

# The Mustard Seed.

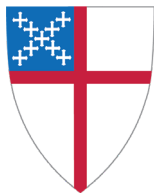
A newsletter from Holy Faith Church

Summer 2019



*Episcopal Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry, left, and ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton, right*

Holy Faith Church  
Episcopal and ELCA Lutheran  
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Deacon:	The Rev. Don Dersnah
Musician:	Jesse Morgan
Choir Director:	Rikki Morrow-Spitzer
Office Manager:	Laurie Tikkanen

Sunday Services: 8:15 & 10:00 am

## Summer 2019 - Church Governance



The Rev. Andrea Martin

Dear friends,

The focus of our summer newsletter is church governance, after both our denominations met recently at the local level to conduct important business: the ELCA of Southeastern Michigan gathered for its annual Synod Assembly in mid-May, and the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan convened June 1st to elect their 11th Bishop.

Holy Faith’s belonging to the ELCA Lutheran and Episcopal Churches is a gift in many ways. While some Christian churches are stand alone entities, Holy Faith is part of a larger community that stretches across the globe and across millennia. For starters, what this means is that Holy Faith parishioners are less vulnerable to the whims and idiosyncrasies of the Pastor.

For instance, we follow a lectionary cycle of readings each Sunday, ensuring a balanced diet of scripture. ELCA and Episcopal pastors cannot get away with preaching their favorite scriptures and pet themes. Additionally, ELCA and Episcopal pastors are bound by what our denominations have determined to be worship practices that are both theologically sound and historical (rooted in how the earliest Christians prayed).

Although some days you might wish your pastor prayed extemporaneously, by and large, parishioners can give thanks for the set prayers that have been prayed by the faithful for centuries and which are guided by scripture and deep theological reflection. No one is made to pray the particular prayer of the Pastor. Rather, our prayer can be common prayer in which we can all participate.

More practically, we derive daily benefit from our membership in the larger denominational bodies. For instance, we receive resources and templates for much of the nuts-and-bolts of parish administration. Things like building insurance and clergy pensions can be offered by each denomination at the national level. Templates for children’s and adult education may be shared.

Collaborative partnerships for doing good and serving others is what is most exciting about our belonging to denominations that organize at the local, national, and global levels. Though none of us at Holy Faith can personally prevent the spread of malaria in African countries, both the ELCA and Episcopal Churches are there and using our resources in our names to save lives. That is just one example. Closer to home, Holy Faith has teamed up with our sister ELCA churches to recycle soft plastics.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of HFC’s newsletter, and I also pray you have Sabbath rest and restoration this summer.

Yours in Christ,  
Andrea+

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## Lutherpalians

**Bishop Gibbs and Bishop Kreiss meet monthly to discuss overlapping concerns for God's people in Southeast Michigan, including federated parishes like Holy Faith. Both denominations anticipate increased opportunities for partnership in the years ahead.**



*EDOMI Bishop - Rev. Wendell N. Gibbs, Jr.*



*SEMI Synod ELCA Bishop - Rev. Dr. Donald P. Kreiss*

Bishop Gibbs graduated from the Seabury - Western Seminary in Evanston, IL in 1987. After serving at Emmanuel Church in Rockford, IL (1987-1989) and in several other positions, Gibbs became rector of St. Andrew's, in Cincinnati, OH in 1993, where he served until he was elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Michigan on Oct. 2, 1999 and consecrated as bishop on Feb. 5, 2000.

Bishop Kreiss earned a Master of Divinity degree and a Doctor of Ministry in preaching from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Kreiss served as pastor of King of Glory Evangelical Lutheran Church in Flushing, MI before he became senior pastor at Antioch Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills, MI. Kreiss was elected bishop of the SEMI Synod on May 14, 2011.

Both the Episcopal Church and the ELCA Lutheran Church are governed at a national level (as well as at the local diocesan or synod, level). Here are some interesting facts about each church.

