



CHURCH OF THE  
HOLY COMFORTER

Summer 2011

# THE DOVE

## *The Times They are A-Changin'* by Father Chris Hardman

"The times they are a-changin'." Bob Dylan told us that in song nearly 50 years ago—and it is still true. The times are changing, and nowhere is that more apparent than in the church.

We tend to think that the church has always been the same, but it has gone through some tremendous changes. Phyllis Tickle in her book *The Great Emergence* says that the church seems to hold a "rummage sale" every 500 years or so. It holds on to what it thinks is essential. It lets go what it thinks is nonessential. This kind of sorting process occurred around 500 C.E. with the fall of the Roman Empire, around 1000 C.E. with the Great Schism between the Eastern Church and the Western Church, around 1500 C.E. with the Protestant Reformation, and it is occurring in our present time, a time she calls "the Great Emergence."

Harvey Cox in his book *The Future of Faith* sees the changes in Christianity a little differently. He envisions a three phase process of change. The first phase (from Jesus' resurrection to 325 C.E.) he calls the "Age of Faith." That was a time when the Christian Faith was new and people were willing to die for the Faith. The second phase he calls the "Age of Belief" (from 325 to the present). This phase is characterized by a strong relationship between Christianity and the State. Thus, assent to certain common beliefs were important to assure national unity. The third phase (the present time) he calls the "Age of the Spirit," a time when the Spirit is leading us away from simple assent to certain beliefs and

into an age where we seek to experience God first hand. It is a movement from knowledge about God to knowledge of God, a movement from knowledge about Jesus to following Jesus.

Holy Comforter has been moving into this new "Age of the Spirit" for some time now, focusing on the love of God as central to our faith, and experiencing God's presence in our communal life and in our services of Holy Eucharist. Those services, with some minor changes (like more contemporary music at 9:00), will remain essentially the same. But, the Spirit may be calling us to some new ways of practice, some new possibilities for hospitality, some new ways of reaching out beyond ourselves.

Therefore, we would like to celebrate the Spirit already at work in our midst and the Spirit continuing to lead us into the future with a special service. This service will kick-off a time when we all renew our efforts to discern the Spirit's calling for Holy Comforter. It will include the early music of Bob Dylan because that music reflects the movement of the Spirit in our present time. This special liturgy will be held outdoors on Sunday, August 28, at 10am, followed by our annual Ice Cream Social. Music will be performed live by Blood on the Tracks, a Bob Dylan tribute band.

As Dylan puts it, may we all continue to be "Forever Young" . . . forever open to new life and new possibilities.

## *The Rev. Heath Howe* by *Father Jason Parkin*

As many know, the Rev. Heath Howe joined the clergy team of Holy Comforter late last summer following the departure of the Rev. Ann Dieterle for her new position in Virginia. Heath was called to this parish in order to assist with pastoral care, and to take a full role in the worship and preaching ministry. She was originally scheduled to depart when Fr. Myers retired, but I asked him, while I was still in San Francisco, if he would extend Heath's relationship with Holy Comforter through this June.

It is with true delight that I am now able to announce that Heath will be part of our common life and ministry going forward: I have extended to her - and she has accepted - a call to become the permanent, half-time Associate for Family Faith Formation, with the possibility of the position growing over time. Practically speaking, this means that Heath will be present another full day each week. Her special area of focus will be to engage more fully in working with families, All Things Bright and Beautiful, and the Church School to strengthen the overall ministry of Holy Comforter, and to establish stronger connections between, and integration of, the various ways in which we seek to nurture families and our younger brothers and sisters in faith. As her Letter of Call states, Pastor Heath will seek to "help the parish create even more fully a sacred space where children and families can come to know and love Christ in a way that informs how they live their lives within and outside the church walls."

Many of you have already experienced Heath's broad and deep gifts. A native of Arkansas, she is a graduate of Boston College, and studied for the

priesthood at Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, CA, her sponsoring parish being the Church of Our Savior in Chicago. Following ordination, Pastor Heath served at Trinity Memorial Church in Binghamton, NY, and St. Paul's Church in Concord, NH, and then as one of the Chaplains at St. Paul's School, also in Concord. She has extensive experience and deep interest in the spirituality of children and of families, and significant background in faith formation curricula and resources. Indeed, Heath has already worked with several parish leaders this spring to develop a new approach to our Church School offerings in the coming year, and did so even before taking on her increased responsibilities. In other words, her background, experience, and passion match beautifully an area in which we, as a community of faith, can always grow and deepen: that of fostering ever more vibrant ways for families, young people, and, therefore, all of us, to grow in our relationship with, and love of, God. It seems as if the Spirit was guiding Holy Comforter and Heath Howe toward one another for a very particular reason!

