



July/August 2012



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

If you had to summarize the essence of Nightwatch, its focus, philosophy, and activity all into a single word or phrase, what would it be?

Try this word on for size: "*ministry*."

And to expand that into a phrase: "*ministry of hospitality*."

How do those strike you? Those aren't new words for us. In fact, we've been using them to describe Nightwatch for a long time. Our very Mission Statement contains them: "Operation Nightwatch is an ecumenical night *ministry* providing *hospitality* to promote dignity and community among Portland's neediest."

But lately, we've been having an internal debate about those words. The question has arisen whether potential supporters of Nightwatch might be alienated by the word, "ministry." The concern has been expressed that if people hear us use that word to describe ourselves, it may trigger within the impression that our approach toward our guests is one that is oppressively religious, especially one that involves proselytizing.

Now I have to admit that I've spent most of my life possessing

"ministry" as one of the prime 100 words of my vocabulary for me to assess this issue objectively. For twenty-nine years, my 1040 form explicitly listed my profession as "minister." But "ministry" for me was an all-encompassing thing. As a minister, I had admittedly been serving a church. Yet funny as it may sound, when I did "ministry" it wasn't necessarily with Jesus always on my mind. I was doing ministry when I was visiting a sick friend in the hospital. I was doing ministry when I was having a simple conversation with a lonely youth. I was doing ministry when spent all those years volunteering downtown, walking the streets for Nightwatch. And I expressed to the members of my congregation they were also doing ministry every day if in their homes and their jobs they acted with sensitivity and compassion toward those whose lives intersected with theirs.

"Ministry" was to be seen (in my understanding) not in the content of any vocabulary that was spoken, but in the sheer act of compassion itself. I understood the word in the same way Jesus used it in one of his parables: "Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not *minister* to thee?" (Matt 25:44) In going to the thesaurus, the synonyms I find for the verb "to minister" were these: "serve," "care for," "attend to," "wait on," "befriend," "help," "aid," "assist," "abet," "succor," "relieve," "comfort," "console," "give solace," "heal," "cure," "remedy."

These are certainly the words that appeal directly to my conception of "ministry." And do they not describe precisely what we seek to do at Nightwatch?

But as I said, my judgments are unquestionably colored by my own involvement in and experience with ministry itself. It's hard for me to look at the word objectively. I don't know what contrary images within the typical "person on the street" the word "ministry" might conjure.

So I ask you: how do you conceive of the word "ministry"? Does it resound with positive or negative connotations for you? And if you had to encapsulate the essence of Nightwatch in some other word, what would that word be?

Gary L. Davis

FALL CONCERT FEATURING PORTLAND- CHAMBER MUSIC, NOV. 3

Nightwatch will again be hosting a concert with Portland-Chamber Music this fall on Saturday, November 3.

This will be the only concert we will be hosting this year (rather than being the beginning of a series). At the Nov. 3 concert, we will be honoring a new Lamplighter of the Year, plus giving out our Volunteer of the Year award.

More details are yet-to-come, but reserve a place on your calendar



FROM THE PROGRAM COORDINATOR

[NOTE: James will be leaving us at the end of July. This is his final column as Program Coordinator.]

Community is something that I put a lot of value in. This is exactly our mission of hospitality at Operation Nightwatch – to foster community to those who don't have a place to call community and to be a community for those who keep on coming back and to welcome newcomers with open arms.

For our ONW Spiritual Retreat, Gary, Pastor Roger, and I gave small presentations on the topic of "Home" and we separated into small groups to reflect on the topic. I imagine that guests got to learn a lot about each other, as I, too, got to share a lot of myself which I don't get a chance to do at the Hospitality Center.

Although it rained for most of the retreat, I think the guests didn't mind staying indoors. We had a nice fire in the fireplace, and were right next to the river where we got to listen to the sounds of rushing water right outside. We also enjoyed a great abundance of food! (Thanks Bergen and April!)

Every community is different, just as every individual person is different. Each person brings talents and characteristics to the table. And since our Nightwatch community has guests coming and going, our community is constantly changing. Some of the guests are very spiritual (like the one who blessed us with a Native American song at our worship service), while some wouldn't even identify as particularly religious, or even spiritual; they are just living the path that life takes them.

I have been blessed and privileged to be a part of Nightwatch. I have made so many good friends at Nightwatch that I wouldn't have

otherwise. On my ordinary tasks of the day like returning a book at the library or riding my bike downtown I am graced when I come across friends from the Hospitality Center. It is – to provide community, safe space, and a sense of belonging to all people of all circumstances, even me. As I go off to become a Jesuit novice (the first step to becoming a Jesuit priest), I will always remember the hospitality that Nightwatch offered me and the friendships that I encountered here.

James Antonio

SUMMER PRESENTS SPECIAL NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS

Over the past few years, Nightwatch has been blessed with an explosion of volunteers as we've developed very satisfying connections with institutions such as Lewis & Clark College, PSU, Linfield, the University of Portland, PCC, and Mt. Hood and Clackamas Community Colleges. There are times so many students want to volunteer that we sadly must turn some away.

