

Fall 2011

Christian Formation



The Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration
Dallas, Texas

Christian Formation – Fall 2011



By Michael Merriman

The Mission Statement of the Adult Christian Formation program at Transfiguration could well be applied to our Youth and Children's programs too; that is to provide opportunities for the Holy Spirit to transform adults, youth and children - through study, prayer and fellowship - in order for us to better seek and serve Christ in all persons. Our Objective continues to be to provide opportunities for all parishioners to grow and develop our understanding of faith while we strive, both as individuals and as a Community of Faith, to challenge and alter our lives for God's service.

Christian Formation at Transfiguration is for everyone – from three-year-olds to adults. One of the promises we made, or that was made for us, at our baptism is to “continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.” Attending our church services provides you opportunities for breaking bread and praying with your brothers and sisters in Christ, and it also does give you opportunities for learning more about what the apostles believed and taught; Christian Formation further develops that learning experience – and gives you wonderful opportunities for enhancing fellowship with other members of Transfiguration as those who have been involved with our Christian Formation programs over the years can attest.

This Fall Semester will be a period of transition for those who have been involved in our Adult Christian Formation program – both for “students” and “teachers/facilitators.” Michael Merriman, who will be acting as the Director of Christian Formation during the Fall, wisely suggested we only plan the Fall Semester at this time, giving Amy Heller an opportunity to assess the needs of our program and plan accordingly for the Spring. Most of you know Mtr. Amy from the several years she served as Chaplain for Parish Episcopal School. She loves to teach and is passionate about Christian Formation for all ages.

The Bigger Picture

will continue to offer a broad spectrum of classes from spirituality to cultural contexts and will in the Fall include a class on Mission for people who are interested in learning more about the mission work that The

Episcopal Church, and Transfiguration in particular, does to reach out to our brothers and sisters in need across the world. Mat Thekkil will be offering the third class in his four-part series on Sacred Music, and we will conclude the Fall Semester with a four-week class, topic “to be announced!”

iParent

is a community of parents currently raising young children. The weekly class schedule rotates between guest speakers, bible study, current issues and informal brunch. There are numerous social gatherings scheduled throughout the year.

G.P.S.

(Giving Parents Support) targets parents of upper-elementary through high school. This community meets Sunday mornings for book study, guest speakers on current topics and community-building.

Children's Ministries

Children ages three through 6th grade have two options during the Formation Hour. Three Godly Play rooms, which have a limited enrollment, are housed in the Childcare/Education wing. The Spark Classroom curriculum (Augsburg Fortress) is used in 5 traditional classrooms. Various opportunities for age appropriate worship and learning are offered throughout the year for families.

(Note: Please see the Children's Ministry Article on page 8 for further information.)

Youth Ministries

Jeb Honeyman, our Director of Youth Ministries, is introducing a new curriculum for our Youth (more about that in his article) and will also offer a variety of activities throughout the year for our teenagers to gather as community to work, worship and play together.

Being formed as a Christian is a life-long endeavor; we believe what goes on in our classrooms is an essential part of that ongoing formation which is why your entire Christian Formation team – for children, youth and adults – is inviting you to join your friends - both old and new - on August 28 as we begin another exciting year of Christian Formation at Transfiguration!

Please come on Rally Day – August 20 and 21 – to sign-up and receive more information.

