



# Harbinger



www.graceevanston.org • churchoffice@graceevanston.org

Fall/Winter 2017

## Affirming, Courageous, Caring

Grace Lutheran  
Church of Evanston  
1430 South Blvd.  
847.475.2211

## Grace Is An Open And Affirming RIC Congregation

### OUR MISSION:

To courageously live out our faith by sharing grace with each other and the communities we serve.

### OUR VISION:

All God's people will feel accepted, challenged, and cared for by Grace Church.

### Sunday:

9:00am & 11:00am  
Worship Services

10:00am Education Hour

Rev. Daniel Tallon Ruen  
Pastor  
pd@graceevanston.org

Mark Bowman  
Music Director

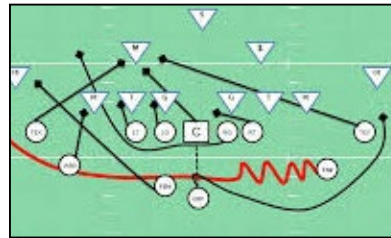
The Rev. Carmelo Alvarez; The Rev. Betty Landis, The Rev. Kaari Reiersen, The Rev. Raquel Rodriguez, and The Rev. Gordon Straw,  
Colleagues in Ministry

Marie O'Brien  
Parish Administrator

Jackson DeLeon Lopez  
and Paola Galicia,  
Sextons

## Offense

Pastor Daniel



After more than 15 years of faith-rooted, issue-based, anti-war and advocacy work to address the needs of the poor, the prisoners, the LGBTQ+ community, the housing insecure and homeless, I am now convinced of one thing: **We need to stop playing defense.**

Recently, I've been asking my allies and fellow activists: can you articulate a faith-rooted, positive vision of the future that encompasses everyone? Can you describe specific, positive, kind, and just outcomes that might activate and organize a majority of our fellow citizens?

Very few of us can. For too long we've been stuck playing defense, and who can blame us these days? Bewildering divisiveness, greed, anger, incivility, racism, trans-phobia, and war-mongering continues to roll in from the Trump administration. It arrives on an almost hourly basis. On the other side, the Democrats generally have little to offer, except something along the lines of, "We're not them." This is not an inspiring strategy. Who is providing a faith-rooted, positive vision with which we might develop an inspiring, traditional, national campaign of renewal?

The right answer for us Christians is always 'Jesus.' The right answer is the Holy Spirit Jesus breathed upon us, his promise to live among us and inside us to the end of the age. Amen?

Co-chairs Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis convened a Mass Meeting of the Poor People's Campaign on Thursday, October 12 at the historic Stone Temple Missionary Baptist Church in Chicago, IL. I attended with Rabbi Andrea London of Beth Emet Synagogue. Grace Members Bob and Gail Lamont were also in attendance.

That night, we celebrated the central theme Jesus preached about, acted upon, and died for: God's Good News for the Poor. (Luke 4: 18)

Pastors Barber and Theoharis are leading a new, inspiring movement in the spirit of The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther

King's original 'Poor People's Campaign,' the last major initiative before his assassination in 1968. King believed the only way to truly start moving the needle past earlier civil rights victories was for all poor people,

no matter their color or religion, to find common cause, and to rise up against the pillars of economic inequality, racism, and militarism.

As we know, the powers and principalities representing those same American demons not only struck MLK down with a bullet—they piled on with divisive rhetoric and policies (E.g. President Richard Nixon's racist 'Southern Strategy'), designed to further fracture groups that have always had fundamental interests in common.

According to Barber, the legacy of those policies is the place to start. "We have to begin by refusing the labels that have been used to divide us," he says. "The key to helping poor white people see through the lie is to show them how the politicians who play to their racial fears actually hurt them the most." The states that have passed laws to restrict African Americans' access to the polls also have the highest levels of white poverty, he explained.

Barber continued: "So we're actively recruiting the same people the white nationalists are recruiting. We're saying to the young men who went to Charlottesville to rally, 'You've been conned. If you want better wages and opportunity for your family, immigrants aren't the problem. Black people aren't the problem. Liberals aren't the problem. Corporate greed and traditional left-right politics are the problem.' And the only way America has ever challenged this structure is for poor people to unite across the dividing lines in a moral movement to revive the heart of democracy."

It's a tall order, indeed. While Barber had great success in 2014 with his Moral Mondays initiative in North Carolina, a movement that subsequently spread around the entire country, he was unable to get a critical mass

Continued on next page

**Grace Budget Meeting Dec. 3, 10am in the Fellowship Hall - Please Attend!**

## Offense, continued

of poor whites to the table. But this is no reason to stop trying. A powerful, moral vision of a shared future that includes poor whites might help us design issue campaigns that will bring them along.

It's also important to note that Barber in no way accommodates his fiery denunciations of institutional racism, greed, militarism, homophobia, and environmental degradation. He waters nothing down. But he is trying to leave a path for more people to join in, adding height to the river of Dr. King's original dream of a broad coalition.

At the rally four speakers of varying ethnicities and experiences, all working poor people themselves, testified to their struggles. They expressed heartfelt thankfulness and amazement that so many might come together to address their pain, their isolation, and their yearnings. This is why the Poor People's Campaign came to Chicago—to build a large social movement, led by the poor and dispossessed, to end poverty, and paint a broader picture. They plan to organize in 35 states to bring non-violent civil disobedience to state capitols all around the country in 2018. In order to reach more poor whites to join such bold actions, says Barber, we are challenged to form relationships, to listen, to speak with integrity, not with hatred, and to paint a compelling picture of a future that includes them too.

This is exactly Jesus' type of offense. An offense of mercy, courage, Good News for the poor, and a grace-filled invitation for those we label as irredeemable. It's akin to his description and inauguration of the Kingdom of God. Jesus was laser-focused on this vision, and it ended up moving the entire world. A new campaign of Good News for the poor will do the same.

After I sang and laughed and cried that night at Stone Temple Missionary Baptist, I thought, 'Yes, Lord. The Kingdom of God is among us.' It's high time for us to start playing offense. I am in touch with the New Poor People's Campaign regional coordinator, so if any of you want to answer the call, let me know if you'd like to get involved.

I am trying to answer my own challenge about articulating a positive vision for our country. I include it below. It is painfully incomplete, attempting to use American-isms I hope might ring true for those who do not always agree with my theological politics. It may not draw any of those people in. But as an exercise in Jesus' thematic vision, adapted for our times and circumstances, I consider it a first draft for what is, I believe, the most pressing project of our divided times. Add to it. Change it. Or, write your own, and with God's help, we will find a new offense of justice, faith, hope, and love around which to affirm, care for, and encourage more and more people.

"Wherever you are born in the world, you are endowed by our creator with inalienable rights, and inalienable worth.

The U.S. is the land of the free and the home of the brave. We crown our good when we bravely fulfill the foundational pledge of American democracy: indivisibility, justice, and liberty for all.

Since all people want good lives for themselves and their families, the more we embrace our American identity of freedom, bravery, and welcome, the safer we are.

Our nation, like any nation on earth, is made up of human beings who are both broken and beautiful. Because of this shared truth, our nation birthed both mistakes and miracles. The miracle of our

constitutional democracy is that we are able to transform our mistakes by confessing our sins, and find creative solutions to solve our problems.

We are strongest when we act as compassionate and just American citizens, dedicated to the proposition that all people are created equal, with equal protection under the law.

Because we are one of the richest, most powerful countries on the planet, we will fund free higher education and health care for all. Our budgets and laws will focus on the needs of people over multinational corporations. Through our strong laws and beliefs, we will provide robust support for families. Because we want lives of abundance and joy, we will craft labor agreements that promote a healthy work/life balance. This greater sense of stability will create freedom for entrepreneurial business ideas, growing our economy, and extending a positive global influence.

