

TIDINGS **Newsletter**

Redeemer Lutheran Church
1545 Chain Bridge Road
McLean, VA 22101

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December 2025



Our mission is to share Christ's love
with the greatest number of people.

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**A Message from
Pastor Sharon Core**

**Rhythm
December 2025**

The hardest thing about serving as a mid-council leader in the Presbyterian Church was that I could never figure out the liturgical rhythm of the work. While we had Presbytery-wide organizational meetings during the year (6 of them!), that was not the rhythm I was longing for. I had been a parish minister far too long not to desire some deeper theological/liturgical rhythm.

The ebb and flow of the Christian year makes sense to me and helps me make sense of the larger world. And with Advent 1 on November 30, we begin a new year recognizing that this time of anticipation, waiting, and expectancy is what we need (it may not be what we want!) as we prepare for the news the shepherds receive from the angels.

It's a curious season—because aren't we really just getting ready for the baby to be born? Again? Yes and no. Yes, in that the scriptures for each Sunday in Advent pull back the curtain bit by bit to reveal the manger scene. The reality for those who received the first birth announcement is that this was something new and unexpected. They had no idea how it would unfold, what this newly-born child would mean for the world. Perhaps they were so overcome with the angelic host that they couldn't even begin to wonder what would come next. For us, we hear the story year after year and because we do know what comes next, we may become a little jaded—oh, it's a beautiful story all right, and have we lost sight of the WOW factor? Because this is about as WOW as you can get—second only perhaps to a guy being raised from the dead.

And no, in that as we revisit the manger and the angels and the shepherds, we are challenged to consider the reality and importance of the incarnation. What is the “so what” for you as you ponder “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us”? What difference does it make in your day to day living long after the candles have been lit, the nativities packed away and the lights untangled that “for unto you a child is born”? How does the rhythm of this season impact the rhythm of your daily life?

Every community has a different rhythm to this season. Our rhythm at Redeemer includes gathering each Sunday for worship. We will hear from the prophets and from Matthew. We will light candles. We will sing all the anticipatory hymns.

There will also be three other services I hope you will attend—December 3, 10, and 17—all beginning with dinner at 6:00 p.m. and service at 7:00 p.m. On the 3rd and 10th, we'll gather for vesper services. These will be quiet contemplative times. On December 17, we'll gather for Blue Christmas, a reminder that this is not the most wonderful time of the year for everyone.

Whatever the rhythm for your personal life, I look forward to sharing with you in the Redeemer Advent rhythm. May the anticipation, waiting, and expectancy be exactly what we need.

Blessings,
Pastor Sharon

DECEMBER



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Traditional worship services at 8:30 am and 11:00 am
Contemporary worship service at 9:45 am
(not Dec. 28)

Faith Formation & Confirmation classes-- 9:45 am (not Dec. 21, 28)

High School classes & Table Talk (Adult Class in Music Suite A) -- 9:45 am (not Dec. 28)

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sundays	Youth Choir Rehearsal (Music Suite B) -- 10:55 am (not Dec. 28)
Mondays	Social Justice and Equity Book Club (Zoom) -- 7:30 pm (not Dec. 22, 29)
Tuesdays	Advent Bible Study (Music Suite A/Zoom) -- 9:30 am (not Dec. 30)
Thursdays	Bible Study (Zoom) -- 8:00 am (not Dec. 25)
	Bell Choir Rehearsal (Music Suite A) -- 7:00 pm (not Dec. 25)
	Traditional Choir Practice (Music Suite B) -- 7:45 pm (not Dec. 25)

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Week of November 30

Wednesday, December 3	Quilting Group (Fellowship Hall)--9 am Advent Community Dinner (Fellowship Hall)--6 pm Advent Evening Prayer Service--7 pm
Thursday, December 4	Prayer Shawl Ministry (Library/Zoom)--10:30 am

