



SUMMER 2019
ISSUE NO. 11

THE TABLE

ORDINARY TIME

Every Nation Tribe & Tongue

WELCOMING THE STRANGER
by Bishop Andudu Adam Elnail

MATTHEW 25 GATHERING
by Lena Van Wyk

SUMMER GROWTH SERIES

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Letter from the Editor

Greetings to you, dear reader.

As the weather continues to warm our hometown of Greensboro, it is starting to earn its name. Trees are alive, grass is green, flowers are in bloom, and many people are finding themselves in their backyards tending to family gardens. It is truly appropriate to see so much life as we move through the full season of Easter and into Pentecost.

It is not just nature that is teeming with life, however. The Farm at New Garden Park is in full swing--many hands have been at work to grow and prepare for another successful year. The school year is coming to a close: an end that also marks the beginning of a whole new adventure for our high school and college graduates. This is true for our Fellows who, along with a team from Church of the Redeemer, will once again embark on the journey to Rwanda to visit and serve in our sister parish in Karangazi. At Redeemer, between summer vacations, there will be a time of learning and growing as our Community Groups wind down and our Summer Growth series start up. Yes, this seems to be a time of year when things are changing but we stay diligent in the shift towards the next thing.

The is happening in The Table. In this our summer installment, we find ourselves in a new issue

but with continued focus on immigration. In our spring issue, we cast a big picture view of how we as Christians frame the conversation around immigration, migration, and refugees. Now, we hope to encourage a deeper dive into what it means to be part of an incredibly diverse Anglican Church in North America. We desire for the stories we share to be ones of hope as they express the vision of God's Kingdom, filled with people from "every nation, tribe, and tongue" (Revelation 7:9).

As we send out this issue, our prayer is that we are all encouraged by God's truth and the stories and experiences of His people. May we love Him with our whole hearts and our neighbors as ourselves, to His glory.



Mikey Fissel
Managing Editor &
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Director

THE TABLE

FEATURED STORIES



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THINGS ANGLICAN

“The Anglican Way: The How and Why to How and Why we worship the way we do”

by Fr. Benjamin Wall

Have you ever wondered why we do the things we do during our worship services?

Why is the whole church saying the Collect for Purity at the beginning of the Liturgy (service) instead of a priest?

Why do we recite the Summary of the Law at the beginning of the Liturgy (service)?

Why do we sing or say the Kyrie at every Liturgy (service)? And why do we substitute the Trisagion in its place during the seasons of Advent and Lent?

Why are we changing the response to the greeting “The Lord be with you” with the response, “And with your spirit”?

Why, in the Nicene Creed, are we saying “We believe” rather than “I believe”?

Why has some of the language changed all of a sudden in our common prayers at services?

Why do we pray the Prayer of Humble Access and say the Agnus Dei only during the seasons of Advent and Lent?

If you have been worshipping with us throughout the past few months then you’re probably aware that these questions are certainly justified. In fact, these are actual questions people have asked in light of the many changes that have occurred concerning the way we worship at Church of the Redeemer.

Why? The short answer is that a new Book of Common Prayer that contains guiding principles of Christian worship in the Anglican Way was recently approved by the College of Bishops in January 2019. The call for a new Book of Common Prayer was made in 2009, at the time of the formation of the Anglican Church in North America. At that time, a Liturgy and Common Worship Task Force was appointed and produced the “lens” by which prayer book texts would be considered: “Guiding Principles of Christian Worship.” Over the past decade, the Liturgy and Common Worship Task Force has faithfully

and diligently worked to provide what is now called the ACNA Texts for Common Prayer: “The Bible Arranged for Worship.” I think it is vital to note that this entire process has been the most participatory process of prayer book revision in all of Church history; a process undertaken with a common vision rooted in common prayer that God would be glorified in and through the entire process, the fruit of which will be the common worship of the people of God.

So what does all this have to do with Church of the Redeemer and the way we worship? What does this have to do with all the changes that have occurred in our weekly services?

The new ACNA Texts for Common Prayer is the comprehensive service book for Anglican churches that contains Guiding Principles of Christian Worship for Anglicans. Contained within these Guiding Principles are rubrics (directions) as to how our church services should be conducted. At times, the rubrics (often italicized in red font) express the possibility of adding or refraining from certain liturgical aspects in a service. For example, the rubric that corresponds to the Prayer of Humble Access states: “Celebrant and People together *may* (emphasis mine) say,” which means that the Senior Rector (Pastor) of the church has the liberty to either include or refrain from praying this prayer in the service.

Though the expression of possibility (“may”) is included in many rubrics throughout the Prayer Book, it is not the case with each and every rubric. For example, the new Prayer Book does not provide an option for refraining from praying the *Kyrie* (“Lord have mercy”). The rubric is clear: “The Celebrant and people pray.” However, there are three options to choose from regarding how we pray the *Kyrie*:

*Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.*

or

*Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.*

or

*Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.*

or

*“Trisagion”
Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.*

Though we are required to pray the *Kyrie* or *Trisagion* at every service, we are given many options in how and what to pray: a liberty we have taken and implemented during the seasons of Advent and Lent.

Now you may still be wondering “but why? Why do we have to pray the *Kyrie* or *Trisagion* at every Liturgy? How was this decision made? Does it really matter at all if we do or don’t pray this specific prayer?” Well, at the end of the day, it probably doesn’t matter. But rather than asking “why,” maybe we should ask “why not?” Of course it’s not sinful not to pray this prayer. But since we are given the opportunity to pray in this way, why not? Think about the ways this prayer reveals and shapes our life together, our theology, and our worship.

These prayers reach back to Biblical times. The prayer *Kyrie, eleison* comes from the Biblical phrase “have mercy on me, Lord” and it is a prayer that is found in many Biblical passages (Psalms 4:1, 6:2, 9:13, 25:16, 27:7, 30:10, 31:9, 51:1, 86:16, 123:3). In the New Testament, the phrase occurs three times in Matthew’s gospel: Matthew 15:22 when the Canaanite woman cries out to Jesus, “Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David”; Matthew 17:15: “Lord, have mercy on my son”; and Matthew 20:30f when two unnamed blind men call out to Jesus, “Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David.”

In ancient times, the congregation (in both Judaism and Christianity) offered personal intercessions before the Liturgy began, using the *Kyrie* as the response to each petition. Later, it was retained as a reminder that we, by virtue of sin, are unable to approach Almighty God apart from His Mercy and Grace.

So when we pray these prayers, we are joining our voices with the communion of saints around the world and in heaven who forever worship in the presence of God in our shared confession of faith that we are indeed utterly dependent and in need of God's mercy and grace. To pray this prayer is to visibly express our shared confession of faith. It is to join ourselves with Anglicans from now and the past, and with many Christians of other traditions who also pray this prayer in their respective weekly services, "Lord, have mercy on us."

Okay, but what if the Senior Rector wants to refrain from praying this prayer or would like to substitute a different prayer other than the Trisagion in its place? Is this possible? Or, are we limited from doing so? Great question. The short answer is that the Prayer Book should not be viewed as some dictator's rule-book, but rather, the fruit of much faithful reflection on what aspects best characterize our common worship and way of life together. In the event that something else is desired in the

place of any "required" aspect of the Liturgy, the Senior Rector may consult and request from their bishop permission to do so. It must be said that our bishop, on behalf of our diocese, has provided a great deal of freedom to clergy in this regard as long as the refrains, additions, substitutions, and revisions are in line with God's word and tradition.

By now, I hope you have a better understanding of how the Prayer Book is a type of guide for how we do what we do at Church of the Redeemer. As stated earlier, the new ACNA Texts for Common Prayer is the comprehensive service book for Anglican churches. It contains the written liturgies for almost any service that would be held at an Anglican church. These include: daily prayer services (the Daily Office); weekly worship (the Holy Eucharist); special services like Ash Wednesday or Good Friday; services held throughout one's life from baptism to a wedding or funeral; ordination services (for a bishop, priest, or deacon); and services used to celebrate new ministries or churches.

The Book of Common Prayer also usually contains a calendar to help you follow the Church Year, prayers and thanksgivings that you use throughout the Church Year and/or at any time, the book of Psalms (because these are often used in Anglican worship), a catechism and other documents to teach the

basics of the Christian faith, and lectionaries, which let you know what passages of Scripture to read during all the services mentioned in the previous list.

Basically, with just a Bible and a Prayer Book, you should have all the text you need to hold Anglican worship services.

This upcoming summer, we will welcome the addition of 200 physical copies of the new ACNA Texts for Common Prayer: The Bible Arranged for Worship into our services, all of which have been purchased in honor of Marilyn Thiebeau through the Marilyn Thiebeau Memorial Fund. We are extremely grateful to everyone who has generously given to this memorial fund for this purpose. The new Prayer Books are books. They are meant to be held in our hands, to become a part of our lives when we gather together to worship.

Our hope and prayer is that we will continue to be conformed into the image of God's Son, Jesus Christ, in our use of these new prayer books. These new Prayer Books are books of Prayer. Prayer is communion with God. Prayer is the proper activity of a redeemed people. Prayer is God making himself present with humanity. May the way we pray inform, influence, and shape our belief. *Amen.*

In case you're still wondering about the answers to the questions posed in the previous article, you're in luck:

The Collect for Purity: Why allow the whole congregation to say this prayer?

