



# Bishop Anderson House

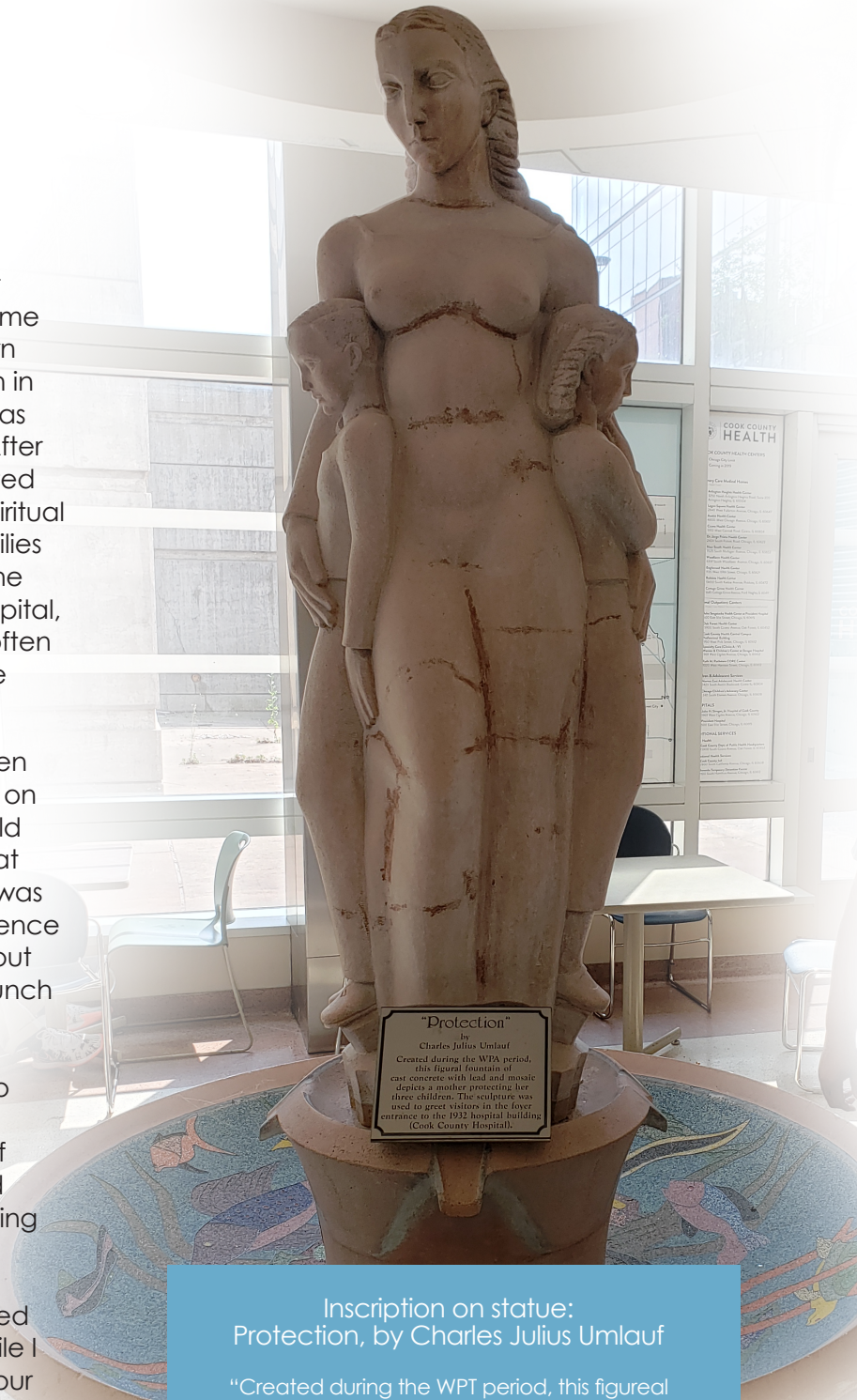
## Newsletter • September 2020

# PROTECTION

By Rev. Dr. Micheal Smith

Laureen has worked as a Nursing Assistant for the Cook County Health and Hospital System at John Stroger Hospital for more than 20 years. For the last several years she has been assigned to care for some of the most critical patients in the Medical and Burn Intensive Care Units. I met her during my first month in the hospital. A gentle and welcoming presence was my impression of her during our initial encounter. After working together for several months she commented that she appreciated and was thankful that my spiritual care extended beyond the patients and their families to include the daily check-ins that I initiated with the hospital staff. When I reflect on my days in the hospital, I have come to realize that our exchanges, most often brief but sometimes rather extended, are often the refreshing and rejuvenating part of my day.

