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Summer 2017

# illumine

enlightening and celebrating where God is at work in our midst



A PUBLICATION OF  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE  
Transfiguration



# CHURCH STAFF

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The Rev. R. Casey Shobe, D. Min.—Rector  
 The Rev. Erin Jean Warde—Associate Rector for  
 Christian Formation  
 The Rev. Michael Merriman—Priest Associate  
 The Rev. Ginny Kivel—Deacon  
 The Rev. Terence C. Roper—Rector Emeritus  
 Shea Gilliland—Curate

## PROGRAMS

Ellen Dingwall—Minister of Congregational Life  
 and Outreach  
 Rebecca Gingles—Director of Communications  
 Colin Hills—Director of Youth Ministries  
 Cindy Hauser—Director of Children's Ministries

## MUSIC

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 Kimberley Ahrens—Director of Children's Choirs

## ADMINISTRATION

Sophie Lowrance—Parish Administrator  
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## PROPERTY

Bracken Reece—Director of Facilities

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 Paul Sternweis, Junior Warden  
 George Banitch  
 George Bienfang  
 Robert Button  
 John Donaldson  
 Susan Fisk  
 Liberty Ford  
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 Roy Heller  
 Nancy Jagmin  
 Jonathan Maedche

## Ex Officio:

Tudi Owens, Clerk  
 Allison Murphy, Treasurer  
 Jay Madrid, Parish Chancellor  
 Chris Ayres, Assistant Chancellor

## 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.

Cover photo by Melody Shobe at the May 7 Mass on the Grass.



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From the Rector

# The Day of Pentecost

**T**his May twenty pilgrims from Transfiguration traveled to the Holy Land on pilgrimage. For two weeks we had the remarkable privilege of walking in the footsteps of Jesus at places like the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan River and the Mount of Olives. One of the places we visited is something called the Cenacle, which is built atop the place where the disciples gathered with Jesus in the Upper Room for the Last Supper. When I was last in Jerusalem several years ago, my group and I visited the Cenacle late one morning, and by the time we arrived, there were three or four large busloads of other Christian pilgrims already there. And they weren't polite, quiet pilgrims, either.

In fact, they weren't even there for the same reason I was there. I was there to remember the Last Supper, the event that we remember every Sunday that connects our bodies and souls to our Lord and Savior. I was ready to sit quietly and close my eyes and spiritually imagine Jesus and the group who shared that sacred meal. But this huge crowd of pilgrims was there to remember another event that happened in the Upper Room: Pentecost. And you'd better believe they weren't remembering it quietly or serenely, either. These were not Episcopalians. The room was deafening with music and shouting and ululating. My ears quickly began to throb with all the noise, and it felt confusing and chaotic and overwhelming. After twenty minutes of impatiently waiting, I gave up and left, frustrated and bitter.

Eventually I realized that I had much to learn from the experience. That group was there remembering the eruption of the Holy Spirit in the midst of the disciples, and they felt totally carried away. They were doing what felt most natural and appropriate. I, on the other hand, am a good, polite Episcopalian. I prefer worship to be orderly and precise, and I enjoy praying and worshipping God in peaceful, beautiful environments. I love the stories from the Bible where God speaks to people in a still, small voice, a voice I have to be quiet and at peace to notice. Maybe you're a little like that, too.

But I wonder if by being this way, by always needing quiet and orderliness and predictability in order to encounter God, we have actually held ourselves back from more completely experiencing the Holy Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost, the disciples are gathered together, probably doing what they'd always done. And suddenly, the Spirit of God blows into the room like a hurricane of wind and fire. People start speaking in different languages, and the whole scene is pulsating with life and energy. It was a scene much more closely resembling the ululating pilgrims at the Cenacle than any Episcopal liturgy I've ever attended. The story says some of the onlookers openly speculated that the disciples were all drunk, which Peter rebutted by saying that it was only 9 o'clock in the morning. Now, Episcopalians

are a lot of wonderful things, but no one ever accused us acting so crazily at church that we might have been hitting the communion wine early.

So to us, the Day of Pentecost comes with a profound and challenging lesson: if we want to know the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, if we want to feel it moving in our lives, directing us to new places, transforming us into the people God wants us to be, then we must be willing to occasionally set our orderly, tidy spiritual lives aside, and act in such a way that people might just think we're a little crazy. I fully believe the Holy Spirit is every bit as alive and at work in this world today as that first day, ready to set people's hearts on fire for Christ. And I guarantee that people would start to ask questions about our sanity if we actually started to live like citizens of the Kingdom of God, if we really got around to following the radical teaching and example of Jesus. You know, if instead of carrying around all our baggage and grudges, we actually started to forgive like Jesus forgives, even the people who have badly hurt us. If we gave more money away than we spend on our vacations each year. If instead of only loving people who are easy to love, we choose to love and care for those people who are hard to love, especially those people who the rest of the world has decided not to bother with anymore.

Yes, if we started to live like this, people would stop and notice. They would wonder what got into us. They would realize that something about us is different, that we are not just like everyone else. All because we finally allowed the Holy Spirit of God to disrupt our lives and our predictable patterns, to reshape our imaginations, and help us become more committed servants of God's kingdom. And who knows...one day someone may notice your crazy, kingdom life, turn to his friend and ask, "Is that person drunk?" And the other will reply, "No, he's an Episcopalian." 🍷

—Casey+



PENTECOST © 2010 JOHN AUGUST SWANSON | EYEKONS)



# Spring at Transfiguration



PHOTOS BY ROBERT HACKER, JOHN MAKOWSKI, AND MELODY SHOBE



Clockwise from top: Children's Good Friday Stations of the Cross, Chris Ahrens sings the exsultet at the Easter Vigil, Fr. Michael presents Henry Ferrell with his God and Family Award for Scouting at our annual Recognition Breakfast, Footwashing on Maundy Thursday, Butterfly release in the Memorial Garden on Easter Day.



