

Voice of The Redeemer

Episcopal Church of

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

November
2022

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COMMUNICATING FACE TO FACE

BY PETER VANDERVEEN

Jesus didn't attend any cocktail parties. To the best of my knowledge, this simply was never an opportunity for him. Too bad. I would have liked to have had an account of this in one of the Gospels, which we all could read for our edification. What would the conversation have been? On what topics? Would he have—as we do—mused about politics and business and personal development? Or share gossip? Or would he—as we tend to think of him—have disrupted the party by using this, too, as one more teaching moment, endlessly pointing out individual failures and moral shortcomings and systemic evils? There might have been, then, a quick rush to the bar to freshen libations. (I've experienced this just by walking into a room while wearing a clerical collar). Seriousness can be a serious faux pas.

What we do know from the Scriptural record is that Jesus was inveterately social. He talked with everyone and anyone. He crossed well-established taboos by showing no respect for or even acknowledgement of the distinctions by which we divide ourselves. The dour Pharisees were appalled that he would dirty himself by associating with the poor. And they were jealous that he was invited to eat sumptuously

with the rich and seemed completely at ease in doing so. In the very brief collection of stories assembled in the Gospels, Jesus is found interacting with a notably diverse array of persons: rulers, lepers, people in grief, others seeking his admiration, authorities, outsiders, enemies, fans, those who would never be more than curious, others who followed like groupies. Some were named. Many were not. And across the entire span of these encounters, Jesus never suggested anything that might be taken

as a platform—his answers for all the social problems that came his way. No revolution. No collective overturning. No agenda for systemic correction. No new movement. No step-programs by which we could all create better selves for ourselves. And, in truth, he didn't teach much either. It's perhaps the most devastating way we misread the Gospels, looking to mine tidbits of instruction from what were, in essence, conversations, not tutorials. (A far more appropriate question to ask in place of the pious “What would Jesus do?” would be “What might

Jesus say?” It removes the moral rigidity that comes with the first question and replaces it with a far more imaginative and intimate sense of the possibilities of conversation).

The Gospels infer far more than they tell. We are given multiple examples of brief conversations between Jesus and others that, in their descriptions, barely scratch the surface of what may actually have happened. Almost every story is boiled down to the exchange of just a few words.

And we're told little, if anything, about the context or the way that the words that were spoken may have registered a physical response: glee, embarrassment, confusion, disappointment, ecstasy, awkwardness; these all are better shown than said. They are revealed most by our bodies.

And yet, even in their spareness, what the Gospels make clear is that Jesus was extraordinarily skilled in connecting. In just a few statements he could convince whoever it was to whom he was speaking that he saw them. He saw them; whether in the depths of their travails

or in the mire of human complexity or apart from all the false judgments that so often hide us from one another. All the detritus fell away. Jesus had a sense of the moment and the power of not being distracted. He also knew the gift of conversation. Topics are mere topics. Issues are mere issues. Gossip tends to get nearly everything wrong. But talk is most beautiful and powerful when it serves as an exercise of mutual disclosure of selves. Especially when it's God who is speaking.

When I think of the holiday of Thanksgiving, my first thought isn't of food or travel or football or being on the verge of a shopping extravaganza. I think of time provided for conversation, with family, friends, strangers, at table, and in the leisure of having no other agenda. For it's this speaking with one another that evokes thankfulness. Food is eaten and gone. Games are won or lost. Stuff is acquired. But meaning and grace and profound gratitude come only, enduringly, from communicating face to face. And this, in addition to Thanksgiving, is the primary work and witness of the church. Not morals. Not rules. But being a community formed by intentional delight in conversing—with one another and with God.

Jesus never suggested anything that might be taken as a platform

WHAT'S INSIDE

Organized around principal themes of: Parish News, Program Reports, Arc of Formation, Budget & Stewardship, Outreach, Choirs & Music

Thank You Lord.....	2
November Forums.....	2
Sing Out!.....	3
Tour St. Barnabas Center.....	3
Survey Says.....	3
RYG Celebrates Fall	3
Get Your Christmas Village Tkts..	4
Meet Jennifer Leith	4
Grants Update	4

STEWARDSHIP AS HOSPITALITY

BY GLENN BEAMER & CHRIS CHOJNACKI

Zacheus ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see Jesus.... When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacheus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

Luke 19:4-6

Jesus calls Zacheus to stewardship. While the crowd responds with disdain, Zacheus responds generously and enthusiastically. Jesus chose a person who was, by his own doing, ostracized in the community. Entering Zacheus' home, Jesus created a space in which Zacheus could know Jesus; He perceives Zacheus' essential worth, in ways that the crowd, seeing only the hated tax collector, cannot. Zacheus starts with faith, becomes Jesus host, comes to know Jesus and experiences real joy.