**Episcopal National Office:**

New York City, NY

**Presiding Bishop and Primate:**

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry - 9-year term

**First:**

African-American Presiding Bishop and Primate

**Primary Decision Making Body:**

Triennial General Convention made up of national representatives

**Last Meeting:**

July 2018 in Austin, TX where HFC parishioner Gail Graham attended as a visitor

**ELCA National Office:**

Chicago, IL

**Presiding Bishop:**

Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton - 6-Year Term

**First:**

Woman Presiding Bishop

**Primary Decision Making Body:**

Triennial General Assembly made up of national representatives

**Next Meeting:**

August 2019 in Milwaukee, WI where a new presiding bishop will be elected

## Rev. Dr. Bonnie Perry Elected Bishop for the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan

*By: Jessica VillaGomen, Chicago Tribune  
June 2, 2019*

When the Rev. Dr. Bonnie Perry first started working at All Saints Episcopal Church in Ravenswood, Illinois, she remembers the pews being filled with no more than 30 parishioners during a Sunday service. Now, Perry estimates more than 300 people come to a service.

The secret? Building an active community inside and outside church walls, she said.

“We’re fun, we’re vital, we’re relevant,” Perry said. “We worry about what’s important. When the world is having a hard time, this is a place you can cry. When you’re angry, it’s a place people can express our outrage.”

But after 26 years in Chicago, Perry, who serves as the rector of All Saints, is planning her departure after being elected bishop for the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan. She is the first woman and first openly gay priest to be elected bishop in Michigan.

“My transition is one of those changes and moments of growth for this faith community,” Perry said of her move.

Rebecca Wilson, a spokeswoman for the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, said that the move to bishop in the Episcopal faith can be a long process.

When a bishop announces his or her departure, a search committee is formed to find a replacement. That team then names four or five people as options; Perry was one of four candidates for the vacancy in Michigan.

Then there are visits by the finalists, when community members are able to ask questions. Eventually an electing convention, made up of clergy from the diocese and community members, takes a vote to determine the bishop. To be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of votes from both clergy and laypeople.

Raised a devout Catholic, Perry studied divinity at New York’s Union Theological Seminary. During her studies, Perry met her wife, Susan Harlow.



*Rev. Dr. Bonnie Perry*

Perry went on to be received into the Episcopal Church and she then served at various churches in New Jersey. She came to Chicago in 1992 in what she calls the best decision of her life.

“In the last 26 years I have encouraged All Saints, Chicago, as it has changed and grown,” Perry wrote in an essay response for the bishop position. She continued: “Anti-racism work, young people’s formation, feeding our neighbors, Christmas pageants, world-wide LGBTQ rights, multiple capital campaigns, baptisms, burials, marriages and blessings, and hundreds of relationships have taught me that the stuff of church is deep, Holy work. God is good.”

Perry said she is excited to move on to Michigan and answer her calling. Her parishioners are thrilled for her, too.

“It’s bittersweet because I’ve been a part of this community for a long time. There are people I have baptized and have married,” she said. “But they are a super strong group of people and they know that for any organization to be vital, it always needs to change and grow.”

Perry is scheduled to be ordained and consecrated in the Diocese of Michigan in February 2020.

## Bishop Election: A Delegate's Perspective



*Molly Hilton served as one of three delegates representing Holy Faith at the June 1st Special Convention to elect the 11th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan. Every Episcopal parish in the diocese, regardless of size, sends three delegates to every convention. The last time the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan elected a bishop was in 1999. After the election, Pastor Andrea asked Molly her thoughts.*

***When the slate of candidates was announced, and we learned the names and the backgrounds of the four nominees, what was your initial reaction?***

My first response was, "Wow! Four women candidates." I then watched the introductory videos of the candidates and read their biographies and thought, "How did they find four such incredibly qualified candidates?"

