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Lent 2017

# illumine

enlightening and celebrating where God is at work in our midst



A PUBLICATION OF  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE  
Transfiguration



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The Rev. Michael Merriman—Priest Associate

The Rev. Liz O'Donnell—Deacon

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## Worship Service Times

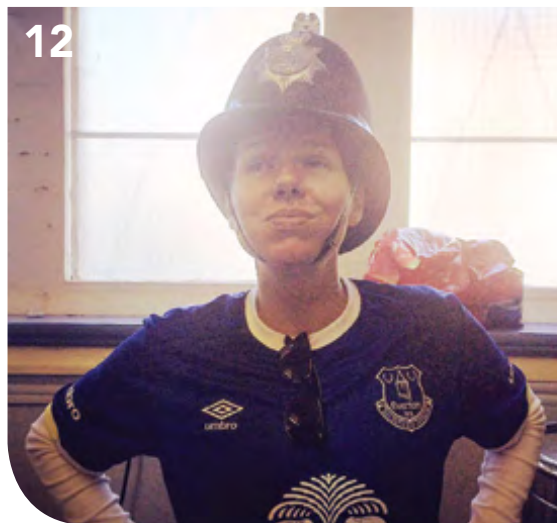
Wednesday | 6:00 p.m.

Thursday | 12:00 p.m.

Saturday | 5:30 p.m.

Sunday | 9:00 a.m.\* and 11:15 a.m.\*

\*Childcare available for children  
6 weeks to age 5.



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*Illumine* is a quarterly publication of Church of the Transfiguration. The word itself has two meanings: to light up or brighten and to enlighten (someone) spiritually or intellectually. The goal behind this magazine is to tell the stories of this congregation, highlight new ministries, and celebrate where God is at work in our midst.





## From the Rector Living Miracles

**O**n Christmas Day I had the honor of attending the Christmas service of Church of the Holy Faith, our sister congregation of Bhutanese refugees, and celebrating the Eucharist with them.

Usually they meet in the Niles Building, but that day they met and worshipped in Roper Hall to allow room for the addition of nearly 50 guests—fellow Bhutanese refugees from around the Metroplex, most of whom are not Christian. The music was joyous, the dresses and dancing were beautiful, and there was palpable hope and spirit flowing through the gathering. As exhausted as I was after all the services of the previous night and that morning, the experience of being with Holy Faith on Christmas Day for three hours as they sang, prayed, danced, and feasted was a blessing that stirred my soul in profound ways.

There really is no way to describe the people of Holy Faith other than to call them living, breathing miracles. The adult members of their church spent most of their lives either fleeing persecution in Bhutan or living in refugee camps in India and Nepal. They lost everything when they were driven from their homes by the Bhutanese government, and but for the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), their entire culture would likely have disappeared. They spent nearly 25 years living in camps, unable to establish new, permanent lives in peace. It was only five years ago that they were resettled here in Dallas and allowed to truly begin again. And now, by the grace of God, they are part of our extended family at Transfiguration.

I call them miracles, because they have endured trials that are hard for us to fathom. They have faced ethnic cleansing, starvation, and homelessness. They have been hated by their own government and rejected by their neighboring countries, including the one, Nepal, to which they trace their lineage and language. They have been “intensely vetted” for several years by the United Nations and the U.S. State Department, and relocated to our nation, where they had to learn another new language and culture and begin their lives from scratch again.

And yet, to watch them dance and sing and pray and feast that Christmas Day, you would not have guessed all this. They smile and laugh genuinely and sincerely. Their children are joyful and full of playful mischief. There is hope in their eyes and gratitude on their lips. Above all, they believe in Christ because he is the light that shined in the darkness of their lives, which the darkness did not overcome, and he led them with love and mercy to the safety and peace of new lives.

We must not succumb to thinking of refugees as nameless, faceless people of dubious character or background. God doesn't command us again and again in Scripture to welcome the foreigner and alien, to open our doors and our homes to refugees and aliens, as though they are just numbers on a State Department list. We are called by God to know and love our neighbors as ourselves, and that means seeing them as people with names and stories. They are human beings, made in the image of God, whose dignity we have promised to respect.

On page 10 of this issue you will learn a little more about some of the refugees we serve and care for at Transfiguration. Like the refugees of Holy Faith, they are miracles, people with stories about overcoming unimaginable suffering to start their lives over in peace here in Dallas. They are not numbers. They are not nameless terrorists of whom we



should be afraid. They are living, breathing people who God has given into our care for a time. And our faith calls us to seek and serve Christ in them, as well as in the countless more who are still walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

In God's economy there is always enough to share, and no one needs to be turned away. Or, as the adage goes, “When you have more than you need, build longer tables rather than higher fences.” Pray that we may have grace and courage sufficient to keep extending our table, because the ones we're welcoming to the banquet are nothing less than living, breathing miracles. 🙏



