

First Mennonite Church says goodbye to Pastor Claudia Aguilar, who finished her time as a pastor at FMC in November.

Pastor Claudia is anything but a boring human, describing herself as: “Mexican, non-US born, with a foul mouth, with many tattoos, wildly passionate about the good news and the Bible and the ways in which God is still speaking through ancient texts, happy to open the doors of the church to anyone at any time, with economic tendencies leaning towards the sharing of everything and political tendencies leaning towards anarchism (of the Dorothy Day kind, not the smash-and-destroy-everything kind).”

Many of us throughout the conference and at FMC appreciate Pastor Claudia’s unapologetic call to name and work against oppression (i.e. racism, sexism, materialism, etc.) and to stand with marginalized folks in our communities. She is honest and forthright, passionate and compassionate, bold and courageous. Her sermons, activism, and social media presence resonate with many, including an international audience.

And even in the midst of an incredibly frustrating pandemic, Pastor Claudia was able to develop meaningful relationships at FMC. In her resignation letter, she says about those relationships: “Some of you opened your homes, back decks, favorite restaurants and coffee shops, neighborhood parks, and hearts to me. You trusted me to learn love stories, heartbreak stories, travel stories, colonoscopy stories, everyday stories of how you went to the supermarket for the first time in God-knows-how-many-months, hold your hands while praying in a hospital bed, supervise your teenagers as they interned at the church, officiate weddings, baptisms, and funerals... We laughed, cried, challenged each other, and sang together. And we broke bread together. I am amazed by how quickly you can grow to love people even when you cannot see them face to face. The capacity of our hearts to love is wondrous.”

Thank you, Pastor Claudia, for sharing your love and your hunger for justice with us for the last two years. You will be deeply missed. Know that God’s spirit will be with you in the next part of your journey.