



Harbinger

www.graceevanston.org • churchoffice@graceevanston.org

March 2014

**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

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**Mark Bowman
Music Director**

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

•

**Marie O'Brien
Parish Administrator**

•

**Steve Brunger
Sexton**

Piety Party

by Pastor Daniel Ruen



Piety can be defined as many things. Devotion. Holiness. Religiosity. It can also be defined as veneration or reverence. How we venerate God, how we show our reverence in worship or in our daily lives, is one way of describing piety. Piety could, therefore, be described as 'the aesthetic through which we best experience and/or communicate the divine.' I use the term 'aesthetic' with some caution, however.

Aesthetics are not piety. Aesthetics are things we like or don't like. They are the colors on the wall and how well they match the furniture. They are the music that is good or bad according to our taste. They're the ways we prefer to physically move around different spaces. They are our preferences. We each have our own cultural, familial and individual aesthetic. It is a powerful and controlling thing.

God, though, according to some of the most shocking words of scripture, has had it up to here with our aesthetic preferences—especially if they get in the way of what should be the focus of our piety.

From the book of Amos, chapter 5: "I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." To condense and amplify Amos: Either our worship of God is focused on the

transformation of the world into a more just and righteous place, or God wants no part of it. Consider my paraphrased core of Jesus' message to his Jewish brothers, the Pharisees: "Your sacrosanct letter of the law is strangling God's spirit of the law."

I hope you agree: our personal preferences are not what make worship worshipful. The work of the Holy Spirit as translated through our piety (our posture of veneration, our acts of reverence in worship and daily life) does. Our piety, oriented toward God's focus as stated in the scriptures, is where our cultural, familial and personal aesthetics dance with God's fundamental mission.

Often, they don't dance at all: tragedy occurs in our churches when we tear ourselves apart over aesthetics, forgetting the larger mission of what worship is supposed to be about. While this shouldn't be surprising given that aesthetics and piety are always intertwined, it is a tragedy nonetheless.

You may be asking: what's then to be done? How do we constructively tend to God's focus in terms of envisioning, designing and participating in worship? How do we challenge our aesthetic needs without feeling disconnected and displaced from worship that doesn't speak to us?

My answer is this: we must endeavor to keep God's focus as our focus in all things, both within and without. It begins with us. If Amos declares that God desires justice and righteousness first and foremost, then that is what we must provide for one another. However, that internal justice and righteousness must likewise be done for the sake of a transformed world.

Last month the Grace worship team met to engage prayerfully with these issues. Mark Bowman, Grace's Director of Music, and I decided to lead with listening. We proposed three questions to those gathered: 'What has fed you during the last few months of wor-

Continued on next page



ship at Grace? How have you seen others being fed? What has left you hungry?' We broke into groups of two for private discussion, then we came back into a larger group to kick around the various responses. As you might imagine, there were significant areas of tension, but there were also important areas of agreement.

We did not come up with a detailed plan to grow into new worship styles while simultaneously honoring our traditional ways of worship. We did not solve all the issues in front of us. However, I believe by making space for everyone's feelings and impressions we did right by one another and acted justly. Out of that meeting came an agreement to, in the short term, continue with seasonal shifts in worship at Grace.

For example: Epiphany was a fairly traditional setting with some global music chosen for certain hymns. Lent will be a repeat of last year's setting with the procession of the cross at the beginning of worship and Table Communion. Easter will be a setting from the blue book, 'With One Voice,' that we've known for many years. And, for the season of Pentecost we will gather a seasonal planning team to experiment with worship in new ways. There was also agreement this was not necessarily the best way to express our various pieties over the long term. There is more conversation to come.

One specific item that sprang out of the meeting was for Mark to ask the congregation for its 'heartsongs,' songs that speak most deeply to us. We feel this is yet another way of doing right by one another: to listen and affirm each other's pieties. With a philosophy of listening and sharing I am confident we will find our way forward toward worship that is, as our core values claim, equal parts affirming, challenging and caring.

If we intentionally claim God's scriptural focus of justice and righteousness as our own, we are transformed into a Piety Party—a piety that risks transformed lives both within our church and without; a thriving, clear-eyed representation of not only who we are, but who God means us to be.

My door is always open for conversation, questions and prayer.

The peace and joy of Christ, Pastor Daniel



Grace Honors Anne Laurence At Vision Keepers Dinner

Eight Grace members joined Anne Laurence and her husband Daniel at the annual Vision Keepers Dinner of Interfaith Action of Evanston on Sunday evening, February 16, 2014. They are Pastor Daniel and Clare Ruen, Les Inch, Marilyn Mason, Gail & Bob Lamont, Ann Stevens and Rina Campbell.

