

THEY WON'T BE EXPECTING THAT!

There is a church in New Zealand that made some widely-shared videos for the Christmas season. One of the videos is titled “They Won’t be Expecting That,” which tells the story of our Savior coming to us as a baby – “they won’t be expecting that!” The actors are children, and it is delightful to watch them tell the story of Jesus’ birth. We might not expect the story to be told in that way, either.

I keep thinking about the many events in our lives that do not happen in the way we expect. Who would have expected an ice storm followed by a snowstorm in the South, when much of the country remained dry? At the same time there are households in MS that will be without power for several weeks; nature hit hard there. Mississippians weren’t expecting that.

The Church of the Redeemer. The women who gathered and prayed about establishing a church in this part of Greenville were not expecting their rector to say “no,” that it wasn’t a good time to start a church. I doubt that they anticipated over fifty people showing up at a neighborhood meeting that encouraged them to go forward. A year later The Church of the Redeemer was not only gathering but had broken ground on a building. Seventy-five years later, we are a strong faith community. As you turn the pages of this month’s Echoes newsletter, you might be surprised at how much Redeemer does not only here but in and for the community around us and across the world. Who would have expected that?

It is time to give thanks for all that we have and all that we do and to continue to seek God’s guidance for our present and future. The neighborhood needs our active witness; the world desperately needs the unity and hope that is grounded in Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit is active here; you can feel the Spirit’s presence in the nave, in our meetings, in the many ways in which we gather. Focus on our call as expressed in our Mission Statement: *“Drawing near to God to make and equip disciples to live as faithful followers of Christ.”*

How do we: draw near to God?

equip disciples ... to live as faithful followers of Christ?

How, then, do **we** live? As we do, and more: in faith, with joy in Christ, with the expectation that we will be transformed by God. We give generously, share abundantly, and give thanks in all things. Empowered by the Spirit, we proclaim Christ, today, tomorrow, and always.

“Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever.” (Ephesians 3.20-21)

**Peace and strength in Christ,
Catherine+**



GOD BLESS US.... EVERYONE!

On behalf of the Outreach Committee, we want to take a moment to say *THANK YOU* to everyone who participated in Redeemer's outreach projects during the Christmas season. Your generosity stretched both near and far and were felt by many. Because of your continued support, we were able to shine some light and spread a little extra joy to those in need. Thank you!

Miracle Hill and Sammy's Mission

Toiletry items and other small gifts were collected for two local men's addiction recovery programs. Items for Miracle Hill were purchased online and sent to their facility to be sorted and given out in time for Christmas. *Miracle Hill* is a household name that has been serving and doing wonderful things locally for over 85 years!

Sammy's Mission, founded in 2021, has seven transitional houses in Greenville. They provide a safe, sober, Christ-centered environment for men in active recovery from substance abuse. On December 17th, a few elves were busy in the transept stuffing Christmas bags with treasured items for each of the 41 men in the program. Each bag not only contained toiletry items, but also a toboggan, warm socks, and a hand-written Christmas card from church members. Cleaning items and sweet treats were also collected and were greatly appreciated. Later that day, an employee from Sammy's Mission showed up in a pick-up truck to load up the gifts. He shared that he is also in recovery and lives in one of the homes. A powerful and precious gift came from such a chance conversation that day. God is so good! He shows us that what we think is a call to fill material "things" can become an even bigger blessing to us!

Pleasant Valley Connection

The staff of PVC worked alongside Salvation Army/ Toys for Tots for the third consecutive year to provide gifts and to help spread Christmas cheer to children

in need attending Pleasant Valley's After School Program. **Lori Hawkins**

**Santa's Elves
packing your many
gracious donations!
God Bless Us....
Everyone!**



A HAPPY DAY

A Happy Day: Christmas Joy in Santiago, Chile

This Christmas was truly a *Happy Day* for the youth we serve in four government-run group homes in Santiago, Chile. Thanks to your generous support, we were able to celebrate the birth of Jesus together on December 20th in ways that reflected family, joy, and the love of Christ.

Each home celebrated with a shared meal, Christ-centered reflections on the Christmas story, and meaningful activities led by volunteers who walk consistently with the youth throughout the year. In the girls' homes, each young person received a personalized gift chosen with her interests and personality in mind. In the boys' homes, the youth requested shared gifts, and each home received a ping pong table, creating space for connection, laughter, and healthy community.

In total, **75 youth**, including girls, boys, and young adults who have aged out of the system but remain connected, received Christmas gifts as a tangible reminder that they are seen, known, and deeply valued. In addition, **110 caregivers** and **25 volunteers** received small gifts and handwritten Christmas cards as a thank-you for their dedication and commitment.

