



GRACE NOTES

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 46 WOODLAND STREET, HARTFORD, CT 06105 860-527-7792

August 2020

NOT BEING AN ALARMIST, BUT...

What happened in-between the World Wars is not fully known or understood by me, and perhaps others of my generation. As a child I remember discussions among family members about that time, my grandparents on both sides came to this country near the end of WW1.

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Imagine what it was like for those living during one or both of those wars, and the time and space in-between, and then particularly the slow growth of what was to become one of the horrors of human history. It began with popular calls for nationalism, the holding up of those purely of German and Nordic descent and then a gradual process of separation of them from others. He was a demagogue, he spoke the language of those suffering and he would make Germany and Austria great again.

Real Hartford AND BEYOND

Message from Asylum Hill
by KERRI PROVOST

To be honest, it's odd that there remain some places of worship that do *not* and will not make this statement of affirmation.



Para-Military forces in Portland →

From Wikipedia: The **master race** (German: **Herrenrasse**, also referred to as **Herrenvolk...** "master people") is a concept in Nazi ideology in which the putative Nordic or Aryan races, predominant among Germans and other northern European peoples, are deemed the highest in racial hierarchy. Members of this alleged master race were referred to as **Herrenmenschen** ("master humans").

The modern concept of the *master race* is generally derived from a 19th-century racial theory, which posited a hierarchy of races that was based on darkness of skin color.

Let's not dredge up past ugliness, but we must avoid repeating what happened then, and many signs point to it happening now. Where was the church in the 19th and 20th centuries? It staggers to realize that the church was in all of it. When we speak of things happening now, some would have us be silent because (1) that's not our jobs (We are to spread the Gospel), not raise concerns of things that are not directly related to that role; (2) those who do represent churches and support what is happening are deemed inappropriately engaged,

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Pastor's Message – What Can We Say? What Can We Do?

Let's see, we are living through a pandemic that since its inception has gotten far worse. While we may take some degree of thankfulness with being in the Northeast, the devastation is country wide, the death toll climbing and we have now set the record of over 4,000,000 of our fellow citizens having tested positively for the virus. Newer projections of in excess of 200,000 deaths in this country are staggering. It's getting worse with our incompetent federal response to this public health threat. Florida is now the epicenter of COVID-19 worldwide.

We have paramilitary units dispatched to cities with democratic mayors to protect buildings and not worry about lives. Protestors have been faced with tear gas, rubber bullets and military paraphernalia as they sought to peacefully influence their cities response to the challenge of Black Lives Matter. These units are assembled, unmarked, show up without request or notice and immediately engage actively to break up protests. This is a democracy, isn't it? Only one death so far, but many injured. But it is a new day in America when someone in the latest camouflage, with shiny new weapons, helmets and goggles jump out of rental cars and pick people at random from the streets to be arrested.

While the President plays golf, he is also decimating our public parks by opening them to development, selling our arctic shores for drilling to the highest bidders, working hard at voter suppression, and now offering the newest of the pandemic updates without the need of any medical science whatsoever, but a softened tone so that he can use this free television time to run for another term.

He has also been busy commuting sentences of those accused of major crimes and rolling back every single climate initiative that has been put in place in recent years. When he is done there will be nothing left of our climate science responses and a country reduced to responding to his whims and financial needs.



Our only choice is to vote. Vote in our towns and cities, in our States and for federal candidates. We must recognize that each of these steps are essential to have what we want to happen. I say that because I am not telling you or asking you to vote for anyone. That is your decision. But not to vote, is to vote. So, should you miss voting this time, the consequences will go to you and all

of us. We must vote. It is the way that we can say we are comfortable with what is happening or we need change.

This issue does have an urgent set of messages and I apologize to adding to your burden as the burdens keep piling up. You will see other articles here that raise questions about other things being neglected and needing our attention. These, too, are helping us sort out what we can say and do. Please give them your thoughtful consideration.

In the meantime, we will continue to Zoom our Sunday services through August if not longer, by taking a very, cautious posture relative to the pandemic.

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NOT BEING AN ALARMIST, BUT...

(continued from page 1)

yet still talk in support of what is happening, fund it, and participate in it as a means to make it seem OK and normal; and (3) since church is not a place for things political or things secular, we have no voice in these things. The problem with that is, in the words of Timothy Snyder, a Yale historian, “history does not repeat, it does instruct.”

