

EASTERTIDE 2023

# THE Transcript

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

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## An Eastertide Message by Rev. Michael Perry



The Easter season can be an abrupt shift. I am reminded of the unseasonable 30 degree weather in mid-April, where I skipped from wearing long-underwear to shorts in three days. I don't think I have ever done that before! Our weather has a funny way of prompting us reflect on how quickly and dramatically the church is asked to change its outlook on Easter Sunday. It is no wonder that often Spring images of new life bursting forth from the dead of winter are a popular way of capturing the transformative power of the Resurrection. Like a burst of Spring, Jesus' rising from death to new life happens through the awesome power of God, who says yes to Jesus when the world has said no.

A quick look at the Gospels invites us into this abruptness. In Mark, the women flee in terror when they meet 'a young man, dressed in a white robe,' (maybe the Risen Jesus?). In Matthew, an angel delivers the news, before Jesus appears and says 'do not be afraid.' In Luke, two angels deliver the news that Jesus is risen, with much the same reaction as the terrified women bow their heads to the ground. In John, a weeping Mary Magdalene is consoled by Jesus, who when she finally recognizes her teacher, he's off again. In sum, Easter can feel like a bit of an emotional mess. How do we move through it all?

I think the challenges experienced at the first Easter are still with us. The joy of Easter does not make us forget the suffering and evil that happened to Jesus. We see it in the fear the disciples had for their own lives. We see it in the marks of the crucifixion on the Risen Jesus' body. We experience it in our own lives as on Easter Sunday our own personal struggles and suffering remain and the great challenges facing humanity are still there. The Passion of Christ stands alongside the Resurrection of Christ. And the abruptness of the juxtaposition does not go away. But the abruptness is not where we remain.

The Easter cry 'Alleluia, Christ is Risen!' invites us to see our lives and our world through the hope of the Resurrection. It is the hope that Jesus will appear in our lives, perhaps as a gardener, perhaps dressed in dazzling robes, perhaps as stranger who walks along side of us, as in the story from Emmaus. Perhaps we caught a glimpse of him on Easter Day at Transfig as our children shared with us their songs of praise. I know I experienced an overwhelming joy in that moment. But the key message is that the Risen Jesus will appear. That hope that he has entered into the evil of our world to transform it, is the joy of Easter. And that joy carries us forward, carries us through the abruptness, carries us through our day to day, carries us to a place where we find hope in new life, where once we expected to find life entombed.

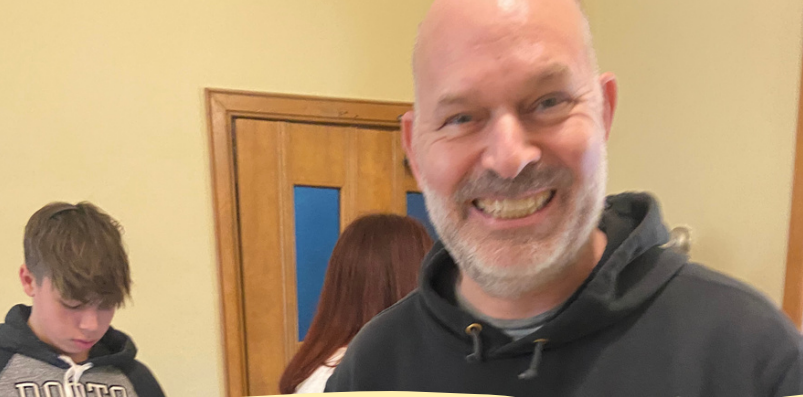
May the joy of the resurrection give you hope, the promise of the Risen Jesus give you comfort, and the gift of the Resurrection give you joy in God's yes to his Son.

In communion,  
Michael









### Easter Sunday: Water's Edge

The Water's Edge community enjoyed a moving service followed by a magnificent Easter Dinner feast. A potluck buffet table of treasures and lively community conversation made the evening the perfect ending to the Great Three Days.







Palm Sunday, 2023





## transfig the hill update --Rev. Michael Perry

Transfig the Hill is a 5-year vision meant to focus our ministry “road map,” as we seek to make our Hill a place to experience the transformative nature of God’s love, mercy, and grace. Its three pillars aim to create a beautiful and accessible pathway to connect the building and hill, create a distinctively Christian character to the Hill, and equip our parish with the resources to rebuild our children’s ministry.

Once again, I wanted to express my thanks to everyone for their generosity at the end of last year. We surpassed our objective of raising \$40,000 in our launch year by nearly 10%, raising close to \$44,000. This strong start has enabled us to get to work immediately in 2023. Here is an update on what we’ve been up to.

We divided the \$40,000 fundraising goals amongst the three pillars so that \$20,000 was set aside for the connection pillar, \$6,000 for character, and \$14,000 for kids. The extra \$4,000 raised last year was held so that it could be used to support the pillars of character and kids.

We moved quickly on meeting our 2023 objectives. We have opened a dedicated “Transfig the Hill” account with the Diocese of Toronto within the Consolidated Trust Fund and transferred \$20,000 before the quarterly deadline at the end of March. This money will be invested by the Diocese over the course of the 5-year vision as we gradually gather the funds needed for this important building improvement project.

