

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Coming to Kansas City for Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

Laughter is Sacred Space: The Human Faces Tour

On **Saturday, September 3** at **7:00 pm**, Ted Swartz, owner and creative director of Ted & Co, a professional touring theater company, will be at **Rainbow Mennonite Church, 1444 Southwest Blvd, Kansas City, Kansas** performing his show *Laughter is Sacred Space*, his own story of grief, loss and ultimately hope. There is no admission charge, but we ask a \$10 donation.

Ted Swartz's business partnership (Ted & Lee) and friendship with Lee Eshleman, came to a tragic end when Lee took his own life in 2007. *Laughter is Sacred Space* is a true story about the joy and pain of a life full of paradoxes as Ted walks through his journey working with a comedic partner struggling with bipolar disorder; and after Lee's death, performing Biblical stories while experiencing the profound absence of God.

During the past four years performing this show, Ted met many people who have grieved the loss of loved ones to suicide, or who struggle with mental disorders themselves. This tour is about humanizing the faces and stories of those who struggle, with photo and storytelling opportunities with our professional photographer on tour with Ted. It is also about addressing the stigma attached to mental disorders, and catalyzing a closing-of-the-gap between empathy and informed engagement in the Church, and other community groups, who want to help but aren't sure how. NAMI affiliates, or other local mental health agencies are invited to be part of these events across the country.

Using multimedia and his twenty years of storytelling and theater experience, *Laughter is Sacred Space* is a beautiful example of Ted's unique ability to use humor and vulnerable storytelling to bring hope to some of life's most difficult realities.