

THE REDEEMER RECORD

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February, 2017



St. Olaf Choir Concert 1.21.17

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

Rev. James Erlandson, Pastor

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Tahnea Brown, Office Manager

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A Letter From Pastor Erlandson

Dear Friends,

Sometimes we find the scripture passages chosen for our weekly lectionary to be amazingly "on target" for our times. This is especially the case this Epiphany season and the month of February. For this month we will read on consecutive Sundays a series of passages from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, from Matthew's gospel. In these passages Jesus addresses his disciples, telling them what it means to follow him, and seek the Kingdom of God.

We ended the month of January by reading Matthew 5:1-12, also known as *The Beatitudes*. This series of blessings outline God's blessing of the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. *"Blessed are you when people revile and persecute you, and utter all kinds of evil falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who went before you."* It is an encouragement to Christians not to be afraid to stand with those who are the least expected to be blessed, particularly immigrants, refugees, Muslims and the undocumented today.

On the first Sunday in February we will read from Matthew 5:13-20, in which Jesus says *"You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? You are the light of the world. Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."* We in the Church have a responsibility to let God's word of grace and love shine before others – as a witness to God's mercy and compassion. If we are not witnesses to God's love in word and deed, we are not fulfilling our purpose as the Body of Christ. Our witness is not for our own glory or credit, but all glory goes to God.

On Sunday, February 12, we hear from Matthew 5:21-37, how Jesus brings a new understanding to the Law of God. *"You have heard it said 'You shall not murder', but I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment....If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out."* This shows us the impossibility of human beings to fulfill God's Law, because the standard is set so high. When we think we are obedient, we have already fallen short. So we are left to stand in judgment, and rely on the mercy of God's grace.

On Sunday, February 19, we read from Matthew 5:38-48, how Jesus said, *"You have heard it said 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven."* This is the perhaps the hardest of all Jesus' teachings, which we still must learn.

We end the Epiphany season on Transfiguration Sunday, February 26, when we hear how three of Jesus' disciples followed him up the mountain where he met Moses and Elijah, and they heard a voice from the mountain say, *"This is my Beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him!"*

These days the Church and all people of faith are challenged to be witnesses to the love of God, in our compassion, mercy, and support for our neighbors. We hear from God the command to treat the stranger, the alien, the immigrant and refugee just as we would treat another citizen, or a member of our own family. This can become a great challenge, as it may require us to follow God's Law, and not the laws or policies of our own government.

This commandment to love includes those with whom we disagree, whom in today's political climate we may treat like enemies, not neighbors. So this is another great challenge which Jesus gives us, to love our enemies as neighbors, friends and families – when it is natural to argue, slander or fight. So we read these scriptures, confess our sins and failures to love, and resolve to “do better” as witnesses to Jesus and his love. We also pray for the strength and faith to follow Christ's call to us. For it is by our words, and actions of love, that people will know that we follow Jesus, and that we all are children of God

Shalom, Peace, Salaam in the Lord's name.

Pastor Jim

February Calendar

Recurring Weekly Events

Sun.	10:00 am ~ Worship
	11:15 am ~ Coffee Fellowship
	12:00 pm ~ Universal Life Church of God
	12:00 pm ~ Praise Covenant Church
Mon.	4:00 pm ~ Shakespearean Youth Theatre
	7:00 pm ~ Minnesota Renaissance Choir Rehearsal
Tues.	4:00 pm ~ Shakespearean Youth Theatre
Wed.	7:00 pm ~ Senior Choir
	8:00 pm ~ Courage to Change N.A.
Thur.	6:30 am ~ Prayer & Meditation A.A.
	4:00 pm ~ Shakespearean Youth Theatre
Fri.	4:00 pm ~ Shakespearean Youth Theatre
	8:00 pm ~ Words into Action N.A.
Sat.	8:00 am ~ Siloé Church
	1:00 pm ~ Shakespearean Youth Theatre

Other Events

2nd	11:00 am	Womens Guild
4th	10:00 am	Girl Scouts
7th	7:00 pm	Vestry Meeting
9th	10:30 am	Happy Seniors
14th	6:30 pm	Elders Meeting
15th	6:00 pm	Handbell Rehearsal
16th	6:30 pm	SPASynod Anti-Racism
18th	10:00 am	Girl Scouts
	2:00 pm	N.A. Valentines Dance
22nd	6:00 pm	Handbell Rehearsal

Women's Guild

will meet Thursday, February 2nd at 11:00 AM. Bring a sandwich or salad. Coffee and dessert will be served by hostess Bette Steglich. Bring a sandwich or salad.