Week of December 7

Monday, December 8	Congregation Council (Library/Zoom)--7:30 pm
Wednesday, December 10	Advent Community Dinner (Fellowship Hall)--6 pm Advent Evening Prayer Service--7 pm

Week of December 14

Tuesday, December 16	Good Grub and God--7 pm Young Adult Christmas Party--7 pm
Wednesday, December 17	Quilting Group (Fellowship Hall)--9 am Blue Christmas Dinner (Fellowship Hall)--6 pm Blue Christmas Service--7 pm
Friday, December 19	Living Nativity and Bake Sale--6 pm Songs of the Season Concert--7:30 pm

Week of December 21

Wednesday, December 24	Christmas Eve Services--4 (family friendly), 6, & 8 pm
Thursday, December 25	Christmas Day Service--10 am Church Office Closed
Friday, December 26	Church Office Closed

Week of December 28

Sunday, December 28	Lessons and Carols--10 am
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**Minutes: November 10, 2025, Meeting of Congregation Council
RLC Library and via Zoom**

Council Members Present in Person: Annabelle Allard; Steve Bott, Treasurer; Pastor Sharon Core, Interim Pastor; Lee Cronin; Sabine Detweiler, Vice-President; Sarah Getter; Victoria Johnson; Karen Miller, President; Tyler Posey

Council Members Attending via Zoom: None

Council Members Excused: Chris Hernadi, Secretary; Megan Kratz; Lena Martikainen, Gene Morrow

Council Members Absent: None

Council Meeting Guests: Linda McConnaughay, director of Redeemer Renaissance Preschool and After-School; Rob Wenk

Call to order. Karen Miller called the meeting to order at 7:33.

Opening Devotions. Pastor Core led opening devotions with a question posed via email in advance of the meeting: How is it we have come to include participation in a faith community as a way to spend our time and energy?

Pastor Core opened the discussion by explaining that she finds it important to engage in conversation with the leaders of local congregations and to get a sense of what draws them to being an active participant in a faith community. Members of Council spoke about what draws them personally to participate in church life. Pastor Core wrapped up the discussion by reminding Council that these considerations are important to keep in mind as the church begins the work of determining whom to call as the next pastor.

Approval of Minutes. Minutes from the meeting were previously approved by email.

Adoption of Agenda. The agenda, as emailed in advance of the meeting, was approved by the Council.

Discussion and Approval Item: Redeemer Renaissance Budgets

Linda McConnaughay presented and explained details about both the preschool and after-school budgets.

Preschool had a small deficit last year. For the proposed budget for 2026/27, headcount was not adjusted down. There is no tuition increase in the proposed budget 2026/27.

The after-school program is seeing large demand. Kids are bused from four local FCPS schools in the area. The 2024/25 school year showed a substantial surplus, and this trend is expected to continue. The proposed budget 2026/27 shows a small increase in tuition.

A deficit in the preschool program can be balanced by a surplus in the after-school program, if necessary, even if budgets are prepared separately.

There was discussion of plans to create a new financial construct that would allow for a roll-up report of both budgets for easier reference of how the Redeemer Renaissance program is doing overall. This will require substantial work, so the goal would be to start showing those figures beginning next fiscal year if the plan is pursued.

Rob Wenk pointed out that since Linda took over the combined programs four years ago it has been more customer-oriented resulting in healthy financials for Redeemer Renaissance overall. He praised Linda for this achievement. Sarah Getter made a motion to approve the budget; Sabine Detweiler seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Item: Redeemer Renaissance Board Meeting Summary.

Sarah Getter reported that the Redeemer Renaissance Board meeting took place on October 27. As in the previous discussion (above) led by Linda, the Board focused on the issues raised in connection with the budget.

The next Redeemer Renaissance Board meeting will take place in January. At that time, necessary changes to the Charter will be discussed.