The theologian Henri Nouwen wrote about communities' spiritual movement from hostility to hospitality. In *Reaching*

Out, Nouwen writes:

Hospitality...means primarily the creation of a free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend...Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place.

Many of us may think of stewardship as a necessary but siloed part of our faith journeys. We need to support the church financially, obviously, but stew-

ardship is broader than that. Stewardship is an invitation to be the host for our entire community and help create the space where change can take place. Then perhaps we can climb down from our own metaphorical tree and welcome one another gladly.

Make your 2023 pledge online at:
www.TheRedeemer.org/pledge

Remembering All Souls

The Requiem of Maurice Durúfle

sung by the combined choirs of The Redeemer
Conducted by Michael Diorio
Accompanied by Alexander Leonardi, organ

Sunday, November 6 at 4pm



More information
www.TheRedeemer.org/MusicSeries



FORMATION

GLIMPSES OF THE ETERNAL
Ministries with Children

By TORY DUNKLE

One of my favorite Church School rituals, that I have co-opted into a nightly ritual with Anna, is singing “Thank You Lord for This Fine Day.” On a Sunday morning it serves as a beautiful way to acknowledge each person present by name. Taken out of the Church School context, it has served as a beautiful reminder of one of the true graces of this life: community.

I started singing it during Anna’s bedtime routine in an effort to establish a practice of daily thankfulness for any and everything—pacifiers, Nana, cheese, friends, etc. But the more we sang it, the more we began naming all the people in our lives instead of the things. Now our song is filled with the names of those we love. There is a certain kind of power and grace present as we sing “Thank you Lord” and specifically and pointedly name and thank God for the people in our lives.

I’ve been meditating more and more

*Thank You, Lord, For This Fine Day,
Right Where We Are.
Alleluia, Praise The Lord!
Right Where We Are.
Thank You, Lord, For Loving Us,
Right Where We Are.
Thank You, Lord, For Giving Us Peace,
Right Where We Are.
Thank You, Lord, For Setting Us Free,
Right Where We Are.*

on this simple song and practice. There are many “things” in this life that I am indeed thankful for - a warm home, nourishing food, etc. I could just as easily reinsert these things into the song as Anna and I sing it each night. But to do so would be to ignore something more powerful than simply someone’s name.

Thankfulness rooted simply in the “things” of this life neglects to acknowledge something of the eternal. Each time we sing this song together and call out each name, I am reminded of the ways in which I have “seen” God in each person and relationship.

We are lucky that our kids live lives where it is fairly easy to list all the things they are thankful for. But as parents and leaders, we can’t let them stop there. This Thanksgiving season, let’s push our children (and ourselves) to acknowledge the people and relationships that point us towards the eternal. I’ll start: Thank you Lord for the children of the Redeemer, who invite me to participate as they openly wonder who you are and how deep your love flows.

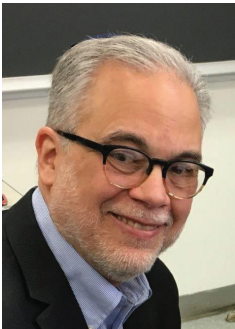


ADULT FORUMS: ALIGNMENT & OUTREACH

By WINNIE SMITH

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November 7: Alignment Sunday
Rabbi Richard Hirsh has served in congregations, seminary, agencies, and on campus during his four decades as a rabbi. Interfaith conversation, sharing, and learning have been central to his rabbinate. On November 7, Rabbi Hirsh will lead our Adult Forum on Psalms in his trademark fun and accessible presentation style. You won’t want to miss this forum!



November 13
Come and hear from **the Rev. Canon Betsy Ivey**, Diocesan Canon for Growth and Support, who will speak about the Diocese of Pennsylvania City Camps. These summer camps provide recreation and fun for families in underserved neighborhoods of the diocese.

November 20
As our final Sunday of the Outreach Series, we will have **Dave Griffith**, ECS

executive director and head coach, and our own **Carol Neilson**, Chief Advancement Officer of Episcopal Community Services. Learn about our strong relationship with ECS and the amazing work it does.



