

Northwest University's Student Magazine

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[HOME](#)
[ABOUT US](#)
[THE SCREECH PODCAST](#)
[CAMPUS LIFE](#)
[OUTSIDE THE BUBBLE](#)
[ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT](#)
[OPINION](#)
[AUDIO/VISUAL](#)

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NU LEADERS RESPOND TO NEO-NAZI STYLE POSTERS ON CAMPUS

By Jon Ladd

Editor's Note: NU Security Director, Mark Lewis resigned October 2017

Neo-Nazi style posters were discovered on campus during the [first week](#) of fall semester at Northwest University. Though the situation was handled by the staff and the Kirkland Police Department, there was some lingering discomfort and confusion among students.

The incident left a sour taste in the mouths of many and made some students feel unsafe. Those who investigated the incident, however, were confident that there was no threat of violence in the posters.

"We have worked very closely with the Kirkland Police Department on this matter. They have investigated fully and determined that there is no apparent threat to the faculty, staff, or students of Northwest University," said Rick Engstrom, Dean of Student Development.

NU Security Director, Mark Lewis agreed with Engstrom.

"These individuals are more interested in causing drama and making a statement than in any violent action," he said.

In response, many professors across campus and across disciplines addressed the issue in their lectures, and it was addressed in chapel the following Wednesday. NU also offered spaces for prayer and support for students struggling with the event.

As for student response, Engstrom suggested that open discourse among each other is the best way to show the propagandists they lost.

"I would encourage students to genuinely engage with one another and discuss practical ways to be Christ's hands and feet in a world where hate and racism still exist. We should use this incident as an opportunity to again ask ourselves that question and engage in dialogue with one another," Engstrom said.

For a more organized response, Dr. Jeremiah Webster led a prayer walk less than a week after the incident.

"We organized a Prayer Walk on September 7th to pray against their actions and to protest their ideology. We met their symbols of racism, white supremacy, and hatred with the symbol of the cross: a symbol of grace, love, forgiveness, and reconciliation for all people," Webster said. "Prayer walks are an ancient church custom and a public expression of our solidarity in the Faith. I thought it was important to meet this incident with corporate prayer and Christian worship."

As well as the prayer walk, Webster also prescribed an attitude of love, and a reminder that we, as Christians, respond differently to adversity than the rest of the world.

"Christianity offers a 'third way' to respond to the evil we find in ourselves, our neighbor, and the world at large: namely a posture of humility, repentance, and forgiveness. The words of Christ are apt: 'In this world you will have tribulation, but take heart, I have overcome the world.' We are called to believe that the polarization we see in contemporary life can be eclipsed when we inhabit the commands of Jesus in our daily lives," he said.

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