



Harbinger

www.graceevanston.org • churchoffice@graceevanston.org

February 2013

**Affirming,
Courageous,
Caring**

**Grace Lutheran
Church of Evanston
1430 South Blvd.
at Wesley
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.

**Rev. Daniel Ruen
Pastor**

pd@graceevanston.org



**Mark Bowman
Music Director**



**The Rev. Kaari
Reierson, The Rev. Jen
Rude, and The Rev.
Raquel Rodriguez,
Colleagues in Ministry**



**Marie O'Brien
Parish Administrator**



**Steve Brunger
Sexton**

Punk Pastor Apostle



When I was fourteen I spent a lot of time in my room listening to rock and roll at high volume, pretending I was the lead singer and guitarist in a band. I worked so hard at my air guitar technique and percussive vocal routine I was convinced that someday these make-believe sessions would turn into the real thing.

Twenty years later, they have. I just had to wait that long for them to come true. I am now fronting a rock band for the first time in my life.

The reason I am able to realize this teenage dream is because of you (and you may be thinking right now, "Um, you're welcome...we think"). You paved a way for my upcoming Lilly Sabbatical (May 12th – September 8th) through your gift of time, money and grace.

The philosophy of the Lilly Grant for individual clergy is that each pastor should explore what truly "makes their heart sing."

For some clergy this means going to a monastery in Scotland. For others it's walking the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem. For me, it just so happens that what makes my heart sing is to play really, really loud rock music with my clerical collar on.

The Lilly Foundation asks its Sabbatical Grant applicants to indirectly incorporate their pastoral call into the Sabbatical. They want to make sure each pastor focuses on something they wouldn't normally do.

However, they also challenge each recipient to design their activity so it might refresh and renew their current ministry.

Some of you know that when I first came to Grace I would regularly go to local open mic venues in my clerical collar. I played original songs on my electric guitar, and then I'd engage with other musicians and bar patrons about God, Jesus and the role of meaning in peoples' lives. It was an incredibly rich ministry of artistic expression, pastoral vulnerability and spiritual education.

To put it as simply as I can: I felt close to Jesus when I was at those bars and music venues. Instead of requiring people to come inside the doors of the church in order to interact with me, I met people where they were—fully claiming my Lutheran identity (how could I not, walking around in a bar with my clerical collar on and a beer in my hand?)—with an eagerness to listen and be transformed.

The Sabbatical time you've granted me is, of course, about me taking a break from the full-time requirements of ministry. But you need to know it is just as powerfully a deeper engagement with the spirit of Jesus in my life.

You are giving me the chance to not only explore my passion for music and reconnect with Clare and the kids; you are likewise giving me the chance to get out into the world as a disciple. I am going out into the world to check its pulse, to learn from and

Continued on next page



Graceland is Back!

Put it on your calendar. Saturday, Feb. 9 beginning at 5:00.

See inside for more information.

Pastor, Continued

be present with those whom God loves but who, for many different reasons, have not felt loved by the church or who believe the church has little or nothing to offer them.

In short, I will be your Punk Pastor Apostle for 16 weeks. I will still be doing God's work, but with a bit of a twist....and with some serious, guitar-amplified distortion.

What will it engender? I don't know. But I know this: it is a profound spiritual opportunity that may enhance my life and our ministry together. As we get closer to May 12th, I want to reassure you of my continued thanks for you, and to also inform you about my plans and the meaning of this Sabbatical.

In upcoming issues of the Harbinger I will share more information about what comes out of our March Leadership Retreat, report on specific schedules and plans for my time away, and also cast some hopes and dreams for when I return.

**The Peace and Joy of Christ,
Pastor Daniel**

Chloe Departure

It's hard to believe, but we will be saying a final goodbye to Chloe Martinez as our Office Manager for the past 5 (almost 6) years. In many ways, Chloe and I began this ministry together. She was hired several weeks after I started in May of 2007. However, we will not be saying goodbye to her as a member of Grace. She intends to stay involved and engaged, especially as an overnight host for Family Promise. I hope she will also continue to serve us (as I respectfully refer to her) as our Fair Trade Coffee and Chocolate 'Dealer'.

