



Harbinger

www.graceevanston.org • churchoffice@graceevanston.org

Summer 2016

**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.

**10:00 am
Worship Services
Every Sunday,
June, July, & August**

Rev. Daniel Ruen
Pastor
pd@graceevanston.org

Mark Bowman
Music Director

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

Marie O'Brien
Parish Administrator

Jackson DeLeon-Lopez
Sexton

We Must Name Our Demons

Pastor Daniel



Photo - Steve Nesius, Reuters

Pastor Daniel note: On Wednesday night, June 15th, the Evanston community gathered at the historic Second Baptist Church to lament, reflect, pray, sing, and join together to take action after the murders at the LGBTQ/ Latino nightclub, Pulse, in Orlando, Florida. Lutheran Pastor Keith Fry, himself an out and proud gay Pastor, gave the following remarks. I can't think of a more poignant, convicting, and ultimately inspiring message to grace the cover story of our Summer Harbinger. His testimony was everything and more that we needed to hear, so soon after this event. It is reprinted here with his permission. Pastor Fry currently serves as the Pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Evanston.

Remarks for Evanston Community in Lament Gathering, June 15, 2016

I'm Pastor Keith Fry, pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Church right here in downtown Evanston. I was up very early on Sunday morning, working on my sermon and keeping one eye on Facebook, when a message came through from a friend who is a pastor in Jerusalem. All it bore was an emoji of a crying face. I asked her, "What now?" And all she replied was, "Orlando." I quickly Googled that, and began to realize the horror that had taken place.

My heart was particularly heavy as I began to lead a special prayer of lament in worship that morning not only because this was a senseless and horrible loss of life, and a tragedy of immense proportions, but also because as a gay man, these were in a very special way my own people, my own community. LGBTQ people live each day with the thought tucked away in our minds that we might at any moment face violence at the hands of bigots and haters. We often guard our comments carefully until we're sure of where the person we're talking to is coming from. Sure, things have gotten better than they were when I was a

young man, better even than they were just a few short years ago. And somehow after last year's Supreme Court decision on marriage equality, many of us had convinced ourselves in the glow of that that we were safe, that we were now accepted, that a new day had dawned, and we were lulled into a sense of security and hopefulness. But then that was shattered across those

long nighttime hours Sunday at the Pulse nightclub as hatred spewed forth from the barrel of an assault weapon. The forces of evil had once again done their worst; the power of fear was renewed.

It has been heartwarming this week to hear and see and read the many expressions of solidarity and support that have poured out. It does my heart and my soul good to see each of you tonight witnessing to the goodness of humanity as we pour out our lament before God and one another. But it has also been discouraging and sickening to see the venom and hatred being disgorged this week by those who despise LGBTQ folks, by those who want to blame Muslims and Islam. One man who serves as a Christian pastor preached on Sunday that he wished that the gunman had killed all 300 people in that bar that night, and that a "truly godly government" would round up the rest of us and put us up against a wall and shoot us, since he declared that that was God's law. We have our own Taliban, don't we? But sadly enough, I pretty much expect that from some folks. Discouraging in another way, though, has been to witness people trying to erase the fact that this attack was targeted against LGBTQ people. It's as though it just makes some folks too uncomfortable to even say the words, or to acknowledge the reality of the violence and hatred toward gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender folks that lies so close to the surface, and they seem to think that if they just don't name it, then they won't have to admit it exists. We just make them queasy, I guess. It's far easier to talk about terrorists.

Continued on next page

Demon, continued

This coming Sunday, in many churches in the Christian tradition we will be hearing a gospel story about Jesus healing a man who is out of his right mind, gripped by violent mental illness, cut off from community, feared by all, living shackled in chains amidst the tombs in the cemetery outside the city walls. In that world view, such illness was attributed to demonic possession. In the story, Jesus approaches the man and commands the unclean spirit to come out of him. And then Jesus does something very curious: He speaks to the demon and he asks, "What is your name?" He does this because to name the demon gives you power over it, gives you the authority to cast it out. And the story says that the man responds, "'Legion,' for many demons had entered him." And they beg Jesus not to cast them into the abyss. It's as though the demons believe that if they can convince Jesus that there are too many of them to name that he will simply leave them alone to work their evil on this man.

