

## Tell Me a Story

*“In the beginning...”  
Genesis 1:1; John 1:1*

All the best stories start out with “Once upon a time...” Like this one:

*Once upon a time, there was a wonderful Presence who was everywhere and everything and who loved everything very much. The Presence loved everything so much that it was bothered that everything didn't love each other and tended to ignore the Presence whenever the Presence was inconvenient. So the Presence decided it had been too subtle and became just like everything-finite and mortal. Oh, it was still very much the Presence, something all the everthings scratched their heads about even today. But now it was Presence totally with them. And it was cool....except....well, lots of folks didn't think it was the Presence. They thought they were being fooled or they liked how it had been BEFORE the Presence showed up in this new way. Some even thought they could get rid of the Presence. But the Presence wasn't going to give up on the everthings, and a few of them got excited enough to yell about the Presence, travel with the Presence, and love the Presence with everything they were.*

*That's when the adventures began...!*

Admit it, you've read that story. Its a great story! And you'd probably tell people all about that story. You might even make a lifetime of studying that story until it becomes so much a part of you that you actually...stay with me on this...CHANGE and become the most every everything you could be.

We're a storytelling people, folks. We pass stories through generations. We use them as cautionary tales. We base societal standards on them. Sometimes, we completely re-interpret them, reshape them, not even realizing that the stories do the same to us.

Storytelling is a sacred business, and the ministry of storytelling is a critical function of the Christian community. By our stories, we see ourselves as well as the One who brings meaning to them. By our stories, we invite others into the meaning we have found and learn from the meaning they have found. We wrestle faithfully with the meaning of the stories. Storytelling is a ministry of renewal and a ministry of evangelism.

“We ‘do’ ministry when we speak or act in a way that reveals to others the mystery of that interaction between personal story and cosmic story,” according to Rev. James C. Fenhagen in Mutual Ministry: New Vitality for the Local Church. “It involves telling the story in a way that reveals not only something of our own lives but, at a deeper level, a glimpse of that underlying reality in which we see, if only for a moment, the mystery of human existence...It is a ministry in which our own stories, spoken or unspoken, become the vehicle for the divine human encounter.”

Build a campfire in the world. Gather souls around it. Tell the stories. Rejoice in the work that they do.

Pastor Heather