Mr. Snyder is a prolific writer, but his book On Tyranny is a must read for all people living in this country now, whether religious or not. It simply teaches us twenty lessons from the twentieth century. While the issues and thoughts presented are not new to us, they are presented in a simple and powerful way. They say so much that has been stirring in my heart. By the way, it was also the subject matter of much of what disturbed Dietrich Bonhoeffer as he watched the evolution of similar things taking place, and realized just how dangerous these things would be to all people, and were.

From the back cover of Snyder’s book, “The Founding Fathers tried to protect us from the threat they knew, the tyranny that overcame ancient democracy. Today our political order faces new threats, not unlike the totalitarianism of the twentieth century. We are no wiser than the Europeans who saw democracy yield to fascism, Nazism, or communism. Our one advantage is that we might learn from their experience.” I remind you our imperfect Luther did say, “You are not only responsible for what you say, but also what you do not say.” In our vernacular today, “Silence leads to violence.” Or as Albert Schweitzer said, “Not to act is to act.”

Drawing from Mr. Snyder and other observations, here are the broad issues:

1. Wealth disparity is growing exponentially – inequality brings instability
2. Demagogues exploit free speech to install themselves to power – think Twitter
3. Tyranny is the usurpation of power by a single individual or group
4. The circumvention of law by rulers for their own benefit
5. People in the know keep quiet out of fear of consequences
6. Institutions are neutered or destroyed
7. Truth ceases to exist, and science is ignored or downplayed
8. Lies are told repeatedly, capture media, and worldwide attention
9. Cronies take on roles while competent and experienced people disappear
10. White supremacy and Nazism are given credibility and encouraged
11. Coarse discourse is the only discourse; immorality replaces morality
12. Follow the money stupid – but it remains hidden and inaccessible
13. Intentional replacement of judges a strategic and silent practice
14. Displacement of bastions of justice – hiring of AG for the president
15. Relationships built with enemies – destruction of those with friends
16. Secrecy is the means of action – constant lies cover the secrets
17. Displays of power and photo-ops replace negotiations and decency
18. Use of lawless paramilitary accountable to president as means to suppress protest
19. Distraction is a method of denial and deceit
20. Incompetence is blamed on those who have competence; finger pointing is strategic

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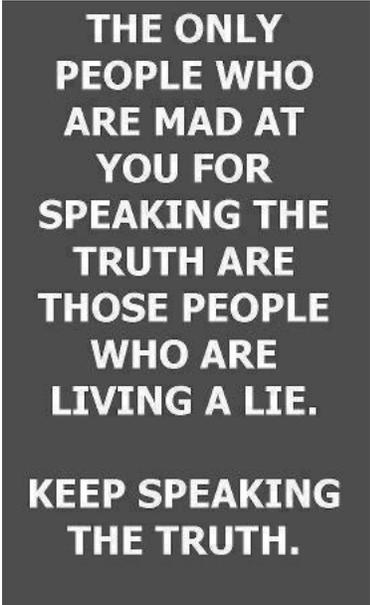
NOT BEING AN ALARMIST, BUT...

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21. Those with wealth secretly fund with Citizen's United in place
22. Corporate lobbyists replace those competent and neutral – they are the swamp
23. Separation of groups is essential; Blacks, Latin, Muslims and Jews are out
24. Authoritarians are in (Putin as the biggest example); Democracies are out
25. Laws and rules serve their objectives of conquest and destruction
26. Huge increase in military spending and arming of police with military equipment
27. Incompetent public health driven by destruction of institutions
28. The symbols of today enable the reality of tomorrow – swastikas and other signs of hate
29. Institutions help preserve decency. They fall if not defended from the beginning.
30. The takeover of the Voice of America provides the infrastructure for propaganda
31. The takeover of the post office enables control of elections
32. Gerrymandering and voter suppression are tools of control
33. Russian and other interventions in our elections remove our right to choose
34. Putin wants to dismember democracy. He's doing it!
35. How many presidential appointees have been found guilty of felonies?
36. How many of them have received pardons or commutations?
37. Private prisons are proliferating – we already imprison more than any country
38. Border treatment and walls are outrageous – children in cages; separation from families
39. Cruelty replaces decency; tawdriness replaces respectfulness
40. Looking away from the murder of journalists and genocide

There are twenty lessons listed in On Tyranny – I just list them here. One must read the book to understand their meaning:

1. Do not obey in advance.
2. Defend institutions.
3. Beware the one-party state.
4. Take responsibility for the face of the world.
5. Remember professional ethics.
6. Beware of paramilitaries.
7. Be reflective if you must be armed.
8. Stand out.
9. Be kind to our language.
10. Believe in truth.
11. Investigate.
12. Make eye contact and small talk.
13. Practice corporeal politics.
14. Establish a private life.
15. Contribute to good causes.
16. Learn from peers in other countries.
17. Listen for dangerous words.
18. Be calm when the unthinkable arrives.
19. Be a patriot.
20. Be as courageous as you can.