Fall 2011 Adult Christian Formation Schedule

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <p>SCRIPTURE, TRADITION & REASON</p> <p><i>Meets in Roper Hall</i></p> | <p>REASON; The Role of Reason in Anglican Thought</p> <p>Aug. 28 – Sept. 18 <i>4 weeks</i></p> | <p>SCRIPTURE: The Gospel of Mark</p> <p>Sept. 25 – Oct. 30 <i>6 weeks</i></p> | <p>TRADITION: Tradition in Christian & Anglican History</p> <p>Nov. 6 – Dec. 11 <i>6 weeks</i></p> |
| <p>THE BIGGER PICTURE CLASS</p> <p><i>Meets in Staff Room</i></p> | <p>EXPERIENCE OF MISSION <i>Alan Justice</i></p> <p>Aug. 28 – Oct. 2 <i>6 weeks</i></p> | <p>SARED MUSIC: Tallis, Byrd, and the Tudors <i>Mat Thekkil</i></p> <p>Oct. 9 – Nov. 13 <i>6 weeks</i></p> | <p>TO BE DETERMINED</p> <p>Nov. 20 – Dec. 11 <i>4 weeks</i></p> |
| <p>SPIRITUALITY</p> <p><i>Meets in the Parlor</i></p> | <p>CREATIVE WAYS TO PRAY <i>Kris & Weber Baker</i></p> <p>Aug. 28 – Oct. 2 <i>6 weeks</i></p> | <p>WHAT DID JESUS DO? WHAT SHOULD WE DO? <i>Kris & Weber Baker</i></p> <p>Oct. 9 – Nov. 13 <i>6 weeks</i></p> | <p>THE PARALLEL SAYINGS OF JESUS AND BUDDHA <i>Kris & Weber Baker</i></p> <p>Nov. 20 – Dec. 11 <i>4 weeks</i></p> |
| <p>PARENTS' (OF YOUNGER CHILDREN) CLASS</p> <p><i>Meets in Room S204</i></p> | <p>iPARENT</p> | | |
| <p>PARENTS' (OF OLDER CHILDREN) CLASS</p> <p><i>Meets in Vestry Room</i></p> | <p>G.P.S. Giving Parents Support</p> | | |

Please Note: Fall Classes begin August 28 and conclude December 11, 2011.



Adult Christian Formation — *Classes for Sunday Morning*

SCRIPTURE, TRADITION & REASON:

The Anglican Big Three *Classes will meet in Roper Hall*

In the Fall Semester we will be merging the two tracks from the past few years – The Episcopal Track and the Scripture Track – to reflect together on our learning and discovery as they speak to these three essentials of Anglican thought. The Leaders will be Richard Harmon, Amy Heller, and Michael Merriman. The three topics which will comprise this series are:

The Role of Reason in Anglican Thought

The three – Scripture, Tradition, and Reason – are ascribed to Richard Hooker, the first great (some say greatest) Anglican Theologian. What did Hooker really say and how does his approach shape how Anglicans do theology? How have Anglican/Episcopalian thinkers applied reason to interpret the Scriptures and Tradition at various moments in the life of our Church.
Four Weeks

The Gospel of Mark

For most of Christian history, the Gospel of Mark has suffered from benign neglect. In the last hundred years of study, scholars have discovered what a gem this document is. Join us as we study the Gospel of Mark and discover for yourself the intricate composition of this book, the way Mark delineates his characters, and the theological intentions behind this work. As a result, it is much easier to appreciate how basic Mark is to the work of the other Gospels and how much we owe to the writer of this book. This Gospel is chosen because, beginning in Advent, it will be the featured Gospel in our worship for most of the next year.
Six Weeks

Tradition in Christian and Anglican History

Richard Hooker and other Anglicans have insisted that Tradition is to be valued. However, its value is not in being unchanging but rather in sometimes becoming outmoded. We will explore some of the times in Church history when a practice of the Church that had been considered unchangeable came to be seen as no longer of value. Then we will ask what we Episcopalian Anglicans have found in the Tradition we have inherited that needed or needs to be altered or even replaced. What part do Scripture and Reason play in such cases?
Six Weeks

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Classes meet in Staff Room

This class will have the more familiar structure of past years with several short courses offered by a variety of teachers. We call it The Bigger Picture because we think that Transfiguration looks well beyond the narrow confines of many in our denomination and even the Christian faith. So we will look at some of the issues that challenge us as Christians and modern-day people today as well as spiritual tools both old and new.

THE EXPERIENCE OF MISSION

– Alan Justice

A 6-week course designed for those who want to test a vocation to mission from Transfiguration, or for those who are just curious about mission. This could and should be a team teaching effort, including especially those who have been missionaries or supported missionaries. Class will cover:

What is mission?

The word itself comes from the Latin and means to send. One goes as an emissary, a messenger. This implies that you are bearing a message, a communication from Someone to someone else.

Vocation, or being called?

To be called—Elijah was called, David was singled out. What is your experience of being called? Jeremiah was known in his mother's womb. Paul was knocked off his horse. Jesus was baptized by John and acknowledged by God.

Where is mission

To whom is one sent? One might be a missionary to one's own people, or one might be sent elsewhere. Often, one is sent to an alien place. Being the stranger can change the way you see things, including the ways you think of God.

Adult Christian Formation — *Classes for Sunday Morning*

Who sends?

God sends. The community sends.

Who is sent?

Unlikely people. Stories of missionaries, both from Transfiguration and from other places.

What do you do when you get there?

What seems to need doing. What you expect and what you find will likely be different. The cardinal virtue of flexibility. Being Christ for others.

The ritual of travel.

The going matters.

SACRED MUSIC:

Tallis, Byrd, and the Tudors, Part 3 of 4

— Mat Thekkil

The Sacred Music series visits Renaissance England for Part 3 of our series. In this part, we will study the art, architecture, culture and politics that helped shape the music of this era. There will be a particular focus on the music and lives of Thomas Tallis and William Byrd (and their contemporaries). As with Parts 1 & 2, we will follow the presentation of topics found in the BBC series: Sacred Music. The course will consist of video presentation along with lecture and discussion.

SPIRITUALITY — Kris & Weber Baker

Creative Ways to Pray

(Aug 28 – Oct 2)

Do you ever put off praying because it is not the right time, or the right place, or you don't have the right words? God, The Cre-

ator, made us in His own image; thus we also can and should be creators. This includes being creative in our prayer life. Join us as we explore ways to pray beyond the rote words of others and engage in a fresh and personal dialogue with our God.

What did Jesus do? What should we do?

(Oct. 9 – Nov. 13)

In this class we will look at how Jesus lived and how in turn we, living in the twenty first

century should live if we profess to be followers of Christ.. Aspects such as faith, worship, simplicity, poverty, compassion and love will be addressed. Come explore what living a radical Gospel life looks like.

The Parallel Sayings of Jesus and Buddha

(Nov. 20 – Dec. 11)

Five hundred years and three thousand miles separate Jesus and Buddha. But in the words of Marcus Borg, they are the “two

most remarkable religious figures who ever lived”. Each week we will look at several parallel sayings of Jesus and Buddha and ask ourselves how can these teachings be applied to our spiritual lives in order to enrich and enhance our walk in the God's world.

iPARENT

— This class is for parents of pre-schoolers through early elementary and will meet in the iPARENT Classroom, Room240 in the South Building.

Connect with a community of traditional and non-traditional parents in the midst of raising young kids in today's information age. Worship, learn, share and grow together as we navigate and understand our roles as parents. Weekly Sunday morning format

includes a rotation of iPARENT and clergy-led topics, breakfasts, open chat time and special guest speakers. In addition, several parent-centered social gatherings will be planned throughout the year.

G. P. S. (Giving Parents Support)

— This class is for parents of upper elementary through high school and will meet in the Vestry Room of the South Building

Navigate with fellow travelers in the uncharted and often confusing time through the tween and teen years. The weekly format alternates between topics to facilitate our children and ourselves through the emotional, physical and spiritual developmental

changes of youth. Special guest speakers will include clergy, professionals with an expertise in youth development issues, and every month we will take time to get to know each other better and enhance our own spiritual growth.

Adult Christian Formation — *Classes for Afternoon & Evening*

LEAVING CHURCH

Facilitated by Joy Daley and Liz O'Donnell

In this memoir by popular author and preacher, The Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor, the author recounts her journey into and out of parish ministry. Having become an extraordinary and gifted preacher, she travels a road which takes her from the highest of peaks to the lowest of valleys. Join us for the Tuesday Women's Book group and read more about The Rev. Taylor's crisis of faith and where it led her in

the aftermath. Paperback copies of the book will be available in the Kay Andrews Bookstore in the late summer.

The class will meet on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30 in the Vestry Room, beginning September 27.

