

At the Dog Park

November 2025 Letter from the Minister

An insurance company recently aired a quietly funny commercial whereby a person awkwardly stands at the dog park as critters dart back and forth around the humans. There is a soft overlay of music and a monotone voice-over that pops in with “at the dog park.” I smile every time I see it. How often have you stood uneasily at the dog park?

Although I don’t have a pooch, when we have family and friends visit, they often bring their fur babies. More often than not, they ask “Where’s the closest dog park?” So, I have stood numerous times at the dog park. Here is what I have noticed.

If and when a dog-owner speaks to another dog-owner, the first comment is often about how the animal appears.

One might say, “Wow. Your Boston Terrier is adorable.” The other person might respond, “Thanks. Bubby is actually a French Bulldog.”

In this case, a person thinks nothing when corrected. “Oh sure. A French Bulldog. Your French Bulldog is adorable.” I have heard many dog owners correct others and it’s not a problem.

If we can honor people who own dogs by identifying their dog’s breed as directed by the owner, I wonder why some individuals become disgruntled when a friend, family member or complete stranger asks to be identified as their chosen pronoun?

Imagine a different scenario at the dog park.

“Wow. Your Boston Terrier is adorable.”

“Thanks, Bubby is actually a French Bulldog.”

“You know. It’s just too much work to get every breed correct. I am so tired of hearing about it. To me, your dog looks like a Boston Terrier. I am going to call your Bubby a Boston Terrier. When I was growing up, a dog was a dog and that was that. I don’t appreciate being corrected and I have lived too many years to change!” 😊

With you on this journey of transformation, Rev. Amy