February Altar Servers

If you are unable to serve, please contact an elder or the church office no later than the Tuesday of the week you are signed up to serve so that a replacement can be found.

February 5	<u>Deacon</u>	<u>Subdeacon</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Crucifer</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>
<i>5 Epiphany</i>	Michelle Geschwill	Joel Michael	Stephanie Stoessel	Ray Hayes	Jared Geschwill
February 12	<u>Deacon</u>	<u>Subdeacon</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Crucifer</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>
<i>6 Epiphany</i>	Tammy Cownie	DeAnne Hilgers	Lynn Schibonski	Todd-Allen Hamilton	Neal Caerwyn
February 19	<u>Deacon</u>	<u>Subdeacon</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Crucifer</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>
<i>7 Epiphany</i>	Joel Michael	Joann Conroy	Mary Lou Knipe	Bob Paddock	Phoenix Mason
February 26	<u>Deacon</u>	<u>Subdeacon</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Crucifer</u>	<u>Acolyte</u>
<i>Transfiguration of Our Lord</i>	Bob Paddock	Leilani Drake	Diana Rankin	Benjamin Cretsinger	Jack Sprung
	<u>Thurifer</u>	<u>Bannerbearer</u>	<u>Bannerbearer</u>	<u>Torchbearer</u>	<u>Torchbearer</u>
	David Tannen	Obang Agwa	Todd-Allen Hamilton	DeAnne Hilgers	Mike Sprung

FEBRUARY SCRIPTURES

We invite members and friends of Redeemer to read the appointed scriptures for each Sunday. This is a meaningful way to prepare for worship. It also binds us to our homebound sisters and brothers who we also encourage to read the same scriptures weekly.

	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
February 26 <i>5 Epiphany</i>	Isa 58:1-9a [9b-12]	Ps 112:1-9 [10]	1 Cor 2:1-12 [13-16]	Matt 5:13-20
February 26 <i>6 Epiphany</i>	Deut 30:15-20	Ps 119:1-8	1 Cor 3:1-9	Matt 5:21-37
February 26 <i>7 Epiphany</i>	Lev 19:1-2, 9-18	Ps 119:33-40	1 Cor 3:10-11, 16-23	Matt 5:38-48
February 26 <i>Transfiguration of Our Lord</i>	Exod 24:12-18	Ps 2 <i>or</i> Ps 99	2 Peter 1:16-21	Matt 17:1-9

ANNUAL MEETING NEWS

At the congregational annual meeting on January 29, we elected new leaders to the Vestry:

Sybil Harris – President
Ruth Belmonte – Vice President
Carla Johnson – Secretary
David Tannen – Treasurer
Joann Conroy – At-Large Representative

Remaining on the Vestry are:

Eric Chiquist – At-Large Representative
Reva Rasmussen – At-Large Representative
Tammy Davis Cownie & Joel Michael – Elders Representative



The congregation thanked Ray Hayes, President, Bob Paddock, Vice-President, and Bonnie Hughes, Treasurer, for their dedicated service for over 7 years on the Vestry.

The congregation also approved a budget for our 2017 mission.

MN History Theatre Play: The Highwaymen

By Josh Wilder

Directed by Jamil Jude

February 4 - 26, 2017



1956. The construction of Interstate 94 destroyed the thriving, tight-knit Rondo neighborhood where homes, stores and businesses once stood. The new free-way tore through the heart of St. Paul's largest African-American community. This powerful new drama explores the dynamics surrounding the decision-making process that shattered the lives of thousands of middle-class residents and changed the face of St. Paul forever.

