

Redeeming Features

Volume XXVI, No. 9

www.our-redeemer.net

December 2010

Greetings from the Rev. Kate Ekrem

Newsletter

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Dear Friends,

Our scripture lessons for the end of November and early December seem have a theme. We keep hearing Jesus say "Keep watch, stay awake!" There are parables about not falling asleep and about servants trying to be ready for a master who is returning soon. We know that Jesus was, on one level, telling us to always be ready for his coming again. But, in the meantime, how are we to take these warnings to watch and wait? What do they mean to us in our own daily lives? Well, maybe we do need to be awake and aware a little more.

There are ways that we "sleep through" our daily life. Have you ever driven home from work to realize you had no memory of how you got from the office to your front door? Something like that has probably happened to all of us. We aren't always awake and aware of what's going on around us, sometimes in small ways (like that evening commute) sometimes in large ways by not realizing that a friend or neighbor may be in a little trouble. In what ways do we "sleep through" our daily life? Do we distract ourselves, by eating too much or watching TV or (my personal favorite), surfing the internet looking for new knitting patterns? We may not even realize how we are trying to distract ourselves from the deep issues in our life that may cause us stress but are really very important to us: who we love, how we treat others, what our life is really all about. Keep watch, Jesus says, stay awake. Pay attention to what is going on around you and inside you. It's about awareness, about paying attention to each moment of our lives. Because that is where we find God. If we are re-hashing the past or being anxious about the future, we are missing what God is doing in the present moment, right now.

In observing Advent this year, perhaps you want to take some time to be aware of the present moment. For example, put down the newspaper and really at others, what our life is really all about. enjoy that first sip of coffee in the morning instead of thinking about the to-do list for the day ahead. Or perhaps you might decide to spend 15 minutes really listening with your whole self to a family member at dinner time or a friend over coffee.

Keeping watch in this way, I wouldn't be surprised if you do find Jesus coming again in your life, and signs of coming of the Kingdom of God that we await during Advent.

In Peace-

The Rev. Kate Ekrem, Priest-In-Charge
kate@our-redeemer.net

A Perspective of Vestry

I am completing my first year as a vestry novice, so would like to fill you in if you wonder what goes on.

I am happy to report that Vestry is streamlined – we meet only once a month for a meeting that sticks pretty strictly to 1.5 hours, thanks to smooth chairing by Rev. Kate, and the two wardens, Connie and George.

Regular agenda items include reports on church finances, and liaisons with various church committees (each of us attends a committee and reports back, so in principle we all know what is going on and can coordinate things like fundraising). Groups like J2A may come to us for approval of initiatives. Most motions pass unanimously, though sometimes after discussion and with slight amendments. Kate and Sabeth report every other month about what they have been doing. We try to acknowledge those who have made a special contribution in the past month.

Twice a year we have a more in-depth ‘retreat’ to brainstorm goals and missions for the longer term. These are led by outside facilitators from the Diocese. Recently the vestry appointed a Strategic Planning committee chaired by Vestryperson Peter Lund. We will receive their report in December. Developing new leaders is our focus topic for November’s vestry meeting.

Lively topics this autumn have concerned what “confidentiality” means in stewardship terms, how to go about energy conservation and property maintenance, and whether the proposed “soft space” in the sanctuary (a quiet play area for infants and toddlers) should be at the front or back of the church!

We are meant to be good listeners, ready to respond to views and suggestions from parishioners, so don’t hesitate to get in touch with: Stewardship: Bob Bettacchi, Welcome: Paula Antonevich, Finance: Frank Kern and George Murnaghan, Personnel: George Murnaghan, Property: Peter Lund, Music: Randy Bowlby, Mission: Paula and Connie Parrish, Worship: Sandy Keshishian, Communications: Susan Emanuel

And don’t hesitate to consider joining Vestry if a Nominating Person taps you!

-Susan Emanuel

Winter Storms

It’s Sunday morning, and you look out the window and see several feet of snow. Are we having church or not? You can easily find out: (1) Call the church office and listen to the message on the answering machine. The phone message can be and will be updated remotely if there is a change in our schedule. (2) Check your email. Kate or Lisa will send out an email to the parish list about any change of schedule. (3) Check the web site. We also do our best to update the web site with cancellation information.