Within our Character pillar, one of our goals is to better identify our building as the ‘Church of the Transfiguration’ from the vantage point of the hill, where people hang out, play, walk their dogs and spend time. Currently, our only signage faces the street, for people passing by. We have accepted a bid from Ken Van Winkle Signs to make a sign above the Garden Door entrance. I had been wondering who created the lovely sign for us on Manor Road when out of the blue, I received a call from Ken to explain that it was him! Sometimes God has a very direct way of answering our prayers. We are aiming to have Primate Linda Nicholls bless our new sign during her episcopal visit on June 11th.

Likewise, with our Kids pillars, it was a quick phone call in January to a sister-in-Christ, an old colleague Hilary Keachie, set in motion a Summer Camp project. Hilary showed me the ropes of Summer Camp planning back when I was working in Children’s Ministry, and I am so delighted we can welcome back a former member of the Water’s Edge community. We are fortunate to have her creative and compassionate hands at service in our community.

Finally, God helped to finalize our 2023 kids pillar plans, by bringing Vivia into the ministry team as our Lay Pastoral Associate. Vivia takes on a multi-faceted role in our parish. She will work with our children and youth, but also in the new space of our Saturday Tots at Transfig drop in. As she prepares for her own ordination to the priesthood, she will also take on more pastoral roles within our community.

God moves quickly! I have been amazed at how our Transfig the Hill 2023 plans have come to fruition. Please continue to pray for the leadership as we seek to execute our objectives and for the transformation of our Hill in the months ahead.



Every year the Diocese of Toronto makes use of our episcopal structure to coordinate our collective effort to respond to our Lord's command to love our neighbours. The special emphasis to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoners --in short, to be a people of compassion and service to those in need, comes straight from the Gospel. We believe that as in Matthew 25, Jesus continues to work through us.

I wanted to highlight one ministry partner of FaithWorks: the Migrant Workers Ministry (MWM) in the Durham region. Rev. Augusto Nunez has been leading this ministry in recent years. I was fortunate to work with Augusto back in 2016, when he was leading a Hispanic ministry at my local parish of St. Jude's Wexford. His gifts of openness and caring were a great blessing as I began my own journey toward parish ministry.

In reflecting on his current work, Augusto writes, "MWM is making a significant impact on the quality of life and spiritual care of the workers."

He notes that some men have been here since January but now migrant workers are arriving in larger groups. At MWM, our prayer is for them and our farm owner friends to have a good and safe season. This is a crucial prayer request as when both sides are connected to the MWM, the experience is that it is better for everyone involved.

MWM works to connect workers with social agencies, community services, local networks, and other churches to access programs and assistance that promote their wellbeing. From bikes for transportation to assistance with bank accounts in which to deposit their wages, the work is extremely varied.

Sometimes Augusto is simply organizing social events and activities, such as fiestas and health fairs. As a passionate soccer player, he tries to make sure there is time and space for the workers to play too. Other times, its about extending an invitation to a free community meal. But perhaps most importantly its about acknowledging them as important community members in the Durham region, who are there to play a role in the agricultural sector.

As someone who had travelled far from home in the past, I think it is so inspiring how MWM aims to provide connection for a community that is far away from their homes for many months at time. You really see how Augusto becomes a shepherd-like figure for them.

Giving to FaithWorks is a simple way to support this unique ministry of our Diocese. You can give directly to FaithWorks through your existing gift to Transfig. Note FaithWorks on the memo line of a cheque, or in an e-transfer. You can specify and allocation of your monthly gift through pre-authorized giving, or you can contact the office for assistance in making a gift.

We are blessed to grow so many good things in our province. Let's also take time to remember in prayer and through generosity those who help to bring that harvest into our own homes.

If you would like to know how to give to Faith Works, the simplest answer is make a donation to Transfig and put "Faith Works" on the memo line of a cheque, or in the message box of an e-transfer, or indicate right on our PAR form that you would like a portion set aside for Faith Works.



# Introducing our Lay Pastoral Associate



Vivia speaking to the young women of St. Clement's School

Vivia Kay Cook is thrilled to be a new member of the Transfig Team! Born in Orlando, Florida, Vivia moved north to Ohio to seek a Master's Degree in Vocal Performance/Ethnomusicology and then further north to Toronto to complete her PhD. After a few years of adjunct professor positions and frustrations of the job market, she found herself managing a coffee shop ministry at Church of the Messiah. This work re-activated a once denied calling to the church. After mentorship and encouragement, Vivia enrolled in Trinity College, where she is now wrapping up the final semester of a Master of Divinity.

Vivia is also finishing her first year of postulancy in the Diocese of Toronto, and is very grateful to be doing part of her training here at Church of the Transfiguration. Her passions are hospitality, pastoral care, and working with families. When she's not working in the ministry, she enjoys cooking and baking, being in, on, or near the water, spending time with her husband Sebastian, and having deep theological talks with her cats.



Vivia in full-on praise mode

## Paul's First Letter to Corinth --Carol Visser

On April 16, we gathered to explore Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians under the knowledgeable guidance of Vivia Cook. Thought to have been written about 53–54 CE while Paul was in Ephesus, this letter is generally acknowledged to be the most 'Pauline' of Paul's letters. In 1 Corinthians, Paul provides practical advice on many subjects, all leading to the recognition that love and the resurrection are of ultimate importance. The letter addresses divisions and quarrels, sexual immorality, lawsuits among believers, marriage and singleness, freedom in Christ, order in worship, the significance of the Lord's Supper, and the right use of spiritual gifts. Also included is a profound teaching on the resurrection.