SAVE THE DATE
Candlelight Service of Nine Lessons & Carols
in the tradition of Kings College, Cambridge
Sunday, December 11, 5:00pm

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

Directed by Michael Diorio Organist & Director of Music
Accompanied by Alexander Leonardi
Michael Stairs Organ Scholar

Admission is without charge. Any free-will offering received will support the Margaret Orr Memorial Choral Scholarship. Reception to follow in Burns Hall.

Voice of The Redeemer
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Deadline for the December issue: November 16

OUTREACH

DIRECTIONS FOR CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

A Period Piece ~ Still Relevant Today

By MICHAEL DIORIO

While pulling some books from a shelf at home, a small pamphlet fell out of a dusty tome. The book is called *Church Music in History and Practice: Studies in the Praise of God*, authored by Winfred Douglas in 1937. I must admit that I have yet to open this book, and from the look of its remarkably good condition neither has anyone else in the 85 years since its publication. However, the small pamphlet that fell out of Douglas' book is roughly 255 years old. The information and instruction on it has probably garnered far more attention than Ms. Douglas' work.

It gave me a laugh because, while it uses a somewhat dated language, it basically asks for the type of engaged congregational singing that any one of my colleagues would be delighted to experience at our respective parishes. I would like to share, verbatim, the following period piece, the aim of which remains relevant today. Here is a brief tutorial from John Wesley's 1761 list of "Directions for Congregational Singing":

Sing all. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up, and you will find it a blessing.

Sing lustily, and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you are half-dead or half-asleep; but lift up your voice with strength. Be not afraid of your voice now, nor more ashamed of its being heard, than when you sing the songs of Satan. (Diorio Note: I suspect, here, Dr. Wesley is referring to music that is secular in nature, not an actual evil ode to darkness.)

Sing modestly. Do not bawl, so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation—that you may not destroy the harmony—but strive to unite your voices together so as to make one clear melodious sound.

Sing in time. Whatever time is sung, be sure to keep with it. Do not run before nor stay behind it; but attend close to the leading voices, and move therewith as exactly as you can; and take care not to sing too slow. This drawling way naturally steals on all who are lazy; and it is high time to drive it out from among us, and sing all our tunes just as quick as we did at first.

Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing to him. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to do this, attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your heart is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so shall your singing be such as the Lord will approve of here, and reward you when he cometh in the clouds of heaven.

I imagine this list was once plastered in the front of hymnals found in pews all over, or at least in those churches that subscribed to Wesley's reforms. While this list made me chuckle a bit, I was reminded that what is said in this list is all still very important today, but can be said more plainly: everybody sing, with courage, with clarity and with an aim to understand of both the text and the purpose of church song, itself.

As I tell the choir, you need to let yourselves be moved by believing what you are singing, and then the sound will instantly change. I would go one step further and say that such a changed sound will influence a heightened experience of our worship together. The next time a hymn approaches and you sense hesitation or shyness from your "pew partner," I would challenge you to stir up their courage by mustering your own and sing out—you might just set a trend.

TOUR ST. BARNABAS RESOURCE CENTER

Tour St. Barnabas Community Resource Center with us! Tuesday, November 8 at 1:00pm

ECS transformed St. Barnabas Mission from a 107-bed emergency shelter to a community resource center. Tour the open-choice food pantry, the industrial kitchen, the playground, the health center, the community meeting rooms, and hear how the center is becoming a resource for community-centric health and prosperity in West Philadelphia, just 6 miles from The Redeemer.

Be inspired by this video of the SBCRC Opening at <https://ecsphilly.org/st-barnabas/>

Address: 6006 W. Girard Avenue, Philadelphia (corner of Girard and North Edgewood). Park on North Edgewood (one-way street heading north, so you may need to drive around the block), the surface parking lot midway down the block on North Edgewood, or across the street for those parking on Girard (to avoid parking too close to the trolley tracks on the near side).

Contact Anna Gerrity (agrunrun@gmail.com) for additional information and to sign up for the tour. Carpool meeting at Redeemer at 12:30pm.

MOVING INTO OUR FUTURE

By JO ANN JONES

In January, 2019, the Vestry embarked upon its most recent strategic planning process focused on growth, particularly in terms of membership. One of the noteworthy comments that the planning consultant made at the initiation of this work was that we present ourselves as disciples so attractive to others that they would want to join Church of the Redeemer in order to pursue their discipleship with us.

Our work led us to examine how we might develop our strategy in light of the Church's mission statement. Vestry members then worked with specific portions of the statement, with these words becoming the focus of my involvement: "The mission of Church of the Redeemer is to celebrate the love of God in Jesus Christ... supporting each other and our world through the generous and creative use of God's gifts."

