

Interview with Ann Jaqua

For the July 2024 Justice and Outreach Digest

This month's JOC Digest is featuring one of our most dedicated and influential parishioners, ever, Ann Jaqua.

If you support progressive Christianity and our openness to and welcoming of all, well, Ann was instrumental in making that happen. That's because Ann was an important piece in getting Mark Asman as our rector. There's some interesting history here but suffice it to say that Mark was appointed interim rector at Trinity back in the day, but it was against diocese regulations for the interim priest to become the parish rector. The Vestry wanted to keep Mark, so did Ann, and she worked tirelessly with others to make that happen. Under Mark's leadership, Trinity developed the reputation of being a progressive church, open to all.

And, if you are involved at all with one of our Parish Councils at Trinity, be it Children and Youth or Hospitality or Welcome or Worship or Justice and Outreach, then here again, that's due to Ann's involvement, with her introduction to Trinity of the concept of Shared Ministry. All parishioners can participate and share in the ministry of the church.

Ann goes back, being a member of Trinity on and off for seventy years (she lived on the East coast for a time). During those years, she has served Trinity in a myriad of ways: a couple of stints on the Vestry, on a number of individual Discernment Committees, as a Spiritual Director to many, as a leader of various classes and retreats, for example, on Celtic Christianity and Process Theology, and book studies, e.g. Ecology at the Heart of Faith for Sustainable Trinity, and in a more concrete way, heading up the major earthquake retrofit effort at Trinity.

With Nora Gallagher, she started the soup kitchen at Trinity, which later moved to the shelter on Cacique Street. As a member of what was then called Spiritual Formation Parish Council and later, she was able to use her connections to bring special guests here to speak and/or lead forums, guests such as Cynthia Bourgeault, Dominic Crosson, Marcus Borg, and recently, Sr. Joan Chittister, the Roman Catholic nun.

Perhaps most important to Ann, something of which she is most proud, is that she started Base Community at Trinity. Base Community is built on the gatherings of women in Latin America during the times of "the disappeared ones" in the 70's and 80's. These women raised the questions: What is Jesus asking us to do? What are lay people being asked to do since there are no priests?

Base Community continues at Trinity today. They meet every Wednesday at noon, and since the pandemic, they meet over zoom. Base Community has evolved over the years, but the main question remains the same: What is Jesus asking us to do? It is open to all. (A note on this: Ann wishes to thank Michael Arnold for leading this group every week.)

The character of Trinity and the tone that Trinity sets has been greatly influenced by the presence of Ann as a parishioner. At 87 today, she is still a role model to many of us. Her contributions to Trinity life today, her wisdom and guidance and grace, continue to inspire us all. Indeed, Ann is the doyenne of Trinity.

Submitted by Jean Lange Davis and Molly Kellogg