Corinth was a large, important, commercial city in Greece; among its citizens were freed slaves, veterans, merchants, and tradesmen from many parts of the empire. It was said to be a city whose core value was "entrepreneurial pragmatism in the pursuit of success." Paul had started the church in Corinth during CE 49/50 and was now writing to the followers of Christ in Corinth who wanted to know how they should act in matters of daily life and work.

The hour that we allocate to our Book-a-Month meeting allowed us only to begin to explore this letter and with Vivia's direction, we made good use of our time and we were able to increase our understanding, perhaps laying to rest some incorrect beliefs we had about Paul's directions to women and leaving us stimulated to learn more. Vivia provided us with 2 guiding questions (What surprised you in this letter? and What did you find confusing or contradictory?) and our 2 groups engaged in lively discussions before coming together to share our thoughts.



Upon regrouping, our opening discussion first focused on Paul's directives for women. Over the years, the belief that Paul saw women as subservient has allowed those wishing to subjugate the role of women in the Church to use 1 Corinthians to support their agenda. Vivia also shared with us that content from 1 Corinthians has been misused by some churches to exclude members of the LGBTQ2S+ communities. Those wishing to promote particular beliefs such as these, have taken Paul's message in 1 Corinthians out of context, thereby distorting his message. Vivia reminded us that context is critical - the historical time, place, and situations must all be known before we can clearly interpret Paul's message. Surprise was expressed by some of us that Paul provided more balanced advice to both men and women on the subject of relationships and sexual morality. Women were viewed with greater equality than some of us initially expected. We also talked about Paul's direction to women that they must be veiled - again, we needed to examine our presumption that this was intended to subjugate women. We learned from Vivia that veiling was a sign of distinction and good repute. A woman could lose her right to be veiled. Veiling elevated all women and was a gesture of inclusivity.

The numerous references Paul makes to the benefits of remaining unmarried could seem confusing - why would Paul not encourage marriage and children - but there was still an expectation in these early years of Christianity that the end times were near and so remaining single, without the additional anxieties brought on by marriage, would allow one to focus on God's work.

We also addressed Paul's assertion in Chapter 14 that states "women should be silent in church". This statement appears contradictory to other references Paul makes about women in this and other letters. He acknowledges women had roles in the growing church - and names Phoebe and Priscilla among them. Vivia let us know that scholars debate whether or not the command for "women to be silent in church" is not debated by Biblical scholars. Some continue to claim these are Paul's original writings, while others posit they were taken from other writings by Paul, or invented entirely by later translators. For this reason many current editions of the New Testament contain these verses in parentheses.

We concluded that the church Paul had planted in Corinth was of a 'bottom-up' structure, rather than a top-down, hierarchical one. Paul tells his followers that faith is spread through them, and so they must conduct themselves in the ways directed by his letter. His message that God has called all believers to work in whatever circumstances they find themselves, and that He has given us specific gifts to fulfill that calling are as relevant to us today as to Paul's followers almost 2000 years ago.

I am a newcomer to the Church of the Transfiguration. It was the Book-a-Month club that drew me to Transfig and this was the third session I've attended. Each has been an informative, enjoyable time - a warm, safe space where we are all welcomed to ask questions, contribute our ideas and share what might be puzzling us. The learning I've taken away each time has allowed me to enrich my reading of Scripture and strengthen my faith. Many thanks to Michael and Vivia for their time, energy and thoughtful teaching.



*The Cubiculum of the Veiled Woman*  
--Priscilla's Catacombs in Rome.



# Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians

--Judy Wooten

This letter written by Paul around AD 50 – 51 is thought to be the earliest letter sent to any of the communities he established in his travels. It is the first piece of Christian writing available to us, thus making it worthy of careful attention. It predates Mark, the first Gospel to be written, by about 16 years (AD 66 – 70) and follows the death of Jesus by about 15 years.

Prior to this letter, Paul had been in Thessalonica for a short time bringing his message of the resurrected Jesus to the Jews and Gentiles living there. As was his custom, he preached in the synagogue to the Jewish community, but according to Michael, he would also have been a presence in the marketplace practicing his trade of making tents and working in leather and speaking to anyone who would listen to his message. His visit though was short lived. He was chased out of the city and went to Athens (See Acts 17: 1-8) leaving him anxious about the fledging community he had hastily left behind. Would the people remain faithful to his teachings under the persecutions they were enduring? When he could not stand the uncertainty any longer, he sent Timothy his co-worker to find out. This letter follows the visit and is full of tenderness, gratitude, praise, instruction, and encouragement to the faithful community he left behind.

Paul takes some time at the beginning of his letter to explain himself to the Thessalonians which suggested to some in the group that he was on the defensive, perhaps for leaving so quickly. He is, however, deeply reassured when Timothy tells him that the community remembers him “kindly” and wants to see him again.

