



GRACE NOTES

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June 2022

IF IT WERE ONLY ABOUT VIOLENCE, BUT IT ISN'T

This afternoon, May 19, 2022, Darrell Urban and I were at an urgently called meeting of GHIAA. It was called to offer a place for all clergy members of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance to share their reactions to the horrific mass murder in a grocery store providing sustenance for a primarily Black section of the city of Buffalo. The ten murdered were all Black, and three others are being treated for injuries, two of whom were black. On that day we learned that there had been 190 mass shootings in our country this year alone. Some of us worried about people they knew from all parts of the State, many of whom were people we grew up with, worked with and cared for most of our lives... my life.

Most of us live or have lived in segregated places, with whites in one place and people of color, other places. At the end of the meeting, one of the GHIAA leaders commented about why we were so surprised. Greater Hartford is clearly segregated. Threats have been received by Muslims, Jews, Black folk and others with different origins and languages. I remember how poignant it was during our Lenten supper discussing a book about racism how Pastor Kam Sian Thang and his wife, Cingh Lun Niang, joined us and spoke of their own fears and concerns. Certainly, in Hartford. But not only in Hartford. Muslims and their Mosques, Jewish brothers and sisters in their Synagogues, Asian people of different faiths, and brown people from all backgrounds from all over the world need to come to grips with the fears and the realities of white supremacy that makes its way into places, particularly in this country.

Ten days later 19 children and 2 teachers died in Texas as an 18-year-old with an automatic weapon and a pistol created mayhem in an elementary school, not unlike that which happened in Sandy Hook some ten years ago. Now more than 200 mass murders have occurred in our country alone just this year!

But it is the hate that was so real in Buffalo. The violence is the way to live out the hate. And we, who are Christians, how can we allow this in our communities, our cities, our state, and our country? Remember the "melting pot"? Remember that pot was to have all sorts of flavors in it; mixed, so that no flavor would be missed, and all contributed to the wonderful taste of democracy. That stew was not created to have a single, white taste or flavor. All flavors making up that wondrous stew were to have remarkable and heavenly tastes.

We are all frightened by gun violence wherever it takes place. Violence takes place for a reason, and a carefully thought out strategy to achieve something ugly, something that has been long promulgated in this country and now has been embraced by a portion of our

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IF IT WERE ONLY ABOUT VIOLENCE, BUT IT ISN'T

population, maybe 25-30% who are convinced by those who see a purpose in creating havoc, encouraging death and violence.

Those who perpetrate the violence think they are doing a good thing for their families and country. They are afraid that people different from them will “replace” them. In their minds they believe that these “others” are going to take away their privileges, jobs, religion, and everything else. And it is these people who intend to take these others by force and kill or maim them.

Just as was the case on January 6th when a coups attempt failed to change the results of a national election. That lie promulgates the belief systems of most of those who belong to that single political party. Those who do not believe in it or support it are retiring and dropping out.

What remains is an empowered group of liars using disinformation as the means to retain and take over the government. Fox News and several of its most known “newscasters” have been pounding this misinformation into those who are looking for that retribution that their own fates have not provided. If they knew anything about history, they would know how and when slave ships trafficked in human lives and that those slaves and others to come later built this country that they claim to be theirs.



Grace is a founding member of GHIAA, the Greater Hartford Action Alliance. We have wholeheartedly agreed with the following Statement issued by the Center for Leadership and Justice and GHIAA:

GHIAA CLERGY UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT:

Greetings in the Name of all that is Good and Holy:

The Center for Leadership and Justice and GHIAA are heartbroken and angry in the wake of the White supremacist mass shooting in Buffalo this past weekend. Yet again, our nation's complicity with racism and racist violence is on full display, as a young White man steeped in the sinful ideology of Replacement Theory donned tactical gear, drove 200 miles, and carried out a vicious and cowardly attack on a grocery store that is a hub of Buffalo's Black community, massacring people who were shopping for food. The trauma of this act is devastating. It extends far beyond Buffalo, to every place where people of color gather, to every place where people should feel safe but cannot in a society that has yet to behave as if Black lives matter.

We condemn this atrocity. We condemn the communities that nurtured the perpetrator. We condemn the ideology of Replacement Theory that fueled his paranoid and misguided rage. We condemn politicians and pundits who pay lip service to Replacement Theory and then take no responsibility in response to such an atrocity.

We also pray. We pray for the victims, that their senseless deaths will result in a more just and loving society. We pray for their families, that they may find comfort and solace in the difficult

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days ahead. We pray for the people of Buffalo, that they may emerge from this crisis stronger, more powerful, more resilient. We pray for all people victimized by White supremacist violence or the threat of White supremacist violence. We pray that our nation will rise up against White supremacy and destroy it once and for all.

We are heartbroken. We are angry. We know it is critical that we offer more than condemnation and prayers. As an intentionally multiracial, multi-religious organization, we know that our members are impacted in various ways by this horrific act. Our hearts are especially with our members of color and our Jewish and Muslim members for whom this atrocity is a deeply visceral reminder that the demons of White supremacy are tenacious and ever-present.

Our hearts are also with our White members as they wrestle with complicity and commit to the work of antiracism, unmasking these harmful ideologies wherever they may raise their ugly heads, and challenging the leaders and policies that support them.



We are heartbroken. We are angry. As we wrestle with what impact a faith-based non-profit in Connecticut can have in response to this act of White terrorism, we lift up the organizations in Buffalo who both serve and revolutionize their city.

Here are a list of 40 Black-led Buffalo organizations working for justice: <https://stepoutbuffalo.com/local-charitable-organizations-that-support-the-black-community/>. Please consider supporting one of these

groups, if you are in a position to do so.

We are heartbroken. We are angry. As we launch our new GHIAA issue slate in the coming months, we pledge to continue our work here in Connecticut, fighting for antiracist social, economic, and political transformation, so that people of all races, religions, and God-given identities can live free from the scourge of all manifestations of White supremacy. We hold Buffalo in our hearts. We are heartbroken. We are angry. And we are more than that. We are committed. We are united. We are powerful. We renew our promise to confront the sin of White supremacy and build peaceful, just, beloved community.

If Anything, We Who Are Christians, Simply Cannot Look Away

As followers of a God who loves justice, we must recommit to pursuing an end to:

- Racism, xenophobia, and prejudice in any form
- The reckless armament of our civilian population that inevitably breeds gun violence
- The division, enmity, and strife that irresponsible politicians and leaders have sown

SOJOURNERS

faith in action for social justice

Any mindset or structure that reinforces human hierarchy, domination, or oppression Adam Russell Taylor speaks in Sojourner's as follows:

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"But this moment for bolder truth-telling is not reserved just to our politicians. White supremacy will have no place in U.S. politics and life once it has no place in the U.S. church. When church and religious leaders stay silent, we help accelerate the spread of this idea in both its overt and subtle forms. We must replace the great replacement theory with biblical truth.

First and foremost, the great replacement theory denies the *imago dei* (Genesis 1:27), the core belief that every person is made in the very image of God and possesses inherent dignity and equal worth. In contrast, replacement theory is super-charged by a belief in a hierarchy of human value that views white Americans as the "true Americans" and sees increasing racial, ethnic, and religious diversity as a threat rather than as a strength."

Our Synod and wider church have joined together in efforts to support anti-racist policies and practices, offering training opportunities to individuals and congregations. We will reach out to our partner worshipers at Grace and see if we may post-pandemic pick up where we left off by worshipping together on the fifth Sundays and interacting in ways to strengthen our support of all those who worship and come to our church for hospitality, support and worship.



PASTOR'S MESSAGE - WHERE ARE WE GOING?

The remarkable challenges that we face continue to grow, whether it be about our political strife, violence and murder the former raised by our first article in this issue. The sense of endless division, death, war, the growing needs of millions of refugees, economic conditions for those who have struggled financially, the impact of the climate crisis, and the looming end to the control women have of their own bodies are all of great and growing concern.

As Christians we want to reduce abortion, not end Roe v. Wade. The words leaked by the Supreme Court regarding a likely ruling would remove a way to more humane choices for those dealing with serious health issues, and further stigmatize those who elect to have an abortion. Some State laws will actually seek to send vigilantes after those having an abortion and to make doctors face charges of murder. Another State's plan is to set the ban on abortion as the date of conception, effectively eliminating the use of the day after pill entirely.

Paul said, in Romans 12:2, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect." This establishes the basis for Christian moral behavior. Jesus modeled this continually, challenging the hypocrisy of religious leaders' overly black-and-white worldview on everything from healing on the Sabbath (Luke 13:10-17) to charitable giving that neglects deeper justice (Matthew 23:23).

As we have gone deeper in our own personal challenges, our family has concluded that we will embrace with trust and assurance that we are in God's hands. May we all find a way to that place, even as so much is churning around us.

Thanks to Barbara Robbins, our new coordinator of ministries; thanks to Bernie Michel, our new volunteer as Property Committee Chair, welcomed by Council on this past Saturday, and we wish Sue Carey well as she moves towards publishing her labor of love and prepares to present it at the Synod Assembly in Worcester coming up.

Thanks to Steven Havira for being awarded again for his extraordinary artistic and creative capabilities, and for being married in his home church recently.