LISTENING FOR THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD

by Philip Newell, facilitated by Joy Daley

This six-week book study presents spirituality for today modeled on the vital characteristics of Celtic Spirituality through the centuries. There is an emphasis on the essential goodness of creation and of humanity, made in the image of God.

Meets on Tuesday Evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in iPParent Room beginning September 27.

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EFM)

Mentored by Elizabeth Lang

The EfM program provides people with the education to carry out the ministry each of us is called to through our baptism. Students sign up one year at a time for this four-year program which covers the basics of a theological education in the Old and New Testaments, church history, liturgy and theology. Students of all four years meet together regularly for nine months, once a week for three hours. The fee for each year is \$350.

This class will meet in the Staff Room from 6:30 to 9:15 on Monday Nights, beginning September 19.

If you are interested in joining the group this year, please fill out an application and return it, with your check, to Michael Merriman (in the church office) no later than August 26.

If there is sufficient response, there will be a class at Transfiguration. If not, those interested are welcome to join the class at St. Michael & All Angels which Elizabeth also mentors.

If you are interested in considering the group for next year (2012-2013), please sign-up too and indicate that it would be for 2012-13.

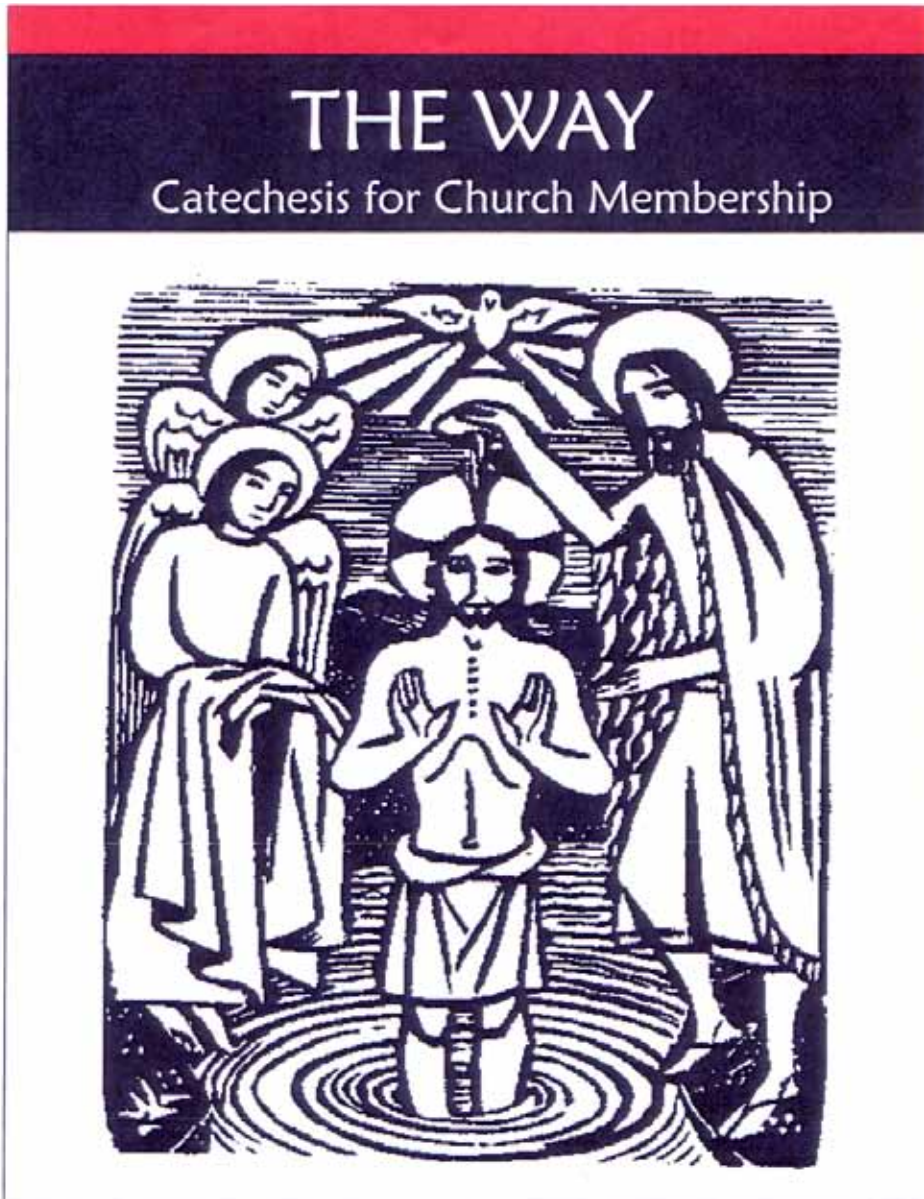
THE SACRED PATH COMPANION

Facilitated by Nancy Jagmin

The six-week small group will study *The Sacred Path Companion*, an interactive workbook centered on using the labyrinth for personal reflection and transformation. The book is written by Lauren Artress, author of *Walking a Sacred Path*, and a guiding force in the re-birth of the labyrinth as a spiritual tool. The book offer exercises, suggestions, and meditations aimed at topics such as the art of labyrinth walking, the lessons of the labyrinth, and using the labyrinth for healing and transformation.

The study will start in the fall: exact date, time and place to be announced.

Adult Christian Formation — *Classes for Afternoon & Evening*



THE WAY provides formation in Scriptures, Worship, Prayer, and Ministry. This formation prepares adults for Baptism, Confirmation or to be Received into the Episcopal Church.

Stage One begins Sunday, September 11 at 5 p.m.
Classes meet in Roper Hall

Are you in one of these categories?

- Adults who have not been baptized
- Baptized Adults who have not been confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church
- Confirmed Adults who wish to deepen their commitment to Christian believing and practice

Then this series is for you!

It consists of the following Stages:

Stage One

