

Voice of The Redeemer

Episcopal Church of

Worship-Outreach-Fellowship of the people of the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr

April 2023

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“NEWSLETTER SIGNUP”

How Much Time Do We Have For Easter?

By PETER VANDERVEEN

Two minutes is all the time we have for what's most important. This was the claim made by the film director Sydney Pollack. It is a fact, he said, that's as unbudging as gravity.

He made this comment when describing the challenge of making a movie. It's very easy, he said, to keep the audience's attention by showing people falling in love. We have a nearly insatiable appetite for this drama. It's easy, too, he added, to keep us all attentive on the other end, when love fails and people fall away and apart from each other. These upward and downward movements make up the long arc of many films, and this part of movie direction, Pollack stated, is a breeze. The only really taxing part – the fiendishly difficult part – he noted, is showing people who are in love. Once love is acknowledged, strangely, we quickly want to move on. Two minutes

is all we have patience for. After that, love seems to be an unbearable stasis. Two minutes is best that any director can do. Anything more, he said, and the story will flop.

If this is true for love, it is no less so for rejoicing. With us, rejoicing, too, tends to be strictly of the moment. This only seems natural. Something gives us cause for joy, and we feel or express brief elation. But almost immediately, this thankfulness gives way once more to the usual rut of activities and concerns. And rejoicing is set aside, reserved as an exception to the rule: two minutes is about the best we can do.

The extraordinary consequence of Jesus' resurrection is that it has burst the limitations of this arrangement. The old way, the natural rhythm of our lives, has been shaken loose from its mooring. Paul understood this, writing that we should rejoice always, no matter what our circumstances. Jesus' resurrection does not mean simply that death is no longer our end, and that there is something that awaits us on the other side of dying. Our Easter hymns

declare that everything about life has now been changed. The dramatic arc of our lives has been altered. It is no longer characterized by rise and fall; we may now progress from “strength to strength.”

This is an astounding freedom. But it can't be realized as long as we consider Easter a holiday that recurs once a year. Jesus' resurrection means that all of our life can be reframed, or better, restructured by a gladness that is constant and not circumstantial.

The exercise of Lent is holy examination, which we are urged to practice for forty days. It is the discipline of solemnity, our taking measure of the value and cost of our lives. Easter is not just a day but, in like fashion, it is a full season. It lasts fifty days, and in this manner, it is a powerful counterpoint to all that Lent has revealed about us. All our solemnity is converted to an even greater joy, grounded in God's declaration of our redemption. But this isn't just a momentary elation; it's a discipline too, and it can only be realized to the degree that we practice Easter

with intentionality across the span of a lifetime.

Søren Kierkegaard once remarked that “you can always accomplish something by giving witness to joy.” His choice of verb is striking and carries the statement. Joy accomplishes things. It isn't just felt. It isn't just the delight manufactured by a holiday and the varied rituals it has accrued. Joy comes from the resetting of all the things that in Lent seemed to have great gravity — not by dismissing them or cutting loose the weight, but by changing the direction of the pull. In Christ, we are ever being lifted toward redemption. That recognition, when kept, opens the world to the kind of hope that accomplishes “more than we can ask or imagine.” This is the heart of the Christian message. Rather than two minutes spent and lost and soon forgotten, our art and exercise—our blessing—is to be most accomplished in rejoicing, now, always, as if in the full compass of the eternal.

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Holy Week and Easter at The Redeemer

Monday & Tuesday - 7:15am Holy Eucharist

Wednesday - Noon Holy Eucharist

Maundy Thursday - 7:00pm Holy Eucharist

Good Friday - 2:00pm Good Friday Liturgy

Easter Sunday

Festival Holy Eucharist

8:00am spoken 9:30am & 11:15am with music & choirs

Egg Hunt follows the 9:30 service



PROGRAM

LOVE IN EASTERTIDE Ministries with Children

By TORY DUNKLE

Growing up in rural Pennsylvania, I know more that my fair share of country music. And as much as I would like to pretend differently, one of my top Spotify stations is entitled “90’s Country.” The second George Strait’s “Love without End, Amen” plays, I can’t help but to sing along. If you’ve never heard it, the song tells the story of God’s love for his children through the story of a mischievous little boy and his patient dad. It is the quintessential blend of 90’s country and popular theology. Despite its failings, I love this song for the simple reason that it reminds me that God loves “without end.”