This past spring I noticed that I had not seen Laureen for several days and initially assumed that she was on vacation. When I texted her to ask where she would travel in the midst of the pandemic, she shared that she had tested positive for the Covid-19 virus and was quarantined at home. During her three week absence from the hospital I texted her weekly to inquire about her recovery and overall well-being. We met for lunch after her return to the hospital and spent the time talking about whether she held any anxiety about returning to an environment where the exposure to the Covid-19 virus was a daily possibility. Not to my surprise she responded that the risk to the health of any member of the hospital staff while heightened during this pandemic did not deter her from returning and caring for her patients. She remarked that the support of the doctors and nurses within her units were important. As we concluded lunch she paused and said, "I also am thankful for your check-ins while I was home recovering. It was good to know that your work is not confined to the hospital and you are truly concerned for us." I thanked her for her kind words. However, I do not believe that my simple thank you could ever convey how her presence, laughter, prayer requests and mutual check-in makes all that I do not only possible, but a joy.



Inscription on statue:  
Protection, by Charles Julius Umlauf

"Created during the WPT period, this figural fountain of cast concrete with lead and mosaic depicts a mother protecting her three children. The sculpture was used to greet visitors in the foyer to the 1932 Cook County Hospital." Bishop Anderson House chaplain Dianna Chu ensured that the sculpture was saved by the wrecking ball and moved to the new Stroger Hospital in 2002.

This expanded newsletter highlights the Bishop Anderson House responses to the Black Lives Matter movement. Our wish is for you to have a resource and companion to guide you as you navigate your own journey confronting racial injustice in our communities and country.

# BLACK LIVES

*In the aftermath of George Floyd's murder, Executive Director Tommy Rogers issued a public statement, concluding with "I am committing myself and our staff to continue our work dismantling racism and discrimination wherever we find it and to foster and protect the dignity and worth of every human being. I affirm that Black Lives Matter." The Board of Trustees took a firm hold of this challenge, spending several months in dialogue, book study, and deliberation, and formally adopted two resolutions to actively work towards ending systemic racism and promoting social justice.*

*It seems appropriate to tie this back to our namesake, who was very focused on social justice. Bishop Anderson "was characterized by a willingness to be an outspoken prophet and determination to move the universal church towards unity, saying "The only inspiration that war can give to the churches is a fresh challenge to stand together and to stand solidly for those principals of universal brotherhood and righteousness and justice that make war impossible." (Bishop Charles P. Anderson quotes "The Living Church", Nov 7, 1999)*

## Bishop Anderson House Social Responsibility Statement for Racial Justice

As healers and caregivers we are committed to continue our work dismantling racism and discrimination wherever we find it and to foster and protect the dignity and worth of every human being.

Eliminating white supremacy is imperative to our charter of advancing healing of the whole person. To that end, we are calling for four things:

First, we call on elected officials and political parties to formally disavow white supremacists and nationalist groups. Their rhetoric contributes to racial battle fatigue and Continuous Traumatic Stress Disorder which affects the health and healing of the whole person.

Second, to combat the underlying disease of healthcare disparities in black and brown communities and create access to quality health care for the uninsured or underinsured, we call for the reinstatement of every provision of the Affordable Healthcare Act that has been repealed.

Third, we call for continuing education related to unconscious bias to support equal treatment of black and brown people who seek healthcare regardless of their ability to pay. There is continued work needed to ensure persons presenting with the same symptoms, receive equal treatment.

Finally, we call on every hospital to staff one community-based chaplain to serve in nearby underserved communities. These chaplains would facilitate relationship and community building through the provision of spiritual, emotional, physical and social support to families, business, corporations, schools and groups in those communities on behalf of and fully funded by the institution.

Until healthcare providers unite in our efforts and take direct responsibility in dismantling healthcare disparities and our own unconscious biases these injustices will never end.