You know, we don't have to believe in literal demons to acknowledge that in our society, in our world, there are many forces at work, forces that seek to control and to destroy, forces that lash out in blind hatred, seeking to diminish others until they have no identity. And those forces do not like to be named. They will do anything they can to convince us that the real demons are gays and lesbians, or young black men, or Jews, or Muslims, or the poor, or transgender folks who just want to pee ... And those forces seem to believe that if they can just convince us that there are too many of them, or that they are too powerful, or that there's nothing that can be done to battle them, that we will be powerless against them and that we'll just say, as we too often do, "Oh, well, that's just the way it is, we'll just have to accept it," that we will leave them alone and let them do what they do, as they continue to drive people to fear and despair and destruction.

Sisters and brothers, we must name our collective demons if we are to gain power over them. We cannot retreat into simply calling them "Legion" and giving up against them. Several people this week, people of very good will and who are coming from a place of solidarity, have said to me, "Pastor, this isn't really about an attack on LGBT folks. This was an attack on all Americans." I respectfully say to that, "No." That's the same kind of thing that happened with "Black Lives Matter," when folks started saying, "No, no, no, don't say 'Black Lives Matter,' it should be 'All Lives Matter.'" We don't want to name our demons. Those forces think that if they can get us to generalize the problems out to cover everybody, if they can dilute the reality, if they can say their name is Legion, and that we can't name them for what they are, we simply won't have the power or the will to change the way things are.

And while the Pulse Nightclub shooting should rightly and does affect all of us, and while it should indeed cause us to stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity as Americans and as brothers and sisters in humanity, we cannot, we must not, erase the name of this demon. We must call it by its name: homophobia. We cannot, we must not erase the name of the demon that murdered 14 people and injured 22 in San Bernardino last December. We must call it by its name: radicalizing ideology that masquerades as religion. We cannot, we must not erase the very particular name of the demon that shot down nine innocent people in Mother Emanuel AME Church one year ago next week. We must call it by its name: racism. We cannot, we must not erase the name of the demons that killed 12 people and injured 58 not even four years ago in a movie theater in Boulder, Colorado, or that slaughtered 20 tiny children and 6 adults at Sandy Hook Elementary that very same year. We must call those demons by their names: mental illness ignored by a society that doesn't want to pay for treatment, and a reckless, foolish idolatry of guns fueled by powerful forces of fear and corporate and political greed, and by a selfishness that says, "My desire to own a weapon that can kill scores of people in minutes is more important than the lives and safety of my neighbors."

But here's the good news: There is healing to be had. There is reconciliation and wholeness to be found. We can be put back in our right mind. But it's going to require that all of us stand up and boldly name the demons that oppress us, those forces that are driving us into places of fear and death, those things that shackle us among the tombs. The demons won't like it. Oh, no, they won't. They will fight tooth and claw to avoid giving up their power and control. But those forces can be put to flight, they can be consigned to the abyss. You and I simply have to begin naming them in order to have power over them. Then, and only then, can we together restore sanity to our society and break the powers of destruction. Together, we can help set people free from the chains of fear that separate us from one another and prevent us from living life fully, as we were meant to. Together, we can demand just and wise laws that limit the kinds and numbers of weapons that can be bought. Together, we can insist that our laws recognize that there are some folks who simply should not be allowed to own guns.

And so tonight, in the face of evil, I ask that God will give each of us the power and the will to stand up together and name what must be named, and demand change.

May perpetual light shine upon all those we remember tonight. May they not have died in vain.

Pastor Keith Fry

Summer Worship Notes

What a difficult, joyful, painful, inspiring, and powerful June we've had in worship. From Youth Sunday to Pride Sunday to our first Outdoor Worship/Noisy Offering of the summer. We've had wonderful weather and fantastic attendance: we are kicking off the season with great spirit and intention. As Pastor Jen said to me on Sunday June 12th, we are called to hold joy and suffering in tension when we worship. This is the essence of the Cross, a place of utter darkness and world-affirming grace. I pray our worship will continue to draw out this paradox for you as we move through the rest of summer.

We will have two more outdoor worship services, one on July 17th and the final service on August 21st. Bring your blankets, chairs, and change for the monthly Interfaith Action Day Center Offering.

I will be gone on break from Monday, July 18th until Monday, August 15th. In that time you will be served by wonderful Grace preachers and presiders: Marvin Scroggins, Pastor Gordon Straw, Jarrod Gaither, Pastor Kaari Reiersen, and Pastor Elizabeth Musselman. I look forward to meeting you at The Welcome Table!

Education at Grace Next Fall

The education program at Grace continues to expand in delightful and provocative ways. Next year we will have three different adult ed offerings, a new role for parents in Generations, as well as increased support for Godly Play and First Followers. People, Are You Ready?

Adult Education

There are three levels of adult ed offerings next year. Take one, or take them all! While they will not be titled as I've done below, it may help to think of them in these swimming metaphors. ;)

- 1. Waded in the Water:** Weekly Bible Study with Pastor Daniel at 8pm every Thursday via telephone service and Facebook live. This will be a 20 minute Bible Study session that looks at the Gospel text for each upcoming Sunday, according to the Revised Common Lectionary. You will sign up with your phone number to receive the call, or join me live on Facebook to dip into the word wherever you are in your day. More info to come!
- 2. Lap Swim:** ANIMATE, our small group adult ed format, looks to expand into next year and will kick off with a potluck and group selection event. Small groups of five to eight people will engage with the theme of 'Faith Practices' as provided through Sparkhouse's adult ed curriculum. Stay tuned for the Fall kickoff date!
- 3. The Deep Dive:** Diakonia, a two year process of learning, faith formation, and spiritual relationship, begins in September at Grace. Classes meet from 9am – 12noon every Saturday in the Fellowship Hall. I will begin teaching the first course on New Testament, and we will have a diverse cadre of fantastic instructors to lead you through more Bible, theology, pastoral care, and outreach courses. We will focus on how to tie all the courses together into a relational

and discipleship-focused experience that leads us to a deeper degree of Christian understanding and vocation. Please speak to me or Sue McDaniels to register!

We also plan to host occasional forums and movie nights throughout the year.

Stay tuned, swimmers.

II. Generations

Our Generations program continued to grow this year. We added three new families and had a wonderful, engaging course of study (Lutheranism, Christian Denominations, and Practicing Our Faith). Next year I will raise up 4-6 adult leaders to facilitate weekly adult discussions and I will take on the task of teaching about the Bible (all year long!) to our middle-schoolers. I am very excited to see how this initiative will take on a new aspect of empowering our adults to lead one another in faith and scriptural understanding. I am also excited to have some more exclusive time with our youth.

III. First Followers and Godly Play

I offered an idea called, "The Campaign For Grace" at the annual meeting that includes an appeal to fund a part-time coordinator for this ministry for three years. I hope the Grace council will seriously consider it, as this crucial program needs some more support in terms of coordination, communication, and outreach to families. The Council may decide to fund a stipended position in lieu of any larger appeals, so that we can at least begin to better support our volunteers and students. **Huge thanks to Jarrod Gaither, Pastor Kaari, Jeanine Brownell, and all the Godly Play and First Followers teachers!**

From Jen Rude & Deb Derylak:

Dear Grace Family,

We are so grateful for your love and support and LOVE being a part of the Grace community. As we head out on this next adventure, we are sad to say goodbye to you, but carry you with us. You have helped shape and form us with your wisdom, challenge, support, love, courage, faithfulness, joy, and care.

Jen is looking forward to working with young adults in a creative and dynamic setting at Pacific Lutheran University. One of the interesting things about PLU is that the student body is only about 16% Lutheran, so there are lots of opportunities for ecumenical and interfaith connections and shared ministry.

Deb is finishing up her Masters of Library and Information Science degree at the end of July and is applying for librarian jobs in the Tacoma area.

