



Church of Our Redeemer
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Redeeming Features

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Greetings from Rev. Kate Ekrem

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**FRIEND
US ON
FACE-
BOOK!**

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Church-of-Our-Redeemer/145507075486413>

Dear friends,

At our house, we have family “story time” each night (Ok, not every night but more or less). We used to let the kids pick the story to read, but now we use it as an opportunity to inflict classic children’s literature and our own favorites from childhood on them. Last week, we read *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. If you haven’t read it, run out and get a copy right now, especially if you have kids in our Christmas Pageant this year. It’s hilarious fun.

It’s the story of an everyday church with an ordinary (read: boring) Christmas Pageant that is invaded by the “worst kids in town”, a family of five neglected, aggressive, bullying children who know nothing about Christmas except Santa. By threatening to beat up the straight-A student who usually plays Mary, they snag all the main parts in the play. But as they learn the Christmas story, we get to see it through their eyes. They are horrified to learn that pregnant, homeless Mary had no place to lay her baby, and think the wise men’s gifts of frankincense and myrrh are useless and stupid (they throw the gilded gifts in the garbage and lay their own ham that was given to them by the food pantry at the manger instead).

What I love about the book is how the church folk come to understand that the real Christmas story was probably a lot more like what these children make it – messy, complicated, stunning, and surprisingly awe-inspiring – than the saccharine, tightly controlled version they usually experience in their yearly pageant.

So while I seriously doubt our pageant extras will be caught smoking cigars in the rest room, whatever chaos does come from 70 children in home-made costumes will be fabulously wonderful – and



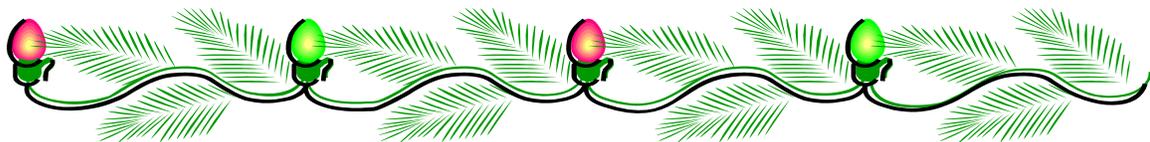
Greetings from Kate (cont'd)

remind us of the messy, complicated, real Christmas.

I think it's good to have our image of Christmas shaken up. If it becomes too familiar, too full of comforting rituals, we lose touch with the reality of what God did. God became human – God entered into this messy, confusing, very much not perfect world – to be close to us and to show God's love for us. As Bill Fortier has been teaching us this fall, God is not above biology, God is in the biology.

May you see and enjoy God's presence in the messy complexity of your own life, and celebrate that this Christmas.

Peace and blessings,



Greetings from Danielle

Dear friends,

As many of you are discovering, I have a rabid passion for chocolate, and when my husband presented me with an Advent chocolate calendar this past week, I was tempted to tear through the whole thing right then.

But Advent is a season of waiting—waiting for chocolate or, more relevantly, waiting for Jesus.

Here at Redeemer, we are doing so much this month to prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus—and a new beginning in our relationship to him—during that waiting process. Members of the Adult Forum will be reading Marcus Borg's *The Heart of Christianity*, while the children and youth prepare for the Creche service.

I pray that as you approach Christmas, this season of waiting becomes one of joy. No matter how you wait—with chocolate or without—I hope you will consider participating in some of these formation events.

In the meantime, all good blessings,

dt



Advent & Christmas Service Schedule

Advent Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 2, 4:00pm

Candlelight service of Lessons and Carols featuring Redeemer's Adult Choir, Tenor Soloist Brad Peloquin, the Tradewinds Woodwind Quintet, and guest choristers.

Cookies and Caroling: An Advent Evening

Sunday, December 9, 4:00-7:00pm

Cookies & Carols Party at the Rectory: cookie decorating at 4:00pm, dinner at 5:00pm.