**Unanimously approved by  
Board of Trustees, September 8, 2020**





# MATTER

## When Hope Begins To Hurt

### An Open Letter to the Friends of Bishop Anderson House

By Rev. Ebony D. Only

Have you ever hoped for something so deeply that you did everything in your power to make it a reality? You planned, you prayed, you positioned yourself to be in the right places and around the right people. You took the necessary steps; you followed the process and all the rules and shared your hopes and dreams with those you were certain could help. Yet after all you had done and all that you invested, you found yourself coming up empty handed again. You had hopes for the job and after four rounds of interviews that you thought went well, they passed on you. You had a string of awful dates and failed relationships and began to think you would never find your true love. You repeatedly shared with your partner your desires for them and your relationship and even after they promised to make improvements or changes, they did not. It left you feeling hopeless and hurt.

Now imagine experiencing this hopelessness not just time after time, but generation after generation. Imagine having confidence that this time will be different and it was not. Imagine expecting this time you would be seen and heard and you were not. Imagine believing surely this time someone will be held accountable and after years of waiting, they were not. Imagine thinking this time you will be believed, this time you will be affirmed and you were not. Imagine anticipating this time you will be seen as a whole person with equal access and equal rights, but time after time, generation after generation you are proven wrong by word and deed. This is what it is like for a Black person living in America today and that is why until #BlackLivesMatter in word and deed, All Lives can't Matter.

The Black community has endured generational trauma for over 400 years and not only have these traumas gone unaddressed, they often are not acknowledged. As a healer and caregiver, it is my duty to acknowledge the trauma and identify ways in which I can influence and bring about change. When I considered whether there was an opportunity to do just that in the context of my service to Bishop Anderson House, I recalled Bishop Anderson's vision that "the church be a transformer of society, an agent of change and healing in a culture where the institutions of humanity fall short of our dreams for a better world."

Alumni, donors and friends, now is the time! We were called for such a time as this to be transformers and agents of change and healing in communities that are crying out for transformation and restoration. We are called as healers and caregivers to unite in dismantling disparities and mitigating unconscious biases in healthcare. While I cannot define for you in your individual contexts how you might influence change or what specific actions you can take, I pray this heartfelt note will encourage you to take some time to reflect and to consider how you can be the change needed and how you can make an impact so that All Lives can indeed Matter!

I pray that you will join us in living out the Social Responsibility Statement for Racial Justice adopted by the Board of Trustees of Bishop Anderson House. My prayer is that you are registered and will vote in the upcoming election. My prayer is that you will take the census and be counted, but most of all my prayer is that you will use your voice to call out injustice whenever and wherever you see it.



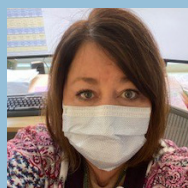
# REFLECTIONS

## *from the Board of Trustees*



*Linda  
McMillan*

We cannot end systemic racism by pushing a button or flipping a switch, we have to dismantle the broken systems and build the change that we want to see. The time is now.



*Patty  
Nedved*

My heart aches due to the amount of pain people of color continue to experience in the year 2020. We have to come together, and work together for justice and equity. Destruction and violence are not the answer. We need to feel true empathy and recognize our own unconscious biases... we need to face them before we can heal, and before we can truly make lasting changes. This year has been a real struggle for so many reasons, but I know we can come out of this a stronger, more accepting, more unified people...a people that recognize our own faults and fragilities so we can make true lasting change. A people that recognize that those who make poor choices do not implicate an entire race, profession, religion, political party or gender. Times are tough, but I believe not insurmountable...we can do this!



*Jamie  
Pruett*

When I reflect on the book *White Fragility*, what struck me is that I struggled through it. At least initially. I was not expecting that. Reading the words and processing the message(s), I was challenged not to take things personally and become defensive as a white person. That was the epiphany for me. It became clear that this piece is not about a personal affront to white people, but rather an unflinching work that addresses uncomfortable parts of our heritage and culture that have created a difficult and sometimes tragic state of affairs. Raising awareness among the white community of the need for systemic change will help us collectively reach our goals and unwind those policies and practices that are divisive. We all have a journey ahead of us.



*Daryce Hoff Nolan*

I am so grateful to God for the opportunity, to not only serve with the members of the board of Bishop Anderson House, but also I am grateful for being held accountable for my complicity in systemic racism. I am so glad that we spent our board retreat working together to try to understand how racial inequality has injured all of us. Our country has been tainted by racism since its inception, and it is imperative that all of us must look at every aspect of our own lives and begin to make a whole-hearted effort to change. This change has to include our words as well as our actions; within, as well as outside our own families, our neighborhoods, schools and places of worship. We all must speak up and continue learning to stand with ALL our brothers and sisters. May God bless our continuing efforts to hear the experiences of our Brown and Black communities and all of those who have suffered under the hand of white supremacy. This is hard work that **MUST** be started now, by all of us and shown by our bold actions, igniting strong actions.