Thanks to the "walkers" on this past Saturday for the Foodshare Walk. The Grace Team exceeded their target.



Welcome back to Louisa returning from her trip to California, and may we give thanks for the graduations of Akeva Koulla and Samantha Bernstein-Naples from High School and wish them well on their journeys to college at UConn and Vassar, respectively.

Finally, let's join together to wish Nilda Bolorin and her dear Ismael well on their 25th Anniversary coming up on June 21st! Hooray...



FREEDOM TO WORSHIP: A PALESTINIAN CHRISTIAN CALL FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

By Jonathan Kuttab



For years, Christian clergy in Jerusalem have been complaining about an ongoing series of assaults, insults, attacks, and various forms of harassment by Jewish settlers in the Old City, as well as the defacement of their property and graveyards. They have also complained about what seems to be a determined campaign by Jewish groups to take over church properties in and around Jerusalem, relying on heavy pressure, deals made with corrupt church officials, forged documents, and exaggerated offers made to greedy tenants of church properties. The response by Israeli authorities has always been that such activities constitute individual acts by a fringe group of Jewish extremists who hate Christians, and who were as much of a headache to the authorities as they were to the Christian Churches. The authorities maintained that they had no interest in altering the status quo or infringing upon the rights of Christians (or Muslims, for that matter) in the Holy City.

This year witnessed an escalation of such attacks, as well as increasing evidence of direct Israeli government involvement. While world attention was primarily concentrated upon Al-Aqsa Mosque and the threat of Jewish extremists attempting to possess, pray, and even conduct animal sacrifices at Al-Aqsa, little attention has been given to Christian complaints. Moreover, Jewish attacks against Palestinian Christians is not something Israel has been eager to acknowledge, relying as it does on Western support. Meanwhile, Western Christians have often been reluctant to acknowledge their own culpability or confront their own shameful history of anti-Jewish persecution and its role in fueling the crisis. Both sides seemed perfectly happy to leave Palestinian Christians (a marginalized community within a marginalized community) alone to bear the brunt of extremist aggression and pay the price, it might be said, for the sins of “Christian Europe.” Ignoring or denying the actions of Jewish extremists seems to be a convenient posture to take.

This year, and for the first time ever, Israeli police announced that they would restrict the number of worshippers at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the Easter Holy Fire ceremony to 1000 people (the church holds approximately 11,000) and would limit the number of Christians allowed into the Old City on Easter to a mere 500. After an appeal to the High Court, the number of worshippers was increased to 4000. The police openly restricted access by Palestinian Christian worshippers and Arabic speakers, while simultaneously allowing foreign tourists and Jewish settlers access to the area around the Church. Meanwhile, a group of settlers broke into and occupied some Church property near the Church, claiming that they

FREEDOM TO WORSHIP: A PALESTINIAN CHRISTIAN CALL FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

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had purchased rights to these properties (by a very shady deal that is being contested in the courts).

These activities have been a source of grave concern for local Christians. Sabeel Jerusalem has shared with us the statements of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch responding to these events and has asked that we raise these concerns with the relevant church groups and political decision makers here in the United States.

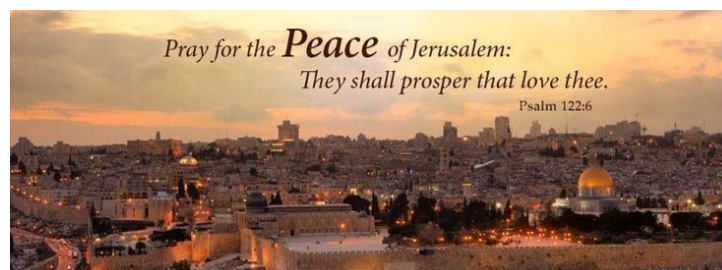
The reason such actions have been increasing appears to be the result of a combination of factors: Israeli extremists are no longer a fringe group in Israel but are now openly represented in the Knesset, even within the government. They must be accommodated if Israel's fragile governing coalition is to survive. More importantly, these religious fanatics are now framing their plans as being integral to the Zionist goal of exclusive Jewish control over Jerusalem, which they claim must be a Jewish city under the sole control of Israel. Secular Zionists who have no interest in a religious war with Muslims or Christians are nonetheless happy to assert exclusive Jewish claims to Jerusalem as a national, political goal.

Religious conflicts are particularly terrible because they arouse hatred and animosity in the name of God and are therefore not open to rational discussion or debate. In Jerusalem, so central as it is to Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, it is easy to whip up religious sentiment and marshal it in the service of some political end.