This historic prayer was originally said in the sacristy by the priest alone, but is now intended as a preparation for the whole congregation.

Summary of the Law: Why do we recite the Summary of the Law/Decalogue at the beginning of the Liturgy?

Our baptismal vows require sponsors to teach The Decalogue, The Lord's Prayer, and the The Creeds. Cranmer introduced The Decalogue as preparation for worship and as a reminder of our duties as Christians. The loss in our current society of absolute values requires the Church's response.

Collect of the Day: Why are we changing the response to the greeting?

The Collect is intended to express the theme of the lessons for the day. It is prefaced by a greeting, "The Lord be with you," and the response, "And with your spirit." The greeting and response are direct translations from the Greek (cf. Galatians 6.18), and the Latin, "et cum spiritu tuo," which Cranmer translated correctly as "and with your spirit."

Nicene Creed: Why, in the Nicene Creed, are we saying "We believe" rather than "I believe?"

The original Greek text used "We Believe" because this Creed reflects the belief of the whole Church as a united body, as contrasted with the Apostles' Creed which is a personal profession of faith used at baptism. The translation we are using for the Creed is that used by The Church of England in "Common Worship," an adaptation of the 1662 BCP (Book of Common Prayer).

Daily Offices: Why has some of the language been changed in the Offices?

The format for both Morning and Evening Prayer are closely based on the 1662 BCP, with changes in language to accommodate modern usage (e.g., "devices and desires" no longer means what it did in the 17th century but "deceit" communicates more clearly to a modern audience).

Prayer of Humble Access: Why was the language of the prayer changed?

Words such as "abundant" (changed from "manifold") and "...delights in showing mercy" (changed from "...whose property is always...") were considered more true to the intention of the text as it is understood in modern English. Furthermore, the original parallelism of "Body" and "Blood" of the 1662 text was restored.



Welcoming the Stranger

by Bishop Andudu Adam Elnail

Movement from one place to another and becoming a stranger is part of the immigration experience [concept and practice]. Immigration is as old as human beings, from when the first immigrants, Adam and Eve, were driven out from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:22-24). We also see in the Old Testament the significant migration of Abraham as instructed by God for divine purposes. In the New Testament, as a child, Jesus is a refugee escaping King Herod and migrating to take refuge in Egypt away from King Herod's evil actions—actions driven by Herod's power, crises in leadership, greed, control, and fear. Apart from natural disasters, leadership crises similar to King Herod's are currently affecting millions of people as they flee their countries to become refugees in other countries.

Millions of immigrants, subjected to a wide variety of situations and needs, come from countries around the globe to the U.S. One thing which unites them in the early stages of their immigration journey is the need for support. Even when we travel as a tourist or on official business, all of us at some point need assistance, sometimes big and sometimes small: directions, help carrying luggage, locating food—you just cannot do it all alone. We are social beings, and we need to help each other with the skills and resources that God has given us.

The Holy Bible in Hebrew 13:1-2 tells us, "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." This verse is not a request but a command. When giving hospitality and help to the stranger (e.g. im-

migrants), consider the strangers who were actually messengers from God in the story of Lot: the people of Sodom wanted to violate the two strangers who were Angels sent from God in the form of men (Genesis 19). Jesus' parable in the Gospel of Matthew is about the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 25:42-43), "For I was hungry, and you gave me no food... I was a stranger, and you did not welcome me..." Jesus said that if we did not help the least of these, we did not do it to Him. We are the hands of God on earth. There is no better way to show that we love God than when we love our neighbors regardless of their situation. I have witnessed the attention, love, and care of the Diocese of Christ Our Hope for the refugees in many of its churches and the Diocesan Convention has demonstrated it continues to move in this direction.

In addition to immigrants, refugees are people to be viewed not only with desperate needs, but often people who are moved to deliver God's good news wherever they go, "... those who were scattered went about preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Joseph remained faithful and obedient to the living God while in the foreign land of Egypt, reflecting the greatness of God even through challenges and oppression. Persevering, Joseph remained faithful and obedient and was used by God to save the Egyptians and his family from the danger of famine.

Many Immigrants are successful in the churches they attend, in the sports they play, and in their academic pursuits. I do believe that through the partnership and encouragement between immigrant and refugee populations and the Dioceses of Christ Our Hope, success can be achieved for the glory of God, his Church, and his mission.

There are Rwandans, Ugandans, Kenyans, Sudanese, and other immigrant churches in the Diocese of Christ our Hope. The background and challenges of these people groups vary greatly. Rather than try to speak on behalf of all immigrants, I will provide examples of the Sudanese immigrant church experience in the U.S. to offer a basic understanding of the challenges they are facing.

Since Sudan's independence from Colonial Britain in 1956, the Sudanese Governments in control have been unjust. For more than six decades, the Sudanese people have suffered from political conflicts, oppression, humiliation, corruption, church persecution, the death of over two million people, and the displacement of over four million Sudanese, many of whom became refugees scattered around the world and traveling through many countries, eventually arriving in the U.S.

Thousands of immigrants arrived in the U.S. filled with fear, psychological problems, and trauma because of the suffering that they had endured. The different culture, food, language, and climate in the U.S. added more stress.

Because of the language barrier, some Sudanese cannot understand sermons or participate in praise or worship songs and therefore cannot participate fully in American English church services. They sometimes feel estranged from the Church and many prefer to stay home on Sundays.

However, others establish Sudanese churches or fellowships in the Arabic language, which is a unifying language even though some of whom were born out of the Sudan cannot understand Arabic. The Sudanese immigrant churches face many challenges. Due to denominational differences, issues of doctrine, liturgy, administration, and church structure, some churches are divided. Many Sudanese church leaders lack seminary training or orientation in church leadership. Young Sudanese congregations are often unable to pay their pastors, and thus, their church leaders frequently lack sufficient time for pastoral work since they are financially unable to dedicate all of their time to the work of the church; they have to work to provide for their family not only in the U.S., but also for their extended families back home in Sudan. Meeting together as a congregation is frequently limited to



only on Sundays at the church building.

Another big challenge is the rapid influence of American culture and language on Sudanese youth. They do not understand the Sudanese church service and as such, they feel out of place, particularly when there is no relevant children or youth ministry. When they turn eighteen, they often leave the Sudanese church. I am concerned that the flight from the church will continue so that within a short time, a generation of Sudanese immigrants will no longer be Christian. American leaders and teachers are urgently needed to train Sudanese leaders for Sudanese youth and children ministries.

A final challenge that I would like to address is that of the male-oriented Sudanese cultural perspective. These male dominated traditions do not fit well in American society, where the law protects all women and men. This sometimes creates conflict in immigrant families, leading to marital separation or divorce. Furthermore, it can lead to conflict over the control of the finances and who will control the small financial assistance being sent back home to the extended family. Methods of parental discipline are different in Sudan which leads some immigrant children to disagree with parents and abandon the families altogether.

I'd like to offer some ideas for Biblically-based intervention by the Diocese of Christ Our Hope to immigrants and refugees:

TRAINING in Jesus' holistic ministry approaches, such as spiritual disciplines, trauma healing, and church leadership and administration.

PASTORAL visits to the Sudanese churches and to families. It is God's love and care through the church that will heal historical wounds and release some of the accumulated stress. Building mutual relationships and trust will go far to restore the dignity of immigrants.

ASSIST when leaders called to the ministry need church leadership skill development or counseling. Find relevant training opportunities that will still allow for bi-vocationalism.

ASSIST with the provision of salaries and release a few immigrant church leaders from their private work to carry out effective and full time pastoral work and Bible studies.

ESTABLISH relevant children and youth ministries, resources, and focus on leadership training of the immigrant youth.

CONDUCT regional conferences or workshops for immigrants and immigrant leaders to address immigrant family conflicts through Biblical narratives, conflict transformation, trauma healing, and restorative justice skills, all of which has proven to be very relevant to the immigrants.

CONDUCT regional conferences or retreats for spiritual nourishment, prayers, and fasting.

HELP the immigrant congregation find buildings in which to worship.

SET strategies and plans so that barriers between the immigrant Churches and the American Church will diminish in coming generations and we will rise as one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

Together, immigrants and the Diocese of Christ our Hope can partner to plant churches, and carry out missions and discipleship even beyond the U.S. I do thank and appreciate Diocese of Christ Our Hope and other churches in the U.S. for helping and supporting some immigrant churches. This is a big blessing in the extension of God's kingdom and gives assurance to the continuation of generations of immigrants in the church.



“ In addition to immigrants,
refugees are people to be viewed
not only with desperate needs,
but often people who are moved
to deliver God’s good news
wherever they go...”



EVERY TRIBE AND NATION NETWORK (ETNN)

Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) is starting a significant ministry called the Every Tribe and Nation Network (ETNN). I am honored to join this ministry, which will labor to organize all immigrants' nations that have come to North America and worship within ACNA to carry out God's mission into the world.

The mission of God requires us to go into the world—in other words, to all tribes and nations. However, almost all nations of the world are represented in the U.S. This is a great privilege. Together, ACNA and these ethnic groups will carry missions to some of their countries of origin, but also carry out mission within the U.S. Mission from Everywhere to Everywhere. As Bishop Bill Murdoch summarized it "ETNN is a ministry of building and sustaining relationships and deepening the respect of one another...and developing human and other resources as every generation releases the next generation into global mission and ministry until our Lord returns."

