

ADVENT 2023

TRANSFIG THE HILL

A 5 YEAR VISION FOR CONNECTION, CHARACTER & KIDS



YEAR ONE UPDATE

Last Advent, our parish launched **Transfig the Hill**, a five-year vision and plan to refocus our mission and write a new chapter in our parish life. We set a goal of raising \$40,000 each Advent to transform our Hill. **Your generosity has helped us make our dream into reality.** Thank you! With your support the \$44,000 raised last Advent helped us to begin to transfigure our Hill along the three key pillars of kids, connection, and character.

The pillars of Transfig the Hill are simple. First, **rebuild our Children's Ministry** to welcome the growing number of young families in our neighbourhood. Second, **connect our Church and Hill** by building a beautiful and accessible pathway to our entrance. Third, **create a distinct character** for the Hill that reflects our church community and makes our green space more than a neighbourhood park.

Each pillar builds off our desire to imagine the Hill as not just a place of connection but **a place to build relationships.** In the pages that follow, you will learn more about the progress we've made in the first year: about kids camp, our new sign, and the money set aside for connection.

You will also learn about what we have planned for the second year of Transfig the Hill and how your gifts will support transforming this year's dreams into reality. For Kids, our goal is to have **\$12,000 for the Creative Worship Coordinator**, a position which includes a focus on engaging children in worship. We will also allocate **\$3,000 for a Summer Camp** this year. For the Character pillar, our goal is to set aside **\$5,000 to improve the seating on our Hill.**

For Connection, we are again asking for \$20,000, with a small portion being set aside in the near-term to improve accessibility on our Hill. The majority will be allocated to our existing fund to tackle the ambitious goal of sharing one accessible entrance between our church and Hill.

Altogether, we are aiming to raise \$40,000 again this Advent. **Two generous donors have got us half-way to our goal.** Can we match their commitment and raise another \$20,000 or more? We know that we still have a long way to go on this journey, but each gift moves us closer to our goal of a Hill transfigured.

One of my favourite Christmas hymns is In the Bleak Midwinter. Its final verse asks the question what gift can I give to Christ? And we sing, "If I were shepherd, I would bring a lamb; if I were wiseman, I would do my part; yet what I can, I give him- give him my heart." The hymn points us to **the greatest gift we can offer: our heart.**

We know from recent experience that our Hill already has a special place in the hearts of our neighbours. When I imagine the future of our parish, Transfig the Hill is our opportunity to offer **the heart of Christ to our neighbourhood.** And it is my deep belief that in offering Christ, new hearts will join ours in offering the greatest gift of all: ourselves.

See you on the Hill and I wish you a blessed Advent and Christmas.

In communion,
Michael



Kids

Goal: \$75,000

It's hard to believe we **re-launched our kids' program just over a year ago**. The songs, the Bible stories, the games and the fun - we've shared so much in that short space of time with the families in our parish, both those who are new and those who have been with us a long time. The support of **Transfig the Hill has been a key part of making these memories happen**.



Importantly, in the Spring, we hired a Lay Pastoral Associate, and with an extra set of hands on the staff team, we were able to shift the focus of Deb's position towards the **Creative Worship Coordinator**. Animating children's worship was made a key part of this role, and we appreciated Deb's gifts in leading the opening song, in Sunday School, in the Christmas Play and at summer camp. We sadly had to say goodbye to Deb in the Fall, as she was offered a full-time position with the Diocese of Toronto. The leadership team is actively interviewing to fill the Creative Worship Coordinator role in 2024, and **engaging kids in creative and expressive forms of worship** will continue to be a focus. Our Transfig the Hill campaign will contribute \$12,000 to this position.

In total, 17 children & youth are connected to our Sunday School and have come regularly over the past year.

In 2023, we also saw the growth of two new programs outside of Sunday mornings: Tots at Transfig and First Fridays. Entirely volunteer-initiated and led, these fun activities **invite the community into our space and into relationship with us**. Children from Tots at Transfig have dropped into our Sunday School, and most recently, three families from Tots came to our First Friday Advent Cookie Baking event and were invited back for our Christmas Play.

