

# LOAVES AND FISHES

DULUTH, MN

VOL. 36 — NO. 1

SPRING 2025

In this newsletter, a few of our community members offer reflections on how we are meeting this moment: a moment that has pulled us personally and collectively out of our depth and a moment that changes so rapidly that some of these articles might already feel dated. We, perhaps like you, are afraid and overwhelmed. We, perhaps like you, don't know exactly how to move forward. We, certainly like you, are doing our best. In the following articles, we'll explore some of the ways that our best efforts emerge, and we hope they may be both a salve and an invitation into deeper community. We all need help right now. If you have anything to give (energy, time, resources, funky talents you aren't sure intuitively plug into our mission) please reach out! We would love to find a way to welcome you into a new part of our work. And, if you feel any gaps in your own efforts that you wonder if we might be able to fill, please reach out. We would love to help where we're able. As systems fall, the walls of isolation do too.

## This Changes Everything

By Tone Lanzillo

It was 8am on November 6th. The morning after. My first thought was "this changes everything."

Trump had just won the presidential election for the second time. My gut told me that not only would the country change direction in some very dramatic and destructive ways, but my personal life and the lives of everyone in this country could be seriously and negatively impacted for at least the next four years.

Over the past several weeks, I've been watching and rewatching the mini series *Zero Day* on Netflix. It's the story of a former president who is asked by the current president to chair a special investigatory commission to figure out who or what carried out a cyber attack on the U.S. that killed over 3,400 people. While the current president and members of Congress believe the attack was carried out by Russia, the Zero Day Commission presents its report and findings which clarifies that the cyber attack was not orchestrated by a foreign power but was clearly a domestic threat. Before a joint session of Congress, the former president identifies the Speaker of the House, members of Congress, a high tech billionaire and a hedge fund entrepreneur as the co-conspirators in the cyber attack.

As of January 20th, the U.S. is facing a domestic threat, and he sits in the White House. In less than sixty days since taking office, we find ourselves being attacked by a president who will potentially destroy the economic, social, cultural and environmental fabrics of our country.

Henry A. Giroux, with the publication of his book, *The Terror Of The Unforeseen*, cri-

tiqued Trump's first administration and proposed that we were facing a "real and present danger" for the country and the planet. Giroux talked about what he calls Trump's "ignorance," especially with regards to his denial of or resistance to addressing climate change given the dangers that it poses to humanity. Giroux also argued that Trump attacked the "collective values" of our democracy and assaulted the public institutions in our society that were essential to having engaged and critically aware citizens.

Giroux wrote, "More than a dystopian dismissal of the truth, this is a normalization of deceit, a challenge to thinking itself and a repudiation of the educational conditions that make an informed citizenry possible. Truth is confused with opinions, and lies have become normalized at the highest level of government."

He argued that the president's ignorance, along with his reckless use of the federal government, would hold the people and the planet as hostages.

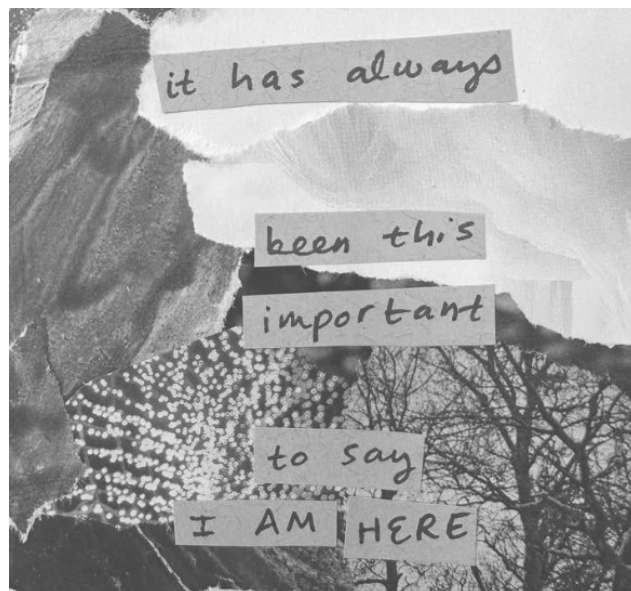
Looking at Trump's first 60 days in office for his second term, it would appear that his arrogance and ignorance is jeopardizing our country's future. The new administration is already taking action to dismantle the Department of Education, withdraw from the World Health Organization and U.N. Human Rights Council, reduce benefits to the poor and homeless, jeopardize public health initiatives, and attack the LGBTQ community.

With regards to climate change, Trump has pulled the U.S. out of the Paris Agreement, taken any information about climate change off the websites of federal agencies, announced that public lands will be opened for fossil fuel developments, and is planning to defund if not close down the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

In the January 2025 newsletter for the Houston Catholic Worker, Michael Baxter wrote a piece entitled "Living Beyond Politics: A Post-Election Reflection On Dorothy Day." Baxter described a radical reconstructive approach writing, "The idea was to forego the politics of the nation-state in order to pursue local forms of community-based work: houses of hospitality and farms, of course, and credit unions, labor unions, neighborhood associations, educational associations, parish pantries, soup kitchens, settlement houses - all kinds of charitable works."

Here in Duluth, Loaves and Fishes has been pursuing community-based work for over 36 years. Through our work in the houses of hospitality for homeless men, women and families as well as offering temporary foster care, managing the Bike Cave, providing meals to the Warming Center and volunteering for various outreach projects, we are always exploring how to embrace personalism and engage people one-on-one. It's also about finding and holding onto the humanity we share with each other.

With the rising chaos, confusion and consternation that is felt by so many, we must brace for the growing threats and ongoing assaults on our civil rights, critical thinking and sense of belonging. In this moment, we need to pursue and embrace every local form of community building that honors and celebrates our humanity. We need the spirit of compassion for our common good.



