



### **Grain**

"Which wolf will win?" "The one you feed." –Story attributed to Cherokee or Lenape people.

### **Field**

"25 I have said these things to you while I am still with you. 26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. 28 You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. 29 And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe." John 14:25-29

### **Thoughts**

Prayers for Buffalo, NY and the loved ones most immediately broken by the murder of 10 of Buffalo's children of God in a black neighborhood. Violence can be perpetrated by people of any color or background, but we have to take seriously that domestic terrorism fueled by online extremist groups is now the greatest threat to our national security. This fact isn't new, so when hearing that an 18-year-old white man, whose anger was fed by online propaganda about white people being "replaced," murdered 10 innocent people, we should only be shocked, not surprised. When will we be shocked enough to clearly name hate speech as violence and not free speech to be protected? How did an 18-year-old boy get his hands on assault weaponry? Who made money from the streaming online of the murders? As we approach elections, what do local candidates have to say? Some have joined with political leaders who have emboldened and legitimized racism, even to be used as a political tool.

Recently, at the East Central Synod of Wisconsin assembly, the musicians turned a Cherokee story about the two wolves fighting within us into a meditation. One wolf contains qualities such as regret, arrogance, and resentment and the other, joy, peace and love. Which wolf within you are you feeding right now? Notice what you are giving oxygen to. I only caught part of the devotion but am aware that in the story, aspects of each wolf are needed; sometimes our regret or resentment can lead to action. But how extreme does either wolf become? Which one wins? "It depends on which one you feed."

Which wolf are we feeding online? We return to discernment with the Holy Spirit. In John's text, the Holy Spirit is "the Advocate," like an attorney fiercely advocating for your wellbeing, or that teacher who stood in your corner, or the friend who didn't leave your side when everyone else did. Extremism and conspiracy theories don't advocate in that way for someone searching online; they don't balance anger at whatever it is one is actually enraged at. May God open our hearts to the Advocate to give us guidance on what we are feeding and giving oxygen to. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy