

Parish Celebration and Annual Meeting

January 31, 2010

Annual Report for 2009



AGENDA

- 9:30 A.M. Eucharist and Priest-in-Charge's Address
- 10:30 A.M. Brunch and Images of 2009
- 11:00 A. M. Call to Order and Opening Hymn
- 11:05 A.M. Certification of a Quorum by the Clerk and Approval of 2009 Minutes – Janet Kern
- 11:10 A.M. Wardens' Report on 2009 and Acknowledgement of Outgoing Vestry – Connie Parrish and George Murnaghan
- 11:25 A.M. 2009 Nominating Committee Report – Julia Francis
- 11:30 A.M. Election of Officers, Vestry, Deanery Representatives, and Endowment Committee Members
- 11:40 P.M. Election of 2010 Nominating Committee
- 11:55 A.M. Treasurer's Report for 2009 – Dinesh Dulipsingh
- 12:10 A.M. Presentation of Budget for 2010 – Jim Neumann
- 12:25 P.M. Election results of 2010 Nominating Committee
- 12:30 P.M. Adjourn

Nominating Committee Report for 2009 Annual Meeting

To: Clerk of the Vestry, Church of Our Redeemer, Lexington, MA

From: Nominating Committee, Julia Francis (Chair), Ian Fox, Julia Francis, Frank Kern, Jessie Maeck, and Chris Needham

Date: January 5, 2010

Re: Nominations for elected positions of parish governance for Annual Meeting, 2010

We nominate the following members of the parish for the officers, vestry, delegates to the Alewife Deanery, and endowment committee as indicated below:

Sr. Warden: Connie Parrish

Jr. Warden: George Murnaghan

Treasurer: Dinesh Dulipsingh

Clerk: No nominee found

Vestry Members for three-year terms:

Paula Antonevich & Susan Emanuel

Vestry Members for one-year terms:

Robert Bettacchi

Youth Representatives:

Rose Bennett & Alex Davis

Deanery Representatives:

Paula Antonevich, Mary Ann Burnside, Tony Johnson, Tom Pryce-Digby, & Greg Ruth

Endowment Committee:

Sally Zimmerman

2009 Retreat Report

Redeemer's Sixth Annual Intergenerational Parish Family Weekend, October 2-4, 2009 at the Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center in Greenfield, N.H. was a great success, with 51 adults (10 for Saturday only), 18 teens, and 17 children. Built around the theme "This Fragile Earth, our Island Home," activities and program focused on stewardship of the earth through sustainable living. For the Friday night ice-breaker, Julien Goulet used the game "Where the Wind Blows" to present some sobering facts about agriculture and the environment. The campfire following produced the usual number of songs and s'mores. Saturday morning began with a circle liturgy led by the J2A pilgrims. The program then included a partial screening of the documentary Affluenza; an introduction to climate change by Kerry Emanuel; and activities focusing on our carbon footprint from household energy use (Frank Kern) and our eating habits (Julien Goulet, Cara Kalf, and Janet Kern). The usual Saturday ropes and waterfront activities had to be cancelled due to weather, but the indoor games organized by Janet Needham and others proved to be fun and quite intergenerational. Saturday night's square dancing called by Geoff Cooper was the perfect end of a stimulating day. The Sunday morning Eucharist planned by Kate Ekrem, Sabeth Fitzgibbons, Cara Kalf, and Beth Murnaghan, with music provided by Cara Kalf, Mary Etta King, and Erica Brotschi was creative and joyous, with the offering our pledges of ways we each plan to reduce our environmental impact in the year ahead. We left the camp committed to sharing our experience with the rest of the parish through Sunday adult formation sessions during the year. We are grateful to Randy and Cassie Bowlby who organized the retreat for the third straight year, and to Janet Kern for stepping up at the last minute after the death of Cassie's mother. The Kings have agreed organize the weekends for 2010-2012.

2009 Retreat Committee: Cassie Bowlby and Randy Bowlby, Claudia Cooper, Kate Ekrem, Sabeth Fitzgibbons and Julien Goulet, Cara and Alan Kalf, Janet Kern, Bob and Mary Etta King, Beth Murnaghan, Janet Needham, Connie Parrish, and Peg Wright.

Finance Committee Report for 2009

Redeemer's 2009 Finance Committee consists of Jim Neumann (chair), Dinesh Singh, George Murnaghan, Sam Stevens, Dorothy Swithenbank, and Suresh Reginald. We are fortunate to have members who are broadly involved in church-wide activities, allowing us to work closely with the Vestry, Executive, Personnel, Mission, Stewardship, and Property Committees. In addition to the current Treasurer, two of our members are former COOR Treasurers, and one was Treasurer at another church.

We meet once monthly, usually on the third Monday of each month, and our main activities include reviewing the prior month's financial report for presentation to Vestry. We review income and expenses at a detailed level, ensuring accurate categorization, and provide input to other Committees and budget managers to try to keep the Church on track with the budget, and recommend Vestry action where necessary. We also review and prepare revisions to financial policies. Beginning as early as August, when we prepare our first draft projections, and continuing through January, we support Vestry's budget deliberations, maintain detailed historical budget performance data, make income and expense projections, and provide budget recommendations for Vestry consideration. Budget season is a busy time for us!