If a storm is on the way, the clergy, wardens, and event leaders (i.e. who ever is in charge of a particular church event) will consult together to decide what to do. For Sunday worship and weekday office closings, the decision to close will be made by 6:30am.



Christian Formation News

We have Christian Formation for ages 3 through 12th grade Sundays from 10:45-11:45am. Nursery care is available for infants and toddlers from 9am-12noon so that parents can attend Adult Formation and fellowship time.

Sunday Evening Youth Group meets in the Great Hall from 5:30-7:15pm. Youth in grades 9-12 are invited to join us for fellowship as we prepare and eat dinner together.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

**** We have Sunday School/Atrium every Sunday unless otherwise noted! ****

- December 5 & 12** **No Sunday Evening Youth Group**
 12/5 Advent Procession at 4 pm
 12/12 Cookies & Caroling Event (all ages) at 4pm
- December 26** **No Sunday Morning Christian Formation/No Nursery**
 No Sunday Evening Youth Group
- January 2** **Christian Formation programs resume**

Age 3-3rd grade – Evelyn Hausslein (ehausslein@rcn.com / 781-861-0378)

4th-6th grade – Peter Koso (peter@peterkoso.com / 781-863-8047)

7th-12th grade – Beth Murnaghan (eliordpar@yahoo.com / 781-862-6923)

Adult Formation – The Rev. Kate Ekrem (kate@our-redeemer.net / 781-862-6408)

Youth Group – Cathy Burns (hcburns@verizon.net / 978-663-5022)

Adult Christian Formation - December 2010

Adult Christian Formation meets Sundays from 10:45-11:45am (at the same time as programs for children and youth and nursery), in the Meeting Room on the lower level. We invite ages 13-113 to join us. Bring your coffee and a friend!

December 5, 12, and 19: Scripture Study of Advent Year A

Join clergy and lay leaders as we take a closer look at the history, themes, and characters of the lectionary readings through Advent, and how they relate to our liturgy and our lives. Bring your bulletin from church, and any favorite scripture resource you use.

December 26: No Adult Christian Formation



Cookies and Carols

Our annual Cookies and Carols party and parish dinner will be Sunday, December 12th from 4pm to 7pm at the Rectory, 12 White Pine Lane in Lexington. There will be cookie decorating and entertainment for kids and their families from 4pm to 5pm. Dinner, followed by a carol



sing for all ages will be from 5pm to 7pm. Please sign up or RSVP to the Church office so we can have food for all!



Is This Your Year for El Hogar? Join us in Honduras next August 5-12, 2011!!

El Hogar Projects rescues children from a life of hunger and desperation in the villages or on the streets of Honduras. Church of Our Redeemer teams travel to the School of Agriculture to live and work with teenage boys who are learning a farm trade. Classes for the boys include tractor maintenance and medical care of animals as well as sustainable farming techniques which students are expected to use when they work in several community outreach projects which the school supervises, and when they return to their own villages after graduation.

Volunteers spend a week at the farm and share meals daily with the boys, enjoying homemade tortillas and produce from the farm as well as fresh milk and eggs right from the cows and chickens! Volunteers do maintenance projects including painting indoors and out, building bunk beds, and rebuilding the corral, as well as skilled labor tasks such as electrical maintenance, computer maintenance, carpentry repairs, mural painting, and teaching English. There is also time to hang out with the students, play soccer, share music and other hobbies, help with homework, practice Spanish and English, etc.

Volunteers age 15 and up are welcome!

Cost of trip: \$1,050.00 includes airfare and all expenses, including the party we always throw for the students on our last night. Travel assistance is available.

Speak to Jessie Maeck jmaeck@aol.com or Chris Needham, trip leaders, if you'd like more information.



Weekday Eucharist returns for Advent

Please join us each Tuesday Advent for a simple Eucharist, including prayers for healing. Advent weekday worship will be offered at noon on November 30th, December 7, December 14th, and December 21st.