I owe Chloe many thanks, as does this church, for her calm in times of great crisis and stress, for her willingness to get the job done no matter what her life threw at her, and for her sense of personal responsibility to the ministry of Grace. She truly cares about serving people and putting her faith into action. Through her schooling to serve as an EMT she has identified a strong vocation to address the pain, trauma and shock that our world deals out on a daily basis. I am extremely proud of her and of her hard, hard work to attain her goals. Her children Malachi and Stazi, as well as her mother Janet, also deserve special mention for the ways they supported Chloe through the years so she could get done what she needed to do at Grace.

Chloe's final day in the office will be Saturday, February 9. She is currently training your new Parish Administrator, Marie O'Brien. Marie will be in worship on Sunday, February 17 and we will host a special coffee hour so you can welcome her and make introductions. **On behalf of the entire congregation:** Thanks be to God for you, Chloe. Our blessings to you and your family, and our best wishes in your new vocation.

Pastor Daniel



Breakfasts for Interfaith Action Hospitality Center



Breakfasts for Interfaith Action Hospitality Center for the Homeless February 17 is our next Third Sunday, the day to collect breakfast groceries for Interfaith Action of Evanston.

The IA-E Hospitality Center housed at St. Mark's Church serves breakfast to about 40 guests on each morning of "Grace's week", from February 18 - February 22, 2013. Please bring in supplies of fruit-juice in large bottles; large boxes of graham, saltine or "Ritz" crackers; loaves of bread; oatmeal in individual packets; syrup and jams; canisters of cocoa, cans of coffee, teabags, cream or creamer; bags of citrus fruit (no apples, please); or, contribute shopping money to cover the perishables like cream cheese, butter, yogurt, frozen waffles, orange juice and milk. We will shop (about \$200-worth) and deliver on Monday morning, February 18.

Please give your donation information to John Wright, Grace Treasurer, if you wish credit on your contribution statements. Grace sponsors Third Weeks of the Month for Interfaith Action breakfasts. On February 17, please bring your donations to the baskets in front of the altar, or put funds in the collection jars on the narthex table. If you can help shop and do deliveries, please let Helen Yarbrough or Council Liaison Dorothy Nagelbach know that. Any questions may go to either of them.

Sabbatical Retreat info from Grace

As part of our Lilly Grant application, a leadership retreat for 30 people from Grace was included to plan and prepare for Pastor Daniel's absence.

Kim Brown and Nancy Mathyer are the Sabbatical Transition Co-Chairs. With Council Chair Les Inch and PD's consultation they have selected a group of Grace members to invite, as well as a location for a retreat the weekend of March 15th and 16th. It's a Friday night and all-day Saturday event. Kim, Nancy, PD and Les decided to ask the Grace Council and current ministry leaders of a diverse mixture (age, gender, orientation, ethnicity, etc.) of newer and established members to attend. The goal will be to prepare resource materials and action plans for the 16 weeks PD is away with his family, and to also explore a more intentional development philosophy at Grace for the long term. We are sorry we could not provide an open invitation to everyone for this retreat, but given the specific Lilly Funds available, and the need to work with current ministry leaders in preparation for the sabbatical, we felt comfortable making the choices outlined above.

If you have questions, feel free to email Kim (brownclanzeus@att.net), Nancy (nmathyer@ameritech.net), PD (pd@graceevanston.org) or Les (linch679@gmail.com). We are excited for this retreat and how it might prepare, strengthen and empower our leadership teams to, in turn, support and empower the entire congregation for this upcoming sabbatical adventure, and into the future.

Grace Book Club

The next book group will meet on February 10, 2013, from 3:00 - 5:00, at the home of Ann Stevens, 1208 Madison St, Evanston, IL 60202, 847-869-1170.

We will discuss *The Housekeeper and the Professor* by Yoko Ogawa.



