



The Rev. Britt Cox, 39, left, and Jessica Hager, 38, walk in their backyard with their 1-year-old daughter, Luca, at their Evanston home on Thursday. Cox serves as executive pastor at First United Methodist Church in Evanston. **ARMANDO L. SANCHEZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE**

Same-sex couples face shifting church policies

Evolution leads to internal conflicts, defections and apology

By Angie Leventis Lourgos | Chicago Tribune

Surrounded by soaring stained-glass windows and elaborate statues of saints, the two wives clasped hands as a Catholic priest in white vestments blessed them in the sanctuary of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Lincoln Park. The prayer was brief, lasting only a few minutes on a weekend in late April, roughly four months after the pope's landmark and controversial decision to formally allow blessings for same-sex couples, under certain constraints, in mid-December. Kelli Knight, 48, planned the blessing as a surprise for her wife of four years, Myah Knight, 44, who had long loved the church of her alma mater, DePaul University. Kelli Knight, who was raised Catholic but went on to become a pastor in the United Methodist Church, also felt a deep connection to St. Vincent de Paul, where the couple would occasionally attend services on Saturdays and during Holy Week.

"Do you freely recommit yourselves to love each other as holy spouses and to live in peace and harmony together forever?" the Rev. Joseph Williams asked. "I do," responded Kelli Knight, wearing a champagne-hued, off-the-shoulder dress and wrist corsage. "I do," added Myah Knight, in a black suit, fedora, gold tie and a corsage that matched her wife's. The priest then asked God to increase and consecrate their love for one another, adding that the rings they had exchanged are a sign of their commitment and fidelity. "May they continue to pros-

per in Your grace and blessing, we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen," the priest concluded, as the two wives crossed themselves. Myah Knight recorded the blessing on her phone for prosperity. Kelli Knight posted the video on Instagram, mostly to share with family and friends. But vitriol soon followed, as strangers began posting comments condemning the blessing. "Anathema! Lust is not love," one person wrote. "How sad this is," another comment read. "A total mockery of God's design and desire

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Igniting new kind of 'wow' for July 4

Holiday fireworks still reign, but drone light shows gain popularity

By Adriana Pérez
Chicago Tribune

The unpredictability of fireworks — where and how each burst of dazzling light and crackling noise will occur — elicits a sense of wonder that captivates spectators. "You almost feel in your chest what you're seeing with your eyes," said Kristen Lindquist, a professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill who studies the psychological and neural basis of emotions, moods and feelings. It is a tradition ingrained in the American psyche. But as the country prepares for summer's iconic holiday of barbecues and big booms, drone light shows have emerged in recent years as an alternative that addresses growing concerns about noise, safety and the environment. Known for its biweekly fireworks displays during the summer, Navy Pier celebrated a gala in September with a 400-drone performance produced by Sky Elements. Rick Boss, president of the Texas-based company, said he only realized drone light shows could be a powerful storytelling medium when he saw a client tear up during one of his first events. "Until you see one in person, you realize ... it's just a massive canvas that you're painting on. It is just wonderful to see," he said. "So that's a big reason for it: Folks just looking for something different, something creative, something energetic to bring into their events ... The drone shows allow them to do it quietly, allow them to (make) it environmentally friendly, and really gives a good 'Wow' moment." These aerial light shows use hundreds of individual drones equipped with color-changing LEDs and programmed to follow certain flight paths to create animations and images in the sky.

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Is youth movement coming for Bulls?

After trudging through two summers with a mantra of "continuity," executive VP of basketball operations Arturas Karnišovas is no longer claiming that consistency is key. As free agency begins Sunday, change could be afoot. **Chicago Sports**

Biden-Trump debate has voters concerned

Event in Georgia crystallized the worries of many Americans about the presidential race, leaving the situation even more dispiriting for many Democrats, undecided voters and anti-Trump Republicans. More than a few came away concerned about the fitness of either candidate for the office. **Nation & World**

Error in lung transplant algorithm hurt people



David Sperlein, shown with his wife, Jeannine, at their home in Manchester, Maryland, was in need of a lung transplant during a period when a flaw in the distribution process put patients with type O blood at a disadvantage. **JERRY JACKSON/BALTIMORE SUN**

Patients with type O blood received fewer transplants last year

By Gregory Royal Pratt
Chicago Tribune

The new algorithm was supposed to help distribute lungs more fairly to people who desperately needed life-saving transplants. But a flaw in the process for awarding the organs to sick and dying patients meant some people didn't receive the care they were entitled to, the Tribune has learned. Specifically, patients with type O blood received fewer transplants last year than would have been otherwise expected, according to records obtained by the Tribune

and interviews with patients, surgeons and advocates. That's because the new system failed to fully account for the fact that type O patients can accept donor lungs only from people who also have type O blood. The problem occurred over a six-month period in 2023 but is only now coming to light publicly amid a dispute over how many patients were affected and whether the organization governing transplants should have been more transparent in explaining what went wrong. A group of transplant surgeons has criticized the Organ Procurement and Transplant Network, which sets rules for organ distribution under a contract with the federal government, for not

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