We are excited to be living in the Pacific Northwest and look forward to hiking, kayaking, camping, and exploring all the natural wonders. We love visitors - please be in touch if you're going to be out our way!

With love,
Jen & Deb



Farewell Party for Deb & Jen: Potluck on June 30

Join a potluck farewell for them on
Thursday, June 30th, from 6-8:30 at Grace.
It's a joint event with Extraordinary Lutheran
Ministries, where Jen currently works.

A Ministry That's A Piece of Cake

Well, actually, it's a piece of bread. If you are vacationing this summer and visit a church on your travels, chances are, if you take communion, you will receive a wafer that looks and tastes like a Styrofoam cup and sticks to the roof of your mouth. It's different here at Grace, and this is why.

When Pastor Stefan Rickman was called to serve Grace in the mid 1990s, as he got to know members of his new congregation he learned that Dave Utech was an accomplished bread baker who had supplied the bread for his family's meals for years. So Pastor Stefan gave Dave a basic recipe for communion bread, and Dave took on this new ministry.



A few years later, Anne Laurence began baking communion bread whenever she was assigned to altar duty and eventually became a regular contributor. Then Dorothy Nagelbach began baking bread as an activity to do with her granddaughter and a way to connect Ceci to the rhythm of the church. When Steve Mosco and Joe Flint and their family joined Grace, it soon became apparent that Steve is a fabulous cook and baker, and he was recruited to join the team.

You don't need to be a regular baker though. Some parents have baked bread once with their children, which also is appreciated.

The recipe is meant to resemble the bread that probably would have been served at the Last Supper (although rumor has it that the 9 a.m. service has gone rogue and uses artisanal breads!). This is all it is:

- 1 ½ cups whole wheat flour
- ½ cup white flour
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ teaspoon baking powder
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- ¾ cup cold water
- 3 tablespoons honey

Mix dry ingredients. Add oil and blend well. Add water and honey and mix. Knead a few minutes until resilient and smooth. Divide into 4 pieces and roll each into a ball. Flatten each with a rolling pin to make 5-inch rounds. Score top of each round with a cross, edge to edge. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes on ungreased cookie sheet.

If you'd like to join this simple ministry, just let one of us know!

Cassie, Eric, and Winona Slater

Hello! Cassie Slater here. My husband, Eric and I, along with our 21 month old Winona have been attending Grace for the last year and a half and joined the church just a few weeks ago. We feel so blessed to call Grace our church home.

Eric and I are both actors in Chicago. Eric just finished the Midwest Premiere of the play Kill Floor by Abe Koeigler at American Theatre Company. I'll be in Man of La Mancha at The Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire June 21 - August 13. The music in Man of La Mancha is some of the most gorgeous you'll ever hear! The cast of this particular production is very small, only 12 actors (!) and we inhabit the space the whole time (no dressing room down time for me). I joyfully am the comic relief in most moments, as I play the Housekeeper and the Innkeeper's Wife.



The arts are at the center of our lives - not only are Eric and I both actors - but our family business brings the arts to kids and their families. Our unique arts program, Stomp and Shout Chicago started as a music and creative play program for babes (8 months - 4 years) and their grownups and has grown to include after school classes for older kids through middle school. I'm especially proud of my Strong Girls Make Stuff class which empowers girls to take on leadership positions in the arts (and beyond) and exposes them to not only performance careers, but also careers in design and production.

This past Spring, we moved into our HQ in Ravenswood Manor (4668 N. Manor Ave.). It was a huge accomplishment that was celebrated with an Imagination Parade and a concert for families! Before our HQ existed, we were a mobile studio - renting space from other organizations. While we still have our satellite locations, we're grateful to have a home base to expand our offerings. This Summer, our inaugural show in our Kid's Theatre Series will come to life on Saturdays in July and August! Snow White and the Missing Dwarfs is an interactive musical for kids ages 2 - 10 (and their families). It tells the story of what happens after Snow White finds her prince.

I'd love to see you at the theatre!