Threads of Grace Projects for the Coming Year

From January to June 30, we will exercise all of our skills – sewing, quilting, crocheting, and knitting. We will again be making “preemie” clothing and blankets for Evanston Hospital. In this project Threads connects with “Care Wear”, an organization that offers appropriately sized patterns. Because our items follow these patterns, hospitals are eager to receive them. Please check your needlework files to see if you still have your last set of patterns. New sets will be available shortly.



From July to November 24, Threads returns to its most popular project: hats, scarves, and gloves for Uptown Ministry in Chicago and the Interfaith Action Warming Center in Evanston. Some members of the congregation like to work on this project all year long. Even beginners create handsome and warm scarves. During this past winter, many families produced wonderful fleece scarves made by hands of all ages. They were received with great joy at both sites. From July to November 24, as a break from the adult scarves and hats, change to a “fun” scarf for fourth to eighth graders at ESSCA (Evanston School Students Clothing Association). We also hope to make two deliveries to them this year.

Inauguration 2013!

Grace members Dave and Lisa Kosnik were in Washington, D.C. and sent this photo.



Please note that Dave and Lisa Kosnik were attending President Obama's second inauguration as private citizens and were not representing Grace or any other organization.

GRACE NEWS & EVENTS



COME TO GRACELAND Saturday, Feb. 9th. 5:00pm

You'll enjoy live music, a pot luck supper, good fellowship and you have the opportunity to brighten someone's day.

We'll be making valentines for all of the residents at the Bethany Retirement Community where 2 of our members reside. Many of the residents have no friends or family left so these cards will be appreciated. We expect some of our Sunday School children to deliver the cards on Valentine's Day.



Put it on your calendar:
Saturday, February. 9 beginning at 5:00. Juice and soft drinks will be provided. You are welcome to bring beer or wine to share, and we hope we'll see you there.



February Birthdays

- 02/01 Julia Shoaf
- 02/02 Emily Mathyer
Deb Derylak
Jen Rude
- 02/03 Cerina Schiffer
- 02/04 Marianka Fousek
- 02/10 Marilyn Mason
- 02/11 Johanna Haar
- 02/14 Steve Mosco
- 02/16 Ali Schwarz Utech
- 02/17 Kayla Mosco-Flint
Jan Blackburn
- 02/19 Christopher Brunger
- 02/23 Dawn Steele
- 02/26 Soren Koh
- 02/27 Robert Sokol
Conrad Owen
- 02/28 Laura Wally

Singing In The Choir

You have seen and heard that our Sunday morning worship has been enriched by a choir the past few weeks. The choir is not only a blessing for the whole congregation to hear but also a joyful opportunity for singers to make music together. We are trying to make the choir experience easily available to all singers.

Currently the choir has a monthly rehearsal after worship on the second Sunday of the month to sing through several songs coming up. Then each week Mark sends out an email with info and music that you can listen to



for the coming Sunday. The choir gathers at 10:15 before worship on Sundays for final preparation. It is understood that each choir member is not able to sing every Sunday - sing as often as you can. Singers of all abilities are most welcome in the choir; the common bond is our love for singing praise and prayer to God in diverse musical styles.

Contact Mark at markleby@comcast.net or 773-316-8892 to be added to the choir email list. Come and try singing with us after worship on February 10th or any Sunday morning at 10:15.

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Feb 3

Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Amy Gillespie
Lector Sue Graef
Acolyte William Thacker
Ushers Russ Kohnken, Nate Brown & Chuck Hewitt
Coffee Hour Kari & Randy Warren
Altar Care Kara Sokol & Janet Wright
Nursery Care Dee Johnson
Altar Flowers Dorothy Nagelbach

Feb 10

Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Megan Sawyer
Lector Les Inch
Acolyte Julia Shoaf
Ushers Russ Kohnken, Nate Brown & Chuck Hewitt
Coffee Hour Rina Campbell and Peter Spies
Altar Care Sue Graef & Nancy Schubert
Nursery Care Nancy Schubert/Cecilia Galicia
Altar Flowers Jill Flaherty



Feb 13 Ash Wednesday

Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Kim Brown
Lector Marilyn Mason
Acolyte Zora Ruen
Altar Care Sue Graef & Nancy Schubert

