



Community of Hope International



# Connections



Winter 2014

SAVE THE DATE!  
 COHI ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
*June 3-5 2014*  
 GRATEFUL FOR OUR ROOTS  
 GROWING THE FUTURE  
*"Run while you have the light" RB*



CELEBRATING  
 THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
 COMMUNITY OF HOPE *and*  
 HONORING  
 THE REV. DR. HELEN APPELBERG,  
*Founder.*



"CELEBRATING THE PAST"

**CARLA COOPER**

*former Senior Vice President of Episcopal Health System, Houston, Texas*

"HONORING THE PRESENT"

**THE REV. ROBERT G. MOORE**

*Sr. Pastor, Christ the King Lutheran Church  
Houston, Texas*

"GROWING THE FUTURE"

**MARIA WELLISCH**

*Vice President of Corporate Education  
Morningside Ministries, San Antonio, Texas*

## *A Letter from the President*

Dear COHI Members,

We begin the New Year excited about our great plans for gathering at Camp Allen June 3-5 to celebrate our beginning 20 years ago. I extend a personal invitation to each lay pastoral caregiver, facilitator, faculty, clergy and anyone interested in COHI and Benedictine spirituality. Make plans now to come—to share, learn, worship and experience beautiful Camp Allen near Houston. This is your event!

Your faithful ministry of presence and service to your communities has gained recognition across the country and helped us grow beyond all expectations. At the end of January I sent you a letter outlining program and policy plans to strengthen COHI for the future.



Come to Camp Allen in June to honor and deepen your Benedictine roots, to celebrate and meet the founders and to "run while we have the light" of Christ discerning God's vision for our future.

In the light and love of Christ,



# News from the Regions



## HERITAGE REGION

Beverly Davis

The Heritage Region holds a Quiet Day at the Ruah Center of the Villa de Matel four times a year. The sisters at the Ruah Center shower the lay pastoral caregivers with their warm hospitality.



Ruah is a retreat center managed by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word. Sr. Adeline is the director of Ruah, and for more than twenty years, Ruah has quietly been making a powerful impact on the Houston community. By providing the one thing that other retreat ministries must often compromise to keep their doors open—silence at all times and in all areas—Ruah has tapped into an appetite that seems to be growing as word of their ministry is shared..

The Sisters have hosted a great variety of groups seeking silence and solitude at Ruah, and those groups in turn are better able to minister to those in their scope of influence.

## HEARTLAND REGION

Pam Heidt

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Raytown, Missouri: In April 2013, Dn. Beck Schubert officiated the re-commissioning of 9 Lay Chaplains. The Parish was invited to be a part of this service as witnesses to each Chaplain's commitment. This will be the eleventh year St. Matthew's Community of Hope chaplains have been active to serve and visit as a ministry of "presence" and also provide a link from St. Matthew's parish family to home bound parishioners.



L-R: Mary Cease, Jacqueline McCoy, Brenda Laney, Fr. Bill McVey, Jane Petrie, Dn. Beck Schubert, Marci Brown-Turlin, Carl Turlin and Linda Gerding. Not pictured: Jim Laney and Kay Gutierrez.

St. Matthews Community of Hope retreat: The Community of Hope Chaplains held their annual retreat on May 5, 2013 at Unity Village. The theme for this year's retreat was "GROWING CLOSER TO GOD THROUGH LECTIO DIVINA". The Leadership Team of Carl Turlin, Marci Brown Turlin, and Linda Gerding, facilitated several activities: A guided meditation, making a meditation collage, group sharing, and closing devotions. It was a peaceful day of quiet meditation and spirituality for all the Chaplains.



Submitted by Linda Gerding

## ATLANTIC REGION

Jennifer Sassin

### New Training Classes in Northern Virginia

Welcome to St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, Alexandria, Virginia, and St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Woodbridge, Virginia, who are conducting their first Community of Hope training program. They are coordinating some of their classes with the fourth training class at Pohick Episcopal Church, Lorton, Virginia. Br. Michael Gallagher, Holy Cross Monastery, Beaumont, Texas, traveled to Northern Virginia to teach Module 1, Benedictine Spirituality. Thanks to his guidance and support, everyone is off to a great start!



