

## Flock Quarterly



*Good Shepherd's new magazine for parishioners by parishioners*

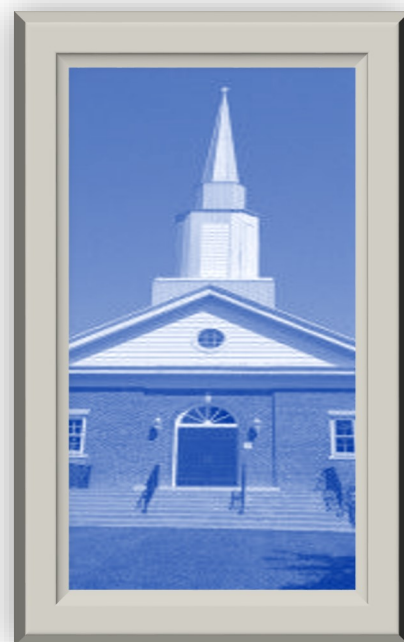
# O LORD

## WE GIVE YOU THANKS

- +For the variety of our skills and interests
- +For our different ways of thinking and moving and speaking
- +For common hardships and common hopes
- +For this family gathered here
- +For living together and eating together
- +For all our good times and our not-so-good times
- +For growing up and growing older
- +For wisdom deepened by experiencing
- +For rest and leisure
- +For the privilege of work
- +For time made precious by its passing
- +For all that has been
- +For all that will be

*We give you thanks, O Lord*

Author unknown. We have used this for over 30 years, from a Xerox copy Mom made at work as a church secretary. This year, more than ever, may we amend this blessing to include both those present at the table AND those who are with us in our hearts...  
*Laura Rosato*



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# INTRODUCING . . . FLOCK QUARTERLY

Good Shepherd's new magazine for parishioners by parishioners

*When to expect it:* Issues likely appearing in the third week of February, May, August, and November

*Types of material:* Essays; Humor; Biblical Reflections; Interviews with Parishioners;  
Original Photos & Artwork; Original Poetry & Prayers

Prepared by the staff of our monthly Good Shepherd Newsletter . . .  
Graphics Editor Laura Rosato and Content Editor Richard Reid

*Remember: You're never too young or too old to contribute . . . material from our children  
and teens as well from adults of all ages is always welcome*

## Guidelines for Contributors

Text submissions in Word or handwritten - try not to exceed 1,500 words

Please do not send any material in the PDF format

Submit original photos and original artwork in the .jpeg format if you are able

If original artwork is 8 1/2" by 11" or smaller, it may be submitted for scanning into .jpeg

### Issue Deadlines

February (last day of January)      May (last day of April)

August (last day of July)      November (last day of October)

Email content to Richard Reid ([writer2363@gmail.com](mailto:writer2363@gmail.com) or telephone (585-347-4839)

## *General themes for any issue to inspire your submissions*

Family; hobbies; your vocation; religion; the weather; people/things/places you remember; a great day;  
something/someone you're thankful for; current events (but let's avoid being overtly political)

## *Special issue themes that look ahead to the coming three months*

### February Issue Themes

Lent; Holy Week; Easter; spring; Valentine's Day

### May Issue Themes

Pentecost; Mother's Day; Father's Day; 4<sup>th</sup> of July; end-of-school; graduations; summer; vacations

### August Issue Themes

Pentecost; Labor Day; autumn; back-to-school; Halloween

### November Issue Themes

Advent; Thanksgiving; Christmas; the new year; the old year just ending; winter; Epiphany

*You are part of the Good Shepherd flock . . . so contribute to Flock Quarterly!*