On a more personal front, Pastor Heath is married to the Rev. Dr. David Jones, and is Mom to Sophia (12) and Eli (9) Civetta.

I hope you will take a chance in the coming weeks to express to Heath your delight in her new, expanded ministry at Holy Comforter, and will keep her in your prayers as she seeks to serve this congregation in new, creative, and stimulating ways. May God nurture and strengthen all of us as we seek to grow in faith, in love, and in joy, in the name of Christ Jesus.

# *Welcoming our Guests* by Father Jason Parkin

As you know, the end of summer and the beginning of fall is the principal time when many people begin to search for a new church home. People visit Holy Comforter for many reasons. Some come because they are long-term Episcopalians new to the area, and this is the logical place to attend worship, while others are taking their first hesitant steps toward or back into the community of faith. Some visit because their children are now old enough to participate in Christian Formation, and others because they love the music and the liturgy. Still others come here because of some crisis or sorrow in their lives or because they are responding to an inarticulate but compelling need or ache within their souls. But whatever the reason that brings people through our doors, it is our calling to be as welcoming and inviting as possible. Few things are quite as unnerving as walking into a new church for the first time, and not knowing where to sit, where the classrooms or washrooms are, who anyone is, where the Adult Forum or coffee hour takes place, and so on. Add to this the fact that the Episcopal liturgy, which so many of us love so dearly, is rather confusing to those not familiar with it (remember the first time you had to juggle a hymnal, prayer book, and bulletin all at the same time, meanwhile trying to discern whether you were supposed to be kneeling, standing, sitting, or doing cartwheels?), and you can imagine how daunting it can be to visit Holy Comforter for the first time.

It is truly important, then, that we greet, welcome, assist, and support guests and visitors in whatever ways we can. As July turns into August into September, please consider welcoming visitors and guests in the following, simple ways:

- Introduce yourself to people you do not know. If you are afraid-as we all are!-of mistaking a long-time member for a visitor, simply say something like, "Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I've been coming to Holy Comforter for \_\_\_\_ weeks/years. How about you?" Or: "Am I being forgetful? Have we met before?" The fear of introducing ourselves to someone who has been a member for 27 years is legitimate. However, it should not be so great a fear as to prevent us from welcoming guests. After all, which is the greater sorrow?
- Assist people in worship. If someone looks confused over which book to use, or what page to follow, offer them your book, or get the next page ready for them. If someone looks unsure of what to do at communion time, explain simply the customary way of doing things.
- Don't merely encourage people to join us for coffee hour or to take their children to Church School: lead them there yourself. Introduce them to others. Stand with them in the courtyard. Find Mary Johnson or a teacher who can guide them to the right classroom.
- If you need to speak to a member of the staff or one of the priests, or even someone else in the parish, please try to do so at times other than right after the service. It is very helpful if staff, and, in fact, everyone, is free to visit with newcomers when they are first with us. We all have other opportunities to visit with friends and neighbors and colleagues. We may not get a second chance with visitors and guests.
- Sit with people you do not know at the Adult Forum, Pancake Suppers, Lenten programs, the picnic, and the like. Again, this may be the only chance we get to welcome someone to the parish and make them feel at home.
- Write a brief note during the following week to a newcomer you met on Sunday. If you are not sure of their name, or need an address, the office has a record of those who fill out welcome cards or the guest register.
- Join the Newcomer ministry (Vestry chair: Eric Beatty) and assist with organizing newcomer receptions, creating written materials about Holy Comforter, and other activities.

Let us honor our baptismal vows to "seek and serve Christ in all persons...and to respect the dignity of every human being." Let us welcome the guest and the visitor, the stranger and the sojourner in such a way that they will feel comfortable and welcomed at Holy Comforter. This is not the vocation or ministry of only a few: it is the vocation and ministry of all. Thank you!

