



Church of the Holy Comforter

February 2017

THE DOVE

The Rector's Column *The Rev. Dr. Jason Parkin, Rector*

During the Second World War, the French Underground, at a time when things were particularly grim, sent a brief message by telegraph to supporters in England. After much thought, they wired the words, "God reigns!" The message, however, was garbled in transit, and the English received it as "God resigns!" The English wired back, "Regret decision. British policy remains the same."

Gotta love the resolve of the British, especially during the darkest days of the War.

For some reason, this story puts me in mind of the month of February. Christmas seems long past, and Lent and Easter are yet to arrive. Pentecost? Won't happen for months. In other words, this is one of those stretches when we are simply called to move forward in our lives of faith, hopefully reveling in the expanding revelation of Jesus' identity and ministry as the season of Epiphany unfolds, but confident—despite the gloomy weather and the lack of any major Church feast—that, indeed, whatever the situation, whatever the circumstance, God reigns. In sorrow and in celebration; in trial and in triumph; in fear and in festivity: God reigns. If we can believe that in February, of all times, surely we can rest in that assurance at all times.

Along the same lines: some years ago, the 6th grade Sunday School class at the Church of St. John the Divine in Houston was challenged to summarize the Bible in 50 words. They did it in 48. Here is their creation:

God made, Adam bit
Noah arked, Abraham split
Jacob fooled, Joseph ruled
Bush talked, Moses balked
Pharaoh plagued, People walked
Sea divided, Tablets guided
Promise landed, Saul freaked

David peeked, Prophets warned
God walked, Love talked
Anger crucified, Hope died
Love rose, Spirit flamed
Word spread, God reigns

There it is again: God reigns. Even in February.

Ash Wednesday: March 1

This year, we will observe Ash Wednesday, March 1, with the Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes at 7:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., and 5:30 p.m. Please note that there is no 9:00 liturgy that day. This schedule has been established in the hope that some people—especially, perhaps, those who work nearby—might be able to come to the Eucharist over the noon hour, and that the later afternoon service will be more convenient to some commuters and families with school-aged children. Please make a special effort to participate in one of these celebrations in order that, as the Book of Common Prayer exhorts us, we might all make a "right beginning" to the holy and poignant season of Lent.

New Wardens and Vestry Members

At the Annual Parish meeting on Sunday, January 29, we elected a new Senior Warden and Junior Warden, as well as five members of the Vestry. For those who were not able to be present, please keep in your prayers Charlie Wise, our new Senior Warden, and Marc Franson, who is now the Junior Warden. Also joining the Vestry are Karen Anderson (Fellowship), Mary Bradbury (Ministry), Wendy Schultz (Outreach Resources), Michael Taylor (Communications) and Rick Voit (Newcomers). Congratulations to all of these gifted and dedicated leaders, and may God fill them with grace and blessings in their new ministries!

Holy Comforter Honored by ReVive Center

ReVive Center for Housing and Healing is one of the partner agencies of Episcopal Charities and Community Services, and has, since 1908, served the homeless, poor, and disadvantaged on the West Side of Chicago. Formerly known as Cathedral Shelter, ReVive provides community assistance, life skills development and resources for thousands of families and almost a hundred permanent supportive housing clients.

On Thursday, January 19, Church of the Holy Comforter was honored to be chosen as the ReVive Center Parish of the Year in recognition of our support and relationship, which stretch back decades. At the Annual Meeting of the organization that evening at their main offices at 1668 W. Ogden in Chicago, Stephen Citari, retiring Vestry Outreach representative, Jan Parkin, and I were privileged to be presented a plaque—already hanging in the office hallway—celebrating this recognition. As I told several Board members, we accepted the honor in grateful memory of our late, beloved Pat Drew, who was the President of Cathedral Shelter for some 14 years, and who devoted innumerable hours and immeasurable tears and sweat to strengthen and sustain the important ministry ReVive exercises on the West Side.