Just like the father in the song, we as parents spend our days pouring our time, energy and attention into our kids to tangibly show them the deep love we have for them. It isn’t always easy, in fact it is often the hardest job we’ve ever had to do. We do it day in and day out because we want our children to know and experience a “love without end”.

Here’s the thing: The love you have for your child, no matter how intense and broad, exists in a temporal world and therefore will end. Sad, I know. But, the love of God stands outside of time and is without end. Our job as parents, isn’t to simply to love our kids in a way that makes them feel our love. Our job is

to love them in a way that points them to the immeasurable love God has for them.

God’s love for our children does not rest on their math test grades, college admission, or goals scored. God’s love for our children does not rest on their obedience, attitude or behavior. God loves our children for them. Full stop. There is nothing they can or will do to garner or lose the love God has for them.

This Eastertide, let us work to actively point our children to the deep and abiding love God has for them. We can do this in small ways that make a big impact:

1. Make a daily list of how/when/where God loves of them. God loves me when I’m silly, God loves me when I’m at school, God loves me when I miss a soccer goal, etc.

2. Make sure your child knows the story of God’s redemptive love inside and out. Pick up a children’s Bible (recommended: Sally Lloyd Jones’ Jesus Storybook Bible) and commit to reading through it. The more our children know God’s story, more they will begin to recognize God in their midst and recognize God’s love for them.

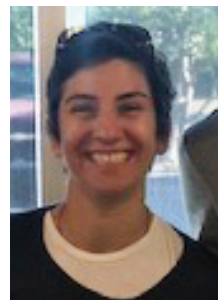
3. Memorize a short Bible verse about God’s love. Try starting with Romans 8:38-39.

MEET THE RYG LEADERS

By REBECCA NORTINGTON

The Redeemer has six incredible youth leaders who spend every Sunday afternoon with highschoolers exploring the intersection of faith and culture, understood Christianity and lived Christianity, doubt in a world of doubters, emp-

tying love on a secular stage, and hope in a society that sometimes feels beyond hope. They are Alexis Topjian Stephan, Bailey Sperry, Jamie Halloran, Katherine Hobson and Scott Carter.



Alexis is a Professor of Anesthesia and Critical Care of Pediatrics and Attending Pediatric Critical Care Medicine at CHOP. She has a huge job, three daughters, two of whom are in RYG, and an active extracurricular life. She brings her strong medical background into constant conversation with her faith both in her work in the hospital and in dialogue with the kids. She personifies faith, engaging scientific understanding, and vice versa.



Bailey is finishing her final year of medical school at Temple. Though we don’t know where she will be next year, we hope that she will remain connected to RYG. She has attended the Redeemer since childhood, and has helped develop and sustain RYG over the past few years.



Jamie is also a lifelong Redeemerite who lives in East Falls and is an executive in the family business, which explores methods of up-cycling coal waste. He is incredibly well read, witty and still a die-hard Eagles fan. He brings a level of debate and challenge to any given understanding of faith that also deepens and strengthens group dynamics the dynamic and a maturing sense of belief.



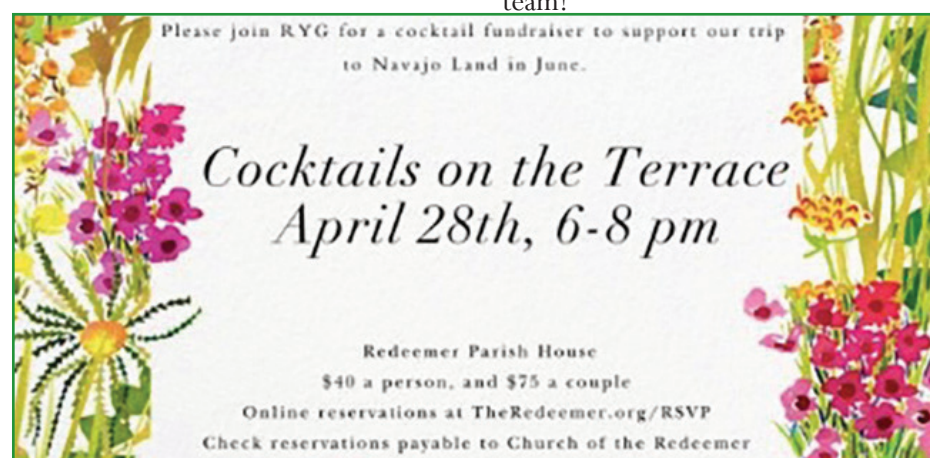
Katherine is a Florida native who spent a lifetime in Catholic schools from pre-K through her undergraduate degree at Villanova University. She offers a com-