Man of La Mancha

June 21 - August 14

Marriott Theatre

10 Marriott Dr. Lincolnshire, IL

For calendar & tickets: <http://www.marriotttheatre.com/show/man-of-la-mancha>

Snow White and the Missing Dwarfs

Stomp and Shout Chicago

4668 N. Manor Ave. Chicago

July 9, 16, 23; August 6 & 13

Saturdays at 10:30am

For info & tickets: <http://www.stompandshoutchicago.com/snow-white-and-the-missing-dwarfs/>

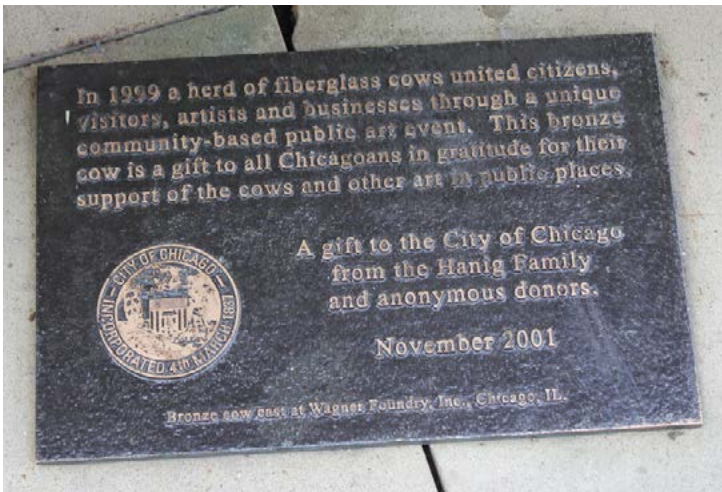
Bronze Cow Monologue



Grace member **Stephanie Kulke** under pen name “Patricia Keeney” wrote the winning monologue for the Bronze Cow sculpture in a writing competition hosted by Goodman Theatre.

Bronze Cow is one of over 30 statues around Chicago who are speaking for themselves now through summer of 2017. To hear what they have to say, simply visit them with a smartphone, and scan the barcode on the nearby sign, or type in a short text into your browser. Magically your phone will ring -- the statue is calling you! -- and will share their point of view and unique slice of Chicago history in a 2-minute monologue. All Statue Stories Chicago statues are written and voiced by celebrity writers and actors with Chicago roots (including David Schwimmer, Shonda Rhimes, Renée Fleming and Bob Newhart to name a few) with the exception of 4 public competition statues – including Bronze Cow.

Kulke said “I love to write but need an assignment and a deadline so this was the perfect challenge. I could relate to Bronze Cow being a country girl transplanted to the big City myself. Chicago performer E. Faye Butler recorded the voice and it was very cool to hear my writing brought to life by an actress as talented as E. Faye.”



For a magical experience, visit Bronze Cow and ring her up for a personal phone chat – but if you don’t have access to a smartphone, here is the monologue so you can have a sneak peek:

Bronze Cow Monologue

by Patricia Keeney

(Eliza Doolittle-like, she practices her elocution): How now bronze cow?

What’s the matter dear? Never heard a cow speak?

The first thing you should know about me is I never ‘Moo.’ Puh-leeze.

Well I used to before I moved to Chicago to commemorate the wildly popular CowParade exhibit. After 15 years I’ve become fluent in Chicago-ese. Allow me to demonstrate a few favorite expressions (delivered with her best Chicago accent):

Grabowski

Bum rap

Run it through the garden

And the ever popular Two Thumbs Up!

The second thing you should know about me is like so many others, this Toddlin’ Town has cast a spell on me. Look deeply into my eyes.

Do you see Chicago’s Picasso etched into one eye? She speaks too dear– so be sure to hear her story directly from the mouth of whatever-she-is while you’re Downtown.

In my other eye I carry the image the Chicago Water Tower. According to local legend, it was the only building left standing after the Great Fire of 1871.

I don’t know if that’s true, but I can tell you that story about Mrs. O’Leary’s cow starting the fire is sheer tommyrot! A small but vocal herd likes to blame catastrophes on cows and billy goats. I can tell by looking into your eyes you’re an open minded sort. So I’ll tell you a secret about Chicagoans.