Christian Zionists also use religious arguments (if spurious) to support their political positions, claiming that support for Zionist goals in Jerusalem is somehow part of God's plan for the End Times. It is shameful that such groups not only support Jewish religious extremists but also show clear hostility towards Muslims and Islam, and many would be delighted to see a bloody, catastrophic religious war that in their thinking would result in Armageddon and hasten the Second Coming.

We at FOSNA reject religious extremism on all sides (whether Jewish, Muslim, or Christian). We assert positions that uphold human dignity and freedom of religion for all parties. We encourage free access to the Holy Places for authentic believers seeking to worship God "in spirit and in truth" rather than abuse God's name by using it to assert exclusive political claims for their own particular group at the expense of others. The delicate balance enshrined in the historic "Status Quo" agreements needs to be meticulously observed, and exclusivist claims on behalf of any of the three religions should be resisted as a formula for disaster for all concerned. Jerusalem is too important to be the sole domain of any one group, and it must be shared by all.

We pray for the peace of Jerusalem and the safety and prosperity of all who hold it dear (Psalm 122:6).



THE IDOLATROUS USE OF GUNS POEM BY CHARLENE RACHUY COX

We pray for the hungry,
And then we feed them.
That's how prayer works.

We pray for the lonely,
And then we enter into their lives.
That's how prayer works.

We pray for the naked,
And then we clothe them.
That's how prayer works.

We pray for the stranger,
And then we welcome them.
That's how prayer works.

We pray for the despairing
And then we give them hope.
That's how prayer works.

We pray for the grieving
And then we comfort them.
That's how prayer works.

We pray for an end to gun violence,
And then we admit that we are a soul-sick people,
We repent of our colossal failure to value life,
We stop making excuses,
We demand that we change our hearts and minds,
And we act.
That's how prayer works.

Prayer without action
Is a clanging gong
Or a noisy cymbal.
Prayer without action
Is a sanctimonious mockery.
Prayer without action
Brings no delight to God.

We pray,
And then we act
So that justice will roll down like waters
And righteousness will flow like an ever-flowing stream -
Justice for those sacrificed on the altar
Of our idolatrous love of guns.



CREATION CORNER

By Nancy Urban

As people of faith, we have walked through Lent, Holy Week, and Easter and now we start out the month of June with Pentecost and the amazing gift of the Holy Spirit. What a journey—a mixture of reflection, sadness, hope, devastation, joy, celebration and wonder. As it relates to Creation Care, seems as if we keep repeating this journey over and over again. We mourn for all those dealing with the wild fires out west; those destroyed by tornadoes and storms and at the same time we can be hopeful when many nations and companies are cutting back on their use of fossil fuels to help reduce climate change. We can look around and see more wind farms and solar panels; we can celebrate as a congregation with solar panels and hydroponic gardens and yet be saddened by the rising seas causing flooding of the most vulnerable people.

When I think of Pentecost, the lines from a Garth Brooks song always come to mind. It talks about how, in our culture we call people strong and cool who are able to stand on their own, who live a life without getting any scars, not taking any risks; and we call people weak and fools who take the chance to love, to live in a different way risking shame and sorrow—who “dance within the flame”.

Standing outside the fire Standing outside the fire
Life is not tried, it is merely survived if you're standing outside the fire.

What does it mean for us to be people of the Spirit, to be dancing within the fire? Making a phone call or writing a note to legislatures regarding climate issues? Encouraging gas prices to go up rather than down? Supporting groups who are working to reverse climate change? Talking with friends and family about life changes to help this earth? Changing our own living habits to be for the earth rather than helping to destroy it? Tending to lawns and gardens in ways that support the bees and land? Using our power of the dollar to make purchases that support care of creation? Educating ourselves so that we can respond to disinformation? ? ? ?

As people of faith, called to care for God's creation, let's keep walking that journey with all of its joys and sorrows, letting the wind and fire of the Spirit guide us along the way.



OUR TIME IS NOW

Over the past 15 years, the National Domestic Workers Alliance has built up the **enduring legacy of domestic workers** – the women of color and immigrant women who do the work that makes all other work possible.

We have transformed power and challenged who gets to hold it. We've expanded our movement to include artists, elected officials, engineers, and economists; organized with and for care workers, working moms, and family caregivers; and welcomed so many people from all walks of life into our movement – people who understand the importance of care in our economy, society, and democracy.

We're building in power, size, visibility, and dimension. And it's time we meet our moment. As we continue to look ahead to innovate the future of work and the future of care, we recognize that shifts have to come from within, too. **That's why we are thrilled to announce Jenn Stowe as NDWA's new Executive Director in a leadership expansion that will see current Executive Director Ai-jen Poo move into the role of NDWA's President.**

Jenn previously served as Chief of Staff and top advisor to Ai-jen Poo, leading organizational development and operational strategy. She brings years of experience in leadership in progressive spaces, specializing in managing rapidly expanding and changing organizations with inclusivity and equity at the center. Jenn is a natural coalition builder and committed to making a better world with Black women, immigrant women, and women of color.