Congratulations to the entire Holy Comforter community on this honor. May it inspire us to grow ever more dedicated in our compassion toward, and generosity with, those in need or difficulty.



--Fr. Jason

Daily Eucharists; Thursday Morning Lenten Eucharist and Breakfast

Even though Lent does not begin until March 1, we wanted to give ample reminder of the quiet, thoughtful, and inspiring Eucharists that are offered every day in the church. The liturgies are celebrated at 9:00 a.m. each day, save Thursday, and are a perfect way to be renewed and refreshed during the week. On

Monday, Tuesday and Saturday, the services are traditional; on Wednesday and Friday, Contemplative Eucharists are offered, designed in such a way as to provide fresh imagery and language for worshipping God.

On Thursdays, the Eucharist is celebrated at 7:00 a.m., and, during Lent, is followed by a filling and nourishing breakfast in the Library. During the rest of the year, this service includes a healing rite, but we suspend that practice during Lent in order to provide time for fellowship and food following the Eucharist. If you have never attended the early service on Thursdays, this would be a perfect year to make it part of your Lenten journey. The early Thursday Eucharist is particularly perfect for those who would like to worship during the week but also need to head off to work.

Please join us any day of the week, as part of your Lenten experience, to give thanks to God for all of life's blessings and delights, and to raise up your sorrows and concerns into God's care.

Calling All Palms

As many are aware, the ashes used on Ash Wednesday are created from burning the palms distributed the previous Palm Sunday. This act takes place on Shrove Tuesday, when Fr Jason burns the palms in the presence of the Junior Kindergarten classes of All Things Bright and Beautiful. If you have palms or palm crosses from last year or even longer ago, please bring them to the church by Sunday, February 26, and leave them in the front office. Thanks, in advance, for your offerings.

Flower Donations

It is no secret that we are blessed at Holy Comforter to have one of the most gifted and dedicated Flower Ministries enjoyed by any church anywhere. Week after week, month by month, save during the season of Lent, the members of the Ministry create beautiful, seasonally appropriate, and frequently breathtaking arrangements on the retable behind the altar, near the Mary statue, and in the narthex. We are fortunate indeed to have such rich and remarkable gifts among the members of the Flower Ministry.

What might not be as well known is the fact that anyone in the parish can dedicate the flowers on any

given Sunday. This offering can be in memory or honor of a loved one; in thanksgiving for a special event such as a birthday or anniversary; to celebrate a joyous occasion or occurrence; or simply to enhance the beauty of the church and support the ministry of the Flower guild. In general, the cost of dedicating flowers averages about \$150, but please know that cost should not be an obstacle to dedicating the

arrangements: donations both greater and smaller are gratefully accepted.

If you would like to donate flowers, please contact Laurel O'Donnell (847.251.6120) and if you have any questions, a member of the Flower Ministry will be glad to provide answers. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and generosity.

"Digging Deep and Rising High" February



In February we will continue to "dig deep" into our Anglican/Episcopal heritage. We will begin with the English Reformation and how the Anglican Church separated from the Roman Catholic Church. We will also address how the Anglican Church was influenced by the

Protestant Reformation. Next, we will look at how the Anglican Church in America became the Episcopal Church. Our final session will be a time for questions about our church, our theology, our practice, or anything else related.

We would like all of the parish to participate in this new series with us. One way to do that is to contribute

a question or two that you might have about our church. It can be anything from asking about what we believe God to be like to why we do certain things in our communion service. We have a box in the parlor with a slot to receive your written questions. Or you can email me at jchardman@holyccomforter.org. We will address these questions and others at our adult forum on February 26th.

