



# Steeple Stories

The newsletter of North Shore Baptist Church

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5244 N. Lakewood  
Chicago, IL 60640

## Blessed Giving

My friends, it is the season when we at North Shore Baptist Church enter our pledge campaign for the upcoming year. Yes, this is the time we invite each of you as members and friends to look toward the future of NSBC in your financial planning. This year's theme is Blessed Giving.

One way we talk about blessed giving is in the way we use our talents of the spirit to help others. In Mathew 10:8, we read these words, "heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons." There are many ways this can be lived out, such as extending ourselves to be the hands of God to anyone who is sick, being present with someone who has lost a loved one, touching those whom others see as untouchable, and working against forces of evil.

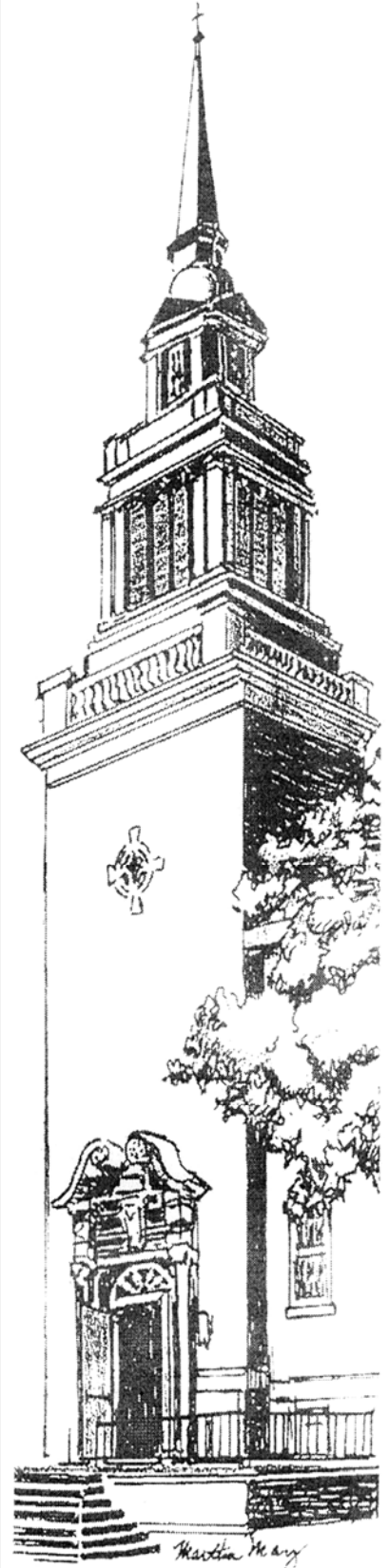


At NSBC, we extend hospitality to those experiencing homelessness. Folks don't simply come to take a shower and grab a bag lunch, rather they are friends addressed by their names. It warms my heart in every encounter knowing we fully embrace, listen to and love those who come through our doors. Peter is one such person: he and I take time to talk whenever we meet, about God and our lives. We express this same kindness to church members needing to host a family funeral, AA groups, theater troupes, and basketball groups who meet here. I am pleased with the welcome we extend to our wider community here at NSBC. This "Blessed Giving" is not based on what we might receive, rather on how we might be a place for hospitality.

The other aspect of Blessed Giving and requires us to look more deeply and personally into how we might share our finances with the church. As we think on our pledge for next year, we estimate what we can give, knowing God is not looking at the amount. Instead, we are sharing from the bounty given us with no other expectation than to be a blessing for the work of God in this community. As we think on the money we might pledge this year, I know our giving will be blessed by God and I encourage you to give, knowing God will provide the increase.

For me, throughout my life of giving to the church, it has never been about what I might get in return for my donation. My offering has always been my way to give back freely from the blessings I have received from God. And here, at NSBC, we strive to bless others through our missions locally and nationally. I invite each of you to join in a time of "Blessed Giving."

~ Pastor Michael



# Welcome & Homecoming Service

October 27, 10 a.m.