Enjoying Popsicles at Mass on the Grass in early May, Nailing reflections to the cross on Good Friday, Youth Minister Colin Hills thanks the youth formation teachers and volunteers, Bishop Sumner blesses our 19 Holy Land Pilgrims the morning of their departure, Mother Erin introduces Rabbi Ariel Boxman during our Lenten Wednesday Prayer series, and showing off his Easter best.







# Sharing Protestant Palms

By Carolyn Lewis

**This spring as you may have heard, one critical element was missing for many churches celebrating Palm Sunday—Palms.**

It seems that a mold fungus struck many of palms and the immature leaves which are used in making palm crosses and used in procession were unusable. Even the local ABC News did a report from the Catholic Dioceses of Dallas about their alternate plans for Palm Sunday without Palms.

Because of our long standing relationship with a floral wholesaler, The Transfiguration Flower Guild had a shipment of palms fronds that was green and useable. In true “feast or famine” irony, we actually got a double shipment. Since palms have a limited shelf life and we had an abundance, we reached out to several area Catholic churches where we had contacts to see if they could use them. We were able to deliver extras to Saint Martin de Porres Catholic Church in Frisco. The priest, Father Richard Kirkman and parishioners were delighted to use them in their celebration. He said they would not have had palms if we had not reached out. So mark us down for one little step towards ecumenical reconciliation!



## ALTAR FLOWERS

### *Bring Your Blooms!*

**This summer, the Flower Guild invites you to bring flowers and greenery from your own gardens on the first Sunday of each month to contribute to the arrangements for the altar.** This effort will help us to save money and erase more of our wasteful footprint. We did this for the first time on April 30 for our Earth Day celebration and the results were beautiful. This new project begins the weekend of Pentecost. The next opportunity to contribute is for Sunday, July 2, so bring your blooms to the church on Friday, June 30 and Saturday, July 1 by 11:00 a.m. Questions? Contact David Diggs at [jswain@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jswain@sbcglobal.net). 🌿





## An Interview with Deacon Liz O'Donnell

**How long have you been at Transfiguration and how did you come to be here?** I have been at the Church of the Transfiguration for just over eight years. I moved to Dallas in the fall of 2008 after retiring from a career with the Girl Scouts of Maine and started on the staff in early 2009. I moved here to be near my daughter Susan and her family and also to be warm—I somehow didn't factor in excessive air-conditioning so "warm" is very hard to come by. That's why you often see me wearing white gloves during a service. Some people think it is to keep my fingerprints off the gospel book; in reality, it's self-preservation.

**Tell us about your ministry as a deacon and how you felt called to care for others.** I often tell people that I am a deacon because of music. When I was growing up all my friends were Episcopalians and sang in the junior choir at the local Episcopal church each week at the nine o'clock service. My family was Methodist, and I sang in the junior choir which sang about four times a year. So on Saturday mornings I started going with my friends to their choir rehearsal, then began singing with them, I joined the junior choir, I started going to Sunday school which turned into confirmation class, and the rest is history as they say.

Fast forward to my adult years and over 30 years in Bangor Maine where my husband had a job at a local college. I became very active in that parish serving in many lay ministries and eventually serving as the parish administrator. In the late '90s the deacon began a class for what were then called Lay Eucharistic Ministers and I was in that first class. I loved working with the homebound and the senior members of the congregation. I loved hearing the stories of their faith journeys and their own love of the church and all that St. John's Episcopal Church had meant to them. During that time I felt that little nudge that God sometimes gives you to be doing something

that involved a deeper kind of ministry and after much prayer and consultation with the clergy, my family, the deacon at the church, everyone encouraged me to begin the discernment process. After 2½ years of deaconal formation and chaplaincy training, I was ordained in June 2004.

**What are a few of your favorite things about serving in this parish?** There are so many things I love about Transfiguration it is hard to pinpoint just a few but I'll try. The first is the mission of the church to seek and serve Christ in all persons which fits in with caring for those I need. And it has been such joy to work with all the pastoral care ministries who serve our parishioners in so many ways. The opportunity to work with an absolutely incredible staff doesn't happen often and I have had that privilege for the last eight years; I will miss that very much. I have always been grateful for the worship, the preaching, and the music which sends me home each week feeling uplifted and empowered to continue my work each day.

**What does pastoral care mean to you?** Pastoral care means seeking and serving Christ in all persons whether it is within the walls of the church or outside the walls of the church. It means being present to all with whom you come in contact. And, pastoral care is not just delegated to the clergy. Every member of the parish is capable of and should be offering pastoral care to all those who surround them, the person next to them in the pew, the person who just lost a loved one, someone in need of a meal, someone who just needs a friend to talk to maybe even just a quick personal phone call. If you think about it, everyone is capable of providing pastoral care and probably each of us is in need of pastoral care at some time in our lives. Opportunities abound in ways in which we can provide pastoral care—see another article in this *illumine* which outlines



PHOTO BY ROBERT HACKER

all kinds of ways pastoral care is offered at Transfiguration.

**What are one or two of your most memorable moments in ministry (that you're at liberty to share)?** Two moments that come to mind deal with the beginning of life and the end-of-life. It is always a joy to participate in baptisms, one of which was my own grandson's. What an incredible moment. The other is having the profound privilege of being with a person and family members at the time of death; those have been some of the most sacred moments of my ministry.

**Any funny stories?** This story was not funny at the time it happened but as I look back on it it is funny. In the days before processed the gospel into the middle of the congregation, the gospel was read from the ambo. One morning when my hands were not feeling particularly nimble, I picked up the gospel book from the altar and turned to lift it up to place it on the ambo. Unfortunately, I didn't lift the gospel book high enough and it knocked the corner of the ambo and the

*Continued*

ambo began to fall over. My first thought was “What do I rescue? Do I keep the Gospel book from falling on the floor or do I let the ambo fall to the floor?” Keeping a tight grip on the gospel book with my right hand I reached for the corner of the ambo as it was falling over. Because I have very little use of my fingers in my left hand I had just my forefinger and my thumb with which to grab the corner of the ambo to keep it from falling. As I was hanging onto the ambo for dear life my thoughts were “Is anyone going to come and help me?” No one moved from a front pew, not one Eucharistic Minister moved from his or her seat, not one of the clergy moved nor the Emcee. There I was for what seemed like minutes, but probably it was only seconds, as I wrestled the ambo back to an upright position and could place the gospel book on the ambo. With steam coming out of my ears I read the Gospel. After the service was over the Emcee came up to me and said “Great save on the ambo, Liz.”