A number of you responded to the survey

circulated last year; the Vestry will soon report on its results to you. Those of you who shared your responses demonstrated that there is a wealth of opportunities for Redeemer members to support each other and our world through the generous and creative use of God's gifts. This suggests that the next steps in our work in strategic planning is to engage these respondents in a series of thoughtful conversations about how they see themselves offering their gifts in furtherance of our mission statement. The possible next steps would be:

- 1) encourage members to engage with existing opportunities to use these gifts;
- 2) encourage members to create new opportunities for The Redeemer and its members to see these gifts in a different light and activity and;
- 3) invite others to discern further or to lead individuals to discern further how they might offer their gifts.

BUSY FALL FOR RYG



By REBECCA NORTINGTON

The Redeemer Youth Group, RYG, has had a wonderful start to the school season. In keeping with our theme of Lamentation, we had a brutal canoe trip with soaking rains and plummeting temperatures in September. We survived and lived to "lament" our struggles. We have had two wonderful trips to the St. Francis Inn in Kensington where we have served the community there that has struggled with homelessness and lived through the Opioid crisis, and the resulting heroin epidemic. We have developed relationships over the years with patrons as well as those serving at the St. Francis on Sunday mornings. Frank, an older school teacher from St. Joe's Prep who has volunteered for years at St. Francis has come to know our group and lovingly welcomes us each week we come. He is blown away that the kids serve not because they need to fulfill service hours, but because they truly love the work and the people.

Our Fall Fundraiser raised much-needed funds for our trip to the Navajo Nation in June. We hope many of you were able to attend the event, that afforded an opportunity for the parish and surrounding community to get to



know our fabulous youth! These kids come week after week to serve, to build toward our trip, and to wrestle with life's big questions in a community that wants to nurture compassion and understanding. Lamentation, for example, is an expression of suffering; which prompts the question, "Why do we suffer?", and tangentially, "What do we do with that suffering?"

We have looked at contemporary pop music from Taylor Swift to Kendrick Lamar to acknowledge the many ways artists process their pain through music. We have distinguished songs of lamentation versus songs of prayer: prayer of hope, thanksgiving, petition, and awe. As leaders we are urging our youth to recognize their own struggles and to process that hurt in ways that can facilitate healing. Scripture reminds us that pain has always been part and parcel to the human story. God does not try to "snowplow" the pain away; but God is with us through it. Many of the musicians we have talked about this fall express the importance of God's presence through their own suffering, and this exercise of listening for those lyrics can remind all of us of the universality of the human story.

OUTREACH



By KATE CHOJNACKI

The Christmas Village is quickly approaching! On Friday, November 18 from 6 to 9 pm, The Redeemer community as well as friends and neighbors will gather to enjoy an outdoor European-style Christmas Village with sparkling lights, delicious food, fun cocktails, mocktails, wine, festive live music, a silent auction and most importantly, a variety of select vendor booths.

Participants can begin their Christmas shopping, knowing that a portion of the monies raised will benefit Redeemer’s outreach efforts.

Featured vendors will include old favorites such as Children’s Book World, Painted Sky Alpaca Farm & Fiber, and Fairhope Graphics. There will also be an exciting selection of new vendors including Kendra Scott Jewelers, the WW Collection (beautiful things to dress you and your home), and Bridget Rose Fine Stationery & Designs.

This year we look forward to 13th Street Cocktails returning with a carefully curated cocktail and mocktail menu and a beautiful wine bar. In addition, The Flying Deutschman and Epicurean Garage will be offering delicious food from their festive trucks.

As in last year, there is no charge for admission to the Village either day; however, if you would like to enjoy a meal and beverages from our food trucks on Friday evening, you will need to register and purchase meal tickets at: <https://redeemerchristmasvillage.asimobile.net/>. Because of the food trucks’ capacity limitations, we cannot guarantee that there will be food available for purchase on Friday evening to those who do not register in advance. Please note that Friday’s event is adults only.

On Saturday, November 19 the Christmas Village is open from 10 am to 3 pm to adults and children of the parish, our friends and neighbors and the broader Philadelphia community. Saturday will have the added benefit of a delightful shopping experience for children as well as specially designed activities to entertain and delight. Again, a portion of all proceeds will go to Redeemer’s outreach efforts, so please do come and shop for a cause!

Please contact Kate Chojnacki (kate.chojnacki@gmail.com), Elisabeth Cooke (elisabeth.c.cooke@gmail.com) or Caroline Manogue (cbmanogue@gmail.com) with any questions about registration, the event or opportunities to help. It truly takes a village for The Redeemer to have a successful Christmas Village!

