



Looking and Praying for Newness in the Face of Chaos

For just about ten months we have been hoping that our country's leadership would respond to the January 6th insurrection. It had felt to be a turning point. A challenge to our way of life. A thumb in the eye of our Republic. A daring, frightening and violent attempt to destroy our democracy. It was unquestionably led by the past president and members of his own party who feared they might never be elected again. What has become known as the "Big Lie" has now proven to be so, in countless recounts by those who understand voting and those who do not. Even those who spoke out the day or

days after this horrific demonstration of insurrection demanding an investigation have now been guzzling the kool aid of disaffection, greed, power-mongering and the veneration of a narcissist. What is happening to the United States of America, what is happening to our two-party system, what is happening to our Courts, what is happening to the melting pot (or stew), why are we coming apart at the seams and why is our current administration, having the power of the Presidency, the House and the Senate, seemingly disempowered?

We need to retreat to the post-Civil War period in our country's history to encounter anything close to the chaos that we now face daily. Not only that, but technology, social media and the press seem to amplify all of the worst of what has occurred in the cause of profits and their very existence, compounding the horrors that we see and taste every single waking minute in our beloved country as we watch it fail to live up to what the Founders had hoped for the future.

Even worse than that, we have lost so much of our credibility in the world, we no longer have the influence we once had. Frankly, we have lost that credibility for lots of reasons, not simply because of the worst presidency in our country's history. We have allowed money to shape our union. The Supreme Court, a bastion of our democracy allowed dark money to consume our elections, corporate lobbyists to take over the running of our government, and anti-union practices to promote the power of the wealthy, the gradual wearing away of the middle class and the creation of a wholly new phenomena, the filthy rich.

Looking and Praying for Newness in the Face of Chaos
 pages 1, 2 & 3
 Pastor's Message — pages 4 & 5
 Pope Francis's Quote — page 5
 Bishop Eaton Joins Other Church Leaders — page 6
 Faith & Blue Community Day — page 7
 From the Department of Energy — pages 8 & 9
 Eight Grace Walkers Hit the Road! — page 9
 ELCA Telling and Teaching the Truth — pages 10 & 11
 ACLU-Gerrymandering — page 12
 GHIAA — page 13
 Enlighten Solar Panel Report — page 14
 October Birthdays / Anniversaries — page 15



(continues on page 2)

Looking and Praying for Newness in the Face of Chaos

(continued from page 1)

As believers in Capitalism, we do not take these words lightly. But many of us come from a time, which I was very critical of back then, when corporate leaders would care about the amount of money the CEO made as a percentage of that of the lowest paid worker in the company. That kind of a measure today has little meaning. CEO's and billionaires have been golloping up the wealth of this country, and the world, at a rate that has shifted the power away from a wonderful concept of a democracy where all had influence on what we were and wanted to become.

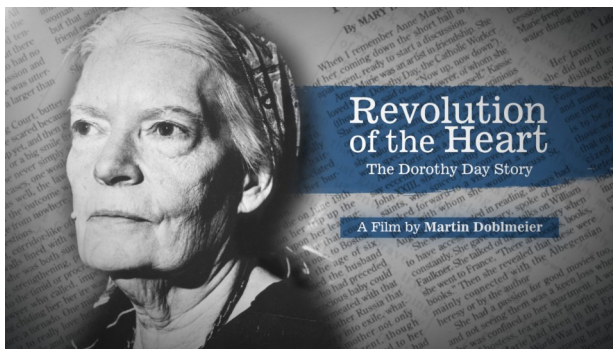
Where is that today? The Republican party has wasted away into a ball of authoritarianism. The head of the minority in the Senate sees his role as to force the "ruling party" to fail. In fact, his most recent game has been to cause the country to fail by blocking the raising of the debt limit to buy time to keep the other party from achieving any of its objectives having won the presidency with more votes than any president in history.



OK. We all know that we are living in chaos. There is no need to argue this further, so what can we do? How can it happen that we have ourselves in the clutches of such a calamity?

There are some glimpses of hope, and we pray they will make a difference. My dear brother led me to the American Academy of Arts & Sciences and its Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship. The latter's final report **OUR COMMON PURPOSE – REINVENTING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY** is available providing non-partisan recommendations on the practice of democratic citizenship. This scholarly and practical report offers a base from which we might explore ways to fix the mess that we are in. Google the organization and its document to look at what their thinking is all about.