To order tickets, visit: <http://bit.ly/2jBxe7k> or call **651.292.4323**

Project Home Information

Every March, the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer hosts Project Home, a program of Interfaith Action of Greater Saint Paul. During this month, we provide emergency shelter space and volunteer support for families facing homelessness in Ramsey County. Project Home is hosted at two different area faith communities each month and provides 20 emergency shelter beds at each host site.

Project Home is almost completely run by volunteers. We encourage you to sign up and serve as Evening or Overnight Host to provide hospitality to these families in need.

Evening Shelter Host:

Volunteer from 5:30pm to 8:30pm. Main responsibilities include greeting shelter guests, serving a healthy evening snack, playing and reading with teens and children, conversing with guests, and orienting the overnight shelter hosts.

Overnight Shelter Host:

Volunteer from 8pm to 7:30am on weekdays and until 9:30am on weekends. Main responsibilities include playing and reading with teens and children, conversing with guests, securing the facility before bedtime, waking up guests, serving a light breakfast, and securing the facility after guests have left for the day.

Sign up to Volunteer:

The link will be posted soon as I have the sign-up sheet published later this week.

Donate to Project Home:

Donations of simple items help us meet the most basic needs of the families staying at Project Home. For donation item ideas, view Project Home's Donation Wish List. Monetary donations are always welcome. Make checks payable to Interfaith Action with "Project Home" in the memo line. When making a donation online, please designate "Project Home" in the text field.

For more information, contact:

Ruth Belmonte: rbelmonte@q.com

ADULT FORUMS

Feb. 5, 2017 11:30 A. M. **"Report on Reformation Pilgrimage"** Presented by Professor Diane Jacobson and Paul Jacobson who will share their memories of their recent trip to the sites associated with the Reformation. This year marks the 500th year anniversary of Martin Luther posting his 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg.

Feb. 12, 19 & 26 11:30 A. M. 3 Week Series **"Journey toward Justice"** Presented by the Anti-Racism Task Force. Last fall several members of LCR attended a 2 day workshop sponsored by the ELCA. Eighty three teams from congregations all across the metro area attended. Our team promised to bring this timely and important issue back to our congregation. Join us for these conversations and help us develop our next steps.

Feb. 12 **"Privilege and Race in Our Church"**

Feb. 19 **"Dying to Whiteness"**

Feb. 26 **"Where Do We Go From Here?"**

CORE TEAM NEWS

A sizable number of Redeemerites and friends turned out for ISAIAH's Prophetic Resistance launch event on January 28th. (We also had several who were present in spirit because illness was keeping them at home.) This meeting initiated a period of 100 Days dedicated to Prophetic Resistance. Extending from the 28th to May 7th, the time range encompasses much of the regular legislative session of the Minnesota State Legislature as well as most of the "first 100 days" of the new presidential term.

Many of us have been stunned and taken aback by the speed at which proposals have been made or actions taken as well as the intense fear and anger directed at those who are considered "other" or "not us." Whether it's the directive to build a wall (or high-tech fence) along the southern border of our nation or making sure any Real ID legislation enacted in our state also forbids any pathway by which immigrants might be able to obtain non-compliant driver's licenses, there is a clear message: you are not wanted here. Fears of possible terrorist actions are being channeled into rejection and harassment of Muslims who are already here (and even citizens) as well as at refugees, who are seeking safety and a better life for themselves and their children.

As people of faith, these actions are unacceptable. Again and again throughout the pages in our Bibles, scripture instructs the people of God to care for the alien and immigrant, the poor and the vulnerable ... to recall the times when the people of God were exiles, strangers in lands not their own. We cannot sit quietly as these things are done in our name, with other religious voices being raised in support, blessing this as right and appropriate for a Christian nation such as ours.

When called to the stage at the January 28th meeting, Senator Al Franken was asked: What are you going to do? He took the question to heart in his response, noting that it is, in some ways, the answer and the question to pretty much everything these days. He spoke of coming of age in a Jewish home during the civil rights era and how his parents would respond to the reports of violence against those who were only seeking their full rights with the statement: This is not acceptable to us as Jews. Much of what we are seeing transpire these days is not acceptable to us as Christians, either.