Some of our other projects and topics this year have included:

- *Church Credit Card* – Redeemer has long had a church credit card, but it appeared to have minimal controls on its use. After some analysis of our options, we cancelled that card and opened a corporate account, set up a limited number of authorized uses, developed policies for usage (for Vestry approval), and set up new controls to ensure use only for legitimate and budgeted Church business.
- *Investment Committee* – This Committee, technically a subcommittee of Finance, has not met for a long time because of membership problems. We recently took up the issue of re-energizing the committee. Interested in being a member? Contact George or Dinesh.
- *Planned Giving* – The Committee did some research on how a planning giving program might work. We hope to take this up again after the budget season.
- *Capital Campaign* – Finance will likely be playing a role in launching a new capital campaign in 2010.

ACOLYTES 2009-2010

We have eleven acolytes currently of which three are new members. The remaining seven members have been faithfully serving the Redeemer community for more than several years. All children 10 years of age and older are eligible to be an acolyte.

On October 18, 2009, we had a ceremony for the commissioning of all acolytes during the 9:30 service. It's the first time this ceremony was done at Redeemer.

During the calendar year, acolytes participate in two training sessions followed by refreshments and playing the board game, "All Around The Altar."

A cook-out celebration is being planned in May 2010 for all acolytes to participate in.

Acolytes will be awarded their crosses in May during recognition Sunday. Their awards are based on the number of years of service.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Keshishian, chair & Jean Ricci, co-chair

Pastoral Care Team Report

The Pastoral Care Team is a group of lay ministers who visit those who are sick, in the hospital, or homebound. Some members are Licensed Eucharistic Visitors who can bring Communion, others make pastoral visits without Communion. The group regularly visits about ten members of the congregation who can't get to church on Sunday.

The Pastoral Care Team meets regularly with the clergy to provide each other with support for this ministry and make sure that all those who need visits are receiving them. They also advise the clergy on who may need a visit from a clergyperson and coordinate other ways of reaching out to members of the parish in need.

This year, the Pastoral Care Team sponsored two wonderful events at the Brookhaven retirement community. One was a tea in October to introduce our new priest-in-charge, with delicious food and friendly conversation. The other was an Epiphany service at Brookhaven that had over 30 attendees. After the worship service, refreshments and a "three kings cake" were enjoyed by all. Many thanks to Mary Nokes, Evelyn Hausslein, Julia Francis, and Nancy Williams for their wonderful ministry on the Pastoral Care Team and to all the members of our congregation who more informally visit those who are sick or in need.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Kate Ekrem
Priest-in-Charge

Report of the Alewife Deanery Representatives

Members: Paula Antonevich, Mary Ann Burnside, Tony Johnson, Tom Pryce-Digby, Greg Ruth (and all clergy *ex-officio*)

2009 Accomplishments:

In 2009, your Redeemer representatives met with reps from other churches in the Alewife Deanery approximately every two months. The meetings involve a good deal of social interaction and fun, there is always good food, and a chance to explore the other churches in the area. The meetings often start with a discussion of broader issues in the diocese and Episcopal community. At the September meeting, Bishop Tom Shaw gave us his view of the most interesting initiatives underway in the Diocese of Eastern Mass.

The main order of business of Deanery meetings is planning of events and approval of grants. The main event supported by the Alewife Deanery was the May 2009 "Jubilee Celebrates Africa" Dinner/Auction at St. Peters Church in Weston - an evening of African food, live music and storytelling. The event was sold-out (tickets at \$25-\$100, cash bar). Various grants (in the order of \$500 - \$2500) were reviewed and approved for various mission activities of our deanery churches.

Your deanery representatives also hosted a forum at Redeemer in advance of the annual Diocesan Convention to discuss resolutions to be voted on. We reviewed the budget proposal, and had an intense and moving discussion about resolutions 1) Requesting our bishop to allow clergy to officiate same sex marriages; and 2) for Episcopalians to explore their historical role and participation in slavery in Massachusetts. All resolutions were approved at the Convention held at Trinity Church (Copley Square) on Nov 6-7, 2009.

Plans for 2010:

Redeemer has been asked to host the Jubilee Dinner/Auction in late April or May this year. Deanery representatives will support this event.

Also, it is suggested that better co-ordination with the vestry could be established for making applications for deanery grants. There are a variety of small grants (\$500-\$2500) available from the deanery for mission activities. These grants are often targeted for specific activities (i.e. service of women & children; or overseas missions). Deanery reps could be more active in coordinating grant applications with interested mission leaders at Redeemer.

Christian Formation Report

God invites each of us, throughout our lives, to learn more, pray more, and grow deeper in our relationship with God. This is Christian formation, something to be desired and nurtured for all of us. This nurturing of our spiritual journey is the role of our Christian Formation programs.

We honored our 2008-2009 teachers and parent helpers on May 17th at the 9:30 a.m. service, and we commissioned our 2009-2010 teachers, helpers, mentors, and leaders for children and youth programs on September 20 at the 9:30am service.

Children

We do ask that parents remain on the church premises during classes. We hope that you model your own continued Christian formation by participating in adult programs, or spend time building the Redeemer community in fellowship!

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd provides the Christian formation program for our youngest learners (3 years through 3rd grade). There is also a Catechesis program that meets on Tuesday afternoons, at the same time as children's choir rehearsal. Leaders and parent helpers for Catechesis in 2009 included Evelyn Hausslein, Carolyn Schultz, Linda Kukolich, Barbara Fortier, and Jennifer Voss.

When children reach 4th grade, they join a class that focuses more on discussion of Scripture and daily living. The class meets on Sundays after the 9:30am service, and includes children up to the age they join the Rite-13 youth class (5th grade some years and 6th grade other years). Leaders for this class in 2009 included Bob King, Peter Koso, Elisabeth Donahue, and Kathleen Mirani.

In 2009, 45 children participated in Redeemer's Christian formation programs.

Youth

The Journey to Adulthood program structures the Sunday morning programs for youth in 6th through 12th grades. Every other year a new Rite-13 class forms, composed of 6th and 7th graders. At the same time, a new J2A class of 8th and 9th graders forms, and the previous year's J2A group becomes a Young Adults in Church (YAC) group for 10th-12th graders. Each group stays together for two years, with some youth remaining in YAC for three years. 2009 was one of those years when we formed all new groups in the fall.

In Rite-13, young people work on forming a Christian community of their peers that is supported by adults other than their parents. They learn about and recognize their individual, unique gifts – including the gift of creativeness and generativity. We celebrate young people around their 13th birthday (hence, the name of the group) with a rite that happens as part of the community's regular Sunday service. Leah Archibald and Alan Kalf led the Rite-13 group that finished in the spring. The new Rite-13 group formed in the fall, and led by Sam Stevens (and currently seeking at least one more leader!).

In 2009, our Rite-13 Celebrities (the young people we celebrated) were: Alex Avery, Eliza Koso, Julia McLaughlin, Leah Mirani, and Sam Williams. The newly formed group has 16 members, so watch for more Rite-13 celebrations in 2010!

The J2A group is the next older group than Rite-13. This group's focus is to build on the community they created in Rite-13, while learning and practicing skills for being successful and caring adults in the church and in the world. The culmination of learning and practicing all these skills is a spiritual pilgrimage that they plan, fundraise, and prepare to take at the end of the second year of the program. Beth and George Murnaghan and Sandy Keshishian led the J2A group that finished in the spring (and went on pilgrimage to Borderlands Ranch in South Dakota in the summer). The new J2A group of current 8th and 9th graders is led by Ashley Rooney, Judy Downes, and Steve Burns.

In fall 2009, we formed our first-ever Young Adults in Church (YAC) group for 10th-12th graders. The returned pilgrims joined with some of their peer, welcomed some new teenagers as well as new leaders Alan and Cara Kalf. This group focuses on helping young adults further identify their gifts and passions, and where they can engage in ministries through the church. This group is a wonderful addition to our Sunday morning programming!

In 2009, 38 youth participated in Sunday morning Christian formation programs, and an additional (non-duplicated) 10 young people participated in the Sunday evening youth group.

The Youth Group meets Sunday evenings to prepare dinner together, share fellowship over the meal, and clean up. They also do some fun activities, like bowling and attending the diocesan Senior High Retreat, as well as some mission-oriented activities like cooking for Sandra's Lodge and shopping for Christmas gifts for the Grow Clinic. Youth Group leaders in 2009 included Chris Needham, Tina Bentley, Helene Huggins, Jack Manes, and Cathy Burns.

Adults

The Adult Formation program meets Sunday mornings after the 9:30am service. 2009 programs included:

- *Traces of the Trade* film viewing and discussion
- Radical Welcome with guest preacher/teacher the Rev. Stephanie Spellers
- Faith and Finances series
- Holy Listening sessions
- Midsummer's Eve Candlelight Labyrinth Walk
- Two Walk and Roll Sundays in the summer – encouraging people to get to church by their own foot and wheel power
- Ministry Fair
- Meet Kate! session to meet our new Priest-In-Charge
- Instructed Eucharist with Q&A session
- Pilgrimage Report with pictures and pancakes
- Music Sunday
- Welcome Team session with Megan Rasbold-Gabbard
- Report on Diocesan Convention
- Report on the parish budget
- Mission – where we've been and where we're going
- Forum with Bishop Tom Shaw
- The Advent Conspiracy series

The Adult Formation Committee, which met in the early part of the year, included Jack Manes, Jessie Maeck, Greg Ruth, Dorothy Swithenbank, Susan Emanuel, and Barbara Beinhocker.

