

Voice of The Redeemer

Episcopal Church of

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

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More coverage online at
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"NEWSLETTER SIGNUP"

WHAT'S INSIDE

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principal themes of:
Parish News,
Program Reports,
Arc of Formation,
Budget & Stewardship,
Outreach,
Choirs & Music,
Legacy into Promise

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CHEER AND JOY

BY PETER VANDERVEEN

Cheer is a uniquely human capacity. It's a certain kind of resourcefulness that no other animal has. I have no doubt that my dogs experience some kind of happiness (though I'm not at all confident that the same can be said for cats). I also know how superbly capable my dogs are in making me happy. It's part of the relationship they have with the world. But cheer is a bit different. I'm always struck by it at this time of year, when darkness lingers in the morning and is quick to descend again in the evening. Most of the lights we use then serve a basic utility. But the many lights that people string around trees and houses can't be said to be merely functional. Their purpose isn't to illumine a walkway or provide light for reading. They are meant to cheer us. They raise our spirits. And they do this by transforming our experience of the spaces all around us. We are able to make the darkness a means by which we

can bring to light a particular beauty.

I don't like the work of putting lights on a tree. I find the task laborious and too often frustrating. And my dogs avoid me throughout this process. They show no evidence of hopeful expectation, anticipating the cheer that will come when the job is done. But I know that once I'm finished I'll feel not only rewarded for what I have done. I'll feel gifted by how the lights and the tree change the mood. And thus they incline me to feel more generous about many things. They make me want to like the world a bit more. They offer cheer. And this is all the more accentuated when people come and share the room with me, having traversed through neighborhoods of light. Many of us spend the whole month celebrating together the cheerfulness we want to express. I never fail to enjoy this.


continued inside on page A2

Voice of The Redeemer GOES ALL DIGITAL

Beginning with the January 2022 issue, our monthly newsletter will be distributed via email and our website. The severe delays in US postal delivery and elevating costs have helped to precipitate this decision. It will also allow us to move our deadlines later to enable more timely content of each issue. For now, TheVoice will continue to look the same.

If you do not have internet access or would like us to mail you a facsimile hardcopy, please contact Fran Merritt at 610-525-2486 ext. 14 or fmerritt@theredeemer.org.

We are grateful for our 15-year association with Episcopal Life, Episcopal News Monthly and, most recently, Episcopal Journal. If you would like to continue to receive Episcopal Journal, subscriptions are available through www.episcopaljournal.org.



CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

**FRIDAY
DECEMBER 24
CHRISTMAS EVE**

4:00pm Christmas Pageant
(doors open at 3:30 pm)
The story of Jesus' birth as Luke told it, staged in tableau form, with hymns and opening prayers.


6:00pm Service of Light and Evening Prayer
Includes choirs and music by Diorio, Mathias & Pilkington

10:00pm Festival Eucharist
Peter Vanderveen, *preaching*
9:30pm Prelude Music
Hark! The Herald angels sing
O Holy Night, arr. J. Rutter
The First Noel
In the bleak midwinter H. Darke
Mary had a baby arr. M. Diorio
Sure on this shining night M. Lauridsen
See amid the winter's snow J. Goss
God rest ye, merry gentlemen arr. S. Fortser

10:00 Service
O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, from "Messiah" G. F. Handel
Whence is this goodly fragrance? arr. Mack Wilberg
Salvation is created P. Tchesnkoff

**SATURDAY
DECEMBER 25
CHRISTMAS DAY**
10:00am
The Holy Eucharist

**SUNDAY
DECEMBER 26
1ST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS**
8:00 & 9:30am
The Holy Eucharist



An Evening of Nine Lessons & Carols

in the tradition of
Kings College, Cambridge
**Sunday, December 12
5:00pm**

Accompanied by
Alexander Leonardi
Directed by Michael Diorio
Director of Music

Join the choirs of
The Redeemer as they present the
beloved readings of the Nativity
with anthems and carols to herald
the advent of our Lord's birth.

A free-will offering will be taken
during the service.

*Proceeds go to support the
Margaret Orr Memorial Choral
Scholarship at The Redeemer.*

Childcare will be available.

This is a great opportunity
to invite a friend to experience
The Redeemer.

Early seating is advised.

PROGRAM

RHYTHM OF THE SEASON
Ministries with Children

By TORY DUNKLE

The passage of time is often an elusive concept for kids. That hour wait for dinner seems too unbearably far into the future. That playdate last week happened so long ago it's hard to remember. Grandpa is only 17 years old while Miss Tory is the oldest person they know (just ask some of our silly children's chapel kiddos).

