



Bishop Anderson House

Newsletter • June 2022

A Moment to Refresh

By The Rev. Tommy Rogers

I don't know about you, but with this pandemic continuing for over two years I'm finding a deep tiredness that I need to attend to. Before the pandemic began, at the January 2020 annual meeting, the Board of Trustees amended our personnel manual to include the gift of a sabbatical for staff who have worked at Bishop Anderson House for seven years. This summer will mark my seventh anniversary as Executive Director.

The thing that has helped me most during the pandemic has been spending time in nature. Jason and I have always had visiting all the national parks on our bucket list – something we imagined doing in retirement when it was harder to travel internationally – but instead we have moved this up. In 2020 and 2021 we visited Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone, Badlands, Everglades, Grand Canyon, Arches, Capitol Reef, Zion, and Bryce Canyon. When not able to travel, we have found ourselves enjoying the Chicago Botanic Garden, Skokie Lagoons, and Harms Woods of the Cook County Forest Preserves.

A good friend of mine who is an ACPE Certified Educator was sharing that he and his wife have been doing the same thing. He referred me to an article on forest bathing. The aim of forest bathing is to slow down and become immersed in the natural environment. To tune in to the smells, textures, tastes and sights of the forest. To take in our surroundings by using all our senses. There's even a growing body of evidence that the practice can help boost immunity and mood and help reduce stress. (Aubrey, 2017)

One of my favorite things to do when I am forest bathing in the Harms Woods is to watch the chipmunks play, to pause and look carefully for deer deep in the woods, and to take a few breaths, noticing how different it smells in the autumn with the leaves on the ground versus the summer. This has been the most restorative practice I have found to manage my stress and anxiety and to improve my mood when I need a break.

I depart Bishop Anderson House on Saturday, May 28 and will return on Tuesday, September 6, 2022. I plan to engage in a lot of forest bathing at Saguaro, Sequoia & Kings Canyon, Yosemite, Redwood, Crater Lake, Mount Rainer, Olympic, Glacier, & Acadia National Parks. As a friend of mine who is also taking a sabbatical this summer put it – enjoying God's Cathedrals.

I hope you get some time for deep rest and refreshment this summer, whether that is taking a weekend trip away to someplace new and exciting; going to one of the beaches along Lake Michigan; or traveling abroad after taking a pause during COVID.

I look forward to seeing what changes in me and Bishop Anderson House during my time away and what we begin to accomplish Fall 2022.



Touching Moments

By The Rev. Dr. Ebony D. Only

Who would think that a piece of material filled with stuffing could bring comfort? Well I guess those of us privileged enough to lay our heads on a comfortable pillow at night might know a little something about that, but this short missive isn't about a pillow. It is about a teddy bear. Yes a teddy bear, but please keep reading.

For expectant families, labor and delivery tends to be a place of peace and joy, but for more than 21,000 families a year that isn't the case. Though infant mortality rates are at an all-time low that is of no comfort to those parents and siblings met with the shock of still birth or the death of an infant. Dr. Kim Sangster, Bereavement Support and Education

Coordinator at RUSH University Medical Center offers teddy bears supplied by Bishop Anderson House as part of her bereavement support to families, ensuring they do not leave the hospital empty-handed.

Dr. Sangster says, "I've given bears to moms who have talked about the emptiness they feel in their belly. I talk with about how that emptiness will not be filled with drugs, alcohol, or food but placing a weighted object or pressing soft object and leaning into the emptiness can sometimes help move it out. Then I tell them about the teddy bears from Bishop Anderson House and how it isn't a replacement in any way for their baby but something they can hold in their arms and hold to their belly to help move the empty sensation, weep, and scream, whatever they need. Holding helps."

Holding does help. Holding space with the ones who are facing such a tremendous loss and giving them something to hold on to, can sometimes be the very thing that helps them hold on to hope. These teddy bears can sometimes be a conduit to a source of hope seemingly lost.

Dr. Sangster told us of another time the teddy bears offered comfort to the siblings of a patient in the NICU. There a 3 year old and a 14 year old came to meet their brother before he was removed from the vent. Kim took a basket of teddy bears in and placed them in the room. The 3 year old was delighted and she also chose one for her baby brother. When Kim went back into the room, she asked the 14 year old if she would like one. The teenager was tentative and maybe even a little embarrassed, but she eventually said, "I'd really like the dog". Kim invited her to take it and the young lady smiled broadly upon receiving the teddy bear.

At the intersection of medical and spiritual care, even in the midst of COVID we can offer comfort through touch. While not necessarily the physical touch we have come to know and appreciate as Chaplains, the physical touch of this plush teddy bear can mean so much to families struggling with the loss of a child or sibling. If you would like to learn more about our Teddy Bear Ministry, please contact us here at Bishop Anderson House.

Be Well!



Bishop Anderson House extends it's
heartfelt gratitude to all who supported our
2022 Healing One, Healing the World Spring Benefit.

Thanks to your generosity, as of May 4, 2022,
we raised a total of

\$83,845!