Because of this generosity, Christmas truly became a *Happy Day*—a day where the good news of Jesus was not only heard, but experienced through love, presence, and belonging.



STAYING CONNECTED

Dear Mother Catherine,

.....Both Abroad

3 новим роком, Happy New Year in Ukrainian. Today is January 7, the Orthodox Christmas. They celebrate according to the Julian calendar. Redeemer shows what a church is like with no walls and goes forth to spread the message. You engage in the community but also beyond.

I am not sure how much you hear about the ongoing war here. I hear nightly air raid sirens that are activated across the country whenever any of the country is struck by bombings. Also we have daily power cuts lasting anywhere from 4-6 hours a day. One learns to adapt and God gives me comfort, especially when many people are under attack in the east, Kiev, Lyiv and even not far from where I am. I pray that God will let people know and feel that He sees their pain and suffering. I know people who God sends to these people.

Stay blessed in Christ.

His,

Gary Powell

.....and Here at Home

**Janet Poleski and
Betty Lupo Catching
-up on a Recent Visit**



CYM FOOD MINISTRY PARTNERSHIP



Reverend Catherine Tatem
The Church of the Redeemer
120 Mauldin Rd
Greenville, SC 29605

Dear Rev. Tatem,

As we reflect on 2025, our hearts are full of gratitude for your support of the CYM Food Insecurity Ministry. Because of your generosity, we have been able to serve over 5,000 households since the ministry began, including 2,189 households this year alone. That's more than 10,000 bags of groceries that have touched lives and brought hope to families throughout Greenville County.

Your partnership has allowed us to stand in the gap for those facing food insecurity during one of the most challenging times for many families. The ongoing economic and governmental challenges have increased the demand for assistance, but thanks to your faithfulness, we have been able to meet that need head-on.

Every bag distributed represents more than just food; it means love, dignity, and the reminder that God sees and cares for His people. None of this would be possible without your contribution to this mission.

From the entire CYM Food Insecurity Ministry team, thank you for walking alongside us, sharing in this calling, and helping us make sure no one faces hunger alone.

With gratitude and hope,

LaShawn Leitzsey
Program Manager
Food Insecurity Ministry



(864) 244-1017



info@cymm.org



9 Beth Drive • Greenville, SC 29609

A NEW YEAR! A REFRESHED LOOK!



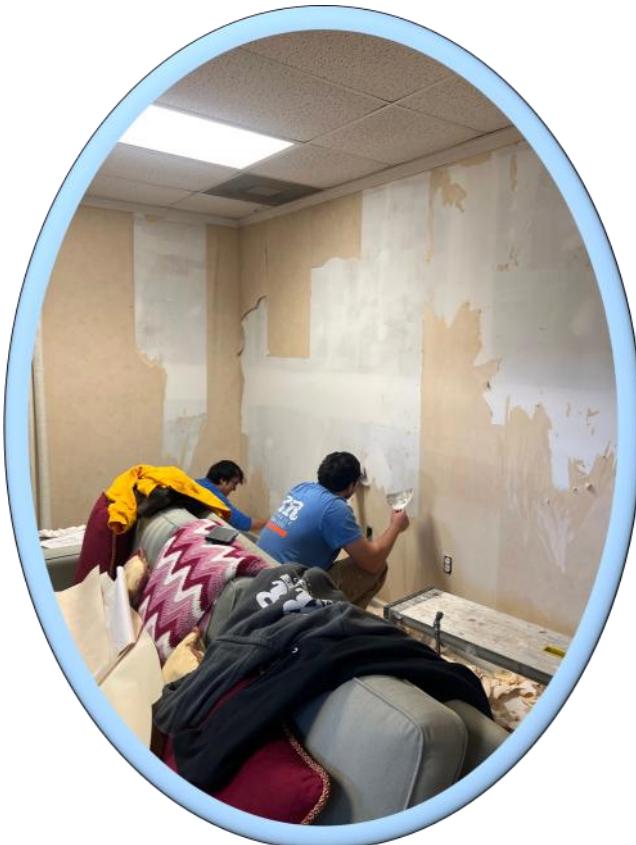
As we enter our 75th year, we're refreshing some areas of our building. You'll notice refinished flooring in the narthex and new paint in the areas between it and the transept. The education wing is getting a facelift as well, with newly painted walls (preserving the beautifully painted murals) and new flooring.

The decision to upgrade these areas grew out of the strategic planning process from two years ago. Specifically, we recognize that one of the greatest strengths of Redeemer is our welcoming culture. What better way to reflect this than through our facility, strengthening the first impression we make by refreshing our narthex?