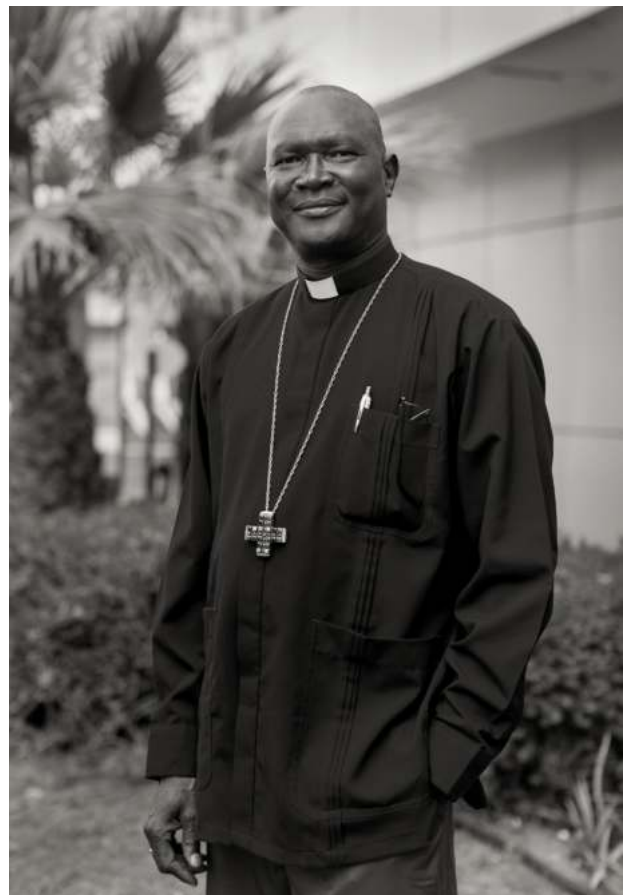
Relationship, Respect, Resources, and Release are the four aspects that guide the ministry. It is a perfect picture of the church and the nations who will stand before King Jesus in his return. (Rev. 7)



Andudu Adam Elnail is a bishop from the Diocese of Kadugli Sudan. The country of Sudan has been going through civil war for many years. Andudu has been working in peace-building since his consecration in 2002. In the second civil war in the Nuba Mountain of the Sudan in 2011, Andudu became a victim of the conflict: his house, all diocesan offices, the diocesan guest house, and cathedral were burned or destroyed. His name is on the list of the unwanted people by the ruling party in Sudan. He acquired asylum in the USA and continues to advocate for the people of Sudan. He testified before a U.S. Congressional subcommittee about the atrocities and church persecution going on in Sudan. He was invited by the African Union several times to participate in peace talks between the Government of Sudan and the opposition party: Sudan People Liberation Movement North. (SPLM/N). He also worked as chairman of the Interfaith Commission for six years in the Province of the Episcopal Church of Sudan and traveled extensively doing interfaith and ecumenical work.

In 2018, Andudu acquired an M.A. in Conflict Transformation and Peace-building from the Center for Justice and Peace-building at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. He received his Bachelor of Divinity from the Uganda Christian University in Uganda in 2000. His passion is to work with the Sudanese Diaspora and other refugee/immigrant populations in church mission and peace-building.

Andudu has traveled to over thirty states in the U.S. to encourage and address the Sudanese in the country, especially to those in need of a spiritual family and social encouragement. Now he is joined in this work with the Diocese of Christ our Hope and the Every Tribe and Nation Network (ETNN). Bishop Andudu is married to Jaleela Elramla and they have five children.





Family Ministry



We are stepping into the summer months and leaving yet another Easter celebration behind us. As we watch the seeds and plants in our church garden grow, I am reminded that we are constantly changing and moving from one stage to the next. Each stage only lingers for what feels like a moment before it fades into the next chapter.

At the beginning of this school year, my son's baritone was as big as he is and he could barely walk with it. 8 months later, I now watch as he walks into school carrying this giant instrument with relative ease. It looks so much smaller, though I realize the baritone has not changed its size and shape at all. My son, on the other hand, has outgrown not one, not two, but three sizes of pants this year.

So many times, we move through this life not seeing the growth that is occurring, but knowing that it is nonetheless. Babies are born, and in the blink of an eye, they are smiling, crawling, walking, then running, reading, learning, graduating, and becoming men and women before our eyes.

As we grow, and as we watch others grow, may we remember to celebrate not just the end goal, but all the steps in between. May we move forward with confidence and hope that each step is significant, not just a means to an end. Each step in itself is a celebration of growth on the journey being taken. May we move on and on together in love.

“Sometimes not having any idea where we're going works out better than we could possibly have imagined.”

Ann Patchett



Melissa Lewkowicz
Family Ministry Director



Redeemer Kids

“LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 19:14b). At Church of the Redeemer, we apply this verse from birth. We do not stick our youngest children into a classroom and wait for them to grow up so they can learn about Jesus and start following Him. We believe that even the littlest infant can feel Jesus’ love and respond to Him. Our goal is to show them His love through the love and care they receive from the volunteers in the Nursery classrooms and invite them to respond as they are able.

Taking care of infants and toddlers is a job that I take very seriously. Right now it is my whole life. After I spend weekdays caring for six kids, four of which are 5 years old and under, I spend Sunday mornings caring for our church’s infants and toddlers as the Nursery Coordinator.

My first Sunday at Church of the Redeemer was crazy and hectic. We arrived late and tried to check our children into their classrooms, but could only check in the baby because the other children start in the service. As soon as we got settled, it was time to take the children to their classrooms. It wasn’t long before the sermon was over and it was time to pick up our children again! We brought them into the service and tried to wrangle them and keep them from misbehaving during communion. I left that morning tired, drained, and not sure that I ever wanted to return.

But God called us to this church and we started a new rhythm. We embraced the church’s philosophy of including our children in the service. Now we look forward to worshiping with our kids every Sunday. We do not see them as a distraction from our own personal worship, but rather a vital part of our corporate worship.

As the Nursery Director, I seek to create a loving environment for each child to come and experience their part of our corporate worship. Although our nursery is open during the entire service, most families keep their children with them at the beginning of the service and pick them up for communion. During their time in the nursery, our Seedlings (under two) and Saplings (two and over) spend time every week playing, read-



Cherie Weber
Nursery Director



ing, and engaging with the volunteers that care for them. All of our volunteers are screened and trained to ensure that they are a good fit for serving our littlest ones. We do not want to just fill our nursery volunteer needs with warm bodies who can hold babies, but to fill them with people who love Jesus and want to show His love to the children in our body.

We feel that it is important to have people from all walks of life and all ages serve together and get to know each other. Our nursery classes are beautiful places where this happens every week. Grandparents, parents, single adults and teens all work together to meet the needs of each child. As they care for them, they seek to represent Christ through their words and actions. It is their act of worship. As the children begin to be able to talk and walk, they invite them to listen to a story about Jesus, to dance to music about his love, and to color sheets that have a picture of the story. It is in these simple acts that they seek to help the little worshiper engage in their part of worship.

To someone who peeks their head into the nursery on a Sunday morning, the setup may not look different from any other church, but the philosophy that these children are important and vital parts of our church guide us as we worship with them every Sunday. When they are in the nursery, it is not just playtime to keep them from bothering the adults. It is an extension of their worship experience.



Catechesis *of the Good Shepherd*



Leah Wall
Lead Catechist

AS AN ADULT, history has taken on an interest for me that I was unable to conjure up as a child. I am able to imagine those names I read about as real people and begin to identify with them, picturing them as living and breathing individuals. I have been learning about the life of Galileo this year. Galileo said in various ways throughout his lifetime that everything that was observed and proven as fact had to be accepted. Likewise, the Holy Scriptures were to be believed. He was longing for someone to do the work to make this possible--someone to take the scientific advances and the truth of God's Word and reconcile them together. Most of us remember what happened next: the church felt threatened. He was accused of heresy, convicted, and held under house arrest for the remainder of his life. There was no one who was able to hold their understanding of God's revelation in Scripture humbly enough to consider that we do not yet know all--we may not see clearly yet. But I have also learned that throughout his lifetime, there were some who did not give up. Some who struggled in this pursuit. There were those who believed: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard" (Psalm 19:1-3).

This summer, our children and all the youth and adult volunteers will have the opportunity to participate in a program called Garden & Grow. We will spend about 20 minutes each Sunday working on the farm or with gardening-related works. We hope that through their time working with the garden, our children will receive that gift of life and health from God in nature. They will be serving the whole church through the work of their hands. They will find the pleasure of a job well done when we sample the fruit of our labors. They will be equipped for future work. They will use the natural activity that God has blessed them with for His glory as they learn what it means to plant, to water, to dig, to name, to arrange, to harvest.

"God is known by nature in his works, and by doctrine in his revealed word."

Galileo Galilei



“There is no description, no image in any book that is capable of replacing the sight of real trees, and all the life to be found around them... Something emanates from those trees which speaks to the soul, something no book, no museum is capable of giving” (from *Childhood to Adolescence* by M. Montessori).