# Called to a Life of Prayer

**As far back as the days of my Christian fundamentalism, I have struggled with the notion that I should pray.**

I remember trying all the things that I thought made for proper prayer: kneeling by my bedside, closing my eyes, placing my hands just right underneath my chin. *Do I intertwine my fingers, or let my hands rest flat against one another?* I remember looking up “Prayer” in the concordance of my Gideon’s Bible, searching for guidance on how to participate in this most important act of the Christian faith. Yet, even with my hands held below my chin and the most earnest desire I could muster, I would offer prayers to God and sometimes feel nothing in the moments, days, or years of silence that seemed to follow my petition. Or, I would feel as if a prayer were answered, and after that rush of satisfaction find that my next few requests went by the wayside. I thought I was listening to God. I thought I was asking for the right things. I thought I was creating as pure a heart as a fifteen year old could, in order to then bring my requests to God. Somehow, though, my prayers always felt like they lacked the special ingredient that made them worthy of God’s ears, or that if I did get what I asked for, it was a short-lived grace.

Later, after my confirmation in the Episcopal Church, I found prayer to honestly be no easier. I thought, for a while, that because I now had *liturgy*, things would be different. My prayers would not be trapped in the confines of my own judgment of efficacy, and would instead be freed by the sacrament to feel the way they were always supposed to feel. *Prayer isn’t about me anymore; prayer is about the work of the people.* While these are parts of my belief around prayer, I regret to inform you that I



**The Rev. Erin Jean Warde**  
Associate Rector for  
Christian Formation

still struggle with my calling to pray. Kneeling, hands folded just below my chin, I continue to sometimes find myself sitting inside that same silent chasm.

I say this to acknowledge that I am still on a journey of figuring out what it means to be called to a life of prayer, and I know I surely won’t solve it during the season of Lent. Still, we will spend five evenings thinking specifically about what it means to be called to a life of prayer, because I wonder if maybe you’ve had some of the same thoughts about prayer, and even *prayed* to become more comfortable with prayer, too.

In our Baptismal Covenant, we vow to continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in prayer. Our catechism defines prayer as “responding to God, by thought and by deeds, with or without words.” We are, as a Church, called to a life of prayer, but that can be made manifest in myriad ways, and challenge us in just as many ways.

Our Lenten Wednesday lecture series this year focuses on different aspects of prayer. We began with a theological teaching on intercessory prayer from our own The Rev. Paul Bradshaw. We will learn about prayer in monastic life with Methodist pastor and prior for the Missional Wisdom Foundation, Adam White. Rabbi-Educator Ariel Boxman from Temple Shalom will help us explore Jewish prayer practices that can influence and enrich our own. We will become pilgrims alongside Danielle Shroyer as we journey through the Holy Land praying The Lord’s Prayer. We will wrestle with the reality of trying to pray when we face grief, and the times when we are called to a life of prayer but do not want to talk to God at all, with Dr. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner, Professor of Pastoral Care at SMU-Perkins.

During our Lenten program, we have Eucharist every Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m., as is our weekly custom. I hope you will join us and participate in this act of prayer. We will also end each lecture with a different type of evening prayer, with this structure as a reminder that our time together begins and is ended in prayer.

As I continue to struggle through my own prayer life, I am finding my peace around prayer through releasing my intertwined fingers, my rules for how it is that I must present myself to God. I am exploring different ways of thinking about prayer—everything from the grand liturgy of the Easter Vigil to the simplicity of five minutes in silence each morning. My prayer is changing from petition to presence, and I’m finding that God feels closer to me for it. As I relinquish the confines that only I have put on prayer, I am reminded by God that it is the love of God, not my work, that creates the space where prayer begins.

God is faithful to join us in bread and wine, and just as faithful to join me as I curl up on my sofa while I sit in what feels like a silent chasm. As I try to live into this life of prayer, I find myself more comforted by the silence, not because it offers me answers, but because it frees me from the heresy that everything I wonder should have an answer. As I continue to explore prayer, I am drawn further into the belief that it is the exploration that it is the act of prayer, not what follows when I have said my “Amen.” It is my prayer that through this season of Lent we will be formed as a community and given direction in our common prayer life, as well as how we pray when we are alone. I look forward to how this prayer will change us, and how this prayer will change me. 🕊

## Instructional Seder with Rabbi-Educator Ariel Boxman

A Passover Seder is a Jewish ritual feast that marks the beginning of the Jewish holiday of Passover. The Seder is a ritual involving a retelling of the story of the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt from the book of Exodus. Seder customs include telling the story, discussing the story, drinking four cups of wine, eating matza, partaking of symbolic foods placed on the Passover Seder Plate, and reclining in celebration of freedom. Join us at the church on Tuesday, April 4 at 7:00 p.m., as we experience a Passover Seder, and in doing so, learn about the importance of this religious ritual from from Rabbi-Educator Ariel Boxman from Temple Shalom. No childcare is available but children are welcome! Please RSVP to Mother Erin Jean Warde at [ewarde@transfiguration.net](mailto:ewarde@transfiguration.net) to reserve your spot. 🕊





# Called to a Life of Prayer

## Lenten Evening Series

Wednesdays through April 5

6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Eucharist - Soup Supper

Guest Speaker w/Q&A

Children's Activities - Compline

We are, as a Church, called to a life of prayer. By reflecting together about both the challenges and joys of prayer, and praying together weekly through Eucharist and evening prayer, we can be formed as a community and given direction in our individual and common prayer life.