Advent Service of Healing and Remembrance

Thursday, December 20, 7:30pm

A service for all those for whom Christmas may be a sad or difficult time.

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

Sunday, December 23, 10:30 -noon.

Parts assigned and costumes distributed.

Christmas Eve

Monday, December 24

3:45pm Carol Sing

4:00pm Crèche Service with Christmas Pageant & Holy Eucharist.

Ingathering of books, hats, mittens & scarves for The Grow Clinic.

7:45pm Carol Sing

8:00pm Festive Holy Eucharist w/ music from the Adult Choir, and guest Harpist, Judith Ross.

Christmas Day

Tuesday, December 25

10:00am Holy Eucharist (no music)

1 Christmas

Sunday, December 30

8:00am Holy Eucharist, Rite I (no music)

9:30am Holy Eucharist, Rite II

No Christian Formation, No Nursery Care

Feast of the Epiphany

Sunday, January 6

8:00am Holy Eucharist, Rite I (no music)

9:30am Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Celebrate the arrival of the Wise Men from the East.

Guest Organist, Geoffrey Wieting

Christian Formation for all ages resumes



Service of Healing and Remembrance

The constant refrain this time of year about the happiness of the Christmas Season and 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 loss of a job or 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 we just can't get into the festivities as 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.

On **Thursday, December 20 at 7:30 pm**, Church of Our Redeemer invites you to come and join prayers, Scripture and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn and for those who struggle - and that God's Word comes to shine light into our darkness.

No need to RSVP - our doors are 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 hurts.

Peace and blessings,

The Rev. Kate Ekrem

The Rev. Danielle Tumminio

Christmas Bulletin folding help needed!

The church office needs a few extra hands to fold the Christmas bulletins. If you have an hour you can spare on **Wednesday, December 19**, please email Lisa, office@our-redeemer.net. Light refreshments will be served. Any help is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

Save the Date for Annual Meeting!

Our Annual Meeting will take place on **Sunday, January 27, 2013**, following the 9:30am service. The Annual Meeting is an important event in the life of the parish. All baptized members age 16 and over are eligible to vote and participate as we elect new vestry members and other officers, review the past year, and talk about our plans and hopes for 2013. Delicious food will be served! Please mark the date and make plans to be there.



Donate Flowers for Christmas



We invite you to donate a poinsettia to decorate our church altar at Christmas this year. Poinsettias can be donated in memory of a loved one, in thanksgiving for something, in celebration of something, or just because. You may take your poinsettia home with you after Christmas Day, or leave it at church for us to bring to a parishioner who needs some Christmas cheer. Please complete one of the RED forms or email Lisa, office@our-redeemer.net. The deadline for donations is **Wednesday, December 12**.



Redeeming knitters are thinking globally!

Redeeming Knitters are meeting in the Library, Thursday, December 6 at 7:30 pm. We will be working on hats, scarves, mittens, and prayer shawls.

A world famous knitter has expressed an interest in joining us at one of our meetings this year. Are you wondering who it is?

Hint #1: she prefers to fly Air France.

Hint #2: she usually knits in public.

Hint #3: she personalizes her knitting

Hint #4: you would see her knitting in the wine shop

Hint #5: her favorite words are *Libertè, èigualitè, fraternitè*



Please mark your calendar for Thursday, January 17, 2013

If you have any questions, please call Susan Burkhardt at 781-899-8644 or Eveleyn Haussein, 781-861-0378.

Cookies and Caroling – Sunday, December 9

Cookies and Caroling is an **all-ages, family event**. Come to the Rectory (12 White Pine Lane, Lexington) for festivities! Cookie-decorating begins at 4:00pm. Dinner (provided, as a holiday gift to you) begins at 5:00pm, with caroling to follow. We will sing around the fireplace, and may venture outside as well. Come for whatever part of the event works for you and your family. No RSVP needed for cookie decorating. Sign up at church (or contact the church office) for dinner head count.