Feb 17

Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Paul Bailey
Lector Larry Yarbrough
Acolyte Cecilia Galicia
Ushers Jan Blackburn Bob Shoaf & Cecelia Galicia
Coffee Hour Kara & Bob Sokol
Altar Care Deb Mitchell
Nursery Care Nina Alvarez

Feb 24

Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Connie Wood
Lector Ann Stevens
Acolyte David Thacker
Ushers Jan Blackburn Bob Shoaf & Cecelia Galicia
Coffee Hour Ann Stevens & Lonny Miner
Altar Care Deb Mitchell
Nursery Care Deb Mitchell

Worship Notes

As many of you have heard, Easter hits early this year. It's on March 31st, which means Ash Wednesday is on February 13th. We will host our regular imposition of ashes and Eucharist service that night at 7:00pm. Mark Bowman has gathered together a Lenten seasonal planning team that will formulate worship ideas and plans for Sunday services and Wednesday midweek services. Look forward to more info in the bulletin and in your Gracenotes! If you have any questions or ideas for Worship, please contact Pastor Daniel at pd@graceevanston.org, and he will bring your items to the Worship Committee, which meets every two months (our most recent meeting was January 31st). Worship Committee members are: Sue Graef, Bonnie Gunzenhauser, Jim Clark, Rachel Stark-inch, Mark Bowman and me.

God's Peace and Joy, PD



Final Tally for North Shore CROP Hunger Walk 2012

When 2012 ended, the North Shore CROP Walk had raised \$42,707 for that year. That's the second highest income year ever for our local CROP Walk! **Grace raised \$2397** and placed in the top ten of participant groups which raised over \$1000 each (32 participant groups donated).

Thank you to all for such wonderful help for people in need.

All Walkers who raised \$200 or more are awarded CROP Walk pins for their high level of support.

Grace's top earners are John Pedersen, Sue and Ron Graef, Martha Fry, Gail and Bob Lamont, and Lisa Kosnik. Congratulations!

**The 2013 North Shore CROP Hunger Walk will be on
Sunday, October 20, 2013.**



Family Promise Returns February 3. Join Us!

Family Promise is a national organization with a Chicago North Shore branch that helps families that are temporarily without housing. <http://www.fpcnorthshore.org>

Grace, in partnership with St. Nicholas Catholic Church and St. James Armenian Church, has been hosting Family Promise Families for the past three years. During our remodeling time we hosted at other churches.

Normally, shelters require husbands and wives stay separately and that boys over 12 be housed separately from their parents. Family Promise keeps the families together. It does so by carefully screening families to rule out any kind of situation that lay folks couldn't handle. Those families who have successfully gone through the intake process are given a place in a week-by-week traveling shelter for 3-6 months. The shelters are all faith-based places: churches and synagogues in our area. Congregation members provide the evening meal and ingredients for breakfast and lunches to pack. Congregation members also take turns spending the night.

Families arrive around 5 pm and leave by 7am the next morning.

During their time in the program, kids continue to attend the school they were in before they came into their situation, parents work or look for work and the Family Promise staff helps them arrange interviews, update resumes, and find other support services such as rent grants, Link cards, etc.



At Grace, Family Promise has become a favorite ministry for families mostly because we host kids and it's fun to meet new kids and share our space with them. Grace has also hosted Grace kid sleepovers during Family Promise; we all camp out in Fellowship Hall. Ask Chloe for details (Or Clare, or Brian).

We will again host families starting February 3rd. It looks like we will be a full house: 4 families, our absolute maximum. I know there is one baby and a couple of teenagers!! We will need lots of volunteers, as I'd say we will need 2-3 cooks per night. I could also use help rearranging the Sunday School rooms and the Nursery. The Families move in Sunday by dinnertime and are gone the following Sunday morning before church, so it's easy to miss them altogether. But try to help out, stop in, meet the families, wash a dish, move a chair.

Also, a special event has been planned for February 9 at Grace. It will be our first Graceland event for 2013. Look for details, but that was scheduled intentionally during our Family Promise week so there would be something fun for the families to attend.