## *Inch by Inch* by Mary Johnson, Director of Children's/Youth Ministries

There is an old song written by David Mallett in 1978. "Inch by Inch" was recorded by Peter Paul and Mary, Arlo Guthrie and John Denver and probably many more. It's a simple melody with simple lyrics that present a simple lesson:

*Inch by Inch, row by row  
Gonna make this garden grow  
All it takes is a rake and a hoe  
And a piece of fertile ground*

*Inch by inch, row by row,  
Please bless these seeds I sow  
Please keep them safe below,  
Til the rain comes tumbling down*

Each day I am here at Holy Comforter, I find time to check on the garden that has been planted in the "back 40," as Father Jason calls it. It came together so quickly at the end of the regular school year at the suggestion of Jan Parkin and in about two weeks the raised beds were in place and filled with rich soil. The children in the Church School planted the first

tomato plant and All Things Bright and Beautiful children helped plant the rest of the garden. It has been a learning experience for all of us as we watch the garden come to life. The seeds have stayed safe below as we have indeed had the rain come tumbling down (....lots of rain tumbling down!) The garden has survived the intense tornado-like storm in June even though a big branch on the tree above the garden was lost. We did lose some sunflowers where the crew had to take out the broken tree branch. I think it would be very hard to watch all the growth that has been generated be obliterated by a bad storm or weather conditions over which we have no control. But we can't fret about that! So we'll enjoy the beauty of the garden, wait patiently for the fruits (.....or vegetables) of our labors and as the last part of the song says: *Season with a prayer and song.* Please come by the back 40 when you are here over the summer and if your timing is right, you may go home with some fresh herbs, a tomato or two or some lettuce, radishes and carrots.

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## *In the Vineyard*

**We joyfully announce the birth of . . .**  
Bradley Gordon to Samantha and Jason Pagels on June 2. He has an older sister, Adair, and his grandparents are Lou and Adrienne Lower.

**We welcome to the parish . . .**  
Caroline and Rudy Cerrone of Wilmette, and their daughter, Samantha. Caroline, the daughter of Anne and Lloyd Williams, was a member of Holy Comforter as a child. Six-year old Samantha was baptized on Pentecost Sunday.

Donna Doberstein of Wilmette. Donna is very comfortable at Holy Comforter because she has many friends who are parishioners.

George and Robin Gemeinhardt of Northfield. The Gemeinhardts are long-time friends of the Parkins; the four of them went to music school together and sang at each other's weddings.

**We extend our sympathy to . . .**  
George, Penny and Stacey Kezios on the death of Penny's mother and longtime parishioner, Fran

## *Lights...Camera...Action* by Patti Pateros, Director of Community

It was the week before our Confirmation celebration on Pentecost Sunday. The liturgy was thoughtfully prepared, the confirmands and liturgists were well-rehearsed, and Sue, host of the reception, had planned every detail - from the DJ providing the music to a floor plan for the Great Hall. Everything and everybody were ready to go . . . until Sue's 94-year old mother suddenly was rushed to the hospital, seriously ill. With just a few days left before the event, I put a call into Jane, explained the situation, and without hesitation, she took over for Sue. The event went off without a hitch - Megan, who had planned the party with her mom, worked with Jane - and unexpected volunteers gravitated to Jane's side that morning: Tim, Barbara, Annie, Lynn. They weren't asked to help, they just knew help was needed.

Two weeks before the parish picnic, an e-mail went out to the "men of the parish," asking for their help with set up, grilling, and clean up for this annual family event. Twenty-five guys volunteered - some came early in the morning while the grass was still wet with dew, while others stayed late, leaving the parish grounds looking like we had never been there. A schedule was put together for the chefs so no one had to slave over a hot grill for too long. But when I heard music coming from the backyard and noticed there were more men in the back than there were in the front, I realized they weren't there just for the cooking - they were enjoying the fellowship time together.

This year we had two youth mission trips that took busy parent chaperones away from their families, and overlapped two important family holidays - Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day. But our chaperones didn't hesitate to commit to the trips and to our children. Janet, Andy and Charlie joined us on the first-ever junior high Mission Chicago trip; Ann and Steve led our second mission trip to Nicaragua. Neither trip could have or would have been successful without their presence.

During Lent, we had decided to have a lay-led Adult Forum program. Focusing on the hospitality theme, movies, discussion topics and prayers were selected, but we needed to find the right people to present the program in an interesting and meaningful way. Although Hal, Eric, Charlie, Barbara and Nancy were

given materials with which to work, they had to make each presentation their own, which took time and preparation - especially since a few rather obscure movies were chosen. Those forums were some of the best of the year.