Bad Weather

A reminder of our bad weather procedure: You can call the church office at 781-862-6408 for a voice recorded message, check for an email update, or go on our Facebook page to see if services are cancelled. Usually those are updated by 7am. It's our general policy not to cancel worship if the clergy can get here. However, that does not mean you have to be here! On stormy days, all those with official duties are excused. Often we hold worship but cancel choir, Christian Formation, coffee hour, and other non-worship events, and operate without acolytes or Liturgy Team. Please use your own judgment and only come to church if it's safe for you to travel.

Also, WCVB-TV/Channel 5 and their website, WCVB.com, are again ready to handle our closings and delays.

You may also sign up for text message or email alerts at this page: <http://www.wcvb.com/weather/closingsignup>



Christian Formation – Children and Youth

The youth of the parish will be preparing the annual Crèche service, which will take place on Christmas Eve at 4pm. The Youth Group will be directing the service, and all youth are welcome to participate, both those of youth group age and those who are younger. This year, there will be one rehearsal for the service, which will take place on December 23rd after the 9:30 service, during the time normally reserved for formation classes. This rehearsal should be done by noon. If your child is interested in participating, please e-mail Danielle, the interim associate rector, at danielle@our-redeemer.net

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

Questions?

Age 3-6th grade – Evelyn Hausslein (ehausslein@rcn.com / 781-861-0378)

7th – 12th grade – the Rev. Danielle Tumminio (danielle@our-redeemer.net)

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

Advent Adult Forum Series: The Heart of Christianity

We know we live in a rapidly changing world, where old paradigms seem to be falling to the wayside on a daily basis. So what does it mean to be a Christian *today*, in our diverse 21st Century world? Our stewardship committee thought this is an important question for all of us, and proposed this book for adult study.

Marcus' Borg's inspiring book *The Heart of Christianity* is about getting back to the heart of our faith in a time of change. For some of us, even those who come to church each Sunday, we've got a bit of baggage from Sunday schools past (some useful, and some not so useful) and we've never really studied Christian theology as adults.

If you know Christianity is about more than just trying to be a good person, and want to connect with a faith that's relevant, compelling, and life-changing, then this Advent series is for you. We'll use Borg's book to help us deepen our own theology in a serious, coherent, adult faith. Each session will be discussion based, and will go more smoothly if you've had a chance to read the indicated chapters beforehand, so we can focus on your thoughts and ideas. Copies of the book can be bought for \$10 through the church office, or at a bookseller near you.

The introduction and Chapter 1 of Borg's book were introduced at a September adult forum. The reading and discussion schedule for Advent and Epiphany is:

December 2: We will discuss Chapter 2, *Faith: The Way of the Heart*, and Chapter 3, *Bible: The Heart of the Tradition*.

December 9: We will discuss Chapter 4, *God: The Heart of Reality*, and Chapter 5, *Jesus: The Heart of God*.

December 16: We'll discuss Chapter 6, *Born Again: A New Heart*, and Chapter 7, *The Kingdom of God: The Heart of Justice*.



Advent Adult Forum Series: The Heart of Christianity (cont'd)

December 23: We'll discuss Chapter 8, *Thin Places: Opening the Heart*, and Chapter 9, *Sin and Salvation: Transforming the Heart*.

January 6: We'll wrap things up with a discussion of Chapter 10, *The Heart of the Matter: Practice* and Chapter 11, *Heart and Home: Being Christian in an Age of Pluralism*.

Adult Christian Formation Contact Person: The Rev. Danielle Tumminio (danielle@our-redeemer.net)

Music News

All are invited to attend Redeemer's annual **Candlelight Service of Lessons, Anthems, and Carols on December 2nd at 4:00**, which will feature our own Redeemer Choir, Guest singers, the Tradewinds Woodwind Quintet, and Tenor soloist Brad Peloquin. This lovely candlelight procession and music celebration to welcome the season of Advent is a wonderful opportunity to invite a guest into our sanctuary and to the reception following the service.

