



Church of Our Redeemer
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Redeeming Features

Volume 29

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Greetings from Rev. Kate Ekrem

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Dear friends,

Each of the coming Sundays, we will begin our worship with lighting the Advent wreath and praying together some prayers that are more than 1,500 years old. They are usually called the O Antiphons, because each one begins with an O. Whenever I hear these antiphons I get butterflies in my stomach, the kind you get when you are a little kid and you know Christmas is getting close. Advent means coming and we are in the season of waiting for the coming of Christ. The themes of Advent – anticipation, preparation, watching and waiting and getting ready – are reflected in all we are probably already doing to get ready for the holiday season. When the Christmas songs start playing in the stores, there is really a sense of expectation in the air. We may remember all those Christmases when we were children, waiting with eager anticipation for the special morning when we got to open all our presents under the tree. But as adults we know we're not just waiting for presents, we're waiting for Jesus, for God with us, and it's good to recapture that sense of eager expectation and longing -- longing for God to come close to us and fill our hearts with love.

The O Antiphons reflect that sense of anticipation and longing. They may be familiar to you because they are the verses of the hymn "O Come O Come Emmanuel." We'll be saying one or two of them each week as we light the Advent wreath.

The O Antiphons were probably written by an anonymous monk, around the year 500. Traditionally they are part of Evening Prayer every day from December 17 through December 24. The antiphons are like a prayer version of an Advent calendar. They count down the days to Christmas. Each one does two things. It gives Jesus a special name or title, and it also asks Jesus to come and fulfill a prophesy from the Old Testament about the Messiah.

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Greetings from Kate (cont'd)

The names the Antiphons give Jesus give a real picture of who he is and what we hope for from him. He is God's holy Word, he is Wisdom, he is our Lord and Savior, he is a radiant dawn, like light shining on us, he is King of all the nations, and most of all he is Emmanuel, God with us.

But the prophesy part always touches me more because of the ways the antiphon puts it with that "come." Come, show us the way to salvation, come, stretch out your hand and set us free, come break down the walls for those who live in sickness and death, come Lord. It's a prayer to God, but it's also demanding and insistent. Come on, God, don't you know we need you know? Come, help us find the way to peace, come, heal the sick and feed the hungry, come, come help us take care of our loved ones, heal us, help us.

This is really our Christmas wish list, isn't it? Not a new toy under the tree, but for God to come and do these things, break down the walls, stretch out his hand, set us free. Because we are not just waiting for a baby to be born on Christmas Day, we're waiting for Jesus Christ to come again, a second time, to fix this broken world and all our broken hearts. We can see signs that God is on the way when we see these prophesies from the O Antiphons being fulfilled – captives being freed, the sick being healed, the love of God being shared.

The O Antiphons were originally written in Latin, and apparently by a very clever monk all those centuries ago, because in Latin they form an acrostic. Taken backwards, the first letter of each of the titles for Jesus makes the Latin words *Ero Cras*, which means, Tomorrow, I will come.

Peace,
Kate

The O Antiphons

Dec 17: O Emmanuel, king and lawgiver, desire of the nations, Savior of all people, come and set us free, Lord our God.

Dec 18: O Wisdom, O holy Word of God, you govern all creation with your strong yet tender care. Come and show your people the way to salvation.

Dec 19: O sacred Lord of ancient Israel, who showed yourself to Moses in the burning bush, who gave him the holy law on Sinai mountain: come, stretch out your mighty hand to set us free.

Dec 20: O Flower of Jesse's stem, you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples; kings stand silent in your presence; the nations bow down in worship before you. Come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid.

Dec 21: O Key of David, O royal Power of Israel controlling at your will the gate of Heaven: Come, break down the prison walls of death for those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death; and lead your captive people into freedom.