Rev. Bob  
Wyatt

I am chair of the education committee, which is reviewing our Spiritual Visitor Training Program. We have enlarged our mission to consider additional modules dealing with racism and prejudice and new tracks appropriate to people of various religious, racial, and cultural backgrounds. We applaud the leadership of Bishop Anderson House for seeking a grant to fund a Latinx track, and we recommend a search for funding for other emphases. We are convinced that SVT can be of particular importance for less-affluent congregations, which may not be able to afford full-time staff. Our committee is diverse, including Rabbi Yaacov Dvorin, Bishop Anderson House Registrar Kim Lessner, Deacon Daryce Hoff Nolan, Chaplain Micheal Smith, and Deacon Sue Youngblood.



By Greg Holden

For most of the time I have been working as a chaplain at Stroger Hospital of Cook County, its predecessor, the old Cook County Hospital, has been under renovation. The recent reopening of the façade of this building as a hotel gives all staff a chance to reflect on the past and how it remains embedded in the present even though times are changing and change is accelerating.

The photo shows the floor of the hotel lobby. It is the original floor of the old County Hospital. I think of the scores of disadvantaged people of all nationalities and backgrounds who walked across that floor, seeking help, seeking care, and seeking respect for what they have gone through. These, of course, are basic human rights that our patients did not always receive in the society outside the hospital. And that legacy of injustice is embedded in the present just as the hospital floor is embedded in the expensive new hotel.

As one who seeks to minister to patients and families who are different than me in many ways, I must be conscious of past injustices they have faced. I must be aware that the legacy of inequality and persecution black people have endured is not only in the past but present in every interaction.

Reflecting on how I am responsible for everyone in my community no matter what our differences are is unsettling and uneasy. But in the act of reflection I hope to pierce the ego that sees me as more precious and more important than anyone else. Destroying this mistaken perception is what patients and families help me do every day. And for the chance to reflect and learn I am grateful.

**That which is has already  
been, And what is to be  
has already been; And  
God requires an account  
of what is past.**

*Ecclesiastes 3:15*



# REFLECTIONS



*Crystal Plummer*

Bishop Anderson House's board has set a goal of eradicating systemic racism. While we may not achieve that goal on behalf of our entire country, what we can promise is that every action we take as a board and as an organization will be with that goal in mind.







John  
Schumacher

I would not have picked up *White Fragility* on my own initiative but confused and distressed by the murders of Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd, the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, and the many other current reflections of racial sickness within our country, I was eager to read – to do something – when the Bishop Anderson House board chose to read and discuss *White Fragility* as the focus of its annual retreat. I ordered the book the day following our decision. I read it and saw myself mirrored in DiAngelo's description of white fragility behavior.

The facilitated board discussion was slow with times of silence. Talking about race in an inter-racial group is awkward for white folks. However, I deeply appreciate being challenged to read the book and to be a part of the process which will continue beyond the board retreat. I have gained insight into myself and how I function in a racially-defined society. I see the need to grow. I also appreciate working with this board. While the self-reflective conversation will of necessity continue, the board discussion will also include consideration of the steps we can take as an agency to address racial injustice in our ministry context. Going forward we will not be the people we were or the board we have been because of the impact of DiAngelo's work.

**"If the society today allows wrongs to go  
unchallenged, the impression is created that those  
wrongs have the approval of the majority."**

