

PROCLAIM

A publication of Northminster Presbyterian Church

Fall 2019





Alzheimer's Stories

COMING FALL 2019

Growing up in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, I was close geographically and spiritually to both sets of grandparents. I relished spending summers at their house – playing in the creek, fishing in the pond, eating my favorite foods, and “helping” my grandfathers with farm work.

It was upsetting to see my maternal grandmother suffer from Alzheimer's for so many years. She was diagnosed shortly after I graduated from college and, because of my work, I wasn't able to see her too often. And, toward the end of her life, I chose to see her less frequently because I didn't feel emotionally equipped to visit with this person, no longer the vivacious, loving person I knew, who no longer recognized me. My mother became my

Mark Your Calendar
Friday, Nov. 8th
at 7:00 p.m. and
Sunday, Nov. 10th
9 and 11 a.m.

by John Wright—Director of Music since 2000

Between 2000 and 2016, deaths from Alzheimer's jumped by 123% and, by 2020, 1 in 3 seniors will die from this disease. The Indiana Alzheimer's Association reports that Indiana ranks 16th in the country in 2019 in people ages 65+ diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Since 2017, 2,770 Indiana deaths occur each year due to Alzheimer's.”

after the Susquehanna Valley Chorale of Lewisburg, PA commissioned Cohen to compose the work in 2009, he asked his colleague and friend, Herschel Garfein, to write the libretto. Both men were interested in the subject matter but knew very little about it. While researching, they were struck by evidence of music's ability to awaken those with dementia and to dramatically ease symptoms of aggression and anxiety. With this as the basis, they created *Alzheimer's Stories*.

Alzheimer's Stories begins with facts and figures of the disease and with the transcripts of Dr. Alois Alzheimer's first interview with Ms. Auguste Deter, the first person to be formally diagnosed with Alzheimer's, in 1901. Dr. Alzheimer asks Auguste for her name, her husband's name, her address, and her age, each time receiving the same reply: “Auguste, I think.”

The first movement, *By the Numbers*, presents the disease both clinically and in a deeply personal manner. The second movement, *The Stories*, contains accounts from the patient's and caregiver's viewpoint. Each story has layers of meaning and experience that become personal both for the singers and the listeners. The final movement, *For the Caregivers*, provides hope in even the most painful moments of the disease, all the while knowing there currently is no cure.

A particular story Robert Cohen heard while developing this work came from the daughter of an Alzheimer's victim. She would sing to her father during each visit, noticing how his face would light up. As she prepared to leave after a visit one day, she realized she had not sung anything, had no desire to sing, and had nothing new to sing. Her father looked at her and said, simply: “Sing anything.” And so the piece ends.

One of the greatest achievements of a work of art is to bring us to our darkest places and show us a light to illuminate our fears, ease our anxieties and heal our pain. *Alzheimer's Stories* is one such special experience. It unites Alzheimer's victims, caregivers, and those unfamiliar with the disease's effects. As Garfein comments on the final few lines, “Something stays until the last with a person with this horrible disease... It's love and it's music, and both seem to stay in the brain right until the end. And so, even if you've lost all the other things, just sing. Sing anything.”

Come Home for Christmas



Our Advent theme this year will be Come Home for Christmas, with a special emphasis on welcoming friends and neighbors who may never have worshiped with us, or who haven't done so in a while.

Please join us on the four Sundays of Advent, December 1st through 22nd and for Christmas Eve services on December 24th.❖

Stewardship



In July 2019, Lisa Longo shared the story of her husband's and twins' baptism soon after they joined Northminster. We've been blessed to celebrate many baptisms since then, and the average age of our membership has been getting younger. We've also continued to host about 12

homeless families at our church each year through Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis.

For the Back-to-School Extravaganza this year, we helped about 1,300 kids pick out new clothes and other needs before starting the new school year.

If you attended Northminster in October 2015, you might remember Generous Giraffe (and a one-time appearance from Mrs. Giraffe) sharing stories with the kids for the children's sermon. We've had some pretty fun times since then, too.❖

75th anniversary

OUR PAST & FUTURE
seeking, serving, embracing

January 5 **Kickoff**

February 2 **Seeking God and community**

March 1 **Ways we serve, service opportunities**

March 29 **Embracing our past**

May 3 **Focusing on our future**

Early June **Family picnic**

June 28 **Celebration worship service, brunch at the Willows**

Start celebrating our 75th Anniversary by purchasing a print of Jerry Gray's pen and ink drawing of our beautiful church, currently on display in the Gathering Place. The cost of \$25 will be used for 75th Anniversary celebration expenses.