Executive Committee Summary. The Executive Committee met on November 5 and talked about the items on tonight's agenda, in particular the budget and transition team work.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Steve Bott presented the 2025 Financial Summary through October 31. As in previous months, the financials show that expenses exceeded receipts. Including the October numbers, the shortfall amounts to \$95,000. Steve compared the financials for the last 10 years and found that between 24% and 30% of the year's contributions had been made in last two months of the year. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to believe that this year's November and December contributions will make up for the current deficit.

Council agreed that Steve, in conjunction with the Stewardship Ministry, will prepare a message for the announcements on Sunday, November 23 asking for contributions considering the current shortfall. In December, Stewardship Ministry may send a letter to all members with the request to prayerfully consider contributing to close the gap before year-end.

Discussion and Approval Item: Budget Process-Synod Contribution.

Karen Miller reported that every year, Redeemer makes a contribution to the Synod to support the Synod's work and ministries. Over the years, the contributions have increased slightly every year. Last year, the contribution amounted to \$74,000, a \$2000 increase over the previous year.

Council discussed what contribution amount would be appropriate. An increase of 2.7 % would amount to a contribution of \$76,000. It was agreed that it would be helpful to have a better idea of how the Synod uses the money it receives. Karen will look into obtaining more information for future decisions.

Tyler Posey made a motion to budget a synod contribution of \$76,000. Annabelle Allard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Item: Budget Process – Committee Budget and 2026 Pledge Requests.

Rob Wenk and Steve Bott are currently working on compiling the budget for the coming fiscal year. Council will have the opportunity to review and discuss the budget in the January Council meeting.

Council discussed Redeemer's culture in connection with pledge requests and what can be done to encourage members to submit pledges. In the past, Stewardship Ministry has requested that members submit pledge forms in January for the year ahead, but few members responded and there was little follow-up to encourage greater participation.

It appears that other church communities are more rigorous in pursuing the submission of pledges. Council agreed that it would be helpful to have more clarity on contributions over the course of the year for budgeting purposes, especially with the current shortfall in contributions and because Redeemer will have the additional commitment of mortgage payments in connection with the construction project starting early 2026. The timing of pledge requests was also raised. It would make sense to send out pledge requests in the fall, so the information is available for the budget.

Tyler Posey will take the discussion – more pledge commitments, change in timing - to the Stewardship Ministry.

Discussion Item: Transition Team Nomination form and Outreach to Potential Participants.

Karen Miller gave Council an update on transition team nominations. The Transition Team Nomination form was published. Communication and a link to the form were included in the weekly announcements/bulletin, and printed forms are available in the Crossroads.

Karen Miller and Sabine Detweiler will do a short Temple talk at the services this coming Sunday to raise awareness.

Discussion and Approval Item: Bishop Hirsch Visit February 15 – Donation to Bishop Discretionary Fund.

Karen Miller informed Council that Bishop Hirsch will visit Redeemer and preach at the services on February 15, 2026. Bishop Hirsch does not expect payment for his involvement. Congregations that would like to provide a gift to the Bishop Discretionary fund are welcome to do so.

Karen Miller made a motion to donate \$250 to the Bishop Discretionary Fund. Tyler Posey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Item: Constitutional Updates.

Karen Miller reported on upcoming updates to Redeemer's Constitution. In August 2025, an ELCA Churchwide Assembly took place in which changes to the model constitution for congregations were made. Redeemer is required to incorporate these changes into its Constitution. They will be presented to the congregation in the next congregational meeting in February 2026.

Council will take this opportunity to address several other (optional) constitutional changes, where the language of the Constitution has not been clear on certain processes or timing.

Karen will solicit team membership to discuss and incorporate the required and proposed changes. An updated draft of the Constitution will be sent to the congregation for review ahead of the February congregational meeting.

Discussion Item: Youth Representative for 2026

A Youth Representative to serve on Council is needed for next year when Victoria Johnson's term comes to an end. Karen Miller will reach out to Kim Wenk for suggestions.