WINNING A WAY FORWARD



We know that policies that center care and uplift poor and working class families are popular, long overdue, and would have a transformative impact for care workers and families across the country.

We also know what real recovery looks like. Workers are clear on our vision for a future where we can live and work with dignity and respect. We have a **once-in-a-generation opportunity to invest in care solutions** that will lift the people who power our economy and our families. **We need good jobs, with good pay, and workplace protections for those who have been traditionally excluded.** With these investments, we can create an economy that can support the needs of all in our country, and it's up to Congress to make the choice to build a strong foundation for us to recover.

That's why we are once again ramping up our advocacy and organizing to make our vision a reality. Our campaign is building momentum with a domestic worker Lobby Day in Washington, D.C., a Mother's Day action to recognize the perseverance of mothers who can't wait any longer for action on the care economy, and a rally to Fight For Our Future and demand bold action on climate, care, jobs, and justice. Learn more about how you can get involved.

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SAFE NOT STRANDED



The Supreme Court will soon begin hearing oral arguments on *Biden v Texas*, the case that will decide whether the dehumanizing, Trump-era immigration policy known as “Remain in Mexico” can finally be terminated.

For over three years, this program has forced thousands of migrants to wait out their asylum hearings in dangerous border towns, subjecting them to the abject horrors of kidnapping, rape, and worse. “Remain in Mexico” is a stain on our immigration system that puts families in danger, strains foreign affairs, and is contrary to the law and our values.

That’s why on April 26, hundreds of advocates are bringing this message to the Supreme Court: Join our campaign Families Belong Together and movement partners across the country to protect Black, Brown and Indigenous immigrants.

JUSTICE, DIGNITY AND RESPECT FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS

Domestic workers — most of whom are women of color and immigrants — have often been overlooked in the fight for workers’ rights, despite the fact that they normally work in homes away from any type of oversight, and often end up working around the clock, seven days a week for low wages that leave them struggling to make ends meet.



That’s why we’re pushing for a National Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, which would close the loopholes that exclude domestic workers from federal labor and civil rights laws.

Our domestic worker leaders will be in Washington, D.C. on May 11 for a Lobby Day to urge elected officials to support the National Domestic Workers Bill of Rights and to create critical new benefits and protections for domestic workers – including requiring employers to provide a written agreement about pay, duties, schedules, breaks, and time-off policies – giving these workers the stability and respect they need.

Show your support for domestic workers and add your name alongside the bill co-sponsors — Senators Kristen Gillibrand and Ben Ray Lujan and Representative Pramila Jayapal — and we’ll share other ways you can get involved on May 11 and beyond.

State deadlines to register to vote for the upcoming primary elections are fast approaching.

Are you registered? [Check your registration](#) and [register today!](#)



North Carolina - April 22

Georgia - April 25

South Carolina - May 16

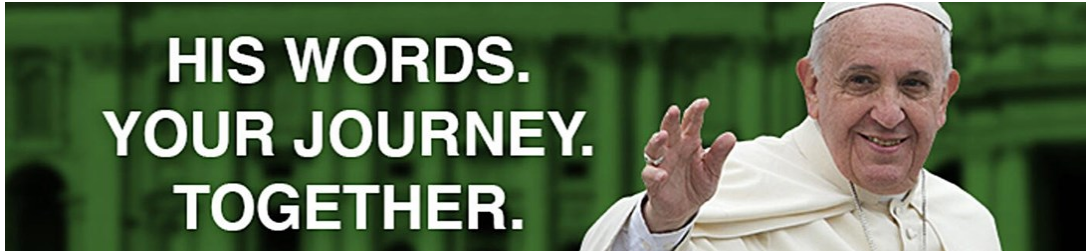
Nevada - May 17 if registering by mail, June 9 if registering in online and June 14 if registering in person

Already registered? Great! Now is the perfect time to request your absentee ballot. Despite declining infections and hospitalizations, we’re still deep in a pandemic that’s disproportionately affecting domestic workers and women of color. Absentee voting, or voting by mail, is a completely safe and reliable option for casting your ballot.

BISHOP DENYING COMMUNION TO THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

From John D. Whitney Sj, a Jesuit priest, regarding recent news of a bishop denying communion to the Speaker of the House. As clear and concise a theology of the Eucharist and the role of my fellow clergy folk as I've ever read.