So what are we going to do? What can any of us do? Approximately 2,000 people attended the January 28th event. All who attended were called to engage in **100 Days of Prophetic Resistance**. The call was given and people responded: **Here am I; send me**. Even if you weren't at the meeting, you can join in the movement. More information on how to participate in these days of resistance can be found at www.isaiahmn.org or through Facebook (enter

Isaiah 100 Days Prophetic Action in the search box and you can find the event; click the **Interested** or **Going** option and you'll receive updates each day as part of your news feed).



We are being asked to do at least one action of prophetic resistance each day for the next 100 days. Actions can range from contacting a representative at the local or national level, attending a public event concerning proposed legislation or action, making a public statement through letters in the paper or conversations with others, and prayer. Here is the prayer we are sharing for the 100 Days:

Merciful God, may your love and vision be evident in every action and deed as we fight the powers of hate, corruption and greed. When we speak your truth of light, love and grace, hold our hands against fear and help us to embrace your children most vulnerable, who need your assistance, and be with us all in this prophetic resistance. Amen.

THEY SANG THEIR FAITH – THE ST. OLAF CHOIR AT REDEEMER

A Review by Diana M. Rankin

When Redeemer was preparing to host the St. Olaf Choir in April 1926, the *Record* had this to say about their anticipated performance:

...to us the chief charm of these singers is their gripping devotion-al appeal, the glorious ability to sing the truths of heaven deep into the hearts of the audience. They evidently believe what they sing and they sing their faith with a reverence and devoutness that are truly convincing.

No doubt the nearly 400 people who attended their concert at Redeemer on January 21st came away with much the same impression as the choir sang sacred music from the 16th century to the present day. A highlight of the program was "*Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied*" by J. S. Bach which, notably, the choir also sang in the 1926 concert. This motet is joyful, brilliant, and technically difficult music for double choir. The intricate interweaving and rhythmic vitality of the 8 separate parts sung so skillfully and effortlessly was truly the highlight of the concert.

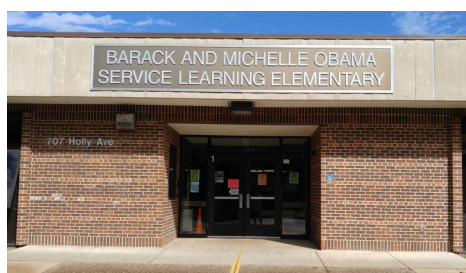
The choir sang some of their signature pieces, including "A Spotless Rose," "Shenandoah," "What Wondrous Love," and "O Day Full of Grace." But there was new music as well. "This House of Peace by Twin Cities' composer Ralph M. Johnson (who was in the audience) is set to words of hospitalized patients and family members. Other new music spoke to the Church's concern for social justice in an unjust world.

Before closing the concert with F. Melius Christiansen's setting of "Beautiful Savior," director Anton Armstrong turned to the audience and urged people to "come back" to Redeemer for more music in our new performance space. What a wonderful endorsement of all the time and skill that Lyle Nelson, Emanuel Hughes, David Peterson, and David Dufresne contributed to renovating the front of the sanctuary!

This review would not be complete without noting that our own Amy Tann Erlandson, a senior at St. Olaf majoring in music education, is a member of the choir.

Finally, many thanks to:

- Kim Huor Tann and her kitchen assistants who prepared a wonderful Chinese dinner for about 150 choir and orchestra members, staff, and volunteers. (It was so good that our guests came back for seconds and even thirds!)
- Ruth Belmonte and others who prepared and served the reception.
- Those who cleaned, moved pews and chairs, arranged tables in the Undercroft, and prepared dressing rooms in the days leading up to the concert.
- The crew that greeted people, scanned tickets, and handed out programs.
- Pastor Jim and Jon Campbell who made all the arrangements with the St. Olaf Choir.
- All those who shared Redeemer's exceptional brand of authentic hospitality in many various ways both before and after the concert.



THANK YOU FROM OBAMA ELEMENTARY

On behalf of Obama Elementary, I would like to thank you for your financial contribution. The generous support helps us to assist our scholars, school and families. Thanks again!
Sincerely, Ms. Pendelton, Principal

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