Paul encourages the brothers and sisters to follow the example he set for them and to do so “more and more.” He entreats them, amongst other things, to live quietly, to work with their hands, to be dependent on no one, to pray without ceasing, and to give thanks in all circumstances. We hear the echo of Jesus when he says “see that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all.”

His first instruction to them was to “abstain from fornication” and not to behave with “lustful passion” like the Gentiles who don’t know God. Michael explained that the sexual mores of the Greeks and Romans were very different from those of the Jews. Paul wanted his new Gentile converts to reject any of the fertility rituals or unrestrained, bacchanalian sexual behaviours of their former days and to live lives of holiness.

There is an apocalyptic thread running through the letter suggesting that the second coming of Jesus was imminent. This was very much a part of Paul’s preaching at the time but one that diminished as the years passed. Just like John the Baptist (Matthew 3:7), Paul taught that “Jesus rescues us from the wrath that is coming.” In answer to questions raised about what would happen to those who had already died, Paul assures them that when Jesus descends “with the archangel’s call and the sound of God’s trumpet” the dead in Christ will rise first followed by those still alive and they would all be together with Jesus forever.

Paul includes all three members of what would become the Trinity, God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit as well as the role of faith, hope, and love in the life of believers. Michael noted that these core Christian beliefs which we still hold today are articulated in the first few verses of this early letter written by Paul to his brothers and sisters in Thessalonica whom he dearly loved and hoped to visit again.



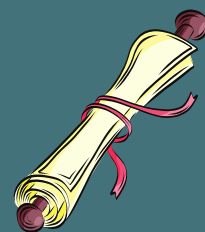
*ruins of the market in Corinth*

**coming may 21:**

**Paul's 2nd letter to the Corinthians**

**led by Vivia Kay Cook,  
lay pastoral associate**

lively discussion,  
lunch,  
and the scriptures.







## On the road to Galatia --Richard Sims

A deceptively short book in the Holy Bible, Galatians is brimming with emotive power fit for the makings of a real schism! When Paul gets angry, take note! There are many fine things to discover in a travelogue through this corner of the ancient world, including that fact that a member of Transfig was born there! So, what take-aways are there after an hour or so of in-person/online small and large group discussions curated by the uber-prepared Michael P.? The Answer: the beauty of more questions, cut into the tension of the literary drama. So mainstream now, how can Galatians cast Paul as a rebel? Who ultimately won the faith vs. works debate? Should we side with the promise given to Abraham or the law given to Moses? Is there just one gospel/revelation, or are there two? While Michael P. leaves us with a clean dissection of the word righteousness: making ourselves right with God, perhaps this pondering will continue to bring forward our own emotive expression. Finally, where else can you talk freely, in polite company, about circumcision? (ouch)

*Saint Paul, el Greco, ca 1600*

coming in June

# joshua:

# led by Prof. Walter Deller

what can this ancient text of  
slaughter and conquest teach us  
today?

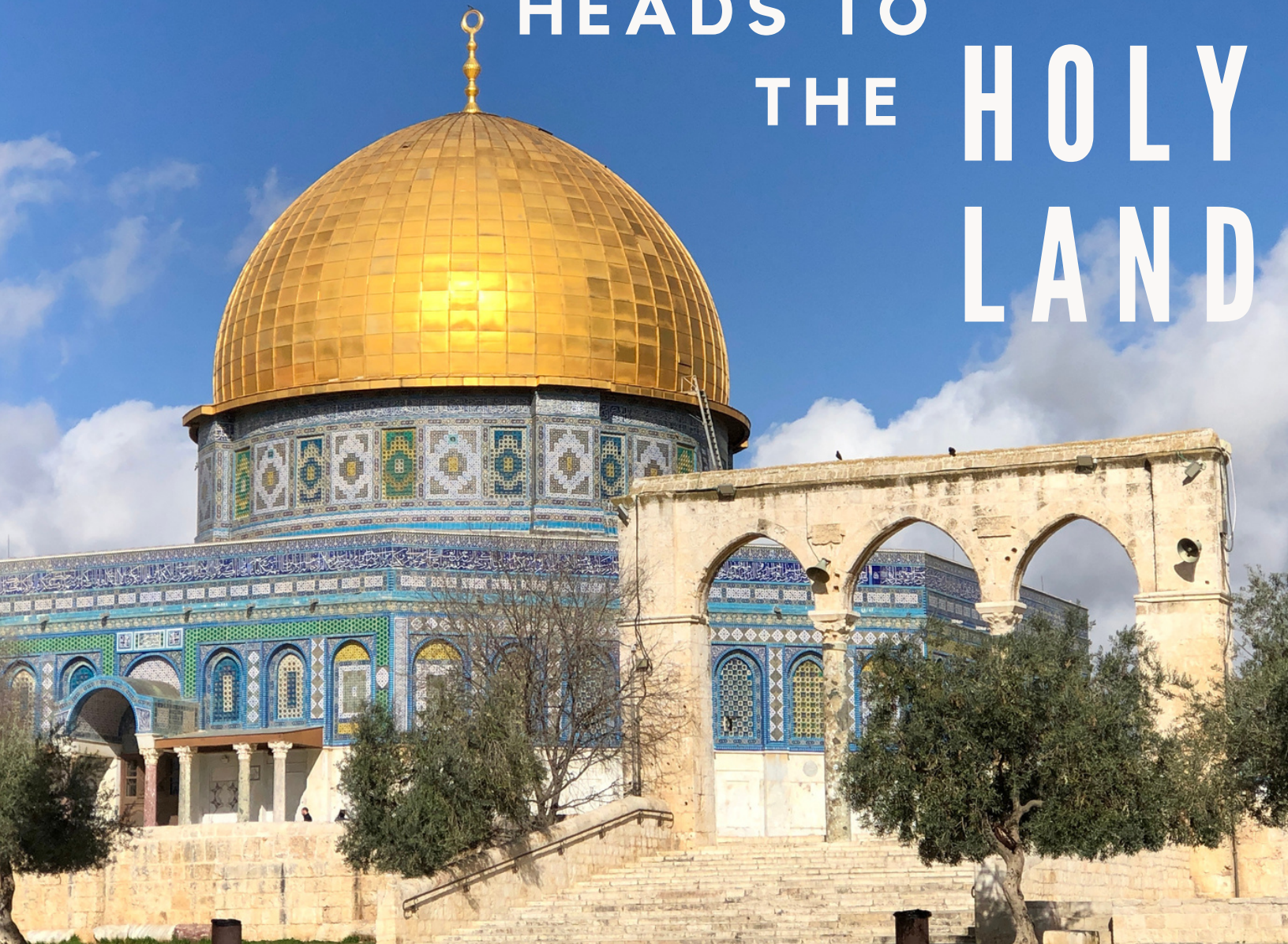
Poussin, *Joshua fights Amalek*  
ca 1625.