NEW PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

By JEN LEITH



It is with great pleasure that I introduce myself to The Redeemer community via this initial article as the new Parish Administrator. Since my first day on October 17, I have been wonderfully and warmly received by fellow staff and clergy and the many congregational members whom I have had the pleasure to meet so far.

I know that Jay Einspanier will not be an easy act to follow. And I thank him for his time and gift of knowledge sharing during our transitional overlap.

By way of professional background, after a post-graduate school stint as a US Peace Corps Volunteer in Mauritania, I have spent the majority of my career in nonprofit operations and management with various direct service and social impact organizations such as WOMEN’S WAY, The Douty Foundation and most recently, the IHM Center for Literacy.

My husband, Mitch Cron, and I, along with our two sons (Finn and Aidan) have lived in Ardmore for the past 16 years. We love the walkability of the surrounding neighborhoods, the abundance of outdoor activities and the enthusiastic support of local sports teams. We are also members of St. Denis parish in Havertown, PA.

I look forward to getting a chance to meet many more Redeemer community members in the coming weeks at a future event, coffee hour or meeting. But please stop by and say hello at any time if you are in the neighborhood.

OUTREACH GRANTS UPDATE

By JAN CLARKE

This year’s grant cycle was a busy and rewarding one for the Outreach Grants Committee! Five enthusiastic new members (Lisa Black, Kitty Farnham, Sallie Greenough, Barbara Hobbs, and Cheryl Masterman) worked closely with long-time members Carolyn Bennett, Sam Morris, Jan Clarke (Chairperson) and Jo Ann Jones (Clergy Liaison) on application reviews, interviews with organization executive directors, and site visits. The following Committee recommendations were approved by the Outreach Steering Committee.

OUTREACH GRANTS AND PROGRAM FUNDING – July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023		
ORGANIZATION	PROJECT	GRANT
Global Programs Total:		\$3,000
African Children’s Mission ^P	COVID support services in Malawi	\$3,000
Food Support Programs Total:		\$15,500
Main Line Meals on Wheels ^P	Operating expenses	\$4,000
St. Gabriel’s Mission ^P	Feeding/counseling ministry support	\$2,500
Darby Mission ^P	Food/support services support	\$3,500
Church of the Advocate Café	5-day/week feeding ministry	\$5,500
Children and Camps Total:		\$7,500
Diocesan Summer Youth Camp	Reduce family cost to \$50/week for 60 campers	\$7,500
Programs for Elderly Total:		\$8,000
ElderNet of Main Line and Narberth ^P	Support for elderly, disabled to remain in their homes	\$8,000
Support for Programs Addressing Homelessness Total:		\$50,500
Family Promise – Main Line ^P	Operating expenses	\$14,500
Episcopal Community Services ^P	“MindSet” Program/other services	\$35,000
St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church ^P	Support new program for homeless	\$1,000
Training/Enrichment/Support Programs Total:		\$14,000
St. James School ^P	Support for wellness center	\$8,000
Legal Aid of DioPA ^P	Free legal counseling (civic issues)	\$6,000
TOTAL GRANTS DISTRIBUTED:		\$98,500
Redeemer Program funding:		
Redeemer Youth Group (program)	“Rise Against Hunger” project	\$1,650*
St. Gabriel’s Lunch Program	Redeemer service project	\$3,000
TOTAL FUNDS ALLOCATED:		\$103,150

*Previously approved but unspent funds were applied to cover the full cost of \$3,800.
^P Indicates “partner” relationship between Redeemer and organization (i.e., current parishioner involvement in organization and/or programs)
Note: Vestry funds Christmas Bag Program separately.

Where and how can someone apply for a 2022-2023 Outreach Grant?
An updated application is posted publicly on the Redeemer website (<https://www.theredeemer.org/grants>) by Dec. 1st each year. Any charitable organization or program that seeks to improve the lives of those living in poverty may apply, and the deadline for receiving completed forms and supporting material is January 31.

Why do many of the same organizations receive grants every year? As described on the face sheet of the application, priority is given to organizations that engage members of the Redeemer community in providing direct support to clients and/or in which members participate at the board/committee/administrative level. Priority is also given to organizations that have a relationship with the Episcopal Church.

How are grants funded? A majority of funds come from an annual outreach benefit event like The Christmas Village! Typically, the Vestry contributes a portion and sets the grants budget.



On Sunday, October 30, we celebrated and thanked Jay Einspanier as he enters retirement for his 15 years-plus years of service to The Redeemer.