Time is considered a developmentally abstract and advanced concept. It isn't until children reach upper elementary (2-4 grades) that they begin to understand the linear and measurable nature of time. Prior to that, they are

largely concrete thinkers who thrive on hands-on experience, interaction, and observation to understand the world around them. Time is not experienced in minutes, days or years, but rather in routine, activities and symbols.

While this natural learning curve complicates a child's understanding of secular time and calendars, it easily lends itself to teaching them the liturgical calendar. The Church calendar uses color, seasons and special occasions to mark the movement of time. This plays right into a child's strengths. We do not need to teach them what week or month it is to help them know it's Advent. Rather, by observing the colors in the Church (purple) and knowing the general season (before Christmas), they can begin to internalize the rhythm of the Church calendar.

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Age Appropriate Ways
to Understand the Church Calendar

Preschool:

- ☐ Know colors (especially purple, white, green and red)
- ☐ Observe the colors throughout the church
- ☐ Observe and identify color changes in church (vestments, altar, etc.)

Lower Elementary:

- ☐ Be able to identify the current season (fall, winter, spring or summer)
- ☐ Associate colors in church (vestments, altar, etc.) with general liturgical themes
 - ☐ Purple: preparation
 - ☐ White: celebration
 - ☐ Green: growing times
 - ☐ Red: Holy Spirit
- ☐ Begin to make connections between secular seasons and liturgical seasons
 - ☐ Example: Advent (fall/winter, before Christmas, after Thanksgiving)
- ☐ Begin to understand the sequential order of the Church seasons
 - ☐ Example: Lent comes before Easter

Upper Elementary:

- ☐ Identify colors with specific Church seasons
 - ☐ Advent/Lent: Purple
 - ☐ Christmas/Easter: White
 - ☐ Ordinary Time: Green
 - ☐ Pentecost: Red
- ☐ Identify Church seasons in sequential order
 - ☐ Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Eastertide, Pentecost, Ordinary Time

CHEER AND JOY, continued from the front page

December is also a time when, with unusual enthusiasm, we speak of joy (it's not a word much bandied about in March). And for many, cheer and joy may seem fairly interchangeable; as if they were slight variations on the same emotion. But joy, I think, is quite different, because it's not within our capacity to generate it. It's more subtle than cheer, as well as being more complicated and more enduring. Joy arises from the very recognition that there are needful things that we cannot do for ourselves. We have to wait upon them. We can only receive them, with

the knowledge that there's nothing that we can offer in return. In this sense, joy can never be a transactional product. Quite the opposite, it is the experience of being overwhelmed by something given for which there is no measure. It is always surprising.

Amid all the cheer of the month, the church's observance of Advent is meant to be an exercise of waiting for a joy that we cannot produce of ourselves and for ourselves. It's not a joy of the present moment or something we can experience like an event—a gathering or a party or a reunion. It's dependent

on the long past behind us, as sung in O Little Town of Bethlehem all the "hopes and fears of all the years"; and it's mindful of all that is yet unknown, that only future time can disclose. Advent is the discipline of drawing both of these, past and future, into a fulfillment, which we try to articulate and comprehend in the coming of God to us, not in judgment but in love and redemption. This kind of joy humbles us and exalts us. It "shifts not just our mood but the boundaries of our being." May we all offer cheer and wait upon joy this season.

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Deadline for the January issue: December 13

PROGRAM

FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

December 12 at 5pm



By MICHAEL DIORIO

Every year around the end of October, the choirs of The Redeemer begin rehearsing music for our annual service of Nine Lessons & Carols, held on Advent 3. The service is focused around nine scripture readings, beginning with the creation of man, the fall from grace, the promise foretold of Christ's coming, the Annunciation, and concluding with the birth of Jesus. The music compliments and echoes the subject matter of the scripture texts.

At The Redeemer, our service's structure resembles the traditional Kings College, Cambridge offering. Like the service at King's, the readings are taken from the 1611 King James Bible. The music is traditionally Anglican and includes both ancient melodies and modern compositions.

For the Episcopal Church, the service of Nine Lessons & Carols has become *the* pinnacle carol service to offer every year, including, as it does, the King James English loved by so many, but which is so rarely offered in modern-day worship services.

Here are just a few of the carols and anthems offered this year:

Once in Royal David's City
I Wonder as I Wander (arr. Pilkington)
Adam lay bounden (F. Boles)
Alleluya, A New Work (Mathias)
Suo Gan (arr. Diorio)
The Joys of Mary (arr. S. Cleobury)
Coventry Carol (arr. Stopford)
We Three Kings (arr. M. Neary)
The Angel Gabriel
Lo! He Comes with Clouds (arr. Rutter)

Admission to Lessons & Carols is without charge, however all proceeds from free-will offerings go toward the Margaret Orr Memorial Choral Scholarship Fund. Established in 2012 by the family and friends of long-time chorister, Margaret Orr, the Scholarship Fund benefits choristers in the Music Program at The Redeemer whose financial needs might otherwise limit their involvement in the program's activities.