In its program Interfaith Action describes itself as *"people of many faiths and traditions who not only volunteer together but also pray together, engage in interfaith dialogue, and advocate. We look for ways to strengthen the natural bond between spiritually committed people. We welcome all who want to learn and serve."*

Also stated in the program, *"A Vision Keeper embodies values that positively impact both the faith community and the larger community. We honor them tonight because they truly grace every life they touch and encourage all of us to affirm our own vision."*

Also in the program is a description of Grace's choice of Anne Laurence as this year's Vision Keeper: *At Grace Church, we claim three core values that simultaneously describe and challenge us: to affirm all people without exception, to act with courage, and to be a caring community. Taking such a vision into one's whole self, inviting others to share it, consistently walking with it for years with spirit and honesty—these attributes describe Anne Laurence's discipleship at Grace.*

Anne has served in so many ways and at so many levels over the years that it is impossible to list them all without fear of missing one. Anne has done some incredible, incredible things. She led the congregation as council president with vigor, intentionality, and humor during some challenging times. She encouraged us to become more financially transparent, putting that vision into action by forming an in-house Finance Committee. She coordinated and participated in a powerful pet ministry. She fought for full inclusion of our LGBT sisters and brothers to be ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She serves on our Courage Fund team that endeavors to get more and more resources out the door for local, national and international needs. Most recently, Anne chaired our 75th Anniversary team and developed a full slate of activities that represented our story, our mission, and our core values.

Pastor Daniel Ruen says: *"It is a great honor to be celebrating this award with her tonight. I hope and pray that in this brief moment of recognition she feels even 1/100th of the respect, appreciation and love we at Grace feel for her. Thank You, Madame (my old Council President nickname for her—as in, 'Madame President'), for everything you have brought and continue to bring to us."*

Threads of Grace . . . More than Coffee at Coffee Hour

Have you ever been curious about the magic of knitting needles or a crochet hook? How do they spin a ball of yarn into a garment? If you watch the side benches in the Fellowship Hall during Coffee Hour, you will see members of Threads of Grace who are glad to share their skills and offer you the equipment you need to begin. We can promise new skills in ten minutes with encouragement and a good time. Certainly, a lesson can be the length that is mutually agreeable. Until the next Coffee Hour lesson, we highly recommend brushing up with the videos on www.knittinghelp.com. There are also videos on www.crocheting-help.com. You can repeat the video of the stitch that you're practicing to your heart's and skill's content. Members of Threads are glad to furnish one-on-one help as you progress.



If you're not yet ready to take on the classics of crocheting or knitting, we have a loom to offer you that makes a winter hat that looks as knitted as any hat produced with needles. Many of our members endorse this loom enthusiastically. Some loomers can make a hat quicker than knitters using needles. Come by and look it over. It may be just your style, and we have a good deal of Winter to go. The perfect ending to this season: Kiss Winter "Goodbye" in a hat that you made yourself.

INTERFAITH ACTION OF EVANSTON

Report from the Director

Taken from *The Interfaith Dialogue*, February 2014

It is 10:00 p.m. on December 11, and it's one degree below zero! I am at St. Paul's Lutheran Church along with 24 homeless people and 5 volunteers. It is cold outside, but I am surrounded by laughter and "thank-yous."

When the temperature drops to 5 degrees, Interfaith Action opens an overnight emergency "cold" shelter. St. Paul's opens its chapel. The city of Evanston provides cots. Each person gets a blanket and a sheet. Hot drinks and warm greetings are provided. People arrive at 9 and lights go out at 10. Two volunteers "sleep" on a pew and continue to answer the door for latecomers. At 6 am, the guests wake up as the volunteer collects the sheets and blankets to wash before their next use. The guests walk over to the Hospitality Center at St. Mark's for a nice, warming breakfast.

We really need more volunteers to continue this service to our homeless residents. Volunteers set up the cots, spend the night, clean up in the morning and do the laundry. We also need lightweight blankets and sheets. Any size! Coffee, tea and hot chocolate are welcome. Other things that would help our guests get through the winter are gloves, hats, scarves, chapstick, socks, and hand warmers.

Tomorrow morning I will open the doors of the Hospitality Center at 7:00 am. I know that I will be greeted by a group of people who thank me for helping them have a safe, warm place to spend the night. Maybe someday we will be able to provide a place every night. This is my holiday prayer.

GRACE NEWS & EVENTS



We will not be selling Equal Exchange Fairly Traded coffee and products until we can resolve our cash flow problems. We will have a clearance sale soon!