### Join us every Wednesday evening through April 5.

6:00p.m. Holy Eucharist in the Church

6:30p.m. Soup supper in Roper Hall

7:00p.m. Featured Lecture with Q&A

8:15p.m. Evening Prayer

There is a Lenten program for children in kindergarten through 5th grades immediately following dinner in Room S-203. Children will learn different forms of prayer and explore creative ways to pray through crafts and activities. Childcare is provided for children ages 6 weeks to 4 years. All lectures in the series are recorded and will be available online at [www.transfiguration.net/guest-speakers](http://www.transfiguration.net/guest-speakers).

### March 8—Sharing in Christ's Prayer with The Rev. Paul Bradshaw

The Rev. Paul Bradshaw is Emeritus Professor of Liturgy at University of Notre Dame, and he is a former President both of Societas Liturgica and of the North American Academy of Liturgy. His book, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Liturgy*, has become a standard textbook for liturgical studies. Both Paul and his wife Rowena can be found in the pews at Transfiguration, and he serves on the Adult Formation Committee.



### March 15—Introduction to Jewish Prayer Practices with Rabbi Educator Ariel Boxman

Rabbi Ariel C. Boxman, Rabbi-Educator at Temple Shalom, grew up in the Caribbean on the island of St. Thomas. As the daughter of a Reform rabbi, she was a very active participant in the Reform Movement. In 2007, Rabbi Boxman graduated from American University in Washington D.C. and continued her studies at the Hebrew Union College, being ordained as a rabbi in 2012. Following ordination, Rabbi Boxman enrolled in a Masters of Jewish Education program and in 2013 earned her degree as a Jewish Educator. During her time in Cincinnati at the Hebrew Union College, Rabbi Boxman taught Hebrew and Judaics, wrote curriculum and supervised the teen leadership training program at the Isaac M. Wise Temple.



### March 22—Praying with Open Eyes: New Monastic Community, Daily Prayer, and Engaging our Local Communities with Rev. Adam White

The Rev. Adam White received his Masters of Divinity at Perkins School of Theology at SMU in May 2015, and serves on the staff at Grace United Methodist Church as the Minister of Discipleship. Adam also works for the Missional Wisdom Foundation as a content writer for different publications, curriculum, and articles the organization offers. The Missional Wisdom Foundation provides opportunities for adults, both clergy and laity, to learn how to live in intentional community in diverse social contexts. The ministry includes on-site learning communities, theological education through the Academy for Missional Wisdom, and pilgrimage experiences.



### March 29—Where Jesus Prayed: Illuminating The Lord's Prayer in the Holy Land with Danielle Shroyer

Danielle Shroyer is an author, speaker and ordained pastor. She spent over a decade in pastoral leadership and was a founding member of the emerging church movement. She holds an MDiv from Princeton Theological Seminary. Danielle is the author of *Original Blessing: Putting Sin in its Rightful Place*, *Where Jesus Prayed: Illuminations on the Lord's Prayer in the Holy Land*, and *The Boundary Breaking God: An Unfolding Story of Hope and Promise*. You can connect with her at [www.danielleshroyer.com](http://www.danielleshroyer.com).



### April 5— The Primal Cry of Pain and Prayer: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?"

#### with Dr. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner

Dr. Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner is an ordained Presbyterian minister in the PCUSA and the Professor of Pastoral Care at SMU Perkins School of Theology. Her teaching specialties include issues in practical theology, pastoral care of women, crisis ministry, pastoral self-care, family systems theory, and adoption. She is the author of *A Primer in Pastoral Care* and *The Spirit of Adoption: At Home in God's Family*. She is also the editor of three pioneering books in pastoral care: *Women in Travail and Transition*, *Through the Eyes of Women*, and *In Her Own Time*. 🙏





# EVANGELISM MATTERS

## What's Next?

By Anne Schmidt

### In November Transfiguration was a big part of the first steps in The Episcopal Church's new Evangelism Initiative.

Over 400 participants from across the country and central America came to the Evangelism Matters Conference in November and were invited to explore ways that Episcopalians can more effectively share our stories with those who have not yet heard the Good News of Jesus. The energy of the event was inspiring and plans are already underway for a second, even bigger Evangelism Conference to be held in another part of the country. In conference evaluations one of the highlights for people was the friendly and helpful welcome attendees received from the volunteers at Transfiguration. From the moment they arrived in the parking lot and throughout their visit they were greeted with welcoming smiles, directions and answers to questions.

One of the big takeaways from the conference was that evangelism is about storytelling. Jesus told stories to explain the nature of God to his disciples, and we each have stories to tell, too. How is God transforming your life? When was a time when you could really feel God's presence? How did you find your way to Transfiguration? What makes you stay? How does your ministry here inspire and change you? The answers to these questions are part of your story. Our new website allows us to showcase these stories to people who may be searching for a church home. Would you be willing to add your story?

