



# UPDATE

July 2016

## Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church

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July is a funny time in Chicago. It's finally really summer, but it's *too* summer. It's hot, it's sticky, people just want to get out of town, and church becomes something of a passing thought in the wake of So Much to Do before we descend back into what feels like our natural state (cold cold winters).

Despite this ease of forgetting, I encourage you to take an hour a week to be with your church community. In the midst of so much frenetic activity, I find it is a perfect time to hit the pause button and re-center yourself among fellow worshippers at Lincoln Park. We're a small congregation, but we are the best example of what a small congregation can be. We're there for each other, we care about each other, and we're happy to see each other (why do you think passing the peace takes so long?).

So while summer has so

many demands on our time, it's important to remember the community that will be there for us year-round, making it to that Fullerton Avenue in sometimes near-impossible weather, and even if you're gone all summer long, we'll be there to happily welcome you back when you return.

See you Sunday,  
Alice Burton

## UPDATE FOR JULY, 2016

Dear Friends,

We have begun our evening worship services that will continue through the summer. In case you haven't heard yet, the Worship Team decided to move worship from 10:30 am to 5:00 pm all summer long. I am really excited about this change and hope that we will provide an opportunity for many people to come to worship on Sunday evening! It's also an opportunity for us to attend other morning worship services and see what else is going on in the church world.

In addition to changing the time, we have moved worship from the sanctuary to the Dreyer Room which is a more intimate setting. We often experience lower numbers of people in worship during the summer and rather than have that feel discouraging, we decided to make the most of it and actually create worship experiences that would be more intimate. What we are hoping for this summer is to design worship experiences rather than just worship services. I hope you will make it a point to join in these worship experiences as much as you are able to this summer!

July 3 - Bruce Hunt is creating a liturgy around a love (agape) feast. Everyone will be seated around the table and the feast will be woven throughout.

July 10 - Special Guest (and friend of mine), M Barclay will be here with us! Here is M's bio: M Barclay serves as Director of Communications at Reconciling Ministries Network of the United Methodist Denomination where they work to mobilize United Methodists for LGBTQ justice and inclusion. M is pursuing deacon's orders in The United Methodist Church and is a graduate of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. With a passion for the intersections of faith and society, they have served in ministry as a hospital chaplain, youth director, justice associate, and faith coordinator for reproductive justice in Texas.

July 17 - Gerri Mead will be leading us in a creative liturgy that is sung. You will have the opportunity to sing some familiar songs and perhaps learn a couple of new ones. This service will invite us to get out of our heads and into our bodies and hearts. Music moves us in ways that mere speech does not!

July 24 - Our worship leaders will be from DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection)! They have prepared the liturgy for the service and then we will invite youth from the Montclair Presbyterian Church Youth Group (where I served before I came to Chicago) to share their experiences from the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. The MPC group is going to spend

the night at LPPC on Saturday, July 23, in between Triennium and their week at DOOR. Immediately after worship on July 24, we will feed them all and then send them on their way to immerse in our City.

July 31 - I will be leading this meditative service and providing some instruction and experience for those who want to walk an indoor labyrinth which we will have set up. This service will be in the style of Taize and will incorporate other meditative experiences as well. Following this service, we will have a barbecue on the front lawn and a potluck dinner. We will provide the meat and everyone else can bring side dishes. We were not able to schedule this with the LPCS, so we will be doing this on our own.

Stay tuned for the line-up in August.

### **My First Pride Parade** Adrienne Williams

Trying to hide tears is not how I thought I would spend parts of my first pride parade. The Pride Parade has become a celebration - a big party for how far we've come, while also acknowledging how far we have left to go. I have marched for other causes, and in each of those the mood was somber, sad, outraged, or indignant. This would be my first march where the oppressed are expressing joy. I was excited and giddy.



I was warned at the very beginning, and at several times throughout, that

there would be protestors towards the end of the parade route. But, I was still excited. When we got there, there was so much energy, so much to see, and so many supportive people. The members of this church welcomed me and made me feel immediately comfortable.

While I thought participating in the parade would be fun, I especially felt marching was important. We needed to deliver a message - to make people feel welcome and loved. But, I was concerned that we would be the boring part of the parade. Everything was so flashy: there were people all around dressed in vibrant outfits; there were drag queens; there was a group of men wearing short-shorts and cowboy hats doing beautifully choreographed dances; there was a float - directly in front of us - with 4 men in speedos, a topless woman in pasties, a drag queen, and a confetti cannon. So much of this event is a spectacle. We were quietly about a message. I was afraid it wouldn't be heard.

I was wrong.

As the parade started, we walked and I started feeling quiet and inactive. I didn't have a collar, or a partner, or a sign to hold to send a message. I was just walking and present. That was probably enough, but I decided to go to the sides to interact with people. I started giving people high-fives and telling people "Happy Pride!!!" People responded and it felt great! We were interacting. They were having fun. I felt more active - more like giving a personal invitation to our church, instead of a distant notice that they wouldn't be kicked out if they showed up.

As I walked down a row, giving high-five after high-five, someone gripped my hand and didn't let go, interrupting my party flow. They pulled me back in front of them, so I couldn't keep walking forward. I expected something silly - some youth showing off to their friends that they grabbed one of the people in the parade. Instead, they turned me to face them, so I had to look them in the eyes. They were not smiling. They looked sad. And then, in a low voice, they said, "Thank you."

I ran back to the center of the marchers. There, I could hide a little. I felt my face contorting, and the burning behind my eyes. I should not be crying in the middle of a parade. I tried to pull my face back into the shape it was supposed to be in while marching in a parade - happy, energetic.

I returned to giving high fives, yelling "Woo!", and saying "Happy Pride!!" Then, when I high-fived a short, older woman, she took my hand and pulled me in. She hugged me, kissed me on both cheeks, and tearfully whispered, "Thank you" in my ear.

I ran back to the center of the marchers.

It kept happening. "Thank you!" "Thank you!" "What church do you go to?" "Presbyterians rock!" "Thank you!" I got hundreds of high-fives, lots of hugs, many cheek kisses, and sparkles poured all over me.

As we neared the end of the parade, I saw and heard the protesters. I realized that even with all the LGBTQ individuals there, we were the people in this parade that they hated the most. We were the ones who spread the dangerous ideas of doubt and non-literal interpretation of the Bible and contextual reading. We spread the idea that the Higher Power might be ok with this. I imagined all the protesters and the marchers were yelling at each other in their minds, "And you call yourself a Christian?!" I was determined to not let this get to me, but was already starting to feel angry about them adding their persecution to this specific day. I went back to the high-fives. To the thank you's.

The Parade comes from a place of hurt, and I expected people there to have been hurt, and to be hurting somewhere on the inside. But I thought that the hurt would be pushed down since there was happiness and entertainment and hope all around. I had not been prepared to actually feel people's pain in that moment. However, in the midst of celebration, of people whooping and smiling and dancing, there were so many people hurting there. Not hurting in general, but hurting right then, right there, during the parade.

And this church helped give them something to be thankful for.

## **Clerk's Clippings: Vision and Reality Check, Compassion and Challenges**

At our Session meeting on Tuesday, June 28, Claudia Gladstone offered the opening reflection and prayer. Here are her thoughts and her prayer:

*Today I'm going to share about a few things that have happened in the past month. I think that God knows how much I don't like leading these things, but knows my passion for travel and knows I can always share that when I return. So I'm going to share a few nuggets from my travels, and some other thoughts.*

- *I had an eye-opening experience earlier this month when I attended my Missouri home church where I was baptized. My former pastor there said there were sinners out there who were allowing LGBT people to preach. I was stunned, and I thought about my own church, LPPC, and how different things were there.*

- *Then while traveling in Europe, I got my bag checked before going into the American Protestant Church in Paris, but that didn't happen at any of the cathedrals we visited.*
- *We were also overseas when the Orlando shootings happened. I can't understand why this keeps happening!*
- *We visited the Anne Frank house in Amsterdam. I tried to put myself into her shoes, and I just couldn't understand how people could be treated this way.*
- *Being in the Pride Parade with my church was a really moving experience.*