However, though relying on students may result in a bumper crop of students during three seasons of the year, it also means we must suffer a drought of them during the summer. Instead of turning volunteers away, we must beg for a sufficient number of volunteers each evening just to open our doors.

So if you have the ability to volunteer on some upcoming summer evening, please do so. We'll have a spot for you. In fact, we *need* you! Just let us know you can come in by calling / texting 503-220-0438, or by emailing info@operationnightwatch.org.

BOARD TRANSITIONS

At its most recent meeting, the Nightwatch Board of Directors offered its thanks to Carmen Vetter upon the completion of her term. Carmen brought great vitality to the Board, and she's not abandoning us, as she continues to lead Nightwatch's Thursday evening art class. In honor of her retirement from the Board, other Board members established a fund to purchase art supplies for the class.

The Board welcomes among its members John Hoover, who has been volunteering at the downtown Hospitality Center since 2005. John is retiring from the Multnomah County District Attorney's office in August. He has also served with Meals-On-Wheels and is an active choir member at the Moreland Presbyterian Church.

At its annual meeting in June, the Board also re-elected Bergen Allee, John Hardy, and Curtis Thompson to new three-year terms.

In further news, it amended the Nightwatch by-laws to enlarge the maximum size of the Board from ten to twelve members. (We'll have news about those who will be filling those slots in our next newsletter.) It also adopted a budget for fiscal year 2012-2013 of \$102,728, which is an increase of 16% over 2011-2012's budget.

WISH LIST

Blankets / Sleeping bags (yes, those sleeping outside need them in the summer, too!)

Socks (we had out a few dozen every week)

Deodorant

Sunscreen

Toothbrushes

Razors

Feminine Hygiene products

Small value giftcards to fast-food places, movies, etc. (to be given out as prizes for bingo, etc.)

IN REMEMBRANCE AND HONOR

We are grateful to have received the following special gifts:

Donor	Fund	Recognition
Carol Silva & Mary Cox	Blankets/Socks Fund	In memory of Bonnar Cox
Anonymous	Mobile Hospitality Center	In memory of Frank & Martha Hayami
Ronald Nitz	General Fund	In honor of his 30 th wedding anniversary
Claudia Taylor	General Fund	In honor of Curtis Thompson, M.D.

We would also like to thank the Griffith Family Foundation and the Boller-Thomas Foundation for grants in support of our work.

CHAPLAIN'S NOTES: Plain Brown Wrapper

We've all seen them in one form or another. Usually, a plain brown wrapper covers something of questionable content. Such as one of "those" magazines, the can or bottle someone should not have. Now and then, we get a surprise. The plain brown wrapper holds a wonderful surprise we are glad to see, that should not be hidden.

I received such a wrapper the other night at Operation Nightwatch Bible study. Our text from Romans 7 showed us Apostle Paul's wrestling match between knowing what is right and his own flawed efforts at doing right. My helpers, active AA men, confirmed that epic struggle out of personal experience. Several guests shared similar stories. Discussion was getting really good.

Then a young couple I didn't know stood up to leave. The young woman handed me a piece of brown paper torn from a grocery bag. It was a little "thank you" card of sorts. She apologized for having to leave early. She promised to read the handout, said she hoped they could stay longer next time. "Thank you for your kindness," she wrote.

The kingdom of God happens. Daily. All over. Right down on SW 13th Avenue. At ONW. Sometimes it even comes in a plain brown wrapper. Thanks be to God.

--Pastor Roger

SPONSORS SOUGHT FOR FALL OUTINGS

Three of our four scheduled outings for the fall are still lacking sponsors. If you would to fund one of these events (or partially fund it to become a co-sponsor), please let us know!

MONTH	OUTING
September	Corn Maze (\$175)
October	OMSI (\$200)
December	Christmas lights (\$175)

NIGHTWATCH TO WELCOME NEW JESUIT VOLUNTEER

Kieran McCourt will be arriving in August to replace James Antonio as our new Program Coordinator. As James was, Kieran is a member of Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest.

Kieran is a native of Philadelphia, where he also attended St. Joseph's University, majoring in Classical Studies. He has a great commitment to issues of social justice.

On the St. Joseph's Web site there is a short video in which Kieran introduces himself. You can access it by going to: <http://www.sju.edu/academics/cas/meet.html>.



Spiritual Retreat

OPERATION NIGHTWATCH BOARD

David Groff - Chair
Retired College Administrator

Doug Davidson
Mortgage Loan Officer
White House Mortgage

John Hardy
Physician

Dawn Hayami
Director of Practice Support
Kaiser Permanente

Curtis Thompson
Skin Pathologist

Bergen Allee
Sales & Leasing Consultant
Lexus of Portland

David Grandy
Professor of Physiology &
Pharmacology
OHSU School of Medicine

Leah Hollingshead
Retired Mental Health
Worker

John Hoover
Retired Attorney



Mt. Hood Outing



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