Invitation is a part of evangelism that can flow from the storytelling. Invitation does not have to be threatening. It is about recognizing the

small opportunities in our lives when we can share about something we love. The first invitation doesn't even necessarily have to be to worship. It is easy invite someone to a choir concert, chili cook-off, or outreach event. If you do feel comfortable inviting someone to worship, grab a few Holy Week and Easter cards at the Visitor's Center and use them to ask a friend or neighbor to experience to depth and joy of this holy season with you.

The Rev. Stephanie Spellers, Canon to the Presiding Bishop for Evangelism and Reconciliation writes about how she hopes Episcopalians will begin to see evangelism. "Let's imagine evangelism that is true to the bold, generous and hopeful spirit of the Jesus Movement. Evangelism that welcomes people into a loving, liberating and life-giving relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Evangelism that first listens for what God is doing in our lives and in the world...and then celebrates and shares it". 🙏

*Anne Rudacille Schmidt has been a member of Transfiguration for 10 years. In that time, she has served as Stewardship Chair, Senior Warden, and Search Committee member. Anne is an Episcopal Consultant who works with diocesan and parish teams when searching for a rector or bishop. She is Vice-Chair of the Forward Movement Board, Co-Chair of the CEEP Conference Planning Committee and recently Co-Convened the Evangelism Matters Summit and Conference. She is wife of Walter and mother of Andrew and Caroline.*



PHOTOS BY RICHARD HILL

**Presiding Bishop Michael Curry and Bishop George Sumner of Dallas exit the church in the Friday evening Eucharist procession. The Rev. Canon Scott Gunn, Executive Director of Forward Movement, co-sponsor of the conference, offers the Host.**





**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** Presiding Bishop Michael Curry preaches about the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement. An African priest listens to a translation of the Eucharist. Worshippers gather in the standing-room only nave. The Gospel is read in Spanish. The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, whose work focuses on Evangelism and Reconciliation, serves communion.





# Ash Wednesday EVANGELISM

By Tim Cutts

**I've been an observant Episcopalian my whole dang life—that's a fact.** I've been to many Ash Wednesday Eucharists; in fact, the first time ashes were imposed upon me was by Fr. Merriman in about 1972 or so.

However, this year was my first time to ever participate in the service. It was hands down a powerful experience and frankly, one for which I wasn't prepared. I've been thinking about Lent for some weeks now; Kristin being new to our neighborhood has provided us an opportunity to talk about what Lent means in a more remedial way. And even as I type this I know what I really mean is this: we're listening to God as he speaks to us in a more remedial way.

I listened to Erin's sermon three separate times on Ash Wednesday and her message was nuanced differently all three times was nothing short

of amazing. Truly amazing. My twine and sticks are messy and uneven and so full of flaws that it's almost unimaginable that anything could find a use for them: for me it's not only about building my own messy nest but about helping others find their building materials, too.

Last night after mass Kristin and I went our little local Indian joint for dinner; there's no better way to end an Ash Wednesday daylight fast than a sound vindaloo. Our server came to our table while we were eating and politely asked about our ashed heads. She stood at our table and asked questions and shared ideas and spoke about her life and clearly was genuinely interested in us and our belief system—and we too were keenly interested in her. Her name is Luba.

In college one of my Baptist fraternity brothers used to josh me for being a tight-lipped Episcopalian—I'm just as uncomfortable evangelizing as the next Anglican. It's such a private and personal thing and the connotations for me are "in your face" thumpers and money. But driving home after dinner Kristin and I talked about what we just did—we're evangelists!



PHOTO BY ROBERT HACKER

**The Imposition of Ashes at this year's Ash Wednesday service on March 1.**



**Tim and Kristin Cutts after Kristin's confirmation last spring.**

The Holy Spirit is moving on me and I can feel it; much of the time it is quiet and requires some concentration to both recognize and hear. However, if I'll shut up, quiet myself, and really listen it is deafeningly loud. And you know what I think He's saying to me? He's saying keep on keeping on and bring your twine and sticks—trust me, they're perfect... and I like vindaloo, too!

"I am a spec in the crowd, and you should know this spec is terribly, terribly grateful for Transfiguration and our mission. It is making an indelible mark upon me and I'm glad of it." 🙏



# Refugee Support Stories

## Michael Widmer & Alvaro Amador

*To protect his privacy, the refugee's name has been changed to a common name in his culture, Ibrahim. Along with Michael and Alvaro another couple at Transfiguration, Robert Hacker and John Makowski, provide support for Ibrahim.*

### Why did Alvaro and I volunteer to help refugees?

The call to help refugees resonated deeply with both of us. However, like the call to love your neighbor, the goal seemed aspirational and somewhat abstract. While we might have been sympathetic, it wasn't until Syrian refugees began to be scapegoated that we realized we could no longer remain passive. In late 2015, The Rev. Samira Izadi Page came to Transfiguration to share the story of Gateway of Grace's ministry to the refugees of North Texas. Like others, we had seen the harrowing travails refugees endured to find safety. However, it was not until then that we learned how truly arduous the process was before and after resettlement. Refugees, those who have been forced to flee their homeland and families for fear of their life, wait for years while the U.N. determines the validity of their persecuted status. Refugees do not get to pick their new homeland. For those who land in the U.S., their destination was determined by the U.N. and the U.S. government.