St. Margaret's new Community of Hope Class: From Left, Barbara Cotton, Anne Parker, Jean Reynolds, Karla Marroquin and Gregg Reynolds



L to R: Sherry Dey, Jack Bausman, Evelyn Bausman, Lisa Tebbe, Kathryn Whitehurst. Seated: Daphne Finney, Ruxandra Panaitescu

### COH at Christ Church Greenwich

Christ Church Greenwich (Connecticut) has had a COH ministry since January, 2002, when we held our first training. Over the years we have usually had 7-10 active lay chaplains participating. Our COH lay chaplains visit parishioners in nursing homes, elder care facilities, and private homes. We also visit parishioners who are patients in our nearby hospital. Most of the people we visit are elderly. Those who are more independent appreciate some companionship and conversation. On the other end of the spectrum, we have several parishioners who are in the last stages of Alzheimer's disease, and we offer familiar prayers and psalms.

(Submitted by Sarah Boyle, COH lay chaplain, Christ Church, Greenwich)



## More News from the Regions



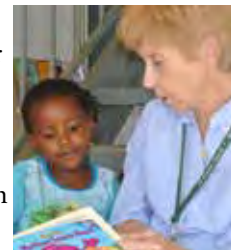
### WEST TEXAS REGION

Lin Boudreaux

St. Francis Episcopal Church in San Antonio is surrounded by mini-communities of refugees from many different countries. We also have 2 Christian churches from those communities sharing our facility. Language is often a barrier, but we find the hospitality that St. Francis is famous for is helping us to reach out and help these families who come to our country, sometimes with only a suit case full of clothes. Often those clothes are suitable only for their climate and while the income earner of the family is trying to accommodate, new clothes are often far down the list.

St. Francis assists by having a food pantry and the San Antonio Food Bank also contributes cases of food; we support an international garden, where refugees can grow sustainables from their own country; we provide dishes, pots and pans, lamps and furniture; and this time of year, we collect warm clothing for all ages and offer them to our new found friends.

In the past, our Community of Hope pastoral caregivers have focused their pastoral care efforts on the parishioners at St. Francis. We are looking forward to becoming pastoral care givers to the outlying community, so that these neighbors can see and learn about the love of Christ. We want to recruit, train and support new COH members with this goal in mind. Our transition will take time and a focused effort.



### GEORGIA REGION

Harmony Kiser

The Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta is hosting a diocesan-wide Community of Hope Training.

Here is a group picture of the Atlanta Diocesan-wide CoHI Registrants, with Nancy Armstrong, Chairman of Atlanta Diocesan IMTE, Harmony Kiser, GA Regional Representative, and Br. Michael Gallagher, CoHI Executive Board, Faculty Speaker for First Module: Benedictine Spirituality.



Seated, from left: Nancy Armstrong, Chairman of Atlanta Diocesan IMTE; Karen Davis, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Alpharetta; Karen Wright, St. Aidan's, Alpharetta; Carol Keith, Prince of Peace Lutheran, Alpharetta; Deb Gerace, Christ Episcopal Church, Kennesaw; Laura Masterson, St. Mary and St. Martha of Bethany, Buford; Elizabeth Hiatt, First Presbyterian Church, Peachtree City; Bill Williams, St. Aidan's, Alpharetta.

Second row: Mike Gerace, Roman Catholic, Kennesaw; Gabe Loggins, St. Gabriel's, Oakwood; Ann Frensley, Church of the Annunciation, Marietta; Davianne Charles, Church of the Annunciation, Marietta; Rosey Dunn, St. Paul's, Atlanta; Nancy Olexick, St. Clare's Blairsville; Jonathan Miles, St. Paul's, Macon; Wade Hembree, St. Aidan's, Alpharetta; Kathleen Nixon-Lancelot, St. Aidan's, Alpharetta; Allen Brown, Cathedral of St. Philip, Atlanta; Edith Cobourn, St. David's, Roswell; Harmony Kiser, St. Aidan's, Alpharetta (GA Regional Representative); Br. Michael Gallagher, Holy Cross Monastery, Beaumont, TX (CoHI Executive Board)

## Meet a COHI Board Member

**THE REV. PATSY BARHAM, Chaplain and Regional Representative Coordinator**

In 1998 Nacogdoches, Texas teacher Patsy Barham took the Community of Hope course at Christ Church in Tyler, Texas. The 40 member class from 6 different denominations was welcomed by Helen Appelberg. Patsy was commissioned on November 1, 1998 at Christ Episcopal Church in Nacogdoches as a Community of Hope Lay Chaplain.