About the same time as I received this from Bob, I received a fascinating OpEd piece from Barbara, a dear friend of my brother and his wife, a deeply engaged person of faith, who worshiped with us a few weeks ago. The OpEd piece from the New York Times was called, "We Should All Be a Little More Like Dorothy Day".



Dorothy, devoted to the Roman Catholic Church, was castigated by many for her views which offered concrete ideas about addressing the discord related to the poor and vulnerable. She was "deeply skeptical of bureaucracy and increasing dependence on the state, which she sardonically referred to as "the Holy Mother State." Picking and choosing from the NY Times piece, "**Day would reject acquisitive populist capitalism as immoral.**"

(continues on page 3)

Looking and Praying for Newness in the Face of Chaos

(continued from page 2)

With views like these, one could only imagine how those on the right and the left might react to her views. During her lifetime she was referred to as a Communist, she was characterized as naïve, and, yet “was a Christian who took the teachings of Jesus very seriously...”

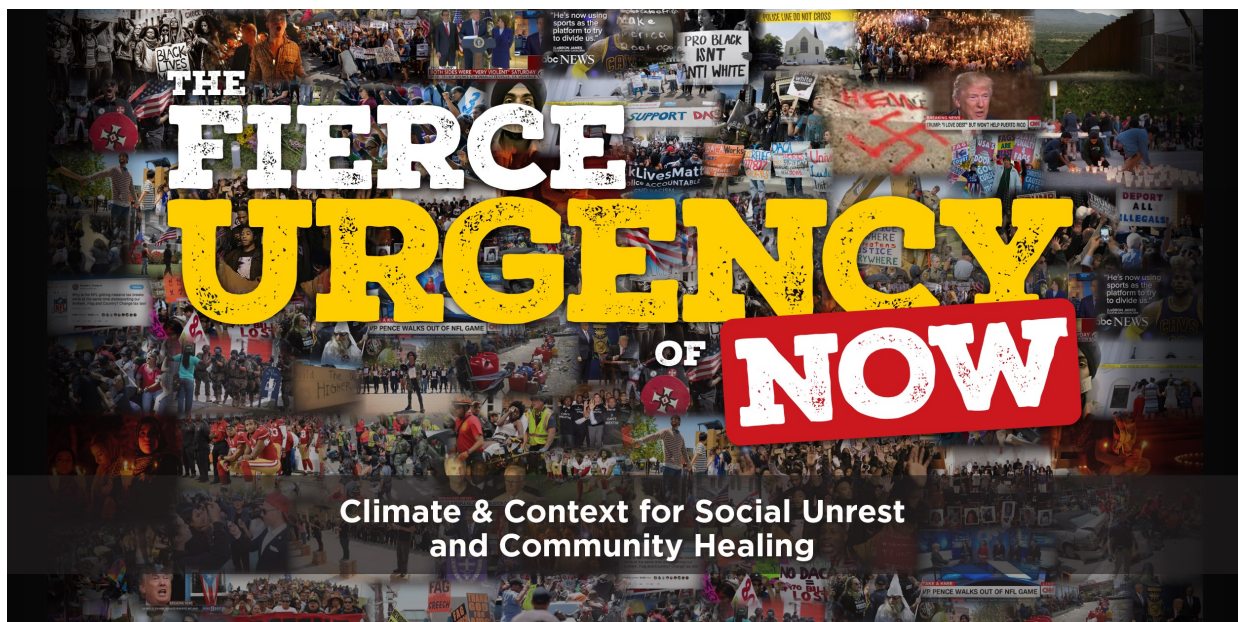
She saw the abuse of workers, particularly laborers, and opposed militarization and war in her 1963 book, **Loaves and Fishes**, she envisioned the ideal family as always capable of caring for one more. “If every family that professed to follow Scriptural teaching, whether Jew, Protestant, or Catholic, were to do this, there would be no need for huge institutions, houses of dead storage where human beings waste away in loneliness and despair.”

“She ultimately saw dehumanization in any form as the enemy, which led her to notice deep connections between stances that are sometimes set at odds.”

