

Chapel of the Holy Spirit

Episcopal and ELCA Campus Ministry to Tulane and Loyola
Advent, 2011



Yes, young adults *do* come to church



The Rev. Giulianna Cappelletti Gray
Chaplain

People sometimes look at me funny when I tell them that I am a priest that serves on college campuses. I am often asked questions like “Do college students actually come to church?”, and “Don’t all young adults need time to wander away from the faith?”. Lots of people have an expectation that young adults must leave the church in order to return to it.

If I have learned one thing from my time serving as Chaplain at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, it is that immense diversity exists in the spiritual lives of young adults. We do have many active, faithful young adults in our congregation for whom practicing their faith is critical.

Many young adults never experience a period of questioning in their faith and are ready to assume positions of leadership at what seems like a young age. Others do experience a felt need to change the church-going routine they had as a child. They need to experience what life is like without the routine, examine the tenets of their faith objectively and come

to a personal decision on their own terms about the role they want faith to play in their lives. And most young adults who were raised in the Church find themselves somewhere in the middle; they keep a foot in the door of the Church and have a door out in the world as well, allowing themselves the freedom to attend worship and be a part of Christian communities as they feel so moved.

Research tells us that this generation of young adults is more likely than previous generations to have been raised with no religious affiliation of any kind. During young adulthood, many who were not raised in a faith tradition begin earnestly searching for religion for the first time. It is always a joy to meet young adults who are seeking. They tend to ask excellent questions and bring a refreshing view on our tradition.

While we do give Christians on campus a place to go to Church, our mission is much larger than that. Our mission as a Campus Ministry Center is to bring the love of God out onto the campuses of Tulane and Loyola, especially to those who have not yet heard the good news.

Young adulthood is a rich and strange time. So many transitions arise. It is a joy and challenge to seek and serve God’s children on campus. At the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, we seek to be available and waiting, ready to receive each person as an individual. While God does not withhold God’s blessings as we wander, God also rejoices whenever we return! For all people, may we be as Christ to them!

Pentecost:
The Chapel celebrated Pentecost with its annual crawfish boil and potluck at the beginning of the summer. This year’s celebration included a sendoff to Madeline Shelton as she returned to Texas.



Reflections from last summer's mission trip to Navajoland

Michael Glass
Tulane Sophomore

When Madeline Shelton, Andrew Kronfol, Maggie Fleming, Erin Hedemann and I arrived at the Good Shepherd Mission in Fort Defiance Arizona, we had to get to bed quickly – it was already 11 p.m., and we wanted to make sure we would make it to church service the next day. At the services (we attended both), I was struck by the melding of Navajo culture into the otherwise traditional Episcopal service – the gospel was read both in English and in Navajo, and those who could said the Lord's Prayer in Navajo. These and prayers based on Navajo traditions reminded us that Navajo culture is still alive and deserves to continue.

Unfortunately, our time there was not enough for us to work in the preservation of Navajo culture. Therefore, we performed manual labor, laying concrete to make an educational greenhouse accessible to the

disabled. The day after we finished that work, we went to Canyon De Chelly, where a number of Anasazi ruins are located. Below the cliff cities, Navajo people live or farm on land that has been passed down for generations. We worked to remove invasive weeds for compost (by hand to avoid pulling up native mallo plants), and afterwards planted currant trees. On our final work day, we worked with the local Boys' and Girls' Club to start seeds for their garden plot. Not everything we did was work, though.



We listened to the brother of a priest describe the Native American Church (a set of beliefs based on plains tribes' traditions), which helped us to understand the current set of religious beliefs on the Navajo Reservation. We hiked around Window Rock, a beautiful rock formation, and along hills overlooking Fort Defiance, granting us a wonderful view of the area.

Something that struck me while on the mission trip is how religious belief does not seem to be defined by individual

points, but rather by a continuous range. On Sunday, the priest spoke about how to understand the Gospel through the lens of Navajo culture. At the other end of the spectrum, her brother, of the Native American Church described how he would summon spirits, and was sometimes asked to summon Jesus. It led me to wonder where Christianity begins and ends, and which beliefs are most important to our identity as Christians.

Frankly, I am not sure that I will ever find an answer.



Game Night at the Chapel House: Students gathered at the Chapel House to play board games and get to know each other early in the semester. It was an opportunity to get to know Rebecca Schroeder, the 2011-2012 Chapel Intern, who graciously hosted the event. The highlight of the evening was a rousing game of Bibleopoly, pictured here.