Because the earth is in danger from too much pollution and fossil fuel consumption, we will create an active response to climate change, so our children's children will have a safe place to live and thrive.

We will feed our people, hosting a great table of sustainable food production, supporting our farmers by working together to find new ways to enrich the soil and care for our animals. No one will go hungry in a country of such wealth, creativity, and resources.

We will form relationships with one another to find solutions to the problems of racism, elitism, economic inequality, political polarization, homophobia, sexism, and wasteful spending on wars that seem to last forever.

We will continue to welcome the tired, the poor, the huddled masses, yearning to breathe free. Every nationality, every ethnicity, every gender identity, is welcome to build responsible lives of American citizenship, and further the overall growth and success of our society. And we will reach out to the world, seeking cooperation, business partnerships, and security agreements for the mutual benefit of all.

Life is beautiful, abundant, and challenging. Providing life, liberty, and happiness to more and more people is the divine purpose of our country."

**Pastor Daniel**

## Read Amanda Straw's Article in Living Lutheran, "Lead the Way"

Amanda Straw, Grace congregant and frequent singer in the choir, has written an article in the November 2017 issue of Living Lutheran that begins, "In response to decreasing enrollment, ELCA seminaries are partnering on a grant program to work on moving the church forward by seeking out and nurturing future leaders." She goes on by describing what is being done.

As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, we note what our friends at Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries have observed: This shortage of pastors could be addressed, at least in part, by those LGBTQ Lutherans who are ready to serve yet aren't considered for the call process.

**Marilyn Mason**

## Worship Notes

Advent and Christmas have been cancelled this year. Instead, we're planning a ten week series on 'Star Wars' (next movie comes out in December) that focuses on light saber acolyte training, wookiee language translation for lectors, and 'droid anointing' (there's a special type of oil used for the robot parts).

[Pause for effect.]

Okay, okay; fine: we'll have Advent and Christmas. I just wanted to see if you were paying attention.

A small, seasonal worship team is gathering to plan out our theme and midweek services for the season. We will only have three midweek services this year because Advent/Christmas is one of the most jam-packed in the ten years of my time at Grace. During Advent we'll host a Blue Christmas service at Grace for those who desire a worship experience for difficult times and feelings during the season. We'll also host our third annual Las Posadas walk through the neighborhood on one of the midweek evenings. The last Sunday of Advent is also Christmas Eve, so on Sunday, December 24th we will host the children's pageant at a 10am cooperative service, and then begin special music for our annual Christmas Eve service that same day at 7pm. Monday morning of Christmas day brings our 10am service in the sanctuary. Can we do it all? With God's grace, we sure can.

See below for the list of dates and times, and I'll see you all at The Welcome Table. – **Pastor Daniel**

### Advent and Christmas at Grace, 2017

**First Sunday of Advent:** December 3 (*Also the Grace Budget Meeting at 10am in the Fellowship Hall! Please attend*)

**First Midweek Service:** Las Posadas neighborhood walk, Wednesday December 6 at 7:00pm

**Second Sunday of Advent:** December 10

**Second Midweek Service:** December 13 at 7:30pm

**Blue Christmas Service at Grace:** Thursday, December 14 at 7:30pm

**Third Sunday of Advent:** December 17

**Third Midweek Service:** December 20 at 7:30pm

**Fourth Sunday of Advent:** December 24, 10am Children's Pageant and cooperative service

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship:** Sunday, Dec.24, 7pm Special Music, 7:30pm Service

**Christmas Morning Worship:** Monday, December 25, 10am in the Sanctuary

### Grace Book Discussion: January 14, 3:00-4:30, 2018 *The Other Wes Moore by Wes Moore*

All members of the congregation, especially young people, are welcome to attend the next meeting of Grace's book group as we discuss *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates*, written by Wes Moore. We will meet in the Grace Church lounge from 3:00 to 4:30.

