

Hildegard's Illumination: Life in the Spirit

St. Hildegard's at a Crossroads: January 16-17 the Community gathered to take stock on our formation as a canonical Episcopal Christian Community and our needs for space as St. George's School expands and the Parish moves into Wright House. Since there isn't office space available for us on campus, Kleberg is needed monthly for the Family Service, and space for the SLS was up-in-the-air, we agreed to search for an alternative location that could meet all our needs. Our hope was, and is, to continue as a ministry of St. George's for the foreseeable future, with a satellite location. In January we agreed to look around, hoping to find a new office before May 1st. Since there weren't options at the present time with a centrally located Episcopal congregation, we explored nearby Methodist and Lutheran churches. By March we had found an exciting possibility with Trinity United Methodist Church in Hyde Park. Both Kevin and Bishop Doyle are supportive of our move and we are continuing to work out the details.

We're moving! We were immediately drawn to Trinity because of their vibrant ministry and their beautiful Interfaith Chapel that is a good size for us with flexible space for our liturgies. They also offered a small office and can schedule our SLS classes. Sid Hall, the pastor, and staff are enthusiastic about who we are and have been providing gracious hospitality, even sharing their own storage room so we can bring most of our liturgical fabric and supplies. As the Holy Spirit moves among our St. George's family to expand St. George's School and grow the Parish, we believe She is sending St. Hildegard's out to a new home and to new possibilities there. On April 12th we formally agreed to move to Trinity and a few days later some of us gathered for a closing ritual in the office that has been home for the SLS for 22 years. It has been sacred space—a healing mandala—where St. Hildegard's was birthed and lives touched and healed at deep levels over all these years. Now was a time to remember, give thanks, and let go what has been so dear so we can go forth with a sense of joy and gratitude. A small group of Hildegardians moved most of our stuff on April 22nd in order to be completely out by the end of the month. In the next six weeks we'll settle in at Trinity and finish moving from Kleberg. We're planning a special service on Pentecost in gratitude for 19 years of enlivening liturgies, SLS classes, and abundant community life. **We invite our friends at St. George's to help us bless and celebrate our move to a new location. Please join us for our last Kleberg Eucharist on Pentecost May 24th and/or our first Eucharist at Trinity United Methodist on May 31st/Trinity Sunday! 4:00 pm Silence, 4:30 Eucharist in both locations.**

Life in community: The same week of our Crossroads meeting our beloved Judith Rosenberg went into the hospital and was there until her death March 8th. We formed a pastoral team to be with her round-the-clock and a 24-hour prayer vigil. She was on a ventilator and we learned first hand of end-of-life realities, supporting her friend who had Medical Power of Attorney as she helped Judith make decisions. A few of us provided hospitality when out-of-town family came to visit. We gathered in her home the evening after her death for a service of "Prayers at the Time of Death" and offered a Memorial Eucharist on April 18th. Suzette and Mary did the music together and it was lovely. Our pilgrimage with Judith deepened our experience of Lent, of facing mortality and accepting the Risen Life in Christ.

Lent and Easter: We've woven a theme of Peace: Our liturgies in Lent were enriched with readings from Buddhist Pema Chodron's *Practicing Peace*. A homeless man named James became a frequent visitor and new friend. Through sharing his life, he's teaching us about challenges most of us don't have to face and witnessing to human dignity. Holy Week was especially moving because we had been broken open by Judith's dying. Easter Season we are "Envisioning Peace," by reflecting on a draft of our new Vows and learning of a few local ways that peace is becoming visible in the world. We were excited to contribute our community tithe to *Austin Tan Cerca de la Frontera* in Judith's memory, to *Casa Marianella's* new *Posada Esperanza* for women and children, and to *Truth be Told*. The SLS classes on Nonviolent Communication have given us a practical resource to use in our life together.

Formation as a canonical Community: Beginning in Lent a small group has been meeting almost every week to discern and draft our Vows and Rule of Life. It's exciting to see this core document beginning to take shape. April 20-25 I participated in the joint annual leadership meeting of the Conference of Anglican Religious Orders in the Americas (CAROA) and National Association of Episcopal Christian Communities (NAECC) held at the Community of Transfiguration near Cincinnati, Ohio. It's a wonderful privilege to participate with these leaders and their communities facing the realities, challenges and possibilities for religious life due to shifts in culture and the spiritual landscape. I went with specific questions and received many offers of help with the process. It's encouraging to be with those who understand the lengthy formation process and who are praying for us. I so value the deepening friendships and was nourished by an inspiring 2-day workshop.

St. Hildegard's is deeply grateful for the home we've enjoyed all these years and look forward to continuing a close relationship with you. I pray that all of us in the St. George's family will be filled with the Spirit's blessing and flourish with abundant life.

Blessings and peace,
Judith