The “Grow” portion of Garden & Grow is centered on the character of God. For about 20 minutes each Sunday, we will be working to expand our Bible verse memorization through music. We also hope to learn many choruses and hymns that will enable us to join in the Sunday service more fully. We will also be building a common knowledge of music that we can sing together at the prayer table in the atrium when Catechesis of the Good Shepherd starts back in the Autumn. We will consider what it means for God to be Creator, Holy, Love, Light, Spirit & Truth, Wise, Faithful, Everlasting, Jealous & Unchanging.

Before all of this, at Pentecost in June, we will remember the gift of the Holy Spirit that was sent to Jesus’ followers after His ascension. This is a timely reminder to us at the closing of the atria for our summer program that He sends His Holy Spirit to be with us also.

This summer, our children and volunteers have a unique opportunity to observe the revelation of God in the garden and also hide His word in our hearts. We will be moving into this time with a celebration and reminder that the Holy Spirit is with us and that there is no language that He doesn’t speak. I am praying that even as children, they will be doing the work of humble synthesis of His world and His Word. He will speak to us through both this summer, and I am confident that God will be at work, leading us into His truth as we Garden & Grow by His grace and power.





Redeemer Youth



ON SUNDAY, MAY 19, we had the privilege of celebrating with our first class of youth confirmands from Church of the Redeemer. We are so grateful for these students who chose to make this personal profession of faith or, as we have discussed in class, an outward sign of an inward reality.

During the six weeks of Lent, each of these confirmands attended an hour-long Sunday morning Confirmation Class led by Nathan Hedman. They daily journaled and worked on catechesis materials, and met weekly with their sponsors to review and walk through all they were learning and experiencing. They attended a Confirmation Retreat led by our youth leadership team (Melissa Lewkowicz, Nathan Hedman, and Valerie Sagero) on March 29 & 30.

These were the participants in our 2019 youth confirmation class:

Anna Cox, sponsored by Rachel Yowell
Anna Davis, sponsored by Evy Warring
Caroline Grunewald, sponsored by Valerie Sagero
Emily Hawkins, sponsored by Debbie Vosburgh
Mary Kate Wise, sponsored by Helen Van Wagenen
Rivers West, sponsored by Adam Hubert

It has been beautiful to see these students choose to follow Christ, and truly commit to being a part of the body of Christ.



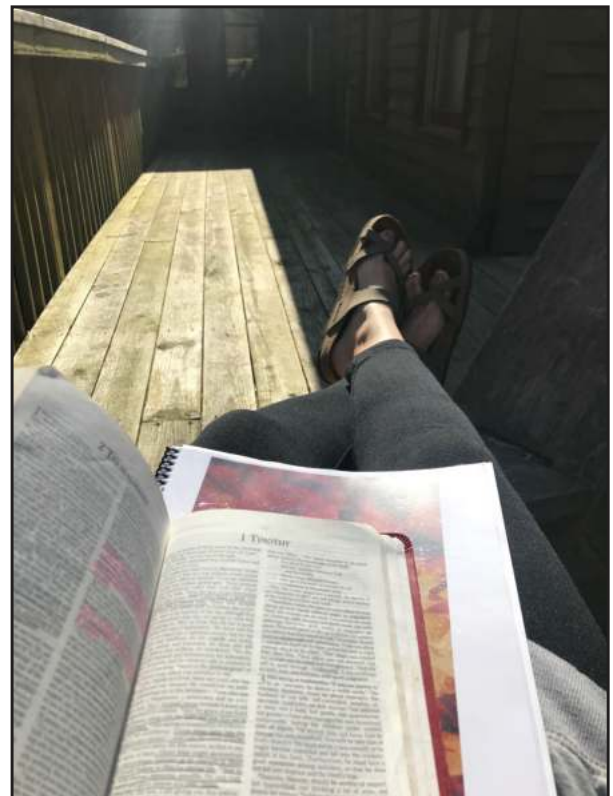


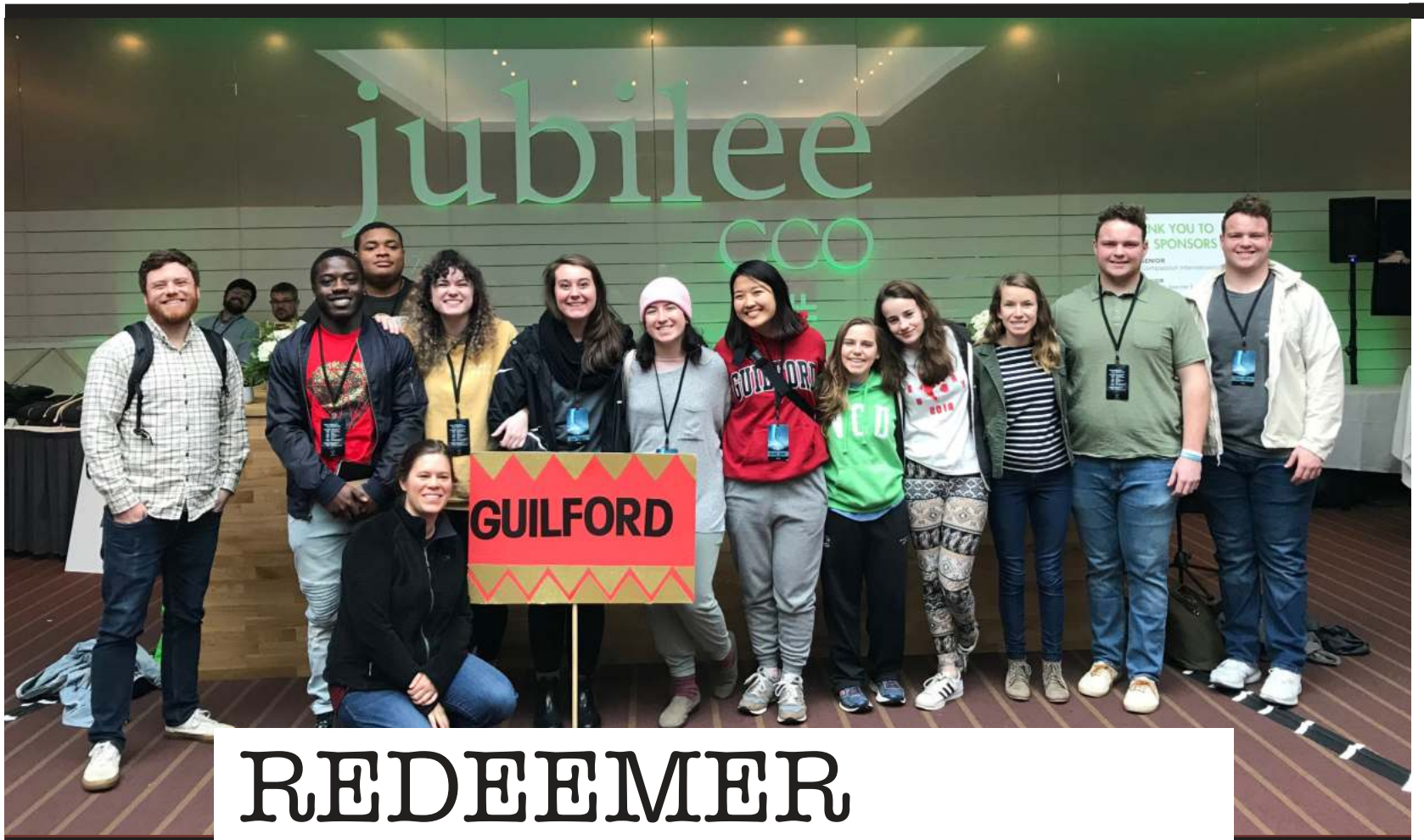
“Confirmation has been spiritually challenging but also so refreshing. I have learned more about God’s love for me as well as His people in general.” **Anna Cox**

“Confirmation was about making the next step in my faith. It was about learning the responsibility of being a part of the church and what God means to me within the church community. It showed me how to listen to God better and where he is calling me to be.” **Caroline Grunewald**

“The confirmation experience taught me ways in which I can prioritize my relationship with the Lord even in the busiest of times.” **Mary Kate Wise**

“To me, confirmation was such a wonderful blessing because it taught me the importance of depending on and making a habit of being with the Lord. I think the Lord can obviously reveal to us many things that need to be revealed, but the everyday self-reflection we did during confirmation was so revealing and encouraging because it made my heart repentant. Not in a jaw-dropping glorious testimonial moment, but in the everyday habitual way which to me is so much more important than an occasional moment with the Lord!” **Emily Hawkins**





REDEEMER COLLEGE MINISTRY

JUBILEE 2019
 #TRANSFORMEVERYTHING

**“He comes to make his blessing flow
 Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found
 Far as, far as the curse is found!”**

We sing these words from "Joy to the World" every Christmas, and in so doing, perhaps they have become over-familiar. Let us take a moment to recognize that in this hymn, we proclaim that Jesus came and will come again, not simply to whisk us away to a ghostly harp concert in the clouds, but to redeem and restore *every* place in our lives and the world that the curse of sin has poisoned. That is why in February, our college ministry climbed into a couple of vans and made the road trip to Pittsburgh for the Coalition for Christian Outreach's annual student conference: Jubilee.

