

THE Transcript

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION ADVENT 2019



Migrating together towards the **LIGHT OF CHRISTMAS**

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY * CAROLLING ON THE HILL * THE PACE OF GRACE

Church of the Transfiguration

111 Manor Road East
Toronto, ON M4S 1R4

Tel: 416.489.7798

office@churchofthetransfiguration.ca

www.churchofthetransfiguration.ca

CREATIVE DIRECTORS

Rev. Dan Cranley

Amanda Jagt

GRAPHIC DESIGN

Carlén Communications

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Church of the
Transfiguration



*by Rev. Dan Cranley,
Pastor & Incumbent
at Church of the Transfiguration*

Birds Migrating

A voice calls in the wilderness, "PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD; MAKE STRAIGHT IN THE DESERT A HIGHWAY FOR OUR GOD." (ISAIAH 40:3) These are words we traditionally associate with Advent, and they can ring true in our own lives as well. Advent is my favourite liturgical season, in no small part because at the end of a year as the nights lengthen, we often find ourselves in our own deserts, yearning for a path that leads toward the Light of Christmas.

In thinking of deserts, I am reminded of the pillar of light in the Book of Exodus that led the people of Israel through the wilderness. Representing God's faithfulness, this pillar, taking the form of cloud in the day and fire at night, led the Israelites through the struggles of a long and challenging migration, holding them together as people set apart for God's kingdom.

Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

(Exodus 13:22)

The Israelites would not have survived forty years in the desert if not for God's faithfulness and God's holding them together. Thousands of years later, this still rings true, for a significant part of being a church is that we walk together, bound to one another in God's faithfulness.

In this journey towards Christmas, I also think of migrating birds; each year they follow the same path together, knowing the destination point. Similarly, as we migrate through Advent, we move towards a known point: Jesus' birth. And we know of our companions on the journey: Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, the innkeeper, and one another. We know that it is a journey with days and nights; it is a journey up mountains and through valleys; it is a journey that calls forth honesty, self-reflection, and hope; moreover, it is a journey where we are reminded that Emmanuel means God-with-us, and God will indeed be with us on the entire migration, leading perhaps by cloud, by fire, or by a still small voice calling each one of us to prepare the way.

So, friends, please join us this Advent as we migrate together as a community of God's people towards the Light of Christmas. ✚

Rev. Dan⁺
Rev. Dan Cranley



I want to extend a hearty congratulations to the Transfig community for a successful summer of events on the Hill. On six different evenings – and one sunny Sunday afternoon – we welcomed our neighbours to enjoy the summer air and some quality entertainment with us.

If you think about it, we were able to make connections with different people in the neighbourhood by expressing our interests in supporting local talent, listening to great music, and taking it easy out on the lawn. And it turns out we have lots in common, because the neighbours turned up. We made a number of enthusiastic friends this summer who are keen to participate and contribute to future events, and we look forward to hosting them.

These events have been a great way to let our neighbours know we are interested in a relationship with them. For various reasons, not everyone is interested in Jesus or church community or Sunday services the way a lot of us are at Transfig, but we are people with many interests, and we managed to find common ground here on the hill by welcoming the neighbourhood to events that didn't require any kind of religious belief or value practice, outside of loving one's neighbour. We can love one another and foster friendship without holding every belief in common. This allows people to see that Transfig is a welcoming and warm community, and this is an important part of our witness. Sharing theological beliefs can be tricky, especially

Unconditional love and radical hospitality are very theological practices

with people that we don't know intimately. However, I would argue that unconditional love and radical hospitality are very theological practices, and they communicate very clearly what we believe. By these practices, people will understand important things about us and our faith, and perhaps provide opportunities where we can share more deeply about why we believe these things.

On FEBRUARY 29TH, we will have a different kind of opportunity to reach out to our neighbours, by participating in the **OUT OF THE COLD FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM**, up the road at Blythwood Baptist Church. The program runs from November through April, providing basic needs to the homeless or precariously housed through the colder, more difficult months of the year.

It might be easy to distance ourselves from those who rely on food provision programs or shelter systems, by telling ourselves that we have little in common with them. But make no mistake: our neighbours include those in need. And a belief in unconditional love and radical hospitality must be extended to all our neighbours, not just those who look like us or share the same socio-economic class. Preparing and serving a meal to someone who cannot do so for themselves, for any number of potential reasons, is another way to express our belief in God's unconditional love. By spending time with our neighbours in need, we show that we are looking to find and widen common ground.

The radical hospitality we are excited to show people who climb the hill to hang out on our turf can be shown anywhere, and sometimes you have to be able to transport it and be willing to share it on someone else's turf. We saw such lively commitment and hospitable energy poured into our summer events on the hill. Through programs like Out of the Cold, we can invest that same energy into serving those in need and rise to the challenge of reaching out to our neighbours instead of just expecting them to come to us. It is a different, sometimes challenging way of enacting the radical hospitality we believe in, but it is worthwhile and often sorely needed.

I hope you'll accept the challenge and join us. ✚

by Deb Whalen-Blaise
Parish Missioner



By Patti Ryan

The Pace of Grace

I hate waiting. Those who know me well can attest to this basic truth. On any given morning, you can hear my fingers tapping anxiously as I await last-minute rescue missions of rogue mittens and homework. Always a compulsive planner, procrastination has never really been my thing. While this has served me well in many respects, it's meant that I've never really mastered the art of waiting. Or at least, waiting well.

My partner has a much different relationship to time. In our many years together, he's helped me to see the value of slowing down, taking notice, and being attentive to what is, rather than fixating on what should be. He's taught me a lot about learning to move at what I've come to call his "pace of grace."

For me, Advent has much to do with returning to a pace of grace and practicing the difficult art of holy waiting. It's an invitation to sit, often anxiously, with fears about what is left undone or is not ready. It is a time to listen quietly for the voice that reminds us that, from this uncomfortable darkness, hope is emerging. As Barbara Brown Taylor writes, new life always starts in the dark.¹

May the light of Emmanuel lead our way through the darkness this Advent, and may we all walk together at the pace of grace. ✦

¹ Barbara Brown Taylor, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2014.

ALL WELCOME!

Christmas Carolling on the Hill

Join us as we gather on the hill to sing Christmas carols (and then take breaks to warm up in the Parish Hall with hot chocolate!)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6TH
6-8PM

Carolling ✦ Campfire ✦ Hot Chocolate ✦ Good Cheer

 Church of the
Transfiguration

Come Celebrate

Christmas

together this season!

Book of Common Prayer Service & Christmas Tea

Thursday, December 5
2pm

Carolling on the Hill

Friday, December 6
6-8pm

Santa Visits Little Lambs

Thursday, December 12
1:30-4pm

Advent I: The Uncomfortable Journey

Sunday, December 1
10:30am & 4pm

Advent II: The Shepherds' Story

Sunday, December 8
10:30am & 4pm

Advent III: Mary's Magnificat

Sunday, December 15
10:30am & 4pm

Advent IV: Quiet Christmas

Sunday, December 22
10:30am & 4pm



Children's Christmas Service

Tuesday, December 24
4pm

Christmas Eve Vigil

Tuesday, December 24
8pm

Christmas Day

Wednesday, December 25
10:30am

Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 29
10:30am

Agape Feast

Sunday, December 29
5pm