Most people who qualify for refugee status are women and children, but in many countries, gay men face not just discrimination, but violent harassment, risk of imprisonment, and death threats. It was in these circumstances that we met Ibrahim, a young man forced to leave his blind mother and sister behind in Senegal. Ibrahim had spent two years in a refugee camp and arrived in Dallas with nothing but the clothes on his back and significant health problems that required periodic hospitalization. Most refugees don't speak English and Ibrahim was no exception. Luckily, my husband Alvaro and I speak his native French. Most churches that work with Gateway of Grace won't minister to gay people. Fortunately, Transfiguration is an exception.

The first order of business was to find others who would be willing to commit time to help. Nancy Korman, Robert Hacker, Jon Makowski, Alvaro, and I first met Ibrahim to meet with him and get to know his needs. While his needs seemed many at first (getting to know Dallas and U.S. cultural norms, learning English, connecting with social service providers) his main need was one of personal connection. In the first few months, he did not feel secure enough to leave his small studio apartment, so the most valuable activity we performed was providing companionship: going to lunch, getting coffee, walking through the Arboretum. In these activities, we learned about each other and helped

***"Hospitality to strangers and care for the most vulnerable is not an aspect of our faith, it is the basis of it."***



**Alvaro and Michael**

him feel more confident and capable in his new home. Eventually he found a job and became more independent.

While Ibrahim is much more acclimated today, he still faces significant challenges. The community he lives in is filled with refugees from conservative cultures, and he has endured harassment and assault. As a result, we are trying to help him find a safer living situation and assist him with his medical appointments and paperwork. For those who wonder to themselves, "What can I do?" know that if you can band with a few friends or even a few like-minded strangers in our case, you can make an immediate and profound impact on another person's life. Hospitality to strangers and care for the most vulnerable is not an aspect of our faith, it is the basis of it. The first time I went to India, I was told by my Hindu friend, "In our culture, the guest is a god." Abraham entertained angels generations before Moses received the Ten Commandments. If the phrase describing Jacob, "A wandering Aramean was my father..." calls to you, remember as it is written in the King James Version: "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous."



## Bill & Lisa Edwards

*Please note: the names of the refugees have been omitted to maintain their privacy.*

A chance encounter (if there is such a thing ?) at our visitor desk last fall has led to a special friendship with two refugees from Iran. After converting to Christianity and having no option but to leave, they began a seven-year journey of immigration that has led them through Azerbaijan, Russia, Georgia (not the “peach” state!), Turkey, and finally to Dallas and “The Fig”. Their journey is absolutely amazing to hear.

Their determination to have the freedoms that many of us take for granted is inspiring. They both came from well-to-do families and had good jobs in Iran but gave it all up to come to America and start all over with basically nothing. Currently he has an entry-level job at Wal-Mart with aspirations of “moving up the ladder” and a long-term goal of someday becoming a teacher. She is going to school at Richland College with hopes (sure to be realized) of becoming a software developer/engineer.

Lisa and I have helped in small ways with transportation needs and friendship. Others in the church have provided meals while she (who is expecting a baby girl the end of March) was on bed rest earlier in her pregnancy. Some of the ladies from the Wednesday morning Mom’s group are offering some support and friendship to them as well. They live in the North Dallas Shared Ministries (NDSM) support area and have been able to take advantage of the income tax preparation services offered there along with receiving some financial aid—largely, we believe, because of our support of NDSM and the fact that they are attending The Fig. We’ve come to understand that the small ways we all can help make a big difference for them and they are so appreciative of the help our church family has given them as you can read:

“From the first day we have visited Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration, they made us feel like we are part of their family and we are in our own home. We went through lots of problems and they have never let us feel alone. They always have protected us financially and emotionally. Whenever we need any kind of help, they were



ready to help us and did their best all the time. The most interesting part of our relationship was that ethnic, color, race and sex is not any importance for them. Humanity is always first and they don’t mind if you are refugee or immigrant, they are always ready to hold your hands. We are so proud of being a part of Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration!” 🙏

## Refugee Ministry Training

As a congregation, we’re looking to enhance our support of our ministry to four refugees, to bolster the small teams already working with them, and to prepare for working with future refugees. The Outreach Committee is leading this effort in order to create a sustainable framework to both assist those parishioners currently supporting refugee families and potentially support future refugees. We are partnering with Gateway of Grace, a local Episcopal organization lead by the Rev. Samira Izadi Page, that helps refugees start over in Dallas/Fort Worth Area.

