

the future hold for the church? To be true to its calling and live up to the name “Christian” it must continue to do what has been at the heart of its being since it began: making a place for authentic spirituality in our ever-changing world. That involves using a Jesus-centered theology for interpreting Holy Scripture to help us be partners in God’s Holy, integrating work. “*Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these.*” (John 14:12)

**Bio:** The Rev. Dr. Ran Niehoff and his wife Marilyn have lived on Sanibel since 1991. He earned a B.A. in Philosophy (Washington U., St. Louis), an M. Div. and D. Min. in Contemporary Theology (Eden Seminary, St. Louis) and has done Sabbatical Study in Israel, at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece, the American School in Rome, Italy, and Cambridge U. in Cambridge, England. Ran served as Pastor and Teacher in four parishes, the latest being the Sanibel Congregational UCC (1991 – 2008).

**March 10, 2019**

**Speaker: Greg Randall**

**Topic: Fulfilling Our Baptismal Commitment of Supporting Others in Their Lives in Christ**

Each time we participate in the liturgy of Baptism, the celebrant asks us if we who witness the vows of the parents and godparents will do all in our power to support them in their life in Christ. We then join with them and renew our own Baptismal Covenant. This beautiful and sacred liturgy provides the essence of how spiritual communities support each other to raise children. When you see a congregation of 250 members, do you envision 250 youth ministers? You should. How do we fulfill our commitment to support parents as they raise their children? How do we help them and what can we do to directly impact the lives of young people? Greg will examine these questions and lead discussion on our gifts that God can use to build God’s kingdom.

**Bio:** Greg Randall is the Director of Youth Ministry and Programming for the Diocese and also the Summer Camp Director at DaySpring. He has worked in youth and camp ministry for many years, including the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, New York City and North Carolina. Greg also worked in education for 14 years, both public and private, as a teacher and school administrator. Greg lives with his family on site at DaySpring. He and his wife, Catalina, are expecting their second son to be born around February 14.

**March 17, 2019**

**Speaker: Brian McLaren**

**Topic: Challenges in Light of Today’s Moral and Spiritual Crisis**

The Bible has inspired virtue, fidelity, service, and heroism. But sadly, it has also been used to justify violence, misogyny, oppression, scapegoating, and even genocide and geocide. How can we read, interpret, and apply the Bible ethically, in light of how it has been abused in the past, and in light of our current moral and spiritual crises? Brian McLaren will draw from his years of pastoral ministry and his work as public theologian and activist to explore the “Challenges to Living the Scripture: Past, Present, and Future.”

**Bio:** Brian is the author of many books and articles on contemporary religious practice, many exploring and discussing theological reform. The most recent, *The Great Spiritual Migration* (2016) explores practical theology for today’s churches of the post-modern era. McLaren earned B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Maryland (1978 & 1981) and an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Virginia Theological Seminary. He served as pastor of a non-denominational church from 1986-2006. Since then, he has devoted his time to writing and speaking worldwide especially at ecumenical leadership gatherings. He and his wife live in Naples, FL and have four grown children.

**March 24, 2019**

**Speaker: Peter Blaze Corcoran**

**Topic: Care for Creation: The Challenge of Following the Primordial Scripture**

“It is...in the general consciousness of humankind, that the awareness of some divine presence underlying evolution demands to be clearly recognized as an ultimate and constant support for action.” (Thomas Berry) Building upon theologian Thomas Berry’s insight that the primordial scripture is creation, Corcoran will frame questions arising from the concept that we are called by God to care for creation. He believes we need to move the human religious imagination to sacred commitment and action. This work includes reanimating ancestral knowledge, reexamining Old Testament wisdom, and reimagining Gospel teachings regarding nature. The discussion will seek to answer the question, “How might scripture guide us to proper stewardship of God’s world?”

**Bio:** Dr. Peter Blaze Corcoran is Professor Emeritus of Environmental Studies and Environmental Education at Florida Gulf Coast University. He has been a Faculty Member at College of the Atlantic, Swarthmore College, and Bates College and has held appointments as a Visiting Professor at universities in Australia, the Netherlands, Fiji, Malaysia, and Kenya. New posts since his recent retirement include appointments as Research Fellow at the Earth Charter Center for Education for Sustainable Development at University for Peace in San Jose, Costa Rica; Senior Fellow at Forum 21 Institute in New York City; and Senior Advisor at Unity Earth Center in Melbourne, Australia. His recent books include *Envisioning Futures for Environmental and Sustainability Education*, Wageningen Academic Publishers (2017), and *Intergenerational Learning and Transformative Leadership for Sustainable Futures*, Wageningen Academic Publishers (2014).

