caught a glimpse of the kind of welcoming, grace-filled church family I would possibly join.

Admittedly, Max is probably my favorite reason for coming to Emmanuel! Being greeted by him, along with one of his bajillion toys, each time I step into the office is absolute joy. And watching congregants stop by and start talking in puppy voices to him is an awesome bonus!

These are just a few of many reasons why I have chosen to become a part of the Emmanuel Church family and why I am so grateful that you have all chosen to allow me to become Emmanuel's newest seminarian!