“Day did not offer a comprehensive social program to solve all of society’s ills. Instead, she had a vision of self-sacrificial faithfulness, loving our neighbor, and trusting the mystery of God with the results.” Wow! (That’s mine.)

I’ve already wondered about my admiration of women religious, particularly those whose lives are devoted to just this kind of thinking. May we open our eyes just a bit wider, cause our ears to become much more sensitive to the howls of vulnerability and the horrors of oppression and indifference.

Good people are called to these pursuits, today. Not for personal benefit, but for purposes that soar above the selfish and the hoarding of goodness for just a few, select beneficiaries. Let’s think deeply about these things... to do nothing like this is to prolong our collective suffering, the further exploration of the very depths of Hades with its ultimate prolongation of the current, deathly chaos. We can’t let that happen...



Pastor's Message: Mandates and Delta – Seeing the “Good News”?

For months now our world has been shrouded in suffering and death, not limited to the pandemic for sure, yet in our country alone as we approach 700,000 deaths, or more than 233 9/11's, we are slowly but surely seeing the emergence of hope once again. Not the hope that solves all problems but the Good News that vaccine mandates are, in fact, making a difference. And our faith communities are beginning to show the courage to tell that news to the rest of the world.

Pope Francis some months ago (and printed in this issue) said that it was imperative that people, who are to love each other as God has loved us, get the vaccines. They are not hoaxes. They are built on evolving and strengthening scientific exploration and the lives of medical practitioners throughout the world. In getting the vaccines we are not simply caring for ourselves... quite the contrary, the vaccines prime benefit is that they care for others. It was Jesus who thousands of years ago gave his life for us, and taught us above all else, to love our neighbors and strangers as ourselves. This pandemic, if it has shown us anything, teaches that our world depends on us looking beyond ourselves, our fears, our assumptions and our hesitancy.



Now, Pope Francis has mandated vaccines for those under his control in the Vatican. It is time for this kind of world-wide leadership. It is time that all Christian leaders, and leaders of all faiths, come to grips with the essential faith-based essence that calls us to care for others all around us. In this country, in recent weeks we've seen a 25% drop in cases, even as other variants are emerging. It is absolutely working. Those who are dying are those who have and continue to be so-called "Anti-Vaxxers."



And those who would have us believe that mandates are unacceptable, that somehow this forced wellness is like taking their guns away, or those who would promulgate lies about "cures" are actually killing themselves and others. They are risking lives even as the means for controlling this disease are in our hands, while the rest of the world begs or clamors for the tools that we have at our disposal.

Without the strong leadership of all those whose voices influence those vulnerable in our country and the world, we would not have any Good News on this front. May we all reach out to all those who fear; help them understand that the cure is in our hands and for the taking. Walking away from this gift of God enables more sickness and death. While those who resist may feel they are taking care of themselves by so-doing, may they soon grasp/realize that they are perpetuating death and keeping the tools of health and wellness from being available elsewhere in the world. It is elsewhere in the world where suffering and death are claiming millions of lives of children, adults, and mostly the poor and wanting.

(continues on page 5)

Pastor's Message: Mandates and Delta – Seeing the “Good News”?

On the day the booster shot became available in this country, at 3:00 pm I walked over to the vaccine team all set-up to offer vaccines at our church. Yes, at Grace! They have been coming for months now, not every week, but for many weeks. I queried them as to the timing for the booster. They said, they were ready on that day, the first day. I didn't even have to roll up my sleeves. I was there with short-sleeves and ready. So, I have the booster, which had no adverse impact.

Let's lead, not obstruct. Let's rid our country and the world of this frightening pandemic and lead us all to know that science is a product of the mercy and love of our Triune God. We have the gifts that may save the world. We need to show the way and have the courage and the deep understanding that this is our call.

Amen.



SATURDAY, AUGUST 21, 2021

“Vaccination is a simple but profound way of promoting the common good and caring for each other, especially the most vulnerable. I pray to God that everyone may contribute their own small grain of sand, their own small gesture of love; no matter how small, love is always great. Contribute with these small gestures for a better future.”

Pope Francis

Bishop Eaton Joins Other Church Leaders at White House Meeting on Pending Economic Legislation

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Sept. 22, 2021) – Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and other members of the Circle of Protection coalition will meet today with senior officials at the White House. Eaton and other heads of Christian denominations and organizations are working together to urge passage of the economic bills the U.S. Congress is considering now, along with voting rights legislation this fall. Today's meeting will focus on the family support bill currently being debated in Congress.