Dec 22: O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come, shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

Dec 23: O King of all the nations, the only joy of every human heart; O Keystone of the mighty arch of man, come and save the creature you fashioned from the dust



Advent & Christmas Service Schedule

Wednesday, December 4, 11 & 18

Noon day Eucharist

Sunday, December 1, 10:30am

Advent Wreath making and All Parish breakfast

Advent Lessons and Carols

Sunday, December 8, 4:00pm

Candlelight service of Lessons and Carols featuring Redeemer's Adult Choir, Guest string quartet and singers in music of Bach, Manz, Handel, Cherubini, Jungst, and more.

Cookies and Caroling: An Advent Evening

Sunday, December 15, 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

Friday, December 20, 7:30pm

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

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

Sunday, December 22, 10:30 -noon.

Parts assigned and costumes distributed.

Christmas Eve

Tuesday, 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, guest instrumentalists and singers

Christmas Day

Wednesday, December 25

10:00am Holy Eucharist (no music)

1 Christmas

Sunday, December 29

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 5

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

9:30am Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Celebrate the arrival of the Wise Men from the East

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 Friday, 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. Andrew Goldhor

Parish Breakfast and Advent Wreath Making



On Sunday, December 1st, we will have our annual Advent wreath making and an all-parish breakfast. There will be no Christian Formation that day. Please join us in enjoying food and extended fellowship with your parish family.

This is a pot-luck breakfast, so if you are able please bring a breakfast dish to share that is ready to serve (i.e. needs no additional prep work). We also need volunteers to help with set-up and clean-up. Please email the Church office, office@our-redeemer.net, if you can help in any way. Thank you!

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 **Monday, December 16**.



Redeeming Knitters

Mittens 101 continues with a meeting in the Library, Thursday, December 6 at 7:30 pm. We will be working on hats, mittens and scarves. Beginning on December 1 the tree will be up for the scarves, mittens and hats.

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

Cookies and Caroling – Sunday, December 15



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 around the fireplace to follow. 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. Thanks to Connie Parrish for helping with the hospitality this



Christmas Eve Creche Service: Tuesday December 24

(Rehearsal Sunday, December 22 @ 10:30AM until 12:30)

It's that time of year. Once again the 4:00pm Christmas Eve service will feature the children and youth of Redeemer bringing the Nativity of Our Lord to life, complete with angels, shepherds, the Holy Family, the Wise People from afar, and more. The service will include Christmas carols, as well as traditional hymns and readings. Parts are available for any interested child or teen, all ages welcome.

PLEASE SAVE THE REHEARSAL DATE! (Sunday, December 22- During our normal Formation time). This will be the one and only rehearsal. The costumes will be distributed at the rehearsal.

If you have any questions please contact Rev. Andrew (Andrew@our-redeemer.net).



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 2014. Delicious food will be served! Please mark the date and make plans to be there.



Happy Holidays!

Bad Weather



It's that time of year to remind you of our bad weather procedures.

You can call the church office at 781-862-6408, check for an email update, or check 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.



Adult Formation News

Adult Christian Formation meets Sundays from 10:50-11:50am, in the Great Hall.
We invite ages 13-113 to join us. Bring your coffee and a friend!

This advent season we welcome Dr. Diane D'Souza, who will lead our Adult Formation series, entitled "**Civil Rights and the Modern Yankee Martyr Jonathan Daniels**". This series begins Sunday, December 8th (Advent II).

This three part forum turns the spotlight on one of the saints and martyrs of the Episcopal Church: the New Hampshire native Jonathan Daniels (1939-1965). The compelling story of his life and his growth into a passionate advocate of equal rights in church and society offers us a special window into inspiration and the promptings of the Spirit, martyrdom and the holy. We also gain insight into the Civil Rights movement and the Church, and the unfinished work of dismantling racism and building beloved community today. The forum is a facilitated learning experience in which we make use of film and lecture, reflection and discussion.

> **Dec. 8: Moved by the Spirit: the Magnificat & the call of Martin Luther King, Jr.**

What is inspiration? What causes us to step outside our comfort zone? This session introduces New Hampshire native Jonathan Daniels, and explores the promptings which led him to leave his life as a Cambridge seminarian to join the Civil Rights struggle in Georgia.