Coming up this month, we invite you all to one of two **Christmas Eve** carol sing-alongs, at 3:45 preceding the 4:00 Creche service (accompanied by James Suprenant on accordion) and at 7:45 preceding the 8:00 Evening Service (accompanied on organ). The later service will also feature guest harpist Judith Ross. Adjunct singers are especially welcomed to join the choir in John Rutter's *Angels Carol* for harp and choir, as a number of our regular singers will be away. For the **Feast of the Epiphany January 6th**, we welcome back guest organist Geoffrey Wieting, while Bernadette is away on vacation.

Looking further ahead, to mark your calendars: on **Sunday February 10th at 3:30**, the choir sings once again in the **Lexington Choral Festival** at Hancock Church, along with 13 other Lexington choirs. Their finale combined selection will be the grand and beautiful ***Dona Nobis Pacem* from J.S. Bach's B minor Mass**.

On Sunday morning March 3rd we will welcome the Back Bay Ringers (www.backbayringers.org), - Boston's premiere auditioned touring hand bell ensemble, for a special Lenten service. The music committee and Redeemer will host a full scale concert in our sanctuary, presented to the Lexington community by the Back Bay Ringers, on **Saturday evening, June 8th**.

The music and worship committees welcome your thoughts about any and all music-related topics.

— Bernadette Colley



What is your Vestry Working on?

Much recent Vestry focus has been on Property issues. At our most recent meeting, Vestry voted to create a Great Hall Renovation Team, and commission them with the specific goal of creating a fully costed renovation plan for the Great Hall, so that we can share those plans with the entire parish and ideally, look to start at least an initial phase of renovation work by summer of next year. The team would engage with all the groups that currently use the Great Hall, and with the parish at large; meet with architects and contractors to assess the feasibility and cost of various renovation options; and work with our Finance Committee to understand what we might be able to fund in the near term and beyond.

A number of parishioners graciously offered their time and talents on this project, and we plan to formally commission the team at the December 2nd service. We are very much looking forward to discover what we might be able to accomplish with the Great Hall. The renovation team members are Jamie Burnside, Ellen Cosgrove, Christopher Huggins, Bob King, James Surprenant, Mary Ucci, and John Wright. Please do let them know any ideas or concerns you might have.

We also have been working to create a new "Café Annex" in the hallway up the stairs from the Great Hall, as a place to relax and carry on coffee hour conversations without intruding on the Adult Formation meetings that take place in the Great Hall. Thanks to some generous furniture donations from Vestry, we have now created the café space, and look forward to seeing it put to good use!

There is also a lot of ongoing property work that the Property Committee has been energetically pursuing. We had an excellent Fall clean-up day with many enthusiastic participants; continue to make progress on the possibility of getting a natural gas feed to the church, which is a fuel source that could provide very significant cost savings; and continue work on a number of projects, from the rectory improvements and cell equipment upgrades in the steeple to new floodlights for the playground and recruiting a Green Team for next year. Many thanks to the Property Committee members for their ongoing commitment to the church!

Lastly, while not requiring formal vestry authorization or commitment of financial resources at this time, officers of the Vestry have been supporting a significant initiative to explore the use a software program called Church Windows for both financial and administrative purposes. Bob Bettacchi has spearheaded this effort, organizing parishioner and accounting data into a parallel Church Windows based system which will be easier to use for staff, officers of the Vestry and parish committees. If successful this will have positive implications for how we use information to support staff and committee work.