Student vestry recognized by Tulane, begins offering regular programming at the Chapel

Jane Ball
Tulane Junior

During the Fall Semester, Tulane granted the Chapel's Student Vestry provisional status as an official student organization. At the Chapel, the Student Vestry seeks to provide an opportunity

for students to gather together and explore their relationships with God. The Student Vestry also organizes fellowship events for students, but all members of the community are welcome to attend. For instance, we recently played Bibleopoly and sampled desserts (see above picture). We are looking forward to more

events and welcome any ideas for more fun. The Student Vestry hosts a Bible Study on Thursday nights at 7:30 pm in the parlor area. Our meetings are the second and fourth Sundays of every month at 5:45 pm. All are welcome. No exceptions.

Senior lunches begin for those students preparing for graduation and beyond

Senior year is full of joys and heartaches, excitement and anxieties. In order to support our graduating students, our chaplain has begun hosting senior lunches each month. This monthly meal and reflection time is aimed to relieve some of the tension in the lives of our graduating students through group conversation, personal reflection, and silent prayer. Our

last lunch of the semester will be held on Saturday, December 3rd from 1pm-2:30pm. The focus of this session will be discerning spiritual gifts. To sign up or to get more information, please contact the Reverend Julianna Cappelletti Gray at giuliannagray@gmail.com

Changes coming for Chapel House

The Rev. Giuliana Cappelletti Gray
Chaplain

We have exciting plans brewing at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit for the Fall of 2012! These plans are substantial enough to require a good bit of work on our part this Spring and Summer to make them a reality.

I first want to share with you a need that I have discovered on one of the campuses we serve. Over the years, many Christian students and faculty from Tulane have shared with me a common experience. They have told me that they have felt pressure to keep silent about their faith while on campus. These individuals have felt a need to compartmentalize their spiritual lives. They have come to church on Sunday but have kept their beliefs out of the classrooms and the dorms and the dining halls for fear of offending others or of being judged for trying to follow Jesus and wanting Jesus to inform the way they live their lives.

Chapel House is a side hall shotgun cottage on Zimple Street just behind the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. Our vision is to transform this space into a home base for an intentional Christian student community. These students will live, and pray, and work together. This community will be one where Christianity will be lived on a daily basis.

Our hope is that Chapel House will be

a space where young adults will be able to simply be church on a daily basis. They will encourage one another as people of faith, be able to openly wrestle with matters of faith, and support each other on their common journey to obtain their college degrees, discover their gifts, and discern how God is calling them to let their light shine in this world.

There is nothing particularly novel about the idea to live and work and pray together. Christians have been doing this for thousands of years! While the idea is not novel, it is foundational to our faith.

God did not create us to live in isolation but to live as community, as brothers and sisters united under one Lord. It is our hope the Chapel House will be a counter-cultural space where spirituality can be integrated into all aspects of the lives of its residents.

Currently, Chapel House is home to our young adult intern, Rebecca Schroeder, and hosts volunteers on occasion. Through the years, the house has served many purposes: from Sunday School classrooms to student housing to being a volunteer base after Hurricane Katrina. The combination of time and several years of hard use by rebuild volunteers have caused some wear.

While our architect tells us that "its bones are good," it is critical that we give the house some loving care so that it can continue to serve our needs and live

into this new mission.

We will soon have plans drawn which will guide our vision, and which we will be eager to share with the larger community. While respecting the historic beauty of the old house, we will create four private bedrooms for residents, make improvements to the bathrooms and kitchen and enhance some of the large gathering places. The addition that I am most excited about is building a long-hoped for front porch on Chapel House. The street is well trafficked by people coming and going to campus, and this porch will be a sign of welcome and hospitality in the midst of the busyness of this part of uptown.

In the coming months, we will be asking for your help to make this dream a reality through prayer and financial support and perhaps even some strong hands who are willing to work in the field.

While the building plans are being solidified, it is not too early to begin committing this project to your prayers. Please pray for those helping us design this space and also for those students who are considering being a part of this intentional Christian community for the 2012-2013 academic year.

I thank you for your faithfulness and your continued support of this important ministry. I look forward to sharing more with you in the new year!

Upcoming Special Events at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit

- Saturday, December 3rd, 1-2:30pm:** Senior Lunch
Sunday, December 4th, 5pm: Advent Lessons & Carols (no 10am or 6:30pm worship this day)
Saturday, December 17th, 4:30-7pm: Bowling with the Bishop at Rock N' Bowl
Saturday, December 24th, 8pm: Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist (no Christmas day services)
Sunday, January 1st, 10am: Please join us for the baptism of Joseph Danilo Gray!

Notes for Students

- Finals Week (December 12-19th):** The Chapel will be open for studying, prayer, and food!
(check website for exact times and days)
Sunday, December 11th: Final 6:30pm worship of 2011
Sunday, January 22nd: First 6:30pm worship of 2012