# Interview

## KEISHA STOKES APPOINTED TO TWO PARISHES; TO BE ORDAINED A PRIEST ON NOVEMBER 21 AT 3PM

An interview with Rev. Keisha Stokes by Content Editor Richard Reid

*Editor's Note: Long-time readers of Good Shepherd's Newsletter have been following the pilgrim's progress of one of our own, Keisha Stokes, over the years. In the March 2013 issue, her election to the Vestry, at age 22, the youngest person to do so, was reported. News of her second vestry term appeared in March 2017. When she was in seminary, Keisha shared her feelings in the October 2017 issue as part of our series of Stewardship Reflections, "What Good Shepherd Means to Me." In February 2019, news of her Lenten Seminar series at Good Shepherd, a discussion of the book, Pilgrim Road, appeared. Most recently, in the June 2020 issue, we celebrated Keisha's ordination as a deacon in many photos and text recollections penned by family and friends and Keisha expressed her feelings in an open letter "To My Good Shepherd Family." Her ordination as priest on November 21<sup>st</sup> will be celebrated in the December Newsletter. Here, in an exclusive interview, we talk with her about her two appointments at Episcopal churches in the Rochester diocese and some of her challenges she faces at them.*

**RR:** Congratulations on your upcoming ordination and appointments at St. John's Episcopal Church in Canandaigua and at Zion Episcopal Church in Palmyra. It sounds like you're going to be very busy.

**KS:** Thank you, and yes, I already am, having started work on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Following my ordination to the diaconate on May 17<sup>th</sup>, Bishop Singh and I explored ways I could best be used in the diocese. I am excited about serving Zion and St. John's!

**RR:** How are you dividing your time between the two locations?

**KS:** I'm spending three-quarters of my weekly time at Zion in Palmyra where my title is "Pastoral Leader." Once I am ordained as a priest, my title there will be, "Priest-in-Charge." My first month has been rather busy getting to know people, working with the wardens and Vestry, and preaching. Wayne County had a surge in COVID-19 cases in mid-October so we moved back to Morning Prayer on Zoom. One of the advantages of Zoom is that our parishioners from other states or those who are not able to get out as easily are able to worship with us too.

**RR:** What is the Zion congregation like?

**KS:** Zion is a very tight-knit community of about 40 parishioners. We are very active in the Palmyra community and many of our members have been at Zion for many, many years and have a great pride and love for their parish. Meeting folks is challenging during a pandemic. Between in-person meetings and the telephone, I've made contact with quite a few of them already. Zion is very committed to Outreach which absolutely thrills me.

**RR:** What are they doing?

**KS:** In August 2018, a core group of Zion parishioners founded Grace House to serve the clothing and emergency needs of residents in Palmyra and the surrounding communities of Farmington, Macedon, Ontario, Ganada, Marion, Pultneyville, Walworth, and Williamson. Grace House has clothing for men, women, and children, in addition to household items. Due to the pandemic, it's has been more challenging finding ways to keep this ministry active. The Palmyra food pantry is in the basement of Zion and our parishioners volunteer there as well.

**RR:** Is this entirely being done by Zion church and its parishioner volunteers?

**KS:** A good chunk of it, yes, but they also secured a grant from Hope House in Webster – Grace House is largely modeled on them -- as well as contributions from other donors and volunteers from other local churches. Both of the directors of Grace House are members of Zion. We are very proud of what we are able to do for our community.

**RR:** What about the quarter of your weekly time at St. John's Church in Canandaigua?

**KS:** That parish has a full-time rector, The Rev. David Hefling, who's been there about ten years. The congregation is much larger, about 90 to 100 families. There are more younger families and a few teens. My role there largely involves working with their Youth programs, including Sunday School instruction, although, obviously, on Sundays I won't be there but in Palmyra. We plan to have a pulpit exchange about every six to eight weeks which I am very much looking forward to doing.

**RR:** Is there an active Outreach program at St. John's?

**KS:** Yes. There's the Gleaners Community Kitchen program which offers a bag lunch five days a week and grocery items on Tuesdays and Fridays. I think they've been doing it for about 40 years. St. John's also converted its Rectory into a day center for families who are in the Family Promise program in Ontario County. It functions much like RAIHN in Rochester which is also part of the Family Promise network. There's a lot more which I'm still discovering. With less time allocated for St. John's, I've met fewer people in the few weeks I've been on the job.

**RR:** Have you found that any of your experiences at Good Shepherd have prepared you for your present ministry work?

**KS:** They certainly have. As a teen, and even as a child, I've had the experience of leading liturgies as a lay reader during Family Sundays and at Youth programs. That led to my work as a diocesan youth minister. Through all our Outreach efforts, I've learned how to serve parishioners and people in the community. First and foremost, Good Shepherd taught me from the earliest age what it looks like to be a welcoming community.