Nursery

Nursery care allows parents of children through age 4 to participate in worship and in their own Christian formation. Our nursery is staffed from 9:00am to 12 noon every Sunday by Safe Church-trained and CORI-checked adults. Caregivers this year were Elaine Huang, Kathy Carcione, Chris Neumann, and Laura Kelly.

Ad Hoc Nursery Committee

In 2009, the Assistant Priest convened an ad hoc Nursery Committee to establish a vision statement for the Nursery ministry, to address the need for a Safe Church policy for the Nursery, and to create a Master Plan for accomplishing the Nursery vision statement. The committee included members of the congregation with interest and expertise in early childhood development as well as parents who are nursery-users: Jack Manes (vestry liaison), Mary Ucci, Ian Fox, Nancy Williams, Kate Needham, Sabeth Fitzgibbons (clergy), Katherine Mirani, Jed Geyerhahn, Beth Murnaghan.

The committee met five times through September, October, and November, successfully accomplishing the goals for which it was convened. The final report to the vestry recommends a dedicated nursery space and the establishment of a permanent Nursery Committee to oversee/advise about staffing, maintenance/cleaning of nursery and toys, commitment to ongoing development and improvement of nursery, guidelines for use of nursery space outside Sunday morning. The Nursery Committee will include a liaison to staff/clergy and vestry, as well as parents, early childhood professionals, and at large members of the congregation. The Nursery Committee will meet quarterly, or more often as needed. If you are interested in participating in a permanent Nursery Committee, please contact the Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons (sabeth@our-redeemer.net).

Confirmation Class

Confirmation is an adult re-affirmation of the vows which were made for us at Baptism. We hope that this affirmation will come after some opportunity for questioning and exploration. Young people (and older ones, too) who are over the age of 15 are encouraged and invited to participate in Confirmation preparation. The decision to be confirmed is made by the individual candidate at the end of the preparation process.

In 2009, the confirmation preparation program was led by the Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons, with assistance from Sandy Keshishian, Jack Manes, and Janet Kern. Alex Davis, Lucia Bennett, and Ronelle LeBlanc were confirmed on May 30 in the Alewife Deanery Confirmation service, which was held here at Redeemer.

In 2010, we will again have an opportunity for youth confirmation preparation, as well as for adults who would like to be confirmed or received into the Episcopal Church (if you have made an adult profession of faith in another denomination) or to re-affirm your baptismal vows (for those who have already been confirmed). If you are interested in Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation, please contact the Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons (sabeth@our-redeemer.net).

Ad Hoc Committee on Space Usage

The Space Usage Committee convened, at the request of the Executive Committee and the Priest-in-Charge, to examine pressing issues around need for more space for Christian Formation programs on Sunday mornings. The Committee was asked to examine the issue and come up with creative short- and long-term solutions. The Assistant Priest convened the Committee, which met on November 30 & December 7, 2009.

Committee participants: Randy Bowlby (Vestry liaison to the Property Committee), Murray Daniels (on behalf of the Music Committee, attended 12/7), Evelyn Haussein (representing Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program), Peter Koso (on behalf of the Property Committee), Beth Murnaghan (representing youth programs), and Sabeth Fitzgibbons (clergy)

The Committee made two recommendations to the Vestry. First, that the Great Hall be updated with improved lighting, floor coverings, paint, and movable walls so that it can be divided into several smaller spaces, effectively creating two more classrooms for Sunday morning use (and for use by smaller groups at other times) without impacting the hall's usability for large group functions. The second recommendation was to relocate the Nursery to a dedicated space closer to the sanctuary.

The Vestry received the Committee's report in December 2009, with thanks.

Christian Formation Committee

In 2010, we will be forming a Christian Formation Committee as an advisory group to Christian Formation staff and lay leadership, to recommend and support the direction of our Christian Formation programs for children, youth, and adults. The Christian Formation Committee will engage in self-study and ongoing goals for excellence and effectiveness. The committee will meet at least 6 times a year and should have membership representative of those served by the programs advised.

The Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons is the staff contact for all Christian Formation programs (sabeth@our-redeemer.net).

Communications Committee Report

In July, 2009, the vestry voted to create a new Communications Committee to "help establish consistent and helpful communications practices and policies at Redeemer." The committee was formed with initial members: Emma Staatz (Parish Administrator), Rev. Sabeth Fitzgibbons (Assistant Rector), Janet Kern (chair of the committee and Vestry liaison), and Bill Vogele (Website Administrator). The committee worked over the summer to identify several areas of communication in the parish that needed coordination and assistance in establishing good practices for information flow with parishioners. Although there were many items of concern, it was decided that we would focus first on high priority items:

Weekly announcements, both printed and email
Calendar of Events and room reservations
Redeeming Features newsletter

We made some progress in improving the process for each of these through September. When the Rev. Kate Ekrem arrived as Priest-in-Charge, we decided to further expand the committee so that we could have other perspectives and assistance on the committee.