INQUIRY Seven Weeks in a program called “Connect? What it means to be part of a Eucharistic Community.” It explores how Episcopalians approach the Bible, Worship, Prayer, Ministry, and Church membership.

Sunday afternoons, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
September 11 – October 23.

A three week break follows, then:

Stage Two

FORMATION Twelve weeks learning how Episcopalians are called to live into their commitment to God and God’s Church. We will use a program called “Commit? What it would mean to live more deeply into my Baptismal Covenant.”

Sunday afternoons, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
November 6 – December 11.

A break for Christmas, then continuing, January 8 – February 5. And ending with a Retreat on February 17-19.

Stage Three

PREPARATION for the Rites of Christian Initiation (Baptism) and of Confirmation/ Reception.

Sunday afternoons, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.
February 27-April 1.

**We call on all current members of Transfiguration to begin inviting people to be part of this series (speak to those you know who are new to our parish, especially those who have not been baptized or confirmed). Consider strongly taking part in order to make a formal Reaffirmation of your Baptism at the Confirmation service. Volunteer to support by your presence some or all of these stages by contacting Michael Merriman, mmerriman@transfiguration.net or 972-233-2898, x 237.*

Children's Ministry



By Gaye Lynn Huddleston

We offer a comprehensive Christian Formation program for children ages three through sixth grade. The curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for community building, learning, and for sharing God's love. Teachers encourage students to question, explore and be in conversation with them.

Godly Play

teaches children the art of using religious language — parable, sacred story, silence and liturgical action in the Montessori method. Three classrooms are divided between preschool, K-1st, and 2-6th grades.

Augsburg Fortress publishes the Spark Classroom curriculum

It's used in the traditional classrooms. Following a two year rotation schedule, a bible story is read aloud, then students are engaged in various activities to explore the reading.

All Christian Formation classes

begin at 10:15. The Godly Play classes and preschool Spark class, meet in rooms along the childcare wing, off the north transept. The four traditional Spark classrooms, for elementary aged children, are upstairs in the Family Life building. To register for formation classes follow the link on our website: www.transfiguration.net

Additional activities offered by the Children's Ministry Department are as follows:

First Informed Communion

While not a sacrament in the Episcopal Church, FIC is still an important rite for many families. Students wishing to participate, will attend a 3 hour retreat Sunday, October 30th, and then receive their First Informed Communion during the 9:00 service on All Saint's Sunday, November 6.