In a letter the Circle of Protection is presenting to President Joe Biden and Congress today, the coalition affirms that these pending bills "would strengthen the physical and social infrastructure of our society, cut family and child poverty more than any time in our lives, and ensure the precious right to vote for all people made in God's image."

As the final version of the family support budget bill is being negotiated, Circle of Protection members are urging Congress to retain the bill's anti-poverty provisions and to tax corporations and high-income people to pay for them. "The Bible is clear in its opposition to the concentration of wealth amid neglected human need," they noted.

"At this moment of historic decision, we are urging the people in our churches and organizations to pay attention to what the President and Congress are doing and be active in advocacy that reflects biblical priorities," the letter states. Churches and organizations in the Circle of Protection are communicating with grassroots members and sending out action alerts about poverty-focused programs such as the child tax credit. Circle members in West Virginia met with Sen. Joe Manchin last week about extending the child tax credit changes.

According to economic studies, congressional changes to the child tax credit and earned income tax credit last spring played a significant role in reducing the percentage of Americans in poverty this summer to below pre-pandemic levels. Notably, these credits were extended to low-income families and individuals. But this year's reduction of poverty will be short-lived unless the tax-credit changes are extended in the family support budget bill. The Circle of Protection letter specifically urges that the provisions benefiting low-income Americans be made permanent and fully refundable.

Circle of Protection members have worked together over the last decade to resist repeated government shutdowns and massive political pressure to cut safety-net programs. The coalition has opposed balancing the federal budget on the backs of people in poverty and strongly believes that budgets are moral documents. They have now come together in support of an unprecedented national effort to finally reduce poverty and make it possible for struggling families to get ahead.

The organizations in the Circle of Protection represent all the main branches of Christianity. They include the ELCA, Catholic Charities USA, the National Association of Evangelicals, the National Council of Churches, the National African American Clergy Network, the National Latino Evangelical Coalition, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Church, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Bread for the World, Sojourners, and the Georgetown University Center on Faith and Justice.

The Circle of Protection letter, including the full list of signers, can be [read here](#).

<https://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/8117>

BE A PART OF THE SECOND ANNUAL



FAITH & BLUE

COMMUNITY DAY

Date: Sunday, Oct. 10th, 2021

Time: 12 pm – 4 pm

Location: 46 Woodland Street, Hartford, CT

@ **Grace Lutheran/ First Calvary Church**

COVID-19 Safety and Social Distancing Guidelines
Masks Required



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Hartford Police Department
Sergeant Doug Antuna- Community Outreach Team
(860) 757-4042 - Email: antud001@hartford.gov



**From the Department of Energy,
written by Erin R. Pierce**



The solar industry is changing rapidly as it experiences unprecedented growth. Here are 6 facts that may surprise you about this increasingly popular source of power.

6. Solar energy is the most abundant energy resource on earth -- 173,000 terawatts of solar energy strikes the Earth continuously. That's more than 10,000 times the world's total energy use.

5. The first silicon solar cell, the precursor of all solar-powered devices, was built by Bell Laboratories in 1954. On the first page of its April 26, 1954 issue, *The New York Times* proclaimed the milestone, "the beginning of a new era, leading eventually to the realization of one of mankind's most cherished dreams -- the harnessing of the almost limitless energy of the sun for the uses of civilization."

4. The space industry was an early adopter of solar technology. In the 1950s, the space industry began to use solar technology to provide power aboard spacecraft. The Vananguard 1 -- the first artificial earth satellite powered by solar cells -- remains the oldest manmade satellite in orbit -- logging more than 6 billion miles.

3. Today, demand for solar in the United States is at an all-time high. The amount of solar power installed in the U.S. has increased more than 23 times over the past eight years -- from 1.2 gigawatts (GW) in 2008 to an estimated 27.4 GW at the end of 2015 . That's enough energy to power the equivalent of 5.4 million average American homes, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. The U.S. is currently the third-largest solar market in the world and is positioned to become the second.