Judy Adams

Melanie Allison-Dean

Rev. Mary Altenbaumer

Anonymous

David & Suzanne Arch

Rev. Dr. Carolyn Baldwin

Rev. Marilyn & Peter Barnes

Tom & Diane Barounis

Rev. Kathie Bender Schwich &
Rev. Daniel Schwich

Anne Bent

Patty Bergh

Carol Berman

Jen Boyle-Tucker & Patrick Tucker

Sharon Bullion

William & Maureen Burke

Nancy Carney

Tom & Terry Cera

Church of The Holy Family,
Park Forest

Church of The Holy Spirit,
Lake Forest

The Rev. Rose Cicero & Donita Ries

The Rev. Canon Paula Clark

Michael Cleavenger

Richard & Elizabeth Cox

Donna Cullar

Toni Daniels & The Rev. Tim Murray

Rev. Rhonda Daniels

Emil DeJulio & Sharon Spellman

Dan Dorman

Rabbi Dr. Yaacov & Robin Dvorin

The Very Rev. M. E. & Katie Eccles

Greg Ellison

Martha & Ami ElShareif

Mike & Janis Ennis

Stephen Erickson

First Immanuel Lutheran Church,
Chicago

George & Judy Fitchett

Suzanne Fleer

Nancy Flowers & Terry McCabe

Geoff & Virginia Frankenthal

Andy & Mary Frankenthal

Chrissy Frankenthal

Kathi Frelk

Kyle & Katherine Galas

The Rev. Kevin Goodman &
Anton Pulung

Greater Reach Consulting,
Barry Benson

Jim & Susan Gullickson

Sal & Karin Gutierrez

The Rev. Lisa Hackney-James

Edward & Valerie Hatcher

The Rev. Judy Heinrich

Larry Hightower

Dawn Hines, Hines State Farm Inc.

Jim Hironimus

The Rev. Daryce Hoff Nolan

Rev. Christy Howard-Steele &
Sam Steele

Bob Hoyler

Renitta Jacobs

John Jorgenson & Lyle Bouxsein

Dr. Kimberly Joseph

Michael & Deb Kelliher

Patricia Kincaid



Healing **ONE** Healing the **WORLD**

AN EVENT TO BENEFIT BISHOP ANDERSON HOUSE

Sunday, May 1, 2022

Kathleen Kirby

Jane Kramer & Paul Giblin

Dick & Jackie Kraus

Bonnielynn Kreiser

Pat & Karren Lee

Jim & Susanne Lenz

Kim Lessner

Randy & Kay Lewis

Ric & Ellen Lindeen

kClare & Louisa McKellaston

Steve & Linda McMillan

Susan McMillan & Kit Roberts

Sharon Meltzer

Sr. Patricia Murphy

James & Suzanne Neaylon

The Rev. Sue Nebel

Bob & Sue O'Meara

Rev. Dr. Ebony Only

Rob & Adele Osmond

The Rev. Jesse & Katy Perkins

Bruce & Crystal Plummer

Nathaniel & Yvette Powell

Powellfull Pieces

Dr. Martha Proctor Gano &
Rick Gano

John & Diana Raitt

Dorothy Ramm

Kathy Sawyer Randolph

Joe & Beverly Raudabaugh

Harold Rees & Emily Culbertson

The Rev. Carol Reese &
Jeanne Wirpsa

The Rev. Jay & Paula Risk

The Rev. Tommy Rogers &
Jason Sutton

Betty Rogers

Rush University, Department of
Religion, Health & Human Values

Rick & Ann Ryba

The Rev. John Schumacher &
Judy MacPherson Schumacher

Nancy Seth

Christine Shillestad

Mike Sirvinskis

Rev. Dr. Micheal Smith

St. Mary's Episcopal Church,
Park Ridge

St. Michael's Episcopal Church,
Barrington

Mary Stark

Dr. Anna Stefaniak & Denise Butera

Mary Stewart

Dr. Russell & Natalia Strong

Jim & Judy Tammi

Rev. Jasmin & Michael Taylor

The Rev. Clayton Thomason &
Mary Hope Griffin

Dr. Mary Kay Tobin &
Peter Thompson

John & Maribeth Totten

The Rev. Ron & Debby Valentine

Dave & Karen Van Maldegiam

Danny & Janette Warner

Rev. David Watkins III

Thomas & Joan Weber

Jon Wes

Nike Whitcomb

The Rev. Bob Wyatt & Terri Lackey

A Moment Can Make A Day

By The Rev. Dr. Micheal A. Smith

“Beauty is not in the face; beauty is a light in the heart.”

Kahlil Gibran

It is not often that amid a pending death that a family and I gathered around a hospital bed find an occasion to laugh or smile. I was paged to the medical intensive care unit to support a large family. I entered the room as the medical team was providing a compassionate explanation of the care that their mother was receiving to make her comfortable during the expected last hours of her life. As the doctor spoke my attention was drawn to one daughter who lovingly rubbed her mother's feet and another daughter who softly hummed a familiar church song as she held her mother's hand.