Service of Healing and Remembrance December 22nd , 7:30 pm

If Christmas is not feeling Christmassy for you this year:
Join us for a special...**Service of Healing and Remembrance**



The constant refrain on radio and television, in shopping malls and churches, about the happiness of the Christmas Season, about getting together with family and friends, reminds many people of what they have lost or have never had. The weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation, the gut wrenching loss of a loved one, the loneliness of no longer having a beloved spouse to share each day- all these can contribute to a feeling of being alone, of 'feeling blue' in the midst of the society around us which seems bent on 'being happy' and 'celebrating'. There are years when we hurt at Christmas time and can't get into the festivities others seem to be able to do. It's at such times that we need to make the space and take the

time to acknowledge our sadness and concern. We need to know that we are not alone. For these reasons, all are invited to a special worship service on Wednesday, December 22nd at 7:30pm. Join in sharing and hearing prayers and scripture that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who struggle - and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness. Please accept this invitation to be with us - a time to move from feeling 'blue' to experiencing the wonder and hope of God's love made human. No need to RSVP - our doors will be open to all who come so please feel free to invite others to come with you, as your support, or if you know that they too, are finding that Christmas is difficult this year.

Christmas Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve Services: Friday, December 24th

3:30 Prelude Christmas Carols sung by the Youth Choir and Family Choir.

4:00 Crèche Service for all children and Holy Eucharist, with Carols and the Ingathering of books, hats, mittens, & scarves for Middlesex Human Resources/Sandra's Lodge

10:00 Prelude Christmas Carol anthems sung by the Adult Choir and Guests

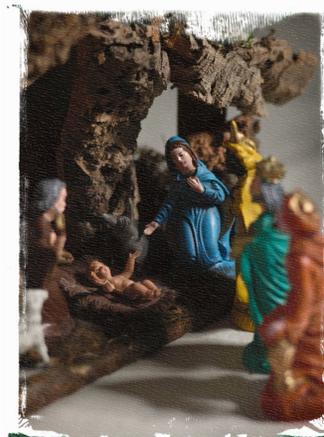
10:30 Holy Eucharist: a festive service with traditional carols to welcome Christmas

Christmas Day Eucharist: Saturday, December 25th at 10:00am

Celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord at a joyful morning service!

First Sunday of Christmas: Sunday December 26th

We will celebrate our usual Sunday services at 8:00 and 9:30am.



Celebrations

Three little ducks went out to play
Over the hill and far away
The mother duck said Quack, Quack come back
and they did ... with Baby Isabella.



Come celebrate with Sabeth, Julien, Esteban
and the whole Redeemer family
the arrival of Isabella !

On Sunday, December 19th after the 9:30 service, we will meet downstairs for food, fun, music, and to enjoy each other and the fun of having a baby on the ministerial staff. If you quilt or knit that's lovely; Sabeth says what she really needs is some help with the adoption costs. There's a big duck in the office. Please make your check payable to Church of Our Redeemer by Sunday December 12th with the notation "Sabeth's purse"

Questions? Contact Ashley Rooney - earooney@rcn.com or 781 861-9511

Rite-13 Celebrities



On Sunday, November 21, Redeemer celebrated the lives and creativity of seven young people (Stephanie McLaughlin, Grace Murnaghan, Olivia Pryce-Digby, Sam Schultz, Caroline Wilkinson, Emily Wilkinson and Joe Williams). The Rite 13 Ceremony, also known as the Celebration of Manhood and Womanhood, recognizes the journey toward adulthood that begins with the physiological changes of puberty.



Getting to Know You: *Lisa Thistle*

From the Editors: This month we want to introduce you to our new parish administrator, Lisa Thistle! Lisa was kind enough to submit to an interview on very short notice. Of course, Lisa also does the layout and publishing for *Redeeming Features*, so we are especially grateful for her willingness to “lay it all out” for the parish!



Can you tell us a little bit about you and your family?

I grew up in Belmont, MA with my parents, an older sister and a younger brother. I live in Burlington with my husband, David, and my children, Christine (17) & Alex (8), along with our cat Gracie, who we adopted from a shelter. It's a busy year at our household as we've spent the last 6 months or so driving throughout New England, as Christine tries to decide which colleges she wants to apply to (finally narrowed down to 4) and then the fun application process (nightmare) begins. I've learned to do a lot of deep

breathing and keep my opinions to my self in order to get through this with everyone intact andthe end is getting near. When time allows, I enjoy cooking, taking yoga classes, and working on small home projects. One of my favorite places is at a beach with a good book.. In the Spring/Summer, and for as long as weather permits, I enjoy riding (as a passenger) on David's Harley.