Given the strong excitement around these two programs and the phenomenal support from the Transfig the Hill campaign, we took a bold plunge this past summer. Our original plan had a summer camp pegged as a Year 2 initiative, but we decided to try launching it a year early - and we're sure glad we did! Our week exploring 'Daniel's Courage' was a huge amount of fun, and **a wonderful leadership opportunity for our teens**. The best news is that our camp leader, Hilary Keachie, has agreed to come back next year and lead another camp! Three thousand dollars from this year's Transfig the Hill campaign will go towards supporting Summer Camp.



Every Saturday, on average, ten children & their parents come to Tots at Transfig



53 people came to First Friday in December - a new record!



18 children & youth leaders participated in Summer Camp



Character

Goal: \$5,000

In June, we were honoured with a visit by Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. She blessed **the new sign above our Garden Doors** - our first tangible action towards creating a distinctive character for our Hill. Now, when you look across the Hill on a Movie Night or a Music Night, or just as an everyday visitor enjoying the green space, our building has a name and an entrance, **inviting people in and growing our identity in the community as a church**. Along with the church sign, we added a handrail up the Garden steps, as a way to improve accessibility to this entrance in the near-term.

Our second project under the "Character" banner this year was electrifying - quite literally! We added power and an ethernet cable along the south tree line and enhanced the lighting above our outdoor space. **Setting up sound, livestreaming or a popcorn machine is now easier**. In addition, **extended our On-the-Hill season**, with Campfire Compline evenings until the end of October this year.

We are so grateful for the many volunteers who care for our Hill - planting, watering, and tending gardens, mowing the lawn, raking leaves and pulling invasive plants. Our Hill would not be such a beautiful place without your **many hours of volunteer work**.

In the year ahead, we are looking forward to continuing this project of **creating a distinctive character** for our outdoor space, with a focus on providing unique places to sit and rest.



better lighting has also continuing on Thursday



Connection

Goal: \$20,000

Last year, we celebrated that we were able to raise \$20,000 towards our goal of building a **beautiful and accessible pathway from the Garden Doors to the Hill**. This money was placed in an investment fund with the Diocese, and our hope is to continue to grow it by raising **\$20,000 again this year**. Sadly, this past summer, we were given a stark reminder of how **critical and urgent** this piece of infrastructure is when our People's warden,

Patti Ryan, broke her ankle while walking down the very spot on the Hill where we are planning to build our path. She required surgery and a months-long recovery. Her injury was a **wake-up call to the danger** present on our property. Given the high amount of use our Hill

sees everyday, the Property Committee is developing an **interim measure** to improve access to our Hill in the near-term - likely a set of wide, solid wooden steps with a handrail at the Pollinator Garden. These steps will make it safer to get on and off our Hill while we continue to work towards our goal of **a fully accessible pathway for all**.