Join us on Sunday, December 12 at 5pm to celebrate Lessons & Carols at The Redeemer. It is a perfect time to invite family and friends into our church and to enjoy fellowship at the reception following the service in our beautiful new Parish House.

ANNOUNCING THE 2022 CHOIR TOUR TO ENGLAND



Bristol Cathedral view of the choir area.

By MICHAEL DIORIO

It was back in 2018 that the choir last had the privilege of taking song and service abroad. We visited Croatia, Slovenia, and ended in Italy — having had the tremendous honor of singing for Sunday Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Mark in Venice (a second time for Redeemer choirs!). Prior to the COVID pandemic, we planned a 2020 tour that had Redeemer choir members visiting Budapest, Vienna and Prague. Alas, that tour, along with so many other things in the world, ended up being cancelled.

As our choirs typically tour on even-numbered years, our next tour wasn't scheduled until 2024. Rather than wait six years between tours, and considering the progress made in fighting the pandemic and the decline in COVID cases, the Music Committee was keen to commit to a 2022 tour. When proposed to our choir members there were no objections, so we proceeded with plans.

Though shorter than usual, our choir tour this summer will find us serving as the liturgical choir for services at Bristol Cathedral, Southwark Cathedral, and St. Alban's Cathedral. This will be the first tour in many years where we will have the opportunity to serve in a residence capacity. That is, these venues are granting

us the privilege of serving as the choir-in-residence for all weekly worship services (Sunday morning, Evensongs, etc.) wherein music is present.

There are eight separate services that our choir will have to sing over a ten-day period. This will require much rehearsing and stamina on the part of the members, but it is quite exciting to know that we will bring exactly what we offer at The Redeemer into these exceptional places of worship.

The focus of this tour will be that of Liturgy and Worship, and our service through song will be directed toward these two important elements, so fundamental to our existence as a choir and a music program. As we move forward with plans, we are ever mindful that things can turn on a dime. We are working with a wonderful UK based travel company specializing in church choir tours. They have been keeping us abreast of all the restrictions and conditions in England over the past several months. We will continue to monitor the global conditions of the pandemic, and follow all state department guidelines and suggestions. Should we have to forfeit this tour due to unforeseen circumstances or conditions beyond our control, we will look forward to the next in 2024, flexibility being key in such unsettled times.



St. Alban's Cathedral

PROGRAM

XMAS

BY MICHAEL PALMISANO

Adult Forums Sunday, November 28— December 19, 10:45-11:30am

My fundamentalist grandparents always got squeamish when they saw the word “Christmas” condensed into what they perceived to be its secular, colloquially version “Xmas.” I’m sure you’ve seen the irate and self-righteous bumper stickers and lawn signs that pop up during this time of year which reflect this sentiment by demanding we “Put ‘Christ’ back in ‘Christmas.’” These feelings seem to be coming from a good place — all honor and glory be unto the Lord, indeed. However, the demand is misguided in myriad ways.

First, the letter “X” in the word “Xmas” is representative of the first letter (*chi*) for the Greek word “Christ.” (*Christós*, Gk: *Χριστός*). “Xmas” was never a diminutive, secular word. It was always representative of the messianic fulfillment that is the Incarnation. Second, the idea that Christ could somehow be vacated from Christmas by means of linguistic neglect is a troubling idea altogether. Not because Christ can be extracted from the feast of Christmas (a divine impossibility) but because this solidifies many false ideas which relegate Christ and the Incarnation to a single day

of the year. The miracle of Christmas and the Incarnation is a daily reality for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

It is reasonable, good, and true for us to suggest that God’s Incarnation is implied by God’s Creation of all things — the logical conclusion to the generous gift. It is for this reason that Archbishop of Canterbury Emeritus, Rowan Williams entitled one of his most recent masterpieces on the Incarnation: *Christ the Heart of Creation*. For Williams, the things we can say about Jesus Christ are the keys to understanding what can be said about Creator and Creation overall. When we find ourselves talking about the Incarnation, we find ourselves talking about what it means to be a human creature.

Join us on Sundays during the Advent season as we wrestle with the implications of an Incarnate God upon life as we know it. We will be led in discussion by each of our Redeemer clergy and be visited by our keynote presenter Dr. Phillip Cary on Sunday, December 5.

Phil Cary is Professor of Philosophy at Eastern University and Editor-in-chief of *Pro Ecclesia: A Journal of Catholic and Evangelical*.