**What's next?** So many people have asked what I'm going to do after I retire and my first response has been—not set my alarm clock for quite a while. I will be traveling this summer, going to Maine to visit



PHOTO BY JOHN MAKOWSKI

with friends and then to Alaska for a stay with my family in Anchorage. After that I'm not sure what volunteer activities I will get involved in but I'm sure there will be several that call my name. And, I'm always open to invitations for tea!

**Any words of wisdom to share with us?** My first words of wisdom are—get involved. Find ways to love one another and be the light of Christ to one another in the world. Find out what you are passionate about and then find some way to focus that passion on fulfilling a need—Is it feeding the hungry? Is it providing companionship to lonely? Is it simply making a phone call to someone whom you haven't seen in church for a while saying, “I've missed you.” Is it greeting a neighbor whom you've never met? Is it writing a letter to a member of congress expressing your opinion? If everyone made one small gesture of caring each day, we would be well on our way to making the word a better place. 🙏



PHOTO BY CARTER ROSE





# Earth Care Year-Round

On April 30, Transfiguration observed Earth Day by making some modest sacrifices and inconveniences to help build awareness for our call to be stewards of creation. It was a joyful success, with the flowers on the altar from parishioner backyards, hundreds of pounds of electronics recycled, 30 pounds of paper saved, and significant electricity conserved by turning up the thermostat and turning off the lights (thankfully it was a cool day!). Consider ways to carry this day forward throughout the year by turning up your thermostat, giving to a tree-planting organization to compensate for your paper usage, and searching online for tips on water conservation. Earth care is not "someone else's job," it is our job!



## Summer Reading

Take a journey to the Holy Land  
Explore life with the desert fathers  
See God's kingdom in a new light



Visit us Tuesday–Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and weekends before and after all services





## Change is Coming

# Communion Wine Switch

By The Rev. Michael Merriman

**Change is coming!** Beginning the Day of Pentecost we will begin using red wine at the Eucharist rather than the white wine we've used for some years. Why? Not, let me hasten to say, because it looks like blood! But because it is more easily recognized as being wine.

The point of sacraments is that they use material stuff as signs of God's presence. This is directly related to the biblical message that the material universe is created by God. It is good, that God created it for our use, and God makes himself present to us in and through the material universe. So in biblical religion the washing in water, the anointing with oil, and the sharing of bread and wine reveal God at work in his creation and become the means of grace and salvation.

Christians for a variety of reasons have, through the ages, lost some of that and have reduced the use of material stuff in the sacraments in ways that almost lose sight of the materiality of our religion. Baptism with only a few drops of water, for example. Anointing with a faint smear of oil which is then wiped away. Bread in unleavened wafer form that is not recognizably food. And white wine that is not visually recognizable as wine, simply because it takes a little more washing to remove red wine from the altar linens. (It is far more difficult, by the way, to remove the lipstick that those linens are stained with.)

As you receive from a cup of red wine, and on Saturdays at 5:30 also from a loaf of recognizable bread, give thanks that God created all that is as a gift and sign of his love for us. Give thanks that in the stuff of our world—food, drink, water, ointments, touch, smell, hearing, sight—God is transforming us just as he transforms bread and wine to be the Body and Blood of Jesus. Transform us so that in us and through us God may make his saving and healing love available to the whole world. 🙏



The altar guild provided the staff with a preview tasting of new communion wine options at a their weekly meeting in early May.

“On behalf of the Altar Guild, I would like to enthusiastically endorse the change from our white sacramental wine to red wine! It is my hope that this change may encourage a more thoughtful participation in this holy sacrament. Personally, I am not always as alert as I should be during the Eucharist. When I TAKE, EAT and DRINK, I should know that this is HIS body and HIS blood, shed for me. In the end it is my hope that at least once in a while that the Holy Eucharist becomes a transformative and spiritual act that puts an exclamation point on our relationship with God.”

—Gabby Guion



Thank  
YOU

from the  
**ImpactKids**

Transfiguration's 4th and 5th graders built an awesome fort in the corner of the Gathering Space with all of the canned goods you brought to help them alleviate child hunger. Thank you to everyone who donated to their spring outreach project. The canned goods and nonperishable items will be delivered to our long-time partner, North Dallas Shared Ministries, in early June.





# OPEN DOOR

## an LGBT+ fellowship (Formerly GLF)

By Bart Stockton

**We are excited to announce that GLF, Transfiguration's Gay & Lesbian Fellowship, is now known as Open Door, an LGBT+ Fellowship!** Following a visioning process which included member discussion of both the scope/purpose and name of the group, the membership narrowed the name selections until a majority voted for the name *Open Door*.

*Open Door* began as the Gay & Lesbian Ministry, which caused some confusion in the early days about whether the group was a ministry opportunity **to** or **for** LGBT church members. The name was changed to the Gay & Lesbian Fellowship to better communicate the group's purpose. In recent times,

however, many church members thought that the name "Gay & Lesbian Fellowship" was unintentionally discriminating against other members of our diverse and vibrant LGBT+ community. We embarked on a visioning process that included a working meeting to brainstorm our outreach opportunities and a possible name change. Members voted electronically in rounds and the name *Open Door, an LGBT+ Fellowship* was chosen by a majority of the membership to better align with our mission of welcome.

We consider all members of Transfiguration's LGBT+ community as well as our friends in the congregation, to be members of *Open Door*. Additionally, some of our members come from sister churches without welcoming groups of their own. *Open Door* has three co-coordinators who

serve staggered three-year terms and the current leadership team consists of Mason McCamey, Linda Horton, and Bart Stockton.