New Sign at the Corner of Lydia Street

Additionally, input from parishioners during the strategic planning process identified another of our strengths as a "genuine family culture/family feel." A revitalized education wing communicates the importance we place on families as well as our desire to serve more families in our rapidly growing community.

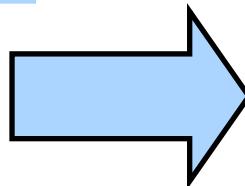
Look for additional changes over the coming weeks as we sharpen our appearance for the next 75 years! **Jane Bouton**



REDEEMER'S REFRESH CONTINUED



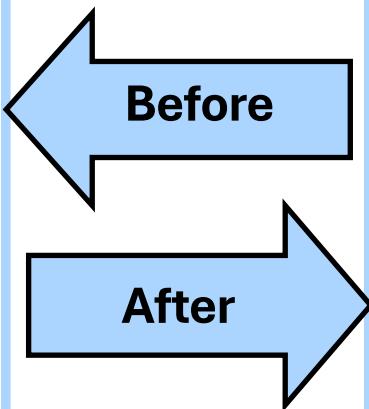
Where's Waldo?!
I mean.... Bob?!



He's on the roof
applying butyl tape to
prevent leaking!



Pressure
Washing the
Wall at the Front
of the Church



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

We are One in the Spirit! Cursillo Weekend #150

A Three Day Retreat with Talks, Meditations, Eucharists, & Music

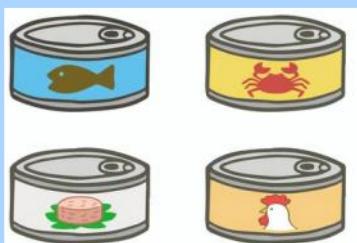


February 12-15, 2026

Camp Gravatt
Aiken, SC

~ For more information, click the “Cursillo Weekend” picture above to take you to the Cursillo web site, or see Mother Catherine. ~

Mark your calendars....as we have one last hurrah before Lent! Join us Feb. 17th from 5:00-6:30 PM in Purser Hall for Pancakes and Jambalaya! Don't forget to sign-up in the Narthex to let us know you're coming. Invite your friends and family. Volunteers are needed for prep and clean-up. There is no charge, but donations are always appreciated to help cover food costs.



Pleasant Valley Connection has started a food box outside their building for people in need. It is proving to be quite popular and is empty more often than not. The *Daughters of the King* is sponsoring a drive to provide canned food for the food box. They are collecting cans of meat (tuna, chicken, chili, etc.) during February and are taking them to Pleasant Valley each week. Please help by bringing a can when you come to church. It is usually a bleak time for those in need, and it will be greatly appreciated.

**STAY
TUNED**

Be on the lookout for more information about Trivia Night scheduled for this Friday, February 6th.

SHARED SMILES AND SACRED MOMENTS.....



Echoes
Photographer
Caught in the Act

Stewardship Sunday

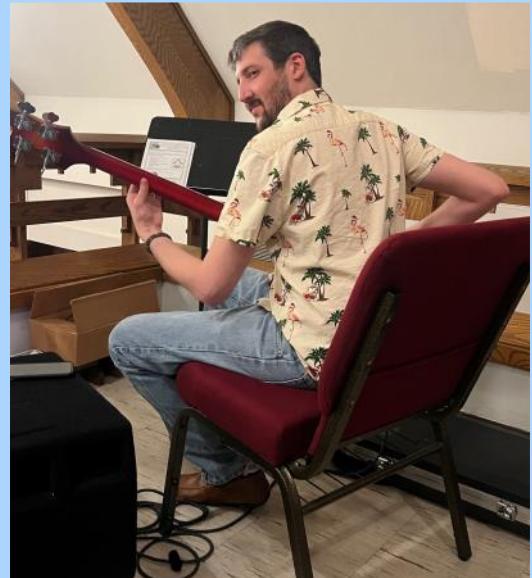
Lori recruited Joseph Ethan to help decorate the Crismont Tree.



REDEEMER'S CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE



DAUGHTERS OF THE KING LUNCH AND CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE



FROM FAREWELLTO HELLO AGAIN!

Kevin Mertens is a seminarian in the Diocese's Deacon Formation program. He was assigned to Redeemer as his field parish for the

Fall of 2025.....and lucky for us, he is staying here through the Spring of 2026! We are so happy, Kevin, to keep you a little longer!



5-John Helm
5-Trip Ethridge
14-Ivy Entwistle
18-Jacob Lightsey
24-Louise Heizer
27-Ted Sanders