Quoting from "Evanston Reads" review: *The Other Wes Moore* is the true story of two boys named Wes Moore, who were born blocks apart

## The Times They Are A' Changin'

On a glorious October 29, 2017, about one hundred of God's people in Evanston joined hearts, minds, and voices to celebrate the signing of the Evanston Lutheran-Catholic Ecumenical Covenant pledging unity, promising to work together to spread the news of God's love and to serve God's people. This was a historic moment long in coming. As one attendee was heard to say, "In the 1960's I would never have believed this!"

The common prayer service took place at the Chapel of the Unnamed Faithful of the Garrett Theological Seminary on the Northwestern campus. The Very Reverend Thomas Baima represented the Chicago Archdiocese and Reverend Ray Legania represented the Chicago Metropolitan Synod. Official participants in the service represented each of the churches signing the covenant. Pastor Daniel Ruen represented Grace at the service.

To signify our oneness in baptism each congregation brought water from the baptismal font of their church and poured it into a common font. The principles on which the covenant was based were read. Then the covenant was read as representatives from nine Lutheran and Catholic churches signed a covenant that was crafted by member representatives of those churches.

Soon a taskforce will be organized to carry on the work identified in the covenant. You will hear about and be invited to their activities as we work together to show unity as Christ would have us do. (John 17:22)

**Connie Wood**



For more photos, go to: [Evanston Lutheran-Catholic Ecumenical Covenant Celebration](#)

within a year of each other. Both grew up fatherless in similar Baltimore neighborhoods and had difficult childhoods; both hung out on street corners with their crews; both ran into trouble with the police.

How, then, did one grow up to be a Rhodes Scholar, decorated veteran, White House Fellow, and business leader, while the other ended up a convicted murderer serving a life sentence? Wes Moore, the author of this fascinating book, sets out to answer this profound question. In alternating narratives that take readers from heart-wrenching losses to moments of surprising redemption, *The Other Wes Moore* tells the story of a generation of boys trying to find their way in a hostile world."



## Comments On Proposed 2018 Budget In Preparation For Presentation To The Congregation.

When looking at the budget document, focus on the right-hand three columns which show the 2017 budget, what we have spent through Sept 30, and the proposed budget for 2018.

### Partners in Ministry

As for 2017, we are proposing \$10,000 towards 'benevolence' in addition to that for ELCA and emergency assistance. That \$10,000 does include our commitment of \$2,500 towards Bridges to Home. As shown, we have already exceeded that amount for 2017 and, given the generosity of Grace, would be surprised if we do not exceed it again in 2018. Also increasing ELCA benevolence.

### Action Ministries

This category shows the most change from 2017. In large part, this is due to what has been happening thanks to Liz Laughlin through both the Sunday School and Wonderful Wednesdays. We had clumped a number of categories into 'faith development'. We're now breaking that into more categories to better indicate how our resources are being used. In particular, social ministry reflects costs of Wonderful Wednesdays. We also have adult education, Generations, and Sunday School as active ministries which we are supporting to a greater extent. For 2018, the youth trip will be to the National Youth Gathering, towards which we've already written a deposit check. It will need more than the \$4000 budgeted, but the youth do plan some fundraising. Finally, the education director stipend to Liz is being moved to the Staff of Grace category (had been in faith development for 2017).

### Operations

This is the category that everyone dislikes, but also the one where we've saved money this year. Both insurance and utilities have been less costly this year, and we've lowered our budget estimates in the hope that this will continue.

### Staff of Grace

As always, this is the lion's share of the budget. The salaries reflect proposed 3% increases for all employees and contractors, and as previously noted, inclusion of education director. Health & pension shows the largest increase, reflecting health care costs. We are maintaining the same level of insurance coverage for our staff as in the past.