**THE ONLY
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ARE MAD AT
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KEEP SPEAKING
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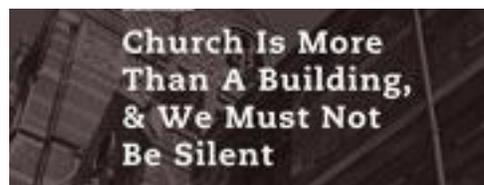
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NOT BEING AN ALARMIST, BUT...

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The ELCA has responded to many of these things, yet our voices are not as loud or as visible as those who support and fund the activities on the right. The Catholic Church in Germany and a portion of the Lutheran Church supported the rise of the National Socialists. We need to speak out more and to do so on the basis of our faith. How can we be Christians while the poor are treated as they have been during the pandemic? Healthcare, housing, food, clothing, and justice are expected by our call to love one another. We deeply care about these things. Black Lives Matter to us. We abhor violence and reject our national positions on gun violence which endanger children in schools, at home with parents with guns and with military weapons that are purchased easier than getting a license plate for our cars.

These matters are deeply about the choices we make and our willingness to pick up our crosses and follow him. You may only be able to do so much, but please do it. We must protect voting at all costs and be sure that all have that precious right. It is time that we erase racism, not time to stimulate hate. On Tyranny can be purchased for less than \$10. Read it; it offers critical ways to respond. We do not want to leave our Country to our children and grandchildren in this condition. That's not what we fought two World Wars for, and it is not what we are called as Christians to do. This is not about being democrats or republicans. This is about being Christians and a people who want their legacy to be a more perfect union. Amen.



Fresh Start Pallet Products Teams Up with Parkville Market

To Re-energize the City of Hartford

The 20,000 square foot food court at Parkville Market recently opened in Hartford's Parkville section. The food court is the first of its kind in Connecticut and is the vision of seasoned developer Carlos Mouta and his daughter Chelsea. Mouta's goal is to help transform the area in Parkville into a vibrant, walkable community that has significant retail, residential and entertainment offerings to make Parkville Market a destination to help draw people into the city – think Faneuil Hall in Boston.

As part of the preparation for the construction, the building was gutted and a number of old beams and lumber were saved for future use. Many of the beams were 20 feet long or longer and up to 6 inches square. Anne O'Brien, one of the designers for Parkville, teamed up with Fresh Start Pallet Products to salvage the old beams and convert them into a number of items and surfaces in the facility.

Fresh Start Pallet Products hires people who are working to reclaim their lives, after battling addiction, homelessness, alcoholism and refugee challenges, and teaches them expert carpentry skills. They build furniture, custom-built items and major renovation projects, mostly from reclaimed lumber. Fresh Start's shop includes commercial grade equipment and the staff has developed a high level of product design and fabrication capabilities.

Items produced for Parkville included 30 tables, 65 benches, 18 kiosk flip tops, 8 barrel hoop chandeliers and a number of butcher block counter tops, steps and bar surfaces. These items were custom built for Parkville under the direction of Anne O'Brien.



Reclaimed lumber and beams from the building 1 construction along with Stair Treads leading to the second-floor retail section constructed from reclaimed lumber.

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Fresh Start Pallet Products Teams Up with Parkville Market

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Tables, Benches and Counter Tops produced by Fresh Start Pallet Products from reclaimed lumber and beams from the Parkville Market building.



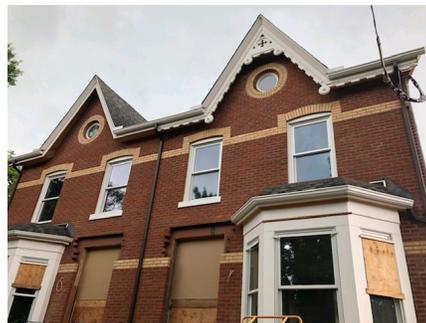
Custom Light Fixture over the kitchen produced from one of the reclaimed beams.

The work from Parkville Market helped Fresh Start to survive the Covid-19 crisis and solidified an ongoing relationship between these two Hartford organizations. Now that Phase I for Parkville Market is up and running, Mouta is turning his sights on Phase II and III to develop additional Parkville Market buildings. After that, development of the area will continue with the addition of apartments, along with additional retail, parking and entertainment space in the Park Road/Bartholomew area.