The mission of *Open Door* is to seek and serve Christ in all persons by embracing the LGBT+ community, their families, and their friends through opportunities for spiritual growth, fellowship, and service.

We may be best known for the fun events we hold on a monthly basis. We come together in the homes of our members and at various venues across Dallas to share dinner or brunch, participate in fun activities such as bowling, and strengthen our bonds

Ministry  
Spotlight





*Continued*

in fellowship. We typically do something social the first weekend of each month and all are welcome. Our largest social event of the year is typically the Christmas party. We are always looking for more people to host potluck dinners in their homes so please contact us if you are interested in hosting!

We aren't just a social club, though.

**Open Door** members are actively involved in every aspect of church life and ministry at our fully-welcoming parish. You'll see us serving as ushers and welcoming ministers. You'll find us serving at the altar as acolytes, ministers of ceremony, lectors, and Eucharistic Ministers. You'll find us teaching Christian formation classes, behind the scenes on the Altar Guild, as Eucharistic Visitors taking communion to the home-bound, on the Flower Guild, in the Transfiguration choir or instrumental ensembles, and in a host of other ministries and groups which welcome all parishioners with open arms.



**Open Door** members serve our community in various ways. Our primary outreach in recent years is to Youth First, a subsidiary of Resource Center Dallas, which is focused on providing a safe space for North Texas LGBTQ youth ages 18 and under, including meals, social activities, health education, and life skills. The proceeds from our annual Maundy Thursday Soup Supper go directly to Youth First and we have on occasion cooked meals for their Friday Family Dinners. This past Lent we also collected coats, sweat suits, and snacks for the Dallas Police Department's High-Risk Victims Unit which regularly processes LGBT teens and young adults who have been caught up in commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Additionally, **Open Door** members participate in various church outreach activities including the Food Pantry, Episcopal Peace Fellowship, Austin Street Center, Gateway of Grace refugee ministry, and more. In February we cosponsored the screening of the important civil rights documentary *From Selma to Stonewall: Are We There Yet?* at Transfiguration, along with the North Dallas Chapter of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. Following the screening was a Q&A panel with filmmakers and civil rights activists.

We primarily communicate with group members via email so please contact us to get on the mailing list. As of press time, our group email address is still [TheFigGLF@gmail.com](mailto:TheFigGLF@gmail.com) but if it changes we will still receive messages there. Also, watch the *Notices* in the Sunday bulletin for announcements of upcoming activities and outreach events. 🙏



## Our Saviour Community Garden Workday June 24

During our Earth Day observance we recognized our diocesan and community partner, Our Saviour Community Gardens and their leader Becky in worship that



morning. On Saturday, June 24, we have the opportunity to get our hands dirty and help them onsite. Join us for this parish-wide garden workday for all ages. Workers are welcome all day throughout the day. RSVP to [outreach@transfiguration.net](mailto:outreach@transfiguration.net) if you plan to attend and you'll receive further instructions about carpooling, location, and what to wear/bring. That evening is also the garden's annual Hoe-Down—stayed tuned for more details. 🙏



# EVANGELISM MATTERS

## — Invite Someone —

By Trey Bounds

**When I was a parishioner more than 20 years ago at St. James Cathedral in Chicago, an amusing story often made the rounds among the members of the parish.**

It seems a very prominent member, a nearly deaf, nonagenarian heiress to one of America's great fortunes was heard to loudly say after a sermon on outreach, "What's all this talk of evangelism these days? Everyone who is supposed to be Episcopalian already is!"

If you chuckled at that then you probably remember when the Episcopal Church was perceived by people both in and outside the church as a bastion of America's elite and those who wished to join were widely suspected of social climbing.

Thankfully, much has changed in The Episcopal Church in the last several decades and our churches are filled with a wide cross-



section of people now. Old and young, rich and poor, liberal and conservative, married and single, gay, lesbian, and transgendered, citizen and immigrant, well and ill, black, white, Latino, Asian, and Native American. This glorious mix of people all have something in common that transcends every possible difference: We believe in a risen lord that unites us to himself and to each other through his amazing love for us. That is great news! That is gospel!

Nowhere is this truer than at our own Church of the Transfiguration. I have only been a member here for a few months but I experience the love of God through the members of our church in a profound and beautiful way. It was like that for me from the first moment I walked in as a visitor and it is an experience that simply must be shared with the people in my life. So, I invite people to church.

It sounds easy, inviting someone to church; in fact it can be quite awkward, even unnerving. But sharing the love of God is something that we are all called to do and inviting someone to church is a wonderful way to do just that! So, here are a few tips:

1

**Pray for those people** that you would like to invite and ask God to present you with opportunities to share about your experiences.

2

**Actively share with others** about your church activities, then turn that into an invitation. I'm always being asked by friends, "So what have you been up to?" I might reply by telling about the fascinating book I'm reading that I got at the church bookstore. I might then say, "You know, I am so grateful for my church. I encounter the most interesting people and ideas there. Why don't join me sometime? I think you would really like it." The variations on this are endless. Give it some thought and give it a try!

3

The Fig is always providing special offerings like Transfigured Nights or guest speakers and lecturers. **Invite someone!** Say to a friend or colleague, "Hey, my church is hosting a concert next Friday night of The Trinity University Chamber Singers. Would you join me as my guest?" Then be sure to introduce your guest to the friends you see at the concert and take the opportunity to talk about The Fig's ministries. At the end of the evening, say, "I'm so glad you could join me tonight. If you would like to, I would love for you to join me some Sunday morning." If you get a positive reply, then be sure to follow up.

4

Be prepared for people to say, "No, thank you." They may tell you about their past experiences of church that were bad. It's OK. It will feel weird and unpleasant, but it is still a chance for you to offer your love. Reply by saying something like this, "I'm sorry to hear that. Please know that if you ever change your mind, **we would love to welcome you** to The Fig." That's it. I promise they will ponder that invitation!