# TRANSFIG HEADS TO THE

# HOLY LAND





The rumours are true! Plans are officially underway for our parish pilgrimage to the Holy Land. We are working with Craig Travel to organize a 10-day tour to take place in late April 2024. Final dates and itinerary will be available in late May/early June. We warmly invite you to consider joining us for this extraordinary chance to walk in the steps of Jesus as a parish community.

Our Tour Leader will be the Rev. Canon David Neelands, and we may be joined by participants from two other Anglican parishes. The estimated cost is \$5000 per person and the private tour will be limited to 20-30 participants. Spots are already filling up, so please reserve your spot as soon as possible. Please let Patti (pattiryan.home@gmail.com) know if you wish to be added to the “Definitely Going” or “Still Considering” list by April 30, 2023. This is important so that we can coordinate numbers with the other parishes and finalize the dates and bookings with Craig Travel. Feel free to reach out to Michael or Patti for more information. We hope to see in you Israel in April 2024!--Patti Ryan



*salt formations at The Dead Sea*

“All this history, which at a distance seems to float in the clouds of an unreal world, thus took a form, a solidity which astonished me. The striking agreement of the texts with the places, the marvelous harmony of the Gospel ideal with the country which served it as a framework, were like a revelation to me, I had before my eyes a fifth Gospel, torn, but still legible, and . . . in place of an abstract being, whose existence might have been doubted, I saw living and moving an admirable human figure.”

shared during First Friday by David King,

taken from the 1863 book *Vie de Jesus* (Life of Jesus) by Ernest Renan (1823-1892)



*the wilderness of Judea*





## Projected details:

(please note that all of these dates/destinations are tentative)

- 10 days in late April 2024
- The Rev. Canon David Neelands as Tour Leader
- Private Tour in collaboration with two other Anglican Parishes
- 4 nights in Galilee,  
5 nights in Jerusalem

estimated cost per person:  
5,000\$





# Marveling at the Ground on which We Stood

## --Jennifer Bolender King

"Welcome home to Jerusalem" is the phrase I did not get tired of hearing, nor did our guide get tired of saying, on our eight-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land. My husband and I were blessed to receive the Fred Hiltz Scholarship in the fall, and upon receiving the good news immediately scoped out logistics and course dates. As soon as we cleared it with our respective employers and colleagues, I spent a small fortune on flights so we would not lose our nerve and put it off. Travelling over the last few years has been anxiety-inducing for many of us, and I find now it takes a new kind of resolve and awareness to commit and execute the plans!

Fast forward to the end of January, and we found ourselves sitting on a plane preparing for the 10.5 hours it takes to get from Toronto to Tel Aviv. Aside from the anxiety of leaving our work for two weeks and wondering if we'd packed the right clothes, we wondered what exactly lay ahead in our Intro to Bible Lands course run by St. George's College in Jerusalem.

We were greeted with sun and palm trees and a very busy international airport buzz. The first sense of home: the commuter train. Right outside the main doors of the station, with a very easy payment system, we found ourselves and bags crammed into a train heading to the city centre. Just like our daily commutes on the TTC, there was diversity, zero personal space and fast-moving vehicles, complete with inexplicable delays along the route.

Dragging our cases on the cobble-stone sidewalks, we eventually found our way to the college, and here was the second sense of home: a soaring cathedral appearing in the sky with buildings, shops and the courthouse densely packed around it. Our room in the guest house had a cathedral view, and I was so elated I texted a picture to Bishop Andrew (who had just arrived in Kerala himself for the Church of South India's annual conference, so was only a 3.5 hours' time difference away) because at the diocesan office in Toronto we have a cathedral view every day. Just like home for the next 10 days!