ADVENT ADULT FORUMS

Why the Incarnation Makes Your Christmas “Merry”

Advent Adult Forums, Sundays 11/28-12/19, 10:45am — Masterman Hall & Livestream

Archbishop of Canterbury Emeritus, Rowan Williams suggests that the things we can say about Jesus Christ are the keys to understanding what can be said about Creator and Creation overall. When we find ourselves talking about the Incarnation, we find ourselves talking about what it means to be a human creature. If this is even the slightest bit true (I contend that it is) then what we can say about Christmas, the Incarnation, and the Second Person of the Trinity are revelatory about what it means to be human and what it means for God to be God. The Incarnation is *the* key to understanding how God and man relate to one another. In this way, talk about the Incarnation is undoubtedly one of the most important intellectual endeavors of the Christian life. Join us at the Adult Forum during Advent as our clergy team and keynote speaker, Phil Cary lead us in discussions of the Incarnation, and as a result, the human condition, and the nature of God.

**Sunday, November 28 at 10:45am****Michael Palmisano**

What might the Incarnation tell you about yourself? About God? About the general public’s approach to the holiday season? These questions can be addressed if we spend adequate time dwelling with this most important doctrine of our faith, the Incarnation. Join us on this first Sunday in Advent as we wonder upon the mystery of Christmas and its daily implications for our lives and perhaps discover how giving it the time it deserves might make this Christmas season just a bit more “merry.”

**Sunday, December 5 at 10:45am****Dr. Philip Cary, Professor of Philosophy at Eastern University**

The core tenets of the Incarnation — the doctrine which underlies the faith of the Church — are already professed by churchgoers on a regular basis. This is because the doctrine of the Incarnation is on full display in the Nicene Creed. Dr. Philip Cary joins us this morning as he unpacks the Incarnation through the lens of the Creed and addresses some of the typical questions that people have about the doctrine and its role in Christian life, faith, and worship. Phil Cary is Professor of Philosophy at Eastern University and Editor-in-chief of *Pro Ecclesia: A Journal of Catholic and Evangelical*.

**Sunday, December 12 at 10:45am****Jo Ann Jones**

On this evening in our parish life, we celebrate the great Anglican service of Lessons and Carols. In honor of this festive occasion, Jo Ann Jones will lead us in a discussion of the Incarnation as it is expressed in the hymns of our tradition. Join us this Sunday morning as we are theologically oriented towards the evening’s offering of Lessons and Carols.

**Sunday, December 19 at 10:45am****Peter Vanderveen**

In this final Sunday of the Advent season Rector Peter Vanderveen will offer his remarks in response to the previous weeks’ presentations. With just one week until the great celebration of Christmas, perhaps we will find ourselves more prepared to receive that great mystery of the Incarnation once more with eyes and ears refreshed.

PROGRAM

FIRST CHRISTMAS VILLAGE A SPECTACULAR SUCCESS

Our first Christmas Village highlighted the beautiful design of the new Parish House and its functionality for generations to come.



Our fantastic co-chairs: Caroline Manogue, Carolyn Morris and Elisabeth Cooke led an incredible group organizing, staging and working this amazing event.

Proceeds from the Village will be distributed to community organizations.



AROUND THE PARISH

2022 STEWARDSHIP

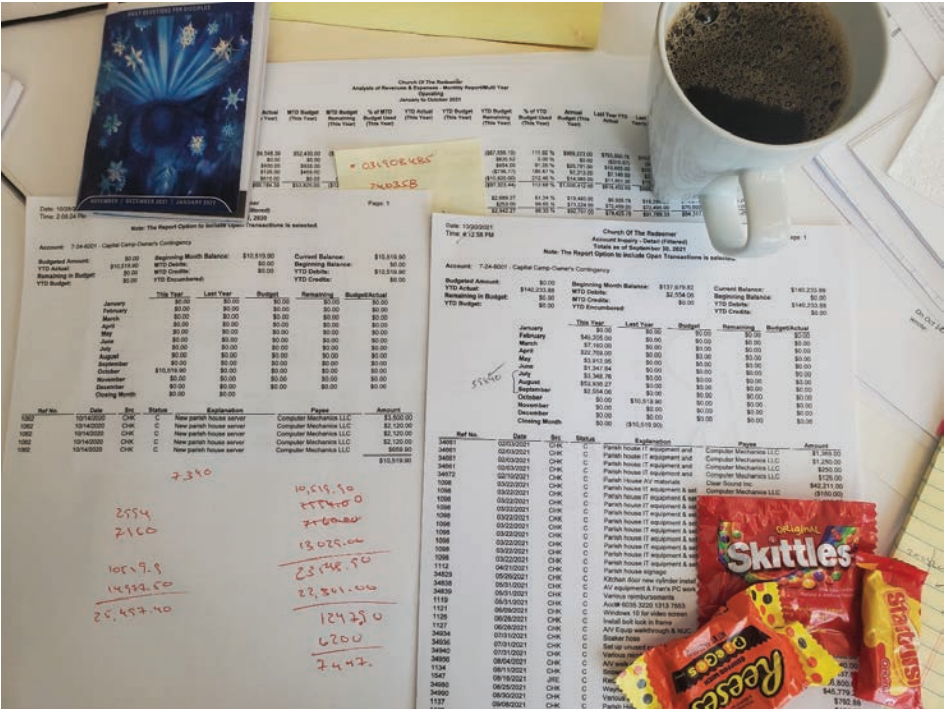
Did you know Stewardship 2022 has had a tremendous response to date this fall? We have a total of 205 pledges for 2022, with an aggregate increase of over 6%. Stewardship volunteers are actively reaching out to the remaining parishioners who we have yet to hear from this year. Stewardship is a crucial part of The Redeemers planning process. It is very hard to budget our expenses as a church until we know the level of our collective support.