Kate joined the committee as clergy representative, replacing Sabeth. Mary Ayvazian and Alice Bennett joined the committee in November, and we established a monthly meeting time of 3:00 pm on the second Thursday of the month. In January, Mary felt she needed to resign from the committee, and so we are seeking additional member(s).

Through the end of 2009 and into January of 2010, the Communications Committee has successfully initiated changes to the high priority items listed above

A new format for weekly announcements (both print & email versions) that lists information for the upcoming Sunday morning worship at the top, and other notices listed in chronological order.

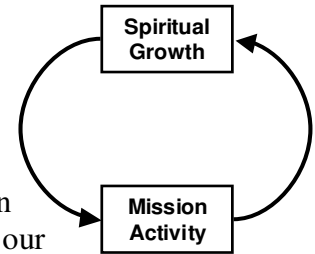
Weekly announcements are now being printed and mailed to a handful of parishioners who are not able to attend church on Sunday (due to mobility), as an additional way of keeping them connected to parish life.

Implemented a new online parish events calendar, available now on the website.

Alice Bennett and Janet Kern have agreed to be co-editors of the *Redeeming Features* newsletter, while Emma Staatz will continue to do the layout and publication in 2010. The hope is to streamline the content of the newsletter and better use all of our other means of communication, such as our website, printed brochures and handouts, etc., so that *Redeeming Features* can be more accessible and easy to read for everyone. Stay tuned!

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Kern, chair
Communications Committee

Redeemer Reaching Out in Mission in 2009



In mission, we seek to be Christ’s heart and hands in the world in partnership with other people, organizations, and religious communities. Our experience has been that spiritual growth and mission activity feed each other and that mission builds our parish community. We have chosen to support organizations that our members are passionate about and to which our parish community gives its time and talent. Our mission work is focused on wellbeing and education of children and on hunger and homelessness.

In 2009 in a difficult economy, we worked hard to partner more deeply with the organizations we support:

- **Middlesex Human Service Agency, Inc.**
 - **Bristol Lodge** (We prepare dinner once each month for this soup kitchen in Waltham)
 - **Sandra’s Lodge** (Shelter for families based in Waltham)
- **Lexington Food Pantry** (A regional food pantry Saturdays at Redeemer started by the Lexington Clergy Association)
- **The Grow Clinic** (Failure to thrive clinic at Boston Medical Center, Boston)
- **El Hogar** (Elementary, technical and agricultural schools in Honduras) Our mission trip in July 2009 was cancelled due to the coup in Honduras. Next trip: July 16-23, 2010
- **Habitat for Humanity - Lawrence**
- **Esperanza Academy** (Episcopal middle school for girls in Lawrence)
- **Jubilee Ministries for AIDS in Africa** (Diocese and Alewife Deanery program)

Through the generosity of our members and our fundraisers, we were able to maintain our support for our core mission organizations despite our parish budget challenges. Redeemer gave to the “Everything but the Baby” and Stop and Shop food gift card drives for the Grow Clinic, “Classroom in a Bag” and the annual fundraising dinner for Esperanza, “Item of the Month” and “Everything but the Turkey” for the Food Pantry and the collection of read-to-me books, hats and mittens for Sandra’s Lodge at Christmas. We had the bike-a-thon fundraiser again for El Hogar in May and our first FunFest for Esperanza in October. In total our parish gave over \$50,000 in funding and goods needed by our mission organizations.

We had a new initiative with the Giving Garden for the Food Pantry and that idea has now spread to other faith communities in Lexington. Our volunteers and musicians played a major role in the Grow Clinic holiday party for the first time in 2009.

One of our long term goals in mission is to offer opportunities to all our members to give of themselves and grow by the experience. In 2009 we increased our mission opportunities for our children including a lemonade stand for the Food Pantry and collection of donations in mite boxes for laying hens at El Hogar. Our youth helped construct the Giving Garden and continued to buy gifts, toys, and books for Sandra’s Lodge and The Grow Clinic during Advent. We have sought to include mission more completely in our prayer, worship, and Christian formation.

The Mission Committee

The Music Program in 2009

Despite the significant challenges facing the music program and the church in 2009, resulting from the departure of Rector Tricia DeBeer, the program managed to grow and present high quality programming, as well as take responsibility for the church's feisty, aging organ. We suffered significant cuts in all budget lines, but our Special Programs budget was cut to \$0 which meant no funding for soloists, instrumentalists, the Gospel Mass or Advent Procession.

Twenty four adults and youth participated in the 4th Annual Lexington Choral Festival at St. Brigid's Church in February. The Gospel Mass was cut, but we added a joint organ recital *Out of the Depths*, music for contemplation, by Dr. Carl Klein of Lexington and Music Director Cheryl Duerr on Good Friday. Talented performers across all age groups from 3 to 82 performed in the spring Talent Show "Ain't We Got Fun." Snoopy (aka Jim Beaty) made a rip-roaring guest appearance live from his Dog House. We said goodbye to two fine musicians – Andrew Olsen and Emily Burns and sent them off to college with our best wishes. Twenty nine people sang for the wedding of Katie Vogeles and Tim Bongiovanni in a beautiful example of sharing of our communal lives.