For additional information:

www.FreshStartPalletProducts.org

www.ParkvilleMarket.com



NINA Victorian House Restoration - Fresh Start

See right hand peak "Gingerbread" care of Fresh Start

Disabled Jamaican woman cooks, washes, and writes using feet

By [ohtadmin](#) | on July 25, 2020

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51-year-old Daphne Williams who was born with a partial right hand and a single finger. She is a picture of resilience as, throughout her life, she has learned to use that solitary finger to undertake every imaginable task on her own.

With the aid of her right foot, Williams cooks, cleans, washes clothes, sews, and writes her own letters. She also lights her coal stove, cuts patterns to sew, and peels food to cook.

A former vendor, the Smithville, Clarendon resident does not allow her disability to stand in the way.

A staunch Christian and believer in God, Williams firmly believes that she was placed on earth for a “special purpose”.

“This is how I was born and I accept it. God knows best, but Jamaica is too blessed for persons with disabilities to live permanently in hardships for the rest of their lives,” said Williams.

The fifth of six children and the only one disabled, she explained her late mother cited domestic woes and emotional distress as the cause of her disability. She has had no formal diagnosis for her condition.

She further revealed that her parents were reluctant to register her in the formal education system, out of fear of her being scorned or ridiculed. As a result, she started primary school at age 10 and graduated shortly before her 17th birthday – when she should have been leaving high school.

“God granted me wisdom, knowledge and understanding, and I see it as a process for me to learn.”

A Sunday-school teacher at the Smithville Baptist Church, she professed her love for children and said the congregation, of which she has been a member since 1994, was very supportive.

She believes that not enough is being done to cater to disabled persons, especially in rural areas.

“I am disabled, but I am able. I do everything for myself, but if I want a bag juice, somebody has to give it to me, so I want some financial independence so that I can stop being a burden to my sister. I need some help,” she pleaded.



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Disabled Jamaican woman cooks, washes, and writes using feet

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Williams' greatest challenge is not physical. She is saddled by financial woes and a lack of resources and pointed to an incomplete house on which construction was halted in 2008 as funds dried up.

"There are times you need help and you don't really see anybody. I would love some help to fix up my house and a little bathroom."

She added that she would love to be able to own a sewing machine, as she aims to profit from her sewing skills.

Her niece and a church member both vouched for her saying she is a 'walking miracle who does everything a person with two hands and two feet can do'. Anyone willing to assist Williams may contact her at 876-562-3732.

Article submitted by Lloyd Smith.

Pastor's Message – What Can We Say? What Can We Do?

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At the same time, we continue to feed people, provide clothing once again, offer AA meetings in person, and soon we will be celebrating our ministries, gardens and solar panels. At the end of the month, on August 29th we will participate in a special "Love Your Block" program that will begin and end at Grace and is sponsored by the City, AHNA and other conservation-based organizations.

Yes, we are doing good things, and continue to do so. I thank all those who are supporting us in one way or another and see the vision we have of a faith-driven new life. We welcome all who come to us, and we seek to make the world a better place.

Have a blessed August.

TUESDAY JULY 28, 2020

"Those who fully pledge themselves to the Kingdom are those who are willing to stake everything, who are courageous... The building of the Kingdom requires not only the grace of God, but also the active willingness of humanity. Everything is done by grace, everything! We need only have the willingness to receive it, not to resist grace: grace does everything but it takes "my" responsibility, "my" willingness ... and who is responsible for this?"

Pope Francis

What Did You Do, Once You Knew? Nancy Urban

“I didn’t know” can often be used as an excuse for continuing in our habitual ways of living. But once we know, we have no excuse and we can make changes.

We learned about the Covid-19 virus and we quickly switched to Zoom church, put on masks, stocked up on supplies and stayed home for our own protection and for others. Through heartrending stories we have learned about the everyday fears and traumas of people of color who just by going about their everyday activities risk their lives or are exposed to racist verbal or physical violence, and we have stepped up seeking better protection, better laws and regulations, better communication with our neighbors to work for equal justice and opportunity.

It is the same with our care for the earth. We can no longer have the excuse of not knowing. We have been inundated with facts and scientific predictions. We know that many animal and plant species are going extinct. We know that the earth is warming and it is affecting the oceans, the forests, the weather, the arctic, the polar ice etc. We know that our over use of plastics is creating islands in the oceans, poisoning our lands and water, killing birds and animals. We know that Climate change affects the poor and people of color in greater proportion. We know that our continued use of fossil fuels, pesticides, chemical fertilizers is bringing us to the brink.