## CHALLENGES TO LIVING THE SCRIPTURE: PAST ~ PRESENT ~ FUTURE

January – March 2019  
Sundays ~ 9:30 - 10:15

### Christian Education Forums



How do we transform ancient scripture into relevant guideposts for the 21<sup>st</sup> century? How do we take the stories, poems, historical facts, and parables of the Bible and wrestle with them in ways that guide and challenge us to be better people of God?

All of scripture - inspired by God and written and rewritten by hundreds over the centuries - possesses elements of moral and ethical judgment and guidance.

The past may seem foreign to us at times but it is OUR past, the stories are OUR challenges, and we need to see God’s powerful Spirit still working among us in the present and in the future. Even as Jacob’s dreams challenged him in his time to see where the Lord was leading him, he awoke and said, “*Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it.*”

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Saint Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church  
Chris Salerno and Linda Scherer, *Co-Chairs of Christian Ed Ministry*  
The Rev. Dr. Ellen M. Sloan, *Rector*  
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**January 13, 2019**

**Speakers: Dory Rooker & Don Adams**

**Topic: Doing God's Work**

This program will explore how Saint Michael & All Angels has met challenges in its past, to include integration, affordable housing and outreach.

**Bios:** Don Adams led the development of the Sanibel Heritage Trail, helped develop the Captiva Historical Society Museum and facilitated strategic planning that led to the privatization of the Edison Ford Estates. He found an outlet for his interest in history as chair of the Saint Michael's History and Archives Committee that produced the video of the parish's history – 1958-2000. He also chairs our committee that plans the annual Martin Luther King Day celebration.

Dory Rooker, a native of Minnesota, has had a lifelong interest in history. She received a B.S. in Education from St. Cloud State University in MN, and a M.A. in Liberal Studies from Keene State University in NH. Dory taught for 37 years in public and private elementary and secondary schools from Minnesota to South Carolina to New Hampshire. She has taken special interest in the history of Saint Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church on Sanibel Island. Over the years, she has unearthed and studied numerous historical documents from the church's archives, and co-wrote an updated history of the parish in 2008.

**January 20, 2019**

**Speaker: Zara Renander**

**Topic: Life Lines: The Christian Work of Healing**

Working collaboratively with the medical and other helping professions, we use the sacred space of the labyrinth as we accompany people on a journey to wholeness and new life. Our work focuses on veterans returning from war with PTSD and / or moral injury, sexual abuse, addiction, suicide prevention, at risk children, on grief and celebration helping people to turn corners to have more abundant life. The Episcopal Church has given me a deeper understanding of the importance of structure, ceremony and sacred journey which we translate to others of different faith traditions, as well as to those with no tradition at all as they journey to new life.

**Bio:** Zara was born in British India and as a stewardess for TWA, she travelled extensively. She calls herself a “tumble weed” with a broad multi-cultural background. Zara works as a consultant for Turning Point Group, a non-profit company dedicated to helping people make successful life transitions, especially following grief and trauma. She has written a publication *Labyrinths: Journeys of Healing, Stories of Grace* and has a M.A. in Religious Studies, St. Catherine's University, St. Paul, MN; SRN (State Registered Nurse, UK), is married to Arthur Renander and has three children and three grandchildren.

**January 27, 2019**

**Speaker: Greg Scherer**

**Topic: Finding Christian Community in Unexpected Places**

Greg reached a spiritual epiphany in 1976 on Cursillo and promised his sponsor that he would do anything and go anywhere he asked. That led to his first of 55 trips to Guatemala with Common Hope. It was there he learned that when we choose to offer ourselves to others, we will be given ten-fold

in return. Since that first trip, he's taken dozens of friends, students and strangers who became lifelong friends on work teams and vision teams of discovery. Guatemala has opened up for him the greatest passages of the gospels which he is delighted to share with you.

**Bio:** Born in Minneapolis and raised in Medina, MN. Graduated from St. John's Benedictine University in 1968. Graduated from Officer Candidates School in the Army and served one year in Vietnam as a Signal Platoon leader and Battalion Signal Officer in the 5/42 Artillery Battalion. Received a M.A. in National Park Administration from the University of MN and worked in the family business, Scherer Bros. Lumber Company for thirty years. Greg and his wife Linda are parishioners of St. Michael & All Angels.

**February 3, 2019**

**Speaker: Hal Wiley**

**Topic: Scriptures That Call Us to New and Transformed Life**

Have you ever thought seriously about the stories of Jesus' healings in scripture and thought how, if at all, they are related to your life today? Or to your church? As a young doctor, I saw little connection between what Jesus did 2,000 years ago and what I did as a doctor. Now I see things differently. Today I see it all as one. Let me share some of what I believe now. And why.