> **Dec. 15: Martyrdom and the Arc Towards Justice**

What does it mean to be a martyr? Where do we find martyrs in our faith today? Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. noted that the arc of history bends toward justice. How do we see the arc of faith? And why might the American South be our Holy Land?

> **Dec. 22: Trayvon Martin, Voting Rights, and Our Unfinished Work**

Jonathan Daniels felt compelled by his faith to go to Georgia, and to work to bring about justice for all people. Where might the pull of the Spirit lead him today? Where is it leading us? This session highlights the annual Jonathan Daniels and All Martyrs' pilgrimage, and explores new movements for change in church and society.

***Diane D'Souza, Ph.D.** is the director of Lifelong Learning at Episcopal Divinity School (EDS) and the Director of the Mission Institute, a collaborative project of EDS, Episcopal City Mission, and the Diocese. Diane spent nearly twenty years in mission and multi-faith work including as a faculty member and director of an international center for research, interfaith relations, and reconciliation in Hyderabad, India.*

If you have input about Adult Christian Formation topics or themes, please contact a member of the Committee (Ian Fox, Susan Burkhardt, Jed Geyerhahn, Mary Etta King), or Rev. Andrew Goldhor (Andrew@our-redeemer.net)



News from the Diocese: Bishop Shaw retiring in September. New Bishop to be elected in April.

Bishop M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE announced today to the Diocesan Convention his plans to retire at the time of his successor's consecration on Sept. 13, 2014.

Shaw in January 2013 called for the election of a bishop coadjutor to serve alongside him for a period of time prior to his retirement, but he has since decided that the overlap period will be unnecessary, and that the transfer of episcopal authority will take place at the bishop-elect's consecration ceremony.

Shaw made the announcement during an afternoon presentation to the Diocesan Convention that focused on his gratitude for the community life of the diocese and for diocesan ministries initiated during his nearly 20-year tenure that have not only accomplished much but which have also made his own life of faith grow, he said.

He recalled, with good humor, his own experience of the coadjutor period when he became a bishop, and how, at the time, he wondered: "What is this coadjutor stuff for? I'm not doing this when it's time for me to retire." He then proceeded to completely forget all about that resolution that until just a few weeks ago, he said, when his prayer about the upcoming election brought it back to mind.

He said he is looking forward to having the next 10 months to continue offering his gratitude to the people and congregations of the diocese. "Then the new time can begin that God is preparing us all for. Let's give the future the most open arms we possibly can," he said.

In an interview prior to the convention, Shaw said: "Some might think this decision has to do with my health, but it doesn't actually," he said, referring to the brain cancer diagnosis and subsequent treatment regimen he's been undergoing over the past six months. "My decision really has to do with my understanding of the episcopate and with God's love."

The election of the new bishop is scheduled to take place April 5, 2014, at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston.

A "Season of Service and Celebration" is being planned to honor Shaw in April-June 2014, beginning with Episcopal City Mission's State House Lobby Day on April 9 as the kick-off service event, and concluding with a picnic and celebration at Franklin Park in Boston on June 21. In between, all congregations are being invited to honor Shaw by organizing or participating in a community service event of their choosing.

Shaw has requested that any financial gifts made in his honor be designated for the diocese's Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center. Information on how to contribute will be made available early in 2014.



Music News

Upcoming in December ...As usual, there are many music happenings in December at Redeemer!

In observance of Advent, our worship service revisits the ancient practice sung liturgy. Like last year, we will sing the psalm each week, and this year we institute the practice of a sung Lord's prayer, in addition. Not to worry - the chant tune is familiar to many Episcopalians, and the choir, as always, will provide leadership.