CAN YOU HELP?

We are searching for current information on former associate pastors: James Tozier, Karl Gillmeister, Scott Douglas, and Eleanor Brouillard.

Do you have a favorite Northminster memory? Please share your memories, ask questions, and update our contact information with Sally Gray (SallyGray1949@gmail.com), Barb Stayton (BarbaraJStayton@gmail.com) or the church office (office@northminster-indy.org).

Umoja Project in Kenya

Ten years ago, my small plane landed in Kisumu, Kenya. Exhausted from the trip I stood on the tarmac trying to get my bearings and locate my host, the director of the Umoja Project. I had met him about 18 months earlier during his visit to Indianapolis and I was unable to find a familiar face in the crowd. Quickly, he spotted me and came to offer greetings. As the only white person in sight I suppose I was easy to identify.

I was in Kenya to visit Umoja, the Swahili word for “unity”, a mission projected located in Chulaimbo near Lake Victoria. The project is supported by more than 15 faith communities in Indianapolis including Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Hindus. More than 35 congregations of differing traditions in Chulaimbo also support the project.

As I visited schools and homes of the vulnerable children living in the area, my heart was broken by the poverty and need I witnessed. At the same time, my spirit was lifted by the hope and the promise



expressed by the children as a result of Umoja. In the years since, I have made the trip to Kisumu four more times, to remind myself of the power of people of faith to change the lives of children and communities.



I am committed to sending another group from Northminster to witness this and to help build houses.

The Umoja Project has developed a compassionate and comprehensive network to respond to the needs of children who have lost one or both parents to HIV/AIDS, ensuring that they stay in school and perform to the best of their ability. Years of educating and empowering orphaned children have created hope among the impoverished families of Chulaimbo. They see children they once knew as downtrodden and vulnerable achieving professional success.



by Teri Thomas—Pastor and Head of Staff since 2002



In 2013, Northminster sent 21 members to visit Umoja and build cow barns in three of the elementary schools. Will Boris was our youngest participant (13 at the time) and Carol Frohlich was the one with the most life experience. We worked side by side with members of the community to build barns. We played games, read stories, and drew pictures with the children who gathered to watch the construction and meet the people from Indiana. Visiting students in their homes, our group learned how some survive in child-headed households.

Attendance has greatly increased in schools supported by Umoja. Test scores are up and more students are qualifying to attend University.

Communities come together to participate in projects to help support the program, provide the rice and beans, pay the cooks, and provide basic needs for the children. Having personally seen the difference Umoja has made in the lives of so many children, I continue to support the project and the students. I am committed to sending another group from Northminster to witness this and to help build houses. The group is going in July of 2020. It is not too late to join up. I promise it will change the life of a child and it will change your life as well.☺



Keeping an Eye on the Kids

Like all the greats in business and volunteering, Jackie Schmidt knows how to work a crowd. During her stint as head of the Sunday Hosts, Jackie could be seen monitoring the moves and needs of every person who walked in. She made note of new people and offered information, she winked at the regulars in that familiar way that make people feel included, all the while directing the parking of strollers and walkers, coordinating the collections and presenting the gifts at the Offertory. Always

Always Jackie's eyes moved around the sanctuary checking that everyone had what they needed as they prepared to hear the Word.

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The one-time head of Indianapolis Housing and Urban Development, Jackie had a big job during the great downtown building boom. At HUD, the work was about identifying needs and solving problems, looking to the future and asking questions: who's going to need it, who's going to use it, who's going to benefit from it and how will it benefit others and the State of Indiana? That sharp eye and those constant questions have served our



congregation as well as she served on the Northminster Board of Trustees, the Foundation and in other capacities over many years.

As noted by former Youth Director Julie Shannon, Jackie is especially interested in Northminster families. While she volunteers alongside the adults, she knows their children and when she speaks to them, it's with the same respect. There's almost nothing a kid likes better than another adult speaking to them with interest and sincerity. For many of our youth, Jackie showed up early and became a lifelong friend.