Third Grade Bibles

In January, each third grade student is presented with a Bible during the 9:00 a.m. service.

Breakfast Club

All 5th and 6th grade students are invited to a monthly gathering in the PES gymnasium. This is a time for food, fellowship and fun.

Advent Festival

A family event, held in Roper Hall the Sunday before Thanksgiving, welcomes the season of Advent with activities, which highlight the season.

Holy Week Workshop

This offering is for 4th – 6th graders. It is held on Palm Sunday, following the 9:00 service. Together we explore what happens during our most holy week.

Nursery Care

All children under age three are cared for by our trained and loving paid childcare staff. The nursery is available from 8:45 a.m. through the 11:15 a.m. service each Sunday morning. Parents must remain on the Transfiguration campus while their children are in the church nursery.

Children's Chapel

Offered during the 9:00 and 11:15 a.m. Sunday services, Children's Chapel is designed for those too old for nursery care, but too young to fully appreciate the entire service of worship. Children accompany their parents to the Nave for the beginning of the worship service, and then follow the cross to Children's Chapel during the Song of Praise. Our Children's Chapel service, led by one of our clergy, reflects the service in the Nave. Children gather to hear the Gospel, sing, say the Creed and share Prayers of the People. An opportunity for an art response follows. They are escorted back to their parents during the Offertory hymn.

Various other opportunities for community building, family activities centered on the liturgical calendar are offered throughout the year.



Youth Ministry

Our church has a deep passion for youth. We know that the passion energy, and wonder with which they wrestle with their faith are invaluable to the life and ministry of our church. The Transfiguration Youth Ministry seeks to cultivate these gifts in our young people through effective relationships, participation in worship, Biblical exploration, service to the community and the world, and Christian Formation. The format we use for Christian Formation is based on a program called *Journey to Adulthood*, which seeks to merge Biblical teaching (based on the Episcopal Liturgical calendar) with the life stages youth go through. We use Biblical exploration, prayer, rites of passage, and both serious and playful activities to help students begin a life-long journey of faith.



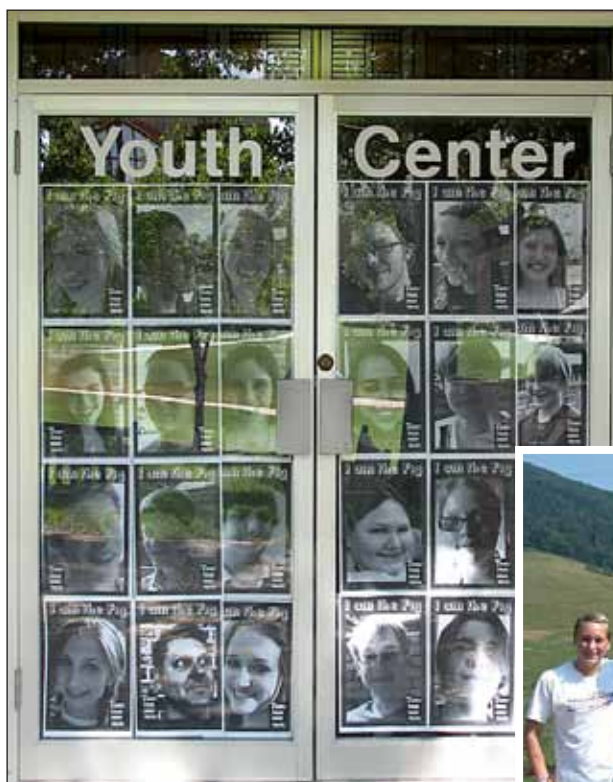
By Jeb Honeyman

Each week, we will gather as a large group in the Youth Center for a 10-15 minute introduction to the lesson for the day. They will then break up into smaller groups based on their age level. We divide groups based on their High School graduation year. Our oldest group called YAC will be comprised of those graduating in 2012 and 2013. Our middle group called J2A will be those graduating in 2014 and 2015. Our youngest group is made up of those graduating in 2016 and 2017. We move in two-year blocks so that each group stays together throughout their time in the Youth Ministry. After 4 years in our program, each group goes on a Pilgrimage to explore their heritage as Episcopalians.

