

How I measure

By [Diane Roth](#)

April 17, 2016

I had a wedding earlier this month. It was my first wedding here, in my new-ish call. The couple at whose wedding I officiated are fairly new members of the congregation. She came and visited not long after I started. A little later, he visited as well. I have some affection for the first few people who showed up the same hot summer that I did.

I took three young people to make chalices the week before the wedding. They are going to make their first communion at the end of this month.

I have a baptism on the same Sunday, at the early service. It will be my third baptism, although my first baby. The first baptism was a three year old and the second was five. A boy and a girl.

There are two eighth graders who are getting ready to be confirmed this summer. I haven't been involved in most of their confirmation instruction, but we are going to get together and design their confirmation service. They are going to pick the songs and the scripture readings and think about what else they might want to have in their service.

One wedding. Three first communions. Three baptisms. Two confirmations. That's what I get excited about. That's how I measure ministry, even.

There are probably better ways to think about this. I could think about new ministries we have started, except that we are moving slowly and we haven't started any new ministries except for our tiny first attempts at cross-generational activities. I could think about successful stewardship campaigns (which by the way, we had, this fall), or I could think of new members, or I could think of new songs we have learned. I could measure by the strangers I have met (which would not be a bad way to measure, actually), or the new places I have been.

But I don't.

I measure one wedding, three baptisms, two confirmations, and three first communions.

I measure the girl who got to help serve communion for the first time on Maundy Thursday and says, "I want to do that again!"

I measure the woman who said that her granddaughter had her first sleepover the other night, and she invited her friend to our church.

I measure the two girls who love to sing Holden Evening Prayer together and who sing so that everyone can hear them.

I suppose that the best measure is transformed lives. That is what we are about. But sometimes transformation is not visible to the eye. It is what goes on inside, and it could be happening even when I have no idea. All I can see is the outstretched hand, the singing voices, the little hugs, the food left outside the church door. All I can do is trust that God is using us, even me, to bring transformation.

One wedding. Three baptisms. Two confirmations. Three first communions. And in so many other, ordinary ways, God is transforming us.

That's what I trust. That's how I measure.

*Originally posted at [Faith in Community](#)*