**RR:** Thank you, Keisha, for taking the time to chat with me on the phone for a bit. Best of luck in your new positions and do let us know when your ordination is scheduled so many of us in your Good Shepherd family can attend via Zoom.

*Editor's Note: Since the interview, the ordination was set for Saturday, November 21 at 3pm. It will be live-streamed from Good Shepherd with very limited in-person attendance. Keisha reminds us that "watching the live-stream will be exactly like you have been doing on Sunday mornings."*





# Bible Reflections

## SHARE YOUR REFLECTION ON BIBLICAL PASSAGES

Sharing spiritual insights is something we regularly do as members of the Good Shepherd family in our annual *Lenten Meditations* booklet each spring. Thanks to our magazine, *Flock Quarterly*, for the first-time, parishioners have the opportunity to share their spiritual insights for the non-Lent seasons of the church year.

In the May, August and November issues of *Flock Quarterly*, up to five reflections on biblical passages will be published in each issue. Parishioners who wish to participate should notify Content Editor Richard Reid ([writer2363@gmail.com](mailto:writer2363@gmail.com)) of their intention to prepare a reflection for the next upcoming issue. Once it is determined that no one else has already asked for that date, you are ready to work on your submission.

Here is the schedule of upcoming days for reflections for 2021

For the MAY 2021 issue –

Select any dates between May 23, 2021 and August 22, 2021

For the AUGUST 2021 issue –

Select any dates between August 23, 2021 and November 22, 2021

For the NOVEMBER 2021 issue

Select any dates between November 23, 2021 and February 28, 2022

## TO FIND THE READINGS

Go to the website, *Daily Prayer*, which is an Episcopal Church ministry resource of the Forward Movement.

[https://prayer.forwardmovement.org/daily\\_readings\\_anytime.php](https://prayer.forwardmovement.org/daily_readings_anytime.php)

Once there, fill in the month, day, and year from the pulldown boxes and click “Get the Readings”. The full text of several readings for that day from the Old and New Testaments will appear. Decide if you wish to focus on a single reading or multiple ones indicated for that day. List the Biblical readings you write about at the beginning of your reflection then write your reflection. Please limit your text to no more than 550 words. There is a limit of one reflection per writer per issue.

All submissions for an upcoming issue should be sent to the Content Editor before the last day of the month before the issue date. (By April 30 for the May issue, by July 31 for the August issue, and by Oct. 31 for the November issue.) Feel free to contact the Content Editor if you have any questions about this process.

# Bible Reflection

February 6, 2021 -- Martyrs of Japan, 1597

Reflection by Denise Junker

Readings: Galatians 2:19-20

Psalm 116: 1-8

Mark 8:34-38

The 26 Martyrs of Japan crucified in Nagasaki on February 5, 1597, were the first of more than 400 recognized martyrs of Japan. At first, the Japanese shogunate and imperial government allowed Catholic missions but soon shut them down and violently attacked the Christians who went underground. The movie "Silence" by Martin Scorsese, based on a book by Shūsako Endō, depicts a fictionalized telling of the prosecution of Japanese Christians. The brutality is harsh and is not a movie recommended for everyone. The film embodies the reality in Psalm 116:

The cords of death entangled me;  
the grip of the grave took hold of me; \*  
I came to grief and sorrow.

These readings today ask a lot of a Christian. There are times we can look at these verses and think of internally dying to our old selves and ways, of being persecuted by family and friends for our devotion to God, church, and Bible; but, that is fluff compared to how many have read and lived these verses in their literal sense before us today. People have literally given their whole, physical self. Are you capable? Are you ready?

As a caveat, in the movie, a Roman Catholic priest, performed by Andrew Garfield, continuously tells people to deny their faith. As I watched the film, I realized the psychology of the situation. The shogunate is the person in power who is threatening death if someone does not deny their faith. A person so amoral as to demand life or death is not the will to bow down to; the will of God is. Is there a possibility that death is not necessary? In not dying, the faith lives. After spending his life as a prisoner of the Japanese and repeatedly denying his faith, the priest dies a natural death. He is buried with a cross, snuck to him by the wife they made him take on, having secretly stayed Christian and spread the faith to his family and others he supported.