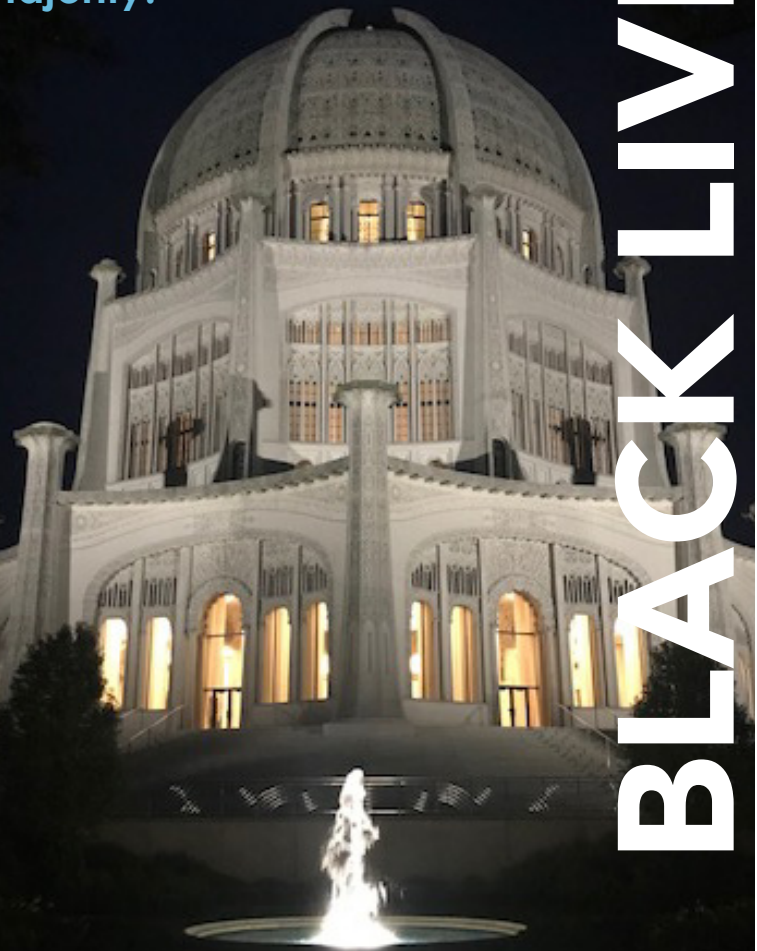
*-Barbara Jordan*

By Nancy Flowers

Jacob Blake, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Atatiana Jefferson, Aura Rosser, Botham Jean, Philando Castille...too many innocent Black people killed by individuals sworn to serve and protect them from harm.

On Sunday my home community, Evanston, held a vigil in honor of Jacob Blake, a son of Evanston. The speakers—clergy from Evanston's faith communities as well as Evanston's police chief and it's mayor-spoke about justice, about the importance of standing up against racism, the need to reform policing, and to make our actions and our votes count. They spoke to the parents that have lost children, to the families that are broken. They spoke to those of us that have never been shot at or mistreated by police but who are outraged that others are. They prayed for healing as we wept for our brothers and sisters who have been killed.

We must remain outraged. We must demand justice for those that have died, as well as for those who live and work and raise families in our communities. This must be part of our personal mission, as well as that of Bishop Anderson House.



**MATTER**  
**BLACK LIVES**

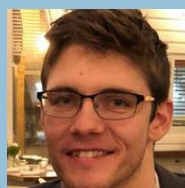
# REFLECTIONS

## *The Friends of the House Reflect on James Baldwin's works*



*Lauren Brownridge*

A reflection I have from our conversation is when murders happen like those of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and so many others, sometimes we treat it as a moment. This time, in the time of the pandemic and the response to George Floyd's murder, this is now turning into a movement. An international movement. More conversations are happening between friends, families, and even in workplaces about the importance of the movement, Black Lives Matter. Also, the discussion of not racist vs. anti-racism is more prevalent now than it was in the past. Everyone, no matter their race, ethnicity, nationality, or background, are taking actions against racism and white supremacy. It's no longer enough to not be racist.



*Justin Perkins*

Baldwin's "My Dungeon Shook: Letter to My Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of Emancipation" reminded us of the wounds that racism implants on the human spirit. Through Baldwin's intimate and emotionally riveting view into the life of his nephew, we could make personal an otherwise complex reality of racial injustice that permeates our society, and thus we began to examine the ways we uphold privilege in an attempt to hide ourselves from racism's everyday reality. Brought into Baldwin's nephew's narrative, we could only begin to imagine how different life must be in the United States because of the simple fact that one is born with a different color of skin.

The **Friends of the House** are like-minded young professionals who resonate with our mission of providing spiritual care to all. The group gathers for social and service activities and provides fresh insight and expertise to our staff and trustees.