The Swiss artist who started Cow Parade in Zurich, or Land in Sicht as it was called, wanted to bring the countryside into view for city dwellers. Now Chicagoans may look and act like big city folk, but most everyone comes from some smaller town or rural area. Which accounts for their famous work ethic, “Stormy, husky, brawling, City of the Big Shoulders”, to quote Sandburg. And I believe that’s why Chicago embraced Cow Parade before any other U.S. city.

I remind them of where they came from. Moooooooooooo!

Oh dear, you can take the cow out of the country, but you can’t take the country out of the Chicagoan.

It’s time I mosey along for lunch. Doug?! Run it through the garden!

For a map of all the statues and self-guided tour info visit

www.StatueStoriesChicago.com.

Craig Gonder's Report from the Synod Assembly

This was my 1st time at synod assembly - it reminded me of a large business / political meeting & I was grateful for the balance provided by worship, prayer, mission moments, & ecumenical speakers. One of the ways I express my ecumenism is in my dog tags: the eternal joke in the US military is that there are only 3 religions - Protestant, Catholic, & Jewish - rebel that I am, in 1989 I had some made for me that said I was Unitarian, which I haven't worn since I was baptized in 2004; still a rebel, I recently had a new set made that say I am Christian, rather than Protestant.

I believe that after 500 years of separation & division, it is time for the church to come together again, & that we will all be enriched from what we have all learned collectively in our individual denominations during the past 5 centuries.

I also enjoyed catching up with others in our conference & synod, like Pastor Betty Landis, & meeting people like Russ Senti from LOMC (where Lynn, Madison, Abigail and I will be spending a week this July at their 2nd family camp session) whom I'd previously only talked to on the phone.

Friday afternoon, Anne Laurence, Pastor Daniel and I split up to attend different workshop sessions.

Because I have toured Israel & recently worked with a wonderful Palestinian American woman (who was not allowed to visit the places I visited in Israel), I felt called to spend the 1st workshop session in "No Way To Treat a Child". This felt personal to me & my Palestinian coworker had opened my eyes to realize that my experience of the Holy Land was different from Palestinians.



While I was in the Navy & on liberty in Haifa in 1991, I had only heard & seen one side of this issue. Also, I am curious: in various churches of different denominations, it almost feels like a tired cliché that we seem to frequently & repeatedly pray for "peace in the Middle East" without ever really understanding what's really going on - perhaps we don't really want to know - perhaps the truth is too awful to face?

One of the awful truths is that each year, 700 Palestinian children are arrested by the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) & incarcerated for weeks, months, or more than a year. We heard testimony from a young Palestinian man who recently came to the U.S. & knew or at least knew of all 4 of the young men in the "Detaining Dreams" video we watched; all 5 men had been arrested as young teenagers, taken from their beds between midnight & 4am, subjected to physical abuse from Israeli soldiers during their transport to a detention facility, where they were accused of throwing stones & interrogated until they confessed to it - what child wouldn't - just to make the interrogation stop. The mothers stop work early in the day & sleep in the afternoon because they're up all night when the soldiers come for their sons. The fathers are emasculated of their role as protector of their families. The sons' schooling is interrupted by their incarceration, which frustrates them, because as refugees, they typically want to do well in school so they can go to college & help provide better for their families. It reminds me of the plight of many African American families & their typical treatment by law enforcement agencies compared to how I, as a white man, am accustomed to being treated. It is a systemic & systematic genocide - though slower & more drawn out than Hitler's Nazi efficiency. Perhaps because of the Holocaust & our country's collective guilt at not having done more sooner to stop it, we are scared to hold Israel accountable for its genocide against Palestine? For more information, please see the following websites:

www.nowaytotreatachild.org

www.dci-palestine.org

www.afsc.org

www.thelPMN.org

During the 2nd workshop session, I learned more about the Diakonia program that we will begin hosting at Grace this fall. Diakonia was started in New York with 6 people in 1978; Rebecca Dahlstrom completed Diakonia in NY in 1993, then started it here in Chicago in 1999 after she moved here.

Completing Diakonia typically results in participants feeling closer to God, discovering what their spiritual gifts are, & what God might be calling them to do with those gifts.