On Sunday, Oct. 27, the English Worship congregation will festively celebrate and welcome our worship community, including new, occasional, and regular visitors, as well as all current and past members. Any rumors of balloons and cake during fellowship following the service are confirmed. Everyone is encouraged to attend and spread the word. This is a great opportunity to bring a guest for the first time!

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## Welcome, Pastor Juan!

What I can say.... I am very happy to be part of this church, North Shore Baptist. I am very happy to be part of the leadership of the Hispanic Congregation. I am very happy to be part of North Shore pastoral team. It is a blessing to be here.

I grew up in a Baptist family and church in Puerto Rico. I am a son of two pastors. My father was a Baptist pastor for over 50 years and my mother has been a minister for 25 years. For political reason I had to leave Puerto Rico in the 1983. I came to Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, at that time in Lombard, to do a Master on Theological Studies to work in my English and work on a doctoral degree in sociology. God had other plans. I was called to pastor a Hispanic church in Aurora in 1984 and that was the beginning of a long journey that have including pastoral and missionary work in the United States, Puerto Rico, and Latin America.

For several years, I did not work as a pastor, but I did a lot of pastoral work in every place that God allowed me to be, even when I was unemployed. That road took me to a deep reflection in the role of the church in society and how the church should be a church, the people of God. It was very difficult to find a church that would be willing to do serious thinking about the challenges of the world today to the church.

It is very special to be part of this church because this is not any church. North Shore is not a common church. Actually, North Shore is a rare church. It is a rare church because there is a strong sense of community in the midst of our particular differences. It is a rare church because it is a church willing to wrestle with the important issues in society. It is a church a rare church because it is willing to walk the talk.

These are some of the reason why I am happy to be part of North Shore Baptist, because I have been struggling with some of those issues for a long time. It has been difficult to find a church that is open to be a fellow traveler in the road of discerning God's Spirit in the world today.



I thank God for the opportunity to be here. To have the opportunity to be part of what God's plans for this church in the near future. With the strength and the wisdom of the Spirit, let us keep walking with those in need. Let the Spirit surprise us in those who are going to come. Let the Spirit transform us in our solidarity to others. Let us be the Body of Christ.

~ Pastor Juan



Rev. Juan Angel Gutierrez Rodriguez joined the NSBC staff as Interim Spanish Language Pastor on September 1

# October 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 6:30 pm Andersonville YPAA 7:00 pm Spanish Bible Study	3 4:00 Stewardship Ministry 7:00 Chancel Choir	4 6:00-8:00 pm Youth Group	5 10 am AA Meeting 4 pm AA Meeting 10 am Spanish Bible Study 2:30pm Karen Programs 4:00 pm Karen Music Rehearsal
6 9:30 am Spanish Worship 10 am English Worship 11 am Japanese Worship 11:15 am Fellowship Time 11:30 am Ad. In Learning 12:00 pm Karen Worship	7 6:30 pm AA Meeting	8 7pm Church Council	9 6:30 pm Andersonville YPAA 7:00 pm Spanish Bible Study	10 10:00 Grupo de Apoyo 7:00 Chancel Choir	11 6:00-8:00 pm Youth Group	12 10 am AA Meeting 4 pm AA Meeting 10 am Spanish Bible Study 2:30pm Karen Programs 4:00 pm Karen Music Rehearsal
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# Karen Anniversary



**Sunday, October 29,** we celebrated the 10th anniversary with a special worship service (which included 7 baptisms!) and a wonderful meal!



## Collective Voice Healing Class



In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was God. But what is a word? Vibration. Music. Sound. Creation. In getting in touch with our own voice and the voices of others, we connect to the Divine. What would happen if we let ourselves fully experience the resonance in our bodies when we sing? How does collective, creative sounding affect our connection to our intuition? How does improvisation relate to our capacity for deep listening? What does it mean to be truly open to the moment?

These are some of the questions we will explore together over a period of an hour and a half. You will be led through grounding meditations using your own voice to center and connect you to what is rather than what you think should be. We will then begin to explore our connection to one another as inherently creative beings, using guided vocal improvisation and sounding exercises in a group.