OUR SINCERE THANKS TO THESE PARISHIONERS WHO HAVE ALREADY MADE A PLEDGE FOR 2022

as of November 18

- Maisie Adamson
Paul & Mary Adkins
Richard & Kris Aldridge
Charlie Alexander
James & Julia Alexandre
Jeffrey Bell
Tom & Carolyn Bennett
Sandra Berwind
Barbara Billings
Diana Bittel
John & Lisa Black
Charlie & Susan Bloom
Al & Leslie Boris
Priscilla Bradshaw
Jamie & Joan Bromley
Marcia Brose
Rick & Phyllis Brown
Jay Brown
Jim & Lin Buck
Andrew & Karen Bucklee
Don & Linda Caldwell
Bobbie Cameron
Lynne Chapman
Sam Chew
Chris & Kate Chojnacki
W. Morgan and Sonia Churchman
Peter & Kimberly Clement
Ellen Conlan
Bill & Joanne Conrad
Dick & Otilie Conway
Peter & Elisabeth Cooke, Jr.
David Copas & Jennifer Vollmer Copas
Betsey Corkran
Ted & Polly Cox
Jim & Betsy Crowell
Stephen & Margaret Dana
Chris & Betsy D'Angelo
Rick & Rita Davis
Bob & Lisa Davis
Gary Davis
Jack & Judy Dawson
Rod Day
Darrell & Julia DeMoss
Gloria DePasquale
John & Melissa Donnelly
Rod & Carol Donnelly
Joe & Elizabeth Dougherty
Tory Dunkle
Rad & Susannah Edmonds
Joe Elefritz
Michael Erdman
Bill & Katharine Eyre
Norma Fabian
Sevren & Lynn Fahr
Kitty Farnham
John & Evelyn Fell
Gordon & Patricia Fowler
Ken Garner & Bob Mikrut
C. Meade Geisel
Tom & Anna Gerrity
Gay Gervin
Emily Gibb & Stephen Ciottoni
Bruce & Gale Gillespie
Frank Grebe
Al & Sallie Greenough
Grant Griffiths & Raffaella Lo Castro
Peter Grove & Nancy Greene
Jim & Barbara Haley
Debbie Hamilton
Greg & Lorrie Harper
Carol Harris
Nancy Harris
Jane Hastings
Leo & Stacey Helmers
Christine Henisee
John Herzog
Bob & Barbara Hobbs
James & Mia Holman
- Sandra Hudson
Alex & Tucker Hurtado
Kathy Hutchinson
Tony & Sally Jannetta
Wilson Jeffreys
Phil & Meghan Jodz
Mimi Johnson
David & Joanna Johnson
Jo Ann Jones
Helen Justi
Betty Justi
Gordie & Janice Keen
Susan Keith
Jim Kelleher & Rik Morris
Cecy Keller
Morris & Anne Kellett
Eric Keuffel & Meena Thayu
Jenny Kirkpatrick
Hope Knight
Elizabeth Kuensell
Barbara Ladd
Anthony & Judy Lane
John & Melanie LeBoeuf
Margery P. Lee
Victoria Leidner
Timothy & Lauren Leithead
Nelly Lincoln
Roger & Monica Lind
Barb Linder
John & Elaine Lisle
Kyle & Marlies Lissack
Stephen LoCastro & Laurie MacKenzie
Marian Lockett-Egan
Charlie & Betsy MacIntosh
Mackie & Charlotte MacLean
Sandy & Louise Marx
Josselyn McAdam
Jim & Louise McCabe
Tony & Binney McCague
Brook & Connie McCann
Barbara McClenahan
James & Kristin McGinley
Rodger & Lauren McKinney
Lisa McLean
Sandra McLean
Elizabeth McLean
Sandy McMullin
Hunter & Pamela McMullin
Charles & Mary Ellen Merwin
Gregg & Mary Miller
Harry & Rachel Miller
Rob & Janie Morris
Perc & Sally Moser
Abraham Munabi & Susan Adeniyi-Jones
Jean Murdock
Karen Nagel
Robert & Priscilla Nalls
Ted & Carol Neilson
Lathrop & Lorna Nelson
Phil & Nancy Nord
Ryan & Rebecca Northington
Francesca Northrup
Michael & Theresa Palmisano
Lanny & Ann Patten
Mark Patten
Roz Pendergast
Thomas & Melissa Peter
John Pickering
Hobie & Pamela Porter
Patricia Pruett
Dee Pugh
Alfy & Kathleen Putnam
Luisa and Eric Rabe
David & Jessie Rae
Doug & Lisa Raymond
Michael & Elizabeth Reese
Karl Richter & Susan Rushing
Jay & Gretchen Riley

THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME PARISH BUSINESS



By JAY EINSPANIER

No, not Advent, although that is certainly quite wonderful. I’m talking about preparing the parish budget! I know: “Cue the eye roll.” Come on, it’s not that boring. The best thing to compare it to is your annual physical. Some news will be good and some perhaps not.

We begin the budget process in August. Staff members are asked to review their individual budgets and submit any adjustments. We continue the process through December with a Vestry approval in early January. The Finance Committee along with the Investment Committee also play a huge role in trying to get the budget as accurate as possible. A true unknown, especially this year, is inflation. Clearly we need to, and do, apply an inflation factor based on what we read and best guesstimates. This year we are going with somewhere between 3% and 4% as an average throughout 2022.

Next year we plan on upgrading to an Ouija board.

Just in case you think we are simply big thinkers and stay way above the boring details, our budget includes 143-line items. Yep, 143 with 24-line items tracking Revenue and 119 looking at Expenses. Each line item is discussed, bent, folded, mutilated and finally entered, continuing until a “balanced” budget is reached.

We make our services available to Washington each year but so far, no response! Since the budget is simply a guide intended to financially direct the Parish, final results can vary. As you know, each year, at the Parish Annual Meeting, the Accounting Warden reports on the previous year’s financial performance. Over the past 14 years, wardens have been able to report a slight budget surplus 10 times. Fingers crossed that we will make it eleven out of fifteen at the end of 2021.

- Philip & Sandy Ringo
Herb Rorer
Daniel & Jessica Safford
Arden Saligman
Patricia Sandiford
Suzanna Saunders
Mort Saunders
Joan Schiller
Karl Schoettle
Nancy Schriber
David & Julie Schroeder
Marda Schropp
Suzette Schultz
Presley Schwinn
Joe & T.C. Scornavacchi
Mary Beth Sedwick & Helen Wortham
David & Diane Senior
Win & Cannie Shafer
Nancy Sharp
Lorraine Simonis
Charlie Silio & Emily Snell
Dan & Patty Slack
Jim & Prill Smartt
Mimi Snyder
Carol Soltis
David & Michele Spence
Tad Sperry & Ellen Harvey
Bailey Sperry
Blair Stambaugh
George Steele & Kathy High
Tracy & Kevin Steele
Scott & Alexis Stephan
- Cindy Stephan
Ann Stewart
Steve & Bebe Strawbridge
Ann Strong
Connie Stuckert
Bill & Leslie Susskind
Radclyffe & Maria Thompson
Christopher & Danielle Trucksess
Mike Tyler
Susan Van Allen
Elizabeth Van Dusen
Peter Vanderveen & Trish Bennett
Jacques & Stephanie Vaulain
John & Karen Wallingford
James & Ellen Wang
Joan Warren
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Daniel Wesley
Brad & Elaine Whitman
Pam Wilford
Julie Williams
Claude & Martha Wintner
Bill & Molly Wood, Jr.
Alan Wood & Hilarie Johnston
Guy Woodruff
David & Ginger Woods
Sook Hee Yoo
Chris Zafiriou & Jessica Harper
2 Anonymous