Sometime ago, following the deaths of her husband Marvin and their daughter Anne Walker, Jackie set out to specifically support the young people of Northminster by giving a bible to every new baby baptized in our church. Each book plate reads "Marvin Schmidt loved the children of Northminster Church." As children grow, they can follow the Sunday readings from children's' bibles supplied in the pews, also gifts from Jackie's family. Perhaps the most profound is a Schmidt Family Scholarship

in honor of Pastor Teri Thomas and presented to Northminster high school graduates who plan to further their education in Indiana schools. Every year on Graduate Sunday, the names of eligible students are announced and checks are sent from the church to the students' accounts at each school. Meredith Haag Weadick was the first recipient in 2006 just before she headed off to DePauw.

Today Meredith teaches special education in Goshen, Indiana. As of 2019, a total of 34 Schmidt Scholarships have been awarded.

During an illness several years ago, Jackie told how she needed to retreat from her family's gathering and headed to her own room to lie down. Soon she was followed by a pack of fully-grown grandsons who stretched themselves across her bed, over her chairs and spilled onto the floor.

One of the young men remarked later that they are grateful for the time their grandmother gives them, her enlightened conversations, endless encouragement and great humor. As are we.✦

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Steeplejack

THE GOOD NEWS – WE HAVE A FIRM FOUNDATION

He must have been a worry to his mother. He was one of those kids who preferred going up. John Reid, Northminster’s steeplejack, likely captured the gene from a grandfather who built great turrets, railroad round houses and domes of the famous Hotel del Coronado in San Diego. Still, John sort of fell into the career.

John spent time in Key West as a young man learning to dive (he also likes to go down), but when he returned to the mainland he signed on with a friend’s dad working on tall buildings, domes and steeples. The opportunity turned into an apprenticeship and eventually a job that suited him. He learned to tie the knots, set rigging and safety harnesses to the bosun’s chair and complete the intricate tasks of restoration while aloft. The travel was not compatible with family life so John broke away and started his own company, assembling a crew that now includes one of his sons. It was a lucky day when Northminster found Pioneer Restoration just up the road in Frankfort.

The ceiling stains were likely observed first by the custodian and monitored Sunday mornings for months by the self-proclaimed balcony rats. What our for-real steeplejack discovered as he began his repairs was that our steeple also hosted

a few squirrels. Oh my! Among the many materials John deftly lifted and installed on our roof, such as Hardie Board, fiberglass, copper sheeting, caulk and paint, were plexiglass panels that now protect the louvers around our belfry. While the squirrels and birds can relocate, bees

“You can’t shoo them off. Bees get mad. And there’s nowhere to run!”

cannot. John noted they are often a hazard to the person in a bosun’s chair reporting, “You can’t shoo them off. Bees get mad. And there’s nowhere to run!”

Our steeple, which was placed atop the church about 65 years ago, is 80’ up. Some may not appreciate the view, but others have enjoyed the coolest ride ever, piloted by Reid himself, to observe and monitor our roof. His cherry picker basket extends all along the pitch of the slate, (now properly caulked), glides over gutters, and peeks under soffits. The aged copper spire, still strong, continues to wear the dignified scars of a few landmark hail storms and holds fast the cross that rises above the oaks and

maples surrounding the church. Reid noted a church can hold a steeple for hundreds of years if it has a good foundation.

When asked if he had a “dream steeple,” our good-natured jack thought just a moment and came up with two vastly different places. He would have liked to work on Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. The other is the Crazy Horse Memorial in South Dakota, first begun over 70 years ago. Ever the adventurer, Reid was pensive when he thought of spending some retirement time sitting suspended at eye level with the great Lakota warrior, perhaps carving a brow in the red granite and enjoying the view of the Black Hills.❖

Puzzle

Northminster by the Numbers

example:

<u>B</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>R</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>O</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>S</u>
2	6	2	7	3	6	3	3	3	2	2	6	6	7

- 4 2 8 4 3 7 4 6 4 7 5 2 2 3
- 5 6 6 9 7 6 6 6
- 2 6 5 8 6 2 2 7 4 8 6
- 2 2 5 8 4 6 4 2 5 5
- 6 2 7 8 4 3 9
- 7 6 8 6 3 2 6 3 7 7 4 7 4 8
- 2 6 6 4 7 3 4 2 8 4 6 6 2 5 6 3 3 8 4 6 4
- 7 8 3 9 2 7 3 7 4 4 7 2 6 6 6 4 8 8 3 3
- 6 6 7 8 4 6 4 6 7 8 3 7 3 6 8 6 3 2 8 4 6 6
- 6 3 6 7 7 7 2 9 3 7 2 7 3 2 5 3 2 7 8