The lessons each week are derived from the scripture passages read in church that week, so what your student hears in church they will study in Christian formation. This is designed to enrich the church experience of the students and to give them the opportunity to discuss what they hear in an age-appropriate setting. Discussion of the scriptures and how they relate to teenagers will be the cornerstone of this program.

There are also several points throughout the Christian Formation experience where we will participate in rites of passage designed to help students understand their place within the larger church. These are powerful and moving events in which the entire parish will help celebrate and honor your student.

We believe this will be an extremely effective, fun, and interesting experience for all students, and we hope that you'll make a commitment to Christian Formation this year.



If you'd like more information, you can contact me at jebhoneyman@gmail.com or you can go to our website at www.transfigurationyouth.net



Meet the Instructors for Adult Christian Formation

Kris Baker holds a Master of Music degree from the University of North Texas, and is an adjunct faculty member at Brookhaven College. She is a life professed member of the Third Order of the Society of St. Francis. Kris has written two books on praying with the Anglican rosary and curricula on spiritual formation and prayer. She is active with the Labyrinth Ministry and sings with the Transfiguration choir.

Weber Baker holds a Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of North Texas, and teaches computers at Vivian Field Middle School. He is beginning the formation process for becoming a member of the Third Order of the Society of St. Francis. He is active with the Transfiguration Labyrinth Ministry.

Joy Daley received her Master of Divinity from Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University in 2001. She also has her Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology and worked as a licensed counselor in various settings prior to ordination. As Vicar at Transfiguration, she assists the rector administratively and also oversees pastoral care and outreach ministries.

Jerry D. Godwin has been Rector of Transfiguration since July 2000, and was parish Vicar from 1982 until 2000. He served congregations in West Des Moines and Perry, Iowa before coming to Transfiguration. From 1976 through 1985, he served the National Church on the Standing Committee on Church Music which produced *The Hymnal* 1982. His passions include liturgy that is "formal without being stuffy," inclusive hospitality, and generous outreach.

Richard Harmon received his doctorate in Philosophy of Religion from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth and was a professor of New Testament at the Anglican School of Theology for 15 years. He was a coordinator for the Bible Study Curriculum at the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Church and has also worked to enhance dialogue between the Baptist and Roman Catholic Churches.

Nancy Jagmin is a certified labyrinth facilitator who coordinated a Christian Education class on the labyrinth. As part of her work with the Fig Labyrinth Ministry, Nancy has facilitated groups inside and outside the parish to experience the labyrinth as part of their spiritual journey. Nancy has an interest in spiritual formation and personal formation, which she is sometimes able to apply in her executive coaching practice.

Elizabeth Lang will be the mentor for our Education for Ministry class. She has mentored EfM groups in the Dallas area for over 20 years and has served as a mentor trainer for the program as well. Currently she is the chairperson of the Religion Department of the Episcopal School of Dallas. Her undergraduate degree is from Mount Holyoke College and her Masters degrees and PhD are from Cornell University. We welcome her as one of our instructors.

Michael Merriman is an associate priest at the Church of the Transfiguration. He has been active in liturgical renewal in the Anglican Communion for many years. He is the author of *The Rite Light* which is included in our parish's service leaflets each week, editor and contributor to *The Baptismal Mystery* and the Catechumenate, and a one

time member of the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music.

Liz O'Donnell has an academic background in education with an undergraduate degree in Home Economics from Cornell University and a Master of Arts in Education degree from the University of Denver. She trained for the Diaconate through the Deacon Formation Program in the Diocese of Maine and received her chaplain training at Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor. In addition to leading book groups, she enjoys leading women's retreats and facilitating the required Safe Church Training sessions for church volunteers.

Mat Thekkil has been a member of Transfiguration since 2003 and is one of the founding members of neXtgen. Mat's interest in Sacred Music grew during his time at the Fig and his tenure in the Transfiguration Choir. Continuing education and teaching are active interests of Mat's: he teaches Organic and General Chemistry for The Princeton Review and is a graduate student at UT-Dallas.