5

Lastly, keep in mind that **God is the one doing the real work here.**

Contrary to the heiress's remark above, NOT everyone who is supposed to be an Episcopalian already is! But they can be, if we are willing to reach out. Inviting people to church is an act of faith and when that friend you've invited becomes a part of our fellowship, you will have the joy of knowing you played a part in the work of God's redeeming love. Inviting people to church will then become a joyful habit. 🙏



# Welcome, New Staff!

## Sophie Lowrance— Parish Administrator

Sophie Lowrance is Christopher Thomas's successor and our new Parish Administrator. Sophie's background includes working as a client and project manager in the finance sector, and she impressed the wardens and me with her intelligence, organization, creativity, and character. Sophie and her husband Nash are the parents of three daughters, who are students at Parish Episcopal School, and Sophie is heavily involved with the school and several other charitable organizations. We are excited for her to help our church's administration grow even more effective and transparent.



## The Rev. Ginny Kivel—Deacon

Bishop Sumner has assigned us a new deacon, and it's one of our own! Deacon Ginny Kivel joins us as our new Deacon for Pastoral Care in June. Ginny was a member of Transfiguration before going through the discernment process to become a deacon, and she returned last year to assume the role of Deacon for Church of the Holy Faith, the sister congregation of Bhutanese refugees who worships in the Niles Building. She will continue to serve Holy Faith, even as she joins our staff to work with pastoral care. You will likely see her as a regular liturgical participant at the 9:00 service, so she can be present at the Holy Faith service at 10:30.



## Shea Gilliland— Curate

Our new curate, Shea Gilliland, will formally begin on June 5. Shea comes to us from Duke Divinity School, where he recently graduated, and he was sponsored for ordination from Church of the Incarnation. Shea's wisdom, gentleness, and thoughtfulness, will aide in his support of our pastoral care ministries, as well as our welcoming and liturgical ministries. He will be ordained a deacon on Saturday, June 24, at a service at St. Matthew's Cathedral at 10:00 a.m., and we hope you will make plans to attend. We are also excited to welcome his wife, Summer, and their one year-old daughter, Olive, as they all settle back into Dallas.



young adult ministry

# Bibles



# Brews

Saturday,  
June 10

6:00 p.m. | ages 21–35  
Flying Saucer in Addison

RSVP at [FigYaministry.eventbrite.com](http://FigYaministry.eventbrite.com)

Anyone ages 21 to 35 is invited to join the Young Adult Ministry at Transfiguration for the second Bibles and Brews on Saturday, June 10 at the Flying Saucer in Addison. Our very own Colin Hills will lead a discussion about what it means to be an Episcopalian.

Whether you grew up in the Episcopal Church or have found your way here later in life, we invite you to bring your unique questions and experience to the discussion.

We hope to see you from 6:00–9:00 p.m. for food, drinks, good company, and a thoughtful conversation.



Fr. Casey leads the discussion at the first Bibles and Brews in May.





PHOTOS BY ROBERT HACKER

# Pastoral Care—Where do you fit in?

By Rev. Liz O'Donnell

**Merriam Webster defines pastoral as “of or relating to spiritual care or guidance especially of a congregation”.**

Interestingly, in the Wikipedia definition of pastoral care, and described in different ways for different denominations, the definition for Roman Catholic theology most closely fits what we see as pastoral care—“pastoral care for the sick and infirm is one of the most significant ways that members of the Body of Christ continue the ministry and mission of Jesus. Pastoral care is considered to be the responsibility of all the baptized. Understood in the broad sense of ‘helping others,’ pastoral care is the responsibility of all Christians.” For us, pastoral care is simply living out our promise in the baptismal covenant to “seek and serve Christ in all persons”. (BCP. P. 30\_\_)

As I close out my tenure as Deacon here at Transfiguration, where pastoral care has been the focus of my ministry here over the past eight-plus years, I'd like to share with you what a snap shot of pastoral care looks like at “The Fig”.

Pastoral care is shared by both clergy

and laity. Clergy are always responding to the needs of parishioners for counsel and prayer, both at times of crisis and times of joy, visiting the sick, taking communion, anointing for healing, providing “Ministration at the time of Death” (mistakenly referred to as Last Rites) and simply being a pastoral presence for those in need.

But a pastor's time and energy only go so far and other “ministers”—read all members—are also able to provide pastoral care to other members of the congregation. At Transfiguration here are some of the ways “lay pastors in the pews” provide pastoral care.

Through Stephen Ministry, specially trained parishioners provide one-on-one Christian caring to those in need. These Stephen Ministers meet with their care receiver to provide “Christian listening” to hear the care receiver tell his or her story and then help him or her find their own solutions to their situation. Stephen Ministers are not fixers—they are simply the vehicle through which God works as the cure giver. Currently eleven members serve as Stephen

Leaders and Stephen Ministers. One of the adjunct ministries of Stephen ministry is the Grief Book ministry. A series of 4 pamphlets are sent over the course of a year to a

parishioner following the death of a loved one. Each booklet provides articles on topics relating to various stages of the grieving and healing process.

If you attend the 9:00 AM service on a regular basis you have noted the three or four Eucharistic Visitors (EVs) who

appear at the altar at the end of the service to receive their communion kits for their visits to homebound parishioners. Their ministry is a pastoral and sacramental expression of the church that is the body of Christ. The EVs take the consecrated elements from the altar to the homebound, reminding them they are not forgotten and are still members of our faith community. I like to tell our recipients that if “they can't get to church, we'll bring church to you”. 21 members currently serve as EVs with back-up from three substitutes.

During the winter months you may have snuggled down under a Prayer Shawl, knitted or crocheted by a member of our





*Continued*

congregation. We actually have a knitter from “across the pond” who brings a beautiful hand-knit shawl with her when she comes here to visit family twice a year. This ministry began two years ago with the mission of providing a hand knitted or crocheted shawl to members of the parish who are ill, homebound or recovering from a medical event or bereavement. Over the past two years more than 40 parishioners have crafted prayer shawls which have been presented to over 150 recipients.