# ESSAY

*Editor's Note: This slightly edited essay was first published on <https://momhomeguide.com>, a website "for your own holiday and home ideas." We appreciate receiving reprint permission.)*

*Original introduction: Erica Kortepeter-Ragan is passionate about the causes of women of the past and present. She wrote this article in response to recent public comments that perpetuate the myth of a suburban housewife who sits at home without anything else to do but wear aprons and bake pies. Erica's grandmother was an original suburban housewife and even back then did not "fit" this mold. In reality, she was a true "[Rosie the Riveter](#)," who helped in the war cause, then worked as a bookkeeper and had hired women from her neighborhood to cook, clean and help raise her children in the gap time between work and home, much as women do today. Erica is a New York State ESL Teacher and Author of the One-Act Play *Conversations in Mary's Home*, about the life of [Susan B. Anthony](#) performed with the "Good Shepherd players." The play was last performed at the Annual Volunteer Dinner for the [Susan B. Anthony Museum and House](#) located in Rochester, NY.*



(c) Larry Jones Illustration

## ***A Day In The Life of a "Suburban Housewife"***

by Erica Kortepeter-Ragan

I actually became a "Suburban Housewife" today. Let me explain. I did not have to be at work (clue right there that I am not really a suburban housewife from the get-go), so I thought I would test it out. I slept in a little, but not too much because I unfortunately just couldn't sleep. Too bad. Too many things to do and to think about. (Are "true" housewives supposed to think?)

My husband had to get to his job and once he was up, there went my own rest. Sad...I didn't make him breakfast, but I guess if I were *really* such a housewife I would have done so. Actually, I often make breakfast for him and ALL the family when we are BOTH working, so go figure.

After I had my OWN breakfast, I sorted out laundry that had been piling up in the bedroom for days. Actually, if I am honest, I technically started the housewife role yesterday when I finally tackled the linen closet. A little bit of a head start. Now IT had not been sorted for years! (Add in smiling emoji with two tears.)

We now have divided rows again of at least semi-neatly folded towels, sheets, pillowcases etc., and I was able to take out some items that could be given away or turned into rags--for more cleaning in the future? Marie Kondo would be proud. (And if I am being TOTALLY honest, I really didn't DO the laundry, my husband did, so, YUP, not fitting the role.)

With the closet complete, towels and other linens in place and most of all of the laundry put away I turned to helping my son. Nope, didn't make him breakfast either. Sigh, I guess life is just too modern. He had slept until noon and was out the door with friends to eat a burger for lunch at a local hamburger place. Note--the time was NOON when I finished all of the above.

That left me and the dog. I put the dog out. Our broom is his mortal enemy and it is one reason why I don't pull it out more often...not because I work or anything since I am really NOT a suburban housewife.

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*Continued*

On to the sweeping and dust mopping. Under all of the beds, hall and down the stairs. Because cleaning is not one of my innate talents, I had to read on the Internet a while back that the best way to clean a home is from the top down, so after the rooms, I swept and dusted it all down the stairs. That took about two more hours. Oh, and of course I swept the areas without rugs on the main floor.

I did have to eat again, but only grazed a little for lunch before I got back to my tasks. I had way too much to do. I got carried away with the sweeping and took the sweeping outdoors to the porch. The dog was not happy, so he got to go back inside for a little while.

Next was the vacuuming. I vacuumed all of the main floor of the house, the dog exiled again outdoors. The vacuum is another one of his enemies. Actually no one really likes the vacuum so it's good I was on my own today because maybe that is what is best about being a suburban housewife. Nothing to do but clean the house? And then no one to complain about how loud the vacuum is. I should have worn earplugs though to protect my own ears. There is no such thing as a quiet vacuum.

It's five o'clock, did I neglect to mention that I had to be on a Zoom meeting for over an hour to visit with an elderly parent? On the official housewife list or not? I don't know. Must be, because when home, a housewife is by default the caregiver of all, old or young, even for those not in one's own family.