### Overall

For 2017, we have struggled at times to maintain our giving, but when asked, Grace has stepped up to make sure that we are meeting our financial obligations. And more, we are meeting financial aspirations. Extrapolating our spending from 9 months to the entire year, we are on schedule to spend \$332,000, more than the 2018 proposed budget. We are already supporting Wonderful Wednesdays and responding to needs we see in our community (think Bridges to Home) and beyond (think hurricane/flooding relief). Thus, even though we are proposing a 5.5% increase in the budget, and we have no anticipated external income, the council and I are confident that Grace will continue to grow in our giving as much as we grow in faith and service.

## Work On the Former Y.O.U. Office Space Moves Forward - God's Work, Our Hands...?!

Progress on the space rehab is being made: painting the walls, ripping out the carpet, and cleaning the air vents.



Before and After!



Kaari Reiersen, Soren & Gus Koh;

Lynn Otte, Holly O'Connor, Kaari Reiersen, Russ Kohnken, & Peter Spies

## 2018 Proposed Grace Budget

| Description:   | 2015                | 2016              | 2017              | 2017, Actual      | 2018, Proposed    |
|--|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Partners in Ministry:</b>   |                     |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| ELCA/Metropolitan Chicago Synod  | \$14,626.00         | 15,100.00         | 16,000.00         | 11,998.00         | 17,000            |
| Other Partners in Ministry   |                     |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Emergency Assistance   | \$3,000.00          | 3,000             | 3,000.00          | 3,597.48          | 3,000             |
| Inspired Giving  |                     |                   | 10,000.00         | 14,930.39         | 10,000            |
| <b>Total:</b>  | <b>17,626.00</b>    | <b>18,100.00</b>  | <b>29,000.00</b>  | <b>30,525.87</b>  | <b>30,000</b>     |
| <b>Action Ministries:</b>  |                     |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Communication (formerly Faith Development)   | \$2,472.00          | 2,000             | 2,200.00          | 11,342.65         | 400               |
| Education  |                     |                   |                   |                   | 2,000             |
| Evangelism   |                     |                   |                   |                   | 200               |
| Fellowship   |                     |                   |                   |                   | 800               |
| Social ministry  |                     |                   |                   |                   | 6,000             |
| Stewardship  |                     |                   |                   |                   | 500               |
| Music  | \$772.50            | 1,000             | 1,000.00          | 821.44            | 1,000             |
| Worship  | \$2,575.00          | 2,600             | 2,600.00          | 2,412.02          | 2,600             |
| Youth Trip   | \$2,575.00          | 1,500             | 2,000.00          | 3,927.00          | 4,000             |
| <b>Total:</b>  | <b>8,394.50</b>     | <b>7,100.00</b>   | <b>7,800.00</b>   | <b>18,503.11</b>  | <b>17,500</b>     |
| <b>Operations:</b>   |                     |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Mortgage   | \$23,748.00         | 23,748            | 23,748.00         | 17,811.00         | 23,748            |
| Property   | \$18,000.00         | 22,500            | 22,500.00         | 21,931.98         | 24,000            |
| Utilities  |                     | 21,000            | 20,000.00         | 12,111.14         | 16,000            |
| Insurance  | \$12,360.00         | 11,000            | 12,100.00         | 5,983.50          | 10,000            |
| Office Expenses  | \$8,000.00          | 7,000             | 7,000.00          | 4,838.13          | 7,000             |
| <b>Total:</b>  | <b>62,108.00</b>    | <b>85,248.00</b>  | <b>85,348.00</b>  | <b>62,675.75</b>  | <b>80,748</b>     |
| <b>The Staff of Grace:</b>   |                     |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| <b>Salaries &amp; Housing Allowance &amp; Employment Taxes:</b> Pastor, Sexton, Music and Education Directors & Office Manager | \$128,531.84        | 125,284           | 130,030.00        | 97,669.30         | 137,000           |
| Professional Fees: Guest ministers & musicians   | \$1,500.00          |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Conferences & Assemblies   | \$1,339.00          | 1,000             | 1,000.00          | 1,156.82          | 1,000             |
| Pastor discretionary Expenses for Grace  | \$300.00            |                   |                   | 1,006.13          | 1,000             |
| Student Loan Repayment   | \$1,250.00          |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Health & Pensions  | \$44,193.00         | 47,600            | 50,100.00         | 37,791.27         | 53,040            |
| <b>Professional Development:</b> Adult education, books, etc. to benefit professional career of Pastor & Music Director        | \$1,545.00          | 1,200             | 1,300.00          | 238.94            | 1,000             |
| <b>Total:</b>  | <b>178,658.84</b>   | <b>175,084.00</b> | <b>182,430.00</b> | <b>137,862.46</b> | <b>193,040</b>    |
| <b>Above the Beans:</b>  |                     |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| In-kind contributions  | \$4,000.00          |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Pass thru contributions  | \$2,500.00          |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>\$6,500.00</b>   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| <b>Total Spending Plan:</b>  | <b>\$273,287.34</b> | <b>285,532.00</b> | <b>304,578.00</b> | <b>249,567.19</b> | <b>321,288.00</b> |