Discussion Item: Rise Against Hunger Summary.

The Rise Against Hunger meal packaging event at Redeemer on Saturday, November 8 was a great success. 213,000 meals were packaged.

Thank you to Roberta, Rob and Kim Wenk as well as Mike and Kate Forrer, who worked tirelessly before, during and after the event to make it all run smoothly.

Discussion Item: Supply Scheduling during Pastor Core's Scheduled Leave.

Karen Miller reported that during Pastor Core's vacation (January 25 – February 13, 2026) Pastor John Teitman and Pastor Amy Feira will be available as supply pastors and that all dates are covered.

Ministry Reports: Various

●Personnel Committee: Pastor Core reported on behalf of the Personnel Committee that the committee met to review the job descriptions for several members of staff. The job descriptions were adjusted to align with the reality of the staff's workload and the work they actually perform. The new job descriptions will be discussed with the relevant members of the staff and in one case in connection with their performance review.

●Youth Activities Planning: Youth Representative Victoria Johnson briefed Council on youth activities. Victoria and Grace Howie represented Redeemer at the Youth Synod meeting that recently took place. Other upcoming youth activities include the Youth Synod Retreat in November and Youth Earth Day in April 2026. Victoria discussed how the church might recruit more kids to serve on the Youth Leadership team. She will talk to kids who participate in the High School "Bagels & Bible" Class on Sunday mornings.

New Business: None

Prior E-mail Discussion and Approval Item: Endowment Grant for Rise Against Hunger. On October 19, Karen Miller emailed the Council the motion made by Gene Morrow of the Endowment Committee to approve a \$2,000 grant to Rise Against Hunger, supporting this year's food packaging event on November 8, 2025.

The motion was approved unanimously by Council via email.

Prior E-mail Discussion and Approval Item: Redeemer Renaissance Board. On October 22, Karen Miller made the motion via email that the Council approve the slate of candidates for the Redeemer Renaissance Board:

- Augustenborg, Denise, Member
- Hanson, Paige, Member
- Lamb, Kate, Secretary
- Magnuson, Josh, Chair
- Magnuson, Laura, Member
- Rodriguez, Luis, Member
- Wenk, Kim, Member
- Getter, Sarah, Ex-officio, Council Liaison
- Pastor Sharon Core, Ex-officio, Member
- McConnaughay, Linda, Ex-officio, Member
- McNair, Katrina, Ex-officio, Member
- Miller, Karen, Ex-officio, Member

It was confirmed in the email that all candidates met minimum eligibility requirements in the Constitution.

The motion was approved unanimously by Council via email.

Close with Prayer and adjourn at 9:25

Upcoming Dates:

Youth Synod Retreat, November 21 – 23, 2025

Executive Committee, November 25, 2025

Next Meeting of Council, December 8, 2025

Construction Project Updates from November

The recent construction activity in the education wing includes: interior painting, exterior painting, rooftop HVAC unit start-up, closet lights added, new ceiling tiles installed, replacement door frames installed, AC unit window glass replaced, conference room dry wall hung, and new desks for the office staff ordered. We are on schedule for county inspections in early December, which are needed for an occupancy permit and turnover.

When construction finishes in the education wing, the office wing will then be closed and the pastor and the staff will be moved into the renovated classrooms as their temporary work locations. Once the office wing construction is finished, the staff will then move back into their renovated offices. This second phase of construction will also include the renovation of the bathrooms and hallways by the office entrance. Signs will be posted to direct people through the location changes.

In the renovated and improved rooms in the education wing, we will have new cabinet and drawer storage spaces. If your ministry team needs additional storage at the church, please send an email to church@redeemermclean.org and describe what kind of space your ministry is looking for. We will evaluate all the requests that are received and will try to allocate the new space in the fairest way possible. While some space will be available late December, other spaces will become available in the spring.