Excerpt from the poem *This Much Has Not Changed* by Sarah Holst

## We Will Survive

By Catherine McComas-Bussa

I was born in 2000, raised inundated with conversations of climate change, and came of age in the young-adult dystopian boom. And I remember walking home from second grade, crying, certain we were doomed. We had just had a presentation on the importance of reducing, reusing, and recycling, had learned about trash floating in the ocean, had been washed (unintentionally) in climate grief. I remember that day because I felt sure

that the Three R's were not enough to stop climate change and also knew that there was little else I could do. It's my first big memory of disempowerment. I read *The Hunger Games* in fourth grade and became a ravenous connoisseur of dystopias. All of these books about rupture, about collapse, with brave heroes at the center that I desperately wanted to emulate but fearfully knew I could not. I suspected that I was no Katniss Everdeen, I was more similar to the people who entered the arena and let themselves die quickly. Even then, the world felt too big to save and I felt too

*continued on page 4*

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# Why Oh God Are You Silent?

By Terri Drahn

Given the devastating roll out of executive orders since the inauguration, my first idea for this article was to title it, "What Is Mine To Do?" I quickly realized I had no idea what to say. I had so many emotions to process. I needed time to feel rage and disillusionment, time to read, pray, write, paint, walk in the snow, and digest. Then, maybe, I could figure out what was mine to do. This is by no means a linear process, but I find it grounding to recognize it IS a process. It helps calm my anxiety about DOING SOMETHING! On paper it looks a little like this: Anger/Despair/Disillusionment ---> Contemplation --->Action.

Firstly, anger. The words from a poem, a lament and rewrite of Psalm 74 by Daniel Berrigan (from his book *Uncommon Prayer*) have set up residence in my head lately. The poem begs the question—God, where are you in this mess? I feel these words cellularly as I was honored to do a movement interpretation of this poem for Daniel at Seattle University in 1991. Below is an edited version of the poem *Faith is a Two Way Street, Hope Is A Hand-to-Hand Clasp*

*Why oh God are you silent?  
Why does evil have the upper hand?*

*The sweet earth is wasted, why?  
Torturers crush the bones of the strong  
Blank-eyed juntas sit in judgement  
Firing squads dispose in a moment's bark  
A single snarl of the troublesome hero.*

*Meantime you hide out  
Meantime you are silent*

*Into what hands have the reins slipped?  
The horseman named death?  
The horseman named plague?  
The horseman named war?  
The horseman named hell?*

*They race like mad dogs to the four corners of the world  
They round up like an Auschwitz herd, your helpless ones*

*Are you a mere onlooker?  
A Witness fleeing the murder scene,  
One whose evidence, if given, would convict Cain  
Don't call it contemplation. We need someone other than a platonic walker of the sea of tranquility.  
You, those who speak for you,*

*Taught us to despise other worldly Others*

*And don't please plead innocence –  
the prophets in your chronicle*

*hammer out  
Scenes of judgement, bring us hangdog  
before the court, rake us  
with brimstone.*

*Question arises: whose side are you on?  
You weren't always so distant—  
Not a page of that famous book doesn't say it.  
You—plucking the people from disaster  
Interposing yourself  
Turning natural forces around  
Making sure  
Making sense  
Making love  
Nailing things down, clarifying  
not allowing evil a rat hole to slink out of*

*Doubtless I run a risk  
In speaking this way,  
Yet innocent blood should have a voice.  
Otherwise, butchers become gods  
and You take up a butcher's trade.*

*Whatever is outrageous then, ill advised,  
bitter of tone, heedless, crude in my argument—  
Forgive  
I do not mince words  
Compose my agony into "speeches before the court."  
Out with it  
Take it or leave it, I am your son (daughter).*

# Coming Together For the Common Good

By Tone Lanzillo

When the national news networks on November 6th confirmed that Donald Trump had been re-elected president, my first thought was no one will be safe. Not the immigrants. Not women. Not children. Not the LGBTQ community. Not anyone who speaks up about climate change and the environment. Not everyone who isn't white. Not the poor and homeless. Not seniors on Medicaid and Social Security. And not someone with a major medical problem or a disability.

The president keeps proclaiming that he's going to "make America great again." But who is he talking about? As the days roll by, it's becoming clearer everyday that his America is all about white nationalism, racism, toxic masculinity, corporate greed, fascism, and the destruction of critical education.

After the election, the Loaves and Fishes community talked about hosting an "alternative event" in response to the presidential inauguration on January 20th. Given our work with houses of hospitality to help the homeless and our various outreach projects to help our vulnerable neighbors, there was a growing concern that the new administration would directly attack those vulnerable populations in our city and the various organizations and programs that serve them.

So, on the evening of January 20th, our community decided to host a gathering for local leaders and activists to celebrate our collective drive to create a more resilient, sustainable and equitable city. Entitled "Coming Together For The Common Good," we asked people to share reflections, poetry and music. On maybe the coldest night of the year, high school students, climate activists, poets, teachers, housing advocates, ministers, musicians and public health providers came to St. Paul's Episcopal Church to connect, explore opportunities to collaborate and embrace the power of building community. From that evening, a number of conversations *Continued on page 4*



Who YOU are is far less clear  
Given the evidence daily shoved in our faces—

Let me make bold to remind you  
Faith is a two way street, hope is a hand-to-hand clasp

So come  
Believe in me  
Take my hand

As for that well-known “our Father who art...”  
I’ll unclench my fist, bloodied at your wall,  
Shake the tears from my face,  
(that never failing rainfall)  
Put myself like a yoga, all will and darkness  
in formal stasis, attitude of prayer,  
will believe me,  
Keep trying, keep trying, keep trying.

Once I have allowed myself the space to feel anger, to rage at the injustice, to rage at God, I land in a more contemplative space. I remember Dorothy Day’s words, “the world will be saved by beauty.” I can open up and see the beauty right in front of me and get lost in painting the flowers on the table, breathe in the cold night air as the snowflakes gently land on my face, feel the calming weight of a newborn asleep on my shoulder. The beauty connects me to

my soul and indeed, saves me, prepares me.