As you reflect on how you can be a part of this outreach, consider:

- Do you have experience and/or expertise in law, medicine, education, computers, home economics, children, cooking, business, carpentry, auto repair, moving, etc.) which you feel might be helpful to refugees?
- Do you have the ability to transport refugees in a personal vehicle?
- Do you have foreign language skills?
- Do you have a connection to employment opportunities?
- Are you available during daytime hours? 🙏

Join us on Saturday, May 6 from 9:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. for a training for this important ministry. It will help all prospective volunteers learn how to get involved and be effective. We will then plug people into teams, according to their availability and skills, so that we can surround the refugees we serve with whole groups of committed, compassionate people. Questions? Email [outreach@transfiguration.net](mailto:outreach@transfiguration.net).



# Solemn Evensong for the Annunciation



PHOTO BY JOHN MAKOWSKI, 2016

**Sunday,  
March 26  
5:00 p.m.**

The Transfiguration Choir will sing an Evensong service (with incense) celebrating the Annunciation of Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Blessed Virgin Mary (transferred from March 25). Join us for this evening of music and prayer at 5:00 p.m. in the church. The Rev. Melody Shobe will preach and music will include C. V. Stanford's Magnificat & Nunc dimittis in G Major and the Preces and Responses (Westminster Abbey) by James Buonemani. Childcare is provided. 🙏

## ~Annunciation~

*John Donne (1572–1631)*

Salvation to all that will is nigh;  
That All, which always is all everywhere,  
Which cannot sin, and yet all sins must bear,  
Which cannot die, yet cannot choose but die,  
Lo! faithful Virgin, yields Himself to lie  
In prison, in thy womb; and though He there  
Can take no sin, nor thou give, yet He'll wear,  
Taken from thence, flesh, which death's force may try.  
Ere by the spheres time was created thou  
Wast in His mind, who is thy Son, and Brother;  
Whom thou conceivest, conceived; yea, thou art now  
Thy Maker's maker, and thy Father's mother.  
Thou hast light in dark, and shutt'st in little room  
Immensity, cloistered in thy dear womb.

The Annunciation, 1914. By John William Waterhouse (1849–1917). This image is in the public domain.





## Missionary Update

# A Letter from Kate Jewett-Williams

*Kate Jewett-Williams has been a member of Transfiguration for two years and was previously a member of The Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma. Since September 2016, she has been serving as a Young Adult Service Corps member in Liverpool, United Kingdom. The Young Adult Service Corps (YASC) of the Episcopal Church offers opportunities to young adults between the ages of 21 and 30 to have a one-year mission experience in locations throughout the Anglican Communion. Whether in Texas or England, Kate enjoys watching, playing, and refereeing Rugby Union games, and eating chips (French fries). Learn more about Kate's experience at [theforeigncommission.blogspot.com](http://theforeigncommission.blogspot.com).*

### Greetings Sisters and Brothers!

I have now been in Liverpool for about six months and I have had an incredible experience so far. My home is located in the city center on the Liverpool Cathedral grounds, and I am still learning to live in the shadow of the fifth largest cathedral in Europe. The central theme to my work in Liverpool is practicing the radical hospitality and welcome as shown by Jesus and others in the Bible.

On the most basic of terms this is achieved through the guest room in my house I help run and maintain. Most weeks there is at least one person staying with my roommate and me in the house. While a majority of guests are from the U.K. we have had several guests from around the world, including France and Ghana. Check out the house website at <https://tsedaqahhouse.wordpress.com/>

I also help to extend welcome to refugees and asylum seekers in Liverpool. First, I work with the HOPE+ food bank, an ecumenical partnership between the Catholic Metropolitan Cathedral and the Anglican Liverpool Cathedral. This project is significant in two ways. Notably, the existence of a Catholic-Anglican partnership in a country that has experienced Christian terrorism is remarkable, due to the divide between Catholics and Anglicans as recently as 2001. But it is also unusual because the vast majority of the 300 plus people we serve are asylum seekers in the U.K. Asylum seekers generally receive about £5 per person per day in assistance from the government and are not



**ABOVE: The views of the Cathedral are from Kate's front door and back garden. BELOW LEFT: Volunteers from the HOPE+ food bank.**

eligible to work while their claim is being processed. Besides being in need of food and clothing many need a sense of purpose, and since asylum seekers cannot work, many volunteer with the food bank either as translators or to help unload, store, and hand out food. Volunteering helps a majority of those allowed to stay find work because they can generate character references from HOPE+ for job applications.

At HOPE+, I generally help with the running of the food bank on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and with data collection by helping create databases for guests, volunteers, and donors.

Another facet of my time here is spent working in a borough of Liverpool called Knowsley that has recently decided to house some refugees and asylum seekers. I am working with a new nonprofit there to create initiatives which build community between U.K. citizens and asylum seekers and refugees. We currently run two drop in centers that offer English as a Second Language (ESL) training to asylum seekers, as well as other support. In addition, we are working towards a community garden project that will eventually provide opportunities for asylum seekers to create community and access fresh produce.

