



ECHOES

August 2023

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Parish Celebrations, Community Calendars & Ministry Spotlights!

From the Rector...

Childhood summer evenings used to include listening to the sounds of cicadas and whatever else chirps and sings and makes sounds at night: the wind in the trees, the water of rains refreshing or thunderous, and thoughts that refuse to be silent. I listen to some of those same sounds now, enjoying the sounds of nature and working hard to push the insistent thoughts or worries out of the way.

Why do we worry? We do we, in the Church, worry? The early Church began in the early morning darkness and the discovery of the empty tomb. No longer only disciples, Jesus' followers became apostles; that is, witnesses to the resurrection. As Christians gathered to pray and to figure out "what's next?" they faced mocking, criticism, and persecution. *Where is your leader now, this Jesus?* There were whispers and gossip... *are they cannibals? They speak about consuming body and blood.* Early believers met in the Temple, in their homes, and considered what to believe, how to believe, pray, and live. Some died for their faith. Others walked away, while many more stayed. From the Book of Acts:

So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers (Acts 2.41-42).

Why do we worry? For decades if not centuries, we have read and heard news like this:

"The congregation was aging, losing members, and worried about its future. In some ways it was the poster congregation for what we mean when we refer to the declining mainline church."

(M. Craig Barnes, *The Christian Century*, May 1, 2013, written about a church the author served in the 1980s.)

We serve God's church. The Good News, the gospel, will not be hidden. We can stop worrying — or delegate our worry to God — and listen to the soothing sounds of the night. The church mentioned above, other churches I have served, Redeemer, and churches throughout the world continue to reach out in mission to God's creation, and, as the author writes, "*remain too busy with mission to die.*" Many, many congregations continue to be the body of Christ in significant ways. Such news is not dire enough for headlines and not flashy enough for much media.

For the next few weeks of worship, we will continue to read and to hear Jesus' parables; through them, we learn not only the story itself, but about the nature and character of God. It is God's abundant love and mercy that sustains us. Jesus continues to teach and to heal in this age. Fear not. God is present, Christ is alive, the breath of the Holy Spirit still roars like a rushing wind.

Jesus came to them and said: And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matthew 28.20).

In Christ, Catherine +

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

August Sabbath

For the month of August, Christian Education for both children and adults will observe a period of sabbath rest. Childcare will still be provided during the worship service.

Christian Education classes will start back up after Labor Day.
Watch future e-blasts and Sunday announcements for the start date, TBA!

Lori Hawkins, Family Ministries

**Calling all students, teachers, and school staff...
It's time for our annual backpack blessings.
Bring your backpack with you to church on August 6.
During the 9:30 service, Mother Catherine will have a special blessing
for those about to begin a new school year!**

Q: *Why do we bless backpacks each fall?*

A: In the Episcopal Church and the Anglican tradition, we appreciate the profundity of a blessing. Throughout the church year, we bless water for baptism, oil for anointing, a paschal candle for Easter, and pets in memory of St. Francis. We acknowledge the sanctity of everyday things, and celebrate that God works through the ordinary stuff of life, including us!

So, when another school year comes around, we bless backpacks as a sign of all the works and wonders that God will do in the life of each student, teacher, parent, and community partner. We pray for safety and mental health, for good grades and hard work... but we also pray for the days when school is tough and friends are hard to find.



*Each student and educator will receive a copy of this beautiful backpack tag!
Did you miss the Backpack Blessing on August 6? See Lori Hawkins to get your tag.*

THE BLESSING OF A WEDDING

Kathryn Ethridge Swilley

I feel so blessed by our church congregation. I cannot find the words to describe how meaningful and spiritual it was for Matt and me to be married in our church. This journey started way before June

24th with pre-marriage counseling sessions. Mother Catherine was incredible and so accommodating to our crazy schedule (Matt lives in Florence during the week due to work and comes to Greenville on the weekends). During each session, I could feel our relationship with each other and God grow deeper.

Our congregation is literally a huge family. Each Sunday Matt and I came to church, we were blown away by the excitement everyone had about our wedding! We are still speechless with the amount of love and support we feel from our congregation.

Robin Mill gave me such peace of mind when meeting with her to go over the ceremony, flowers, and music. With all of the decisions you have to make planning a wedding, it was so nice to know that Robin, the flower guild, and alter guild had everything taken care of and it was going to be perfect!

It was a magical feeling to wear my mother's dress and walk down the same aisle she did when marrying my dad. The flowers and candles, the flower and alter guild design looked like something out of a movie. I know Shirley Campbell with her green thumb would have been so impressed and would have bragged about it at bridge club.

After the ceremony, we were able to take the most beautiful pictures in the garth. This was such a special moment for me because it allowed my grandparents (Shirley and Raymond Campbell) to be a part of our wedding day. This would not have been possible without the hard work of the garden club and garth committee.

I really just want to say thank you to everyone. There were so many moving parts from every committee that played a role in our big day. I have received so many compliments from friends and relatives about how beautiful our church is and how lovely the ceremony was. Matt and I really could not have asked for a more perfect wedding and we are so blessed to have the love and support from The Church of the Redeemer as we begin our marriage journey.

Thank you,

Kathryn Ethridge Swilley



LESSONS FROM THE LITURGICAL YEAR

The Feast of the Transfiguration

On August 6th, the Church observes the Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We step away from the usual readings of Ordinary season,

switch to white paraments and vestments, and celebrate one of the most peculiar scenes found in the Gospels.

All three of the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke preserve variations of the same story: Peter, James, and John accompany Jesus to a high mountain. There, the disciples see Jesus “transfigured,” transformed in some way, or perhaps visible in his truest form. His face shines, just as Moses’ did after encountering the presence of Adonai, and his garments become like the pure whiteness of light. Jesus is then joined by two figures, Moses and Elijah, which prompts Peter to offer to build three tabernacles, dwellings for these divine figures, to mark the occasion. Just then, a cloud overshadows them (again, recalling Moses’ interactions with the great I AM) and a voice proclaims Jesus as God’s beloved, chosen Son. The voice tells the disciples, and us, to listen to Jesus. Just as suddenly, the cloud, the voice, the vision, and the brilliance go away, and Jesus is left alone. He instructs the disciples not to tell anyone, and at the time, they obeyed him. Of course, in time, they told generation on generation about it.

Biblical scholars — just like artists, preachers, and parishioners in pews — cannot make up their minds about this text. Some emphasize Moses and Elijah representing two of the three sections of the *Tanakh*, or Hebrew Scriptures. The *Torah*, the first five books, were traditionally attributed to Moses as a sign of respect, while Elijah is counted as first among the prophets, and represents prophetic literature. Some scholars even point out that Jesus might represent the third section: literary books, like poetry and wisdom literature, since Jesus, the *Logos*, or Word, is sometimes aligned with *Sophia*, Holy Wisdom. Other scholars see the Transfiguration as Jesus in the full glory of the Second Person of the Trinity, and as an inherently Trinitarian occurrence, like Jesus’ Baptism. Others see this scene as a heavenly vision, since legends of the time said that both Moses and Elijah were lifted into heaven instead of dying. So, the disciples recognized these two figures because they were the two great figures of Hebrew history who were already present in heaven. Still others read the passage through a hermeneutic of black liberation, and find the language of whiteness, brightness, and purity to be unsettling, because of how often white supremacy has crept into the teachings of the Church.

May God, who creates us, loves us, and keeps us, bless you on this festive day and every day!

SUNDAY LECTIONARY READINGS

	August 6	August 13	August 20	August 27
First Reading	Exodus 34:29-35	Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28	Genesis 45:1-15	Genesis Exodus 1:8-2:10
Response	Psalms 99	Psalms 105: 1-6, 16-22	Psalms 133	Psalms 124
Second Reading	2 Peter 1:13-21	Romans 10:5-15	Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32	Romans 12:1-8
Gospel	Luke 9:28-36	Matthew 14:22-23	Matthew 15: 10-20, 21-28	Matthew 16:13-20

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHTS

Garden Club



At the Garden Club meeting on July 9th, we walked the church grounds with Rick Hankinson, Junior Warden, to identify potential landscaping projects. Afterwards, we went to the Biscuit Head Restaurant for lunch and prioritized the items on our list. We also determined which items we felt could be done by church members, versus those which would require paid professionals.

Our next Garden Club meeting will be held on Sunday, August 13th, immediately following the coffee hour. We will discuss a proposed butterfly garden for the flower bed located at the top of the church's main driveway.

Thanks to everyone who joined us for fellowship, brainstorming, and planning! If you would like to get "into the weeds" of any of these new projects — or our on-going work to care for and celebrate this beautiful plot of land we share — please reach out to Louise Heizer at heizerlouise@gmail.com.

International Ballet & Pleasant Valley Connection

This Summer, we have been thrilled to help facilitate a new partnership between the International Ballet dance company and the Pleasant Valley Connection. Twice a week, every week throughout the summer, ten students came prepared to learn...about ballet positions and dance steps, but also caring for their bodies and working together to achieve their goals. We are very proud of the young people who took on this new challenge and celebrate all their hard work! On Sunday, July 23, seven of these young dancers assembled for a recital in Purser Hall. Parents, teachers, and parishioners alike thoroughly enjoyed the performance — and the opportunity to break bread together. Thanks to everyone who helped provide the festive, fellowship meal!



WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

	August 6	August 13	August 20	August 27
Verger	Bill Heizer	Wallace Lightsey	David Poleski	Rebekah Webb
Usher	Ken Wood	Josh Hawkins	Joe McCullough	Bill Lee
Crucifer	Sarah Meade	Debbie Price	William Meade	Riley Hawkins
Lector 1	Rick Hankinson	David Poleski	Bob Bouton	Betty Boesch
Lector 2	Robin Mill	Bill Lee	John Helm	Robin Mill
Altar Guild	Ann Meade; Sarah Meade	Susan Butler; Margie Hankinson	Debbie Price; Edie Parrott	Janet Poleski; Judy Derrick; Joanie Mullin
Flower Guild	Robin Mill; Morgan Helm	Louise Heizer	Lauren McCullough	Cynthia Eason
Counters	John Helm; Jane Bouton	Bill Lee; Meg Coffey	Steve Webb; Carol Hallman	Jane Bouton; John Helm
Video	John Helm	David Poleski	Jane Bouton; Bob Bouton	Jim Briggs

FLOWERS & FELLOWSHIP

If you would like to dedicate altar flowers in honor of someone special in your life,
the 2023 altar dedication book is on the communication table.
We ask for a donation of \$40 to offset the cost of the flowers. We appreciate your generosity.

+ + +

Please sign up to bring simple snacks for coffee hour after Sunday services.
There is a sign up sheet in the transept. Thank you!

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

1 Steve McCullough	4 Jennifer Thompson	16 Erica Robinson
2 Andrea Helm	9 Micki Brown	18 Faye Chadwick
3 Leslie Entwistle	15 Wendy Caney	26 Nancy Powell
3 Jacob Hayes	15 Margaret Lee	29 Pauline Warren

AUGUST 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 12:00 PM - AA (PH) 6:30 PM - Choir Rehearsal (CR)	3	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5 11:00 AM - ALANON (T) AA (PH)
6 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 2:00 PM - Hispanic Service (PH)	7 6:00 PM - ACOA (PH) 8:00 PM - ALANON (PH)	8 12:00 PM - Clergy Lunch (T)	9 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 12:00 PM - AA (PH) 6:00 PM - Finance Meeting (WR) 6:30 PM - Choir Rehearsal (CR)	10	11 OFFICE CLOSED	12 11:00 AM - ALANON (T) AA (PH)
13 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 2:00 PM - Hispanic Service (PH)	14 6:00 PM - ACOA (PH) 8:00 PM - ALANON (PH)	15 6:30 PM - Vestry Meeting (V)	16 8:30 AM - Men's Study Breakfast (F) 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 12:00 PM - AA (PH) 6:30 PM—Choir Rehearsal (CR)	17	18 OFFICE CLOSED	19 11:00 AM - ALANON (T) AA (PH)
20 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 2:00 PM - Hispanic Service (PH)	21 6:00 PM - ACOA (PH) 8:00 PM - ALANON (PH)	22	23 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 12:00 PM - AA (PH) 6:30 PM - Choir Rehearsal (CR)	24	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26 11:00 AM - ALANON (T) AA (PH)
27 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 2:00 PM - Hispanic Service (PH)	28 6:00 PM - ACOA (PH) 8:00 PM - ALANON (PH)	29	30 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist (N) 12:00 PM - AA (PH) 6:30 PM - Choir Rehearsal (CR)	31		

Key for facilities and spaces:

(T): Transept; (PH): Purser Hall; (P): Parlor; (N): Nave; (V): Vestry Meeting Room/Media Room; (WR): Work Room; (F): Floating Location; (EH): Education Hall; (CR): Choir Room

Note:

Sunday Services of Holy Eucharist are offered in-person and on-line;
Wednesday Holy Eucharist is offered in-person.



The Church of the Redeemer

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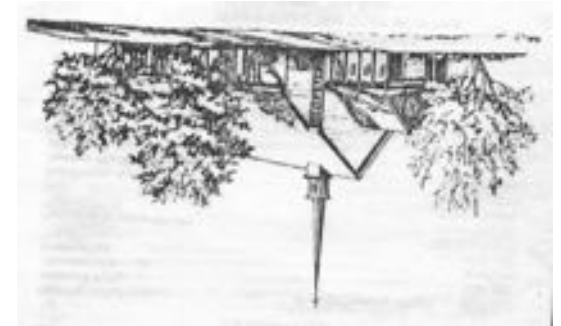
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The Church of the Redeemer

**Everyone is welcome to join us
for Worship on Sundays at 9:30 am
and Wednesdays at 9:30 am.
Watch services online at:
[Facebook.com/corgsc](https://facebook.com/corgsc)**

Come Join Us!