Jubilee is a conference like no other, celebrating the *big* gospel story of Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Restoration and the spe-

cific ways it gets worked out in our world and lives. This year's theme was Transform Everything, and in addition to brilliant main-stage talks on the beauty of Creation, comprehensiveness of the Fall, timeliness of Christ's Redemption, and motivating hope of Restoration, there were workshops to help students live this story in the classroom, workplace, family, and more. Part of the beauty of such a full-orbed proclamation of the gospel is that students (any myself) start to see how every part of our life is included in the good news of Jesus Christ. There is no part of our life that has been unaffected by the Fall, and so there is no part of our life that Jesus did not come to Redeem and Restore; there is no cursed part of our world that is not destined for the blessing of being transformed into a New Creation by our Creator, Savior, and Renovator. Praise God. And Praise God for the Jubilee Conference that invited our students to be transformed themselves and participate in God's work of transformation in all that they do.

But enough from me. Here is a reflection from one of our students, Jennifer Shoe, on what she took away from the Jubilee Conference. She reflects wonderfully on the theme of beauty that she heard in the gospel story: beauty created, fallen, redeemed,



JEN'S TAKE

AS I THOUGHT about going to Jubilee for the second time, I wondered where God would take my heart. How would he stir the pot for me this time? Jubilee has tough, deep topics that can leave you with more questions than answers, and open your mind to learn more. Jubilee can also uncover something in you that you didn't want exposed. Often, God works in ways that you'd never expect.

The first main session was about Creation. The speaker [Dr. Anthony Bradley] had a lot of humor in his speech, which I believe helped soften the blow of the really intense topics that were to follow. He talked a lot about beauty: how God made each and every person on Earth; how much time he put into making us; and how, most importantly, we are unique in His image. The talk really hit me as I realized how much work God puts into creating everyone. How beautifully and wonderfully made we are! The speaker went on to say that we need to admire this beauty—that is something that I was not doing. I was having a hard time seeing myself as beautiful. This world easily tears down women with impossible edicts about how they are supposed to look. Dr. Bradley brought me to a new perspective on how to look at myself and others. Everyone is unique and different, and we need to admire that! We need to realize that we ourselves are beautiful, and look at others the same way. God put so much work into making each and every one of us; we should not be tearing that beauty down, but admiring and rejoicing in it!



On the last day of the weekend, I went to a workshop entitled "What Does It Mean to Be White?" This was where God really stirred me up. They talked about what privilege is and how it shapes our lives on a daily basis. It made me think a lot about how our world works, and how our society and institutions make things easier or more difficult for people based on the color of their skin. It also made me reflect on my own life. Even though I haven't had an "easy" life, how have I benefited from privilege, and what does that mean for me? These questions gave me a new perspective on what is going on around me. It was a powerful example of what Dr. Bradley talked about the first night: that we are not admiring each other's God-given differences, but tearing each other down. And when we do that, we miss out on becoming the beautiful community God made us to be.

I had no idea how God would open my eyes to the beauty in myself and others like he did that weekend. Once again, Jubilee was eye-opening and transformative!

This is just one of many stories that could be told about what God did among us who attended Jubilee. We want to thank everyone at Church of the Redeemer who made this possible for our students. Your generosity has shown all of us the heart of our Father, and you are participants in God's work of transformation—not only in our students but in the world to which they are being sent!



PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LITANY ON WELCOMING THE STRANGER

Church of the Redeemer

During the season of Lent, we spent time in our Prayers of the People acknowledging corporate sins in our world of which we need repentance and amendment of life. This prayer is a litany on welcoming the stranger and the ways we often fail to do so. 2 Corinthians 5:16 says that in Christ we regard no one from a human point of view, but celebrate the new creation of God's divine family. We are reconciled to God and are reconciled with one another.

After each prayer, we will say Lord in your mercy and you can respond with hear our prayer. With these prayers, we as a community ask for God's redemptive presence in the church, world, community and individual lives. And we offer our own lives to God's mission of healing and reconciliation in the world. Let us pray.



OH GOD, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

OH GOD who loves all of his world, we remember Abraham and Sarah who did not know whether their visitors meant harm or good, still they opened their tent in welcome, and they were blessed. From the stranger, we hear the good news of God's covenant love. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WHEN THE PEOPLE of Israel were strangers in Egypt, only as valuable as the bricks they produced for Pharaohs' economy, God heard their cry and saved them. When we are strangers, we come to know a God who frees us. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WE REMEMBER the man lay dying on the Jericho road until the strange and reviled Samaritan came to his aid and in sharing his resources gave a picture of your love. From the stranger, we receive help and healing. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

OH CHRIST, you remind us that you are hidden in the face of the stranger, for you said "I was a stranger, and you welcomed me." In the stranger, you assure us that we can experience your presence, Lord Christ. Help us to welcome the stranger, the hungry, and those without homes in our lives and in welcoming them help us to welcome you. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

WE REMEMBER before God all those who have been uprooted from their homes and communities – people who are compelled to flee for their lives, to leave their land and culture, and live apart from their families. With them, we mourn their loss of dignity, community, and resources. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

WE ESPECIALLY PRAY for the women who are the majority of those displaced. We remember the work that women do to keep families together, to nurture community and end violence and injustice. We also remember the millions of children whose lives are marked by danger and exploitation. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

WE REMEMBER those who are persecuted because of their gender, race, or creed. We pray for the women, the men, the children, and the elderly, who seek safety and solace, who desire to begin new lives. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

WE REMEMBER before God those countries where people must leave their homes because of war, injustice, and violence. We pray that you protect their courageous travel, shelter them in your mercy, and may they find open arms to welcome them in safety. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

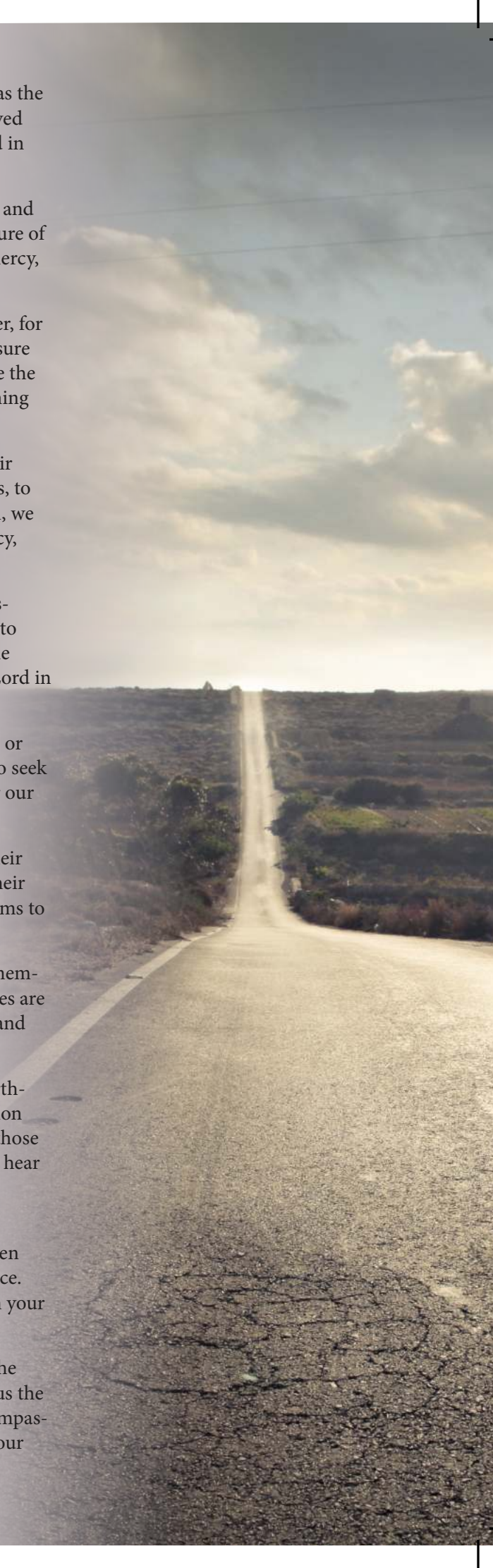
WE PRAY for those who leave their homes for economic survival; we remember that the gap between rich and poor gets wider, and the earth's resources are shared by fewer people. May we be the generous people you call us to be and seek to show them your blessing. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

WE REMEMBER before God those who leave their homes because of earthquakes, storms floods, and other disasters. We acknowledge the exploitation of resources for the sake of consumers in other countries and mourn for those who have been hurt by poor stewardship of creation. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

WE PRAY that hostility and indifference may give way to hospitality and justice. Help us to be vigilant stewards and faithful partners, and strengthen us to live as people of your creation, committed and bold in deeds of justice. Oh Lord, may we welcome the stranger as you have welcomed us. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer

GOD, you taught us through your Son to seek the signs of your reign in the tiny mustard seed. Plant your word deep in the soil of our hearts, sow in us the seeds of compassion; let your hospitality take root within us, and your compassion grow in us, so righteousness may spring forth in all the world, and your holy will be done through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen





Greensboro Fellows



We can't believe our time with the current Fellows is coming to a close! They travel to Rwanda May 17-27, and then their graduation ceremony is May 31st. Our time has flown by too fast!