## BRIDGES TO HOME UP-DATE

### *The 2nd Annual Bridges to Home Cabaret*

On October 7, 2017, Bridges to Home, a project of the five ELCA Lutheran churches in Evanston, held our 2nd Cabaret to help fund an apartment for two young men who are ready to move out of Our House (home for 5 or 6 young men under the supervision of Connections for the Homeless). Once again, the talent of the five churches combined to put on a fabulous show of song, instrumental pieces, dance, and spoken word which we enjoyed with homemade savory and sweet treats and various beverages. At this writing, the amount raised is \$4,190, but we expect more contributions. In addition to the Cabaret money, the churches have pledged varying amounts to support Bridges.

Grace's talent is legend, so it is no surprise that we didn't have to twist any arms to get 3 fabulous performances. **Zora Tallon Ruen and Margot Van Nice** tap danced a delightful duet titled "Tapping our Way Home"; **Bob Lamont** used his strong, persuasive voice to read a moving story titled "The Well"; and **Reggie Bruce**, accompanied by **Mark Bowman**, sang the very moving "Falling in Love with Jesus." Keeping the program moving was our amazing MC, our very own **Pastor Daniel [Ruen]** who gave great introductions to all the acts and humorous asides about the serious acts versus the more folksy ones. The four other churches all contributed equally talented performances of various art forms, but this article does not have the space to describe them all.

I think, without a doubt, that the most important part of the evening was the testimonial given by one of the two young men currently living in the Bridges apartment. Payton Walters told us of his years of homelessness, sleeping on couches, in trains, and finally pretending to be alcoholic to get into a residential treatment facility. Now he has a full-time job, has taken courses at Oakton Community College, and lives in his own apartment. As I remember it, this was his moving, concluding comment: "Tonight all of you will go to your own homes after this event, and so will I."

Special thanks to our five performers - Reggie, Mark, Zora, Margot, and Bob - and to PD, our masterful MC. A special thanks to **Nancy Schubert**, who turned Trinity's fellowship hall into a lovely fall-themed, candlelit nightclub.

God willing, we'll put on our 3rd annual cabaret in October, 2018. Don't miss this great fund-raiser for Bridges to Home.

**Dorothy Nagelbach and Ginny Ayers**





The Navigating Real Life Diversity series presents

## Rethinking the past Examining the present Changing our future

**Navigating Diversity** is getting ready to launch its fourth year with all new programming. This year's theme is *Rethinking the past, Examining the present, Changing our future.*

**Join us for our first session**

**November 15, 2017, 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM**  
**JEH Administrative Building, 1500 McDaniel Avenue**

**Free and open to the public. Childcare provided. Spanish interpretation provided.**

The series kicks off with a brand new session with Elisabeth "Biz" Lindsay-Ryan that asks, "How do we make sense of terms like 'whiteness' and 'white supremacy'? What do we need to know to dismantle structural racism right here in Evanston?" This session is geared towards white parents/guardians ready to deepen their understanding in order to take action. All are welcome.