***Did you know from the start which candidate you were supporting? How did your opinion develop?***

I initially thought that all the candidates were good, but there was something about the way that The Rev. Dr. Bonnie Perry spoke fearlessly about God and the joy she conveyed that moved her to the top of my list. I originally had a different candidate in mind as my second choice, but after the walkabout session my fourth place candidate moved up to my second choice.

***How did you see the Holy Spirit active in the process?***

I prayed that we would find the candidate that was best for our diocese. I was pleased to find that most people

that I spoke with placed The Rev. Dr. Bonnie Perry as their first choice as well.

On the day of the election, with all the praying and singing we did calling upon the Holy Spirit, the spirit was going to be amongst us whether we wanted her or not. I joke, but you could feel the spirit moving through the cathedral. It was a long day, but I felt nourished and pleased with the process.

***What was the most exciting thing about participating in the election?***

I was very excited to be participating in the election of a bishop and play my own small part in the apostolic succession. I'm old enough to not take for granted that a woman or a member of the LGBTQ community is often still not seen as an obvious choice. I was very pleased to see that our diocese could move beyond the labels and see the person and the light of God shining through that person. I was moved to tears when the election was announced and the congregation rose as one and started singing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow..."



Molly Hilton reviewing proceedings



Inside the cathedral



Passing out and collecting ballots

## 2019 Michigan Synod Assembly

By: Wendy and Andy Amstutz



271 ELCA Lutherans met recently for the 2019 Southeast Michigan Synod Assembly. Wendy and Andy Amstutz were there, and they bring back this news from the event.

### **“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1**

On Friday, May 17 and Saturday, May 18 we attended the Southeast Michigan Synod Assembly at Calvary Lutheran church in Clarkston. Pastor Barry Osterbur and Pastor Andrea Martin were also there.

The theme of the assembly was Hebrews 11:1: “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” We heard faith talks from several amazing people while also doing important business of the synod and hearing reports from various ministries. The credentials committee does the important work of keeping the statistics of participants while simultaneously telling really bad jokes.

#### **Attendees Report:**

Total - 271, Clergy - 86, Lay Men - 68, Lay Women - 81, Youth - 3, Non-voting Visitors - 36

#### **Elected to Synod Council:**

- Vice President of Synod Council:  
Paul Archer, Hope, Dearborn
- Secretary of Synod Council:  
Sonja Markwart, All Saints, Hartland

- Conference 4:  
Beth Paulo, Christ, Sterling Heights
- Conference 5:  
Geraldine Udell, First English, Grosse Pointe Farms
- Conference 10:  
Elizabeth Friedman, Lord of Light, Ann Arbor

#### **Elected to the Consultation Committee:**

- Jamie Authier, Faith, Shelby Twp
- Alex Steward, Trinity, Richmond
- Jill Heather, Emmanuel, Southfield
- George Evalt, Celebration, Westland
- Beky Huepenbecker, Christ, Monroe

#### **Elected to the Discipline Committee:**

- Ken Greble, Calvary, Clarkston
- Heather Oberlin, St. Thomas, Grosse Ile
- Scott Pike, Our Saviour, Port Huron
- Janice Locke, St. John, Farmington Hills

The By-laws were updated to add the positions of an Assistant Secretary and an Assistant Treasurer and to provide a transition plan for these positions.

## Former Holy Faith Interim Pastor Stan Eckermann was recognized for 50 years of ministry service.



**Patricia Hartig, Regional Gift Planner from the ELCA Foundation** presented this important Partner Ministry and offered to come to any congregation in the area to help create an Endowment Gift Policy, an Endowment Fund, and meet with parishioners one-on-one to help develop a gift plan.

**Living Waters Ministry** reported a healthy growth over the last few years and have plans to renovate and continue to innovate at Stony Lake over the next 10 years. They have given \$161,160 in scholarships to 498 students who would otherwise be unable to attend.