The R.O.S.E.S. (Reaching Out to Serve Every Senior) ministry is envisioned to provide friendship and loving concern to elderly parishioners and other members of the community who may be isolated and have limited social contact with family and friends. About to be revitalized, a new class of visitors will be trained to provide social visitation—no agendas—just a time of social interaction with a homebound parishioner.

Our new Meal Ministry began last fall and provides a meal or two to those who

are returning home from a hospital stay or rehab or are homebound due to an illness. This ministry is an outreach ministry of St. Elizabeth's.

The Ride Share ministry began last summer when we asked parishioners if they would be willing to provide rides to church for those in their geographic area. We maintain that list for when we receive calls for help.

The mission of the Transfiguration prayer chain for more than 35 years has been to seek and serve Christ in each person by committing to daily intercessory prayer for the needs of parishioners, friends, family or anyone who reaches out with a request for prayers. Currently 39 members offer these daily prayers.

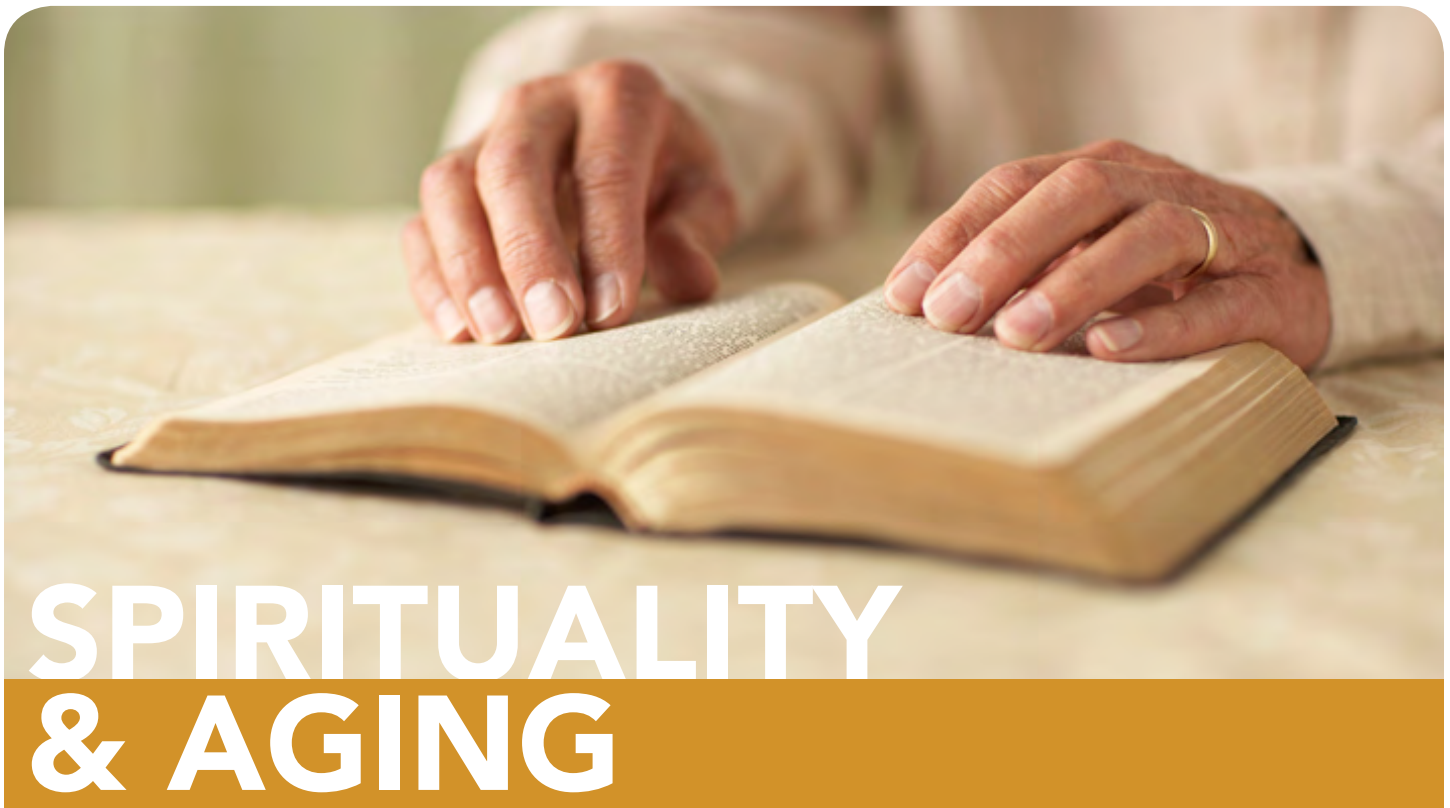
The Circle of Care ministry is new and currently being fleshed out for its final form. It is envisioned to assist the clergy in reaching out to those who have recently experienced the death of a loved one, to recognize their loss and be a supportive presence.

So, where do you fit in? There are so many opportunities to serve our fellow parishioners with time commitments ranging from an hour a month to several hours a week. Of utmost importance are having a loving and caring heart and a commitment to seeking and serving Christ in all persons. As many of the Eucharistic Visitors declare, with joy, the people they visit give them untold blessings and they feel guilty in even suggesting that they receive more than they give. A good kind of “guilt”, don't you think? 🙏

*There are so many opportunities to serve our fellow parishioners with time commitments ranging from an hour a month to several hours a week.*







# SPIRITUALITY & AGING

**Some months ago, a couple of parishioners approached Fr. Casey with ideas of forming a ministry that would address the issues of aging and spirituality, and as a result a steering committee was formed to explore the concepts, the literature and the need for such a ministry.**

We wanted it to be more than just the checking of the boxes of whether or not we have talked to our children, or if we have a will or if we have done the “paperwork” that prepares us for the next stages of life.

Nor was it to be just about being a good caregiver or how to deal with the difficult decisions of aging. It is all of those things, of course, but we wanted it to be more than that. We wanted it to be a way to help us find purpose in our lives, physically as well as emotionally and spiritually.