"I want to write a longer piece about those bishops who seek to keep some from the table of Christ, but for now I will say this: it is not your table (nor mine). Bishops, priests, etc. are neither the hosts nor the bouncers nor the ones who wrote the guest list. The Eucharist is the resurrected body of Christ given for the life of the world. Jesus Christ is the one who invites the guests ('all you who labor'); he is the host of those who come; he is the setter of the table; and he is the feast which is shared ('Take this, all of you. . .this is my body, this is my blood'). We are guests at the meal, and sometimes (by his calling) servers. So stay in your lane, please. The wait staff doesn't get to exclude those who want to come. If you don't like the company Christ calls (and, admittedly, it is a rag tag bunch of sinners, one and all), it's you who need to leave the table, not them."



FRIDAY, MAY 27, 2022

"Dear brothers and sisters, and, in a special way, young people! If we want to cooperate with our heavenly Father in building the future, let us do so together with our brothers and sisters who are migrants and refugees. Let us build the future today! For the future begins today and it begins with each of us. We cannot leave to future generations the burden of responsibility for decisions that need to be made now, so that God's plan for the world may be realized and his Kingdom of justice, fraternity, and peace may come."

Pope Francis

MESSAGE FOR THE 108th WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES 2022

ELCA STATEMENT ON THE BUFFALO MASS MURDERS



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

"Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored?" —Jeremiah 8:22

Our hearts grieve for those who have been killed and our souls cry out against more lives lost to the hatred birthed by racism. As we mourn those lives lost as a result of the racially motivated killings in Buffalo, we ask God to ease the continued suffering and trauma of our Black siblings throughout the nation and in our church. We are one body in Christ, so when one part suffers, we all suffer.

We of the ELCA acknowledge our complicity in the ongoing cycle of violence that grows out of white supremacy. "Through colonization and slavery, the United States of America helped to create and embrace a system of valuing and devaluing people based on skin color and ethnic identity," the National Council of Churches declared in 2020. "The name for this system is white supremacy." As a predominantly white church, we benefit from this system, and we must double our efforts to dismantle it.

In 2019 the ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted the social policy resolution "Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric." Through this action we committed to pushing back and speaking out against racist ideas that divide God's children and perpetuate white supremacy in our church and society. At the Heidelberg Disputation of 1518, Martin Luther reminded us that "a theology of glory calls evil good and good evil. A theology of the cross *calls the thing what it actually is*." Calling a thing what it actually is can be a first step toward healing the wounds of God's people, but not the last. We must take real and lasting action now—through education, relationship-building with Historic Black Churches, ongoing anti-racism education, advocacy, and self-reflection. Churches have a foundational role in eradicating racism and white supremacy in society.

The ELCA's European Descent Lutheran Association for Racial Justice (a network of white leaders committed to anti-racism in our church) calls upon all ELCA members, especially white congregations and leaders, to join their communities and other congregations in prayer, study and actions utilizing many churchwide and ecumenical resources.



CONSERVATIVES ARE DEFENDING A SANITIZED VERSION OF ‘THE GREAT REPLACEMENT’

Excerpts from a piece written by Adam Serwer, a staff writer at the Atlantic

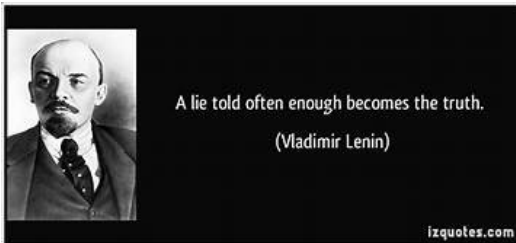
MAY 19, 2022

Three years ago, when a white-supremacist fanatic killed dozens of people in El Paso, Texas, the reaction from the right was unreserved condemnation. When another white-supremacist fanatic killed 10 people at a supermarket in a Black neighborhood in Buffalo, New York, last week, the reaction from some figures on the right was to acknowledge that the guy had a point about this whole “replacement” thing.

Large sections of the manifesto attributed to the Buffalo shooter were plagiarized from the writings of the perpetrator of another racist massacre in Christchurch, New Zealand. Both share the premise that violence against nonwhite people is justified to prevent “white genocide” or the “replacement” of white Americans by nonwhite immigrants. As the alleged Buffalo shooter put it, he carried out the attack because “all black people are replacers just by existing in White countries.” I would offer to explain how Black people got to the United States, but who knows if “critical race theory” remains legal where you’re reading this.

In recent years, Fox News has consciously amplified the same line of argument, with popular hosts such as Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham echoing its logic. Carlson, for example, has said that “the Democratic Party is trying to replace the current electorate, the voters now casting ballots, with new people, more obedient voters from the Third World,” while Ingraham has maintained that Democrats “want to replace you, the American voters, with newly amnestied citizens and an ever increasing number of chain migrants.” Having promoted the conspiracy theory for years, Carlson told his audience recently that “we’re still not sure what it is,” before reaffirming its veracity.