Just a few weeks ago, I suggested to the staff that we conclude our outdoor Sunday summer liturgies with a bang. A Bob Dylan tribute band has been hired to play at a special liturgy on August 28th at 10am, which will be followed by our annual Ice Cream Social. Father Hardman, who is already busy with his adult ed programs and regular duties, took time to review Bob Dylan songs, the Sunday readings, and alternative prayers, to develop an appropriate theme for the liturgy. Like the U2charist, the Motown and Imagine Masses, this promises to be a modern, lively, and interactive liturgy - a perfect ending to our summer, and an inviting beginning to our new program year.

I was recently asked to oversee a 6th/7th grade youth program. As we did with AIM and WHAM, I felt it is important to give this new youth group their own space. Most rooms in our building are already used on Sunday mornings, so it was time to get creative. I went to Jeff, our Operations Manager, and suggested we redo a space that is currently used as an indoor playground for ATB&B on weekdays. Jeff quickly got on top of it, contacting the appropriate contractors, researching new furniture, and helping with decorating options. The room will be ready come September.

This has been a sneak preview into how I've spent my last few months. I've been accused by some of being a "control freak" - and rightly so since it is my job to be in control. However, I prefer this analogy: I am the the producer of a movie (albiet a low budget, independent film that very few ever see!) with an incredibly talented group of directors and actors who are willing to donate their time and talent to the project. I work closely with the director to be sure the actors fit the roles; the score, scenery, and script are well-done; and the movie is finished on time and within budget.

Not every event has been a box office hit . . . but the directors and actors are certainly worthy of an Oscar.

# *Youth Group News: Grades 6~12* by Patti Pateros

## **WHAM ~ High School**

Sixteen high school students and their three chaperones returned safely from their mission trip last month. Hosted by the Fabretto Children's Foundation, this second trip to Nicaragua was much different than their first: high up in the northern mountains, the rainy season was in full force throughout the week, causing power outages for several days. Although this did not seem to affect the villagers, it made living conditions for those used to the comforts of home even more difficult. When night came (and night comes early down there), it gave a new meaning to dark - candlelight inside, star light outside. Really, quite beautiful.

In the mornings, our students worked side by side with Nicaraguan laborers, performing menial, but necessary, tasks including moving tons of bricks to a work site for a new school building, and clearing and digging a new garden at their local residence, La Casona in Cusmapa. Although the work was hard and tedious, it helped the students understand the difficulties of doing basic tasks without the tools and machinery available to us.

The afternoons were much more relaxing as they visited and played with the children at the Fabretto afterschool program in the tiny village of Miramar. 48 grade school children eagerly awaited the arrival of our students, swarming the bus as it pulled up in front of their school each afternoon. They were welcomed with hugs, a musical presentation, and handmade gifts. The most meaningful moments took place at the farewell ceremony hosted by parents and grandparents, many of whom walked miles in the heat and humidity to express their gratitude for our presence and relationships with their children

## **AIM ~ Junior High School**

The Confirmation liturgy was the culmination of a year-long study by the 28 students who were confirmed by Bishop Scantlebury on Pentecost Sunday, June 12. The liturgy, which included a creed written by the confirmands and participation by older siblings, was poignant and beautiful, yet somewhat informal and very personal to the families. Following the liturgy, the confirmands, their families and friends, celebrated at a special reception that was totally kid-friendly with a DJ, mac 'n cheese and pigs in a blanket

for lunch, and gift bags for the confirmands. This was a perfect celebration for our confirmands and Bishop Scantlebury who retired from his ministry with the Diocese of Chicago the following week.

## **2011-2012 Program**

Beginning in September, the youth groups for grades 6-12 will be reorganized and refocused. The most significant change is a combined 6th/7th grade program called "iCONNECT . . . with God and our World." The students will focus on stewardship to the earth [connecting to our world], prayer [connecting with God], and community service [connecting with one another]. iCONNECT will meet in a newly created space designed specifically for their age and study.

AIM will become the 8th grade program with a focus on character building and discovering their gifts and talents. By giving the 8th graders their own program, we acknowledge that this is a unique and important time in their lives with drastic changes in growth and development. This new program will help them with these transitions and give them a forum to discuss issues that are affecting them . . . at home, in school, and throughout the world. The 7th and 8th graders will be given the opportunity to participate in the Mission Chicago mission trip in May 2012.

We look forward to a strong freshmen presence in WHAM come September. Our high school group will continue its focus on how to be loving, caring young adults as well as stewards of a global society. Sunday morning meetings will focus on current events, personal spiritual growth, and preparation for the June 2012 mission trip. Fundraising activities for the mission trip will be held throughout the year.

All youth groups will participate in community service and parish projects during the year and fellowship events will be regularly scheduled.