In a survey of Redeemer's Favorite Hymns we compared them to the list assembled 10 years ago when Music Director Cheryl Duerr arrived. We used the top favorites in a Festival Worship Service on Sunday October 18th, and presented more favorites in a Sunday Morning Coffee House during Adult Ed. A handout about hymns which includes the list of 1999 favorites as well as the 2009 favorites is available from the Music Director. Thanks to the Endowment Committee, Fred Bailey, and Lori Martell, we raised the funds to produce the Advent Procession which was claimed to be our best ever.

We currently have 3 musical groups active weekly and 1 ad hoc group – Brass Choir – for festival occasions. The 21-member Adult Choir continued their weekly ministry to the parish as well as serving pastorally to each other. The 6-8 member Band is to be thanked for their steadfast commitment to accompanying Sunday worship, as well as filling in the the Music Director during her vacation, and thus saving the church the cost of a Substitute musician. Mary Etta King is also to be thanked for serving in this capacity in order to save the program money.

The Youth Choir is a diverse group of 8-10 youth primarily in late elementary and middle school, and all quite talented, who meet in conjunction with Tuesday afternoon Atrium. Several of them sang with the adults for The Lexington Choral Festival as well as the entire Advent Procession – quite an accomplishment. We also have a group of Brass Musicians who come together for festival services. Librarian Elizabeth Gable finished a database for the Choral Library, and then stepped down after 10 years of service.

The organ continues to deteriorate, showing itself at its worst during the Good Friday organ recital. After spending much time and money trying to resolve the problems, we still have major problems which no one seems to be able to pin down and fix. Bruce Francis continues to spend a great deal of time fixing the organ. The Music Committee, gravely concerned about the aging instrument and the fact that the church does not maintain any 'organ' fund for major repairs or replacement, petitioned the Vestry to have an organ consultant make some observations and recommendations. The vestry approved this expenditure of funds. A copy of the petition detailing the problems with the organ and expenditures for repairs is available from Cheryl.

As we look to 2010, we will be taking a serious look at the vision for the Youth Choir as a part of Youth Ministries, and continue to push for rehearsal time on Sunday morning. Our programming plans are similar to 2009, based on budget expectations. We met with Organ Consultant, Jonathan Ambrosino who will send us his written report on the organ acoustics, as well as his suggestions. We will participate in The Lexington Choral Festival in February. We hope the church will fund The Advent Procession in December.

Having celebrated my 10th anniversary at Redeemer, I will be on sabbatical in the late spring and summer. We are currently in talks with a professional substitute for that period of time. I am grateful to the church for this opportunity to rest and retool. Working at Redeemer has been one of the greatest learning experiences of my life.

The budget cuts have not altered our commitment to giving our absolute best to Sunday morning worship, to presenting vibrant music, bringing the best new anthems, hymns and liturgy to that worship experience, to seeking out new ways to involve the congregation in music and more musicians in the program.

The Music Committee is a strong, varied and vibrant group of committed musicians of varying ages and viewpoints, many involved in the program and in the church in several different roles. Murray Daniels, Committee Chair, Jim Beaty, Erica Brotschi, Ian Fox, Elizabeth Gable, Mary Etta King, Lori Martell, and Nancy Penland.

Submitted by Cheryl Duerr, Music Director
Cheryl@our-redeemer.net

Endowment Committee Report

The Endowment Committee recommends to the Vestry how the income from the Endowment shall be spent for projects outside the annual budget of the Church. The Committee requests proposals from congregants and organizations for the expenditures.

This year the Committee

- (1) reestablished itself after not functioning for several years
- (2) established a policy on what money could be spent (\$3500 in 2009)
- (3) recommended five proposals to the Vestry for funding

The proposals recommended were:

- (1) Support for the Advent Procession requested by the Music Committee
- (2) Support for the annual Church retreat to enable a limit on costs for large families (not needed since the retreat supported itself)
- (3) Support for audio/visual equipment used at the Church
- (4) Support for new signage around the Church requested by the Welcome Committee
- (5) Support for a parishioner's mission trip to Africa (Sarah Vogele).

Tom Swithenbank, Connie Parish, Kathleen Mirani, Cathie Ghorbani, Peter Lund

Property Committee 2009 Annual Report

Members: Karen Schragle (chair); Steve Burns, Randy Bowlby, Bruce Francis, Christopher Huggins, Frank Kern, Peter Koso, Connie Parrish, Sam Stevens, Tom Swithenbank.

Our Extended TEAM Redeemer: Alex Davis, Dinesh Dulipsingh, Eveyln Hausslein, Janet Kern, Peter Lund , Bob & Mary Etta King, Sophia Koso, Jessie Maeck, George Murnaghan, Chris & Kate Needham, Jim & Chris Neumann Bill Vogele.