*olive trees in The Garden of Gethsemane*

this article originally appeared in *The Anglican*





The opening Eucharist at St. George's Cathedral was the first thing on our course agenda. We were not too jet-lagged to marvel at our safe travel to Jerusalem and find ourselves sitting in a beautiful stone cathedral chapel with 25 strangers-soon-to-be-pilgrim-classmates, being greeted by the Dean of the cathedral and our course guide and chaplains. Cue the tears – in that moment overcome with gratitude, sharing in the body of Christ in the Holy Land.

Since the Hiltz Scholarship began, I have known about St. George's College and the pilgrimages on offer. I have enjoyed processing all of the applications over the years and working with the scholarship committee to grant clergy and lay people to partake of this opportunity. I loved helping Bishop Andrew plan his trip to the Holy Land a few years ago and was intrigued by his and Mary's experience there. We know so many people who have been to the Holy Land and how much of an impact it has had upon their faith and formation. But I was truly surprised by the instant, overwhelming sense of home we experienced within the first couple of hours. That sense of home, accompanied by overwhelming gratitude, carried us throughout the pilgrimage.

The first outing our group took was to the Mount of Olives. When Dave and I were commuting from the airport to Jerusalem, we noticed with delight that the name of transit routes and stops all seemed to be Mount-something. That was such a pinch-me moment – we were somehow in the land of the Mount of Olives, etc., that we had heard about our entire lives growing up in Christian communities. There we were, standing on the Mount of Olives, overlooking the old city of Jerusalem in all its modern-day glory (complete with construction cranes), just marveling again at the ground on which we stood.





*view of Jerusalem from Dominus Flevit Church on the Mount of Olives*

Our guide said a lot of things and I could not recall any of them now, we were so taken with the view and awe of being there. Thankfully he knew that none of us were probably listening, being the seasoned guide, Bible scholar and priest he was. He took us back there later in the course when our ears were trained to listen to his calm and quiet voice and our eyes were trained to see what we were being directed to at the same time! (Isn't there a parable in there somewhere?)

One very special outing was visiting the Haram esh-Sharif, the al-Aqsa Mosque compound. Thanks to the good relationship between the college and the staff at the mosque, we were taken on a private, guided tour inside the Dome and surrounding buildings. The morning was sunny and clear, and again we found ourselves quietly marveling as we stood within the compound, taking in the glorious gold and the art of the Dome of the Rock. I was not the only one in our group weeping at that holy sight. The emotional swell came from recognizing the significance that physical structure has for millions of people of a different faith than mine, and with a shared reverence for the holy place that it is. It was stunning to be in a sacred place so important and sought after by people all over the world.

We were led into a giant building next to the Dome, and our guide pointed us to the windows at the very top of the soaring ceiling. Many of the windows were shattered, and it took a few minutes to realize what it was – bullet holes and the destruction from bullets. Our guide explained that forces have tried to invade the buildings with such force even while people were inside worshipping. That was disturbing to see and something I continue to think about now that we are home. There are no bullet holes in my church's windows. Also in the same building, we came across a group of people cleaning, dusting and tidying up. Some more familiar reality, that such holy places are also very public spaces and need to be cleaned. I have spent my whole life in church, and helping to clean up and tidy up at church is second nature, because it is your home away from home. We all have to contribute to our churches' caretaking so that we may have a place to worship and pray in.

On our last day, early in the morning, we met the Dean in the college courtyard who would prepare and lead us through the Way of the Cross in the old city, ending at the Holy Sepulchre. I am not a morning person, nor did I at all like the visit to the Holy Sepulchre on our first day, so this was an excursion I, admittedly, was anxious about! Being the last day, however, we had had eight rigorous, fulsome days of awe-inspiring excursions under our belts, and when the alarm went on the last morning, I was already awake and eager to engage with this last adventure (a pilgrimage miracle!).



The Dean asked us to take turns carrying the cross and reading the scriptures at each station. By now we were also experts at managing our earpieces/headsets and minding local traffic so as not to be herdlike and irritate people going about their daily lives. But carrying a large wooden cross and keeping your breath to read scripture in meaningful ways in the hustle, and minding many other pilgrim groups, was a challenge. Somehow, I ended up beside the Dean and was saddled with the cross as we began. It felt awkward and weird, and the old cobblestones amongst the vendor stalls and people and cats (there are cats everywhere in the old city) gradually blended into the background as my heart took in what I was physically doing: carrying a cross through the streets of the old city in Jerusalem just as Jesus did some two thousand years ago. Ending in the courtyard of the Holy Sepulchre, we were all a puddle. As we made our way inside, we stopped at the anointing slab perfumed with fragrant oil and made our way up to the place of the crucifixion. Kneeling in front of the cross at that place of all places was an extremely humbling and meaningful moment.

We learned that an hour or so after we had passed through the second station, at the Chapel of Condemnation, a young man had run into the chapel courtyard overturning statues and trying to smash monuments. The chapel groundskeeper, who had greeted our entire group and the Dean by name just a short time earlier, threw himself on the man to restrain him. The young man apparently pleaded “insanity” to avoid charges. It was jarring to hear of another act of violence in a holy place that we had just stood in while praying and reading scripture. A day after we had arrived in Jerusalem, a Palestinian refugee camp was attacked, and several people were killed. Three days after we arrived, a Jewish synagogue was attacked, and several people were killed. The tension between violence and welcome is something I have never experienced in a place to such an extreme and was palpable throughout our time in the Holy Land.

