

# CONNECTIONS

VOLUME II, ISSUE I

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## Special Points of Interest:

- *Letter from our President*
- *Spring Women's Gathering*
- *Carla's Corner*

*The mission of this organization shall be to foster active communication, spiritual enrichment and education among the women of the Episcopal Church with Christ as the center.*

*Episcopal Diocese of West Texas*

## LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Wow where did the year go? Seems like I blinked and the end is approaching.

The last news letter, I shared that I have stopped running and playing the hide and seek game with God and that I am now discerning what God is calling me to, what I'm running from and why, and exploring the fears. As I wait and prepare for the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ this Advent, I am reading and reflecting on a booklet, "Living in Hope Advent Meditations from the writings of Henri Nouwen." I'd like to share one of the meditations with you.

**We Wait For God; God Waits For Us**  
*I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. John 10:14-15.*

Increasingly we feel we have less and less influence on the decisions that affect us. So it becomes increasingly important to recognize that the largest part of our existence involves waiting in the sense of being acted upon. The life of Jesus tells us that not to be in control is part of the human condition. His calling in life and ours are fulfilled not just in action but also in passion, waiting.

When we realize that God in Jesus Christ is waiting for our response in divine love, then we can discover a whole new perspective on how to wait in life. We can learn to be obedient people who do not always try to act but who recognize the fulfillment of our deepest humanity in passion, in waiting. The spirituality of waiting is not simply *our* waiting for God. It is also participating in God's own waiting for us in that way coming to share in the deepest love, which is God's love.

*O God, may we always be deeply grateful for your gift of faith, which teaches us that you wait patiently and expectantly for us to receive your love.*

May we continue to grow in God's divine love as we wait the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Hope to see you all at the Spring Gathering. I'll be prayerfully waiting.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

For His Sake,  
Deb

### *From the Editor*

New beginnings. We start our New Year with Resolutions. I think I am going to keep mine really simple this year. My prayer is that I will live my life so others can see the Christ in me, and use my eyes and heart to see the Christ in others.

Simple? Who am I kidding? Maybe I can make it to council in February, or if, I really keep my head and heart in prayer to gathering in April.

Still that is my prayer for 2011.

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**CONNECTIONS**

**SPRING GATHERING 2011 — APRIL 8-10**

About the weekend.....

This Retreat, entitled *Get Over Yourself: How to be Deeply Joyful*, is based on my third book *Get Over Yourself! God is Here!* In our time together, we will examine how human beings, and women in particular, separate ourselves from God and end up feeling empty. We will discuss the inner workings of the mind, how to pray, and how one is to discipline the mind to turn to God. Each woman will leave the retreat with a deeper knowledge of her temptations and the thoughts that drive her from God's purposes. I will also give each woman some tools for how to turn to God and find the kind of peace that passes all understanding.

The first presentation, entitled, *The Fall* will cover how human beings fell from God's grace and how our broken world reflects the truth about how we have become estranged from God.

The second presentation entitled *The Wheat and the Weeds*, will examine the inner workings of the human mind and how certain thoughts can be distractions from God.

The third and final presentation, entitled, *Joyful Prayer*, will be about establishing a rule of life, or learning how it is that each woman is called to pray in a way that is uniquely her own.



**The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead**

**Dean, St. John's Cathedral  
Jacksonville, FL**

About Kate..... Education: BA Vassar College (Phi Beta Kappa) 1992  
Yale Divinity School Carpenter Scholar 1994  
MDiv Virginia Theological Seminary (Cum Laude) 1997

Author of 3 books: Between Two Worlds  
Organize God  
Get Over Yourself! God is Here!

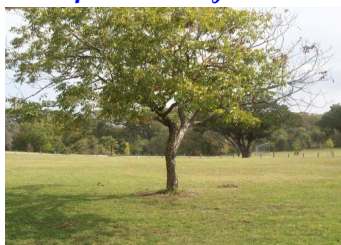
Married to J.D. Moorehead and the mother of 3 little boys: Luke, Jacob, and Max

Chaplain: The Rev. Lera Tyler



*Bell Tower at Camp Capers*

*Life's Blessings.....*



*view looking south from the chapel*

**WHY DO I COME TO THE WOMEN'S GATHERINGS?**

There is always an inspirational talk by a person who has studied his subject extensively. No matter what his or her topic is, it always is thought provoking. Sometimes it is more inspirational to you than other times. But you can always learn something.

I also come to see me friends. The hugs and greetings you receive are worth a great deal. You feel really loved in this place of gathering. And it is so great to be out of the city and in the country. It is so peaceful. And to top it off the food is super.

Judy Nibbelink  
St. Peter's Episcopal Church,  
Rockport, Texas

Lay reader, Chalice Bearer and Lay  
Eucharistic Minister

Note: Judy has been attending the women's gatherings for as many years as I can remember. She has shared her talents with us by teaching us many of her craft projects, and always seems to be involved in ministries which enrich the lives of many whose needs are greater than ours.