**Deacon Sue Rothmeyer, ELCA Church-wide representative** brought greetings from Bishop Elizabeth Eaton and the national church. "We are Church, We are Lutherans, We are Church Together, We are church for the sake of the world." She invited us to participate on Sunday, September 8th in "God's work, our Hands" Sunday, a national day of Service for the ELCA church.

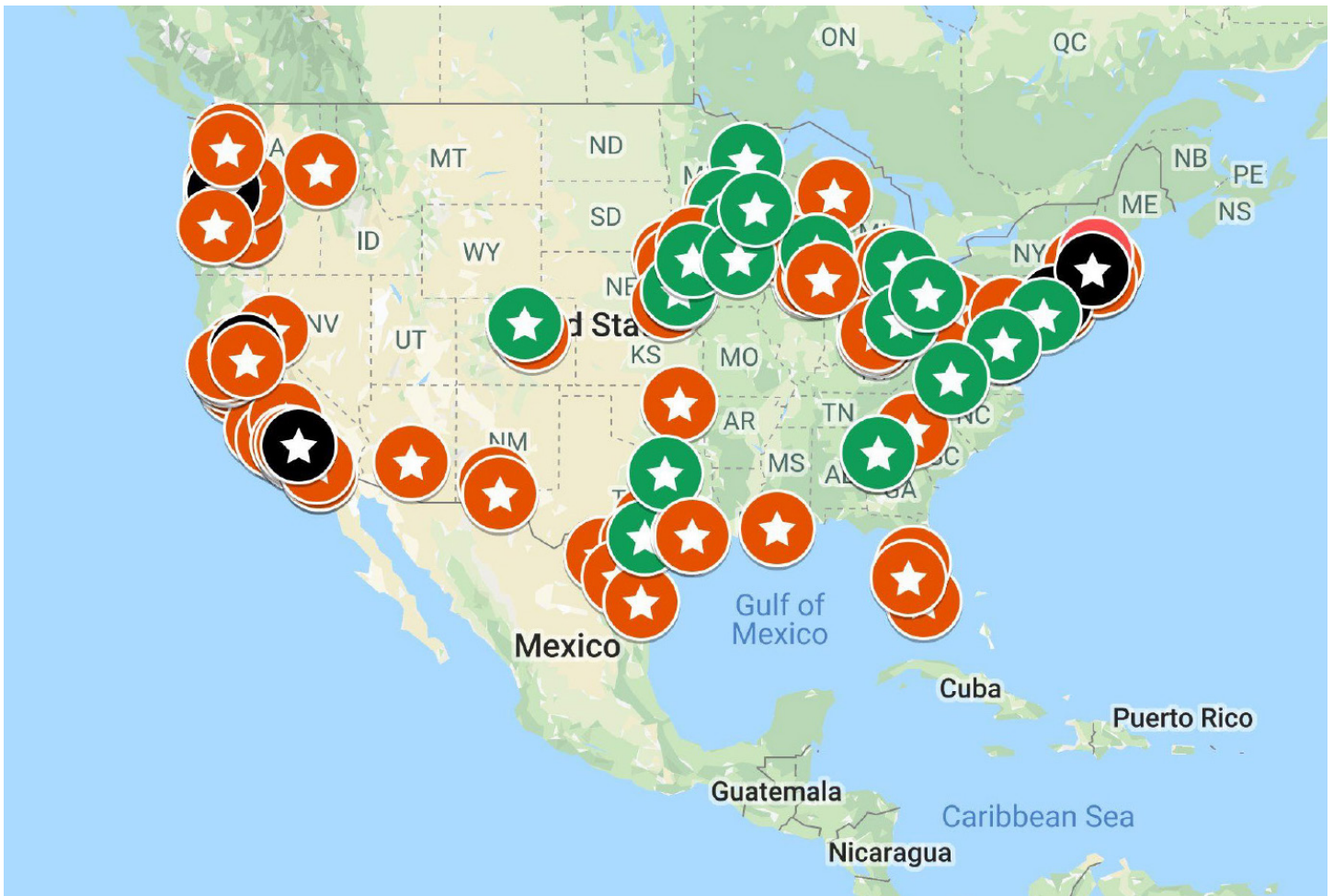
**Manisha Dostert, Senior Associate Rector at Christ Church Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills**, the largest Episcopal congregation in Michigan, gave a tear jerking Faith Talk about growing up as a first generation Indian / American and in the Jain religion before being baptized in the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod at the age of 26.