2. As prices continue to fall, solar energy is increasingly becoming an economical energy choice for American homeowners and businesses. Still, the biggest hurdle to affordable solar energy remains the soft costs -- like permitting, zoning and hooking a solar system up to the power grid. On average, local permitting and inspection processes add more than \$2,500 to the total cost of a solar energy system and can take up to six months to complete. The SunShot Initiative's soft costs program works to make it faster and cheaper for families and businesses to go solar.

1. California's Mojave Desert is home to Ivanpah Solar Power Facility, the world's largest operating solar thermal energy plant. It uses concentrating solar power (CSP) technology to focus 173,500 heliostats, each containing two mirrors, onto boilers located in three power towers. The plant, which came online in 2014, has a gross capacity of 392 megawatts (MW). CSP technology is unique in that it allows for solar energy to be stored for use after the sun sets -- a key focus for our recent research and development efforts -- which addresses some of the concerns over delivering solar power when and where it is needed most.

Explore our projects in solar energy on the Sunshot Initiative's project map and study up on Solar Energy Basics.

(continues on page 9)

And, as can be seen in the pictures below, our pastor, who has been talking about this for years, now is among those who have joined this movement, finally!

Those interested in article links may go to "Top 6 Things You Didn't Know About Solar Energy: written in 2016... this is a history piece, for sure, the numbers today are far greater and the technology further advanced.



Eight Grace Walkers Hit the Road!

Eight Grace people joined in with hundreds of others back on the road raising money for Connecticut Foodshare. The two have merged into one and have done an absolutely fabulous job of getting food to people through the pandemic. We are partners with this remarkable organization, distributing home-cooked meals during our Friday Gatherings. Grace has not lost a beat through the same period. Our own food distribution, and relationship building made it through these tough times, too. A tribute to the dozens of volunteers that make it happen.

Allen, the three David's, Samantha, Toby, Walter, and an old pastor walked!



An old friend showed up at the church about the same time. We asked Angel if it would be OK to take his picture. It was great seeing him looking so well, having overcome some very difficult physical challenges. It was great seeing you, Angel!





Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Telling and Teaching the Truth: The Church's Obligation to Education about the Ongoing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery

From Churches Beyond Borders: Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Anglican Church of Canada, The Episcopal Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

As another school year commences, we are reminded that the educational systems we have handed down to our children often teach national narratives that perpetuate white supremacy by deleting and ignoring the histories and contributions of Indigenous People and other marginalized communities and peoples in both Canada and the United States. The ongoing legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery and the sinful acts of racism in North America are rarely if ever taught in our school systems or churches with the fullness and import that is necessary and just.

When Christians engage history with honesty, humility and a spirit of confession, it is clear that the church was and is complicit:

- In the hunting and killing of Indigenous Peoples,
- In the dishonorable breaking of thousands of treaties that federal governments made with First Nations and Native nations,
- In the forced removal of Indigenous Peoples from their original homelands,
- In the relocation of Indigenous Peoples into reserves and reservations where poverty, starvation, desperation, missionization, addiction, and suicide were allowed to become the rule for generations of Indigenous people,
- In the making of long-term federal policies that enforced family separation,
- In the stealing of Indigenous children away to brutal assimilation camps known as Indian boarding schools in the US and residential schools in Canada,
- In the ongoing plight of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,
- In the coverup of all of these evils, including through systemic efforts to erase Indigenous Peoples from our collective memory.

Scripture reminds us that the truth is costly. In Proverbs 23:23 we read, "Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding" (NRSV). Our churches' work to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery begins with the costly work of telling the truth.

Only then will we be able to start making good on our promises as churches and, together across borders, to seek truth and healing for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples by:

- Providing educational opportunities for all of our churches' people,
- Leading advocacy efforts for legally mandated inclusion of accurate and truthful history and narratives of Indigenous people in our educational systems at all learning levels,
- Standing in solidarity with residential and boarding school survivors and their descendants,
- Doing the necessary research to reveal as much truth about this shameful part of our churches' histories.

(continues on page 11)

If you want a clear lesson in partisan gerrymandering, what's happening in Ohio's redistricting process is it. The ACLU is already taking legal action.



Yesterday, we – along with our Ohio affiliate and Covington & Burling LLP – filed a lawsuit challenging Ohio's newly drawn maps for state House and Senate districts that give an extreme and unfair advantage to the Republican Party.