This noxious ideology is now too popular on the right to isolate without risking bitter intraconservative conflict, and so, as the *New York* writer Jonathan Chait notes, right-wing media figures have taken to defending and rationalizing the claims that motivated the shooter, while condemning the violence itself.



The ideology of the Great Replacement is a particular threat to democratic governance because it insists that entire categories of human beings can or should be excluded from democratic rights and protections. Any political cause can theoretically inspire terrorism, but this one is unlike others in that what it demands of its targets is their non-existence.

In 1916, the American immigration restrictionist Madison Grant published *The Passing of the Great Race*, which argued that immigration was destroying America’s traditional “Anglo-Saxon” population and along with it the tradition of self-governance. Grant’s ideas were popular and influential. They provided the impetus for racist immigration laws passed in the 1920s, which sought to limit not only African and Asian immigration but also that of Eastern and Southern Europeans, who were deemed genetically inferior to their Northern European counterparts. Adolf Hitler cited these racist laws as an inspiration, but some ascendant nativist intellectuals on the right now commonly refer to their repeal as a great catastrophe.

There are two versions of the “replacement” conspiracy theory, but both of them share the same basic premise. The first version is the idea that a secret cabal (typically one that is composed of Jews) is fostering demographic change in the United States through immigration in order to replace its white population—the motive of mass murderers in Pittsburgh, El Paso, and now Buffalo. The second is that liberals are fostering demographic change in the United

CONSERVATIVES ARE DEFENDING A SANITIZED VERSION OF 'THE GREAT REPLACEMENT'

(continued from page 14)

States through immigration in order to replace its white population. Both conceive of America as fundamentally white and Christian, and in so doing posit not only a racial conception of citizenship but a racial hierarchy, one that must be maintained if America's true nature is to endure. That these theories are now embraced by the descendants of some of the very European immigrants whom Grant considered racially inferior might have shocked him, but that just shows how arbitrary and socially determined such categories are.

But all versions of this conspiracy theory are not only racist; they are also false. Democrats and Republicans alike have, at various times, sought comprehensive immigration reform as a way to win over Latino and Asian American voters—and implicit in this is the idea *that they need to be won over*. George W. Bush tried to do it in 2006 and was foiled by a talk-radio revolt; Barack Obama tried to pass an immigration reform bill and failed because his ramping up of immigration enforcement and deportation did not bring Republicans to the negotiating table. Republicans briefly reconsidered the idea after losing the 2012 election, and instead walked the path of Trumpism. As with Obama, Biden's decision to leave many of Trump's immigration policies in place has done nothing to quiet conservative hysteria about "open borders."

The argument that the growing nonwhite population is intrinsically advantageous to Democrats is itself absurd, because racial identities are no more fixed than political ones, the migration of mid-20th century "white ethnics" from the Democratic column to the Republican column being an object lesson. If any Democrats or Republicans believe that demographic change inherently advantages one party over the other, they are tremendously foolish. For any conservative worried that immigrants will lead to permanent Democratic rule, I've got some wonderful news: History has shown that will never happen.

The 2020 election, if anything, illustrated the persuadability of such voters, as Donald Trump amassed historic margins with Latino voters in Florida and along the Rio Grande valley. That communities in Texas, for example, where policing the border and extractive industries employ large numbers of residents, would choose Trump over Joe Biden should not be surprising. These voters are no less rational or independent than white people, and Republican nativism is clearly insufficient to make them reliable Democratic stalwarts. They are not mystically immune to conservative arguments about religion, culture, economics, or even immigration; in fact, many immigrants arrive in the United States sharing such premises. The hypothesis that immigration reform would be an overwhelming boon among such voters has been disproved; Trump won many of them over while enacting immigration policies that were both cruel and counterproductive.

Nevertheless, the conspiracy theory of a Great Replacement is now part of the Republican mainstream, as I warned it would become four years ago. During the Trump administration, conservative elites could distance themselves from Trump as an individual while still supporting his policies. But now that so many important Republicans have embraced the idea, the conservative elite must find a way to make the sanitized version of this genocidal nonsense respectable. A strain of self-implicating paranoia underlines the entire concept, the fear that once they are a minority, white people will be subject to revenge for the dark chapters of American history, a past that Republican-controlled states are attempting to erase.



JESSICA KREMER—5/26/2022 FACEBOOK POST—MASS MURDERS

So my husband and I had to talk to our children about another school shooting. Another one.

I told Josef. He looked mildly upset and asked me if the shooter was one of the elementary students. I know he cares, but he's grown so accustomed to mass shootings.