Anne Laurence and Nancy VanBrundt



You're invited!

Come to a party to watch Claudia Perry on Jeopardy!

Saturday, March 15th, 6:00p.m. at the home of Taína Rodriguez-Encarnación, 7655 N. Sheridan Road, #1S, Chicago.

Bring food and beverage to share. Ample street parking. There are a few steps to walk up.

RSVP to Taína 773-701-8120 or trencarnacion@gmail.com.



Nursery Volunteers Sought

The future of the church are the children, please consider volunteering for nursery.

Contact Deb Mitchell at dmitchell22358@hotmail.com or 312-485-7178.

March Birthdays

- 03/02 Leif Steele
- 03/02 Bob Shoaf
- 03/05 Claire Repsold
- 03/12 Jen Rude
- 03/21 Taína Rodriguez Encarnación
- 03/26 Bob Lamont

Book Group

In March, we will discuss *Little Bee* by Chris Cleave.



LSTC / Courage Fund Thank You

To: Peg Haar

I wanted to thank you for the decision to sponsor me in this quest for ministry. I apologize for the lateness of my acknowledgment. Please do not see it as any indication of my excitement. The semester has gotten off to a rousing start with my first online class, every session of which requires more writing than I ever did on a weekly basis in any previous graduate class. I will seek to represent the Church and the Courage Fund well in this endeavor.

Sincerely

Marvin Scroggins

MARCH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

March 2

Presiding Pastor Daniel Ruen
Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Kim Brown
Music Director Mark Bowman
Lector Craig Gonder
Cantor Dominique Baptiste
Acolyte Joanie Daye
Ushers Sydell Reeves, Ann Stevens
Coffee Hour Bill Blackburn, Jan Blackburn
Altar Care Christian Lantry, Deb Mitchell
Godly Play TBD
Nursery Care Ann Stevens
Flowers Ann Stevens

March 5 Ash Wednesday

Presiding Pastor Daniel Ruen
Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Taína Rodriguez Encarnación
Music Director Mark Bowman
Lector Ann Stevens
Cantor Jan Blackburn
Altar Care Caitlin Sellnow, Janet Wright

March 9 - Remember The Time Change

Presiding Pastor Daniel Ruen
Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Joe Flint
Music Director Mark Bowman
Lector Dan Nehring
Cantor Russ Kohnken
Acolyte Emma Mosco Flint
Ushers Sydell Reeves, Ann Stevens
Coffee Hour Martha Fry, Bob Shoaf
Altar Care Caitlin Sellnow, Janet Wright
Godly Play Nancy Stewart
Nursery Care Nina Alvarez
Flowers None Because of Lent



Lenten Services

Ash Wednesday Service March 5, 7:30pm
 Lenten Midweek services are starting
 Wednesday March 12 and ending April 9.
 ELW Vespers at 7:30pm.

March 16

Presiding Pastor Daniel Ruen
Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Connie Wood
Music Director Mark Bowman
Lector Sarah Carson
Cantor Bonnie Gunzenhauser
Acolyte Alice Wilson
Ushers Larry Yarbrough, Jon Flaherty
Coffee Hour Rina Campbell, Peter Spies
Altar Care Susan Graef, Nancy Schubert
Godly Play Nancy Stewart
Nursery Care Nancy Schubert
Flowers None Because of Lent

March 23

Presiding Pastor Daniel Ruen
Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Jarrod Gaither
Music Director Mark Bowman
Lector Zora Tallon Ruen
Cantor Kelly Hackett
Acolyte Zinzi Steele
Ushers Larry Yarbrough, Jon Flaherty
Coffee Hour Nancy Mathyer, Mark Mathyer
Altar Care Susan Graef, Nancy Schubert
Godly Play Clare Tallon Ruen
Nursery Care Deb Mitchell
Flowers None Because of Lent

March 30

Presiding Pastor Daniel Ruen
Preaching Pastor Daniel Ruen
Assisting Minister Rachel Stark Inch
Music Director Mark Bowman
Lector Janet Wright
Cantor Caitlin Sellnow
Acolyte Cecilia Galicia
Ushers Sarah Carson, Nate Brown, Nancy Schubert
Coffee Hour Russ Kohnken, Christine Collins
Altar Care Helen Yarbrough, Sue McDaniels
Godly Play TBD
Nursery Care Ann Stevens
Flowers None Because of Lent

January 2014 Budget Summary

General fund

Contributions of \$15,796.30 into general account, \$500 transferred to courage fund, \$1144 designated as capital fund. Also \$110 designated for particular groups.