**Bio:** Dr. Hal Wiley is a practicing dermatologist in Tampa, FL. He received a B.A. from Yale University and M.D. at the University of Florida College of Medicine. He has served on the faculties of the University of Florida College of Medicine and USF College of Medicine. He is married to Sarah and has two grown children as well as five grandchildren. He has been a member at St. John's Tampa since 1980 and has been involved in many ministries there including mentoring EFM, conducting Lenten programs, giving parish retreats, and serving on the Vestry. For over twenty years he was a lecturer and board member of the School of Pastoral Care, an international healing ministry founded by Agnes Sanford. Recently, he completed a three-year term as Board Chair of the Franciscan Center in Tampa. Currently, he serves on the Diocesan Council of Southwest Florida.

**February 10, 2019**

**Speaker: Stephen Fuchs**

**Topic: Fundamentalism: The Scriptural Challenge We Must Answer**

The harm over the centuries that a literal reading and understanding of Scripture has caused is incalculable. Too many resonate to the mantra: “The Bible says it, I believe it, and that settles it!” Rabbi Fuchs will share his understanding of scriptural “Truth” and how that understanding can enrich our appreciation of important scriptural stories.

**Bio:** Rabbi Stephen Lewis Fuchs, D.Min, D.D., serves as Rabbi of Bat Yam Temple of the Islands in Sanibel. He is Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Beth Israel, West Hartford, CT and the former President of the World Union for Progressive Judaism. In that capacity he traveled to more than 65 communities on five continents teaching about and advocating for progressive religious ideals and legitimacy. Earlier in his career he served at Temple Isaiah in Columbia, MD and at The Temple, Congregation Ohabai Sholom in Nashville, TN. In 2017, Vanderbilt Divinity School named Rabbi Fuchs its “Distinguished Alumnus of the Year.” It is most unusual for a Christian Divinity School to

honor a Jewish person in this manner. Since 2014, Rabbi Fuchs and his wife Victoria have spent several weeks each year in Germany raising Holocaust awareness in secondary schools and speaking in synagogues, churches and universities. He has written a book titled *What's in it for Me? Finding Ourselves in Biblical Narratives*.

**February 17, 2019**

**Speaker: Eddie Gibbons**

**Topic: People of Faith: What Comfort Do We Bring?**

Many people in our communities today are suffering for one reason or another. Some experience life in terms of misunderstanding, intolerance and even rejection. As a people of faith, do we have any comfort to offer? In Luke 15:11-32 *The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother*, we are reminded that God's love is about *Celebration not Condemnation* and His Mission is one of *Rescue not Rejection*. Are we on board with this Mission? If so, what comfort is born of our faith and how are we called to bring it to others? Eddie will share his own spiritual journey using the parable of the Prodigal Son, sharing the 12 Step program, and how we are called to mirror the love the Prodigal Son experienced when he returned home.

**Bio:** Eddie Gibbons is originally from Dublin, Ireland. He is a former Roman Catholic Priest, ordained to the Priesthood in 1997 and received into the Episcopal Church as a layperson in 2015. Eddie and his wife Alicia reside in Fort Myers. He has a B.A. in Theology & Philosophy from All Hallows Seminary Dublin, a Higher Diploma in Social Policy from University College Dublin and a Masters in Social Work from Trinity College Dublin. He is currently doing a Certificate in Anglican Studies in the Hybrid-Distance program at Nashotah House, Wisconsin as he prepares to be received into the Episcopal Church as a priest in our Diocese. He is also a Spiritual Care Counselor (Chaplain) at Hope Healthcare / Hospice. Eddie has led a 12-step retreat for those working a program of recovery from alcoholism and has himself been sober for nineteen years. The 12-step program is a big part of his spirituality.

**February 24, 2019 ANNUAL MEETING - NO FORUM**

**March 3, 2019**

**Speaker: Randall H. Niehoff**

**Topic: Partners in God's Integrating Work**

*“The oldest thing that you can say about God is that God is always doing something new.”* So writes The Rev. Paul R. Smith in his 2011 book [Integral Christianity: The Spirit's Call to Evolve](#). Whether in philosophy or theology, to be INTEGRAL is to be embracing, inclusive, non-marginalizing, and comprehensive. Our Biblical tradition began with God's integral call to become God's people. Over the centuries people have worked to live in covenant with God and tried to be faithful to God's ongoing creative presence – with mixed results regarding the challenge to be [integral](#). Historians characterize the various forms of ecclesiastical expression with terms like: traditional, modern, and postmodern. That latest category finds churches identified with such labels as *progressive, conservative, fundamental, evangelical, New Thought, emergent, evolutionary*. What does