I have also been consoled by a meditation on Psalm 46:10:” Be still and know that I am God.” I remember that I don’t need to have all the answers, or see the whole picture but can believe there is a God that does and has not abandoned us (I’m going with that for now). I like to breathe through the lines like this (taught by mystic James Finley, Center for Action and Contemplation)  
Be still and know that I am God (breathe)  
Be still and know that I AM (breathe)  
Be still and know (breathe)  
Be still (breathe)  
Be (breathe)...

A similar message reaches me when I read a quote by the Persian poet Hafiz, “I am a hole in a flute that Christ’s breath moves through—Listen to this music.” Or the words of Richard Rohr reminding us “God is as close as our breath.” These lines all ground me, remind me God is near and prepare me for “what is mine to do.” So the question still looms large most days about what to DO. I have landed on, going to the roots of society-and plugging in to anything that helps build community and creates “a world where it is easier to be good” (Dorothy Day). I realize that our community houses provide us daily with the work that needs

doing - providing shelter, friendship, and hospitality, to the unhoused of our local community. On any given day we play with the children of Olive Branch, cook and share a meal, clean a toilet, fill the mitten rack, have a cup of tea and listen to the heartache and lived experience of someone who is daily told they are unworthy. It is exhausting and humbling to be present and help hold all that needs holding, but I am convinced, more than ever, it is how we are meant to live.

Practicing the Works of Mercy burns as a deep desire in each of us here at Loaves and Fishes. You don’t have to join a Catholic Worker Community to take on the personal responsibility of translating love into action, but finding a way to join with others makes it easier to plug in and is usually a lot more fun. It’s still, for me, a back and forth process almost daily, but I know full well I need to take time in each stage. Contemplation tempers my anger and informs my action. Hopefully we can all hold each other accountable to find our own action. If you are interested in the work of Loaves and Fishes, there are many ways to help out (see page 8) or, simply call us and come for a meal, some fun and lively conversation. Each of us together, and only together, will answer the question, “what is mine to do?”

## Motherhood in 2025

By Chelsea Froemke

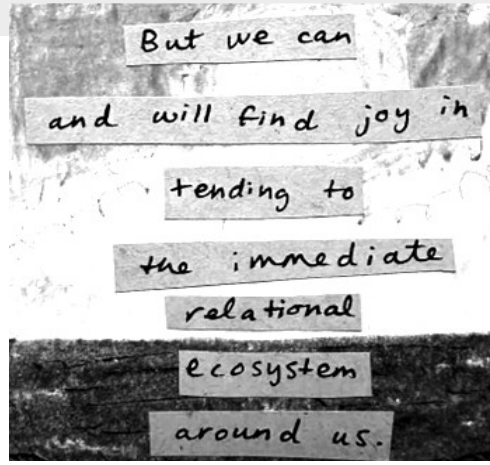
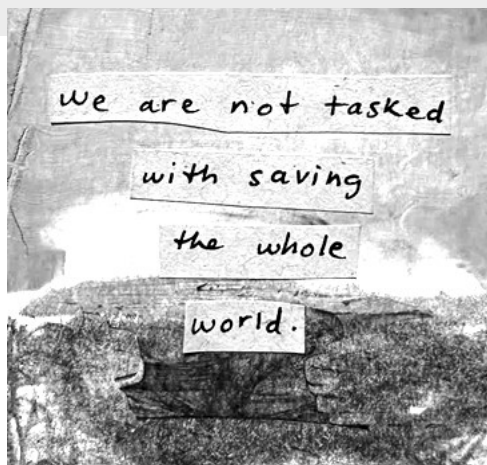
Where were you on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021? Drew and I were in a hospital waiting room when a community-mate texted everyone with an

alert to check the news. What were we waiting for? Our 12-week ultrasound during our first pregnancy. Moments after learning about the insurrection, we watched a tiny heartbeat pumping away on the screen in front of us. We had a viable pregnancy; we were on our way to bringing a new life into this world.

Ultimately there was a transfer of administration and soon after I received my first COVID vaccine, benefiting myself and the peach sized fetus growing in me. Both of these events gave us some hope for the future and confidence in our decision to have a baby, a decision that we grappled with and questioned for years prior to that moment. With that same hope, we added one more little one to our family this past October, only to be left in shock a month later as the results of the 2024 presidential election started rolling across my phone screen.

That election shock and confusion lasted for weeks and was a stark juxtaposition to the unending joy and love that enveloped our family as we snuggled our newborn. At my weekly Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) class we recently had a conversation about how children, even infants, can sense their parents’ stress. Do they know just how scared I have been since November? Could my little newborn sense the chaos that was just beginning to swirl around him? I try to stay calm; try to not let my fears and anxieties for their future take hold. But those fears are always there, just under the surface ready to bubble over. And then again, they aren’t, because I am so overwhelmed, almost petrified that I don’t know what to think or what to do. Most days it’s easier to focus on the tasks at hand; feed the baby, wash the dishes, fold the laundry. Life is already so full!

I hear that was the strategy all along: “flood



the zone,” the administration’s attempt to force their policy agenda all at once, before opponents can react. And in the process, those “checks and balances” I’ve heard about my entire life seem so very precarious. It has been a jarring couple of months waiting to see if the courts truly can keep our democracy in order or if the executive branch will honor their rulings. As executive order after executive order rolls out, I feel completely debilitated. I try to stay informed, seeking ways to engage with these harmful changes but am left feeling hopeless. I want to show up to meetings and protests, but who’s going to make meals for my family, pick kids up from school, or maintain a nap schedule? I’ve called my representatives a few times—when I have a quiet moment, when I remember. It isn’t enough. I know it isn’t. But what else is there to do as a busy parent of three small kids?

It’s impossible to know the impact this administration will have on our lives and my children’s future. Everything seems at risk: from their education to the air that they breathe. In my darkest moments of hopelessness, I have to remind myself that I am not powerless. I am a mom. Everyday I have taken on the beautiful and daunting task of raising three children. And with my power as a mom, I am determined, now more than ever, to raise kind, generous, compassionate humans. May they be critical thinkers, may they appreciate and protect the natural world, may they never lose their strong desire for equality and justice.