Payments total \$20,287.27 for a deficit of \$4490.97 for the month. The transfer to courage fund has been made, but not the other designated groups. This leaves a bank account balance of \$-989.81. In addition, there are two payments that we should make/have made in January but did not: ELCA (\$1183.33) and Portico (\$3375.74), which would make the bank account balance \$-5548.68.

Capital fund

Total contributions received were \$1829. Mortgage of \$1979, so we ran a deficit there of \$150. This deficit is included in the general fund deficit, as the general fund pays for the mortgage check.

Courage fund

Total contributions received were \$2,130, of which \$500 came through the general fund; those funds were transferred to the courage fund. \$1450 of this money was designated for Uptown, which has not yet been disbursed. The remainder was undesignated.

\$2000 was disbursed for emergency assistance and another \$1000 for educational assistance.

Easy to read, but painful to think about summary:

Accounts:	General	Capital	Courage
Money in	15,796.30	1829	2130
Money out	20,287.27	1979	3000
Change	-4490.97	-150	-870



Worship Times for Lent and Easter

Wednesday, March 5th:

Ash Wednesday 7:30pm Imposition of Ashes and Eucharist

Sunday, March 9th:

First Sunday in Lent

Midweek Lenten Services starting Wednesday, March 12th and ending April 9th:

ELW Vespers at 7:30pm

Sunday, April 13th:

Sunday of the Passion at 10:45am

Thursday, April 17th:

Maundy Thursday and Footwashing at 7:30pm

Friday, April 18th:

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Saturday, April 19th:

Easter Vigil at neighboring St. Nicholas Parish 9pm-1am (Children welcome!)

Sunday, April 20th:

Easter Sunday at Grace, 10:45am

Photos From Holden Village



Retreat at Holden Village

The theme for the annual women's retreat at Holden Village was "Dancing the Trinity: Grace, Love, Communion." Presenters included Amy Boers, Tacoma, Wash., leading music sessions; Renee Splichal Larson and Taryn Montgomery, pastors from South Dakota and North Dakota respectively, providing Bible study, and Grace's own Clare Tallon Ruen as dance leader. Clare led three dance workshops as well as early morning stretching sessions, culminating in a farewell anointing service with all the participants. Pastor Daniel attended Bible Study sessions, read books and articles for adult ed classes, as well as materials related to leadership and change in organizations. Clare and PD also hosted worship together for the village on Monday, February 10th. Clare, PD, Zora and Isaac were hosted in Wenatchee, WA on the way in and way out of Holden Village by members of Grace Lutheran in Wenatchee, and they also attended a Wednesday night dinner at the church after leaving Holden. Their hospitality was overflowing and it was exciting to see another 'Grace' church doing so many wonderful things.

PD

Clare Tallon Ruen's Dance Workshop

Thanks for stepping outside of your comfort zone. Our goal today is to each create a three-part gesture and move it around the room. The premise of this workshop is that our bodies are sources of information. I will use the word "imagine" seriously, referring not to something that may be, but that is.

(warm up) Take a walk around the room, waking up your peripheral vision. Notice: where are you in the room? Where are the others? Are you in a pack? Going across the room or moving with the group? Are you near a wall? What can you sense behind you? We are animals, we may not see behind us but we do sense.... Now take one person and keep her in your peripheral vision at all times. She doesn't know she's the one, but she's right there, at the edge of your vision....

...now add a second person. You are in a changing triangle with two other people. When that triangle becomes equilateral, clap!.... Now, just keep the first person in your peripheral vision and go as far away from her as you can..... now get as close as you can.

Pause.

Now, let's come together seated on the floor, or a chair if you're more comfortable. We're going to "brainstorm" synonyms for the three parts of the Trinity and write them on this giant piece of paper, then we're going to "bodystorm." So, for the "first" person of the Trinity, what are some synonyms that are verbs, or phrases? Such as: for Creator, we'd say "Create" or Make or Guide, etc...

(follow this process for three words: father/mother, son/created, holy spirit)

And, for the purpose of generating some movement vocabulary for ourselves, come back up to standing and, using your first initial, write it in the air with your hand. Now let's play with that. Can you write it with your elbow? Your shoulder? Both shoulders at the same time? Mirror imaging each other? In sequence? Draw it minuscule with your eyes, make it huge with your hips, take up the whole

room writing your first initial with your hips. Now trace it with your feet. Make it smooth. Make it choppy. How else do you want to try this? (etc)...

Now we will "bodystorm" and for this part, I invite you to imagine that you are possessed. You are a channel of divine information about God's nature. Don't just pretend, be that. Go there! You made it here, so just do it. Stand comfortable, soften your knees and feet bottoms. Notice your spine, it is fluid, imagine the top of your head—open. Imagine your feet—connected to the earth.