Family Promise Coordinators at Grace are Clare Tallon Ruen, Brian Vinson and (unofficially) Chloe Martinez. Reach out to one of us and ask questions or just sign up!

Sign-Up Sheet: <http://tinyurl.com/ajuc96t>

claretallonruen@gmail.com





The Honorable Senator Mark Kirk
United States Senate
524 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

January 8, 2012

Dear Senator Kirk,

As leaders of churches, denominations and organizations in Illinois, we gratefully applaud you for your successful arrival back to the U.S. Senate. Your courage, determination and perseverance throughout the recovery process are a source of inspiration for us all. We have been praying for your healing and will continue to pray for you as you resume your responsibilities in the Senate.

As we look to the work ahead of us in 2013, we know Congress and the President continue to face difficult decisions on spending and revenue. As pastors and leaders, we have worked hard to ensure that vulnerable people here and abroad are protected from funding cuts to vital programs, and we will continue to do all we can in this regard. Many of us can personally testify to the devastating impact such cuts would have on families in our churches and communities.

We are thankful that the American Taxpayer Relief Act prevented the most economically harmful portions of the fiscal cliff from taking effect and minimized the impact on poor and hungry people, but we know many of its provisions are temporary. Critical programs including SNAP (food stamps), WIC, international food aid and development assistance continue to be threatened by cuts. These programs not only provide life-giving support through hard times but are an investment in the health, strength and security of our country's future.

We look forward to working with you this year as we strive to protect these important programs for the most vulnerable people in our communities, our state, our nation and our world. Please carry our concern for poor and hungry people with you as you consider the difficult decisions ahead. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, and we thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Zach Schmidt
Regional Organizer, Bread for the World
Chicago Regional Office

Matt Gross
Deputy Director, Bread for the World
Chicago Regional Office

Bread for the World, an organization that works to eradicate hunger, obtained 148 signatures from pastors, bishops and agency directors to Senator Mark Kirk to welcome him back after being off for nearly a year after his stroke last January. Among those agreeing to have their signatures included were our own Pastor Daniel Ruen, Pastor Betty Landis from St. Paul's Lutheran in Evanston, Pastor Peg Otte, former Grace member who's now assistant pastor at St. John's Lutheran in Wilmette, and Wayne Miller, bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. On Wednesday, January 16th, two colleagues, a Bread member from Peoria, and Zach Schmidt, Regional Organizer for Bread for the World for states that in-

clude Illinois, met with two of Sen. Kirk's DC-based staffers to deliver the letter. They had a good conversation about the importance of protecting funding for poor and hungry people. The staffers, Ms. Blum and Ms. Wich, were friendly and said they would make sure the senator reads the letter. They also asked that Senator Kirk respond to the letter, and Zach will share his response with those of us on his mailing list once he receives it. On their way out, they ran into Sen. Kirk, who stopped to talk with them for a few minutes! They had a brief but encouraging conversation, and Sen. Kirk spoke highly of Bread for the World and the work we are doing together.

Let Samaritan Counseling Center Send a Valentine For You

Each year on February 14th, St. Valentine's Day celebrates love and affection between friends and family members. This year spread your love even further by letting us send a Valentine greeting to your loved ones.

Each Valentine is only \$14 - send as many as you like. Your purchase of 4 Valentines provides 2 hours of counseling for a client unable to afford therapy. Click here to download and print the form to order your Valentines. (northshoresamaritan.org/images/stories/samaritan/valentine%202013%20v1.pdf) Forms should be submitted by February 11.



ETHS students (from left) Rools Jean, Sammi Warner, Taylor Avery and Willow Smith received the 2012 Youth Service Medal of Honor from the Cook County Sheriff's Department.

ETHS students earn service award from Cook County Sheriff

Congratulations to Rools and his family! We know how much Rools gives to his church, so it's no surprise that he gives to his community.

January 9, 2013

Four Evanston Township High School students received the Cook County Sheriff Department's Youth Service Medal of Honor for their consistent volunteerism and hard work in the community. ETHS seniors Rools Jean and Sammi Warner and juniors Taylor Avery and Willow Smith were recognized for each contributing more than 100 hours of service to various organizations last year.

