

# Christopherus Grades Conference Presenters and Staff



**Donna Simmons**

Well, you all know me or your wouldn't be coming to this Conference....Waldorf teacher, youth worker, homeschooling mom, biodynamic gardener, parent educator, anthroposophist, and Creator of Christopherus (with major input from Paul, below!). Just read the website if you want to know more about me!



**Paul Newton**

Paul is currently undertaking training to become a priest of the Christian Community. He used to work as a professional homeopath - and in between, he has been the editor-in-chief, webmaster, CEO, skivvy and all round useful guy at Christopherus. He is a long-term member of the Anthroposophical Society and School of Spiritual Science.



**Barbara Benson**

Barbara Benson is a Waldorf inspired homeschooling mother of five whose oldest child is now 23. She is a consultant for Christopherus Homeschool Resources, a certified teacher of Chiel Qigong, and a former attorney and marriage and family counselor (B.C: before children!). She lives with her husband Craig and their two children still at home on 18 acres of woods and gardens in Unionville, IN.



## Lisa Marshall

My love of handwork dates back to my early childhood when I was drawn to anything I could make from yarn or fabric. My first knitting project was supposed to be a scarf but it had so many holes and added stitches that I sewed it together and declared it to be a tea cozy (the handle and spout fit nicely through several of the larger holes). After knitting came crochet, embroidery, macrame, felting, and basket weaving.

When my children were very young and I discovered Waldorf education, I found my handwork skills much in demand and expanded my repertoire to include needle felting, doll-making, and quilting. Spinning and plant dyeing are the next things on the horizon.

I am not the type to sit in a lonely studio with my work. I consider my work to be part of an enduring folk craft tradition, and I get the greatest joy from doing handwork together in a community setting, sharing my knowledge and learning from others. I also enjoy teaching children. I am currently enrolled in Waldorf handwork teacher training through the Applied Arts Program part of the Three-Fold Institute in Spring Valley, New York. My 3 children all attend the Ithaca Waldorf School where I volunteer as the handwork teaching assistant.



## Mary Ann Vaca

My name is Mary Ann Vaca and I currently live in Chicago. I have a Bachelor's in Liberal Arts from Warren Wilson College. I received my Waldorf teaching certification in 1999 from the Arcturus Program in Chicago. I have worked at the Chicago Waldorf School as a class teacher for 11 years. I am currently teaching 7th grade and have been with this second class since 1st grade. I believe that Waldorf education provides individuals the opportunity for transformation. Waldorf education brings to the human being is an opportunity to harmonize oneself on so many different levels but most importantly to grow and learn on what it is to be human. I look forward to working with the home schoolers community and sharing with them the wonderful experiences I have acquired over the past 14 years working and teaching in Waldorf education.



## Elena Baba

Elena Baba graduated from the London School of Eurythmy in 1986 and spent five years teaching and performing in Sacramento at Rudolf Steiner College, Sacramento Waldorf School, and the Iona Eurythmy Center in Fair Oaks. After her daughter was born in 1992 she became involved in young Waldorf initiatives on the West Coast and in the Mid-West teaching and performing Eurythmy as well as giving talks on the Waldorf Curriculum. She has taught Eurythmy in Waldorf Schools for 18 years and is presently teaching at the Chicago Waldorf School as well as teaching the teacher trainees in Arcturus. Elena has worked with homeschoolers as well as homeschooling her own daughter.



## Leigh Anders

Since 2008, Leigh Anders has been working in the Christopherus office, dispatching book orders, answering your general inquiries about homeschooling and Christopherus publications. She will be the all around *Girl Friday* at the Christopherus conference.