All of that is easier said than done. Step one, naturally, is to model those qualities (again, easier said than done). I’ve also discovered the importance of honesty around current events. Of course, most of these conversations tend to arise in the minivan in moments when I feel totally unprepared to address

things such as war, climate change, or the dismantling of democracy. Yet we forge ahead, scrupulously broaching these complex topics with an age-appropriate lens. This is their world too and they deserve nothing less.

Our media and our political leaders are rarely modeling the behavior and values that I expect and hope my children will embody. Thankfully our family is surrounded by a community that is radically modeling hospitality. In the years to come I will continue to lean on my Loaves and Fishes community and our broader community to help raise these little ones. Thank you for showing them a beautiful and generous way to go about living. And in this season of life, when I am most likely at home nap-trapped, thank you for showing up and raising your voice for our family too.

## Up On High

by Drew Anderson

From up on high they’re calling you.

Well, you could just reason with me.  
Cause from right here I see your face,  
Or do my eyes deceive me?

Who could have imagined  
Such times as these?

Would you fall down on your knees  
For a soothing word and golden ring?

If from up high they’re calling you,  
Then why the hell are you doing this?  
Cause you’re no snake oil salesman,  
You’re my friend, you’ve always been.

And we need friends  
In times like these....

We’re wasting time, get off your knees,  
There’s more to be than the boot of a king.

To hear the song put to music check out  
<https://www.climesmusic.com/>

*We Will Survive continued* unremarkable for a hero's journey. I was not an unhappy child! I lived a lovely life in the "before-times," but apocalypse felt near and terminal. I worked hard in high school, tried to be taken seriously at the capitol, hoped that we could legislatively shift toward a future of more flourishing, felt the inflating ego borne of polished marble staircases and well-fitting blazers. Felt too the disempowered performance of conversations that change no one's mind, the limits of legislators that cannot look the poor in the eyes.

In college, I was embraced by abundant, beloved community. I was a fishbowl in a lake, filled and surrounded and sunk with love for the world. I was made new. We read *Black Wave* by Michele Tea (an auto-fiction dystopia where apocalypse isn't so bad, actually), and in the fishbowl, I seriously considered being a Stayer for the first time. The protagonist in *Black Wave* is unlikeable for most of the book; she is not a hero like Katniss, but she doesn't need to be to build a life of meaning in the rubble. And then to let it go. She doesn't save the world. She can't! The world is too big, too entropic. Everything changes in the end, and it all matters. But she stays and stays attentive. A Stayer!

I can't tell if the world is ending differently than before or if it's ending the same amount but uglier and louder. I don't know if I should get a job/go to seminary/learn a trade or compile a "go-bag." I don't know if the oligarchs are profiting off of my attention or if they're relying on my looking away. The dissonance is so loud. I don't think



we're in apocalypse, but I also can't believe anyone that says we'll be ok. I don't think I'll ever have a retirement account because it feels impossible that I'll retire into a world where it's relevant. All the time, I wonder *how worried should I be?* And usually the answer emerges, *I don't know, but I think I am very worried.* And then I take my second-grade self's hand, and I walk her home. "We're all walking each other home," Ram Dass wrote. Even when the world is too big, too entropic to be saved, we are walking. And it matters.

I don't mean to be trite, but what feels real to me right now is community, and loving people as they are, and cooking food, and doing laundry, and being outside, and trying to preserve rotting herbs in salt before they give themselves over to slime. Thank God I'm in a place ripe with this work and only a quick jaunt away from The Lake. Maybe

the world (as we know it) is ending. We will not numb ourselves for we know that one can watch without witness. But to freeze full-time is to submit to an insidious departure from the Staying. People will still need a place to sleep and food to eat. We will wash towels. We will assemble burritos. We will sing. We will be Stayers.

When I first came to Loaves and Fishes, I crept out in the middle of the night and drove down roads I had never seen before in search of high, clear ground to watch lights in the sky. When I got to a trailhead, I walked a bit and then sat in the middle of the path and looked up for hours. It was so dark, it was so bright. Every noise felt shocking, little eyes peeked out, in the distance there was howling. I thought I was about to leave at least fifteen times, but the light would inflate again, and how could I look away? There was a singleness of purpose: in those moments, I only existed to marvel. And now, and now, oh my friends, how can we look away? Bad things are here and worse things are coming. It is scary and disempowering and loud. There is not one right way to move through this moment, but from where I sit in the fishbowl, I am choosing to stay tender and obligated to every living thing. I am choosing to marvel at all the love spiraling around and within and through us. I am not denying the horrors of the world, just rejecting the simplicity of their doom. In the undying words of Gloria Gaynor, singer of the ultimate Stayer's anthem, *As long as I know how to love I know I'll stay alive. I've got all my life to live, I've got all my love to give, and I will survive. (We) will survive.*

*Coming Together for the Common Good continued* took place concerning how to protect our common ground and, at the same time, how to proclaim and celebrate our common good. Part of this journey would be acknowledging the threats from and the hard truths about the Trump administration as well as addressing the challenges of figuring out how we can move forward and solve the problems already facing us.

At the end of the mini-series *Zero Day* on Netflix, the former president finds himself speaking before a joint session of Congress where he shares a letter from his daughter who was serving in Congress and had just turned herself into the authorities for being a co-conspirator to a cyber attack on the U.S. In that letter, his daughter wrote, "The way to solve our problems is to look for common good. Not wins. The way forward is to confront hard truths. Not hide from them."

Right now, the president and many of our political leaders are not looking for the common good in solving our country's problems. It is quite evident that they don't want to move forward by confronting any hard truths, whether it's addressing climate change, the needs for public education or providing basic services to the poor and homeless. They are making every attempt to diminish us, divide us and destroy any efforts to promote the common good in our neighborhoods, cities and nation.

On March 7th, the New York Times reported that the Trump administration wants to remove or delete certain words from the federal government. Words and phrases like mental health, climate science, social justice, immigrants, equity, gender based violence, environmental quality, health disparity and vulnerable populations.