**Rev. Imad Haddad pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hope Ramallah in Palestine**, who studied at the Near East School of Theology Beirut, Lebanon, and completed one year of studies (a Lutheran year) at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia South Carolina and was for months planning to come to the Synod Assembly to deliver a faith talk. He was denied a visa from the US and could not be with us.

Recognitions of Anniversaries included **George Watson**, who is retiring after serving as the Secretary of the SEMI Synod for the past 28 years (since 1991), and **Pastor Stan Eckermann**, celebrating 50 years of ministry service.



*Living Waters Ministries, Stony Lake*



Map showing synods, congregations, task forces, and organizations participating in AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities)

Four resolutions and three memorials were passed. The memorials will be sent to the national ELCA Church for the church-wide assembly this August.

**Resolution 1** updates the phrase “gay and lesbian people” where it appears in the 1992 “Affirmation of Welcome” document to be “Christians of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions.”

**Resolution 2** updated the 2020 Minimum Compensation guidelines to include Paternal Leave equal to Maternal Leave which is up to eight weeks.

**Resolution 3** resolved that the Southeast Michigan Synod become an AMMPARO Synod (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) and encouraged us to pray each Thursday morning when 27 members of the synod are with minors in the Detroit Immigration Court.

**Resolution 4** resolved that the Southeast Michigan Synod clearly and explicitly renounce sexism and sexual misconduct in all its forms, as well as to commit to creating safe spaces for survivors. The synod council is called upon to recommit to standards of accountability which are in line with the document “Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline.” This protocol is to be posted on the ELCA Web Site. **Memorial 2** which is similar to this resolution will be sent to the national church in August.

**Memorial 1** requested that Bishop Eaton petition the administration and legislation to ensure that US funds do not support military detention, interrogation or abuse of Palestinian children in violation of international law.

**Memorial 3** requested Bishop Eaton to petition the administration and legislation to restore funding to the East Jerusalem Hospitals and to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).



## 2019 Michigan Synod Assembly Bishop's Report

By: Bishop Donald P. Kreiss

*In the Report of the Bishop, Bishop Donald P. Kreiss answered the question, "What is the Southeast Michigan (SEMI) Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?"*



The SEMI Synod of the ELCA is composed of 11 counties in southeast Michigan, with 109 worshipping communities. Along with those communities are included:

- The Lutheran Campus ministry partnered with "Lord of Light" congregation on the campus of the University of Michigan
- Congregations under development or redevelopment (such as Salem, Flint; The Detroit Cooperative Church; King of Kings, Lake Orion; and St. Philip, Trenton)
- Mission congregations (such as Grace in Action; Asian Indian Ministry at St. John, Farmington; Hope West in South Lyon; the SAWC in Lapeer; and the newest mission, Micah 6 in Pontiac)
- Federated congregations that we share with our partners in the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan (such as: Holy Faith, Saline; Spirit of Grace, West Bloomfield; and Mother of the Savior, Dearborn)

- Our unique relationship with the one Lutheran monastery in North America, St. Augustine's House in Oxford.
- The shared ministry through Living Water Ministry, at Stony Lake Camp in New Era, Michigan.

The SEMI Synod is also the baptized members and friends of those congregations, approximately 30,000 strong, who call one of those worshipping communities their "church home."

