

The Elizabethan



The Newsletter of St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church Burien, Washington

February 2017

From Fr. John:

On January 27th, Donald Trump issued an executive order temporarily banning travel from seven Muslim-majority countries. The order raised numerous legal questions, set off multiple political firestorms and induced thousands of people to protest around the country as people who had previously been approved to come to the United States were being detained at airports. The political rhetoric seems to be increasingly polarizing as people demonize those with whom they disagree.

Thankfully, that polarization is not making headway at St. Elizabeth, whose parishioners cover the political spectrum from conservative Republicans to moderately liberal Democrats and progressive independents, and some folks in between. We seem to be able to maintain differences of opinion and politics without making the mistake of mistreating each other, and for that, I am proud of this parish.

Regardless of our varied political affiliations and leanings, I am compelled to point out the *moral and spiritual* travesty of Trump's action. While we can agree that keeping U.S. citizens safe is a value shared across the political spectrum, this action seeks to procure safety by putting other people at great risk; some of them among the most vulnerable in the world. The number of U.S. citizens killed by immigrants from any of the eight countries listed has stood at exactly "0" for decades. Moreover, there are persuasive arguments from our military, academic, civil and other leaders that this ban may, in fact, stimulate danger rather than provide safety.

In the church, leaders from Christian denominations as diverse as far right evangelicals to centrist and far left mainline churches have voiced their opposition. Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Anglicans, Lutherans, Baptists and Methodists have all added their voices. And though this ban is currently temporary, it immediately affects people in our own parish.

And yet, whether we agree with the new White House or not, there is no cause for vilifying each other. I may find White House denials of a "Muslim ban" to be misleading, but I will not reduce my objection to the level of name-calling even in pointing to the immorality of targeting categories of people for exclusion on the grounds of baseless fear.

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On the day Trump issued the order, our own Bishop Rickel wrote what I consider to be a measured and thoughtful statement of opposition. I agree with his stance, but what I find most reassuring is the tone and so I am passing it along to you as people of the Diocese of Olympia. Please read the following statement in its entirety, keeping in mind that we promise to God in our baptismal vows to seek and serve Christ in ALL persons, to strive for justice and peace among ALL people, and to respect the dignity of EVERY human being.

Thank you.

Fr. John

“Dear ones,

Today, President Trump issued an executive order severely limiting the immigration of refugees from predominantly Muslim countries. I cannot support the president's order placing restrictions on refugees based on their nationality and religion. This executive order is a violation of the foundational principles of our nation. As a member of the Jesus movement, I believe the United States has a moral responsibility to receive and help resettle refugees from the more than 65 million people who have been displaced by war, violence, famine, and persecution. To turn these vulnerable people away and limit the flow of refugees into our country is to dishonor the One we serve.

“The Diocese of Olympia's Refugee Resettlement Office (RRO) assists in the resettlement of 190 individuals each year. Many of these refugees come from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Libya - all countries that could fall under President Trump's executive order. The RRO assists refugees by meeting families at the airport, providing cultural orientation, helping families find and furnish an apartment, and helping them find employment. The office also provides English classes, helps refugees achieve financial stability with a matched savings program, and provides loans for refugee micro-enterprises. The parishioners of St. James, Kent and Saint Mark's Cathedral, Seattle have worked with the Refugee Resettlement Office to sponsor two families who arrived from Syria in the last year.

“According to the executive order, the refugee program will be suspended for 120 days, until a more "extreme vetting" process can be implemented. The Syrian refugee program will be discontinued indefinitely. I oppose these restrictions. The vetting process for refugees coming into the United States is already more thorough and rigorous than anywhere else in the world.

“I also oppose these policies because the danger posed by refugees has been greatly exaggerated. Since 1975, there have only been eight deaths linked to acts of terrorism committed by refugees or asylum seekers. During that same period, there have been 438 deaths linked to acts of terrorism committed by U.S. citizens.

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The Elizabethan is published monthly by St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church. The deadline for articles is the fourth Friday of each month.

Articles, calendar items and ideas may be mailed or emailed to the addresses below or left in *The Elizabethan* box in the Parish Office.

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This Old House of God....Building Update

The Parish Hall and kitchen have been listed on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) commercial leasing site. We have had two showings in the past week. If you know anyone that is interested in leasing the space, please have them contact Tony Hettler.

Neighborhood House continues on their remodeling renovation project. We have run into some plumbing issues, but after a couple of meetings with the architect, Neighborhood House and the building contractors we have an acceptable modification plan in place. The unfortunate impact is that we are now a couple of weeks behind schedule, although the contractor is looking for opportunities to improve schedule performance.

Parts for repairing the drinking fountain in the hallway across from the library have been ordered. Hopefully we will have a functioning drinking fountain in the near future!

Linda Knutson

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“The irony is not lost on me that this executive order has been signed on Holocaust Remembrance Day, reminding us all that our nation turned away thousands of Jewish refugees fleeing the genocide in Europe. President Trump's executive order will not make our nation safer, it will only condemn thousands of innocent families fleeing violence and persecution. As Christians, we are called to acts of love and compassion.

“Key Points to Remember

- There are more than 65 million people displaced by war, violence, famine, and persecution.
- The United States already has the most rigorous and thorough vetting process for allowing refugees into our country.
- Since 1975, there have only been 8 deaths linked to acts of terrorism committed by refugees or asylum seekers.
- Since 1975, there have been 438 deaths linked to acts of terrorism committed by US Citizens.
- The RRO helps resettle 190 individuals each year.
- The RRO provides a variety of services to help refugees resettle in a new culture and a new community.
- Any ban on a specific religion or nation is against our nation's values.

Blessings,

+Greg

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Hospitality House updates!

St. Elizabeth's church will be providing the evening meals for Hospitality House during the week of March 14-19. If you would like to help with this, please sign up on the church bulletin board, or call Christine at 206-243-6844, or Danielle at 206-243-3502.

We do this three times a year and the wonderful home cooked meals are always appreciated by the residents of the house as a sign of our caring.

The Spring Fling, which is a fundraiser for the work of Hospitality House, is scheduled for March 4, at St. Francis Catholic Church. This is always a good time for a good cause! Some of the items offered for the auction are the following:

Santa Fe anyone? Once again, we are auctioning off a 4day/3night stay at a condo, including airfare, in beautiful Santa Fe, New Mexico (\$1500 Value). Enjoy the history and culture of Santa Fe through its artwork, trading posts and large open air markets.

Wish to stay a little closer to home? We have the ticket for you – why not bid on a round-trip hydroplane ride from Seattle to Victoria BC via The Victoria Clipper (\$375 Value). Either return the same day or make it a longer trip by staying overnight in Victoria and catch a return boat on your own schedule.

Don't want to go to either of those places? Then create your own trip destination! We will be auctioning off (4) one-way passes from Southwest Airlines (\$800 Value) and two round trip tickets from Spirit Airlines (\$1000 Value). You pick the time and place!

There will be music, fantastic desserts, and many and varied items to bid on for the benefit of the House. The dinner is created and served by the students of the Puget Sound Skills Center. The cost of the dinner is \$50.00, and tickets may be purchased by Brown Paper Tickets.

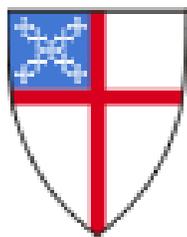
Please consider coming to the Spring Fling for a good time, and a good cause. If there are any questions, please call Danielle Butz at 206-243-3502.

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