This group has been a tremendous blessing to Becky and me, to our church, and to our community. Their humble and hungry hearts, the ways they have sought after Christ and His kingdom, the ways they have stretched to be the men and women God created them to be, have all been refreshing. We are especially thankful for how the Fellows have bonded as a family, encouraging and supporting each other.

It is hard to put into words how these young men and women are blossoming into their true self in Christ, growing into the gift they are to the world, but we are privileged to have seen this taking place over the last year. We have loved seeing God at work in each Fellow personally and as a group. They are growing more alive in Christ and developing as spiritual and professional servant leaders. We see glimpses of their destiny, the way God is going to use them for His Kingdom, the way they will touch and impact our world for the glory of Jesus Christ, and we are thankful. Developing leaders is not an event or program, but a way of life. Leadership is an overflow out of character formed by living in union with Jesus Christ. But God does use events and programs.

These are some highlights from the past several months with these remarkable Fellows:

Leadership Development

We are blessed to have number of gifted teachers and sages in our church and community. This year, John and Emily Freeman taught on Decision Making and Discerning God's Will. Fil Anderson taught on the Enneagram. Stephen Boatman led a seminar on budgeting and financial planning. We held a workshop on Discovering your Unique Design and Calling. In addition, every Wednesday, they heard different community leaders share stories

about seeking to lead for kingdom impact. The weekly mentoring each Fellow received was also an invaluable resource!

Studying the Scriptures, Theology & Spiritual Formation

We have studied Sacred Rhythms by Ruth Haley Barton (on spiritual disciplines) and Delighting in the Trinity by Michael Reeves. Dr. Jason Myers taught Survey of the New Testament the second semester, and Dr. Benjamin Wall taught Ethics in the first semester. Alan Hawkins taught Church History in the beginning of the year. We are walking through parts of the Gospel of John in our community group, and we have taken two silent retreats at St. Francis Prayer Center. We have been blessed with great teaching, discussions, and opportunities to learn how to live in union with Jesus Christ. He is Life!

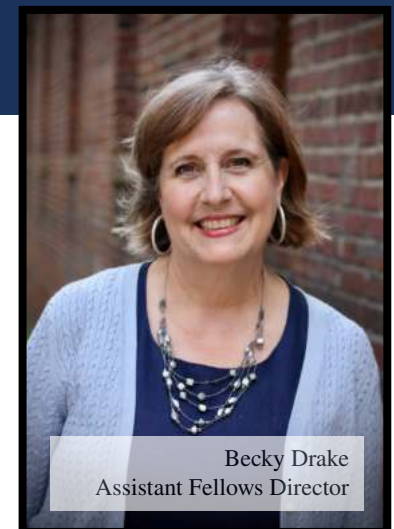
Serving

We seek to develop habits and rhythms the Fellows will continue well after the program. One of those habits is learning to serve as a way of life. The Fellows serve frequently at Church of the Redeemer, New Garden Farm, and Capernaum Young Life (a ministry to teens with intellectual and physical disabilities). Each Fellow picks a ministry or non-profit of their choice and leads the rest of us on a service project. Through the Fellow's Program, we have served at Hannah's Haven, Backpack Beginnings, New Arrivals, New Comers School, Re4Him (a ministry to the homeless), and Hope Academy.

Thank you, Redeemer, for caring for the Fellows! Being a part of this church family is one of the best elements of the program. Please keep in your prayers this year's class of Fellows as they move forward into what God has for them next.



Rev. Dodd Drake
Greensboro Fellows Director



Becky Drake
Assistant Fellows Director





the Farm



New Garden Park

Spring at the farm brings small tastes of the goodness of God to come. Warm weather and raucous birds fill our hearts with hope while the early tulips and tables of transplants slowly bring the garden back to life after a dormant winter. Much of this past winter at the farm has been spent soil-building: the hard work of digging compost and shoveling wood chips. Plants come and go with the seasons but soil remains, so true sustainable farming is mostly about building up your soil. Our soils are made up of various types of clay, mineral deposits, compost, mineral amendments, root systems, water, and living organisms from fungi to bacteria to worms. In the drudgery of digging, I am often reminded of the cry in Psalm 90:17 for God to “prosper the work of our hands”—though the redemption of the land and the building of top-soil is hard work, it will bring blessing to the plants that grow on it for years to come. One of my farming heroes, Wendell Berry, puts his love for soil like this:

“The most exemplary nature is that of the topsoil. It is very Christ-like in its passivity and beneficence, and in the penetrating energy that issues out of its peaceableness. It increases by experience, by the passage of seasons over it, growth rising out of it and returning to it, not by ambition or aggressiveness. It is enriched by all things that die and enter into it. It keeps the past, not as history or as memory, but as richness, new possibility. Its fertility is always building up out of death into promise. Death is the bridge or the tunnel by which its past enters its future” (excerpt from *The Long-Legged House*).



in the winter of life, hoping for but not seeing growth or harvest, with the Holy Spirit, our hope can remain firm. The prayers you repeat year after year for a loved one, the friendships you make with unbelievers, the children you raise, the soil you build or company you invest your life into—this is all the work of a lifetime and in God’s timing, he will bring about the spring as He always does. As a final reminder of the upside-down nature of farming, and of the life in Christ where we have hope even in the waiting and death, here are lyrics from Jill Phillip’s song “Beauty in the trying”:

**“There is a harvest coming,
even though you haven’t seen it yet...
Do not falter in your courage,
if he is faithful then so we should be
And we stand upon His promise,
and we trust in what we cannot see
There is beauty in the trying
There is blessing in the world
There is life there in the dying
It is rising from the earth”**



written by Julia Myhre, *New Garden Park Farm Intern*

So when you see the raised beds in our Revelation Garden by the greenhouse and wonder at their shape, know that the shape is meant to build the soil and bless the land. The beds are built on contour line to keep the lower parts of the garden from becoming too soggy and to store rainwater runoff in the ditch-pathways that are now filled with wood chips. Or, if you venture down to the hoop houses to see the double-dug beds and drainage ditches there, know that it also was work done with the future in mind. Though we often work

Meet a Leader

Logan Porter

I grew up in Jamestown, NC and went to UNC Chapel Hill. After college, I lived in Raleigh for almost 20 years and then moved to Greensboro in 2008 with my wife Eloise and our four kids to work in the family business: We sell pine needles to landscapers and garden centers. My kids are Mary Mac, who is a sophomore at UNC; Frances, a junior at Weaver Academy; Logan, a sophomore at Page; and Ruthie, who is a 5th grader at Irving Park Elementary. Eloise works as a preschool teacher at Holy Trinity Day School downtown.

I grew up attending Jamestown Presbyterian Church, but really came to faith later in life through the Alpha program, a British evangelistic course. Understanding who Jesus is and knowing what He has done for us has given me confidence that I am a part of God's family, and this has given me an eternal perspective on life. We were part of an Anglican church in Raleigh and were connected to Alan and Angela Kaye before we even packed a single box to move to Greensboro. We were excited God was already planning for us to be a part of Church of the Redeemer.

We love the Anglican liturgy and traditions. It's been amazing to watch the church grow, and we've developed strong relationships with so many people in the church. We were part of one of Redeemer's first leadership teams with the Wises, Bosts, and Wolfes. How

amazing to see the church blessed through the property of New Garden Park, and witness people coming to Redeemer over the years bringing a variety of gifts and talents to share. Currently, I serve chalice during communion. I really love participating in communion. I like being a tangible part of people connecting to God through the distribution of the bread and wine. I also serve on the Finance Team and Vestry. I like that I can give a historical perspective on many of these teams. I've really been encouraged by the great leadership that's developed in our church – especially the younger people I've gotten to know through these ministries. My desire for the finance team is that we will continue to evolve and grow as new people become involved in it.

I'm amazed at all God has provided, and what he has done with our church community – to be part of the initial vision casting and now witnessing the reality of those dreams with New Garden Park is far beyond what we hoped and imagined. Four years ago, we kept trying to imagine how to accomplish the vision that God gave to Alan for Redeemer and not getting very far, and then all of the sudden, the entire vision came to fruition in what seemed like just a few months! I truly believe that the Lord has blessed and is continuing to bless this church and I am grateful to be a part of it.



THE VESTRY



Betsy Hundley
Junior Lay Leader

Fred May

Sally Miller

Scott Vosburgh

Nate Peachey

Barbara Lipe

April Hedman

Ben Lewis

Sam Cox

Alice Wolfe

Logan Porter



Trey Miller
Senior Lay Leader

SUMMER GROWTH SERIES

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER



Immigration

Dr. Jason Myers



Human Sexuality

Alan Hawkins
(Online)



Anglican Theology

Dr. Benjamin Wall



Financial Foundations

Stephen Boatman

SUMMER GROWTH SERIES

ANGLICAN THEOLOGY

Dr. Benjamin Wall

ANGLICANISM--what's this all about? What does it mean to be Anglican, theologically and practically? Throughout this Summer Growth series, we will explore how Anglican theology is closely intertwined with Christian spirituality, and in particular, how Scripture, tradition, worship, and prayer play distinctive roles in Anglican theology and identity. The aim of this 6-week class is to develop a greater appreciation for the relationship between theology, prayer, and worship in the Anglican way. We will learn about the distinctive history of Anglican theology and its dynamic, diverse, and contemporary practice. We will also examine Anglican thinking about the good life, especially in its connection with worship, the sacraments, and its outworking in everyday life. I will discuss how we are a people of prayer and incarnation, and a people who honor scripture, tradition, and reason. We will talk about God in ways that honor the fullness of humanity and God's creation. We will meet on Wednesday evenings in July and August. I hope you will consider joining me.