There are (12) 5-week courses, 6/year, 3 hours/week. Pastor Fred Reklau teaches the Old Testament course - which some dread because of having to read ~100 pages/week; however, Rebecca said the visitation class is typically the most dreaded because you actually perform a (supervised) visitation - this discernment confirms for some that they are not called to do this & for others it confirms that they are called to a ministry of visitation. I would love to complete this program - especially at Grace & especially with my wife; however, at this time I need to wait until I'm less busy.

Thank you for allowing me to represent Grace at our synod assembly.
Craig Gonder



Transformed & Transforming

Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA
■ 29th Annual Synod Assembly ■

Anne Laurence's Report from the Synod Assembly

I attended the Metropolitan Chicago Synod assembly with Craig Gonder and Pastor Daniel on June 10 and 11. We heard many reports from divisions and affiliates of the synod and the ELCA, and passed several resolutions on social issues; here are a few that I noted:

- Our synod has committed to raise \$1 Million by October 31, 2017 for the fight to end hunger throughout the world and in our country
- The assembly voted to reactivate Lutheran Advocacy Illinois
- A free app containing Luther's Small Catechism will be available from Augsburg Fortress in July
- Resources to help congregations celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation now are available, and more are being created
- The ELCA now has a credit union to serve ELCA members and congregations

Leaders from the United Methodist Church, the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, and the United Church of Christ spoke to the assembly, sharing the work of and their visions for their denominations. Their comments emphasized our denominational commonalities and the opportunities for collaboration. Greetings from Archbishop Blase Cupich were delivered by a representative of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago. Synod staff announced that the ELCA will be renewing its covenant with the Roman Catholic Church in 2017, in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

The three of us attended different breakout sessions, in order to glean the most information we could. I attended a presentation by Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Arlington Heights. They had piloted a One Church: One Book program, something that Grace is considering. They also shared their robust adult education programming, which has included Bible study; a series examining current socio/political issues, such as civil rights in America and the Arab/Israeli conflict; tours of interesting local sites, such as WPA post office art; health issues; and even a Fantasy Football draft! I will be sharing their curriculum with Grace's adult education planning team.

I also attended a session presented by a small church in southwest Chicago that has replaced their Vacation Bible School with a Peace

Camp, a deliberate attempt to give children non-violent skills and strategies to deal with an often hostile and unkind world. Volunteers and church leaders also receive training sessions in restorative justice practices and peace circles. The program intentionally reaches out to the community and the un-churched, as well as to the congregation's children. Plans are underway to expand the program to provide home-friendly resources for families of children who have attended Peace Camp, and to develop a complete program for interested adults.

Craig and I attended the worship service at the end of Friday, which was a nice way to center ourselves after a day chock full of information – and a fair share of bureaucracy.

Many plants adorned the worship space, all of which would eventually bear fruit, vegetables or herbs, and attendees were invited to take a plant home. I saw a couple of people leaving the convention center with young apple trees – I hope they had a sun roof!

The Saturday session included Bishop Miller's report to the assembly. His presentation included a number of his goals and challenges for our synod's congregations, especially his vision for each of us to be a real presence in our respective communities and the growing importance to be a voice and force for justice, especially as it relates to poverty, violence and racism. We celebrated our synod's generosity to ELCA missions and benevolences – one of the top three in the country – and the incredible generosity of individual members of synod congregations.

We had a chance to connect with former pastor Fred Reklau, former interim pastor Dawn Mass, and former Ministry in Context student at Grace Amy Gillespie, who is now a rostered leader at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Lombard. Of course, Pastor Daniel knew a thousand people more.

I had never imagined ever having a reason to travel to Tinley Park, but I'd say this year's synod assembly was worth the trek...especially since Craig and PD did all the driving!

**Respectfully submitted,
Anne Laurence**

Grace Photo Gallery RIC/Pride Sunday



Grace Photo Gallery Youth Service



ELCA Presiding Bishop Issues Letter in Response to Orlando Shooting

CHICAGO (ELCA) – The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has issued a letter in response to the June 12 shooting that claimed the lives of 49 people at a nightclub in Orlando, Fla. This is the deadliest mass shooting in U. S. history. In the letter Eaton states, “We must speak peace and reconciliation into the cacophony of hatred and division. We must live the truth that all people are created in God’s image.”