prehensive knowledge of scripture and of works-based faith that mirrors her own vocation as a coordinator for Cradles to Crayons Philadelphia. Her infectious energy and her transparent path of faith, with all of its challenges, visibly inspires the kids.



Our newest leader **Scott Carter** is a recent graduate of the University of Michigan as well as a recent transplant to the Main Line. He offers a rich background of sev-

eral denominations and can speak authoritatively of Evangelicals, Catholics, and Episcopalians. Scott is someone who knows a little bit about everything and a lot about many things: as the kids can attest. His contributions to discussions and his willingness to step up and run formations has been a powerful addition to a truly wonderful team!



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Deadline for the May issue: April 19

PROGRAM

A STORY OVER TWO THOUSAND YEARS OLD

BY WINNIE SMITH

In early April 2012 during a Maundy Thursday liturgy, as the altar was being stripped bare and we listened to the simple chanting of the choir, I had no doubt about the whole Christian story. It was fleeting; it was incredibly powerful; it hasn't been repeated.

Now, for a priest to write this, to tell you that only once has she fully believed the story of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ is probably...surprising? Concerning? Disappointing? I hope assuring, too.

I absolutely love Holy Week. The highs and lows are so dramatic; the beauty and power of the liturgies are unlike any other in our whole church calendar. The week takes commitment: to come to church three or four times in a span of seven days is a lot. But it is absolutely worth it. Palm Sunday, alone, is a striking service: We begin with songs of praise and waving palms in honor of the Savior, the King. And we conclude a mere hour later with silence. We have heard the Passion narrative and we are reminded that the Messiah is also the man hung on a cross, left to die next to common criminals.

I will admit, I don't actually love Palm Sunday because it is just too much. Earlier church tradition did not include the Passion Gospel; Palm Sunday was entirely a day of "Hosannah" and praise and worship of Jesus. On Thursday, churches would remember the Last Supper with a celebration of the Eucharist and then remove all the decorations and accents in the church so that it was bare for Friday. And then would come the reading of the Passion, around noon. Jesus's crucifixion

would be recounted from the Gospel at the hour he is thought to have died. Saturday, a day of quiet, day of darkness, when Christians would feel just a bit of the fear and sadness that Jesus's friends and disciples felt those days after he was killed and before he rose again. Not until the Great Vigil of Easter, or perhaps Easter morning, would light return. After a week of vigilance, following forty days of preparation, finally could Christians celebrate once more their resurrected Lord.

This year, I hope you consider stepping more purposely into Holy Week. Come

BY JO ANN JONES

INTO NEW LIFE

At the time of this writing, Easter is a little more than four weeks away. As I mentioned last month, I planned to fast from certain foods. Darkness has not descended on my life at this point during Lent. Fasting did give me space to cast light on other possibilities. My needs recede. I became more present to God's presence.

I have carried this fasting out every day so far, and have not felt burdened at all. In fact, I have experienced a new lightness of being. A range of different food choices has been made possible for me. It is as if I have taken on a new

of faith, and Lent proved to be the best time to learn.

Is this not what we in part prepare ourselves for during Lent? Particularly given the Gospel passages from the third week of Lent on, we were called to examine our limitations as human beings, in our physical being and our spiritual one? And as we pass through Holy Week, when all our human limitations are fully on display, so much so that we have to flinch when we look them fully and honestly, we can equally and passionately cry. "Alleluia, he is risen, indeed! Alleluia!"