From that time until the present Patsy has been involved with Community of Hope on many levels: Community of Hope Board before Community of Hope International was formed and Community of Hope International Board. She has served on the COHI Board as Regional Representative, President, Chaplain and now, the Regional Representative Coordinator.

In the midst of all these volunteer positions and after her retirement from professional teaching in 2004, Patsy was invited to help pilot the priesthood track of Iona School for Ministry. She was then ordained to the priesthood in January 2008 and became full time priest at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in Henderson, Texas. She was invited to serve as faculty at Iona School and teaches two classes there annually: Christian Formation and Little Churches (which involves strategies for success in ministry in a small church).

Patsy organized a lay chaplaincy ministry at East Texas Medical Center, works with Henderson Interchurch Ministry Community of Hope, is clergy leader for the Little Church Club ministry and serves as chaplain to the Episcopal Diocese of Texas Daughters of the King.

In addition to wearing all these different hats, Patsy is a full time wife, daughter, mother and grandmother to her wonderful family. Board members enjoy Patsy's delightful stories and the wry humor with which she tells the stories of family, of being a female priest in a small East Texas town and of life in general. We often wish we could hear her Sunday sermons.

As our COHI Board President Patsy guided the board with a kind and steady hand during the time of great transition from COH to COHI. As Board Chaplain she is always ready with a beautifully crafted prayer to fit any occasion or situation. Her current Board position, Regional Representative Coordinator, is a new position on the Board and Patsy is very effective at encouraging the Regional Representatives with virtual meetings and has made good headway in coordinating their efforts and goals.



In November of 2013 at the annual Diocese of Texas Episcopal Church Women's meeting, The Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg received the Outstanding Service to the Church Award. The other recipient of the award was Ann Normand, Canon to the Ordinary (Diocese of Texas).



Don't forget  
Module 13 -  
Care  
for the  
Caregiver!

Please stay  
warm  
and safe this  
winter.

## *A Testimonial to the Community of Hope:*

### *“You want me to consider doing what, now?”*

I remember the conversation I had with Gus Davis like it was yesterday. How he wanted me to consider going through the Community of Hope Training to become a Lay Pastoral Caregiver. To be honest, I was never really in touch with what a huge impact this training would have on my life and my ministry as a member of the body of Christ.

At the time I was 24 years old and a fairly new member of the community at Canterbury Chapel Episcopal Church in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. I had just started discernment for Holy Orders in the church and was looking for ways to test that call. Needless to say, Community of Hope arrived in my life right when I needed it to.

The training itself was transformative. The emphasis on Benedictine Spirituality opened my eyes to a life and a way of living that I had never considered before. I learned that being a lay pastoral caregiver was not always about having the right answers at the right time and that the faithful thing to do is to just show up and be there for someone in the midst of their pain.

There were many times after I was commissioned as a Lay Pastoral Caregiver that there was simply nothing else for me to do, except to be present, to be an active and compassionate listener, and to let someone else tell their story. I'm always reminded that my role is to just be present and to help the other person talk out their feelings, never staying too long, but being available for however long the person might need to talk.

The other aspect of The Community of Hope that has come to mean so much to me has been the community aspect. My circle of care members have been Christ to me in the midst of some of my darkest struggles and I am so thankful that they were willing to take on the challenge of becoming active, compassionate listeners.

As I continue with my education here in Sewanee, Tennessee at The School of Theology at The University of the South and think about what the future may hold, I cannot help but reflect on what an effect this community and this vocation have had on me and my life as a whole. Being a Lay Pastoral Caregiver colors our lives in ways that are impossible to see until we reflect back and see how each and every encounter changes us and affects us.

Excerpted from a letter from Tyler Richards, Seminarian, Sewanee Class of 2016

*Did you know that at*

[www.cohinternational.org](http://www.cohinternational.org)



*You can find:*

- The current COHI Brochure to download and personalize for your own center.
- Description of recently updated 2013 COHI Curriculum.
- Guidelines for starting a COHI Center.
- Nancy Denmark's website (Nancy is the designer of the beautiful and exclusive COHI cross jewelry).
- Contact information - Board Members and Regional Representatives



Your next COHI Newsletter will be the  
SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER



We would love to hear news from you and your center! If you have pictures and/or news of classes, retreats, or your center's activities that you would like to share, please send your pictures and articles to your Regional Representative.



*The mission of The Community of Hope is to create and sustain Christian communities of volunteer lay pastoral caregivers around the world.*

*We are united in prayer, shaped by Benedictine spirituality and equipped for and serving in pastoral care ministries.*