MANY THANKS are due:

- To all the members of the Redeemer community – staff and parish – who provided tremendous assistance on 2009 Property projects.
- To all our Greeners and Gardeners & Memorial Garden people for their care of the lawn and gardens, with special thanks to Claudia & David Cooper, Ashley Rooney, Peter Lund and Janet Kern.
- To Emma Staatz for keeping Property informed of ongoing concerns.
- To Kate for her keen eyes and observations AND bringing Roy McHoul our new Sexton.

2009 was a year the Property Committee had to focus on savings. We renegotiated contracts (Sprint, Cleaning & the Dumpster-savings approx. 25%), hired a very handy man named Roy to serve as Sexton, took on time sensitive projects instead of hiring contractors and responded quickly to emergencies. Our Rectory required a great all around effort by the extended Property People, Vestry and Redeemer community. We repaired, painted and power washed 12 White Pine as a TEAM determined to be ready @ 100% of our list complete for the Ekrem's arrival. With a very short turn over slot of time we were able to buff, clean & polish the house with the TEAM Redeemer volunteers saving approximately 10K.

In May, we dedicated the John Ayvazian Memorial Bench which was donated by the members of the Property Committee for all the years we shared in community together and John's passionate commitment to Parish Life @ COOR.

Every year, Bruce Francis takes the initiative to make improvements in many areas. This year, Bruce focused on completing the BOILER working with Hayes to trouble shoot problems and arrange for the work to be done. Our boiler is complicated and requires ongoing supervision, thank you Bruce for your work throughout the Church.

We are most grateful for everyone's help, time & talents and look forward to accomplishing the 2010 project list. With the youth classes growing and space demands challenged our upcoming projects include refiguring the Great Hall for multiple purpose. The Steeple is slated for repairs and paint this spring, we have potholes in the lot to repair and further tile work in the Church to do. The Primary Rectory work involves an HVAC evaluation and recommendation for Vestry.

Please contact Karen Schragle if you are interested in participating in this important ministry.

Stewardship Committee Report

With a complete turnover of the previous year's members, the committee was never officially chaired in 2009, though managed a successful fall fund drive and shows signs of year round programming in 2010.

- *Cottage Meetings:* Attended by about 50 parishioners, the stewardship committee made a strong effort to invite the parish to a number of in home and after church meetings to discuss Redeemer, the comments of which were collected in a letter sent to the entire parish. The letter outlined common themes and values expressed at the meetings and kicked off the fall pledge drive. The information gathered at the meetings is being used to inform vestry and clergy while it discusses Redeemer's budget and makes decisions for the church.
- *Stewardship Forum:* In November Jim Neumann gave us a "budget in pictures" slide show with images of how Redeemer's pledges have and will be spent. The meeting provided parishioners with some methods to calculate their pledges for 2010 and welcomed some newer parishioners to the forum. This stewardship forum has become a regular event at Redeemer seems to foster thought among attendees about pledging levels and why it's so important to give to Redeemer.
- *Pledge Drive:* In spite of the difficult economic times, more than one-third of responders increased their pledges above the 2009 level (6% decreased and 42% stayed the same). The number of new pledges is about the same as the loss of old ones, but the amount gained the amount gained from repeat and new pledgers was more than double what was lost from those who moved away or passed away in 2009. Overall our income from pledges is likely to be slightly higher (\$8,000) than last year, but still less than giving in prior years. Given the state of the economy, however, any increase in pledging activity is seen as a positive sign for Redeemer.
- *Bequests:* This year, even without a planned giving program in place, the Church received two large bequests from parishioners who passed away in 2008, totaling \$30,000. Preliminary planning for stewardship in 2010 indicates a special effort to begin planned giving efforts.

The committee would love to add some new members in 2010.

Connie Parish, Sally Zimmerman, Ted Gaiser, Kate Ekrem, Sabeth Fitzgibbons, and Jed Geyerhahn.

The Welcome Team Annual Report

Composed of 8 members (but more always welcome!) the Welcome Team, started from the 2006 Discernment Process, has created a strong foundation to ensure smooth integration of newcomers to the Church of Our Redeemer and initiatives to introduce the concept of *Radical Welcome* to the Redeemer community. The foundation consists of Two Dreams Statements, a Charter, a Vision Statement, and Action Steps. The Vision Statement and the Action Steps have been re-visited and re-written to better meet the objectives and the identified and evolving needs of those coming to Redeemer for the first time.

