

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Being Safe May Require Change

BY DAN

At a clergy retreat last week, storyteller Sheila Arnold recounted how a woman she knows desperately wanted to attract beautiful songbirds to her front porch. She had seen her neighbor's array of bird feeders and even a bird bath and wanted to recreate the same setup. So, paying close attention to the porch next door, she did her best to emulate it. However, days passed and not a single bird visited. She double checked that she had put out the right kind of bird feed and that the height of the feeders was correct. Yep. It was the right kind and the right setup, all guaranteed to bring droves of birds to her front steps, yet none had come. Not one. Days turned into weeks. She was desperate and confused as she looked over at her neighbor's porch day after day and saw so many birds flying in and out. "What am I doing wrong?" she asked herself.

Finally, her neighbor noticed her outside one day and asked how her porch makeover was going. "Not so well. No birds seem interested in my porch."

"Oh? Let me take a look," the neighbor said as she walked over. After a brief inspection, she kindly told her, "You have to remove your wind chimes. The birds are startled by the extra noise on the porch."

The lady was stunned. Something as simple and seemingly harmless as wind chimes had kept the birds from coming to her home all these weeks. Sure enough, as soon as she removed them, the birds came.

I think this story helps remind me that there are plenty of noises in our lives, but some are making our spaces unsafe for others. If you want "the song birds" to feel comfortable on your front porch (whoever or whatever that might be for you), you may have to remove some of the "wind chimes" (whoever or whatever that might be for you). We want to make our spaces, our dorm rooms, our classrooms, our clubs, our meetings as inclusive as possible. Let's try to find what "wind chimes" (though possibly well meaning or pretty sounding) might be hurdles for others feeling truly welcome.

CONT'D ON PAGE 02



This issue:

"Being Safe May Require Change"

by Rev. Dan Harrison
Pastor, Church of the Covenant

PAGE 01

Sympathies, Concerns,
and Congrats

PAGE 02

Interfaith Holidays and
Dates to Remember

PAGE 02

Information on October 5th
Courageous Conversation
with Dr. Larry Ward

PAGE 03

For more information about the Spiritual Life Center,
including info on our student groups, go to our webpage -
link in the email signature. You can also visit our Linkt.ree
(Link is in email).

Being Safe (cont'd)

I know most of us on campus, including Church of the Covenant on Sunday mornings, work tirelessly to make our events inclusive. However, we are not perfect and need feedback when spaces aren't as inclusive as they should be. So, please speak up and let us know how we might improve. We want everyone to feel welcome and know they are fully appreciated. The "song birds" are more important than the "wind chimes." Let's be safe for one another!

Love and light, Pastor Dan



Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats

Congratulations to:

- **Dustin Haase '16** (Enrollment, Marketing & Communications) and his wife, Britt Mays '13, on the birth of their daughter. Wren Haase was born on September 3, 2023, and she was 6 pounds, 8 ounces.



Interfaith Holidays

October 6-8

Shemini Atzeret (Judaism)

October 7-8

Simchat Torah (Judaism)

Dates to Remember

Weekly on Sundays in Snidow Chapel:

- 11 a.m. Worship with Church of the Covenant
- 4:30 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass

TODAY! Wednesday, October 4

5:45 p.m. - Outside the SLC

PIZZA IN THE HUT

(Email Bryant.J@lynchburg.edu to RSVP)

Thursday, October 5

3:30 p.m. - Virtual

America's Racial Karma: A Courageous Conversation with Dr. Larry Ward
(Scan QR Code on page 3 to join)

Friday, October 20

WHEN DO YOU FEEL SAFE?

- 12 p.m. - Lunch panel. East Room
- 3 p.m. - Bullet melting ceremony. Outside Dillard Fine Art Center
- 5 p.m. - Artist reception. Daura Museum of Art
- Through Dec. 7 - Exhibition. Daura Museum of Art

Thursday, October 5th at 3:30 pm

America's Racial Karma: A Courageous Conversation with Zen Buddhist teacher, Dr. Larry Ward

About Dr. Larry Ward

Dr. Larry Ward is the co-founder and executive director of **The Lotus Institute**, a senior teacher in Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh's Plum Village tradition of Engaged Buddhism, and the author of **America's Racial Karma: An Invitation to Heal**. Dr. Ward holds a PhD in Religious Studies with an emphasis on Buddhism and the neuroscience of meditation. As a teacher, Larry interweaves insights with personal stories and resounding clarity that express his Dharma name, "True Great Sound."



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SCAN TO JOIN!

**Join the Conversation virtually on
Thursday, October 5th @ 3:30 p.m.**