Hosted by the PTA Council in partnership with Evanston/Skokie School District 65, the Organization for Positive Action and Leadership (OPAL), Youth & Opportunity United (Y.O.U.), Family Focus, YWCA Evanston/North Shore, The Moran Center for Youth Advocacy, Evanston Public Library, and the McGaw YMCA.

**The Navigating Diversity Planning Committee**



### Grace Justice League and OPAL

The Grace Justice League, as it was recently dubbed, has been busy planning trainings and advocating for fair housing and racial equity in our schools and city government, among other important issues in Grace's Social Justice ministry.

In October at Grace, Rina Campbell led a Solidarity Response Team training for Evanston 4 All on "Becoming An Ally," and Gail Schechter and Kevin Brown led a workshop on Kingian Non-Violence through the Addie Wyatt Center for Nonviolence Training. On October 23, Pastor Daniel and Rina showed support at OPAL Evanston's (Organization for Positive Action and Leadership) press conference outside the D65 Hill Center. While District 65 Superintendent Paul Goren said he supports and encourages the efforts of OPAL and says "the district has worked hand in hand with the organization to improve outcomes for black students," OPAL founder Cicely Wilson-Fleming believes "District 65 consistently drags its feet when it comes time to take action." While the district hired Corrie Wallace, a Diversity and Equity Consultant, last year to provide an equity assessment and diversity training for district 65 teachers and administrators, OPAL's Melissa Blount says the achievement gap has actually gotten worse in the past 49 years. She quoted data that show that "A white student today is nearly three times more likely to reach college readiness benchmarks in reading, and nearly four times more likely to reach benchmarks in math."

The group motioned for the district to: "Hire a black Student-Coodinator to advocate for underserved students, initiate a plan to hire black teachers where vacancies exist, and to implement a results-oriented accountability system that focuses on improving African-American student outcomes with clear goals and metrics for success, and with regular monitoring and public progress reports driven by a sense of urgency." <http://www.opalevanston.com>

### Lutheran World Federation/ Augusta Victoria Hospital Update November 2017

ELCA Peace Not Walls (PNW) thanks you for taking action on the recent East Jerusalem Hospital action alert. PNW would like to share an update from the LWF Jerusalem team with you:



As many are aware, these past two weeks have not been easy for us at the Lutheran World Federation/ Augusta Victoria Hospital (LWF/AVH) - for patients, staff, as well as management. The curtailment of services at AVH due to the lack of payments from the Palestinian Authority was weighing heavily on everyone.

Last week the Coordinator of the East Jerusalem Hospitals Network met with Palestinian Authority officials. Following that meeting, the Palestinian Authority agreed to another payment to LWF/AVH in order to reduce the hospital's cash flow problems. The amount received falls short of what LWF/AVH has been asking for. Nevertheless, LWF/AVH decided to resume services as normal on Tuesday, 31 Oct.2017.

The payment received this week, plus further anticipated conversations with PA officials later this week or next, go a long way to de-escalate the tensions that arose between LWF/AVH and the PA and are

a kind of acknowledgement of the correctness of the AVH billing, the professionalism of the AVH services, and quality of AVH leadership.

At the same time, LWF/AVH will continue to work hard to identify effective strategies to ensure that regular and substantial payments are made to LWF/AVH so that the PA receivables are kept at manageable levels in the future and interruptions in treatment will be avoided.

Our appreciation goes out to ELCA members for all your good efforts that have clearly produced satisfactory results at this stage. More advocacy will most likely be needed down the road.



## The Times They Are A' Changin' - Lutheran/Catholic Covenant



# Grace

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