I will read the first section of words and you let your body respond to them...

(I read, re-read, pause, time passes)

Now distill one gesture that keeps coming up. Simplify it, toss a frame around it. And once you're ready, you may make a little note on this paper or in your journal so you remember it. Make a symbol or use a word, or just remember it in your head/body.

(Repeat this for word sections 2, 3)

Now take just a couple of minutes to mash those three gestures into one. Make decisions about which body parts are leading, about your facing, the size of the movement, the place in the room, the fluidity or choppiness of the movement, make a beginning and end, and toss a frame around it.

Now all come together and make a wide circle. I'll put a candle in the middle. Watch the candle and use your peripheral vision to mirror my movement. Just catch what you catch, empty your head and follow.

Now take your 3-part gesture and walk it around the room, greet each other with it. Sometimes just receive a gesture, mirroring someone else's. If you are in a following mood, follow someone following someone's gesture, you are free to cut out mid-gesture and wander away, or begin yours and see who follows.

Now divide up into these three corners of the room (indicate) and one at a time, walk to the center with your gesture. Meet in the middle and move your gesture or follow another's. Finally, make a group-shape and find stillness. Once that group is still, the next group may leave, and the first group continue on in the direction they started, crisscrossing the space. I will play a ¾ rhythm on the djembe...

Once everyone has gone once, all are welcome into the space and co-create a final group shape, making choices about levels, facings, body parts, movement qualities... I won't stop playing until you find a final resolution. It's up to you as a group....!

End

Now before using words again, come to this piece of charcoal paper, take some charcoal and sketch your movement, your gesture/symbol, or whatever comes up for you.!

Thank you!

Clare is willing to lead this workshop for Grace folks in the future. Contact Clare or PD if you are interested. Sounds like a great idea to me. Marilyn Mason, ed.

Mosco Flint Family

You may have seen, if not met, the Mosco Flint family at one of Grace's services. It's not hard to identify them as they are what they call a "conspicuous family". Joe Flint and Steve Mosco are middle-aged white men and their daughters, Emma and Kayla, are African-American. The girls carry both of their dads' last names and call them Papa (Steve) and Daddy (Joe).

This family's story started off like many. Joe and Steve were introduced through a mutual friend in 1997. They dated for two years before getting married in 1999. Always feeling they would love to share their lives with children, they sought the help of The Cradle in Evanston to adopt. Emma was four weeks old when she came into their lives in 2003; Kayla was just a week old when she joined the family in 2006.

"As with most couples, our lives became shaped around our children," said Joe, who now works at The Cradle as a senior development officer. "Our friends without children didn't really feel much like having dinner at 5:30, and we were exhausted by 7:30. It was a challenging life but also very good for us."

Like many families, both of this family's parents work full-time. Steve works as a personal assistant for an attorney in Chicago and has taught ballroom dance for nearly 40 years. He was raised in western Massachusetts and has a bachelors degree from University of Massachusetts at Amherst. In addition to his development work, Joe returned to school at Northeastern Illinois University in 1997 to earn a masters in counseling; he is a licensed clinical professional counselor (LCPC) and has a small private practice in Evanston. He grew up in western Illinois and moved to Chicago in 1984 for work.

After living in Chicago for many years, Joe, Steve, and, by then, Emma moved to south Evanston in 2005. "We found the right house in the right neighborhood and we've never looked back," said Steve. "We love being able to walk the girls to school, meeting up with their friends along the way."

The girls enjoy very active lives. Emma is 10 and in 5th grade. She loves to run and has become involved with Girls on the Run, a fitness and self-esteem program for girls. She also sings in the school chorus and is a Girl Scout. A second-grader, Kayla just turned 8 in



Mosco Flint family: (Back) Kayla, Joe, (Front) Emma, Steve

February. She loves to sing and dance, and she just recently decided to try out karate in Dawes' after school program.

Emma's family chose to have an open adoption, so the Mosco Flints are in contact with her birth family in south suburban Blue Island. Emma is proud to say she has three dads, one mom, and 10 brothers and sisters (including Kayla). Kayla's family decided on a closed adoption for now, but Kayla has gotten to know her two-year-old brother who was also adopted through The Cradle.

"We are fortunate that Emma's and Kayla's moms worked with The Cradle," said Steve. "The girls found us, and our lives have been blessed ever since."

