

David L. Vickers

Education:

Associate of Arts, Macomb County Community College, 1968
Bachelor of Music Education, Vocal, K-12, Eastern Michigan University, 1971
Master of Arts, Choral Conducting, Eastern Michigan University, 1971
Doctor of Musical Arts, The History and Practice of Choral Music, Univ of Colorado, 1979
Master of Divinity, The (Episcopal) Theological Seminary of the Southwest, 1999

Continuing Education and Formation Experiences:

1993-1994 Navajoland Mission Trips, twice yearly
2001-present Licensed foster care
2003-2004 Life Space Crisis Intervention (working with youth at risk, three day training)
Response Abilities Pathways (working with youth at risk, two day training)
2003-2005 Camp Chickigami Episcopal Summer Camp for youth and teens
2005 CREDO, Loranger, Louisiana
2007 Workshop on Emotional Intelligence and Human Relations Skills, Roy Oswald and others, St Mary's by the Lake Conference Center, Mundelein, Illinois, January 22-26, 2007
Peter Steinki and others, Holland, MI (clergy-congregation relationships from a systems perspective, two day workshop)
2008 Fresh Start, Scottsdale, AZ (five day director training)
Resort Ministries, Keystone, CO, The Rev Lou Blanchard (four day workshop)
2009 Visiting Fellows at the Seminary of the Southwest, Austin, TX (topic: rethinking Eucharist in the 21st Century) (two week seminar)
Passing on the Faith: Practices of Spiritual Formation with Youth, Dr Jana Strukova (Seminary of the Southwest, Austin, TX, five day class)
Comparative Religions, Online Course, Fall 2009, Seminary of the Southwest, Austin, TX (six week class)
2010 Emotional Intelligence and Human Relations Workshop, Roy Oswald and Jackie Bahn-Henkelman, St Francis Retreat Center, DeWitt, MI, May 17-19, 2010

Work Experience:

20+ yrs in public and private education, K-12, High School & Middle School Choral Music
20+yrs as a church choral musician
20+yrs working with civic choirs (adult, children, Barbershop, Madrigal/pop/jazz)
Over the past fifteen years I have composed a modest opus of compositions for church and school.

I was ordained to the priesthood in December of 1999. After a curacy at Christ the King, Arvada, Colorado, The Rev Lou Blanchard, Rector, I answered a call to the position of Rector at Transfiguration Episcopal Church, Indian River, MI. In addition to my parish responsibilities, I have been the Dean of the Northern Convocation for ten years, have served on Bishop Todd Ousley's Core Team for the past five years, and served as Priest-in-Charge for one year.

Summary: Since coming to Indian River, my continuing education and formation has been focused on working with people and organizations in transition. Some of the questions I have asked are: How can we create a safe place for children to learn and grow? How do we grow to be good neighbors; living into the commandment to love God and love neighbor as self? How do we create sacred space where

all are welcomed and all are treated with dignity, where all gifts are valued and all are given the opportunity to grow into the fullness of Christ? What is the role of an ordained clergy in the 21st Century? What is the work of the Church in the 21st Century? How do we understand worship in the here and now, and in the timeless cry of “Holy, holy, holy Lord”?

The bulk of my work and ministry as a result of parish ministry fall into two areas: youth work in the community, and diocesan work which includes being a Dean, serving on the Bishop’s Core Team and being the Fresh Start coordinator and facilitator, assisting the Bishop in congregation development and the training of diocesan formed ordained leadership.

Youth work in the community:

The youth work in the community was a result of the particularities of the parish of Transfiguration which is comprised of retirees and near retirees. If we were to be engaged in “youth” work, we would need to find a non-traditional approach, that is, we would have to engage in emerging church thinking. To that end, we helped to start a daycare in the parish hall which grew to the point that the parish built a daycare center to house the program. I also became involved in the local school system teaching music to elementary students several hours a week. From the association I became involved in helping develop a mentoring program in the high school, and a program in the middle school aimed at helping students learn healthy social skills. The middle school program includes aspects of Appreciative Inquiry, The Circle of Courage (resiliency training), Emotional and Social Intelligence, and Positive Behavior Support for Young Children. We are currently in the process of developing a mentoring program in the elementary school. This past winter I joined the School Board.

Diocesan Work:

The Diocese of Eastern Michigan is a small diocese of less than 50 churches. Most are family- size, with only ten parishes able to employ a full-time, seminary trained priest. I am the Dean of 16 of these churches that comprise the Northern Convocation. As the Dean I convene clericus, attend the Convocation Council meetings, and assist the Bishop in congregation development and clergy health. As a member of the Bishop’s Core Team I work with the Bishop and other Deans to develop programs to help our diocese grow into its ministry. We became involved with Fresh Start as a way of assisting new clergy and transitioning clergy to become familiar with the unique opportunities of small church ministry in the Diocese of Eastern Michigan. In the fall of 2010 I took on the assignment of Priest-in-Charge of a small congregation in Gaylord, thirty minutes away from Indian River. I am also the Advising Cleric for three students of our diocesan theological studies school.

This is a resume of those endeavors which have contributed to my education and formation. While formal education and job experience are describable contributors, so are those persons who, by their example and teaching, reveal new facets of beingness and invite us into new ways of living life. I have had many memorable teachers, but I would like to speak here about my family.

Barbara and I have been married 29 years. Barbara is a Special Education Teacher Consultant for a local school district. Her areas of specialty are inclusion and Autism, and bringing people to the table. Our marriage could best be described as a partnership of different gifts. She has the gift of organization and common sense, the gift of faithfulness and patience, the gift of hopefulness and inner peace. She has a poet’s soul and a pragmatist’s approach to life. I have learned much from Barbara, but the two things that are most formative for me is that we are only able to trust to the degree that we are willing to hold ourselves accountable to mutual trustworthiness, and that being a member of a family is not simply a matter of biology, but is the result of conscious choice and faithful effort.

We have four children.

Charles Spencer Vickers (age 21) is a junior at Grand Valley State, Allendale, MI. He is taking classes to become a middle school science teacher. He is a student of the world, having completed a semester abroad in Australia. He is a fine lad with a gentle heart, a quick wit and a gift for writing. From Spencer I have experienced the wisdom of the I/Thou.

Anthony Cole Vickers (soon to be 19) completed his freshman year at Northern Michigan University in Marquette, MI and has transferred to Grand Valley State to be closer to Spencer. He is planning to go into mortuary science. Cole is a child of great inner beauty and integrity. He has taught me the importance of friendship, reminded me of the core meaning of music, and given me the courage to say "No." Both lads do well in school.

Abigail is soon to be nine years old. She is open, trusting, and eager to learn; she truly desires to live a better life. She is learning ballet. She is teaching me how to be present, and also what it means to give of one's self with no personal reward. She has shown me how to contribute to the reality that someone not of my tribe or family can gain the opportunity to live well.

Gabriel is four. He and his sister, Abigail, came to us as foster children when he was six months old. Over the past three+ years, we have become his parents. Gabe is four and I am sixty-four. On the one hand, we have Abraham and Sarah as models of elderly parents. On the other hand, well, there is the other hand. Gabe calls into question the whole notion of the family cycle of child, parent, grandparent and the roles we play at different stages of our lives. Adoption is serious stuff, but Gabe reminds us that there is another side to it. And he makes us laugh. His joy for life is so infectious we can't help but be joyful with him and that is ageless.

Sincerely,
David L Vickers