And on March 10th, we heard that

the Trump administration fired more than 1,000 employees from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and fired NASA's chief scientist who had been appointed to lead the agency's work on climate change. Also, the Department of Education fired 1,300 employees and there is a proposal to close all the regional offices for Social Security.

Throughout the book *Moral Ground: Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril*, a group of writers talk about the need to acknowledge and accept our responsibility to come together in meeting and respond to the growing challenges that climate change will bring to the environment, public health and every other facet of our society.

Thich Nhat Hanh advocates that people need to wake up and find their "collective responsibility" and that it is imperative to encourage a change in everyone's consciousness in order to live with a greater sense of compassion and loving-kindness. Robin W. Kimmerer argues for the "moral covenant of reciprocity" where we have a mutual responsibility to care for each other and anyone or anything that sustains us.

Katie McShane states, "It is through its connections with our sentiments that the world becomes a place where we feel at home, a place

that we can come to love, and where we feel a sense of belonging. These are goods that aren't obviously quantifiable in economic terms, but they're a crucial part of what makes human lives go well."

Whether it's climate change or many of the other challenges we face in this country, including racism and economic inequality, how can we create a place that feels like home, where we feel love and belonging? How can we cultivate a mutual responsibility to care for each other and that which sustains us? How do we live with a greater sense of compassion and loving-kindness?

In his book *Pedagogy Of The Oppressed*, Paulo Freire wrote, "Human existence cannot be silence, nor can it be nourished by false words, but only by true words, with which men and women transform the world. To exist humanly, is to move the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new naming. Human beings are not born in silence but in word, in work, in action-reflection."

If we are to come together for the common good, we cannot remain silent. We cannot be nourished by false words. We cannot turn our backs on the numerous problems that our country must face. To do this, we must confront a president and many of our political leaders who want us to stay asleep, keep our mouths closed and not be "woke" or critical thinkers.

Coming together for the common good will require each of us to connect with others, share our compassion, embrace our creative spirits and explore opportunities to collaborate and build community.



Terrence Smith leading song at Coming Together for the Common Good gathering on January 20th, 2025.

# It's Time For Good Trouble

By Tone Lanzillo

Watching this country over the past three months got me thinking about the Philippine journalist Maria Ressa. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2021, she co founded Rappler in 2012, which was a digital news website that focused on exposing corruption in governments and the manipulative powers of technology companies.

In her book, *How To Stand Up To A Dictator*, Ressa wrote, "Democracy is fragile. You have to fight for every bit, every law, every safeguard, every institution, every story. You must know how dangerous it is to suffer even the tiniest cut. This is why I say to us all; we must hold the line."

Her words can serve as a warning to how fragile our democracy is in 2025. This country decided to elect Trump to a second term and his administration has already inflicted a number of cuts on the American landscape since the presidential inauguration on January 20th.

On March 12th, Newsbreak reported that the USDA canceled \$18 million in funding for school meals and food banks in Minnesota.

The same day, The New Republic carried a piece on their website entitled "Trump's FBI Moves To Criminally Charge Major Climate Groups." The FBI was planning to criminalize groups like the Habitat for Humanity for receiving grants from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Also, the FBI informed Citibank that any recipient of EPA climate grants could be considered potentially liable for fraud.

On March 15th, The Hill reported that Trump signed an order to dismantle seven federal agencies that serve the media, libraries and the homeless. The list of agencies targeted included the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at the Smithsonian Institute, and the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund.

In a flurry of public announcements and executive orders, this administration is attacking and attempting to destroy a number of vital and valuable programs and resources that serve and support millions of people around the country. Im-

migrants are living in fear of being deported. Members of the LGBTQ community are fighting to protect their civil rights. Climate activists are being threatened with arrest and jail. Students at colleges and universities are being accused of antisemitism for simply protesting on behalf of the Palestinians.

And when it comes to the earth and environment, the Trump administration has announced that it's withdrawing the U.S. from the Paris Agreement, closing the regional offices of the EPA, and opening public lands to fossil fuel developments.

Back in June, 2018, John Lewis sent out a tweet - "Do not get lost in the sea of despair. Be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble."

At the time, Lewis was serving in Congress representing the 5th congressional district of Georgia in the House of Representatives. Prior to entering politics, he was a key figure in the civil rights movement, having served as a leader in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and the Freedom Rides. Lewis participated in the first mass lunch counter sit-ins in Nashville in 1960 and led the Selma to Montgomery March for voting rights in 1965.

It is now sixty years after the march for voting rights and at this moment there clearly appears to be a need or calling to get in good trouble, necessary trouble.

In 1988, Bruce Hornsby released a song called "Look Out Any Window." This song explored the themes of corporate greed and environmental degradation. Also, Hornsby wanted to highlight the urgent need for a greater awareness and sense of responsibility in a world where too many people were turning a blind eye to the issues that surround us.

*Far away the men too busy getting rich to care. Close their eyes and let it all out into the air.*

*Far away they bend the rules so secretly. Close their eyes and let it all out into the sea.*

*Look out, look out for the fat cat builder man. Turning this into a wasteland.*

Several weeks ago, Al Jazeera reported that the Trump administration was eliminating 31 protections against air and water pollution.

So, when do we make good trouble? Where do we begin? How can we hold the line?

Maybe, we start by looking out our windows and seeing what's taking place around the country.

In trying to figure out how we come together and move forward, I find myself looking back in history to World War 2 and the German occupation of various countries in Western and Eastern Europe - and the births of numerous resistance movements. Whether it was in France, Poland or Belgium, resistance movements were organized and built to defend themselves against Hitler and Nazi Germany. Among the various strategies and activities of these movements, people organized themselves to promote noncooperation with the authoritarian government, practice civil disobedience, counter Nazi propaganda, help others, and provide news and information.

Here in Duluth and other cities around the country we can "dig trenches" and start defending our neighbors against the threats and attacks from the Trump administration. Digging trenches to defend the immigrants, members of the LGBTQ community, college students, climate activists, small farmers and entrepreneurs, the poor and homeless, federal employees, and anyone who's not white, male and privileged.