Despite all the busy work that has gone into the last few months, I have been able to attend a few football (soccer) matches and a local rugby league match, with several other trips planned in the near future to London and Ireland. I hope that you all have an enriching Lent and blessed Easter. Please keep me and my work in your prayers as you are in mine. 🙏



# Holy Week & Easter at Transfiguration

**Holy Week is the most sacred time in the life of the Church, when we commemorate the events of Jesus' final week leading to his death and resurrection.** In fact, almost half of Mark's gospel is taken up with telling the story of this single week, as if to emphasize the monumental importance of those seven days. It begins with his entry into Jerusalem, and includes his final meal with his friends, washing their feet, praying fervently in Gethsemane, betrayal by Judas, the strange trial before Pilate, and his execution. Christians believe that every aspect of the week is sacred, and especially so in the Paschal Triduum (the three days of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday, culminating in the Great Vigil of Easter). For the faithful, worship in Holy Week is more important than anything else we could do, and it takes precedent over all other activities: work, school, sports, or recreation. But we do not worship in Holy Week out of duty or obligation, but because we know that if we walk this way once more with Jesus, the way of the cross, we will find it none other than the way of life and peace. And come Easter Day, we will rise to greet the morning as though it were the dawn of eternity, for God has stopped at nothing to show us his love and to be with us forever.

## Palm Sunday—April 9

Palm Sunday begins our commemoration of the events of Holy Week. All four gospels depict Jesus entering the city of Jerusalem atop a humble donkey, amidst the fanfare of cheering crowds. Many of them shouted "Hosanna," (literally, "Save us!") and laid cloaks and palm branches in his path, a traditional response to the procession of royalty. The service begins in joy, as we bless palm fronds and wave them jubilantly in the air. They are symbols of Jesus' final entrance into Jerusalem, and may be taken home and kept until Shrove Tuesday (2017), when they will be burned to create the ashes for next year's Ash Wednesday. The mood of the service quickly changes from joy to sorrow, as the central element in the Liturgy of the Word is the reading of St. Luke's Passion. In recognition of the ways that we reject and deny Christ, the congregation plays the role of the mob ("Crucify him!"), humbling us and challenging any notions of false pride or piety.

## Tenebrae—April 12 | 7:00 p.m.\*

The Office of Tenebrae (meaning "shadows") combines elements from the ancient monastic night and early morning services (Matins and Lauds) of the last three days of Holy Week. Each of the "nocturns" indicates a portion of the service that



derives from one evening, and consists of psalmody, readings, and short passages from Scripture (responsories). The psalmody is chanted, led by scholas from the Transfiguration choir, honoring the monastic tradition of singing the psalms. One of the most conspicuous features of the service is the gradual extinguishing of candles and other lights in the church until only a single candle, considered a symbol of our Lord, remains. Toward the end of the service this candle is hidden, typifying the apparent victory of the forces of evil. At the very end, a loud noise is made, symbolizing the earthquake at the time of the resurrection (Matthew 28:2), the hidden candle is restored to its place, and by its light all depart in silence.

## Maundy Thursday—April 13 | Noon, 5:30 p.m. (kids)\*, 7:00 p.m.\*†

Maundy Thursday begins the arc of the *Triduum*, the three holy days of Christ's Passion that concludes on Easter Day. The service begins in joy, as we remember the Passover meal established by God with the Israelites on the night of their deliverance from Egypt, and later shared by Jesus and his disciples on their final night together. We also



remember Jesus' giving of a new commandment: to love one another as he has loved us ("Maundy" is from the Latin *mandatum*, "command"). But the mood of the liturgy quickly changes and takes on the darkness that permeates the rest of the Passion. A centerpiece of the liturgy is the act of footwashing, when we will follow Jesus' example, take on the role of humble servant, and wash one another's feet. The sanctuary



is then prepared for the solemnity of Good Friday in an ancient ritual called the Stripping of the Altar. All holy objects are removed from the sanctuary, leaving it utterly bare. The consecrated bread and wine of the Sacrament are transferred to an Altar of Repose (located in the Library), serving as a spiritual reminder of the time that Jesus spent alone in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before his death.

### Good Friday—April 14\* | Noon, 5:30 p.m. (kids), 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday commemorates the passion and death of Jesus. In keeping with ancient tradition, we pray the Solemn Collects. In these prayers, we pray for nearly everything: for our own sins and redemption, for followers of Christ around the world, and for those who do not know

God. On this day, we also venerate a plain wooden cross. This cross gives us a glimpse of the device used to crucify Jesus, but it also allows us to contemplate our own need to daily die to sin and to rise to new life. At our noon worship we share the Mass of the Pre-Sanctified, consuming all the remaining consecrated bread and wine from Maundy Thursday (*note: this will occur only at the noon service*). In keeping with ancient tradition, this is not a full celebration of the Eucharist, but a humble and quiet reception of communion on a day when we remember

Christ's death. No consecrated elements remain in the church following the noon service to underscore the feeling of absence and loss. While Good Friday is a solemn day, it is not a sad day. We should not pretend that we do not know the end of the story. Yes, Jesus dies, but from his death God makes possible the deliverance of all from death. Therefore, we depart the church in silence, as our *Triduum* liturgy is not yet over.