It brings fully to mind another Easter hymn that I loved to sing at St. Thomas, my sending parish: "And because He lives, I can face tomorrow. Because He lives all fear is gone. Because I know He holds the future. And life is worth the living Just because He lives." It strikes me that what I cannot articulate about the resurrection is put aside in favor of, in one small way, what I gain from it. The invitation to this life is truly too good to pass up. The possibilities are so exciting. At last to claim the freedom from sin and to strike out into new life, less burdened and fear banished.



HOLY WEEK

to a service you haven't been to in a while; join our early morning services of Holy Eucharist at the beginning of Holy Week; really stop and think about what that week was like for Jesus and his inner circle. In doing so, you might be rewarded as I was that night eleven years ago, with a new appreciation for—and perhaps newfound belief in—the story that has kept us gathering together for over two thousand years.

dietary adventure! Certain hesitations have given way to exploration and new tastes. How much I have been missing?!

The question becomes, what changes after Easter? I'm thinking now, the discipline I accepted on Ash Wednesday was an invitation to a new kind of freedom—freedom to put the familiar and comfortable behind and the venture more assuredly into the unknown. It seems to me that this is an essential part

African Children's Mission Says Thank You

You certainly responded to our Have a Heart campaign to help our friends in Malawi. Now even more help is needed. A recent cyclone has left **326 dead, 201 missing, 796 injured and 501,775 total people affected.** There are cards and envelopes available in the back of the church for your contribution. One Heart can touch another Heart.

SEEING ALL THINGS THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF FAITH

Wednesdays: 7:00 - 8:00pm (starts April 19)

Masterman Hall: led by Peter Vanderveen

Ask anyone who is not a Christian for a few words that describe the Christian faith; "generosity" would probably not be one of them.

Ask anyone who counts themselves within the church for a few words that describe the church's core message, and here, too, "generosity" probably wouldn't be included.

Generosity is, in fact, often spoken about in the church—but usually as an appeal. The ask is for its members to be generous toward the church, which can all too easily make generosity feel like an obligation rather than a freedom. What is far less spoken about, however, and what is often contradicted by the church itself, is the generosity of the Christian faith and God's persistent generosity toward us. Instead, faith is described as heavily proscriptive and demanding; it's restrictive and judging; it's the hard discipline of pinching our lives down to a level of thinness that would allow us to squeeze through "the narrow gate."

This stinginess does not reflect the Gospels nor the expression of faith that is so methodically and beautifully set out in our worship. Yet we regularly fail to appreciate that faith is our cultivation of seeing God's generosity in all things.

In a series of investigations of what is said and done in our liturgies and what is taught by the church, we will explore how it is that generosity is expressive of the very heart of Christianity.

ANNUAL "GARDEN PARTY" TAKES ON A NEW LOOK

4:00pm, May 21

Under the tent and in the courtyard of the Parish House

The Garden Party has traditionally been a time to highlight the contributions of the choirs to our church life and to raise funds for upcoming choir tours. This ticketed event has featured musical performances, a catered dinner, and a silent auction — as well as a profusion of bow ties and straw hats.

Since we are currently in transition and seeking a new Director of Music, we'd like to celebrate the Garden Party a little differently. This year it will not serve as a fundraising event and there will be no cost to attend. **We're merging the Party with the annual spring Parish Picnic, inviting everyone to come with some food to share, and together we'll be able to recognize both the ongoing work of the music program and the delight of congregational fellowship.**

There will still be choirs singing and socializing and, we suspect, bow ties and straw hats; it may be just a little less formal and a little more participatory. We hope you'll think this includes you.

PARISH NEWS

SEARCHING FOR A NEW DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

BY PETER VANDERVEEN

Music is integral to the worship, programs, and community life of Church of the Redeemer. It gives dimension and vitality to our liturgical expression; it provides intergenerational experiences of the sacred that are never forgotten; and it serves as an immediate mode of hospitality by which the church can welcome and engage the greater public. The expansive musical offerings of The Redeemer are valued both by our members and by neighbors, near and far, who attend our various services and concerts.