We hope you will choose to participate in one or more of these Summer Growth Series. You can find more information about and register for these classes at <https://redeemergso.churchcenter.com/groups/summer-growth-series>

TODAY, immigration is an important and often contested issue within religion and politics. This six week course takes a survey of the scriptural evidence concerning the immigrant within the books of the Old and New Testament. It will provide a theological framework for understanding the topic of immigration informed via scripture. Likewise, the course will conclude with addressing practical, social, and legal issues surrounding these topics as we become more educated on the challenges and opportunities of this key issue. Readings for the course will be limited to scripture and select articles. The class will be for 6 weeks on Tuesday evenings in July and August.



MONEY is one of the most talked-about topics in the Bible, and most of us know that God wants us to be wise stewards of what He has given us. But what does that look like? How do we provide for ourselves and our families, while also being generous? What are the financial areas that matter, and the things that don't?

In this 4-week class, on Tuesday nights in June, Certified Financial Planner Stephen Boatman will lead you through all of these questions with both Biblical and practical applications. In a culture of debt and poor (or nonexistent) budgeting, you will learn how God has called you to live differently--even with your finances.



NOT ONLY is the issue of Human Sexuality & The Gospel a cultural issue, it is also at the forefront of our very own diocese and many discussions among its leaders. This 3-class course will be spread over the summer months with time to read between classes. Each month on a Wednesday night, we will look together at the issue of Human Sexuality & The Gospel. At the end of the time, you will be able to think of the issue both pastorally and prophetically, and be given tools to clearly communicate this perspective.



This class will be taught remotely, and members will read three books over the course of our study: *Is God Anti-Gay?* by Rev. Sam Allberry, *Sex and the I World: Rethinking Relationship Beyond an Age of Individualism* by Dale S. Kuehne, and *Understanding Gender Dysphoria* by Mark Yarhouse. We will also be using material by Matthew Mason, which can be found under 2016 Convocation Media at <https://www.adhope.org/media>

Report from the 2019



MATTHEW 25 GATHERING



A group of us from Redeemer had the deep privilege of attending our denomination's conference on justice and mercy ministries called the Matthew 25 Conference. The gathering is named after the famous passage where Jesus tells his followers that when they feed, clothe, and minister to the sick, the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, and the imprisoned, they are serving Him.

In the week leading up to the conference, my body felt depleted and numb, exhausted from a winter season at the farm of intense manual labor, big projects, and planning. The conference offered a 24-hour silent retreat at our Anglican retreat center, Corhaven, in the Shenandoah Valley, and I felt the deep need for it. Arriving at the retreat center in the late afternoon, I collapsed into a fluffy twin bed situated by a window overlooking a bucolic farm house and the mountains, and all I could do was nap or stare out my window for hours. God ministered to me like he did Elijah, feeding me and allowing me sleep in preparation for the Holy Spirit-filled week ahead. He convicted me about how much I have been trying to serve the land and the marginalized through my own power rather than His power. How tempting it is to do this in ministry: we think that the work the Lord is calling us to do must be done from our own competency and energy. I also discerned over that day of silence how much I have missed out on the Spirit's guidance in my ministry because I have tried to muscle through in my own manner.

So I arrived a day later in D.C. for the conference feeling emptied but free, ready to receive whatever the Lord had for me and for the rest of the participants there. And what a gift was before us! The three days were richly full of worship, convicting sermons, and time in fellowship with our colleagues in the Anglican work of caring for the poor and the marginalized. The year's theme was on race, and as we wrestled together with our nation's greatest wound of sin, I felt the presence of Jesus leading us as a denomination into greater holiness and humility. It became clear to me how much my body, and our church's collective body, needs the radical and miraculous power of healing in this area. We need more than the right words and the right actions. We need to touch the cloak of Jesus and to be utterly transformed into His Kingdom vision for humanity in all its diversity. The powers of Satan that hold this nation captive into sin and systemic abuse of people of color can only be exorcised by a church that truly believes in the immense authority and power of Jesus over all realms.

In my own spirit, I felt God speaking to me about how my own frantic busyness, fears about farming failure, and general frazzled-ness have prevented me from deep, relational engagement with our East African community. Valerie Sagero and I spent long periods praying together for the unity of our church at Redeemer—that God would help us transcend our boundaries of culture, race, and language. God had to empty me on the silent retreat into stillness so that I could receive his gentle rebuke, not with defensiveness, but with a longing that the farm ministry and all of Church of Redeemer would experience the Holy Spirit anointing that comes with truly integrated community and worship.

A woman at the conference named Christine, who is a leader in our denomination in the area of justice and mercy, gave testimony of God miraculously healing her body after she was hit by a truck while helping her teenagers fill up their car that had run out of gas. The impact collapsed her lungs, split her liver in two, crushed her face. The doctors had no hope that she would live. She has vivid memory of almost dying on the operating table several times, with death and life warring for her. She saw the presence of Jesus beckoning her to not give into death but to enter through the pain towards his healing. She answered his call and lived against all odds. She stood before us with her hands held high, worshipping Jesus. She said that during her visions while fighting for her life, she saw the River of Life, portrayed in Revelation 22, as a golden stream of life for all nations.

In hearing her testimony, my body responded with joy, awe, sorrow, and hope. Jesus, the worker of miracles, beckons us through the pain in our individual lives towards his radical healing. Only in being radically healed—body and soul—can we truly participate in His Kingdom. Only as a nation, journeying through the pain of racial brokenness and keeping Jesus as our focal point, can we hope to experience a Kingdom of peace. And in my own life and ministry, only in my total and submissive healing can I truly work in His power toward the healing of our land and our Redeemer community. The Revelation 22 passage that she referenced is the anchoring passage of our farm, and the name of our main garden (the Revelation Garden). This is done in the hope that our farming ministry will be a place that points to New Creation where all creation and all humanity is restored to perfect beauty and unity, and that the leaves of our fruit trees will be like the “leaves for the healing of the nations” in New Jerusalem. In His grace, may it be so.

Lena Van Wyk

New Garden Park Farm Director

Top three things I learned from the Matthew 25 Conference:

The power of sharing your story:

Christine Warner's testimony was incredible. Her testimony helped me to realize when I choose life, there will be pain.

The significance of learning about your community to support your nonprofit mission:

I will keep working to change structures that limit inclusion of those in need.

To work through fundraising challenges, you must keep asking:

Fundraising is very difficult and rejection can hurt. Many others shared the issue of separating the ask from your personal feelings.

The gathering was a spiritual, life changing event that I will never forget. From the intense praying to the incredible relationships made, I have grown and been inspired.

Sandra Robinson-Wilson

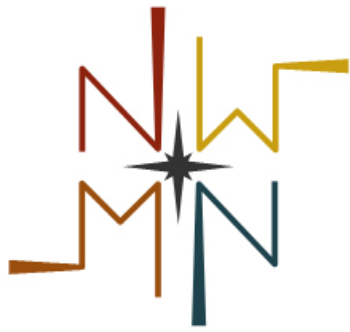
Founder & President

Combat Female Veterans Families United

The Matthew 25 Conference was a unique opportunity that I hope to attend for years to come. It was good to fellowship with other Anglicans seeking to rightly name ways the church can repent from being complicit in the societal patterns of exclusion and make the move to being communities of belonging characterized by justice and mercy. I encourage everyone at Redeemer to prayerfully consider attending next year.

Fr. Benjamin Wall





NEW WINESKINS MISSIONARY NETWORK

“I’d Like You To Meet My Neighbor!”

By Jenny Noyes

Executive Director, New Wineskins Missionary Network

“Hello?” I answered the phone one evening and found myself greeting my next-door neighbor Diane. We were living up in northern Virginia in a suburban neighborhood teeming with young families.

“Hey! I hope you don’t mind, but Carlos from next door was playing with Andrew and was asking questions about the difference in what Protestants and Catholics believe about Jesus. I had no idea how to answer him, so I told him to go and talk to you.” Diane knew I worked at our local church.

“Of course, but only if he brings me some of Juanita’s homemade salsa!” I replied. “I’ll invite him to attend the AlphaBITS program that we’re going to host at our house in a couple of weeks when the kids get out of school. I hope Andrew and Amanda will come, too. Should be a lot of fun!”

AlphaBITS was a program that several women from our church plant Christ the Redeemer (CtR) had helped me adapt from the adult Alpha course (www.alphausa.org). The Alpha Course is a ten-week evangelistic outreach that teaches the basics of Christianity through the format of a shared meal, a thought-provoking talk and a small group discussion. It’s a non-threatening atmosphere that presents authentic Christianity in a way that is accessible to people of other faith traditions or no faith at all.