This is our first legal challenge of the nation's current redistricting cycle, but – as states continue determining new district maps in this once-in-a-decade process – it will likely not be our last.

Let me break down exactly what's happening:

- In 2015, an over 70% majority of Ohioans approved a constitutional reform specifically to stop endemic partisan gerrymandering in the state's General Assembly.
- Last week, the Ohio Redistricting Commission – dominated 5 to 2 by Republicans – approved new maps that lock in a Republican veto-proof supermajority in both chambers of the General Assembly. This is in blatant defiance of the 2015 reform.
- Over the past decade, Republicans have received between 46.2% and 59.7% of the statewide vote. But these newly enacted maps draw an overwhelming 67% of the House districts and 69% of the Senate districts to favor Republicans.

Not only is this a brazen abuse of power, but it's a clear violation of the Ohio Constitution. That's why we're going to court.

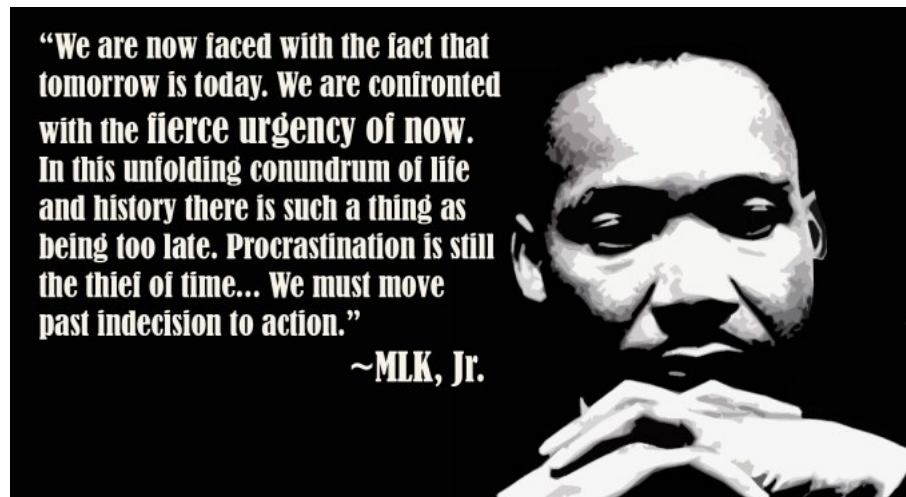
Gerrymandering like Ohio's is a dangerous political practice that harms communities across the country – particularly communities of color – diminishing people's representation and voting power for the next 10 years.

Too many lawmakers in the past have used redistricting in this way to manipulate electoral boundaries and influence future elections. This isn't how democracy works – and we can't allow it to happen once again. We must defend fair representation for all of us.

The redistricting process takes place over a narrow window of time, which gives us only months to push back. So please stay alert in this urgent fight ahead and thank you for sticking with us.

For our democracy,

Alora Thomas-Lundborg
Pronouns: She, her, hers
Senior Staff Attorney, Voting Rights Project, ACLU



GHIAA IS ON THE MOVE — Darrell Urban

GHIAA Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance continues to be about doing great things for justice.

Most readers know that Grace is a charter member of GHIAA and supports the work with a financial contribution and with many of our members directly involved in the actions of GHIAA.

GHIAA will have a fall assembly on Sunday October 24th at 2:00-4:00 by zoom. All members of Grace are not only welcomed but encouraged to attend. The more we have attending the greater impact it has on the city and state leaders and all other stakeholders who are responsible for decisions related to justice issues.

I would like to know if you are planning on attending because I will be recorded on film giving a roll call for Grace. (how many we have present at the meeting). The more the better. Also to get you registered for the assembly. Please call me or text me at 860-416-3818 or email me at darrellburban@gmail.com.

You will not need to play a leadership role in attending but you will be counted and your name will help to show the power we have in the actions we are taking.

Many of you are aware of the influence Grace has had through GHIAA in addressing and changing injustices here in Hartford. Among them: Ending the horrendous housing conditions brought on by absentee landlords in the Clay Arsenal Renaissance apartments and the Barbour Gardens, getting rid of the welfare liens placed on people who have gotten help from the state in the past, clean slate legislation that wipes the slate clean of past offenses for people who have served their time in prison and shown over a number of years that they have reformed and are contributing members of our society, creating and strengthening police civilian review boards in Hartford and many other places throughout the state, and passing legislation that makes racism a public health crisis with a means of carrying out specific policies and practices that can address this issue. And there is more that is happening.