In faith, Ian



2012 Convention Summary by Connie Parrish

Kate, Sarah Neumann and I joined over 600 others from all the congregations across the diocese at the Cathedral of St. Paul on Nov. 2-3 for the 227th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

Convention approved five resolutions. (For the full text of all resolutions, go to http://www.diomass.org/webfm_send/1946)

1. A Call for Economic Reconciliation through Socially Responsible Banking, that encourages the diocese, the Diocesan Investment Trust, congregations and individuals to divest from banks and financial institutions implicated in the foreclosure and financial crisis
2. Engaging Poverty and the Work of Economic Justice, that asks for a renewed focus on reducing poverty and working for economic and racial justice at the corporate, diocesan and congregational level
3. Criminal Justice Reform in Massachusetts; which requires support of state legislative priorities to eliminate any form of mandatory or automatic sentencing and encourages congregations to participate in public discussions of issues regarding administration of justice in criminal matters
4. Preparing the Church to Respond to Local Disasters, which directs Diocesan Council to establish a committee to create a disaster preparedness and response plan and provide support to parishes in disaster preparation
5. Strengthening Communications Ministries for Parishes, that asks for a report next year about how the diocese has responded to resolutions passed in July by General Convention encouraging each diocese to provide resources to congregations that wish to have dynamic Web sites and use social media more effectively.

Convention also voted to establish the Jorge Fuentes Anti-Violence Task Force. Jorge was a young leader in the diocesan-supported B-SAFE summer program who was shot and killed on the street outside his Dorchester home last September. The purpose of the task force is to begin work to address root causes of violence.

Each day was a full agenda, and legislative business was interspersed with worship, prayer and celebration of ministries. The Diocesan Youth Council, of which Sarah is a member, led a bible study session on Saturday afternoon. Bishop Tom gave a wonderful meditation both days, and at the closing service Bishop Gayle gave a rousing sermon that drew on the Vicar of Dibley and the lyrics of Three Dog Night (some of us of a certain age remember that group's songs). You can listen to the meditations and homily at <http://www.diomass.org/multimedia/videos>.

The cathedral isn't the most comfortable place to sit for hours on end, but that was more than compensated for by the love and spirit and energy of diocesan members that is so evident at Convention. It was an honor and a pleasure to attend as your representative.



Mission News

“I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.”

— Mother Teresa

Join the Redeemer community for a wonderful holiday party!

For the fourth year, we have the honor of helping to host the holiday party for families served by the Grow Clinic. The party is scheduled for **Thursday, December 20** from 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Our teens in Youth Group will shop for presents and read-to-me books before the party and teens age sixteen and older and adults can volunteer at the party itself. Our collection at the Crèche Service and special collections at other Christmas services provide for the presents and for a contribution to the clinic's family assistance fund, which provides fuel assistance, diapers, baby equipment, supplies and other things the families need. At the party, we help with set up, music, serving food, crafts and entertainment, and clean up. We take the mitten tree from church, set the tree up and give out the mittens, scarves and hats. We also bring cookies and other baked goods.

This year, the clinic specifically has asked for individuals who can speak other languages in order to speak more easily with some of the families they serve. The most prominent languages needed are: Spanish, Vietnamese, Portuguese, and French. For the Portuguese and French, we are particularly seeking people who can speak the Cape Verde and Haitian dialects, respectively and we may have a lead on those.

There are lots of ways for you to help:

- Knit or buy mittens, hats and scarves and hang them on the mitten tree by Sunday, December 15
- Bake cookies for the party (NO NUTS PLEASE DUE TO ALLERGY CONCERNS) by December 19
- Volunteer at the party (Thursday, December 20) between 2 p.m. (for set up) through 6 p.m. (for clean up)
- Bring your favorite board books and read-to-me children's books to the Crèche Service (for the clinic to give to families when they visit)
- Donate funds at the Crèche Service or give in a mission envelope at any service between December 22 and December 29

The Grow Clinic is located at Boston Medical Center and serves families who have a baby or toddler who has been diagnosed with FTT (failure to thrive). This is a very serious medical condition that occurs when a child does not receive adequate nutrition due to complex social and economic factors. Redeemer has had a relationship with the Grow Clinic for over seven years and this is the fourth year we have been invited to help with the party.

You may also visit the Grow Clinic's website, <http://www.bmc.org/pediatrics-growclinic.htm>, to learn more about their important work and the population they serve.

Please contact Chris Needham at 781-862-0591 if you would like to volunteer.