Photos From Holden Village



The Caban Chavez Gonder Family

Craig Gonder was born in Ames, IA, but grew up in the South Shore and Hyde Park neighborhoods on Chicago's southeast side before spending 5th grade – HS in Crystal Lake. Craig's dad was raised Methodist on an Iowa farm, & his mom was raised Disciples of Christ in an Iowa small town. Growing up, Craig attended Unitarian, Congregational, & Methodist churches, but was never baptized; as a young adult, he only attended Unitarian churches. After serving in Operation Desert Storm, Craig left the Navy, returned home to Chicago, & began living in Rogers Park in 1992.

A lifelong Chicagoan, Lynn grew up in the Lakeview neighborhood on the north side, studied nursing during her last 2 years at Schurz HS, and started working as an LPN immediately upon graduation. She also enjoyed doing volunteer work with developmentally disabled adults and going to a Methodist church with her favorite grandmother. While married to her first husband, Lynn lived on Chicago's southwest side, was baptized, & joined the Catholic Church; she also completed her associate's degree & became an RN. They had 3 daughters together: Jennifer, Angela, and Annalise.

Craig & Lynn met on 06 Aug 1995, when she gave him a ride to a week-long Unitarian singles camp held at the Presbyterian Camp in Douglas (near Saugatuck), MI. They were together the whole week, & although at first they thought it might just be a summer fling, by mid-week they knew they would get married. Jennifer was 14, Angela was 10, and Annalise was 5; as Craig & Lynn dated, they attended Unitarian church together with all 3 girls. Craig & Lynn were married on 31 Mar 1998.

Craig & Lynn bought a house, & the family of 5 moved out to Woodstock in March of 2000. Although Craig had started working on the 2nd shift at S&C Electric Company in Rogers Park on 02 Sep 1997, he soon transferred to Field Service, which kept him on the road most of the time – so he rarely had to drive 55-miles to the factory.

Craig & Lynn first became grandparents when Angela gave birth to twins Maddie & Alex on 28 Jul 2003. As they busied themselves helping out with their grand-twins, they stopped attending the Unitarian church & talked about maybe trying out the Methodist church, but never actually went. In December of 2003, Alex was fighting for his life in Children's Hospital, & one night a nurse (who was a twin) suggested that 5-month old Maddie be placed in the crib next to Alex. At first, she whimpered & pulled back as she touched her listless twin brother covered with tubes & wires. Then, a visible wave of calm seemed to wash over her & she renewed her efforts filled with God's healing power: she caressed him, cooed at him, & did not let go or give up; Alex opened his eyes wide & smiled from ear-to-ear, his vitals turned around dramatically, & he miraculously recovered. Everyone in the room was crying, & the nurses kept getting more nurses to witness this healing miracle.

Immediately upon returning to Woodstock, Craig & Lynn began taking the twins to the Methodist church, & Craig was baptized on Father's Day 20 Jun 2004, when they both joined the church. The Gonder home already had 5 adults, 2 toddlers, 3 cats, & a Labrador in it when Angela gave birth to Abby on 26 Jun 2006.

Craig & Lynn moved to Evanston in March 2008, when Lynn was hired to serve as a house parent to adults with developmental dis-



abilities. Finally tired of life on the road, Craig transferred to an office job within a month of moving to Evanston, enjoying the much shorter commute to Rogers Park. Since moving to Evanston, Craig & Lynn went to several Methodist churches they had to drive to before finding Grace (their first Lutheran church) in February 2013 within walking distance of home.

Jennifer & her partner Katelyn are raising Alex in Woodstock where he is in 5th grade at Olson School. Angela & Annalise are sharing an apartment on Chicago's southwest side. Lynn's mother Joan "Grammee" raised Maddie & Abby in Woodstock until she couldn't any more: Craig & Lynn began raising Maddie & Abby in May of 2013, soon after Joan was baptized. Joan spent her last month alive at an inpatient hospice in Glenview, which allowed plenty of visiting after work / school, & on weekends until she died 23 Sep 2013, less than 12 hours after Craig & Lynn last visited her. Maddie is in 5th grade & Abby is in 2nd grade at Dawes School.

Caring for the Land In Your Own Backyard

March 1, 2014, 10 am — noon

Levy Center, 300 Dodge Ave, Evanston

Plenty of parking, or take #93 bus



Right outside your own door, you can help care for the land and create a more resilient environment that's ready for a changing climate.

This workshop, organized by Evanston TreeKeepers in collaboration with Citizens' Greener Evanston, will help you plan. The focus is on native trees and shrubs, but we'll also be considering stormwater management and how to provide for beneficial insects and birds.

Louise Clemency, Chicago Field Supervisor for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, will kick off the morning with an ecological perspective on creating and managing diverse habitats in urban and suburban settings. Local horticulturists, foresters, and arborists will provide practical advice and answer questions.