So do we want to go back to “normal”? I hope not. As People of Faith, who believe that “The earth is the Lord’s”, that it is a gift of creation entrusted to our care, I hope that we do not go back living as if our consumption of goods and energy, our production of garbage, our polluting ways had no consequences. I hope, that as People of Faith, we would keep moving forward, spending more time with family, neighbors and building community. That we would consume less and create more. That we would pay attention to what and to whom we are giving support when we make a purchase. That we would use less plastic, produce less garbage and eat less meat. That we would be willing to give of what we have received so that others may have enough. That we would lift up and support those people and organizations that are working for the common good of all people and for the restoration of the earth. Knowing that when we walk in the Light, when we walk with Love in our hearts, there is no darkness that can overcome us.

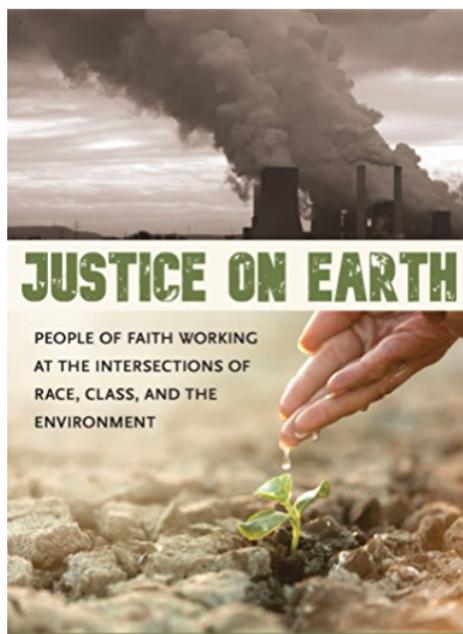
What Did You Do While the Planet Was Plundered: Excerpt of a poem by Drew Delliger

It is 3:23 in the morning, and I’m awake because my great-great grandmother won’t let me sleep.

My great-great grandchildren ask me in dreams,
What did you do while the planet was plundered?
What did you do when the Earth was unraveling?
Surely you did something when the seasons started failing.

As the mammals, reptiles, birds were all dying?
Did you fill the streets with protest when democracy was stolen?

What did you do once you knew?



Celebration of “Love Your Block”

Saturday August 29, (or Sunday if it rains on Saturday)

4:00-6:00 PM Volunteers for the Clean Up will gather at Grace Lutheran where the City "Love Your Block" van will distribute bags, clothes, masks etc. Mike McGarry will organize a team to head for the end of Niles Street where he has identified a major area in need of trash removal. Other volunteer teams will form to tackle areas within four city blocks, from Woodland down Niles to Sigourney up to Farmington, down Farmington to Woodland and back to Niles St. The volunteers will work 2 hours, then return to Grace for the Celebration.



6:00 to 7:00PM Celebration!

The neighborhood can celebrate our achievements; creating Pollinator Gardens at Grace, Trinity, the Cathedral, Asylum Hill, Youth Challenge and Immanuel, through the City Love your Block Grant which we were awarded. Grace not only has a Pollinator Garden, but a Hydroponic one as well. And, we are installing Solar Panels on the roof! The evening is especially to honor and see all we have done.



FINANCIAL FLASH – Dale Eberhardt
 For those curious about how we are doing financially, here are some quick and flashy facts about where we stand at mid-year: Operating Budget Expenses are at \$67,900, pro-rata Operating Budget is at \$68,549. Looking good! Income (regular and pass-thru, etc.) is at \$65,651. Given the pandemic and disruptions we're fine.

August 2020 Birthdays & Anniversaries



Alexander Mathura 08/03
Catherine Abrom 08/04
Sonia Wellington 08/10
Kevin Yigle-Kaljob 08/10
Clifton Bullock 08/10
Irene Kirschner 08/14
Eric Crawford 08/14
Sarah Gagnon 08/18

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

Happy Anniversary

Brian & Donna Phelan 08/04
Cephus & Sally Nolen Jr. 08/24

Marion Green 08/20
Susie Brown 08/21
Cynthia Hudson 08/24
Nancy Urban 08/27
Cephus Nolen Jr. 08/31

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary?
 Contact the office,
 860-527-7792 or email
officeatgrace@sbcglobal.net
 to update our records.



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Artist in Residence for Outreach

Barbara Ruhe, President

Barbara Calogero, Secretary

Dale Eberhardt, Treasurer

Janice Potter, Financial Assistant

Dale Eberhardt, Organist

Walter Scott, Sexton

www.graceistheplace.org

