

NOVEMBER 2022

# COMMUNITY OF HOPE International



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## Annual Reports Due in December

With 2022 quickly coming to an end, we would like all centers to prepare their annual reports by December 1, 2022. This year has been a much more typical COHI year than 2020 or 2021, so we anticipate centers will have more to report, including how your center has changed since the pandemic began. Some areas that you might report on are:

Please include the following in your report:

- Number of lay chaplains
- Number of hours served, if available
- Date of last training and # of chaplains trained, next scheduled training
- Areas in which your center serves (ministering to the elderly and ill, homeless ministry, pet ministry, quilting ministry, cards, phone calls, other)
- Circle of Care frequency of meetings, type of programs presented

Please contact us if we can be of help to your center. Send your report to either your regional rep or Sarah Roberts at Sarah Roberts [sarah.roberts@cohinternational.org](mailto:sarah.roberts@cohinternational.org).

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# *Community of Hope*

# CONFERENCE

Snapshots from the event!



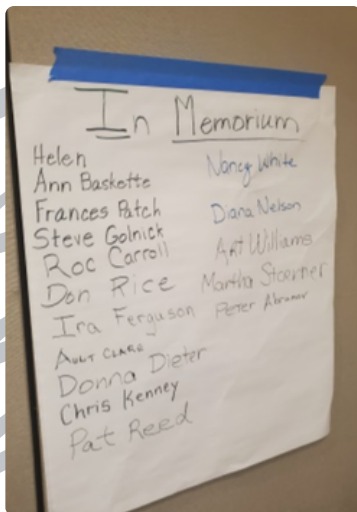
**Display of photographs of our Honored Alums.**



**Bishop Brian surveys group progress.**



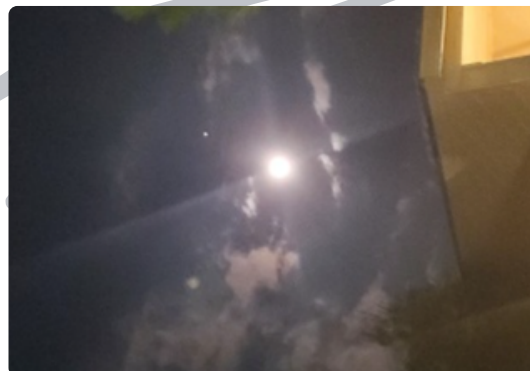
**Bishop Brian Prior leads Sunday Eucharist.**



**The necrology of friends and family for whom we prayed during the Eucharist.**



**Roomies Tricia and Karen**



**A full moon shines over our joy!**



# *Community of Hope*

# CONFERENCE

Snapshots from the event!



**Jennifer & Michael**



**The Little Rock St. James crew!**



**Bishop Prior keeps us busy with posters and Post-It notes!**



# *Community of Hope*

# CONFERENCE

Snapshots from the event!



**Karen & Tricia enjoy  
St. Carol's wisdom.**



**Brother Michael  
accompanies our  
Sunday hymns.**



**Father Peter Funk**



**Command Center!**



# *Community of Hope*

# CONFERENCE

Snapshots from the event!



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**Sarah & Elizabeth**



**Sarah, Jennifer, Jeff, & Tricia**



**Sarah & Elizabeth, & Kathryn**



# *Community of Hope*

# CONFERENCE

Snapshots from the event!



**Sarah & songwriter  
Carol Davis**



**Sarah & Brian**



**Besties!**



**Sarah, Carl, John, &  
Karen**



# *Community of Hope*

# CONFERENCE

Snapshots from the event!



**Bro. Michael, Steve, Pam,  
& Tricia**



**Carol & Donna**



**Ryan, Willie, & Greg**





# A Celebration of Helen's Life

**PAM PIEDFORT-ST. GEORGE CHURCH-SAN ANTONIO**

"The thread of how we began, the experience we're having today. You're part of that same thread," said COHI founder Helen Appelberg at a talk at Trinity University in 2018 about the history of COHI. In 2022 we continued to spin that thread at our Homecoming Conference at Camp Allen Texas. Sadly Helen would not be with us.

Conference planners thought, "How will we honor Helen at the current conference? How will express our grief, her vision, her joy, her legacy?" We dedicated the Friday evening worship to a celebration of her life. For the opening we asked Brother Michael Gallagher to talk about their special friendship, and he told a story that had us all laughing—what a great way to begin! Bro. Michael said that when he met her in 1998, she exclaimed, "Oh, I've been looking for a monk!" and thus began his long connection to COHI and to Helen.

Next we welcomed Helen into our midst by means of a video of the talk mentioned above. We heard her story of the night she received a revelation from God, in which she heard, "Start a community called hope and I will provide the rest." She also said, "We are still becoming," urging us to continue the work begun in 1994.