Eaton’s letter follows:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them.” Genesis 1:27

We are killing ourselves. We believe that all people are created in God’s image. All of humanity bears a family resemblance. Those murdered in Orlando were not abstract “others,” they are us. But somehow, in the mind of a deeply disturbed gunman, the LGBTQ community was severed from our common humanity. This separation led to the death of 49 and the wounding of 54 of us.

We live in an increasingly divided and polarized society. Too often we sort ourselves into like-minded groups and sort others out. It is a short distance from division to demonization. Yesterday, we witnessed the tragic consequences of this.

There is another way. In Christ God has reconciled the world to God’s self. Jesus lived among us sharing our humanity. Jesus died for us to restore our humanity. God invites us into this reconciling work. This must be our witness as the Evangelical Lutheran Church

in America. The perpetrator of this hate crime did not come out of nowhere. He was shaped by our culture of division, which itself has been misshapen by the manipulation of our fears. That is not who we are. St. Paul wrote, “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new. All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ” (II Corinthians 5:17-20).

Our work begins now. We need to examine ourselves, individually and as a church, to acknowledge the ways we have divided and have been divided. We must stand with people who have been “othered”. We must speak peace and reconciliation into the cacophony of hatred and division. We must live the truth that all people are created in God’s image.

This morning your churchwide staff came together to mourn and to pray. We prayed for those killed in Orlando and remembered the Charleston Nine killed only a year ago. We prayed for the family of the shooter, for our LGBTQ brothers and sisters and for our Muslim brothers and sisters who now face the threat of retaliation. And we prayed that the Prince of Peace will bring us to the day when we stop killing ourselves.

Your sister in Christ,

**Elizabeth A. Eaton, Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

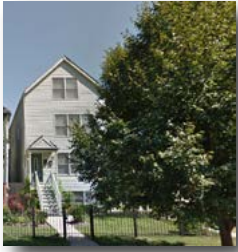


June 12 - New Grace Members:

Beth, Patrick, Nora & Calvin Brady; Aaron, Elizabeth, George, Claire, & Margot Van Nice.

We also welcomed new members on May 15 (not pictured):

Sally Schleker, Cassie, Eric & Winona Slater



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Bridges to Home is the result of 5 Lutheran churches sitting down together to determine what they could do in a combined effort to meet an unmet need in Evanston. After consultation with various community organizations, notably Curt's Café, Connections for the Homeless, Interfaith Action, and Family Promise, the need was clear. We are going to help young men who have not gotten off to a good start to develop good and productive lives.

Bridges proposes to donate \$10,000. per year to subsidize a 2-bedroom apartment in Evanston for 2 young men at a time. These 2 men will be coming from *Our House*, a sheltered home for 5 young men run by Connections for the Homeless. Our subsidized apartment will be the step of **interdependence** in the route from dependence to independence.

So, here's the deal:

We need money – please designate some of your benevolence giving to Grace for Bridges. Just write Bridges in your memo line in whatever way you donate. Grace has promised \$2500 up front.

We need talent – for our **Bridges to Home Cabaret** on **Oct. 1st**. We need singers, musicians, magicians, poets, dancers - from all of our Lutheran churches in Evanston. Please say yes when we seek you out!

Remember that Jesus saved individual lives – not just those 5,000 fish and loaf eaters. We are honored to help 2 at a time.

Questions: Ask Ginny Ayers or Dorothy Nagelbach or Pastor Daniel Ruen

SAVE THE DATE: - Saturday, October 1, 2016

FUNDRAISER

Come to the Cabaret!
that is
The Bridges to Home Cabaret
at
Grace Lutheran Church
FEATURING

FUNDRAISER

The combined talents of each of the participating churches
We not only need your money but your wonderful talent as well.
Come to the Cabaret!



Grace

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Evanston, IL 60202
847.475.2211



Find us at:

GraceEvanston.org
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