Host potluck dinners with your neighbors. Sponsor roundtable discussions on the important issues which impact your city. Organize public demonstrations at the offices of elected officials. Write letters to the editors of your local papers.

Good trouble comes in many sizes. None are too small or too large at this extraordinarily challenging moment. Ultimately, we can not be complacent or complicit in our response and resistance to what appears to be an authoritarian government that is threatening to tear the environmental, social, economic and cultural fabrics of our democracy.



## \*About the Artist

Sarah Holst is a parent, artist, and theologian living on



Anishinaabe Land on Madeline Island in Lake Superior. See more of Sarah's work on Instagram @sarahholstart

# Dorothy Day House Notes

By Anne Schepers

Note- names have been changed to protect confidentiality

Last November at our Monday morning Loaves and Fishes community meeting we considered different topics for this newsletter. After a tumultuous year of politics, devastating wars abroad and an uncertain future ahead, it seemed an opportune time for those of us who were willing, to share personal reflections and experiences. I thought writing might offer some clarity but was fooling myself- I rarely put pen to paper- finding my inspiration and insight instead from a brisk hike, bike or ski. So--- shall we take a walk together?

Walking through this past year- my fifth year living at Loaves and Fishes. There were so many guests in and out our doors, so many funeral meal leftovers brought to our table, so many volunteers helping with house duty, house and yard projects, so many phone calls from folks in need. The daily up-and-down routines punctuated by celebrations of birthdays, sobriety anniversaries, holidays, neighborhood events and guests moving on to their own homes. Looking at the whole year is too much - let's break it down a bit.

One moment among so many: Diante, a previous live in guest, is at the door- mutters something that I can't make out.

"Like some coffee, Diante?"

"No, I had some."

"Come on in. Let me check to see if we have mail for you."

He comes in, sits, gets on our internet to check his phone messages. No mail for him.

"Can I get you a sandwich?"

"Nope, I'm fine," though he looks leaner than last I saw him. "I'll be going then." One hour among so many...

Dorothy Day house (for men and non-binary folks) is open to drop-in guests on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. When I started my shift at 5 pm, the house was filling up with dinner guests. I'd noticed George and Shawn sitting on the couch earlier in the afternoon, just hanging



Hibiscus bloom in the DD dining room, a welcome sight in March. Photo by Raymond Payne

out while waiting to do laundry, Shawn had been dosing off a bit.

With a crowded table, I was making a second batch of instant mashed potatoes when I noticed George at the table and Shawn on the couch still napping. Going over to the couch I nudged Shawn and encouraged him to come have supper. He said he was tired and needed a nap. While I continued to refill platters of ham and potatoes, Roger, our neighbor and former guest, was keeping an eye out for Shawn.

Roger, having just lost a cousin and aunt to overdoses in the past three months, was hyper-alert. Becoming concerned about Shawn's napping, Roger tipped off Henry (our super friendly and outgoing live in guest) to check on Shawn. Henry couldn't rouse Shawn and called out that Shawn had overdosed.

Two doses of Narcan later and with paramedics and police filling the house, Shawn was awake and talking. George had retreated to a dark corner in the back hallway and was curled up, apparently afraid to talk with anyone, scared for his friend.

Community. Community is the reason that Shawn is alive today. Studies show that the strength of our connection to community is one of the strongest indicators of good health and long life. Yet within that dinner time community were folks deeply grieving from past losses. Our guests were suffering trauma triggers yet still having to go back to life on the streets.

A Monday among so many:

**0200-** phone call from live-in guest, Johnnie, at the front door. Needing to be let in after his night shift.

**0800-** Jen and Melissa arrive with the food run which is composed of expiring food coming from the Whole Foods Co-op.

**00830-1030-** Our community meeting, where live-in volunteers share, plan and update each other.

**1300-** after having prepped ingredients, several of us gather at Olive Branch to assemble 95 burritos. Two UMD medical students join us- they are part of the Street Medicine interest

group.

**1700-** "Alumni dinner" where former guests join us for supper. Members of Peace Church provide the meal (praise the Lord!).

**1830-** house meeting with our live-in guests.

**1915-** pack up burritos for two volunteers- this week it was Terri and Dave- to bring to the Warming Center, where up to 70 guests stay each night. The WC is staffed by CHUM but doesn't have a food budget.

It's easy to list all the tasks from the "busiest" day of the week. It's harder to recognize and endure the pain and downward spiral of Roger, our neighbor and former guest. Hoping that he keeps showing up at the house. Hoping that he doesn't hit rock bottom. Which he didn't, this time. A couple weeks later he told another guest- "this house is where I get my head back on straight."

And so, and so. Here we are in 2025. Buffeted by change - how do I ground myself in my work and play? By remembering my roots, my commitments, my joys. I became interested in this work because my dad exposed me to the life of Dorothy Day 50 years ago. I continue to do this work because of its transformative effect on my life. I do this work in community because it is at Loaves and Fishes that I find the inspiration, energy and joy to keep me going.

Dorothy Day wrote in her journal (found in the *Duty of Delight*, edited by Robert Ellsberg)- "Every one must go through something analogous to a conversion- conversion to an idea, a thought, a desire, a dream, a vision - without vision the people perish. In my teens I read Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, and Jack London's *The Road*, and became converted to the poor, to a love for and desire to be always with the poor and suffering - the workers of the world. I was converted to the Messianic mission of the proletariat. Ten years later I was converted to Christ because I found him in the people, though hidden. " At Dorothy Day house, we daily see how "people perish" if we don't stay committed to our belief that everyone deserves a warm bed, food and people who care about them. And daily, we receive back more than we have given.

## Loaves & Fishes Housing INC Board Report

By Brooke Tapp, co-chair

At this moment, the kitchen in Hannah House is gutted down to the studs to make way for an improved kitchen after the rats were discovered in the cavities of the kitchen floor July, 2023. It takes a lot of planning, budgeting, fundraising, and decision-making to undertake such an extensive remodeling project. And that is what the Loaves & Fishes Housing INC board, along with our fundraising and project committees, are here to do.