Our choir is busily preparing its annual **Advent Candlelight Lessons & Carols Service for Sunday December 8, at 4:00**, with a guest string quartet, and reception to follow. Thanks to the adjunct singers from within and beyond Redeemer who have already committed to joining us. Singers are still welcomed to join us for this special service, and may pick up packets of music from the door of Room 208. There are also youtube practice links to each piece, which Bernadette can email to you. Adjunct singers should plan to attend the second half of regular Wednesday rehearsals from 8:00-9:00 p.m. each week. Dress rehearsal with the strings is Wed., Dec. 4th, and a choir-only dress rehearsal Saturday morning Dec. 7th 9:00-11:00 a.m.

On **Sunday morning December 22nd**, when our liturgy honors Mary and we celebrate the Magnificat, the Atrium Singers will sing two songs in Mary's honor - "Ave Maria" and "Canticle of Mary."

On **Christmas Eve December 24th**, we welcome guest singers into our choir, and we anticipate guest instrumentalists from Cambridge's *The Renaissonics* on recorder, keyboard, and other period instruments to join us for the 8:00 service.

Looking ahead to 2014 ...

From January 9th to February 1st, I will be traveling on a Continuing Education and Mission trip to South Africa, where I will be rehearsing and singing on tour with *Village Harmony*-a group of singers from the US, England, and Canada, in collaboration with the *Polokwane Singers* from Polokwane, South Africa. A second purpose of my trip will be to explore mission, and music-mission, partnership possibilities for parishes in the MA diocese, in various locations throughout South Africa. As a result of my work this past spring and fall with the MA diocese on behalf of South African children for the Music-and-Mission event in October, I was able to arrange for the touring group to sing a concert on January 29th at *The Cathedral Church of St. George the Martyr in Capetown*, former seat of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. That concert will be a sister "launch event" to the Dedham October 25th evening, this one on the "other side of the pond," to highlight new mission collaborations between Massachusetts and South Africa. The touring group will also sing a benefit concert on January 27th at the *Rondebosch United Church* in Capetown to benefit the Masazane soup kitchen, which serves meals to 150 children daily, and is supported by the Arlington-based organization *Tremendous Hearts*. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep and heartfelt thanks to all at Redeemer who have supported my efforts and work with music and mission in South Africa thus far.



Music News (cont'd)

While I am away, the music program will be in good hands. Substituting on January 12th will be organist Geoffrey Wieting. My interim predecessor Joyce Painter Rice returns to direct the choir rehearsals and lead services on January 19th and 26th. I will be back on the organ bench Sunday February 2nd.

Beyond January - mark your calendars for:

Sunday, February 9, at 3:00 Lexington Choral Festival at St. Brigid's Church

Monday, April 7, at 7:30 p.m. Combined "Life's Journeys" concert with the Brookhaven Chorus.

Mission Committee

The holiday season is here! Don't miss the opportunity to reach out to those in need. The need is particularly great this year, as federal policy is having a direct impact on many of the families impacted by the organizations we support.

An article in the *New York Times* on November 7, 2013 read,

"For many, a \$10 or \$20 cut in the monthly food budget would be absorbed with little notice.

But for millions of poor Americans who rely on food stamps, reductions that began this month present awful choices. One gallon of milk for the kids instead of two. No fresh broccoli for dinner or snacks to take to school. Weeks of grits and margarine for breakfast.

And for many, it will mean turning to a food pantry or a soup kitchen by the middle of the month.... The reduction in benefits has affected more than 47 million people.... It is the largest wholesale cut in the program since Congress passed the first Food Stamps Act in 1964 and touches about one in every seven Americans." (http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/08/us/cut-in-food-stamps-forces-hard-choices-on-poor.html?_r=0&pagewanted=print)

Please take advantage of the many opportunities to support our neighbors this holiday season. Some opportunities include: volunteering with the Bristol Lodge team, donating to the Food Pantry, and contributing to and/or attending the Grow Clinic's holiday party.

The Annual Grow Clinic Party is here. It's not too late to get involved!