The steering committee, after some detours and much discernment, has crafted a mission for the ministry that encompasses the following broad ideas for classes to begin in the fall of 2017:


- From Aging to “Saging”: Elderhood as more than just getting ready to die.
- Putting the “Grand” in Grandparenting.
- Closing the Gap: Connecting people with the pastoral care they need.
- Discovering New Passions: In Art, Writing, Music and Theater.
- Story Corps for Transfiguration: Chronicling the stories of our lives to form a legacy for the future.
- Telling Your Story: The Ethical Will of My Life.

Some of these might be single Sunday morning classes held

during the Adult Education hour, while others will be ongoing for a number of weeks, such as the Aging to Saging class, which will be led by Nancy Destafano. There will be others as we go along, but our goal is to meet the unspoken needs of the community within Transfiguration.

- Be ministers to/servants of/involved with the people of Transfiguration of all generations.
- Help people to embrace the art of aging well, and prioritizing the meaning of the rest of our lives.
- Explore what it means to age with grace and wisdom.
- Mentor the younger generations AND one another.
- Share resources that help people meet the challenges of inevitable events.
- Create programs that help people learn and grow and thrive.
- Build a real community of older people.
- Become a support group for each other.
- Explore and stimulate creativity and new ideas.
- Capture stories that relate to the journey people have walked to far.
- Share hopes and fears in the midst of struggles and challenges.

We have talked to other congregations in other denominations and find that the resources are vast and the experiences of other churches and faiths have created a wealth of material. We continue to work to refine the mission and the curriculum and the objectives, and we want to help people to become spiritual elders, not just old folks.

Therefore, if you have ideas you would like to have explored as this ministry evolves, please let us know and we can help grow this into a truly caring and giving ministry for all ages. 

—Al Blackwell, Hal Bybee, Nancy Destafano, Carol Frauenheim,  
Karen Kahl, Stephen Kahl, Tom Moore



# Why Transfiguration?

## *The Donaldsons*

**Something's missing.** That's the feeling people get occasionally that begins them on their journey for a new church home. There can be many reasons to start this search, but for the Donaldsons it came down to, "Something's missing."

John started his journey when he became an "empty nester." He was raised Methodist and had been attending Episcopal services primarily as a Christmas and Easter Christian. Knowing something was missing, John wanted to find a church home that shared his values and beliefs. For him, the missing piece in his search was equality. Not a preached equality, but an enacted one, in which all persons were welcomed, encouraged to participate, and serve in every aspect of the church's ministries. For John, attending a church that was not inclusive for all, not only to participate, but to lead, was a hypocrisy that made his past church experiences feel hollow and unfulfilling.

It only took him one visit to fall in love with Transfiguration. He was noticed as a new visitor and greeted warmly by Ellen Dingwall and the welcoming team upon his first visit. They are, after all, good at what they do. The Liturgy, the music, and the general sense of "family" made it immediately feel like a church "home." Not long after that, Jim Kirkman, with his gregarious smile and mischievous wit, had John involved in the Episcopal Men's Fellowship and several other group activities. John was renewed with the warmth and inclusiveness he felt and witnessed at the Fig.

A while later, John and Kathleen met. While they were dating, John asked Kathleen to attend church service with him at Transfiguration. Kathleen was raised Catholic and could count on one hand the times she had attended a church service in the last 20 years. Spiritually, there was a lot missing for her in the church experience, but based on their shared values, Kathleen accepted John's invitation.

For the first time, Kathleen came away from a church service thinking, "Yes! I can relate to that!" She felt good. She felt inspired to dig deeper within herself to find personal meaning in the words of the Gospel and the sermon. Kathleen was eager to discuss and share all of this with John, and in the process, they were able to learn more about each other on an even deeper level. Finally, she was not being preached at, or preached down to, and sin was not the focus. Instead, the love, humility and forgiveness of God was highlighted for her.

It can seem rare in today's environment for a church to truly live by its mission, but Kathleen and John both felt drawn by the fact that the members of Transfiguration really do "seek and serve Christ in all persons". This service-oriented approach is evident throughout the ministries of the Parish; from the music ministry, flower guild, altar guild, and many other groups, all serving with joy to make the church

a beautiful and spiritually welcoming place for all.

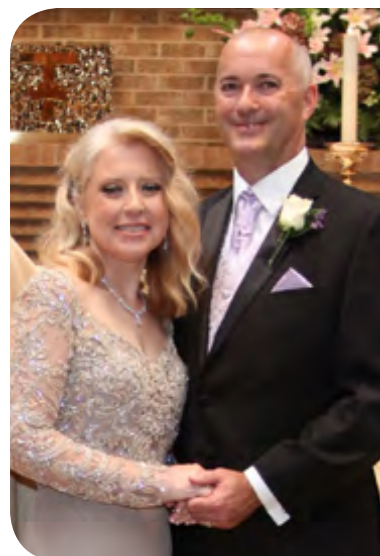
Kathleen found her Easter service experiences so moving, she was brought to tears. She also appreciated the church's emphasis on service through the Christmas and Easter services collection plates going directly to the outreach programs that the Fig supports.

While he had a wonderful church home, John wasn't going to take a chance that this and his charm would be enough to woo Kathleen, so he invited her to one of the Kirkman's events. This one happened to take place in Wimberley, TX in the fall of 2015, and ended up on the news. The group lost four vehicles (but thankfully no members) in a flash flood. After appearing on numerous interviews for the local and national news, Kathleen would later mention that she was unlikely to ever go on a more memorable date than that trip to Wimberley. It is hard to find more excitement and bonding than being rescued by first responders, tied to a rope, and being led through a five-foot tall torrent of cold, muddy water! What could be more appealing than watching your clothes dry while sitting (in donated clothing) with disheveled hair in the community center giving television interviews?