Our board membership is a mix of volunteers living in the Loaves and Fishes community and long-time, outside supporters who care deeply about the welfare of the community and its houses.

I started on the board when I lived at Hannah House seven years ago and stayed on the board even though I moved away. Being on the board keeps me connected to the work that the live-in community members do day-in and day-out. I see my service as a way to protect the structures that provide such needed care for people *Continued on page 8*

**SAVE THE DATE:**

# JEFFERSON STREET BLOCK PARTY

POTLUCK SIGN-UP: 

**AUGUST 23, 2025**

**2-5 PM**

1600 BLOCK OF JEFFERSON STREET

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**



# Notes From Olive Branch

By Terri Drahn

With spring around the corner, we're looking back on autumn and winter at Olive Branch.

In the fall, Olive Branch welcomed our newest live-in volunteer, Catherine. Her contagious laugh, ability to break into song over anything (including distributing house chores!), her phenomenal culinary skills and genuine good nature infuse Olive Branch with joy and good fun.

Alongside Catherine, and among our group of families, Shelly and Terri live-in at Olive Branch. Shelly's wit brings lightness to many moments, and she gives her time openhandedly to those of us seeking a listening ear, help moving, or fierce cribbage opponent. Terri is approaching two years in community. Over this time, and with her activism, and continual intention and presence in relationships, she fosters deepening friendships with those around her, past guests, and within a widening circle. And, living down the street, Kate spends many afternoons and evenings at Olive Branch, and her insight –collected over years of community life– is a gift, as is her knack for anything artistic, and ability to make holidays feel abundant and inclusive of all people, wishes and treats!

This past Christmas Eve, we found "room at the inn" for two new families. We celebrated with gifts and delicious food, all made possible with the generous help/donations of our wider community. Thank you!

As Winter set in, we hunkered down for indoor play – magnetic tiles and Uno abound. With snow came sledding in our neighbor's yard and carving tunnels through shoveled piles of snow. And parents enjoyed needed downtime while kids played on tablets.

What impresses me daily is how hard parents work every day – waking sleepy children, bundling in snowsuits, packing bags, and getting to the bus stop— and all in the dark, cold hours before sunrise!

The daily grind of work, school, laundry, cooking, and feeding children, while trying to guide them to grow into loving adults, is exhausting. Parents and grandparents take on this labor of patience, juggling many commitments, often making room for humor and play, all while their long-term housing hangs in the balance.

To mirror back to our young parents their strength and resilience in these days of living together feels like, perhaps, the best work we do.

As always, we give thanks to all who help

us run Olive Branch – your consistent contributions, including filling in for house duty shifts, bringing a meal, dropping by donations of requested items, and so much more, keep our house in motion. In this time of great uncertainty and anxious spinning thoughts, the daily work of running a House of Hospitality feels like "true north." It is the work that needs doing.



DJ - future engineer constructing a tower in the Olive Branch toy room.

## Hannah House

### Notes

By Chelsea Froemke

The past season has been one of big changes at Hannah House. The biggest change was the birth of our now six-month old, Pax Wesley, in the beginning of October. His birth has brought much joy to our family and community. His name means peace and was chosen in honor of our late friend and community mate, Donna Howard, who committed her life to efforts of nonviolent peace-keeping.

Catherine joined Hannah House briefly this winter before setting



The big sisters snuggling with Pax.

at Olive Branch. She brought a love for children, delicious cooking, and infectious laughter that will be missed. It was a joy sharing space and life with Catherine and we are all grateful that she is only a block away.

In the beginning of March we temporarily moved across town because of the renovation work in the Hannah House kitchen. This project has been a long time coming after the rat infestation of 2023. A

number of significant structural problems are being addressed in this renovation. The house will forever be a little cattywampus but now, thankfully, won't get any worse. A few weeks ago the kitchen floor was raised and I am in disbelief that it is

now actually close to level!

We are so very grateful to Loaves & Fishes alum and friend, Doris Malkus, who has generously welcomed us into her beautiful home on Observation Hill during this renovation. It is so special to watch our children's friendship with Doris deepen and it is a humbling experience to be on the receiving end of hospitality. We will relish these days in this new place while we eagerly anticipate our return to Hannah House.

Our lives continue to pivot around the kiddos in our household. They continue to amaze us with their resilience and flexibility during this season of change. We have been especially impressed with our eldest's ability to befriend all elementary aged children within a three-block radius of our new temporary home. Drew and Chelsea are eager to continue our commitment to foster care once we return to Hannah House later this spring.

## Bike Cave Report

By Drew Anderson

As always, the Bike Cave continues to thrive. So many people we serve depend on the bicycle as a means of transportation. And while we see plenty of other bicycle enthusiasts come through our doors, it is the unsheltered population we see the most. Two consecutive, unseasonably warm winters have resulted in us being busier than usual.

Last year, we broke our bicycle adoption record at around 130 bikes! This was only possible due to our team of dedicated volunteers, myself, Issac and Ken, along with friends who help when they can. We certainly miss our one and only Oceanographer mechanic, Daniel, but we hear he's doing alright out west.

This winter we've been excited to see some new prospective volunteers. Val has been



Jay Johnson  
7/17/1958 – 2/3/2025

developing a knack for the truing stand and has ignited a fun collaboration between us, Zeitgeist, Continental, the DTA and WLSSD to develop a Bike Cave-like program downtown (we so desperately need this!) We're keeping our fingers crossed on some potential grant funding.

We also experienced a major loss this year: our dear friend, Jay Johnson, passed away. Jay avidly supported the Bike Cave over many years. He also had the bug for

restoring abandoned and salvaged bikes, making them affordable/accessible to people who needed the transportation. He often popped by the Cave to help out and exchange parts for bicycle builds. Outside of the Bike Cave, Jay and his loving partner, Shelly, are dear friends of mine. Once upon a time, they found a

tandem bicycle at a garage sale and surprise-gifted it to Chelsea and me. We have wonderful memories of visits to their home with our foster kiddos, where we got to meet their little village of farm animals (ducks, chickens, cats and dogs). Once during a visit, Jay insisted that we all pick a polished agate from his impressive collection to take home. It was then that he instilled in me the concept: "You don't find an agate, the agate finds you!"