February's Schedule:

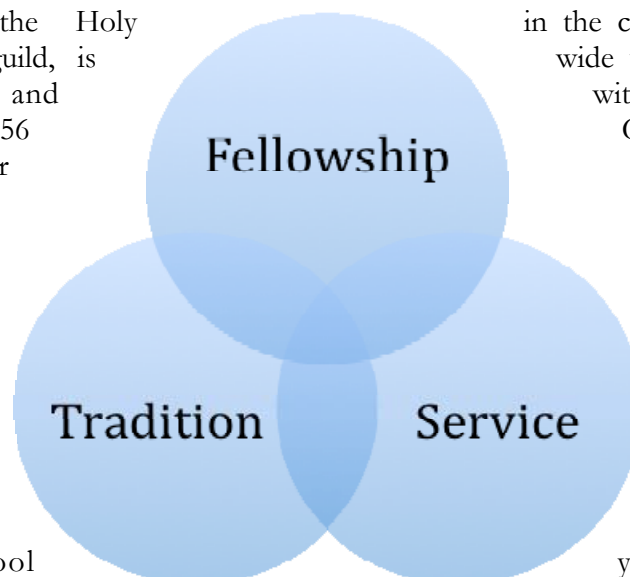
February 5	The English Reformation
February 12	The Anglican Church: 1700 - present
February 19	The Episcopal Church in the U.S.: Birth, Death, and Rebirth
February 26	A Time for Questions on our Church

Please join us for a wonderful series. Don't forget to submit your questions.

St. Helen's Guild: The Intersection of Fellowship, Tradition and Service

St. Helen's, Church of the Holy Comforter's longest-running guild, is making plans for a fun and rewarding 2017 season. At 56 parish households strong, our group socializes while celebrating CHC's tradition of service. Primary events in 2017 will include a Summer party at the Voits' on July 23, a Fall gathering October 15 at the Eaton's, plus a Holiday brunch at Skokie Country Club on December 10.

While Holy Family School (formerly St. Gregory's) school has traditionally been a focus for St. Helen's,



in the coming year we will explore a wide variety of charitable activities, within and outside of Holy Comforter, among our membership. Not surprisingly, ours is an extremely active group! St. Helen's members have the opportunity to introduce others to the acts of service that have enriched their own lives.

Our biggest wish is for everyone to know they are welcome, and are included. If you would like to learn more, please email Rick Voit at rvoit@yfc.net.

What Are We Really Up To When We Pray? *Heath Howe*

What are we really up to when we pray? I have been thinking about this a good deal this week in part because I was planning a lesson for our third through sixth grade Sunday school class on the various types of prayer (intercessory, petition, thanksgiving, etc.) Another reason prayer has been on my mind is I have heard a variety of thoughts and reactions about our praying as a community for our new president and other government leaders. I also spent several Sundays with our junior and senior teens who have that wonderful adolescent way of letting you know they will not tolerate anything but the real deal. When I speak with them about prayer I need to make sure I am as clear, authentic and honest as I possibly can be. Otherwise, they are not interested.

So, again, I ask: What are we really up to when we pray?

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry helped me answer this question a bit in his recent statement released on January 12. He writes, *"Real prayer is both contemplative and active. It involves a contemplative conversation with and listening to God, and an active following of the way of Jesus, serving and witnessing in the world in his Name."* I love his description of the two-sided nature of prayer. There is a receiving and a giving in prayer. There is the love and grace of Christ flowing in when we pray and his love and grace flowing out when we put our prayer into action. It is no wonder that for Christians the heart is the place within our bodies where we turn when we pray. As we are quiet our minds and go deep into our hearts to pray, our heart muscle itself is pumping in blood and pumping it out. The receiving and the giving of blood to the body as well as the receiving and giving of the holy presence of God to the soul.

I find that starting with the contemplative side of prayer works best in general. When we sit with intention and offer ourselves to God, we are able to hear or have a sense of what we are called to do in prayer. Sometimes our contemplation leads to intercessory prayer for others. Sometimes we are led to a confession of some kind, and we ask for forgiveness and healing. Sometimes God seems to have a quiet conversation with us individually. At other times, we are simply held in the quiet peace of God's embrace. The best part of this discipline is that we are reminded that God is leading and guiding every aspect of our life, even our prayer. We may have concerns we

need to offer to God. However, these requests are not a "to do list" for God that are offered quickly with an expectation that God will quickly do as we see fit. When contemplation comes first, God leads the offering of the concerns of our heart. We are able to slowly name the person, situation or event of our concern one at a time. We can imagine placing them before God and knowing God has heard. Then throughout rest of the day if that person or concern comes to mind we simply say, "Thank you God for all you are doing about (name the person or concern)." We can use this same practice with the things we are thankful for: contemplation first and then action. This grounds us, realigns us, with Christ's love and keeps us centered in the present moment.