Our goal is to grow a bigger, healthier, more diverse urban forest that's good for birds and insects, that helps manage stormwater, and that's resilient in the face of challenges now and into the future.

There will be tree-related activities for children 10 and under.

ELM Statement Regarding New Thrivent Policy



Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries Responds to Thrivent Changes

Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries was deeply disappointed to learn of Thrivent Financial's recent decision to exclude our organization from their various grant programs because they consider our ministry "divisive."

Thrivent's recent decision excludes certain organizations from member-directed giving via the Thrivent Choice program; employee gift-matching programs; and Thrivent chapter matching grants. Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries has received funds through all of these programs. These funds supported Lutheran pastors, Lutheran seminarians, and Lutheran congregations and ministries. This change in policy affects not just the organizations who are now excluded, but also the Thrivent members, employees, chapters, and congregations that are part of the LGBTQ community.

While neither Thrivent nor Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries are exclusively Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) bodies, many of our shared supporters are ELCA members. This action violates the spirit and the letter of the hard-wrought commitments the ELCA made in 2009 to "bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor, and respect the bound consciences of all." In those actions, the ELCA did not commit to a policy of neutrality, but to one of active inclusion of differing stances. In this conscience-respecting stance, the ELCA offered a model for how churches and faith-based institutions can honor both oneness and theological diversity. Thrivent's action steps back from that bold witness and returns to a time when churches and institutions acted out of fear more than good faith.

Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries believes in a church wide enough to embrace differences of opinion.

The letter that our donors have received from Thrivent is disheartening. In the letter, Thrivent stated that Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries is one of a "small number of organizations and issues that are so divisive they distract, or have the potential to distract, from the common purpose of Thrivent and its membership." The letter further states that the Thrivent Choice program reflects the "shared values of our members, advisors, and employees." It is impossible to reconcile those words with a decision to exclude organizations such as ours that are, in fact, supported by Thrivent members, advisors, and employees.



We urge Thrivent Financial to drop their disingenuously named "neutrality" policy and restore the meaning of member-directed giving by allowing its members, employees, and chapters to truly choose which organizations they wish to support.

Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries affirms and supports lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Lutheran rostered leaders and those pursuing a call to rostered leadership while engaging allied congregations and ministries to proclaim God's love and seek justice for all. We are thankful for the many supporters and friends of our organization and those of our movement partner, ReconcilingWorks, also affected by this decision.

Learn more about Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries at www.elm.org.

What you can do:

We encourage you to contact Thrivent about this decision, especially if you are a Thrivent member or if your congregation invests in Thrivent. We remind everyone that many employees and members of Thrivent are supporters of ELM, ReconcilingWorks, and other affected organizations. This decision has been very difficult news for them too. It is important to be thoughtful, respectful, and kind in your communications. We want to encourage Thrivent to revisit this decision and to honor the meaning of "member-directed" giving. We believe that LGBTQ people are part of the church and that our lives, families, and calls are not "divisive."

1. Share your views on the Thrivent feedback page by clicking [here](#).
2. Call Thrivent: 800-THRIVENT (800-847-4836)
3. Contact your Thrivent Representative and set up a meeting or conversation to discuss your concerns.
4. Consider increasing your support for Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries, ReconcilingWorks, and other affected organizations through a direct gift from you or your congregation. We received \$2,985 in funding last year through Thrivent member-directed giving. With a growing number of LGBTQ seminarians, pastors, and LGBTQ-led congregations to support, we need resources to encourage and support these ministry leaders. Contribute now.
5. Share this post with your Facebook friends, congregation, friends, and others.

http://www.elm.org/2014/02/17/elm-statement-regarding-new-thrivent-policy/?utm_source=February+interMISSION&utm_campaign=Feb+eNews&utm_medium=email

Let Us Know Your Heartsongs

For each of us there are a few worship songs that touch our hearts, that deepen our connection to God.

A diverse congregation like Grace tries to sing the different heartsongs of as many persons as possible at some time.

Please let Mark know one or two of your heartsongs—maybe for the Lenten season, for Communion or for any other time in worship.

Send via email to markleby@comcast.net or leave a note in his mailbox outside the office.

Breakfast Groceries and Ongoing Donations

Third Sunday -- March 16 -- Time for Breakfast Groceries for the IA Hospitality Center!

Grace's breakfast monthly contributions complement our quarterly turns serving the Sunday Soup-Kitchen meal for Interfaith Action.