Rick had the harder job. He talked to Abigail. She's in fourth grade. She does drills so that if a shooter ever barricades himself in HER FOURTH GRADE classroom, she'll know what to do. She knows what to do. She's done all the drills. But she is also a sensitive and empathic child. So she told him "If a shooter was in my classroom, I would want him to kill me. I wouldn't want him to kill the other kids. I wouldn't want anyone else to die. I would go up to him and tell him to shoot me and leave the other kids alone."

What would this world be like if everyone had empathy like Abs? It is so lacking.

What would happen if we saw all children as OUR children? Would we change gun laws?

Would we have the evil audacity to talk about "illegal babies" getting formula?

What if, instead of thinking that we were already the best country we could be, we looked at other places that have actually solved some of these problems and tried to LEARN?

What if, instead of passing no gun laws because it might offend the NRA or it might lead to a law that people don't like, we did the things that would really help? Ban assault rifles. Take guns away from domestic violence perps. Ban assault rifles. Okay, yes, do background checks and stuff like that. But also, do things that work. And why can an 18 year old buy a gun, but not a six pack?

What if we tried, really tried to come together instead of letting ourselves be polarized? What if we used common sense? Or any freaking sense?



UVALDE, TEXAS



SOLAR PANEL REPORT—APRIL, 2022



Produced



2.6 MWh

21% higher *

29 Apr : 127.7 kWh
Maximum production day



Consumed

1.4 MWh

4% higher *

15 Apr : 96.4 kWh
Maximum consumption day



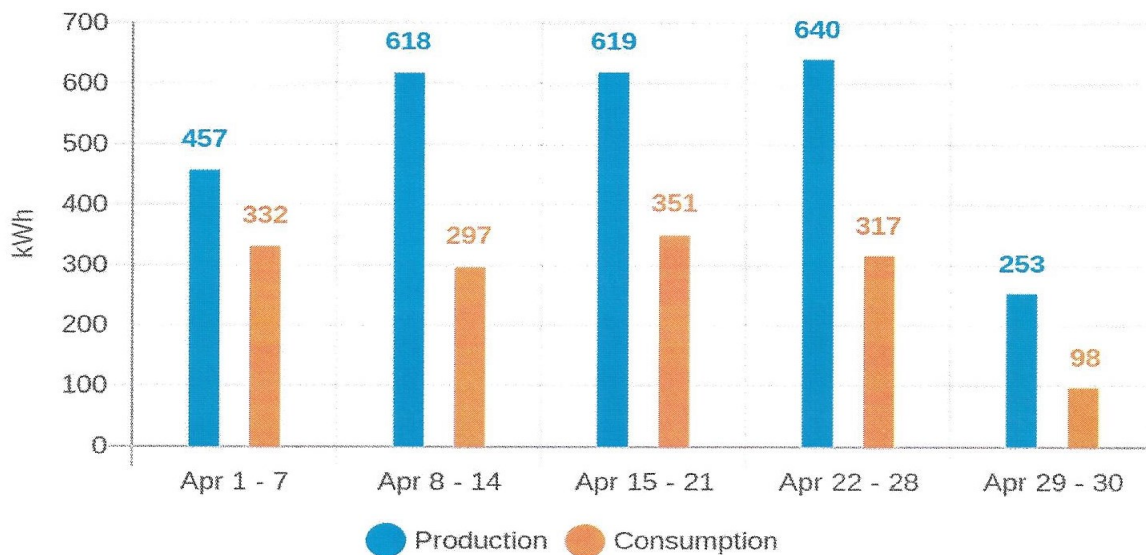
Grid energy

578.4 kWh

Imported

1.8 MWh

Exported



Carbon offset

1.79 ton

Offset equivalent to 46
Trees



Energy
Independence

58%

For this month, 42% of your energy
consumption is supplied by the
utility grid.

Get grid independence
with Enphase

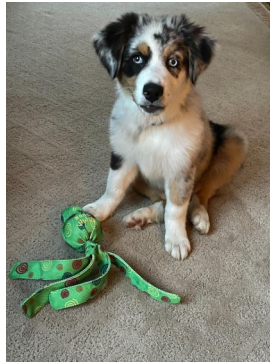
Add Storage

Year-to-date production

7 MWh

* As compared to last month's records

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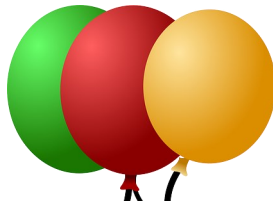


How did she get in here?



June 2022 Birthdays and Anniversaries!

**Happy Birthday to all
those who's birthday are
in June!**



**Happy Anniversary to all
those married in the
month of June!**



***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
to update our records.



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