That likely sealed the deal, because John and Kathleen were married at Transfiguration less than a year later. It was a wonderful experience and so easy (as easy as weddings can be) with the amazing help of the wedding guild and Father Casey. Weddings can be stressful, but everyone connected with the parish demonstrated such grace, expertise and love that the day was a truly joyous one. With family and friends in attendance, the Donaldsons felt blessed to share such an important part of their lives with their church family.

John is currently serving in his second year as a member of the Vestry, along with his roles as an EMF board member and usher. Kathleen assists with The Gathering, Newcomer's receptions, ushering and other events as time permits while also working full time and pursuing a graduate degree as a Physician's Assistant.

Joining Transfiguration also gave them the opportunity to participate in The Way, the unique and immersive class for people seeking to learn more about the church and the faith, to be baptized, confirmed or received. Father Michael is a wonderful teacher, and hearing the biblical stories in their historical context, is revealing and enlightening. John and Kathleen also enjoy the Foyer Group dinners for the opportunity to get to know other members of the church (along with guests and neighbors) on a more personal level, and the Bible classes that are offered that teach the historical and social context of the time in addition to the religious message. There is just so much that the Fig offers to serve, learn, nurture and grow. 🙏



**Kathleen and John Donaldson at their wedding last year.**





# Compassion in the City

An Evening with  
Glennon Doyle Melton



**SAVE THE DATE—SEPTEMBER 25**

On September 25 Church of the Transfiguration will partner with First United Methodist Church of Dallas to cosponsor an evening with Glennon Doyle Melton. Glennon is a New York Times bestselling author and highly sought-after speaker who blends humor, candor, and wisdom to reveal profound truths about life and faith. She is the founder of Momastery, an online community that reaches millions of people each week, and she is also the creator and president of Together Rising, a non-profit organization that has raised \$7 million for families around the world through its “Love Flash Mobs,” which helped revolutionized online giving.

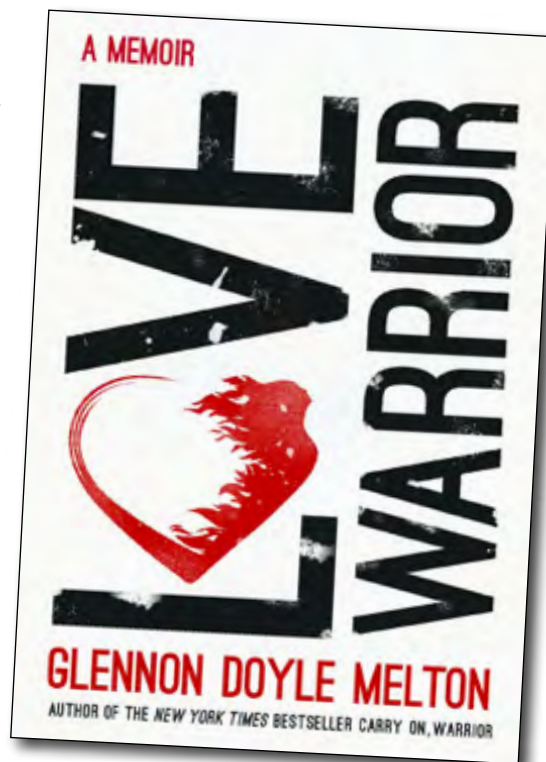
Transfiguration and FUMC will jointly welcome her to deliver a talk titled “Compassion in the City,” which will focus on how we can become more compassionate people and build a more compassionate society. This topic is more relevant than ever, as we discern how to resist the rising tide of extremism that has resulted in a growing number of hate groups right here in Texas. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, there are now 55 groups operating in Texas, and the number is rising. As Christians, we are disciples of one who teaches us

what it means to truly love our neighbor as ourselves (Luke 10:25–37), and how great and sacrificial a calling it is to be people of compassion. Glennon will speak from her personal experiences about this hard, beautiful work (she coined the word “brutiful” to describe

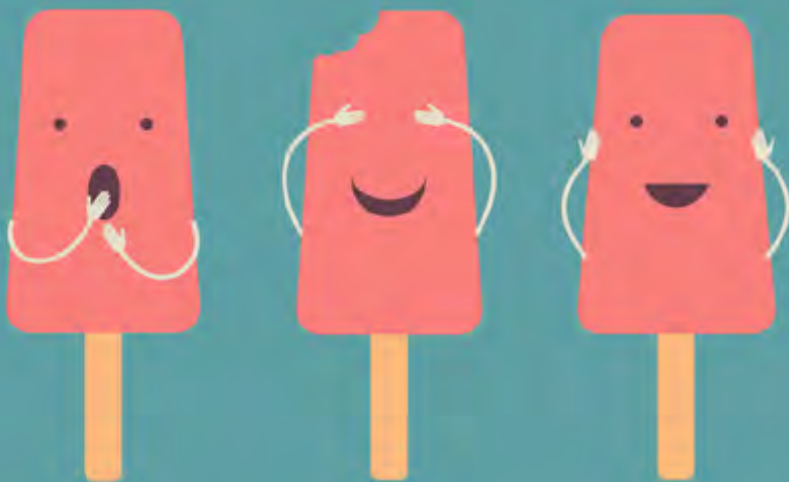
when life is both brutal and beautiful), and encourage us all to renew our efforts to change the world one compassionate moment at a time.

“Compassion in the City: An Evening with Glennon Doyle Melton” will be held at First United Methodist in Dallas. Tickets are \$30 and are available by visiting <https://firstchurchcamps.regfox.com/compassion-in-the-city-an-evening-with-glennon-doyle-melton>.

That same day Transfiguration will host a luncheon for civic, religious, and non-profit leaders of the Metroplex, at which Glennon will be the keynote speaker. This event is not open to the public, but we are recruiting volunteers to help us offer this gift to those who are on the frontlines of the compassionate movement right here in our community. You are also invited to purchase a copy of Glennon’s most recent book, *Love Warrior*, available in the Kay Andrews’ Bookstore. 🙏



# Summer Ice Cream Socials



July 2  
August 6  
September 3

10:15 a.m.  
Tower Cloister or Outside  
(weather dependent)