- 1) for the breakfast supplies, please bring breads, instant oatmeal packets, half-gallons of juice, crackers, jam, syrup, teabags, creamer, a can of coffee, bags of citrus or other fruit except apples.

If you would like to sponsor the shopping with a gift of cash, on Monday Feb. 17th we will need to buy gallons of milk and orange juice, 12 boxes of frozen waffles, 60 cups of yogurt, 6 packages of cream cheese, and 3 tubs of butter.

If anyone would like to help get the groceries organized for the altar presentation, or would like a turn at shopping and in-person delivery to the Hospitality Center, please let Lisa Kosnick or Helen Yarbrough know. Thank You! (yrbr@att.net)

- 2) Also, the Chicago Uptown Ministry always needs canned and packaged goods for lunches and evening meals. These high-protein, non-perishable items are collected in the large wooden box in the coat room.



Adult Ed: The Secret Gospels, Part II

In preparation for this group of lessons, please watch this informative BBC Documentary on the Gnostic Gospels:

<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=the+gnostic+gospels&FORM=HDRSC3#view=detail&mid=355123E1ED62FB4B8A62355123E1ED62FB4B8A62>

Over the next few weeks we will explore the texts themselves as well as frame them in the larger context of the first century, searching for how to understand and integrate them into our current understanding of the Christian faith.

If you have any questions feel free to email Pastor Daniel at pd@graceevanston.org or Ron Graef at graef79@gmail.com

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & FRIENDS
1004 Greenwood Street, Evanston
Fellowship Hall

MARDI GRAS! MARDI GRAS! MARDI GRAS!

It's Mardi Gras Time!
Tuesday, March 4th at
6:30 pm

Join Us For a Cajun Style Dinner:
Jambalaya, Gumbo, Cornbread, Greens,
Dessert, Coffee & Beverages

RSVP Approximate
Numbers Attending by
Friday, February 28th to:
office@stpaulsevanston.org or
847.475.3403

CENTER FOR Economic Progress
Providing Solutions for Working Families

save the fee
FILE for FREE

Get your taxes done for free with the Center for Economic Progress (CEP). From January 21 thru April 15, 2014, CEP is offering free basic tax help in your neighborhood for:

What to BRING:

- All W-2s and 1099s (if any)
- Social Security Cards or Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITIN) for all family members
- Valid photo ID
- Copy of last year's tax return, if available
- Bank Account Number and Routing Number to direct deposit your refund
- Property tax bill
- Amount spent on college expenses

Services are free to:

- Families**
Two or more people who share a common household
- Individuals**
With income up to \$10,000

EVANSTON

Evanston Public Library
1703 Orrington Ave
Evanston, IL 60201

Tues & Thurs, 5:30pm - Tax site closes when capacity is reached
Sat, 10am - Tax site closes when capacity is reached

Open Jan 25 - April 15

QUESTIONS?
www.economicprogress.org
or call (312) 252-0280
For the hearing impaired, please dial 711

! Tax sites close when capacity is reached.

- Sites operate on a first-come, first-served basis
- For shorter wait times, visit in March
- Please allow at least two hours or more for tax preparation
- All taxes are prepared by IRS-certified volunteers

Take advantage of the OPTIONS:

- Free help to file your EITC claim**
If you earned less than \$10,000 last year, you may qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)
- Bank Accounts**
Open a new or existing account to deposit your refund
- Prepaid Debit Cards**
Deposit your refund into the card, spend or keep



Friday 3/14 • 7:30 pm
Grace Lutheran Church • 1430 South Blvd • Evanston, IL
Benefit for Courage Fund • \$10 suggested donation

Courage Fund Fundraiser:

Namoli Brennet

Namoli Brennet is an incredible performer, a wonderful spirit and is transgendered, having received a lot of recognition within the LGBT community and in the wider music world.

She is choosing to do this concert as a fundraiser for the Courage Fund, because over the years she's been inspired by its ministry. The concert will be held on Friday, March 14, 7:30 p.m., in the Grace Sanctuary, \$10 admission charge.

Go to Namoli's site to learn more about her and her music -
<http://namolibrennet.com>

March Calendar

Every Sunday 10:45 Worship followed by coffee hour
Sunday School During Worship

Wednesday, March 5th: Ash Wednesday 7:30pm
Imposition of Ashes and Eucharist

Midweek Lenten Services starting Wednesday, March 12th and
ending April 9th: ELW Vespers at 7:30pm



Grace Church Council

Les Inch, Chair,

Jon Flaherty, Martha Fry, Jarrod Gaither, Nathan Johnson,
Dorothy Nagelbach, Holly O'Connor, Laura Wally



Find us at GraceEvanston.org

Grace

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