Local agencies such as Habitat for Humanity, NorthShore University HealthSystem, Family Focus, and Ten Thousand Villages benefited from the students' volunteer efforts. "Rools, Sammi, Taylor and Willow exemplify great citizens and people who genuinely care about their community," stated ETHS Community Service Coordinator Mary Collins. "They have given of themselves for the welfare of others and we are very proud to call them our own."

The office of Cook County Sheriff Thomas Dart recognized ETHS students this school year at an awards ceremony in Chicago along with about 200 students from all over the county who completed service hours between September 2011 and August 2012.

http://www.eths.k12.il.us/youth_service_award2012/

From the desk of Ministry in Context student Megan Sawyer:



Outside my window, snow is falling across the mountains. This is one thing that I love about Washington—the Cascades and the way the fog hovers over the peaks and drifts into the valleys, with electric green moss still clinging to the trees. I've spent most of Advent until Epiphany at the Grunewald Guild as an artist in residence.

The man who founded the Guild created the stained glass piece on the west end of our sanctuary (he is quite the interesting gentleman!). The Guild is a faith-based community of artists; their main event is a summer of week-long intensive classes, and the winter is a quieter time with smaller retreats and folks like me who come to create and breathe.

Between working on my paintings and dinking around in the ceramics studio, I've had a lot of time to pray and to read. I'm staying in a room above the library, and on the first day I found a stack of books to peruse in addition to my books for class (after the residency, I was in Holden Village for a class on ecology and liturgy!). One of these books was called "Beauty Will Save the World," and the title and its words have been wandering through my brain. Being both an artist and a Christian can be a strange combination; the art world doesn't quite know what to make of Jesus, and creativity can be puzzling in the pews. Part of this pilgrimage has been a chance to connect with other folks who live in that intersection, and to explore how my artistic and pastoral vocations can happily mingle.

What I noticed during my stay was that artistic communities are places where imagination is risky, where the modus operandi is try/fail/try again, where you get your hands dirty. Grace is a church that claims courage, and I think that I'm finding that courage can come readily in that kind of daring imagination.

It's a lofty idea, and in a sense is still as abstract as a Pollock. However, some time after I return to you all at Grace, I will be leading an adult ed series where we can explore together some of what's been keeping me out of Evanston for so long. For now, though, I can sit with my coffee and 2H pencil on this to draw and to dream. I hope you all have found some time in the quiet weeks of Epiphany to do the same (or at least time to dream!).

I eagerly await rejoining the community here at Grace!



Parenting in the Age of Entitlement

By John Lucas, MAPC

Entitlement is defined as “the condition of having a right to have, do, or get something.” Entitlement is no longer creeping into our society; it is in many cases, running our society. The problem with entitlement is that if we feel that we are special, entitled or somehow better than the next guy, then how is it possible to sustain a relationship? If it is all about you, how can you meet other’s needs? Unless we do something to teach our children that we are all created equal, we all have feelings, needs and wants, and that sometimes those needs must be sacrificed for the greater good, then we are in real trouble.

How did this sense of entitlement come to be? Was it when we stopped giving grades and went to pass or fail so no one’s self-esteem was hurt, or when we quit competitive sports programs so all were treated equally and everyone got a blue ribbon? Or, was it when we went from being our children’s parents to being our children’s best friend?

W. Keith Campbell in his 2010 book titled “The Narcissism Epidemic” says this: “Many well intentioned people take it for granted that a high level of self-confidence, even narcissism, leads to success. There’s only one thing wrong with this popular, pervasive, and deeply rooted belief; it’s not true.”

In other words, overconfidence backfires. People with a sense of entitlement don’t know how to take criticism or learn from their mistakes. In order for criticism to be accepted by the entitled generation, it has to be done in an entirely different way than what we are used to. One needs to approach them from a strength standpoint, being careful not to overemphasize the weakness. Overconfidence leads to poor performance.