Again this year, Redeemer will be helping sponsor and host the Holiday Party for the parents and children served by the Grow Clinic. The party will be held on Thursday, December 19 from 2:00-5:30 pm at Boston Medical Center. If you would like to help with Holiday Party by participating in any of the activities described below, please contact Chris Needham at 781-862-0591 or speak to Julie Coons if you would like to bake for the party.



Mission Committee (cont'd)

How can I help?

- ❖ **Donate funds** to support families served by the Clinic during the Christmas season using a Mission Envelope (write Grow Clinic in the memo line on your check)
- ❖ **Donate one or more read-to-me or toddler board books** at the Crèche and other Christmas services
- ❖ **Bake cookies** and deliver them to Julie Coons' house December 18 before the party – VERY IMPORTANT: **NO NUTS** in the cookies
- ❖ **Bring new hats, scarves and mittens** and hang them on the Mitten Tree in church by December 15. Our Redeemer knitting group will also contribute hats and mittens they have knitted and will hand out their items as well as the mitten tree items at the party
- ❖ **Volunteer at the party** – there will be a car pool for volunteers leaving at about 12 pm from church, and a later trip for teens in the Youth Group

The Grow Clinic, <http://www.bmc.org/pediatrics-growclinic.htm> , is located at Boston Medical Center and it 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 fifth year we have been invited to help with the Holiday Party.

The time is here to think about whether this is your year for El Hogar...

The 2014 travel dates are set! We will be sending a group to El Hogar August 1 – 8, 2014. Everyone who is 15 years old or older is invited.

Please contact group leaders Calie Koso calie@kosofamily.com or Erica Brotschi eranbro@gmail.com for more information.

El Hogar, a joint project of the Episcopal Churches of the United States and Honduras, provides a home and education to 250 poverty-stricken boys and girls in Honduras. Redeemer has sent volunteers 7 times since 2006 to participate in this inspiring organization. Next summer we will be at the Agricultural school



Calendar

December		
Sunday	1	8:00am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II 10:30am - Advent Wreath making and All Parish Breakfast
Monday	2	5:30pm - Men's Group dinner meeting 7:30pm - Church Community meeting 7:30pm - Property Committee meeting
Tuesday	3	9:00am & 7:00pm - EfM class
Wednesday	4	Noon day Eucharist with Advent meditations 7:30pm - Sabbatical Planning Committee meeting
Thursday	5	7:30pm - Redeeming Knitters
Saturday	7	9:00am - Liturgy Team meeting
Sunday	8	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>Civil Rights and Jonathan Daniels - Part I</i> 12:00noon - Executive Committee meeting 4:00pm - Advent Lessons and Carols
Tuesday	10	9:00am & 7:00pm - EfM class 7:30pm - Adult Formation Committee meeting
Wednesday	18	Noon day Eucharist with Advent meditations
Thursday	12	7:30pm - Creation Care Team meeting
Sunday	15	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>Civil Rights and Jonathan Daniels - Part II</i> 12:00 noon - Pastoral Care Team meeting 4:00pm - Cookies and Carols Dinner at the Rectory
Monday	16	7:30pm - Finance Committee meeting
Tuesday	17	9:00am & 7:00pm - EfM class
Wednesday	18	Noon day Eucharist with Advent meditations 7:30pm - Vestry meeting
Thursday	19	2:00pm - Grow Clinic Holiday Party 4:00pm - Warden meeting
Friday	20	7:30pm - Advent Service of Healing and Remembrance
Sunday	22	8:00am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II 10:30am - Creche Service Rehearsal 10:50am - Adult Christian Formation: <i>Civil Rights and Jonathan Daniels - Part III</i>
Monday	23	1:30pm - Cook for Bristol Lodge
Tuesday	24	4:00pm - Creche Service with Holy Eucharist & Children's Pageant 8:00pm - Festive Christmas Eve Service with Guest Musicians
Wednesday	25	10:00am - Christmas Day Holy Eucharist (no music)
Wed. - Friday	25-27	Office Closed
Sunday	29	8:00am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II No Children, Youth, or Adult 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 January Redeeming Features submissions is December 15.