One night we were visited by staff of a non-profit organization working for peace and understanding, specifically with young people. This was so hopeful to learn about, and I invite you to visit [www.musalaha.org](http://www.musalaha.org) to consider learning more and supporting its work. As a pilgrim who was warmly welcomed and instantly found spiritual “home” in Jerusalem, I must in turn give time to pray for those who have their home in Jerusalem, and for peace and reconciliation in Israel. Thank you to the Hiltz Scholarship Committee, to Bishop Andrew and to the Diocese of Toronto for the gift of this extraordinary pilgrimage!





# Tots at Transfig-- the world gathers here

## --Vivia Kay Cook and Jessica Pratezina

Tots at Transfig shows the amazing ministry a church can do by simply opening its doors. The first week I sat in the Chapel of the Six Ladies--also known as our Children's Chapel, I was so thrilled to be reminded how such a simple ministry can bear such impressive fruit.

Started by Jessica Pratezina in October 2022, Tots at Transfig began with a simple need: energetic young children with no space to play. Apartment living in Toronto, especially when the weather isn't good can be difficult for young families, especially with young children. Jessica expressed that her kids needed a place to play, and wondered if other families in the neighbourhood might have the same need.

And did they ever! On the very first Saturday, eight little ones came with their grownups. We continue to average ten to twelve visitors on a given Saturday.

Tots is a fabulous example of how our church buildings can serve as neighbourhood sanctuaries for all of God's people.



One of the best things about Tots at Transfig is that parents from all over the world gather in our chapel and socialize.

Parents and Grandparents from India, Finland, Chile, South Korea, Lebanon, and the United Kingdom meet and get to know each other here in our church.

We also regularly have families from Ukraine and Russia gathering in our space chatting as their children play together.

“  
The wolf will live with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
the calf and the lion and the yearling  
together; and a little child will lead them.

Isaiah 11.6

fun tots facts:

There are over fifty families on the Tots group chat!

The kids love all of our toys, but the train table is very very popular


0-3 year olds can bring all their grownups: we're LGBTQ2S+ friendly AND mobility device accessible.

the drop in is free and no registration is required




# Notes from Children's Chapel





It just wouldn't be Easter without singing, chocolate, and the story of the empty tomb. After singing some songs for the congregation and receiving a blessing, the kids left "big church" for their chapel. Deb led us in a few more songs, and Freda Perry used the Mary Magdalene window in the Children's Chapel to tell the story of the very first Easter Morning. Then the kids had an egg hunt.

Although Easter contains much more chocolate than an average Sunday, every Sunday is warm, welcoming, and fun for the youngest worshippers here at Church of the Transfiguration.





# Shrove Tuesday

## --Deb Whalen-Blaize

This winter, we saw the return of one of our most beloved traditions: Shrove Tuesday, the literal feast that prepares us for the beginning of Lent, by allowing us to consume indulgences before potentially laying them aside until Easter. Over the course of the pandemic, when eating together in groups was not advised, we were able to enjoy some semblance of the tradition by encouraging everyone to prepare their own pancakes at home and then eat them over zoom with members of the parish. We tried to make the place-holding practice as celebratory as possible, and enjoyed plenty of laughs and creativity, but I think all of us were longing for the day when we could celebrate in person again. This February we finally had the opportunity to do just that, and what a celebration we had! We were able to encourage one another to come and eat together, inviting neighbours and friends, both new and old. Over the course of the evening, we saw over 60 people sit down to eat in the parish hall, amidst children playing, plenty of laughter and some joyful Mardi-Gras music playing in the background.

Of course, we could not have done it without the generous participation and support of a large list of volunteers. Over 20 participants from the parish helped the night run smoothly by helping to set up and tear down the dining room, prepare sides of fruit and sausages, mix batter, flip hundreds of pancakes, run food from the kitchen to the service table, serve and greet our guests, collect donations... the list goes on! Our volunteers ranged in age from 10- to 80-years-old. As they say: it takes a village!

After such a successful return, we can only look forward to continuing to build this annual tradition up in the years to come, and to see the community grow stronger and closer through Shrove Tuesday and events like it.







## Lenten Food Drive for The Neighbourhood Organization --Heather Hanson

This Lenten season we began a food drive in support of TNO. TNO, or The Neighbourhood Organization, provides many services to the community, that include employment programs, support for newcomers, youth programs, and family wellness services.

TNO established the Food Collaborative in March 2020 at the outset of the pandemic to help seniors stay safe by delivering food hampers to their homes. Due to an overwhelming response from the community, TNO opened a food bank to the public serving residents of Thorncliffe and Flemington Park. The Food Collaborative now serves over 1,100 clients, ensuring they have access to food twice a month. More than half of those served are newcomers to Canada. We all have experienced the rising cost of food prices and across our city many more families are turning to food banks.

For four weeks from March 12 - April 2, our community answered the call and dropped off canned and boxed food items into two bins located in the Narthex. By the end of Palm Sunday, the bins were overflowing and we had collected monetary donations totally \$1000!

