

Statement to City of Milwaukee Public Safety Committee
September 8, 2016

My name is Pastor Joel Jaeger. I live at 2232 W. Greenfield Ave. I am the pastor of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church (2235 W. Greenfield Ave.) and the West Campus of Christ St. Peter Lutheran School (2229 W. Greenfield Ave.).

I wish that each of you could spend 12 hours in the living room of the parsonage, looking out over the intersection of S. 23rd Street and W. Greenfield Ave. I think that the magnitude of prostitution activity would shock even you! I started to keep a record in early August. In the month that has passed, there have been only three occasions as I crossed W. Greenfield Ave, either going to our campus or heading home, that I could see no prostitutes at the intersection of 23rd St. and W. Greenfield Ave. I cross W. Greenfield Ave. at least six times each day. One weekday morning I counted seven prostitutes at one time hanging around the intersection.

If it were only adults who use our facilities I would be less concerned. Christ St. Peter Lutheran School has 4 year olds through 8th graders coming and going at this intersection every school day. What are we teaching our children by allowing this prostitution activity to continue with no apparent effort to stop it?

My wife and I frequently call the MPD non-emergency number. On average only one in ten calls actually ends up having a police response. Several weeks ago I called 911 because a man (probably the pimp) was dragging with her hair, a young woman through the intersection. It took six minutes before I could even talk to a 911 operator. I waited for 15 minutes after speaking with the operator, but no police response occurred while I waited. I finally gave up and left the scene.

All this you could observe from our front windows. Does this make Milwaukee and safe and pleasant place to live?

Having sat and watched for a time, let's get up and get some exercise! Come with me on a walking tour (This will be much shorter than Alderman Donovan's weekly walks!) of our campus grounds. Behind the bushes on the school front lawn (I picked up here last Saturday.) three beer and liquor containers are in the bushes in the front of our school building. Over here, you can see that someone has been using this space for either sleeping or prostituting. On the church front steps we find used condoms and used hypodermic needles. In the fenced back courtyard. We see a similar scene. This is all new since we make an effort to clean up the property at least once each week.

What do you find when you walk around your yard?

I appreciate the number of social agencies and faith groups who are actually trying to interact the women who make their living on our streets. This may help supply some relief from the unwholesome activity occurring on Greenfield Ave., especially from 16th St. to 27th St. But we need your help. This is not just unhealthy, anti-social activity, it is criminal activity.

Please help us make all of Milwaukee a safe and pleasant place to live.

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