*So what does all this have to do with church, and our church? This new Compassion Project that we are embarking on seems to be very related. We have already been advocates in the areas of gun violence, Black Lives Matter and LGBTQ issues. Now we have an opportunity to really reach others, because everyone is in need of some compassion and understanding. I am also thinking of writing my former pastor about what he said, and about my experience here.*

*Here is a quote about compassion: "Compassion without action is just an emotion."*



*The following prayer of compassion is from Mother Teresa. Let us pray. "Lord, open our eyes that we may see you in our brothers and sisters. Lord, open our ears that we may hear the cries of the hungry, the cold, the frightened, the oppressed."*

*Lord, open our hearts that we may love each other as you love us.  
Renew us in your spirit. Lord, free us and make us one. Amen.*

After Claudia's reflections and prayer, we looked back at the previous month, and lifted up what had gone well, not so well, and what we had learned. It was very good to get to the Pride Parade in time to participate in the Chicago Coalition of Welcoming Churches' brief worship and communion. Sharing communion was especially meaningful. Immediately following the worship, we participated in the parade-wide moment of silence in memory of the Orlando victims. The Parade itself was both celebratory and somber, given the events earlier in the month. The Saturday evening Pride service, with Barry Smith's presentation about the history of LPPC's involvement in the LGBTQ inclusion movement in our denomination, (especially the leadership and witness of David Sindt), was very powerful. Many thought that having the service in the Dreyer Room built a strong feeling of community, and we hope this will carry through all the summer worship services. Even though attendance will likely be low at worship during the summer, the smaller space should help worship be more intimate and personal. Elders appreciated Beth's recent sermons as especially moving. Beth noted that she had met with both the Space and Green team and the Creative team, and that both meetings were full of creative, helpful ideas. Others said they were quite heartened by the enthusiastic response from members when asked to serve on the Compassion Project teams. At that point in the discussion, we shared personal joys and concerns.

The focus topic for the June Session meeting was finances and our future. The Property and Finance and the Space and Green teams have both been having in depth conversations about where our church is financially, and what that means as we plan for the future. Now it was time to bring such honest conversation to the Session table. We discussed how important it is for the Session to be the leaders in both realism and vision for the future.

The work of the two teams (Creative and Space and Green) so far, and people's commitment to participation in the teams, is very encouraging. Our congregation, both historically and now, has energy for whatever we decide is important. Having structure and specific goals will help engender that energy going forward. Meanwhile, P&F's discussions about smart ways to cut costs, as well as the Space and Green team's developing ideas for restructuring the sanctuary to make it more intimate in the fall, also should help the congregation see how things are beginning to happen. And the Creative team has begun brainstorming about starting with small, but engaging projects very soon. They also agreed that any and all efforts will be evaluated first by how it reflects that we are a faith community. One of the gifts of this congregation has always been to blend justice with spiritual growth; they go together and shouldn't be separated.



While our conversation was at some times a bit intense, we are engaging in honest dialogue about the challenges as well as the excitement of our future together. That takes both realism and vision, and the Session is about both.

We were excited to learn that Deogsoo Kim is interested in being our Student Pastor for the 2016-2017 year. Many of you may have met Deogsoo already; he has been worshipping with us almost every Sunday for the last several weeks. Beth and Ben Ho interviewed him in early June, and were both pleased with his interest in us as well as with what he might bring to our congregation. One of the things he wants to do is to learn more about all of us, and to learn more about American culture. He would love to meet with everyone individually. We're suggesting that people invite him to their home for a meal, or if that's not convenient, to a restaurant or coffee shop for an informal time of getting acquainted. And summer is a good time for that, before he's involved in his fall studies at McCormick Theological Seminary. The Session voted enthusiastically to approve Deogsoo Kim as our Student Pastor.

Vision, realism, challenge and compassion: all these were important features of our June Session meeting. And as we move forward with the Compassion Project and into our future together, may we keep all four of these in balance, but always before us.