Soon my husband will be home but how did I neglect to make dinner? I actually forgot I have been so busy. Also, I never got to the bathrooms or beyond a cursory sweep of the kitchen floor. What about all the counters, "real" mopping and "real" cleaning with chemicals that I hate and am allergic to?

Didn't Laura Petrie on "The Dick Van Dyke Show" have it all together down to the perfume and lipstick when her husband came home from work? I am running out of time. I should have thought of a slow cooker meal earlier in the day. Maybe I am more like Mary Tyler on the "Mary Tyler Moore Show" but wait, she was a single woman and working. (Confusing, same actress)

In fact, I'm not sure there is such a person as a suburban housewife. Maybe some time in history there was someone's image of one. I still doubt that there is really a "true" one out there, now or in any era?

Maybe I am trying to emulate someone that really doesn't exist in 2020. After all, someone who is truly a suburban housewife would have to have enough money to stay at home and take care of the house, husband and children, oh, and dog at her leisure. A life of leisure.

Unfortunately, I'm not sure any woman has really experienced a life of leisure even in the era it was supposed to have been. Wasn't it the 1950's when women supposedly had pies cooling daily on their windowsills and wore aprons all day? Sorry Laura, you are just a TV character. Much loved, maybe, amusing, but totally unrealistic even in your time and certainly not in 2020. I did enjoy my one day of, well--not really leisure though.





# Bible Reflection

November 24, 2020

Readings: Zachariah 11: 4-17    1 Corinthians 3: 10-23    Psalm 120    Luke 18: 31-43

*Reflection by Sharon Therkildsen*

Prophecy, despair, desertion, the false shepherd, and the death of the Messiah all rolled into one powerful set of readings. I must admit that I never really paid a lot of attention to Zachariah. His book is near the end of the Old Testament and I was always eager to get to the New Testament and the birth of Jesus. It may be that I am reading it in the time of COVID and with the tension in our country and the world, that I began to understand the message of a broken relationship in God's displeasure with the people and along with the rupture between Israel and Judah. I also pondered the reference to "thirty pieces of silver" in this reference and in the "other" reference we know so well.

It is when we start thinking that we have it all figured out that we become most vulnerable. It is so easy to forget that God knows how all this will end even though we don't have a clue. The news encourages us to run from one set of "facts" to another, so we are weary and angry at the same time. But Paul reassures us the "we are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in (us)." Perhaps we should be spending more of our time in quiet prayer so that we can look inward to the guidance of the Holy Spirit within us.

As we move into Luke, even the concise account of what was to happen to Jesus was not understood by the twelve. What they did understand was the miracle of healing so they could assume that things would go on as they were forever. Boy, were they in for a surprise and an even greater revelation of who Jesus really is.

So, it is with us. None of us are the same as we were last year at this time. What is it that we will be thankful for this Thanksgiving? What have we learned and how are we showing God that our love and trust are with Him as the days grow shorter and the darkness comes?

## ARTWORK

*Note: It is hoped that in future issues we can present between one and three pages of parishioners' original artwork consisting of drawings and/or photography. Won't you please share your talents with all of us?*

### A Happy Accident

Photographs by Richard Reid

Attending the 2019 Rochester International Jazz Festival, I took pictures of fan favorite Troy "Trombone Shorty" Andrews (in the red shirt holding trumpet and trombone) in the photo on the left. With the photo on the right, I discovered that I had accidentally created an impressionistic image of music visualized as a series of "J's" (for jazz, I assume) dancing in the air – the perfect way to remember that memorable performance.