What types of work have you done before coming to Redeemer?

I have worked as an Executive Assistant, Office Manager, and Meeting/Event Planner for both large and small corporations. For three years, I served as a volunteer on the Carnival Committee at my sons elementary school, and volunteered as a classroom parent/helper. This is my first time working in a church setting and I am excited about this opportunity.

What has been the most challenging part of the job so far?

So far, the most challenging part of the job has been learning about the church calendar and cycle of different days (Pentecost, Advent, etc), understanding which responsibilities fall under the different committees, and trying to figure out the church database system. Each day, different pieces are coming together and I am understanding more about the job and feeling more confident in my responsibilities to the Church of Our Redeemer.

What are some of the things that you enjoy doing, and are there things parishioners can do to make your job easier?

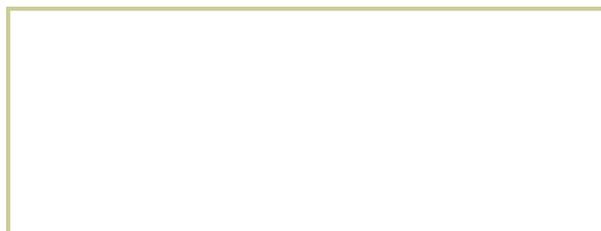
I enjoy working on the weekly Bulletins, weekly E-announcements, and RF Newsletter, and as I put them together, I am getting a greater understanding of Our Redeemer Episcopal Church. In terms of making my job easier...just bear with me while I am in the learning process, trying to remember everyone's names, and keep a sense of humor if I make an error on the hymn boards!.

In the short time I have been here, everyone I have met in person, spoken with on the telephone, or communicated with via e-mail has been helpful, kind and welcoming. Your warmth is greatly appreciated and I will do my best to do a good job for Kate and the entire parish community. Thank you.



CHURCH OF OUR REDEEMER

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December	Date	Event Details
Wednesday	1	7:30 pm Property Committee Meeting
Saturday	4	9:00 am Liturgy Team meeting
Sunday	5	8:00 & 9:30 am Worship Adult Formation Topic: Advent Bible Study 12 noon Pilgrimage meeting 4:00 pm Advent Procession
Tuesday	7	12:00 noon Eucharist—Advent weekday worship 7:00 pm Strategic Planning Task Group meeting 7:30 pm Stewardship meeting
Thursday	9	12 noon Worship Committee meeting 3:00 pm Communications meeting
Sunday	12	8:00 & 9:30 am Worship Adult Formation Topic: Advent Bible Study 4:00 pm Cookies and Carols, Dinner at Rectory
Monday	13	7:30 pm Executive meeting
Tuesday	14	12:00 noon Eucharist—Advent weekday worship
Wednesday	15	Newsletter Deadline! 7:30 pm Vestry meeting
Sunday	19	8:00 & 9:30 am Worship Adult Formation Topic: Advent Bible Study After 9:30 service Welcome Isabella Baby Shower 4:00 pm Family Circle; 5:30 pm Family Circle Potluck
Monday	20	7:00 pm Strategic Planning Task Group meeting 7:30 Finance Committee meeting 7:30 pm Mission meeting
Tuesday	21	12:00 noon Eucharist—Advent weekday worship 6:00 pm Winter Solstice Labyrinth Walk
Wednesday	22	2:30 pm Grow Clinic Party 4:00 pm Warden’s meeting 7:30 pm Service of Healing and Remembrance
Friday	24	3:30 pm Christmas Eve Crèche Service—Musical Preludes 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Crèche Service 10:00 pm Musical Preludes 10:30 pm Festive Service
Saturday	25	10:00 am Christmas Day Eucharist
Sunday	26	8:00 & 9:30 am Worship No Christian Formation
Monday	27	1:30 pm Cook for Bristol Lodge

The **deadline** for newsletter submissions is **15th of each month**. Please email all submissions to RF@our-redeemer.net or send to the church office, with “RF” clearly marked.