Simply said, the contemplative side of prayer, listening to and conversing with God, is merely a delightful means of hanging out with God. Prayer is not trying to get something but to be with Someone and hence become someone.

The active part of prayer is equally important. Think of Jacob wrestling all night long with God (the contemplative part) and then getting up in the morning and going to meet his estranged brother, Esau, and reconciling with him. Hard work and important action. If we do not participate in the active side of prayer our view and our living become self-focused and limited. We are called to take the love we have been given by God out into the world. That is exactly what we promise to do each time we reclaim and reaffirm our baptismal vows. We promise "to seek and serve Christ in all persons" and "respect the dignity of every human being," to name two. At the end of our liturgy each Sunday, Deacon Sandy sends us forth into the world "to love and serve the Lord." The various tasks we are called to each day throughout the week, be they large events that tend to many in need or small tasks that impact a few, are our prayers in action which began in church but do not end there. Simply put, prayer in action is love in action.

There are times when we do not believe we can pray. We do not think we have the words and we know we do not have the energy to act. No matter. We still need to show up and be with God. Maybe God needs our presence even when we feel we do not need God's. We may feel awkward or even be mad at God.

Continued on page 5

We still show up, and as we do we encourage the Holy Spirit to guide our contemplative time. Perhaps this is what Paul was explaining to the Romans when he writes, *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God."* (Romans 8:26-27)

Lastly, the movement of the Spirit reminds us of another important part of prayer: Community. God does not call us to live in isolation. We are created to be social creatures, and the Spirit of God continues to bring us together, especially in prayer. Even when we are praying alone at home we are connected to the Holy Spirit that is in all things. When we come together for worship on Sundays or during the week we present our hearts full of contemplative and active

prayer with all the others gathered. We hear others pray prayers that we are too afraid or angry or forgetful to pray. We pray for others who are absent or cannot pray for themselves. We gather to pray because our hearts grow stronger and our souls are enriched by the prayers of the whole body of Christ, the community. When this happens, truly, the love of God grows.

What are we really doing when we pray? Simply said, prayer is showing up to receive love so that we learn how to love in the everyday moments of our lives. It is the most important work we can do, after all: *"They will know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yes, they will know we are Christians by our love."*

Prayer as love: What a nice thing to practice in the month of February.

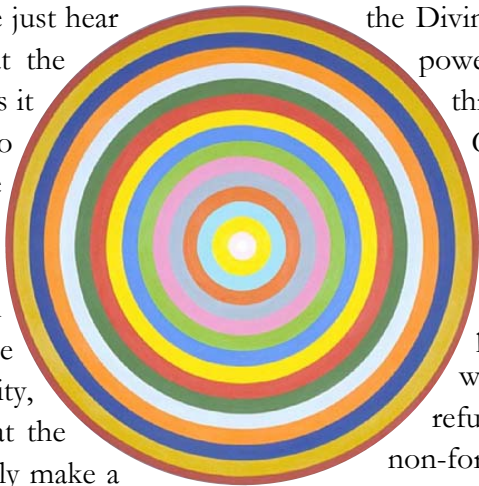
Getting Into the Circle *Charlotte Long, Youth Ministry*

Firstly, let's remember that Jesus was not a one-time response from God to humanity. If we want to get deeply into the Trinity (and I do!), then Jesus didn't just appear and then disappear at the convenient moment. The Trinity is forever; the Trinity has always been; the Trinity is working with us in this minute of time. With that in mind, why do we always cling to the title of "Christ the King"? Wasn't he just born to us a baby, lowly and powerless? Didn't we just hear the birth story again and wonder at the marvel of so much lowliness? Perhaps it is because as humans we are so invested in the "celebrity," the hierarchy of importance, power and money. We must know who is in charge! We must take! And keep! And follow the rules! We're more comfortable with the pyramid reality, with the notion that power is held at the top and we down below can't possibly make a difference or be held accountable. We quickly made the meek and humble of heart (Mt 11:29) into the all-powerful monarch.