We were having a lot of success reaching non-believers in the secular, metropolitan area of Centreville, VA, where our church was based, but some of us had wondered about reaching the kids in our neighborhoods. That led to us create a Vacation Bible School-like curriculum that was perfect to run in several of our backyards one summer. Thus, Alpha Backyard-In-The-Summer (AlphaBITS) was born.

It was a summer in the late 1990s, when my kids were in elementary school. I went door-to-door with a simple personal invitation to invite the multi-ethnic children in our neighborhood to our home for the program: a half day for five days a week.

“Hey, Wang Shu! Would your boys like to join us for a little program we’re having at my house? On the last day, they’ll need to wear clothes they can get wet and bring a towel.”

“How much does it cost?” she asked. I wondered if she was looking for excuses not to allow them to come. I knew they were Buddhist.



“It’s free!” I responded.

“Five half-days of childcare for free?” she exclaimed in disbelief. “We’re in!” Can they bring a friend?

“Sure,” I said, “The more, the merrier! We’ll see Li and Zhang at 9am next Monday!”

Wow! That was too easy, I thought as I made my way down to Azar’s house. I knew they were Middle-Eastern and I assumed they were Muslim.

I rang the doorbell. The mom opened the door. “Hey, Azar!” I said with a smile.

“You can call me Bonnie.” She said flatly.

“But, why? Azar is such a pretty name!” I complained.

“It’s easier for Americans to say and remember. We’re trying to just blend in,” she responded.

“Okay. Hey, I know you recently moved from overseas. What is your home country?” I asked.

“We’re Persian,” she stated. That meant that she was from Iran, but she didn’t want anyone to know that because Iranian/U.S. relations were still strained. How sad that she was too fearful to even tell a neighbor her country of origin, I thought.

“Well, anyway, I want to invite Tim and Vanessa down to our AlphaBITS program next week. We will be sharing about what Christianity

is all about. There will be games, teaching, crafts and some snacks. It would be great way for your kids to get to know the other neighborhood kids.”

“That sounds great,” she said, “I’ve been wanting to expose them to Christianity since it’s the majority religion here. I make them study the Koran, but I think they should ultimately decide what they believe. I don’t even know where to begin to answer their questions about Christmas and Easter!”

“We’ll take good care of them,” I said, “And you are welcome to come down and see what we’re doing too, or you can enjoy a few hours of time by yourself!”

That summer our church hosted AlphaBITS in five different neighborhoods. We had 50 kids come to our backyard for an entire week, and close to 200 from all five homes combined! We taught about creation and the fall of humanity, about temptation, sin and forgiveness, about the Bible, prayer and being a Christian. The last day, we talked about the Holy Spirit and played water games and sent everyone home with a Bible to keep and an invitation for their parents to attend our adult Alpha in the fall. Kids came from Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, atheist, Protestant, agnostic and Catholic families who had come to the U.S. for a variety of reasons and from a variety of countries.

Many of the children accepted Jesus as Savior that summer and some of their parents checked out our Alpha Course. My favorite story was Vanessa putting her trust in Jesus, then her mom Azar attending Alpha and accepting Christ, too. Both of them were baptized together by immersion the next spring. Azar and I have kept in touch for over 20 years.

I still encourage people to get to know their neighbors. You can knock on someone’s door and introduce yourself if you’re holding a homemade apple pie, or invite them over to your home for a cup of tea or coffee. Most of our American neighborhoods are similar to my neighborhood back then--multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and from a variety of religious backgrounds, or increasingly, no religious background. In 2019, we have an amazing opportunity to reach the nations because the nations have come to us--through immigration, refugee displacement, and international students and scholars studying and teaching on our nearby college campuses.

It’s not hard to detect if someone is “not from around here.” Take the opportunity to comment on how lovely someone’s sari is, or ask someone speaking with a foreign accent if they speak more than one language. If they say yes, then ask them how to say hello in their language. Then, try to repeat it, even if you butcher it. Relationships start with a simple hello and can lead to friendships that could last for eternity--literally!

If you have a heart to share your faith, a desire to live a more mission-intentional life or just want to learn more about what God is doing both here in the U.S. and around the world to draw all nations to Himself, then we invite you to join us for the New Wineskins Global Mission Conference, September 26-29, 2019 in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. We’ll have sessions on Reaching Muslims, Reaching Hindus, Moving from the Status Quo to Mission Mobilization, Reaching Jewish People, Reaching International Students and much more! Check out our website at www.newwineskinsconference.org and register today. You just might come home with a good idea for how you can meet your neighbors!



NOTABLE EVENTS

May 4 // Farm Work Day

May 12 // Mother's Day &
Rwanda Send-off

May 19 // Confirmation Sunday
with lunch

May 31 // Fellow's Graduation

June 1 // Farm Work Day

June 2 // High School Graduation
Recognition

June 9 // Pentecost Sunday &
Baptisms

June 16 // Father's Day &
Camp Booyah Send-off

June 16-21 // Camp Booyah

June 20 // Stephen Ministers
Commissioning

June 13 // Farm Work Day

SERMONS ON THE GO

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REEL WORLD REVIEW

with Mikey Fissel



Reel World Theology

It is our hope that by examining the entertainment that is prevalent in our culture, we may better understand and engage the narratives that are shaping it, being aware that story is powerful and entertainment is not mindless.

WHEN I first saw the announcement for *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, I thought, “But, why? Haven’t we rebooted and re-imagined Spider-Man enough in the past decade? Besides, since when do animated comic book movies get a theater release?” Obviously, I was skeptical.

Fast forward to me sitting in the theater with a good friend who would not let me miss out on experiencing *Spider-Verse* on the big screen. **Thank God for good friends.**

I don’t think anyone could have prepared me for the sheer joy I had while watching this film. After exiting the theater, I immediately started getting excited about my children eventually being old enough to enjoy this film that was full of everything I could have wanted in a Spider-Man film: action, adventure, mystery, humor, and an incredibly diverse cast of characters.

Spider-Verse doesn’t spend its time trying

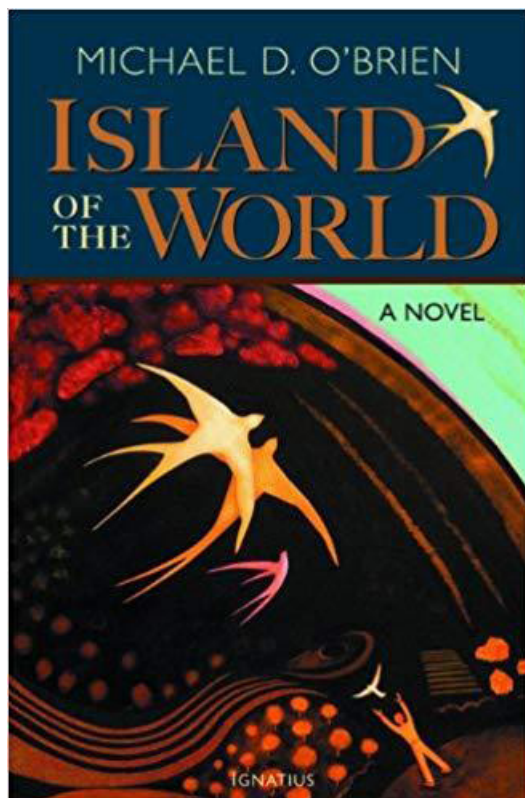


to rehash an already over-done origin story; instead, it uses its entire runtime exploring what makes Spider-Man great as we follow the journey of our new Spider-Man, Miles Morales, into a world of superheroes and super villains. It doesn’t hurt that the soundtrack is pretty incredible as well.

Of all the positive things that have been said about the film, I think the thing that gets me the most every time I watch it is the relationship between Miles and his dad. You just don’t get to see such an honest and encouraging look at a dad who can be both strong and tender—who can laugh as well as be heartbroken. As a father, it was a beautiful reminder of what fatherhood can look like.

Spider-Verse walked away with the Oscar for Best Animated Film last year and I think it’s easy to see why. If you haven’t seen it yet, give it a try. I am confident that you’ll love this family-friendly movie. Just take a leap of faith.

Island of the World by Michael D. O’Brien



THIS LENT, I opted not to give up food or drink, but rather to take up a discipline. I reread the most profound novel I have ever read: Michael D. O’Brien’s *Island of the World*. The novel follows the life of Josip Lasta, a Croatian boy born in a small village in 1933 during the Italian/German occupation of the Balkans. He lives through the bloody civil war and religious persecution perpetrated by Marshal Tito’s Communist regime and eventually emigrates to the United States, where he continues to grieve as his home country erupts into conflict again in the Yugoslav Wars of the ‘90s.

I chose to read this book again during Lent – and will likely repeat the practice every year – because Josip Lasta’s story is a story of absolute loss, dehumanization, and death. As O’Brien writes of the crucifixion of this character’s soul, his words are so powerful that the reader cannot help but enter into that death as well. No other novel has caused me to sob like this one. And yet, in the end, the story is also about resurrection.

Whether you choose to read it as a Lenten discipline next year, out of interest in the perspective it will give on a dark period of history in Europe, or simply out of delight in excellent fiction, *Island of the World* will expand your soul. Grief, when offered at the cross of Christ to our God, has a way of doing that.

reviewed by Rev. Hunter Van Wagenen

THE BOOK N O O K



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