

Living Our Faith Meet Bridget

An SFX parishioner since: 1974. Jerry Shen, whom I knew from Christian Life Community, was a parishioner, and he invited me to join College Church. We were married here two years later. It was a high-energy, pew-packing era. Father Bob Houlihan, former rector of the Fusz Jesuit Community, was the new pastor, and he brought the “Fusz Community” of St. Louis Jesuits and their music and choir with him. Jesuits scholastics joined us in Sunday worship, and we journeyed with them through their various roles and commitments. Our physical Church has undergone many changes over the years, but the spirit remains in force.

Living my faith: Jerry and I chose to remain at College Church and raise our sons here so that they could be formed in the Ignatian spirituality that we cherished. Thus, our College Church journey began. With three other couples we offered a Baptismal Prep Program using a filmstrip projector that we toted from house to house. From there, with other families, we began the Religious Education program now known as Family Formation. I joined the Church staff and continued to unfold Youth Ministry, Parish Life Ministry and Marriage Preparation, always in partnership with other parishioners.

Today, I’m privileged to be part of the Pastoral Care ministry, another high-energy, committed, creative group focused on keeping Senior parishioners involved and connected. We run the gamut from prayer groups to party groups and whole lot in between.

Why I’m involved: Being part of College Church is how I am continually formed. I am in awe of the quietly lived generosity, commitment and spirituality of the faith community. It’s like swimming in an ocean of grace. Everyone is welcomed here -- where they are, as they are. What I love the most is that there is no pretense. If you are going to drive 30 or 40 miles to get to Church, pretense goes out the window!

Three words that describe SFX: Responsible, Professional, Big-Picture.

My neighborhood: Jerry and I have about an 18-minute drive to SFX from our home in St. Louis Hills. We live just south of Hampton Village and a little too close to Ted Drewes!

Fun fact: Our family’s history at College Church goes back 122 years, to 1901. My maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Cannon Hayes, consecrated her family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus at College Church, where the Jesuits were faithful promoters of devotion to the Sacred Heart. I still have the original consecration certificate, stamped with the Parish seal. The family legacy continues. Our son, Francis X., was married here in 2010, and recently we’ve celebrated two baptisms at College Church -- for our grandson, Lawrence, and my great-great niece, Nora. We are most grateful.