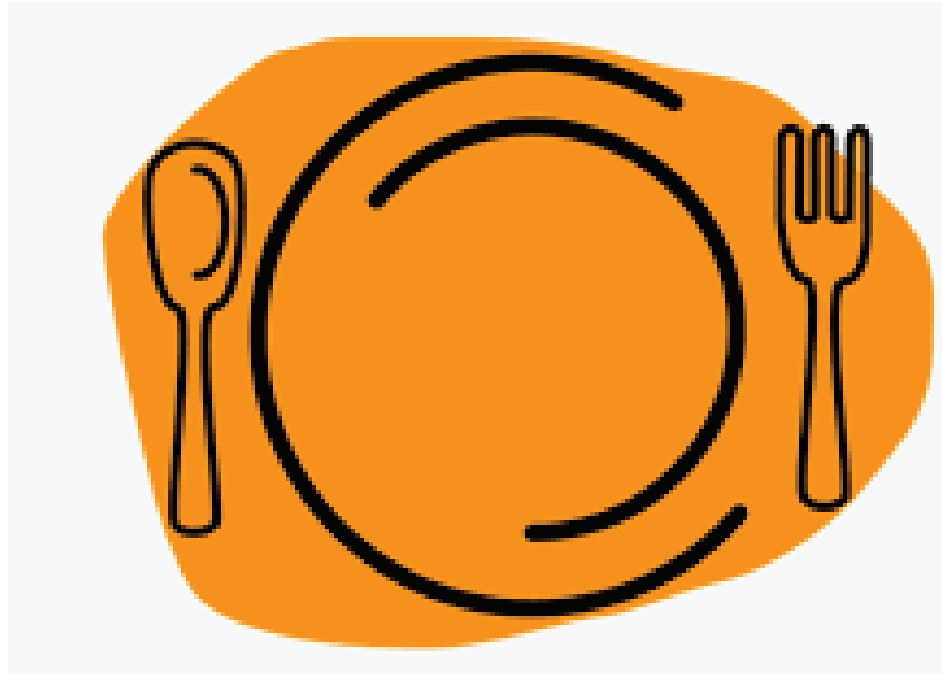
FORMATION

PROVIDING FOR MEMBERS IN NEED

By JO ANN JONES

Now that the program year is underway, and more and more people are gradually making use of the Parish House, we can anticipate changes in scheduling, activities and the many uses to which the Parish House may be put. Several occurrences within the parish have alerted me to new responses that the Pastoral Care Committee might offer to our members.

The arrival of the Palmisano twins was immediately instructive on this point. Their need to attend to their newborn daughters meant that Theresa and Michael could not carry out all the functions that parents of older children manage to meet the family's day-to-day needs. Of particular concern for them was the preparation of meals. Similarly, a member of The Redeemer had serious surgery and faced a long recovery period, again, this family requested the assistance of The Redeemer community to make dinners for them.



The Pastoral Care Committee now plans to assist our members, whenever the need arises, to support them through times of illness, births, and/or whatever

makes it difficult for them to cook for themselves. Please contact any member of the Pastoral Care Committee or Jo Ann if such a need arises. We also

welcome members of the congregation to join the Committee in this activity. While we would love for you to join us for our monthly meetings, we recognize that a meeting during the work week may not be convenient for everyone. Know, however, that we would value your contribution to the work of this group.

Traditionally the members of Pastoral Care Committee have visited those Redeemer members who are housebound or do not venture beyond their homes very much. These dedicated members possess gifts of compassion, insight, patience, and wisdom necessary to support our members in whatever transition or change of life anyone may experience. We welcome the opportunity to offer these gifts widely, and encourage any and all to call upon us to be a companion to you whenever the need occurs.

WHERE THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD

By MICHAEL PALMISANO

Anglican Formation
Thursdays, January 6-February 3
8:00-9:00pm

While in seminary, I took part in a one-month intensive course called *Christian Social Ministry*. During those four weeks, each student spent the morning hours in a classroom discussing the work and legacy of American theologian Walter Rauschenbusch, pioneer of the Christian Social Gospel Movement, and then spent the afternoons serving in various local non-profit organizations. The course was intended to bring our classroom discussions to life and simultaneously invigorate our experiences of service.

This course was taught by The Rev. Dr. Elbert "Bert" Ransom, a long-standing adjunct professor from the Alexandria community. Bert is a magnificent man. A lover of all things musical, he would begin each class by playing a recording of a selection (usually church music) that had struck him earlier that morning. This was his little way of setting our intentions in the context of wonder, love, and praise. He himself is a living testimony to the joy and the efficacy of the Gospel. As a man who was on the receiving end of verbal and physical assaults during the Montgomery Bus Boycott, a man who lost loved ones to racial violence, and who was a friend



of the late MLK, Bert has somehow managed to be unwavering in his proclamation of the Good News and has found joy in the fullness of life.