Following the video, we enjoyed the original song Listen with Your Heart, written, sung, and accompanied by lay chaplain Carol Davis, following a particularly meaningful personal conversation with Helen in 2019. The song is included here in the form of a poem.

Finally, Bishop Brian Prior offered prayers in her honor as we grieved our loss. We ended with sharing our memories of Helen around tables and then sharing with the group. Amid tears and smiles, we felt we had honored her with our whole hearts.



## Listen With Your Heart

Dedicated to Rev. Dr. Helen Appelberg  
for her vision, inspiration, and love as the founder of Community of Hope.

People we see each and every day,  
Are hurting in so many ways.  
Frustrated, angry, sick and alone,  
Homeless or disabled, just looking for a home.

Refrain  
We're a Community of Hope,  
A Circle of Care.  
Who listen with our heart,  
And lifts you up in prayer.

Everyone needs to know that to someone they matter,  
Minds that are gone and that speak endless chatter.  
If you listen from your heart, you'll be able to hear,  
There's still someone inside, a life so precious and dear.

Refrain

The gift God gives is to listen to what they have to say,  
Free from judgment, full of love, help them face another day.  
Listen to your heart, God speaks so soft and kind,  
Listen with your heart, let God take care of your mind.  
Listen from your heart, you'll be blessed by what God does,  
When He takes you by the hand, and guides you with His love.

Refrain





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## Update from the President

**SARAH ROBERTS**

Our recent conference was a joyful homecoming! It was so nice being back at Camp Allen and reuniting with old friends. It was equally joyful to be joined by many first-time participants. It didn't take long at all to feel like a deeply connected community! The conference encapsulated exactly what Community of Hope is all about: deep spiritual formation that is rooted in Benedictine spirituality, community, ministry of presence, listening, and collaborating with The Spirit. After all, "we encounter God in and through community" and that is precisely what we did together.



As we tracked along our "Path to a New Day", we held the tension between celebrating our past, our history and heritage, and dreaming about our future, wondering what God is calling us to next. All the while, we remained grounded in prayer and scripture.

We announced that one marker of our future is that our next annual conference will be held in Atlanta, GA with The Reverend Willard Kamandani, of The Anglican Diocese of Southern Malawi, as a featured guest and speaker. We look forward to welcoming Fr. Kamandani to the United States and celebrating the growing COHI ministry in Malawi and neighboring countries.



It was affirmed during our time together, that The Spirit is alive and well within Community of Hope International and we are energized to do the good work we are called to! Let us know how you see yourself engaging in our future together.

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# Compelling Speakers Highlight Conference

**KAREN MURPHY - GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GAINESVILLE, FL**

It was wonderful to be back at Camp Allen, which is a lovely camp/retreat center. Our lovely Sarah Roberts and the COHI Conference planning team provided three days of looking at yesterday, today, and envisioning tomorrow. Richard Rohr's work focusing on order, disorder, and reorder came to mind here. As COHI sought to define who we are; then disrupt, change direction, repent, turn; redevelop- asking where the Holy Spirit is leading us as we move forward.

The folks who gathered this year were smaller in number, but it gave us an opportunity to get to know our fellow COHI folks better and spend time with our outstanding presenters. More members Zoomed in than attended in person, and the technology team did a great job uniting us all.



## Friday



Focusing on the Friday theme of "COHI Past", beloved Sister Carol Perry, 93 year-old, "sharp as a tack", Bible scholar and teacher, regaled us with Bible stories and humor. She used stories from Genesis where God tells Abraham "Go!" Just like standing on sand at the beach with the tide pulling at our feet,-God is asking us to find a new place to stand. We are being invited into a new world. She spoke of God's covenant to be with us/our COHI covenant. She challenged us to, "Invite God in and get going!" Bishop Brian Prior (Episcopal Bishop and Certified Coaching Consultant) with lots of fun and humor, led us through a work session. Think: team building activities, small group work, sticky notes, large sheets of chart paper posted around the room, and folks sharing their work.



# Compelling Speakers Highlight Conference

## *Continued*

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### Saturday

Sister Carol began our day with "God of the Journey" Bible study of Acts. "The knock is our call. God has no good taste!" (Look at Peter and ourselves--people beginning to take a step in a new direction.) Ancient people were unprepared for the future. The Holy Spirit was needed then and is needed today. Sr. Carol said, "Take to heart what you have been called to. When someone sits on a gift, it is wrong. Let us get going. We've sat too long!"

From Atlanta, our own Carl McColman, spiritual director, retreat leader, author, speaker on mystical spirituality, and contemplative, spoke of the present moment, the wisdom of the present moment. "Recognize the designs of God for us in the spiritual life-present moment. Each moment is the universe. Be in the moment ready to act." He used Mathew 19: 26, "With God all things are possible," and "We are in this mess, but in the middle of life now with Christ." Carl spoke of St. Benedict and the Prologue of The Rule. "Open our eyes to the light and open our ears to listen to the Holy Spirit." "The present is all about The Presence. Silence is a way of worship." To conclude he led us in a 20- minute Centering Prayer sit. We embodied silence, now how do we embody hope in the world? Carl's comment, "Community of Hope is a Generosity Factory!"



### Sunday

On Sunday morning, Brian conducted us through "Future; Path to a New Day" We looked at COHI's mission statement "Creating communities steeped in Benedictine Spirituality to serve others through compassionate listening," stressing spiritual the development piece, truth, accountable community, and searching for God in community. Through the board's work with Brian this past year, we have outlined COHI's goals as clarity (roles), creativity (our responsibility) collaboration relationships), and capacity (serving others). Brian has guided the board through Order and Disorder and we are working on Re-order as we move toward Revitalization. He further suggested that God is inviting us toward the "4T's": Time, Talent, Treasure, Technology.

The focus of the new board revitalization is to be:

- Executive/governance
- Finance/stewardship
- Communication/marketing
- Curriculum
- Membership

We felt we had set a firm foundation for our future work.





## Contemplative Services Moves Gathering

Having a Taize service one evening is a traditional event at our conferences. I owe a huge debt of gratitude to chaplains Carolyn Cockcroft and Beverly Davis for planning and implementing the memorable service. They coordinated with our contemplative speaker, Carl McColman, to plan the readings, homily, and quiet moments, and they brought back talented musicians Pat Simmons, flute, and Pat Robson, guitar who had performed in the past. Thanks to Beverly for



## A Super Successful Raffle!

**TRICIA JONES - ST. FRANCIS BY THE LAKE, CANYON LAKE, TX**

Sincere thanks to everyone at the annual conference for making the Raffle a fun and successful event! There were many hands that helped set up the event, donated terrific items (especially Pam Heidt), generated enthusiasm and support for ticket sales and assisted in the smooth drawing of winners and award announcements.



## A Super Successful Raffle!

### *Continued*

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We had so much fun buying tickets and deciding which bag to put the tickets in to win one, two, or a few of the fabulous prizes. There were 37 raffle prizes that included treasured hearts, crosses, prayer shawls, books, notecards, and so much more. A special treat were two stained glass pieces made and donated by Frank (see Frank and his buddy at left) and Jennifer Sassin. It got really exciting when three additional stained glass pieces made by Frank Sassin were sold in a LIVE Auction on Saturday afternoon.



There was fierce competition and bidding between the folks in the room and the folks on Zoom. The bidding was so hot that our genius auctioneer, Bishop Brian Prior, and of course, the craftsman Frank Sassin, doubled the number of stained glass pieces to be sold. Frank Sassin made similar pieces and mailed them to the three additional winning bidders! Thank you Bishop Brian for the fun time and a very special thank you to Frank and Jennifer for donating the stained glass.

Before the conference, the COHI leadership decided that the proceeds from the Raffle would be donated to Iona Hope Episcopal Church located in Fort Myers, Florida, where a COHI Center is located. Sarah Roberts, COHI President, contacted the rector of Iona Hope and he was grateful to have someone reach out to him with a listening ear. He said the members survived and the church buildings looked to be alright, but it would take time to make a thorough assessment and clean up debris. He expressed that there was damage all around and so much need in the area even before Hurricane Ian. Thank you Sarah for reaching out to Iona Hope and pledging the proceeds of the Raffle to their recovery.



**Winners left to right: Karen Murphey, Linda Horbal, Sarah Roberts, Sue Auffert**

Thanks to the generosity of the Raffle participants, LIVE Auction participants and additional donors, we raised \$2,144.00 as of Saturday night! **To donate to Iona Hope click on this link.** <https://forms.gle/koveGZzz9jgYQu2m8>

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## Gift to a Beloved Friend and Priest

**KAREN MURPHY - GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GAINESVILLE, GA**

Karen Murphy recently attended the COHI Conference at Camp Allen and won this lovely stained glass created by Frank Sassin during the raffle. Upon returning home Karen presented it to the Rev. Laura Masterson, a former COHI Pres. and COHI Chaplain. Laura founded the Grace Episcopal Church's COHI Center in Gainesville, Ga. where Karen is active. Rev. Laura is currently the clergy in charge of St. Mary and St. Martha of Bethany, in Buford, Ga.



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## Contributions

Generous donations have been made by:

*Suzanne Carroll*

*Christa Schick*

*Jennifer Sassin*

*Maria L Wellisch*

*Carol Heddleston*

*Carolyn Ershler*

*Ann Bermudez*

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The newest video password has been released!  
Please check with your regional rep. for more  
information!



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Send us an Honored Alums story!  
Tell us about books & blogs you like,  
ways of reaching care-receivers, and  
training ideas that work!

Email Pam Piedfort at  
[pamelapiedfort@gmail.com](mailto:pamelapiedfort@gmail.com) to share your  
story!

**Deadline: 12/3/2022**