# ESSAY

## MUSIC AND THE PANDEMIC

by Bob Markham

*Music has always been part of my life. As a youngster I played several instruments in my high school band and orchestra and played in Big Bands and Dixieland bands. All of this was a lot of fun and a most enjoyable experience. Then life happened. I got a job, had a wonderful family, and making music took a back seat. The music did not stop however, as I sang in the church choir for most of that time.*



*Then, a while after I retired, at age 61, music once again became a bigger part of my life by learning how to play the trumpet (an instrument I always wanted to play as a kid but for one reason or another never did). One thing led to another to the point when, just before the pandemic changed all of our lives, I continued to sing in the church choir, I played in the New Horizons Orchestra, the Penfield Pops Concert Band, the New Horizons Jazz Ensemble (also did vocals), the Melody Masters Big Band (also did vocals), the R.G. & E. Big Band, and played in the Rochester International Jazz festival for the last five years.*

*Then one morning in early March of 2020 I woke up and the music had stopped (along with a lot of other of life's normal activities).*

*As happens to most of us when confronted with major life changes, I experienced what might be called withdrawal symptoms. No more rehearsals, no more singing and worshiping at church, no more performances for people who are confined to nursing homes, no more almost daily camaraderie with fellow musicians. For me...A real bummer!*

*On the plus side I now had a lot more time to spend with Carol as we pondered how to deal with life going forward. I also had a lot more time to pray and to reexamine how I had been spending my time. All this praying and pondering began to take on a new shape as some of my musician friends began to forward emails with links to something called a virtual performance. Many of these were produced by professional musicians who were seeking new ways to make their music heard. Some were created by large church choir directors. Some were soloists, some were small ensembles, and some were huge groups of singers or instrumentalists or a combination of both.*

*One video in particular caught my eye and ear. It was a group of 32 of the worlds foremost trumpet players who collaborated to perform a piece inspired by Ryan Anthony called "A Hope for the Future," as a tribute to healthcare workers. Anthony did all this while he was in the hospital receiving treatments for cancer. If you have a computer and are interested in seeing this, you can see it at this link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eR\\_7P5\\_7kh4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eR_7P5_7kh4)*

*This got me thinking about how I might participate in virtual productions and what I would have to learn to try to make music this new way.*

*What is a virtual choir or instrumental ensemble? The short story is that it is the combination of individual singers/instrumentalists each separately recording their own parts of a particular piece. The result when each recording is digitally synced with the others sounds much like a choir or ensemble being together in the same place performing the piece. If you have been attending church*

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*the last few months by watching Fr. Lance's videotaped services, then you have seen the results of our virtual choir efforts worked into the service.*

*How does one go about making a virtual choir recording? Well, I learned that basically I needed to have a camera, a microphone and something called a click track by those who knew about the process. Where do I get all this equipment? Thanks to the expertise of Bruce Dunn and Chris Nuccitelli, I was reminded that I already had some cameras and microphones in the form of my smart phone and electronic tablet. Each of these has a microphone and a camera built in and are of sufficient quality to record myself singing. I did get a set of headphones to help also, although a pair of earbuds will suffice.*

*Now thanks to the efforts of a lot of people, I can record my own part to hymns or other music. The process is easy once you get used to it. I listen to the click track with my headphones and watch Karyn conduct on my iPhone and record my part of the piece into my iPad by singing along with what I hear in my headphones.*

*That recording is then sent to Chris Nuccitelli, who works his magic by combining mine and everyone else's recordings to produce the sound and video you see and hear when watching the recorded church service. Hopefully, you have been enjoying the inclusion of the virtual choir in the services.*

*We may not be physically together, but we are together in spirit.*



### **DENISE JUNKER SUBMITS WINNING NAME FOR GOOD SHEPHERD'S NEW MAGAZINE: FLOCK QUARTERLY**

*Editor's Note: Of the eleven magazine title submissions received, Denise's suggestion was the winner, as selected by Fr. Lance and by Graphics Editor Laura Rosato whose idea it was to create this new magazine. Content Editor Richard Reid recused himself as a judge since he had a potential title in contention. For those of you who may not yet know Denise very well, we asked her to introduce herself. Here's what she wrote.*

I am honored to have my title idea picked for this new parish quarterly magazine! I started attending the Church of the Good Shepherd in December of 2014. Due to bad health, I stopped driving in late 2014. As I started to miss church, I remembered Lance's parish was closer to me. I had met Lance in the summer of 2009 at a job seeker's support group he kindly organized. And with seminary, EfM training, and diocesan convention, I had the chance to know him more. Without hesitation, I reached out to him in 2014. The parish of Good Shepherd kindly started their years of helping me get to church and take care of other tasks my health has prevented me from accomplishing. I am grateful to Lance and this parish for all they do! I am glad I could contribute by suggesting a name for this magazine. I've been a diocesan convention representative and a member of choir. I do my best as a member of our prayer chain and contribute when I can meditations for the Lenten booklets. I'm also in my eighth year of mentoring an online section of EfM with John Clinton Bradley. I received my MDiv. from CRCDS in 2014 and, as my health has been improving, look forward to finding more ministry possibilities. I am certain Richard and Laura and all of our contributors will make this a fantastic publication!