### Easter Vigil—April 15\* | 8:00 p.m.†

The Great Vigil of Easter begins in darkness. Out of this darkness, a new fire is kindled, from which we light the Paschal Candle, a symbol of the Christian Passover, in both its association with the pillar of fire that led the Israelites during their exodus from Egypt, as well as its association with our “passing over” from death to life through Christ. Next, we hear the *Exsultet*, an ancient hymn in which vivid imagery illumines our purpose in gathering: “Rejoice and sing now, all the round earth, bright with glorious splendor, for darkness has been vanquished by our eternal King.” Then we hear stories from the Hebrew Scriptures describing God's gracious care, generosity, and saving power. Following the readings we turn to the baptismal font. Christian baptism is a participation in the death and resurrection of

Christ, a dying to sin in order to be reborn in him, and from the earliest times the Great Vigil has been the most appropriate occasion to welcome new members into the body of Christ. Each symbol of the liturgy having built upon the last, we finally proclaim the joy of Easter and hear again the story of Christ's empty tomb. Alleluia

is sung, bells are rung, and the first Eucharist of Easter is celebrated. A “Break the Fast” celebration in Roper Hall concludes the evening.

### Easter Day—April 16\* | 9:00 a.m., 9:15 a.m. (Roper Hall), 11:15 a.m.†

Since the earliest decades after Jesus' death, the Church has celebrated Christ's resurrection as the pinnacle of the year. It is the “Queen of Feasts,” the greatest and oldest celebration of God's glorious work through Christ, and though it begins on Easter Day, in truth it lasts a full fifty days, known as “The Great Fifty Days.” On Easter Day we say and sing again *Alleluia*, which was omitted during Lent. Throughout the Church's history, *Alleluia* (literally, “Praise the Lord”) has served as an expression of joy that is especially appropriate at Eastertide. The font will remain central in all Easter Day liturgies, and you are invited to touch the water of the Holy Water Font as a reminder of your own baptism, and the fellowship all believers have with the risen Christ through those holy waters. The traditional posture of prayer during Easter is standing. The Council of Nicaea in 325CE forbade kneeling for prayer during the Great Fifty Days, and we encourage you to stand with joy and gratitude throughout our worship during Eastertide. 🙏

\*Childcare

†Incense





# Stations of the Cross Art Commission

**Artists Charlotte and Bill Hallett have left quite a legacy at Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration.** They

are the creators of many of the most striking and important pieces of devotional art around our campus, including the altar, triptych, processional cross, and holy water font. The altar and triptych, in particular, are so indelibly tied to the way our church looks that it is easy to forget they were later additions to the nave. The triptych was not installed until 1987, nor the altar until 1994. Yet the image of the radiant, transfigured Christ, as well as the crucified, resurrected, and ascended Christ on the front of the altar, depicted in a traditional Byzantine iconographic style, are what many people first think of when they think of our church.

Fr. Terence Roper was Rector of Transfiguration for both of those commissions, and proudly oversaw their creation and installation. And alongside him was Mike Lockerd, who was Sr. Warden at the time of the triptych's commission, and a key leader and benefactor for the commission of the altar. For years after it was Mike's dream that Transfiguration would one day commission the Halletts once again, this time to create a set of Stations of the Cross. Such a set of stations would complement the altar and triptych, further enhance the beauty of our church, and provide people with the ability to enter more deeply into the central story of the Christian faith.

Mike died last year, yet his dream has finally reached fruition. In November 2016, Transfiguration commissioned Charlotte and Bill Hallett to depict the fourteen traditional stations of our Lord's journey to the cross, and one additional "resurrection station" to depict the story's true culmination. The Halletts are uniquely able to create stations that build upon the existing art in the church and further nurture the reverent beauty of the space, yet they are nearing the end of their working careers as artists. This led Fr. Casey and the Vestry to realize that the opportunity for making this commission was "now or never." Funds in memory of Mike Lockerd made possible the start of work on the first station, and quickly ten more sponsors came forward to underwrite additional stations. Work began late last year, and already the Halletts have completed work on the first two stations. They remain on schedule to complete the full set by Lent 2018, and completed works will be shipped to us in groups of three or four.

The set of stations currently hanging in the nave, which were commissioned in memory of Mary Francis Berryman by her family, created by artist Donna Standerwick, and installed in 2000, will be used for devotional purposes elsewhere in the campus. It is hoped that they




**TOP: Artists Charlotte and Bill Hallett in their studio during Fr. Casey's visit in November. ABOVE: The first two stations in progress.**

will one day be installed in a chapel.


Three of the fifteen stations remain unsponsored. If you are interested in participating as a sponsor or learning more about the project, please contact Fr. Casey at [cshobe@transfiguration.net](mailto:cshobe@transfiguration.net). 🙏





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