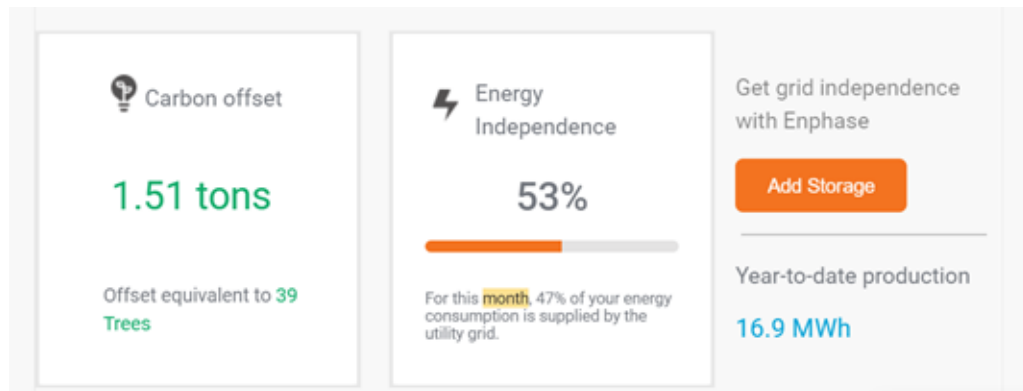
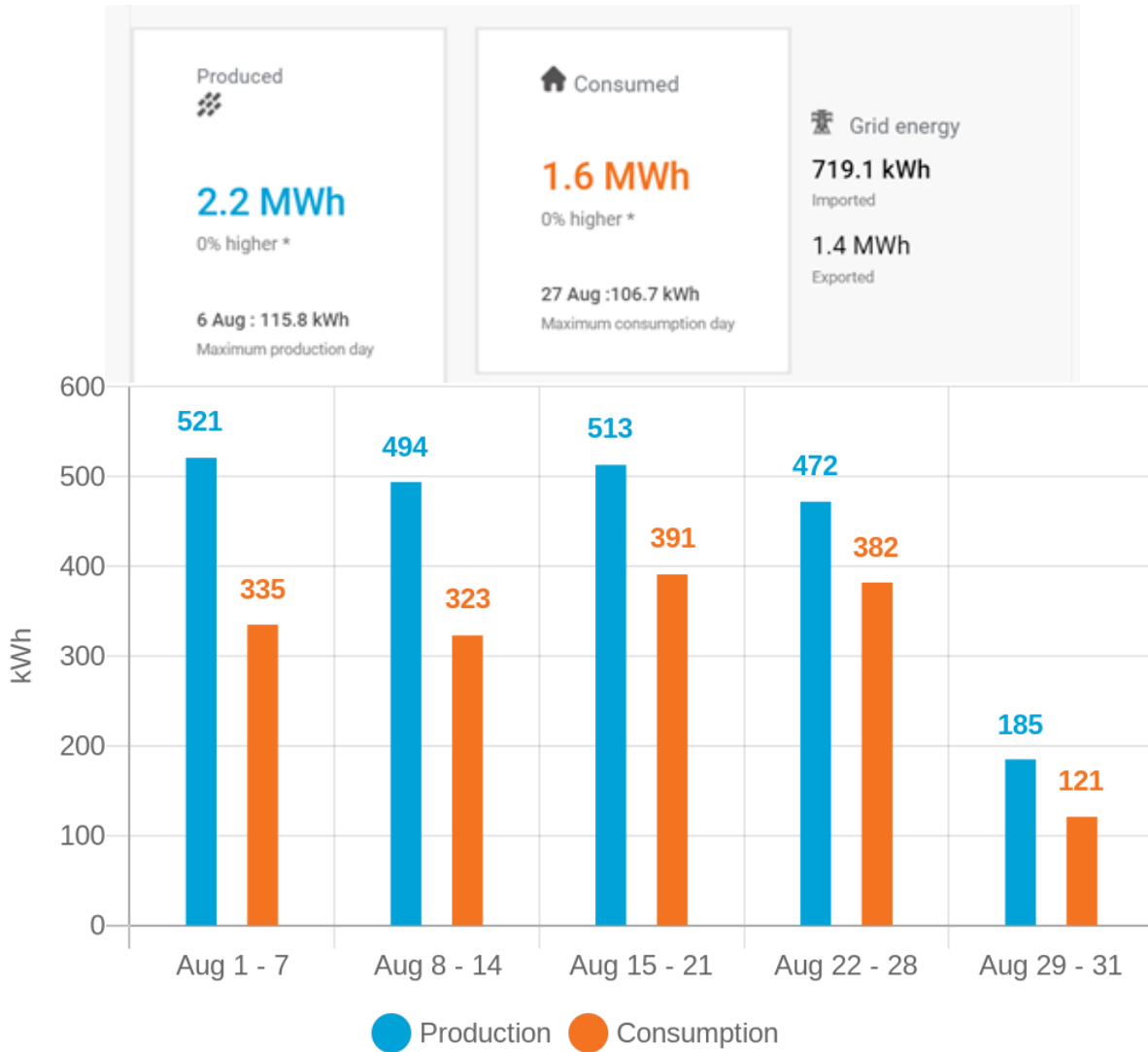
At Grace we have a core group of members and associates in our larger faith community. They have helped identify the issues to be addressed, have been present at public actions, have been at the capitol steps for press releases, and they have been writing letters to the governor and state representatives to help see that these initiatives have moved forward. Members of the Grace core group are: Louisa Barton-Duguay, Samantha Bernstein-Naples, Judy Butterworth-Kremer, Sue Carey, Barbara Carman, Emma Carr, Emmanuella Hart, Peter Hinks, Gladys Jackson, Pastor Rick Kremer, Nina Kretchmer, Paul LaMonica, Roberta LaMonica, Lou Oliver, Cynthia Rockwell, Nancy Urban, and myself Darrell Urban.