Redeemer's Capital Campaign for our building renovation and construction of a columbarium and improved playground areas has received 49% (\$1.56M) of the pledges needed towards our goal of \$3.2M. Plus, an additional 7% (\$232K) has been given directly and outside of the pledge process. Making a gift toward the campaign is a great opportunity to honor someone important to you and your family or to just give thanks for all the blessings in your life. Of course, all financial gifts are gratefully received and appreciated, with or without a pledge.

As you think about how you can support Redeemer's renovation and improvement plans, please consider one of the tax-advantaged giving options. The giving of appreciated stocks or mutual funds will help minimize your capital gain taxes. Also, the giving of an IRA's required minimum distributions (RMDs) can also lower your taxable income. See Redeemer's website under the additional "[Giving](#)" heading for more information. This is an option for your regular planned end-of-year giving to the church too.

Reflections from Metro D.C. Synod Middle/High School Event

On November 21, five of our youth and two chaperones attended a Metro D.C. Synod weekend event in Maryland. Their experiences included fellowship, small group study, service projects, and more. Please enjoy a few reflections from those who attended below:

Anna

Personally, I have been on a couple of church retreats but the synod one we just attended was one of my favorites. It was interesting to spend the weekend with kids from the Metro DC area as well as the Maryland-Delaware Synod. The way this retreat worked was that each day we met at least once with the large group, which was all the age groups from every church, then, we would meet with our small group that consisted of around 10 kids that were in the same grade as us. One of my favorite parts of this retreat was the small group time because it gave us the chance to connect with people our age who were in similar situations. It was nice to build friendships with teens from all over the region, not just from Virginia. In my group, the message we focused on this weekend was how everyone has their own individual strengths and weaknesses. While we all contribute something different, we can still come together for a similar purpose. We also talked about how God has a plan for all of us and though we may not know exactly what that plan looks like right now, we need to trust that he has our best intentions in his heart and that everything will work out as it should when the time is right.

Something that our church does every night on trips like these is talk about where each of us saw and heard God. Throughout this whole retreat, I saw God through the youth leaders, who did an amazing job organizing and carrying out this retreat. I talked with many of them, and I could tell how devoted they were to helping others grow their faith. It was powerful to see people my age making a difference. I heard God through the testimonies that were shared on the last day, when two kids spoke about their faith journey over the years and their relationship with God. Their stories were incredibly impactful and left a meaningful impression on me.

I am grateful for getting the chance to attend this retreat and would love to go again in the future if the opportunity presents itself. I would also like to thank Kim Wenk and Karen Miller for being amazing adult supervisors, and the other youth for making this such a memorable weekend!

Ella

In my opinion, the weekend retreat to Skycroft retreat center was amazing. I enjoyed a lot about it overall. Looking back to reflect, I can see a lot of things that I found nice for my first church retreat.

I am first grateful for the opportunity to go on this adventure with my fellow peers. I am also thankful for the amazing people who lead us in our groups and the adults guiding us through our journey through faith. I loved the band (even though we can all agree the music needed more hyping up). I loved my small group and all the amazing people that were there. I thank the fact that I made so many new companions that I hope I will see at the next retreat.

Now, I didn't want to say anything bad happened, but the food was okay. Something I would have liked knowing is what would be on the menu. The only reason why is because I didn't know what it was for most of the time. But, overall I absolutely loved the trip. I think my favorite part was the fact that there was a cat, a black cat with white feet. We called her CeCe (cabin cat). I am very excited for my next trip, whenever it will be.

Hannah

I had never gone on a church trip like this before. While some things were similar to past events, like meeting new friends and forming new relationships, other things were completely different and gave me a new perspective. Unlike other events, we were split into small groups with no one from our own church in them. At first, I was very nervous and unsure because being around familiar people is a comfort to me, and I didn't know what to expect from the group I was placed with.

However, my group ended up being full of people I will never forget. Throughout the weekend, I spent hours with them playing new games, getting to know each other, and most importantly learning that God guides us when we feel lost and is always watching over us. This trip wasn't just a fun weekend for me; it also strengthened my relationship with God.

