

Redeemer/ St. George's September Newsletter 2024



From the Pastor's Desk

"Every teacher of religious law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a homeowner who brings from his storeroom new gems of truth as well as old." (*Matthew 13:52, NLT*)

Dear Friends,

As we look to the future, we often have only partial images of what is to come. We don't know what will come to fruition, and speculation about the plethora of options that may, or may not, become reality only really multiplies worry and the stress that comes with it. That is the danger of the unknown, that it might envelope us in our insecurities and wrap us in anxiety. We are called, however, to put our faith in God – to trust in Him. When we don't know what is around the corner, we at least know who holds the corner, and whatever we find around it. Moreover, we know who holds us. And so, we can face the unknown with confidence, because we know that whatever we encounter we are His: I am my Beloved's; He is mine.

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What's New?

Services in September will be a bit different. The service schedule is as follows:

Sunday Sept. 1 Anglican Communion

Sunday Sept. 8 Lutheran Service of the Word

Sunday Sept. 15 Anglican morning prayer

Sunday Sept. 22 Lutheran Service of the Word lay led

Sunday Sept. 29 Lutheran communion

Please speak to a council or vestry member to share your thoughts about this service schedule.

I know that this kind of trust in God's presence, trust that the One holding me was also holding the future, helped me through the Covid lockdown and the constant pivoting that faith communities had to undertake to accommodate changes in health guidelines during that time. In the Church we are accustomed to changing at a slower pace than the rest of society, but during that period we underwent as much/many change(s) as society regularly does in about 10 years (on the last report I remember seeing). It was tiring, and confusing. Coming through lockdowns and emerging as an ongoing concern was exhausting for people.

Our churches were not immune to this, even with confidence in God's provident hand. God provided. Redeemer could have been left without a pastor, and so with the task of finding worship leaders weekly until a suitable pastor could be found; St. George's could have been left casting about for a place to call home, and with that a regular part of the city to worship among. But God provided and brought our groups together. We are currently working through some of the realities of bringing together two communities, and it is analogous to a marriage in some ways.

We each bring our birth-family traditions with us (and the way we've always done it is the way that *it* is supposed to be done – even if we'd never really thought about it or thought we cared much about it), and what *our* traditions will be has yet to be made, and yet to be seen. This is a time of experimentation for us, as we work through the dynamics of bringing together these two ways of negotiating-human-life-as-people-of-God, and along with things that fit well for us there are sure to be things we try that won't work for us in the long run. That is a part of learning to be family. But if we both partners are committed to making it work, then we will find that way forward that not only allows us to grow in our own ways, but to experience life in new and previously unimaginable ways *together*. That's what makes marriage worth fighting for; it's what makes our full communion worth fighting for. But it does mean that we need to give space for trying new things, and for some of those things to fail – otherwise we will never find the things that succeed for us *together*.

Coming out of pandemic there was a sense in which we were fighting to keep our heads above the water, and in some ways the distinct identities of our faith-communities was lost. Redeemer is not a generic Lutheran Church. There are distinct qualities to how we bear the inherited tradition of Lutheranism together, peculiar to us, that I am excited to discover. Similarly, St. George's is not a generic Anglican Church (honestly, I don't believe any church community of any denomination is generic). There are distinct qualities to the way that we bear the inherited tradition of Anglicanism together, peculiar to us, that I am more familiar with (due to proximity and time) but which I am still excited to rediscover. The time has come for us to rebuild what we lost in the pandemic, and for us to move more fully into the reality that God has brought us together for.

This fall I hope that we can start to rediscover these things together, and that we can start to really come to know one another as we are (crazy cousin "It" – whom we keep hidden from outsiders – and all!). God is up to something, and it is something good. It is our privilege to be here to witness it side-by-side. This fall, expect to see signs of new life as we develop our common life together. Take part in what you are able to, that we may grow towards the fullness of the stature of Christ, to which we've been called.

In His grip,

Jonathan+

The month at church:



Fellowship Sunday Sept. 8

After church on Sept. 8 we will have a BBQ and potluck. Burgers and hot dogs will be provided, please bring a dish to share.

Tuesdays Choir Practice Will be Tuesdays this year. All are welcome to join. Start date and time TBA

Thursdays Sept. 12, 19, 26 at 1:30 there will be a Book of Common Prayer Communion service with bible study to follow at 2:00, led by Jonathan.



Annual Fall Supper

Saturday Sept. 28 5-7

We are looking for food donations and volunteers. Please see the sign-up sheet at the church.



Brain Teaser:

Who woke up after his wedding to find he had married the wrong woman?



Timmy didn't want to put his money in the offering plate Sunday morning, so his mother decided to use some hurried creative reasoning with him. "You don't want that money, honey," she whispered in his ear. "Quick! Drop it in the plate. It's tainted!" Horrified, the little boy obeyed. After a few seconds he whispered, "But, mommy, why was the money tainted? Was it dirty?" "Oh, no dear," she replied. "It's not really dirty. It just 'taint yours, and it taint mine,'" she replied. "It's God's."

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"Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain."

1 Corinthians 15:58