Gail Russell  
Clerk of Session

## Oh, the places we can go!

Who would you like to see our mission funds help in 2016?



If you could help a local charitable organization, who would it be? In the next few weeks, the Social Justice and Education team would like to hear from you as the team begins anew a grant program that began in 2014.

In 2013, what was then the Church and Society ministry team explained brilliantly how Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church (LPPC) uses a portion of pledges to support a variety of local, national and international mission-focused organizations.

The ministry team noted that the church allocates two-thirds of its Mission Giving dollars to the Presbyterian Church (USA) for mission world-wide. One-third of that budget (about \$3,000) was distributed at the discretion of the Church and Society ministry team.

Church and Society now goes by the name Social Justice and Education, but the ministry remains equally compelling and exciting, as the team set up a grant program in 2014 to help benefit local charitable organizations.

In previous years small grants have been awarded to organizations like ONE Northside, CAMFED, Bread for the World, Thresholds, Sarah's Circle, That All May Freely Serve and More Light Presbyterians, to name a few.

This team again invites you to share with us names of organizations you believe are deserving of support. The Social Justice and Education team is preparing to send invitations for nominated organizations to apply for LPPC's grant dollars. We'd like to have your input by late August. What we need is an organization name, address and contact person.

You can email your suggestions to Ronda Howell, [rjhowell45@aol.com](mailto:rjhowell45@aol.com), and those details will be shared with the full team.

We're excited to see where our mission dollars will go as we seek to be the hands and feet of Christ in a hurting world!

Your Social Justice and Education team: Gail Russell, Gale Morgan-Williams, Marianne Nesler, Peggy Long, Jen Seat, Andrew Carr, Robert Guenther, Ben Ho and Ronda Howell.

## Enough Is Enough



A National Day of Action on Gun Violence Prevention began June 29 on the Federal Plaza in the Loop. The “action” was to demand the U.S. House Speaker to bring two pieces of legislation up for a vote: one bill to strengthen background checks on gun purchasers and another bill to ban gun purchases by people who are on the terrorist watch list.

Although there was little advance publicity, several hundred people attended. An impressive parade of U.S. Representatives spoke: Steny Hoyer from MD, Robin Kelly, Mike Quigley, Danny Davis, Bill Foster, and Jan Schakowsky, followed by two Chicago mothers whose children had been killed by gun violence and by leaders of a number of anti-gun violence organizations. At Jan Schakowsky's suggestion, the crowd (except for a few with rebellious knees) participated in a spontaneous sit-in---right there on Federal Plaza.

The common themes throughout the speeches were "Enough is Enough," "Disarm Hate," "No Fly, No Buy," and "Common Sense Legislation." Father Pfleger urged those elected officials who are against gun control legislation to experience freedom this Fourth of July weekend --freedom from the fear and greed of the NRA. Representative Kelly asked the audience to keep the movement going.

We will keep you informed of any action items. Enough is Enough.

**--Marianne Nesler  
Social Justice Ministry Team**

## **LPPC Women's Book Group Summer & Sept. 2016**

"The Language of Flowers" by Vanessa Diffenbaugh, is the summer selection for the Women's Book Group meeting **Saturday, August 13** in the Lighthouse Lounge on the 14<sup>th</sup> floor of The Admiral at the Lake, 929 W. Foster Ave. All interested women are invited to join the discussion of this story about a young woman whose gift for flowers helps change her own life and the life of others.

There will be a social time with light refreshments beginning at 9:30 a.m. The book discussion which will start promptly at 10 a.m.

On **Saturday, Sept. 10**, "All the Light We Cannot See" by Anthony Doerr will be discussed at the same time and place. A National Book Award finalist, the novel is how the converging lives of a blind French girl and a young German intelligence officer in World War II illuminate the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.

All women are welcome!

**Sharon Stangenes**

## **July Birthdays**

<b>3</b>	<b>Megan Miskiewicz</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Seri Porter</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Wayne Russell</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Bonnie Humphrey</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>William Robert Baker (child)</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>Drew Wilkinson</b>
<b>25</b>	<b>Elizabeth Russell</b>