1	2 ABC	3 DEF
4 GHI	5 JKL	6 MNO
7 PQRS	8 TUV	9 WXYZ
	0	

1) Gathering Place, 2) Knox Room, 3) Columbarium, 4) Calvin Hall, 5) Narthex, 6) Sound and Spirit, 7) Congregational Meeting, 8) Stewardship Committee, 9) Northminster Foundation
10) Mens Prayer Breakfast

by Pennie Lumley—Member since 1965

Opus 154–Update

C. B. FISK ORGAN, INC.

The words “pipe organ” evoke all sorts of memories – perhaps you’ve seen the world’s largest in Europe, heard one played on TV for a royal wedding, or simply remember moving music you’ve heard in church or on screen (think: J.S. Bach’s *Toccata and Fugue* in D minor from *The Phantom of the Opera*).

Well, C. B. Fisk, Inc. of Gloucester, Massachusetts, is already constructing Northminster’s NEW pipe organ in their shop. It will be disassembled at year-end and then shipped to us in January, when it will be carefully reassembled and tuned over a 4-month period.

In the next issue of *PROCLAIM*, we’ll take a closer look at Fisk’s design of Northminster’s new instrument and hear

more from our organist, Marko Petricic, and members of the organ committee. We’re incredibly grateful for the many members who are contributing to the organ fund. Together, we have an opportunity to build a legacy of lasting, positive impact on our worship and our community for years to come.✧



by Elizabeth Brandes—Member since 2018

Once Lost, Now Found

Ever heard this version of heaven—that when you get there, you'll be reunited with all the favorite stuff you lost during your lifetime?

Could be, but in the meantime, Northminster volunteers have been putting the Lost & Found of Washington Township and Carmel Schools to a more immediate use. For six summers now, we've been collecting about 5,000 good-but-abandoned articles of clothing—mostly sweatshirts, t-shirts, sweaters, coats, gloves, hats, and shoes—and supplies from 30-plus schools, bagging and washing them in volunteers' homes, hanging and sorting them in the Gathering Place, and trucking and displaying them at the Back-To-School Extravaganza held at St. Luke's Methodist.

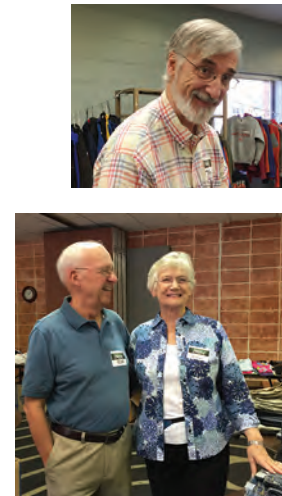
Meanwhile, we've also been buying new (not-yet-lost) jeans from the Castleton JCPenney (at a generous discount) and adding them to the shopping choices.

And on one extraordinary, Extravagant Saturday in back-to-school season, Northminster and friends, including First Mennonite Church members, open the shop for a 100% Off Sale to some 1300 of Central Indiana's neediest families, eager to put the clothes to good (first or second)

use. Northminster's shop is one stop on Extravaganza Saturday, as the families wend their way through sites for new shoes, books, school supplies, haircuts, health exams, social services, and cookout lunches.

Chief Haberdasher Jerry Gray gives special credit to Northminster's Striders and Deacons, along with all of our 200 volunteers who do Extravagant things.

So heaven might reunite us with our own lost stuff. But uniting it now with other people who need it more than we do—that seems a lot closer to heaven. ☞



Back to School Extravaganza occurs in August of each year. Northminster provides donations and volunteers to help hundreds of local families.



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Proclaim is a new quarterly publication of Northminster Presbyterian Church celebrating the stories, people and work of our church. It will feature more human interest than timely information. Let us all Proclaim the good news!



Please send interesting story ideas and photos to sglant@northminster-indy.org. We cannot guarantee publication of all submissions, but we appreciate recommendations. Thank you for reading and for all you do to support Northminster.