Jay's compassion helped shape the ethos of the Bike Cave and we are honored to carry that legacy forward as best we can.

So, for now, the Bike Cave is currently open every Wednesday, 1-5 PM and, starting May, we will also be around on Sundays, 1-5 PM. If you're ever curious about what the Bike Cave is or how you may plug in, just come by when we're open. It's that simple and you won't regret it.



Hippie Jay at our annual "Bike Grave" Halloween ride.

**Dorothy Day House**  
1712 Jefferson Street  
Duluth, MN 55812  
(218) 724-2054

**Bike Cave**  
1712 Jefferson Street  
Basement/Backyard  
(218) 302-5523

**Olive Branch**  
1614 Jefferson Street  
Duluth, MN 55812  
(218) 728-0629

**Loaves & Fishes Housing INC  
or Hannah House**  
1705 Jefferson Street  
Duluth, MN 55812

## Current Needs:

- Socks (adult small sizes)
- Boxers (M or L)
- Nitrile gloves for Bike Cave (S, M, L)
- Laundry detergent
- New Pillows
- Bed bug covers for twin, full, or queen bed
- Convertible car seat
- Gas cards
- Bus passes
- Sugar
- Baby Wipes
- Toilet paper
- Dish Soap
- Coffee

Donations can be delivered to 1614 (Wednesday, Friday, Sunday) or 1712 Jefferson Street (Tuesday, Thursday, Friday). Ask for the volunteer on duty.

## Monetary Donations:

Checks can either be made out to *Loaves and Fishes* (NOT tax deductible) for unrestricted needs of the community and our guests, OR to *Loaves and Fishes Housing* (tax deductible) for house maintenance and repair only. Send donations to 1705 Jefferson St, Duluth, MN 55812. Online donations can be made at [www.loavesandfishesduluth.com](http://www.loavesandfishesduluth.com)



## Volunteer Needs:

- Live-in volunteers at both Olive Branch and Dorothy Day! Come share life and help run the houses. Feel free to contact us at [duluthcatholicworker@gmail.com](mailto:duluthcatholicworker@gmail.com) for more info.
- Plumbers, electricians and carpenters to assist with small projects around our four old houses.
- Volunteers with trucks or trailers to help occasionally with dump runs, donation deliveries and helping guests move into new apartments.
- Meal angels to bring a prepared meal for 12-15 people once a month.
- Volunteers to help cover house duty shifts at both Olive Branch and Dorothy Day

For more information or to update your mailing address please email us at [duluthcatholicworker@gmail.com](mailto:duluthcatholicworker@gmail.com)

## Who We Are:

Loaves and Fishes is a community of people inspired by Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement to build "a new society within the shell of the old." We believe in a world that is abundant with resources and love, and that there is enough for everyone if we share. As a community we offer family-style hospitality to people experiencing homelessness; operate a no-cost neighborhood bicycle shop to promote shared economics; organize with our neighbors to protect everyone's right to housing; and study and practice nonviolence in our interpersonal relationships and in our politics. Loaves and Fishes is entirely volunteer-run and receives no government funding.

Current live-in members of Loaves and Fishes Community are: Drew Anderson, Emma Bromage, Shelly Bruecken, Terri Drahm, Chelsea Froemke, Tone Lanzillo, Catherine McComas-Bussa, Dave McComas-Bussa, Anne Schepers, and Kate Young. Many other people are part of our community as volunteers, donors, meal providers and advocates.



Construction of the Dorothy Day House basement stairs.



Gavia and Drew inspecting the new stairs



Joel, Doris, and Anne cutting the ribbon at our stair celebration!



The beam. One of many structural improvements included in the Hannah House kitchen project.

*L&F Housing INC Board Report continued* experiencing homelessness, addiction recovery and mental illness.

The mission of the board is to lessen the burden of stress caused by failing roofs, water damaged bathrooms, and the general wear and tear that happens to these houses that are so well lived-in. Just in the past five years, we have completed some impressive structural improvements to these old homes:

### 2020

- Dorothy Day full kitchen remodel

### 2021

- Olive Branch sewer line replacement
- Dorothy Day re-roofing

### 2022

- OB partial kitchen remodel, 1st floor bathroom expansion and bedroom remodel
- Hannah House roof replacement, solar panel installation and property-line adjustment.

### 2023

- Olive Branch re-roofing
- Dorothy Day 1st floor bathroom repair/re-

tiling and toilet upgrades

- New Hannah House garden shed, garden retaining wall build
- Bread and Roses electric service panel upgrade and lead water supply line replacement

### 2024

- New Dorothy Day basement stairs and Bike Cave concrete patio installation
- Olive Branch kitchen counter and sink upgrade, and bedroom lead remediation
- Hannah House bathroom remodel
- Bread and Roses porch window replacements, garden retaining wall and foundation repair

### 2025 (in process)

- Dorothy Day siding
- Olive Branch backyard patio
- Hannah House kitchen remodel
- Bread and Roses guest bedroom remodel and sink replacement

None of these projects could have been completed without the volunteer efforts of our board and sub-committees. Successful grant applications, fundraising events and ongoing community support funded these improved projects that safeguard the longevity of Loaves and Fishes houses and the work of hospitality.

If the work and mission of the board calls to you, we currently have an opening! A knack for fundraising, crunching numbers and/or insight into property management are welcomed skills. Not everyone that wants to participate in a solution to poverty and homelessness can live at one of the four houses of hospitality, and there are so many other ways we can be part of the solution. I'm grateful for the opportunity the board and committees provides me to be a part of the incredible community that is Loaves & Fishes.



Kate, Tone, Emma, Dave, Shelly, Anne, Catherine, Terri, Pax, Chelsea, Drew