And yet Jesus was relational. Jesus was interested not in the power "out there," but in the divine in here. Trinitarian theology says that spiritual power is much more circular or spiral. As Richard Rohr says, "Circles

are much more threatening than pyramids are, at least to empires, the wealthy, or any patriarchal system. What if we actually surrendered to the inner Trinitarian flow and let it be our primary teacher? Even our notion of society, politics, and authority—which is still top-down and outside-in—would utterly change." The circle of the Trinity tells us: the endless Emptying of Self leads to being continually filled with the Divine - a giving away and sharing. God's power is not coercion or domination or threat. The power of God is about the Circle.

How do we get into the flow of the Circle? Look to those who Jesus says are blessed: the marginalized, the poor, the outcast, the afflicted. I would add to that: the homosexual, the refugee, the person of color, the gender non-former, the homeless, the Native. These are who the Western World has suppressed. "One of the most transformative experiences is entering into some form of lifestyle solidarity with the powerless. It's like changing sides from the ego side of things, and this is what changes you. We don't think ourselves into a new way of living; we live ourselves into a new way of thinking. (Rohr)"



New Name, Same Mission *Mary Johnson, Children's Ministries and ATBB*



For the past three years, Holy Comforter has been a member of the Winnetka Interfaith Council. CHC was the host for the 2015 Thanksgiving Interfaith Service. Founded in 1967, the purpose of the Winnetka Interfaith Council is to foster interfaith understanding by providing a forum for interfaith dialogue and developing programs that provide a service to the community at large where there is a mutual respect for different faith traditions. In the 50 years this organization has been around, it has experienced a tremendous amount of growth and change. The most significant change is introduced this month as the name changes from Winnetka Interfaith Council to **New Trier Multifaith Alliance**.

Over several months, the members have been discussing a name change. At the November Board meeting, the new name was approved by a vote of the members. This is a summary of the thought process that resulted in the name change:

Location: New Trier by definition includes the communities of Winnetka, Kenilworth, Glencoe, Northfield, and Wilmette, and these communities more accurately represent the current member faith communities.

Purpose: Multifaith is appearing more frequently in contemporary usage to refer to groups that go beyond interfaith. The word promotes dialogue, tolerance and acceptance with the foundation of understanding and cooperation.

Organizational Nature: By definition, *council* describes a body gathered to consult, deliberate, and set policy. *Alliance* refers to an organization that more actively works to multiply the resources and talents of respective member organizations for the better of the whole.

One of the benefits of this group is the opportunity to engage in conversation on a variety of topics with individuals who have different perspectives. There have been two forums sponsored by this Alliance: "Finding Inner Peace; What Do the Sacred Texts Teach?" and "In a World of Misunderstanding; What Do the Sacred Texts Teach?" The third forum open to the public will be on March 14th and will be held at the Winnetka Covenant Church from 7:00 – 8:30. The title of this event is "The Status of Women: Have we Come Far Enough? What do the Sacred Texts Teach?" This panel of four women will include Pastor Heath Howe who will speak about the Christian perspective on this topic.

The Baha'i, Jewish, and Muslim faiths will also be included in the panel discussion. Each panelist will select two passages from their faith's texts and respond to the questions asked in the title of the forum: what do they teach regarding the status of women, and have we come far enough? I am so excited to have Heath represent the Christian faith in this provocative topic, and I look forward to the discussion and Q&A that will follow the four speakers' observations. I hope many members from our community will be there to listen and support Heath and share in this opportunity.