Church of the Redeemer is committed to being an anchor institution within the greater Philadelphia area and an instrument of personal and social good. We are distinctively Episcopal in worship and mission, which gives us the tools, the desire, and the breadth of vision to be intentionally the Church, within and for the greater community.

In furtherance of these ends, The Redeemer has begun the search process for a full-time Director of Music who shares our vision: someone who is skilled in bringing excellence to hymnody and the broad musical repertoire of the church, who can build upon and enhance our already outstanding choral program, and who can work with staff, volunteers and community musicians to increase the place and importance of music in our common life. The current constitution and configuration of our music program is set out in comprehensive detail on The Redeemer's web site (theredeemer.org). We are looking to build on this foundation.

Qualified candidates will hold degree(s) from a university or conservatory in organ, music, and/or choral conducting. They will be recognized keyboardists, familiar with the classical sacred music compendium as well as past centuries of choral repertoire. Compensation will be commensurate with experience, and includes medical, dental, disability, and life insurance, as well as employer contributions to a 403(b) retirement plan.

Application can be made by forwarding the following materials to The Rev. Peter Vanderveen (pvanderveen@theredeemer.org): a cover letter, resumé, three references, and three to five video links that provide examples of your playing, a choir or choirs in a service, and your conducting a portion of a choir rehearsal.

Applications should be sent by May 1, 2023. We hope to have this position filled, beginning the Fall of 2023.

PARISH BUSINESS Signs of Spring

JEN LEITH

Signs of Spring: the return of baseball and Redeemer grounds clean-up.

In preparation for Easter, the various beds around our properties will be mulched and cleared and, apropos of the season, the beautiful perennial flowers, shrubs & trees will soon spring to life.

This month will also see a variety of roofing activity around the us. The slate roofs of the Church, Rectory & Parish House will receive skilled maintenance and replacement of loose and missing slate tiles.

Our rental properties along Pennswood will have their siding and roofs 'softwashed' for the first time. 'Softwashing' is a cleaning method using low pressure water and cleaning agents to preserve the integrity of the roofing material. It will effectively remove the mildew, bacteria, algae and other organic matter and stains growing on those roofs and building exteriors. You can watch the time-lapse results in real-time as it takes about 3-4 weeks for all the organic material to detach and fall off the surface, once the 'soft-washing' has been completed.

In addition, masonry work will begin on the exterior of the Narthex with more extensive work scheduled for the late Fall 2023 and early 2024.

With sunny days and warmer temperatures upon us, we hope to see you somewhere on campus!



MUSIC AT THE REDEEMER series continues with

SONQO: Spring in South America

Experience the music of the Andes



**Friday, April 14, 2023
7:30pm**

Artcinia
Music in Your Neighborhood

Tickets at the door or online at:
www.TheRedeemer.org/MusicSeries

Episcopal Church of
The Redeemer

Experience the magic and music of the Andes with the group, SONQO. Featuring internationally touring performers, this band brings to life the various traditions and music heard in the South American Mountains. SONQO plays authentic Andean and Latin American music with a variety of traditional instruments that originated during the Pre-Columbian times in combination with the stringed instruments brought by the Spanish conquistadors. The upbeat performance and beautiful harmonies of SONQO is sure to please audiences of all ages and backgrounds. \$35 per ticket



EASTER MEMORIALS

Please send the names of the people you wish remembered in the Easter Memorials. There is a suggested \$25 per name. Please mark these as Easter Memorials and send them to the Parish Office, att. Fran Merritt, by April 3. Be sure to write the name(s) clearly so that we don't make a mistake. You can do it online as well at: www.TheRedeemer.org/donate_flowers.

The Newcomer Committee
and Members of the Vestry of
CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

invite you to join us for coffee
at the home of
**The Rev. Peter T. Vanderveen
and
Trish Bennett**

Sunday, April 30
from 10:45-11:30 am

The Rectory
220 Pennswood Road
(follow the path directly behind the church)

There will be an opportunity to meet various
members of the Newcomer Committee
and Vestry at this casual gathering.

RSVP by April 25
The Rev. Winnie Smith
wsmith@theredeemer.org or 610-525-2486 ext. 13