I owe my experience of ministry in the Montana Synod to a relationship that started in Geneva, Switzerland.  Bishop Crist was an advisor to a j-term course I was a participant in there.  We spent our time together learning about ecumenical relationships and being a world church.  We also got to know each other and appreciate each other.  When it was time for my first call, I give thanks for this relationship and Bishop Crist knowing a church that was the perfect fit for me.  Eleven years later I continue to serve the people of American Lutheran Church in Billings.

While exposure to female pastors abounds in this community, it still seems ground breaking at times.  Just the other day when it was clear my pastoral presence wasn't  respected equally to my male counterpart, the comment was made "you just haven't been doing this long enough" as in 50 years of ordaining women isn't enough to yet change the culture.  I give thanks that my part of moving us towards long enough means that there are many who embrace my ministry and my special gifts for ministry as a woman, wife, mom, daughter, and friend.  For every wall I hit, I know that those same gifts have allowed me into sacred moments, conversations, texts, and tears.  I continue to feel that I am partnering with God in proclamation of and witness to the Gospel in our world.  I give thanks daily for my ordination and the life of faith and practice that it allows me to live. We are not "there" yet but we are on the road, a long, winding, windy, hilly, mountainous Montana road- the valleys exist but glimmers of mountaintops are worth it all.