That includes Synod staff, rostered leaders: pastors and deacons, Licensed Lay Ministers, professional and support staff, Conference deans and directors, and all the faithful folk who come every Sunday to share the Good News of Jesus' death and resurrection

Which means, dear sisters and brothers, that when we talk about the "Synod" we talk about ourselves. That is, the "Synod" is us. Us, dear friends, with all our gifts and graces, and all our faults and failings as well.



Detroit Cooperative Church

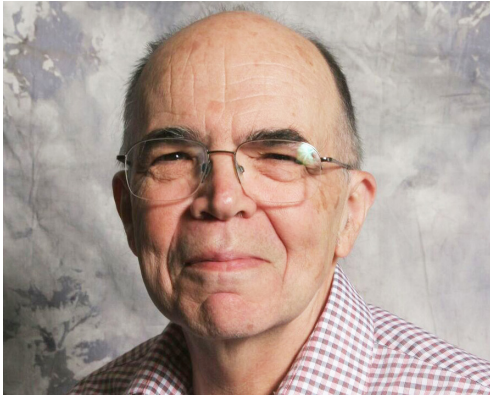


Micah 6 Community



St. Augustine's House Lutheran Monastery

## In This Together - Dementia Awareness



*In partnership with friends from Holy Faith, EMH Senior Solutions, and the Michigan Great Lakes Alzheimer's Association, Jim Mangi has been leading an 11-part dementia awareness series. This series, which concludes July 17, is one of a kind in its comprehensive approach. While most community education programs about dementia offer only a few topics at a time, Jim will have presented at Holy Faith the Alzheimer's Association's complete compendium of talks. Each Wednesday evening since May 1st, 30-50 people have come to Holy Faith to learn more. Throughout the series, Jim has emphasized the support available to people facing dementia. Pastor Andrea sat down with Jim in June as the series wraps up.*

### **Who has been coming to Holy Faith to hear the talks?**

The latest “demographics” I have is our average attendance age is in the mid 40s, and we have been drawing people from: Saline, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Manchester, Chelsea, Dexter, and Whitmore Lake, as well as Tampa Florida.

### **How did you get the idea for offering this series at Holy Faith, and how did you get it off the ground?**

Where credit is due department: The Dementia Awareness program grew out of a chance discussion I had with Jane Darling who thought that a few folks might be interested in hearing about my Alzheimer's Journey with my wife, Kathleen. That got me thinking, and I ran some ideas by her and Larry before approaching you. Jane, see what you started?

And of course, you have acknowledged Barbara Arnold and Carolyn Schneider for their weekly greeting roles, but they have also played two more roles:

First, as the publicity team, they each divided the Saline-Ann Arbor area and methodically hung paper – the fliers and takeaway cards – in every establishment they could think of. I think there was one case of a big man standing on the corner waiting for the light, and Barbara hung a flier on his back.

And second, despite my repeated entreaties to the contrary, every Wednesday night Carolyn and Barbara take down the theater seating and help roll out and set up the tables for coffee hour.

Additionally, Lisa Reifert and Katie Garvey each presented portions of the series. What a crew! What a blessing.



Carolyn Schneider



Barbara Arnold



Lisa Reifert



Katie Garvey

alzheimer's  association®

**24/7 HELPLINE:**

**800.272.3900**

**www.alz.org**

***If someone is concerned about their own cognitive health (or that of a loved one) what's the first, best step they could take?***

In parallel, confer with a knowledgeable physician, and educate yourself. Not all physicians are yet trained in detecting early memory loss and related problems, and sadly some others just don't take it seriously. So find a physician who can and will do a cognitive evaluation. But also get some information for yourself.

The Alzheimer's Association has a wealth of reliable, free information about dementia and support that is available. They are at: **www.alz.org**. If using the Internet is not convenient, call their excellent 24/7 helpline **800.272.3900**. They will answer a wide range of questions, and they have nothing to sell you.