On multiple occasions Bert would gather himself into a stern posture as he reminded our class that our shared endeavor of learning and serving in this space was "where the rubber meets the road." For Bert, the Gospel came alive principally in the service of God and His people. My contention is that everything we do in the life of the Church is where the proverbial "rubber meets the road." If our prayers, our Scripture, and our celebration of the sacraments have no bearing upon the wholeness of our

life, then all these things are irrelevant, ineffectual, and unworthy of our time. One cannot encounter the risen Christ in prayer, scripture, or sacrament and depart unchanged. Even when we don't "feel it" with our prayers, or understand scripture wholly, or know what's going on with the Eucharist or Baptism, we can be assured that God is working through these things despite our personal ambivalence or ignorance.

That said, a deeper theological search for understanding is our necessary response to the love of God. Our engagement with God through such pursuits is akin to a lover growing in understanding of their partner. It is

through the processes of searching, listening, learning, discerning, and abiding in another's presence that causes partners to fall more deeply into one another. As we come to know more *about* God, we also come to know God. This is what the heart longs for – a deeper understanding and love for God. It is the unending pursuit of the Christian life.

If you have known God for many seasons or years, desire to know more about Him, or know little or anything of Him, I invite you to join us for our class on Anglican Formation during the month of January. For five weeks we will explore the ways in which Baptism, Bible, Prayer, and Eucharist are themselves occasions in which "the rubber meets the road."

This class is a great opportunity for newcomers to the Episcopal Church and those seeking Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation (on February 6, 2022) but is dependent upon the spiritual depth and wisdom of all those interested in seeking a more mature faith. Please consider joining us during the month of January. Classes can be attended either in-person or via Zoom and will run from 8:00pm to 9:00pm on Thursday nights. Drinks and light refreshments will be provided. For more information, please contact Michael Palmisano.

AROUND THE PARISH

CALLING REDEEMER ELVES FOR ECS

BY ANNA GERRITY

It's time to get ready for Christmas—let's help ECS provide a little Christmas light to the families they serve! There are 600 children in the enrichment and mentorship programs, in six schools across the city this year: *Six hundred opportunities to make a big difference...in one precious life.*

It's as easy as purchasing one \$25 gift card, which will be given to the parent to buy the right gift and have the joy of wrapping and presenting it. ***PLEASE, send donations before December 10!***

To participate in the ECS Christmas gift card drive you can choose from the following options:

- 1) **Make an online donation via website:** www.ecsphilly.org/support/donate/
List "Christmas Gift Cards" in the Comments box below your donation.
- 2) **Send a check to ECS** with "Christmas Gift Cards" in the memo line (address below).
- 3) **Order gift cards directly from Target:** choose the option to have them shipped to address below.
- 4) **Order gift cards directly from Walmart:** choose the option to have them shipped to address below.

Episcopal Community Services
225 S. 3rd Street
Philadelphia PA 19106



Once you've placed your order please email Ken Anderson at ECS (Kennetha@ecsphilly.org) so that they are aware of your gift and can watch for it in the mail. And, **THANK YOU!**

CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIALS

Please send the names of the people you wish remembered in the Christmas Memorials. There is a suggested \$25 per name. Please mark these as Christmas Memorials and send them to the Parish Office, attention Fran Merritt, by Monday, December 20. Be sure to write the name(s) clearly so that we don't make a mistake. You can also do it online at: www.TheRedeemer.org/donate_flowers

THE BEAUTIFUL SEASON OF UNWRAPPING

BY PETER VANDERVEEN

There's something particularly lovely about ending the calendar year with the celebration of a birth. And this is all the more accentuated by the many habits and rituals that have become a deeply ingrained part of the season, which culminate in the festivity of unwrapping. We offer gifts. They aren't simply products delivered to our door. At Christmas, it is the *process* of giving and receiving itself that takes unusual precedence. And by this means, the focus shifts from *what* it is that is given to *who* it is that is giving and *who* it is that is receiving. In the exchange of presents we become more closely present to one another.

Augustine famously noted that our downfall as human beings begins when we become creatures who are too exclusively wrapped up in our selves: *homo incurvatus in se*. It is not only the case that we need one another; our greatest joy comes from relationships we have with one another. Our happiness is best seen in someone else's eyes. And as the days become short and darkness and cold linger and the year bends toward the close, we make it our practice to open up ourselves. Giving is a delight. Receiving is a delight. Neither has more magic than the other. Because the real moment of discovery and surprise is personal. It's the connection made with someone else.

We gather together. We share feasts. We sing. We extend generosity to strangers. And the cost isn't all that important, neither in time, nor in effort, nor in dollars. Because all these activities make us feel more abundantly alive. Unbound. Celebrate the unwrapping.



Christmas Village attendees were greeted with a display of the community organizations which benefit from the proceeds.



View Peter Vanderveen's Stewardship Message online at:
www.TheRedeemer.org/give