*Carla Pineda  
VP Programming*

*Watch this space for Carla's  
reading recommendations.....*

## CARLA'S CORNER

The Meaning of Mary Magdalene: Discovering the Woman at the Heart of Christianity by Cynthia Bourgeault

Mary Magdalene; apostle, beloved, wisdom figure...Episcopal priest Cynthia Bourgeault, a pastor, scholar, mystic and respected contemplative teacher has written a wise and profound book into "the origins and wisdom of Christianity, through the apostolic witness of Mary Magdalene" (The Most Rev. Dr. Katharine Jefferts Schiori). The book is a thoughtful and provocative analysis from the perspective of Wisdom Christianity, the relationship between Jesus and this woman of many faces, and how her presence in the story has and continues to unfold in the ongoing story we know as Christianity.

The Judas Conspiracy by Leslie Winfield Williams.

"Move over Dan Brown." Any De Vinci Code fans out there? If so, you must read this book. Follow the trail with Detective Isabella O'Leary and scholar Paul St. Clair as they untangle two millennia of clues involving an underground sect, murder, scholarship, Scotland Yard, the FBI, the National Cathedral...a nail biter, cliff hanger, search for killers and answers to ancient questions. Leslie resides in Kerrville, Tex., is a member of the Diocese of West Texas family and currently is working on a graduate degree from Yale Divinity School.

You don't want to miss this book!

The Dance of the Dissident Daughter: A Woman's Journey from Christian Tradition to the Sacred Feminine by Sue Monk Kidd

Fast forward about 6 years and the author comes out with this her second memoir on spiritual journey. In the late 1980's she "experienced an unexpected awakening that brought her into conflict with every aspect of her former life." Beginning a journey toward a feminine spirituality she wrote, "I was amazed to find that I had no idea how to unfold my spiritual life in a feminine way. I was surprised, and, in fact, a little terrified, when I found myself in the middle of a feminist spiritual awakening."

## UPCOMING GATHERING SPEAKER

Fall Gathering 2011  
October 14-16

Deborah Smith Douglas  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

When Deborah Smith Douglas could no longer silence the voice inside her that said she had chosen the wrong path, she left her law career behind and became a Camaldolese Benedictine oblate who leads retreats.

Deborah has degrees in literature and law, training in spiritual direction, and is a member of the Episcopal Church. A Camaldolese Benedictine oblate, she leads retreats in the United States and Britain. A frequent contributor to *Weavings*, she is the author of *The Praying Life: Seeking God in All Things* and, with her husband David Douglas, co-author of *Pilgrims in the Kingdom: Travels in Christian Britain*.

Chaplain: The Rev Mary Earle

Mary C. Earle's ministry focuses on spiritual direction, contemplative prayer and interfaith dialogue. She is the author and coauthor of several books. She is also Author-in-Residence at the Center for Faith in the Workplace, a ministry of St. Mark's Episcopal Church in San Antonio. She teaches classes in spiritual formation at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, where she is a member of the associated faculty.



Deborah Smith Douglas



## CONNECTIONS

### COMMISSION FOR WOMEN'S MINISTRIES



*Episcopal Diocese of West Texas*

It is not easy to find us on the Diocesan Website, but it can be done!

dwtx.org  
 Hover over **Diocese**  
 Select **Committees and Commissions**  
 Select **Commission for Women's Ministries**

### Your Commission Members

President	Deborah Gardiner
Advisor	Patricia Brooke
VP for Programming	Carla Pineda
VP for Communications	Jane Ahuero
Secretary	Linda Hollingsworth
Treasurer	Betty Graham
Chaplain	Lera Tyler
Altar Guild Co representative	Pat Donegan
Altar Guild Co representative	Fran Schrader
UTO Representative	Deborah Jenkins
Daughters of the King Representative	Karen Duerr
Hispanic Ministries Representative	Chelo Robredo
Church Periodical Club Representative	Esther Reynosa
Women's History Project Representative	Susan Johnson
Kairos Prison Ministry Representative	Louise Mayberry
Central Convocation Co representative	Linda Hollingsworth
Central Convocation Co representative	Anne Lutz
Eastern Convocation Representative	
Northern Convocation Representative	
Northeastern Convocation Co representative	Kate Pettit
Northeastern Convocation Co representative	Kathy James
Southern Convocation Co representative	Deborah Jenkins
Southern Convocation Co representative	
Valley Convocation Representative	Wendy Sulewski
Western Convocation Representative	Sherry Martin
Honorary Member	Catherine Lillibridge
Honorary Member	Patti Reed
Media Technician	Dan Hollingsworth

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### REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

- All members of the Commission shall be communicants in good standing of the Episcopal Church and resident in the Diocese of West Texas
- Membership shall consist of the Board Officers, one representative from each Convocation in the Diocese, and one representative from each of those organizations within the Diocese specifically involved with Women's Concerns.
- There may also be assistants for each Convocational Representative and for each Women's Concerns Representative.
- Ex-officio members of the Commission shall consist of the Bishop of the Diocese of West Texas and an Advisor to the Commission who may be appointed by the Bishop.
- The wives of Bishops, active or retired, of the Diocese shall be invited to serve as honorary members of the Commission.