

Covenant Renewal 2016 Pulpit Speech

Al Ingram – March 13, 2016

- My name is Al Ingram.
- I started coming to Arlington Street Church back in 1996. I was an occasional congregant for many years. I sang here with the Boston Gay Men's Chorus almost every Christmas Eve since then. In November 2008 I finally became a member.
- From many memories, I have one that's very vivid: The afternoon of September 11, 2001, I drove back to the city from my office in Lexington and I came here to sit with others in the sanctuary to attempt to deal with my strong emotions and find some sense of what was happening. I remember finding a large measure of comfort in recalling our covenant to LOVE and to live together in peace.
- I will say there's not one particular thing about Arlington Street Church that I love most. I love being here because we support *so many* things and because we are *so many different* people.
- Covenant Renewal is our annual fundraising drive for the operating budget of Arlington Street Church. We will make our pledges and celebrate our generosity on May 15th, Covenant Renewal Sunday.
- Since this is Leap Year, our Covenant Renewal theme is "Leap for ASC". Over the next nine weeks, we are challenging everyone to find their own meaning of "leap" and their own way to respond.
- For me, "leap" brings to mind a time long before Arlington Street Church and I found each other. On July 20, 1969, astronaut Neil Armstrong first set foot on the Moon and said "*That's one small step for man, one GIANT LEAP for mankind.*"
- So I say the Covenant Renewal "leap" challenge means this: Instead of pledging the same as last year, a SMALL STEP at the same old pace, let's take a GIANT LEAP, and increase our pledge by an amount that is personally significant. That might mean a 10% increase. Or for those who have never pledged before (you don't have to be a member to pledge), let's take the GIANT LEAP of pledging for the first time!
- I invite you to join me in taking a GIANT LEAP for Arlington Street Church by pledging generously to support the good work of our beloved community.
- "Hash tag Leap-4-ASC". Thank you!!