Chil-



dren's

Choir Meeting

Please join us in the Library on Sunday, February 12

A Wizard of Oz Reel Spirituality! *J. Chris Hardman*



A new Lenten Series beginning, Wednesday, March 8, 2017

This year Pastor Heath and I are teaming up to present a special Reel Spirituality series entitled *A Wizard of Oz Spirituality*. You will not want to miss this one.

The Wizard of Oz is one of our most beloved movies. So beloved that my mother even let me stay home from church one Sunday night so I could see it. Little did I know that after seeing the movie hundreds of times, I have finally identified why I like it so much. It is because it is a “Godly” movie that points the way to a “Godly” life. It is all about discovering wisdom, courage, compassion, and home—which is pretty much all I have been talking about for the past few years.

We will look at a portion of this movie and discover its hidden path to a greater consciousness. Then, using other movies, we will show how it is the Christian path that leads to the Kingdom of God.

If that sounds intriguing, then set aside each Wednesday Night in Lent: March 8, 15, 22, 29, and April 5. Tell your friends. Ease on down the road! It will be an extraordinary “yellow brick road” experience! More about this will follow in next month’s [Dove](#).



THE WHO, WHAT, WHERE AND WHY OF THE STEPHEN MINISTRY

WHAT IS STEPHEN MINISTRY? Stephen Ministry is a lay ministry of Holy Comforter composed of parishioners who have been trained to provide one-to-one Christian caregiving to individuals in our Church community.

WHO COULD USE A STEPHEN MINISTER? Stephen Ministry helps members of our Church family who are experiencing a difficult time during a life transition: people experiencing divorce, grief, illness, loneliness, family or career changes, or any other time of difficulty.

WHY WOULD I CALL FOR A STEPHEN MINISTER? A Stephen

Minister can walk with you as you journey through one of life's transitions. The care of your Stephen Minister is confidential, non-judgmental, and supportive. The Stephen Minister is there to listen to YOU as you go through a challenging time.

HOW DO I CONTACT A STEPHEN MINISTER? If you have any questions or would like to discuss a Stephen Minister relationship, please contact one of the clergy or please call either Carrie Smart, Stephen Ministry Referral Coordinator 847-501-3954 or Stephen Leader Team Coordinator, Jean Britt 847-256-2372.

The Vineyard

We welcome with love to God's family and the family of heavenly abode, and comfort and strengthen the entire extended Olson family.

Carter Coleman Flury

Isla Harper Kerr

George Finley Kerr

Scarlett Jayne Kerr

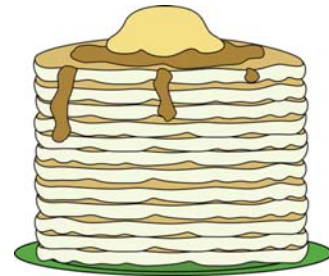
Baptized Epiphany Sunday, January 15, 2017.

It is with sorrow that we note the death of Warren Weaver, the father of Carrie Smart. Mr. Weaver lived in Kansas City, and his funeral took place at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in that city, the parish to which the Weaver family has belonged for decades. We hold in our hearts and prayers Carrie, her husband John and their three sons, and her mother Connie, asking God to enfold Warren in love and light perpetual, and to comfort the extended family with peace and joyful memories.

Our hearts and prayers also go out to Jim and Julie Olson and their family on the death of his mother, Joan G. Olson. Mrs. Olson, who lived in Lake Forest, died the first week in January at the age of 90 after a long and rich life. A private memorial service has been held. May God hold Joan in love, light, and life eternal in her

We also offer condolences and love to Billy Keller and Paige Ellwood Keller on the death of Billy's mother, Lucille, on January 8, at the age of 73. Lucille was a resident of Richmond, Virginia. Knowing that her time was short, Lucille had planned a "Going Away" party for herself in late April, and that gathering will now be a celebration of her life. We pray God's loving embrace of Lucille, now and evermore, and peace to her family and friends.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



Church of the Holy Comforter

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