Grace has been better represented at many these events than most congregations.

Attend the October 24th assembly and you will be inspired by what you see and hear.

Members of the Grace core group will be meeting at the Urban's on Oct 17th 3:00 in the afternoon. Members will be working on how to have one on one meetings with members of the congregation and others. They will also be working on and proposing new actions that GHIAA will be taking in the future.

Don't be surprised if you get a call from one of these people who will invite you to have a one on one meeting with them. This is part of the GHIAA concept of developing a more relational culture in the congregation. It is what organizing is about. GHIAA is about organizing. And GHIAA is on the move!





Guilty!!

Titan is an 11 year-old Alaskan Malamute with hip dysplasia. With Judy traveling the world, David, pastor and Titan are living together and alone. When David is taken to work, Titan is left home alone. He does not like being home alone. Remember the movie? So, he demonstrates his displeasure by opening up the doors to closets and pulling down the clothes therein and then breaking one or two hangars in the process. For those with animals they love, I caught Titan in the act. Note how "guilty" he indeed looks.

October 2021 Birthdays & Anniversaries!

**Happy Birthday to all those
who birthday is this month.**

Birthday blessings.



*May you all be
blessed as you
celebrate your
special days!*

Did we miss your
birthday or anniversary?
Contact the office,
860-527-7792 or email
[office.gracelutheranhartford@
gmail.com](mailto:office.gracelutheranhartford@gmail.com)
to update our records.



**Happy Anniversary
To all those who have an
anniversary this month.
Blessings.**



Grace Lutheran Church
46 Woodland Street
Hartford, CT 06105



Our Staff and Council Leadership

Reverend Richard H. Kremer, Pastor

rickkremer@aol.com

Nilda Bolorin, Parish Administrator

office.gracelutheranhartford@gmail.com

Dorothea Glatte, Lay Minister

Lloyd Smith, Lay Minister

Louisa Barton-Duguay, Religious Worker

Artist in Residence for Outreach

Barbara Ruhe, President

Lou Oliver, Vice President

Mildred Unfried, Assistant Vice President

Barbara Calogero, Secretary

Dale Eberhardt, Treasurer

Janice Potter, Financial Assistant

Dale Eberhardt, Organist

Walter Scott, Sexton

www.graceistheplace.org