# ESSAY

## OUR SHELTER FROM THE STORMY BLAST

by Richard Reid

Everyone probably has a favorite song about rain – if only because there are so many of them –

“Singin’ in the Rain”                      “Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head”  
“Rainy Days and Mondays”                      “A Hard Rain’s Gonna Fall”  
“Set Fire to the Rain”                      “Purple Rain”                      “Rain on the Roof”  
– to name just seven.

“Rain on the Roof” was written by Stephen Sondheim for his 1971 musical, *Follies*. More recently, it was used to hilarious effect in the delightful 2017 movie, *Paddington 2*, performed by Hugh Grant and a highly unusual chorus line during the closing credits. The song’s lyrics talk about hearing the patter of the rain while staying blissfully cozy and dry inside your home. Likely, all of us in our roofed Good Shepherd family can relate to that feeling right now. For some in God’s family who live not far from us, such a feeling is only a past memory. Fortunately for a few of these homeless souls, there is RAIHN – the Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network.

Our Good Shepherd Newsletter has reported on RAIHN over the years, most recently by Bev Strohm in the January 2018 so it’s not too soon for another piece, this time, in our Magazine. Founded in 2004, RAIHN is a non-profit 501(c) 3 corporation, an affiliate of Family Promise, which consists of 203 groups in 43 states, serving over 68,000 people annually. In the Rochester area, 43 faith communities, among them Good Shepherd, work together as host and support congregations, helping homeless families that have been temporarily displaced from their homes. A few volunteers from our church prepare and/or host meals there while others contribute money to support its \$200,000 annual budget.

In 2019, RAIHN served  
34 families (consisting of 116 individuals) in its Shelter Program  
26 families in its Aftercare and Stabilization Program  
47 families in its Prevention & Rehousing Program

That is good news – until you consider this: it is estimated that each night in Rochester and its suburbs, more than 700 individuals are homeless, including 100 families with children. More volunteer help and financial assistance is always needed and those moved to do so can find information at RAIHN’s website: <https://www.raihn.org/>

Previous articles about RAIHN usually ended here but we live in a time now which calls for a different response. Let’s stay focused on housing and homes. In 2019, 91% of RAIHN’s guests were people of color (77% African Americans, 11% Hispanic/Latino, and 5% multi-racial) and 9% were White.

The city of Rochester has the dishonor of being the third poorest city in the United States among the top 75 metropolitan areas. The majority of poor people in America today are people of color, and even more so in Rochester, sadly, one of the most racially segregated cities in America. Restrictive racial covenants governing home purchases and a practice known as redlining which funneled government and private bank loans mostly into areas where people of color didn’t reside accomplished that dubious distinction.

In fact, those areas of Rochester that were redlined in the 1930s remain 92% occupied by people of color today. Poverty, the result of low-paying jobs (when they can be secured) keeps them there. When the economy sours for any reason, those jobs are lost, and so are many homes. A vicious cycle but one that doesn’t have to continue to impact as many lives as it does.

For too long, a person’s race and its perceived weaknesses was deemed a sufficient explanation for living in squalor. Today, we are having fresh discussions leading to new insights about the true reason: systemic racism. Not all yet agree, but at least the topic is on many tables now, as society’s ways of doing things are being examined anew for how to be made racially just.

As followers of Jesus, we are told to love our neighbors as ourselves. Truly applying that simple directive to all aspects of our lives will surely cause the racial scales to finally fall from our eyes. Then all, not just some, of our earthly homes will become secure shelters from life’s stormy blasts, each one shining more nearly like our eternal home to come.