Then Audrey, Finn and Juliet, along with their parents, went to grocery stores in Thorncliffe to shop with the money we raised. Before we went, we asked TNO organizers which were the most needed items so we could focus our purchases on high impact items. Tuna fish cans were the most needed, so we purchased 60 cans. We practiced our budgeting skills looking for good deals to maximum our funds and made sure we went up to the amount collected without going over. After the successful trip to the grocery stores, on April 8 we delivered everything we collected and purchase to TNO. It was three carloads full! While there, we even got to take a tour of the food bank.

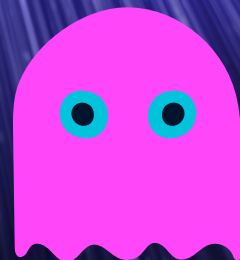
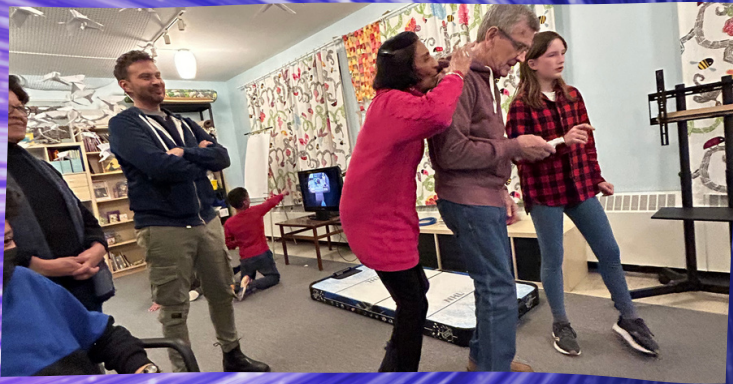
Thank you to everyone for your donations, the organizers were thrilled with our contributions. We were so proud of the outpouring of neighbourly love from Transfig and your generosity will make a huge difference to those dealing with food insecurity in our community.







# video game night





# How to invite a friend to church?

## start with a First Friday

### --the youth of Transfig



We Anglicans have a reputation as not being evangelical - we even sometimes shudder at the sound of the word. At Church of the Transfiguration, we have a great event to get anyone over the threshold of our church: First Fridays. I sat down with a few of the youth of our Parish to hear what they think is great about this event, in the hopes that it might encourage everyone to "take the leap" of inviting a friend, neighbour, or someone in need of a community to church. --Vivia Cook

"It's very inclusive, for anyone of any age. There is something for everyone, especially food."  
"Even though it is hosted by the church, anyone can come and be comfortable."

--Audrey



the next event (May 5) is a gardening party!

"Every First Fridays there is something new and interesting to do and the food is delicious! I like to do activities with friends from the church community and to meet new people. It is fun for all ages!"--Juliet



"I love First Fridays because I get to play games with people from church."--Spencer





2023 Concerts On the Hill Season  
--Deb Whalen-Blaize





In 2019 we began hosting concerts out on our beautiful hill through the summer season. Even through the pandemic, both online and in person, we have been able to continue hiring local musicians to entertain not only those of us from the parish, but our neighbours in the vicinity and build community and camaraderie around the arts on our beautiful hill, next to the church.

So, it is my pleasure to announce the official summer line up! You'll notice both new and familiar names, but in either case, each act promises to provide us with a lovely evening of rich entertainment.

June 22nd: Alex Pangman & the Sweet Hots – This lively jazz trio will return to kick off our concert series, lead by Alex Pangman's powerful and jaunty vocals, supported by Nathan Hiltz on smooth jazz guitar and Juno-award winning horn player John McLeod.

July 6th: El Ceibo, performing their traditional Argentinian folk music, will also return. Last summer they performed in the sanctuary due to inclement weather. This year, we're praying to enjoy them out on the lawn, so we have more room to dance the night away!

August 10th: Jenna Cowans is making her On the Hill debut this summer and will entertain us with her soulful, R&B style vocals and piano playing. She comes from excellent stock: her parents founded the Toronto Mass Choir, so music is in her blood!

August 24th: Our final concert of the season will feature members of our staff team: David King and Deb Whalen-Blaize. Joined by other members of the parish, we'll get an opportunity to share our gifts and passion for music with the neighbourhood outside of Sunday services.

After that post-Easter "heat wave", I think a number of us are extra ready for summertime, and this is yet another reason to look forward to the season. We hope you will help us build excitement for the shows among your friends, neighbours and colleagues by word of mouth, as well as with the posters and social media posts that will become available in the near future. For now, you can mark those dates in your calendar and stay tuned for more details!



# compline (online)

enter into stillness with an ancient service  
of night prayer

*thursdays at 7:30-- on zoom*  
*campfire compline returns in June*



May 14  
June 4  
July 9  
August 13  
September 10  
October 1  
November 5  
December 10

SUNDAYS AT 4:00 P.M.

## THE WATER'S EDGE

SERVICE WITH COMMUNITY MEAL

May 5th: Gardening Activity  
June 2nd: Games on the Hill

enjoy a delicious dinner  
and fun activities

*join us all summer long for movie nights and music nights on the hill!*

**First  
Fridays**

5:30-9:30  
P.M.