In 2009, with the help of clergy, staff, lay leaders, & parishioners, the Welcome Team accomplished:

- General accomplishments include: met regularly to organize & plan; Welcome Table & Announcement; participated in Liturgy Team, including the monthly meeting; and continued our education of *Radical Welcome*;
- Made special effort to invite newcomers to existing, church events/programs;
- Invited the Rev. Stephanie Spellers to preach and teach *Radical Welcome: Embracing God, The Other and the Spirit of Transformation* to preach & lead adult forum (February 1, 2009);
- Invited guest preacher Megan Rasbold-Gabbard (October 25, 2009), Megan is a young woman with cerebral palsy and talked about her spirituality and how Redeemer and her current parish, Grace (Newton) welcomed her and provide access for her to further explore her spirituality.
- Submitted articles for *Redeeming Features* about the Welcome Team, accomplishments, plans, etc.;
- Led Adult Education to update Redeemer community to continue discussion about Radical Welcome but effort was adjusted for conversation with Canon to the Ordinary Mally Lloyd;
- Investigated using an ADA Consultant to evaluate current physical plant for those who may be wheelchair-bound, hearing or visually impaired. Were able to secure meeting with Diocesan Disability Concerns Committee co-chair, the Rev. Kathryn Piccard (May 2009). Collaborated with member of the Property Committee;
- Conducted sign audit to assess directional sign needs for the building, Updated some signage;
- Organized the March 1, 2009 All-Parish Breakfast potluck with *Celebrating Your Cultural Background* theme;
- Organized intergenerational program for Advent on Sunday, December 13 that will include cookie decorating, dinner & caroling;
- Administrative: work with administrative coordinator on parishioner nametags; updated the Welcome card in the pews.

What we expect to Accomplish in 2010:

- Collaborate with other Redeemer ministries (Mission, Adult Education, Church School);
- Systemized follow-up with newcomers & improve where necessary;
- Publications: create 1 page (2-sided) information sheet to replace “An Introduction to Worship at the Church of Our Redeemer” and “A Quick Reference Guide to the Church of Our Redeemer” booklets;
- From discussion with the Rev. Kathryn Piccard, create link on CoOR website with information about current accessibility; update handicap signs to standard blue;
- Work with Vestry on the adopted Diversity Priority & help make them a reality at CoOR over time.
- Work with the clergy and office to advertise particular services or events to the Lexington community, churches within Alewife Deanery and to Hanscom A.F.B. ;
- Visit other churches (Episcopal & non-Episcopal) to evaluate other Welcome practices;
- Meet with clergy and other lay leaders regarding formation of Parish Life Committee;
- Continue to update directional signs within the church building.

Current members: Elisabeth Donahue, Evelyn Hausslein, Helene Sullas-Huggins, Sandy Keshishian, Jack Manes, Kathy Mockett, Kate Needham, Paula Antonevich (team leader).

Worship Committee Report

When I arrived at Redeemer in August, one of the main issues that many brought to my attention was our worship life and how the transition from two services at 9am and 11am to one at 9:30 was working for the parish community. I also felt the need for input from members of the parish on how to shape our Sunday worship. With the approval of the vestry, I invited all those who had been involved in previous worship discernment groups, plus those who had expressed a strong interest in this issue, to join me in a conversation about worship.

We met for the first time in November. At that meeting, we all shared our own personal stories of how worship has shaped our life and what feels most important about it to us. Many themes came up, including: welcoming; community; worship that reflects our work and mission in the community; reverence without uptightness; inclusion of children and youth; a sense of comfort, home, and love; time for quiet, and a sense of holiness.

The group met for a second time on January 13. Together we made a timeline of the worship history of Redeemer since the move to the new church building in 1956. It was fascinating to all of us to see how patterns have unfolded in the past. We also noted the many different perspectives we have on our current 9:30am service. We discussed the idea of “polarities” and how the balancing act between looser and more formal styles of worship (for lack of better labels) is not something that will ever be “settled once and for all” but a healthy tension that we need to work with to get the best of both.

The group committed to meeting monthly through May, with the goal of arriving at some underlying principles and values about our shared worship life. After that, we will have an ongoing smaller worship committee that will work with the clergy to carry out those principles and plan Sunday worship. I’m looking forward to further conversations with this wonderful group, who bring a very great deal of thoughtfulness, wisdom, knowledge, and experience to this important conversation.

Many thanks to Barbara Beinhocker, Erica Brotschi , Cheryl Duerr, Joyce Dufault, Kalpana Dulipsingh, Julia Francis, Sabeth Fitzgibbon, Ted Gaiser, Evelyn Hausslein, Janet Needham, Paula Pryce-Digby, Cara Kalf, Bob King, Peter Koso, Linda Kukolich, Sandy Keshishian, Mary Etta King, Sven Spoerri and Mary Ucci for their involvement in this group.

Respectfully submitted, The Rev. Kate Ekrem, Priest-in-Charge

Liturgy Team Report

Lay liturgical support for the 9:30 service is organized by teams of adults and children who serve for one or two months during the year. Members of the team share responsibilities for all of the liturgical functions—preparation of the altar, lighting of the candles, greeting, reading the lessons, collecting the offering, leading the prayers, and offering the chalice at communion. On the first Saturday of the month, the team meets with the clergy to go over the lessons for the month, share ideas about the meaning and structure of the liturgy, and organize duties for each Sunday. The goal is to have everyone in the congregation participate—last year over 90 people served on a team. Each March the teams are shuffled to provide an opportunity for people to work with as many other parishioners as possible.