Keith Campbell’s contention is that in solving the mystery of entitlement, we need to look at the value placed on self-admiration and how it has changed over time. He outlines a litany of events starting in the 1960s through the 2000s. Over the years we have gone from reality to the land of grandiose fantasy. The fight for the greater good of the 60s somehow became looking out for number one in the 80s.

Recently, I was working with a young student who had just graduated from college. She had all the academic credentials to be a really good employee. Her resume, references, and her volunteer portfolio showed her to be an exceptional candidate for employment. She was hired at a salary that she felt was beneath her level of compensation but nonetheless took the job fully believing that within six months to a year she would be given regular raises. Three weeks into the job she became disgruntled, unhappy, somewhat defiant, and demanding. She felt that filing, assisting around the office, and doing tasks that were necessary to the function of the business were insulting and not up to her expectations. In the

60s, 70s and 80s that was called learning the ropes or being the rookie. When I pointed that out to her, she became infuriated. In fact she showed me the letter that she had mailed to the president of the company on the day before our session.

In the first paragraph she described the company in glowing terms and told how she felt the company’s potential was virtually untapped. In the next three paragraphs she proceeded to criticize in detail what the company was not doing and how it was inadequate in fulfilling the needs of its employees. When I read the first line of the fourth paragraph a smile came across my face. It screamed entitlement loud and clear. She wrote, “In all my 22 years I have never felt so forlorn.”

A friend related another story to me. He hired a young man who he felt had real potential. But after six months of constantly holding this young man’s hand, my friend became frustrated. He told the young man that he needed to think about looking for another job. The young man went home and told his parents he had been let go. The next morning, the young man’s mother called the owner of the company, demanded that he hire back her son, and that he take him to lunch to apologize for bruising his self-esteem.

Matthew Kelley in his book “Building Better Families” says that if you can’t see that our culture is in crisis, then you have become a wounded victim of the cultural war. He also says that what we do has more influence upon our children than anything we say. He says empowering children to find answers is one of the most practical skills we can give our children. Allowing our children to have “successful failures,” or what the new terminology calls “failing forward,” enables them to learn from their mistakes and to contribute to a society that is led by virtuous people.

Consider the story of a young man who goes off to college excited about his future only to flunk out at the end of the second semester. He could not handle getting his homework done, being at class on time and doing the simple tasks that a normal 18 year old should be able to do. As an only child, his mom and dad had over indulged him in so many ways. He did not know how to do his laundry, check the oil in his car, change a flat tire, or function in other simple ways. The more I talked to him, the more I came to realize that mom and dad had simply done everything for him. The amazing end of the story is that both the parents and the young man blamed the school for his failure since the school had not taken better care of him.

My greatest concern about entitlement and narcissism is the fact that it is the biggest single threat to today’s family. As successful parents our journey with our children is more about “successful failures” than it is about giving them self-esteem. If we don’t allow our children to make mistakes and learn from them we will severely hinder their ability to function in the world. The more we do for our children the more we significantly limit their ability to do for themselves.

Annual Vision Keeper's Dinner: February 17th

The Vision Keeper's Dinner is coming up – February 17th at the Hilton Orrington in Evanston at 5:30 p.m. Each year, local faith communities are asked to nominate a member of their congregation as a Vision Keeper, someone who embodies values that positively impact both the faith community and the larger community. This Vision Keeper will be honored at the gathering and, we hope, will be surrounded by other members of our congregation. Please sign up on the clipboard in the Narthex Hallway. Tickets are \$65/person. Speak to Pastor Daniel if you are interested! We will announce our Grace vision keeper soon.



*Interfaith Action of Evanston (IAE)
Announces the Annual*

Vision Keepers Dinner

February 17, 2013 5:30 PM
Grand Ballroom, Hilton Orrington Hotel
\$65.00

Rabbi Brant Rosen, Keynote
Speaker,
Jewish Reconstructionist
Congregation

Join the IAE Board in honoring members of our faith communities who exemplify the IAE vision of interfaith social action and dialogue. Tickets include a donation to support IAE's direct services to homeless and hungry people in Evanston. Details will be mailed in January.

Select your Vision Keeper by January 25th!