After the medical team departed, I introduced myself as the unit chaplain and offered that I was present in response to their request for spiritual care and support. The eldest daughter introduced all her siblings and other family members who were present at the bedside and outside the room. I acknowledged how difficult this moment must be for them and invited one or two of the daughters to share a memory of their mother. The diverse remembrances manifested both tears and laughter in the room.

Throughout the sharing one daughter continued to softly hum a song. I commented on the beauty of her voice and asked the family if a song would be appreciated. They responded with an overwhelming YES and I was asked to offer a selection. With a serious laugh I replied that I was not personally offering to provide what would amount to a joyful “noise” unto

the Lord, but that I would play a YouTube video of the song I first recognized when I entered the room. As the song played, many family members joined in the refrain of the song or the lyrics that each knew and for many minutes the sound of praise filled the room. Other family members reentered the room as the music was playing and I then offered a prayer for their mother.

Soon afterwards, their mother quietly passed. I remained with the family after the pronouncement of death and until the last three daughters were ready to leave. At that moment, the daughter who was humming when I entered the room thanked me for being there with her family. And then to my surprise, she commented on how handsome I was. Considering that we all were wearing masks in the room, I could only smile and say thank you. Her sister, as only a sibling could, proclaimed, “How would you know what he looks like?” It was only in that moment that I realized that she was blind. I had been standing behind her during the entire spiritual care encounter, so had not noted it before.

Recognizing the spirit of those kind words spoken on my behalf, I turned to the questioning sister and pulled down my mask and boldly asked, “Was your sister correct?” I believe that she was equally surprised at to my action as she was her sister's words and said, “Yes, she was.” We all laughed and her sister responded, “We see with more than our eyes.” As a result of that moment, my smile remained with me for the rest of the day.





A Moment in Time

By The Rev. Rose Cicero

As I knock on a patient door before entering, I never know who will be allowing me in. There may be a woman who is close to giving birth or a mother holding her newborn close. I may encounter a woman filled with anxiety and fear about her future and another who is relieved that all has gone well and her child is safe beside her and resting peacefully.

Other visits might find me with a woman who has given birth, but her newborn is receiving care in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). This mother speaks of her fear for the health of her baby, praying that her child will survive. She dreads having to leave the hospital without her baby, and finds comfort in knowing I will visit NICU to pray for her newborn. I see this mother again after she is discharged when she returns to visit her baby in NICU. We rejoice together on the day her son is healthy enough to go home.

I never know who will be behind that door when I knock. When I enter a room, I might find an incarcerated pregnant woman who is flanked by officers, or a pregnant woman recently released from prison and homeless. Responding to my knock with a "Come in" might be one of the drug-addicted women who are in recovery and trying to turn their lives around for their unborn children. There may be a woman with mental illness who has been so traumatized by life that she can barely answer a simple question, yet she desires to care for her child. There may be women

who are heartbroken after being advised to abort because of fetal deformities, and those whose babies die for no apparent reason. Some are angry at a God who would allow such things to happen. After all, "we did all the right things."

I have been invited into rooms where I have witnessed tremendous faith, like that of a woman who had her ninth miscarriage/loss and was told it was too dangerous for her to try again for her much longed-for child. The women come to the Obstetrics & Gynecology and Labor & Delivery units of John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County are from a wide range of varied backgrounds. Most keep their children while some agonize with the decision to give them up for the chance of a better life.

Whoever allows me into their room, we spend a slice of time together, a precious moment in time, no more. I provide compassionate, active listening and support, sometimes a bible, a prayer square, a prayer shawl or a prayer. Sometimes I simply offer a hope. Our paths meet in that moment, at that time, in that space, and then the moment is gone. Isn't that all we really have with each other, moments? I thank you for your generosity and support which allows these sacred moments in which the presence of God has the ability to create a holy connection that has the potential to change us all.

Enrich Your Spiritual Care Skills

We invite you to become a part of the Bishop Anderson House Spiritual Care Visitor Training Program!

Participants will gather for an innovative retreat” which will include a time of spiritual reflection, followed by workshops that will explore how to be an “active listener” and the particular concerns of providing spiritual care with those who are dying.

The program continues as each participant is offered a set of 7 online modules to take at his or her own pace. The online modules are recorded, live presentations by seasoned practitioners from a variety of disciplines.

An integral part of the program is providing 2 hours per week of spiritual care in a selfselected site (a congregation, nursing home, or hospital are a few options). Participants are required to be supervised by their faith community leader or a professional in the field.

To facilitate further learning and growth, a monthly online-chat will be offered for participants to process the modules and to ask questions that may arise from spiritual care visits. A background check must be successfully completed prior to acceptance into the training program.

Spiritual Care Visitor Training Program

Our next session is scheduled to start on September 24, 2022

You are encouraged to complete an application online and provide a non-refundable application fee. We will contact you shortly after it is reviewed. We appreciate your interest in the Spiritual Care Visitor Training Program.

For more information and questions, contact Kim Lessner at 312-563-3825 or kim_lessner@rush.edu