It is often said that our children are our future. Holy Comforter stands behind that thought by providing these unique opportunities to nurture, guide, and encourage spiritual development in our youth, opening the door to a bright future for them and for our parish.

# *Home for the Holidays ~ 57th Annual Housewalk*

Holy Comforter's annual Housewalk will be held on Wednesday, October 5, featuring four beautiful homes within walking distance to the church, a boxed lunch in the Great Hall, and a "mini" boutique in the parish library. "Home for the Holidays" will bring Housewalk back to its home base, but will still offer the quality and excellence the greater community has come to expect.

Every year, all funds collected from Housewalk are used solely for outreach purposes. Over the

past four years, Holy Comforter has been able to give over \$275,000 to local and global non-profit agencies. In order to achieve this goal, the support of EVERY parishioner is needed, not only with volunteer opportunities but also with ticket sales. When you receive your Housewalk invitation later in the summer, each parish family is encouraged to do their part by purchasing a minimum of three tickets, the cost of which will go towards our outreach giving. Thank you in advance for your support. For more information, please contact Cindy Macfarland, Vestry Chair.

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## *2011 Outreach Giving: Local & Global*

In addition to our volunteer commitments, the parish believes in direct charitable donations to selected organizations. Money for outreach is raised by the annual Housewalk, the parishioner offerings during the Easter and Christmas seasons, and special anonymous gifts. The money raised is overseen by the Outreach Ministry of the Vestry and distributed annually to a series of deserving organizations. The Outreach Ministry distributed funds to organizations based on the Millennium Development Goals and the needs and relationships with the requesting agencies. The following is the list of agencies that benefitted from Church of the Holy Comforter's 2011 Outreach Distribution. We encourage you to read more about these organizations; go to [www.holycomforter.org](http://www.holycomforter.org).

- ◆ Bishop Anderson House \$3,000
- ◆ Cathedral Shelter \$4,000
- ◆ Connections for the Homeless \$10,000
- ◆ A Just Harvest \$10,000
- ◆ Good News Partners \$10,000
- ◆ Good News Saturday Morning \$500
- ◆ Lawrence Hall Youth Services \$2,000
- ◆ Messiah St. Bartholomew \$600
- ◆ Primo Center for Women & Children \$3,000
- ◆ Holy Family Ministries [formerly St. Gregory's Episcopal School] \$5,000
- ◆ St. Leonard's Ministries \$3,000
- ◆ Father Ikeyne's African Ministry \$2,000
- ◆ Global Alliance for Africa \$5,424
- ◆ Fabretto Children's Foundation [MDG Impact Project] \$15,000

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## *Our Secret Garden: The Columbarium*

During the summer months, the 9:00am Sunday liturgy is informal, family-friendly, and celebrated outdoors in the Columbarium. Our beautiful and tranquil garden comes alive with the sights and sounds of families gathered for worship and fellowship. Thank you to Barbara Haljun who lovingly prepared the Columbarium gardens for the parish community to enjoy, and to Margaret Campbell, Jane Coley and Jody Lapp who faithfully maintain them each week.

# *Upcoming Events*

## **"Storming the Nets" Tennis Party**

Saturday, July 9 ~ 5:30pm

All levels of play and fellowship for non-players.

## **Time for Women**

Tuesday, July 19 ~ 6:30pm

Hosted by Bev Joutras; RSVP required.

## **St. Helen's Guild Summer Party**

Sunday, July 24 ~ 5:00pm

Hosted by Bill and Stephanie Sick.

## **Special Outdoor Liturgy & Ice Cream**

### **Social**

Sunday, August 28 ~ 10:00am

A live band will perform the early music of Bob Dylan; the ice cream social follows immediately.

## **Annual Family Beach Party**

Saturday, August 13 ~ 3:30-6:30pm

Hosted by Bob and Lori Patin; barbeque provided by Smoque at 5pm. Reservations requested; guests are asked to bring a side dish or dessert to share (please avoid food that needs refrigeration).

## **57th Annual Housewalk**

Wednesday, October 5

Four beautiful houses within walking distance to the church; lunch and boutique in the Great Hall.

## **Summer Sunday Schedule**

8am ~ Rite I Eucharist

9am ~ Outdoor Family Eucharist

10:15am ~ Rite II Eucharist

The parish office closes at 1pm on Fridays.

**CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMFORTER**

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*To read more about our parish or to register for a parish event, go to [www.holycomforter.org](http://www.holycomforter.org).*