Martha  
Proctor  
Gano

Having recently participated with the Bishop Anderson House board in our discussion of the book "White Fragility," I was encouraged by the honest reflections and the expressions of urgent need to transform our ideas into action regarding Black Lives Matter and the recent and not so recent episodes of violence and discord in our communities. Our discussion facilitator expressed his own thoughts on the book while allowing us the chance to expand on his insights. The diverse comments from our board members were considered thoughtfully and opinions were voiced honestly and openly in what was at times a difficult discussion. What remains is the harder work: How do we transform meaningful discussion into action? Our board is committed to addressing this question with concrete steps going forward.

Having been acquainted with Bishop Anderson House for the past five years via the Spiritual Care Visitor Training (SCVT) program and subsequently as a board member, I have been encouraged to see our board as well as the participants in the SCVT programs transitioning from a largely white, Episcopal presence to a more diverse group of races and religions. It's a start.



Lesli  
Vipond

Our discussion reminded me of the importance of critically reflecting on our own experiences and how they influence our perceptions of race and racism. I've also spent a lot of time thinking about how we can and should use an anti-racist lens in our work as Friends of the House.



Jon Wes

Currently, we are experiencing one of the most critical moments this country has ever seen, one haunted by a history of violence and injustice yet brimming with a future of possibility and hope. In the Friends of the House we believe Anti-racism and community investment is the key to that future. In beckoning forth a bolder vision of equity and justice, we strive to do the work in our communities, with our friends and family, and in ourselves to usher in this brighter future.

Though the work is heavy and the road long, I find particular strength in James Baldwin's words on systemic racism and white supremacy; "And if the word integration means anything, this is what it means: that we, with love, shall force our brothers to see themselves as they are, to cease fleeing from reality and begin to change it. For this is your home, my friend, do not be driven from it; great men have done great things here, and will again, and we can make America what America must become."

# BLACK LIVES MATTER

# REFLECTIONS

# BLACK LIVES MATTER



Marilyn Barnes

*A copulation of quotes by Morgan Harper Nichols*

It's okay that productivity looks different in this season.  
People change, seasons change and your perspective  
changes, too.

You are not alone.

You are free to slow down. You do not have to sort  
through everything right now.

Cling to joy, bold audacious joy, that looks for Light in  
everything.

Even when you're waiting.

You start to see where the light gets in.

You start to see how to make it through.

The same light you see in others is shining within you, too.  
So, here's a little reminder to be kind to yourself today.





## Rev. Rose Cicero Continues Legacy of Chaplaincy and Care at Stroger

By Rev. Rose Cicero

Dianna Chu was a Bishop Anderson House chaplain at Cook County/ John Stroger Hospital who brought comfort to many through her Teddy Bear Ministry. Dianna's passing was a great loss to patients and staff alike, but she left a legacy of love and care behind. I feel blessed to be able to continue Dianna's compassionate work at Stroger Hospital. I look forward to working with staff in providing for the spiritual needs of women, children and their families, be it with a Teddy Bear, a kind word, a listening heart, a prayer or blessing, a prayer shawl, a memory box, or a memorial service. With each visit, Dianna's spirit will be ever present.



Bishop Anderson House  
1653 W. Congress Parkway, JEL 64  
Chicago, IL 60612



## *Spiritual Care Visitor Training*

**1/30 10a-12p and 1:30p-3p; 2/6 10a-12p.**

The events of the past 6 months have reinforced and reminded us of the value of caring—caring for ourselves, for loved ones, for all those who are hurting. In this era of Zoom meetings and virtual interaction, meaningful connection is more vital than ever, and Spiritual Care Visitor Training (SCVT) equips your sympathetic heart with skills to more effectively care for those who may need a listening ear.

Our next SCVT session will be offered in January of 2021. Participants gather first, by Zoom, for three mandatory “retreat” sessions, which includes a time of spiritual reflection, followed by an exploration of active listening, and providing spiritual care for those who are dying. After the virtual “retreat,” each participant completes a set of 7 online, self-paced modules, recorded from live presentations by seasoned practitioners from a variety of disciplines. Monthly support calls are also provided.

Please go to [www.bishopandersonhouse.org](http://www.bishopandersonhouse.org) for more detail or you may contact Kim Lessner at [Kim\\_Lessner@Rush.edu](mailto:Kim_Lessner@Rush.edu) or 312-563-4825 to answer any questions.

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a link to complete your  
donation.

We send many thanks  
to all of you who have  
continued to financially  
support Bishop Anderson  
House during this  
tumultuous year. We can  
care for others because  
you have cared for us.