Is 2013 Your Year for El Hogar?**Trip dates: July 12-19 or July 12-26, 2013**

Redeemer will send its 8th group of volunteers to Honduras this summer to spend a week working and living side by side with the students and staff at the Agricultural School of El Hogar Ministries. This mission trip is open to adults and to teens 15 years old and up; often a teen and his/her parent volunteer together. Maximum group size is 15.

For more information or if you wish to go, contact: Jessie Maeck jmaeck@aol.com 781-863-8053.

El Hogar, a joint project of the Episcopal Churches of the United States and Honduras, provides education to 250 boys and girls in Honduras. Redeemer has sent volunteers 6 times since 2006 to participate in this inspiring organization.

Mark your calendar for Sunday, January 13, 2013. Ted Gaiser will be returning to Redeemer to preach about his work since he left us to serve as a missionary for the church in Colombia.

From Ted's blog, October 8, 2012, <http://tedabroad.wordpress.com/>

"I suspect that when most of us ponder the idea of a sermon, we think of a clerical exposition on a biblical, theological, religious, or moral theme. Sermons can be based on scripted preparation of notes or text, extemporaneous, based on preparation and limited notes, or impromptu, responding to the spirit of the moment. Sermons often include the preacher's stories and experiences, both past and present. In seminaries, students are taught to write the three-point sermon, which, depending on your particular perspective, is likely to mean the making of three specific points of exposition, exhortation and practical application. Typically, sermons are delivered by an individual called to ordained ministry in the church. But, a sermon doesn't have to be delivered by an ordained person. That said, however, in many traditions the authority and right to preach in the context of regular weekly worship requires some form of hierarchical approval. I believe the word "sermon" originated from the Latin word *sermo*, which means discourse. The word can also mean conversation. Since some people believe early sermons were delivered in the form of question and answer, as opposed to modern-day monologues, the idea of a conversation, or a form of interactive discourse, makes a great deal of sense to me."

Check January's Redeeming Features for more about Ted and his most recent work, prior to his return on January 13!



Calendar



December	Date	Event Details
Monday-Thursday	All month	9:00am - Morning Prayer
Saturday	1	9:00am - Liturgy Team meeting
Sunday	2	8:00am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II 10:50am - Adult Christian Formation: <i>The Heart of Christianity: Part I</i> 12:00 noon - Pastoral Care Team meeting 4:00pm - Advent Lessons and Carols w/ special music
Monday	3	7:00pm - Property Committee meeting
Tuesday	4	7:30pm—Stewardship Committee meeting
Thursday	6	7:30pm - Redeeming Knitters
Sunday	9	8:00am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II 10:50am - Adult Christian Formation: <i>The Heart of Christianity: Part II</i> 12:00 noon - Executive Committee meeting 4:00pm - Cookie Decorating & Caroling at the Rectory (all ages) No Christian Formation for children or youth
Sunday	16	8:00am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II 10:50am - Christian Formation for children and youth 10:50am - Adult Christian Formation: <i>The Heart of Christianity: Part III</i>
Monday	17	7:30pm - Finance Committee meeting
Wednesday	19	7:30pm - Vestry meeting
Thursday	20	7:30pm - Advent Service of Healing and Remembrance
Sunday	23	8:00am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II 10:30am - Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 10:50am - Adult Christian Formation: <i>The Heart of Christianity: Part IV</i>
Monday	24	3:34pm - Carol Sing 4:00pm - Creche Service with Christmas Pageant and Holy Eucharist. Ingathering of books, hats, mittens & scarves for The Grow Clinic 7:45pm - Carol Sing 8:00 pm - Festive Holy Eucharist w/ special music
Tuesday	25	10:00 am - Holy Eucharist (no music) Office Closed
Wednesday	26	Office Closed
Sunday	30	8:00am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II No Sunday morning Christian Formation/No Nursery Care

Please send all announcements by email to office@our-redeemer.net or for those without email, call or send to the church office, with "RF" clearly marked.

The **monthly deadline** for the December Redeeming Features submissions is December **15th**.