This workshop is **NOT** only for trained singers! Everyone who can make sound with their throat is invited. Singing is everyone's birthright, so don't be shy! This is more about connecting to your own voice and exploring creativity and community than it is to create some kind of "polished sound" or "performance." Try to wear clothes you feel comfortable lying down in and moving around in. The more at ease we can feel, the better it will be for really letting go into the exercises. And bring with you an open and curious mind.

This class is **free** and open to everyone! It will meet on **Saturdays** from **10:30 am-12:00 pm** in Nambu Chapel. It will start on Saturday, **October 19** and run for 8 weeks, excluding Saturday, November 2.

The class will be led by **Julia Rahm**, who has been the Alto Section Leader with NSBC since spring of 2018. Julia is an initiate of the Inayati Sufi Order, an interfaith spiritual community of seekers with a rich tradition of using music to tune the heart and help people discover peace and harmony with themselves and others. She has a Master of Music in Voice Performance from Roosevelt Univ. and a Bachelor of Arts from Sarah Lawrence College in Theater, Music and French. She combines all her interests—music, the voice, meditation and mindfulness, improvisation and creativity— into developing this holistic, exploratory voice practice.

# What's Up With Our Youth?



In August, the youth group went on a mission trip to Dubuque, IA, with the youth of several neighboring Edgewater churches. The Scripture for the week was the story of the Good Samaritan, and the theme for the week was "Who is My Neighbor?" We served at a rescue mission and several farms that provide food for the shelter at the rescue mission. We also heard from a local State Representative who spoke of the Good Samaritan story through the lens of "fixing the road"- working to create an environment in which people walking from Jericho to Jerusalem wouldn't have to worry about being set upon by thieves. Each night, we heard testimonies from adults and youth about people who had been a neighbor to them.



We will begin regular Friday night youth gatherings on **Friday, October 4** from 6:30-8:30 pm.

## Transforming: An English-Language Adult Bible Study

In September and October, Pastor Kathryn has led class on Sunday mornings called "Transforming the Church." The class works with excerpts from the book Transforming: The Bible and Transgender Christians by Austen Hartke. Hartke looks at different Scripture passages through the lens of his own experience as a transgender man, and in conversation with the experiences of other trans people. Thus far, we have reflected on how gender relates to our being made in the image of God and discussed the significance of giving and receiving new names in various biblical texts.



## Church Leadership Retreats



This fall, we have had two important all-church leadership meetings/mini-retreats. On **Saturday, September 14**, the pastoral relations committee, moderators, and pastoral team gathered offsite to pray together and reflect on how we can work together to continue to foster healthy communication and shape an environment that can process conflict as an opportunity for growth and learning.

On **Sunday, September 22**, the Church Council gathered in the afternoon to get to know one another and discuss needs in our community and dreams for the future.

Thank you to everyone who participated in these two important events!





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North Shore Baptist Church

"Serving All God's People  
From This Corner"

We're on the Web:  
[www.northshorebaptist.org](http://www.northshorebaptist.org)



"When someone is going through a storm, your silent presence is more powerful than a million empty words." — Thema Davis

# UNITY SUNDAY



**November 3, 2019**

**10:30 am** - Sanctuary  
(All Language Groups)

Light Luncheon - Noon - Howel Hall  
*No Adventures in Learning Classes*

High among the great joys of life at North Shore Baptist Church are the Joint Worship services we share. We will again celebrate our unity on **November 3, 2019**, at **10:30 am** (note the time). Our preacher this year will be **Pastor Juan**, our new Interim Spanish Language Pastor. During worship, people will be asked to present their pledge cards as part of the campaign, for our 2020 church budget.

A reception with finger foods will follow in Howel Hall. Please plan to attend and celebrate our multi-lingual, multi-cultural Unity!

If you would like to receive *Steeple Stories* by e-mail (in color!), contact us at [office@northshorebaptist.org](mailto:office@northshorebaptist.org)