The Federal government also has a lot of free, reliable information, such as very readable booklets about Alzheimer's and caregiving. These are available for download or you can order them in hard copy. Go to **www.alzheimers.gov**.

Whatever else you do, please don't get led on by the hype and false claims you see and hear about cures for Alzheimer's and surefire preventions. I so wish this weren't the case, but there are none on the market.

***In your own journey, where have you found support and guidance? What resources have been most helpful?***

The reliable information sources I cited above were very valuable and I compiled quite a stack of factual materials.

On the human resource side, the support groups hosted by the Alzheimer's Association have been, over the years, extremely valuable.

From fellow travelers on this Unwelcome Journey, I have learned caregiving tips and ways to take care of the caregiver.

And I have had the opportunity over the years to pass it forward, sharing some of my experiences and insights with other support group members, and getting the positive energy back from them. There are numerous support groups, typically meeting once a month, all over the Saline/Ann Arbor area, at various days and times. The Alzheimer's Association website can generate a list by zip code.

But as you know, I am such a shy guy, that even the small group setting of the in-person support groups did not always suit my mood. Especially when I felt really at wit's end at 2 AM.

So I turn at times to what the Alzheimer's Association calls their forum or message boards at **alzconnected.org**. It's essentially a 24/7 on-line support group with thousands of members.

There's a general forum and specialized sub-groups (spouses; early-onset, etc.), and it is very well mannered, and intensely helpful and supportive. I found folks all over the country who offered me potent support and spot-on advice that got me through some rough days.

Indeed, when I stopped posting for awhile just because I got busy, I then found there were multiple posts asking about my wellbeing!

**“There are more academically rigorous descriptions, but the one I like best: a dementia-friendly community is a city where people walk *toward* a person with dementia, not away from them.”** *Jim Mangi*

It costs nothing to join [alzconnected.org](http://alzconnected.org) nor do you need to reveal any information you don't care to share. If anyone from HFC joins, tell 'em Mr. Toad sent you.

***You have met with Saline's Mayor and Town Council suggesting that Saline become a dementia-friendly community. Would you talk a little bit about what a dementia-friendly community looks like? What could Holy Faith do to be more dementia-friendly?***

There are more academically rigorous descriptions, but the one I like best: a dementia-friendly community is a city where people walk *toward* a person with dementia, not away from them.

Dementia-friendly cities range from Denver, CO to Cottage Grove, WI, population 7,000 on a good day. They have ongoing efforts to raise dementia awareness among citizens and among community leaders. Acting on their greater understanding of what it means to live with dementia, business owners, government officials, service professionals and others then adapt their practices accordingly.

What that means is things like quiet corners, quiet times at restaurants, more helpful staff in stores, less cluttered waiting rooms, and avoiding late-afternoon appointments. There is a long list of mostly simple, no-cost or low-cost changes a community can make to demonstrate its attitude toward people with dementia.

No one has the exact number, but we know that the population of Saline and its environs includes people living with dementia – and whatever the number is here – the general statistic is that 80% of people with dementia are not sequestered away in some “facility,” they are living with family or home alone. Thus, people living with dementia are a part of our community, not apart from it.

By reaching out to 40 or more of our friends and neighbors each week since early May in our In This Together Dementia Awareness program, I think Holy Faith is indeed dementia friendly, but there are maybe a few



*What does a dementia-friendly community look like?*

small and easy things we can do to further demonstrate that. One would be hosting an expert-led “Dementia Friends” training session, which gives one the confidence to walk toward a person with dementia and say, “I can help.”

***As you see things, where is the hope?***

With the research going on now, I believe that the generation just starting families now, like yourself, and like my daughter, will not face Alzheimer's as we know it today.

In the shorter term and the more local context, I am optimistic that the more people in our community are aware of what it means to live with dementia, the more they will help make life a bit easier for those persons and their caregivers and families. I must confess, I very much do not understand how dementia fits into God's plan, but I am pretty sure that all of us doing what we can to help each other is part of it.