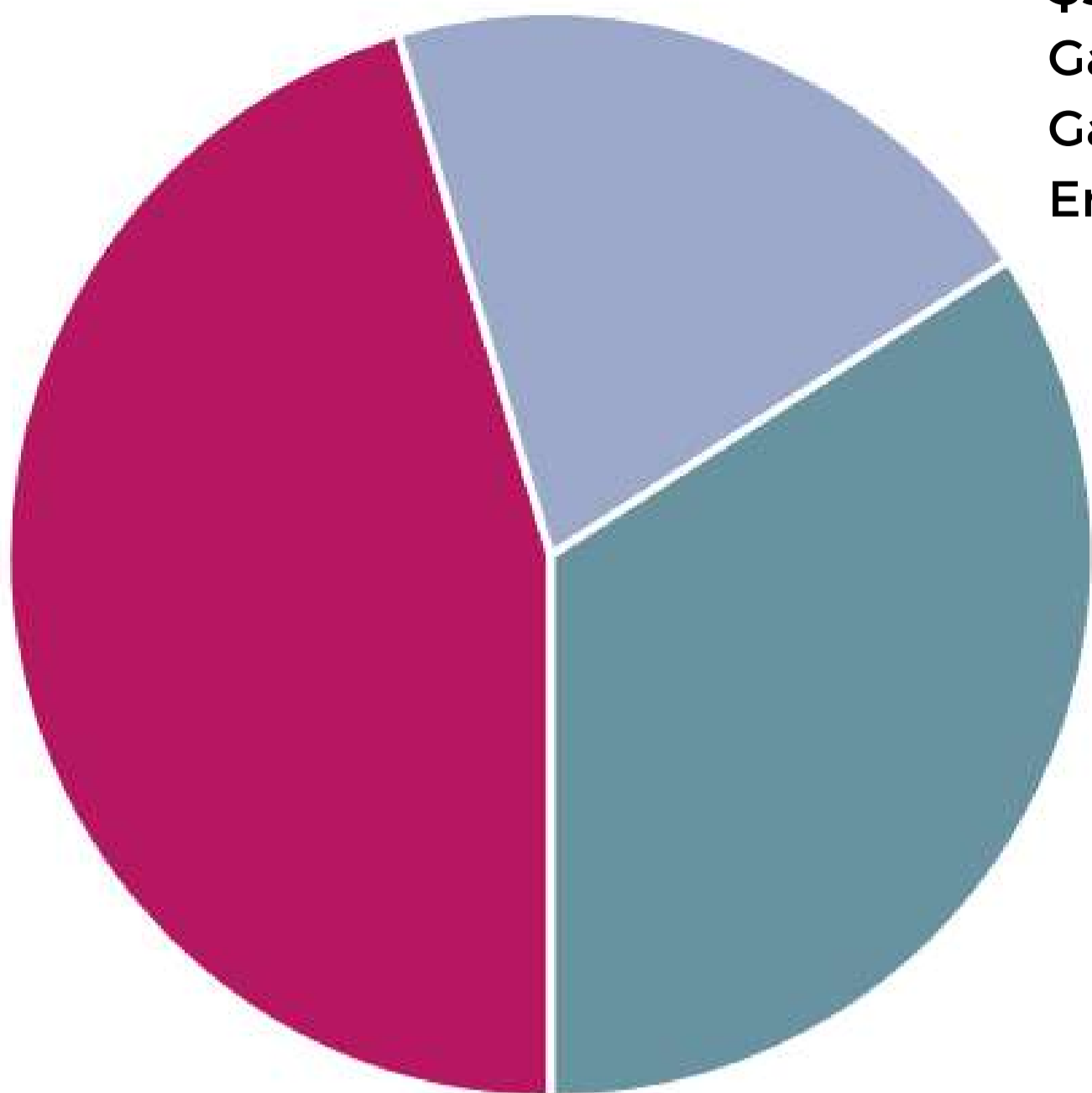
Financial Update

Last year, we raised \$44,000.

Connection

\$20,000

Transferred to a dedicated "Transfig the Hill" account within the Consolidated Trust Fund with the Diocese of Toronto.



Character

\$9,000

Garden Door Sign
Garden Door Handrail
Enhanced Lighting & Power

Kids

\$15,000

Summer Camp
Creative Worship Coordinator
Salary

Do you have questions?

Rev. Michael would be happy to have a conversation with you or take a walk around the Hill if you have more questions. He can be reached at mperry@churchofthetransfiguration.ca or leave a message at the church office: 416 489 7798.

HOW TO GIVE

E-Transfer

- Send to:
etransfers@churchofthetransfiguration.ca
- Write "Transfig the Hill" in the comment Box

Canada Helps

- Easy to use & directly on our website
 - You can use your credit card and there is an option to cover your fees
- <https://churchofthetransfiguration.ca/give/>

Cheque

Mail to:

Church of the Transfiguration
111 Manor Road East, Toronto, ON M4S 1R4
Drop them off during a service or in the church mailbox

Write "Transfig the Hill" on the Memo line.

Credit Card

Make a donation before or after the service at the Welcome Table using the Square machine. One of the greeters will be happy to help you and will note Transfig the Hill on the church's copy of the receipt.