I cannot wait for the upcoming mission trip, and thank you to everyone for your contribution!

HAPPENING AT REDEEMER

Advent-Themed Bible Study Hosted by Women's Faith Group—Open to All! Tuesdays, Starting December 2 at 9:30 am

The Women's Faith Group will host an Advent-themed study at 9:30 am on Tuesday mornings in Music Suite A at Redeemer--open to all men and women interested, in person and on Zoom. If you would like to join us, please sign up at this [link](#).

The dates this study will meet are December 2, 9, 16, and 23.

Redeemer Renaissance Preschool & After-School Open House December 4

Join us on Thursday, December 4 from 10:30 to 11:30 am or 5:30 to 6:30 pm for an Open House showcasing all Redeemer Renaissance has to offer! Classes for 2's, 3's, and 4's are offered morning and all-day classes.

Registration for the 2026-2027 School Year will begin in January of 2026.

For questions or more information, please call 703-365-3567.



The poster for the Redeemer Renaissance Preschool & After-School Open House features a blue tree logo with the text "REDEEMER Renaissance PRESCHOOL & AFTER-SCHOOL" above it. A QR code is in the top right corner. The main text reads "OPEN HOUSE" in large, bold, black letters, followed by "1545 Chain Bridge Road" in blue. The event date and times are "THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4th 10:30 - 11:30 AM or 5:30 - 6:30 PM", with "2026-27 School Year Registration January 2026" in smaller text below. The program offerings "PRESCHOOL 2's, 3's & 4's" and "Mornings & All-Day" are listed in white on a blue background. At the bottom, the phone number "703-356-3567" is displayed in large white digits over a collage of photos showing children playing in a playground.

Advent Community Dinner and Midweek Vespers December 3 and 10

Please come for dinner co-hosted by Redeemer Church and Redeemer Renaissance for the congregation and preschool/afterschool families on 12/3 and 12/10 (Wednesday nights). Please invite a friend, co-worker, or neighbor, but RSVP via this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4AFA722A64-60628125-advent>

We will gather for a casual dinner and fellowship at 6pm in the Fellowship Hall. The Advent Vespers (a service of evening prayer) will begin at 7pm in the sanctuary. All are welcome to attend both or either dinner or Vespers, as your schedule permits.

Join Redeemer Renaissance Preschool and After-School at the McLean Winterfest Parade December 7

March, walk, scooter, and stroll! All are invited to join in the festivities as we support and share about all our Redeemer Renaissance ministry has to offer. We will be handing out candy canes and contact cards as we greet people along the parade route! Meet at the McLean Post Office at 2:15 pm. Wear festive fashion and decorate your scooters or strollers. We hope to see you there!



Social Justice and Equity Book Club New Book December 8

The Social Justice & Equity Book Club is just finishing up *Mad Honey* by Jody Picoult and Jennifer Finney Boylan and will be starting a new book on December 8, *Horse* by Geraldine Brooks (author of *March*, a Pulitzer Prize winner). Anyone is welcome to join us and this would be a good time to do so! We meet every Monday via zoom @ 7:30pm - 8:30pm and will be taking a Christmas break the two Mondays before and after Christmas. Please contact [Teresa Schellenger](#) for more info.

Good Beginnings at Redeemer Renaissance Preschool
Outdoor Classes for Ages 1.5 and older with Caregiver
December 9–9:30 am

Come and play! This outdoor-play program for toddlers and caregivers to enjoy together promotes a sense of wonder, discovery, and exploration while providing a fun introduction to preschool. Children will build their first friendships and work with new materials as they engage in open-ended play in a safe, developmentally appropriate environment. During exploratory play, caregivers will have the opportunity to discuss topics of interest and create bonds that will help them navigate the early childhood years and beyond.

The class is offered on the following dates: Dec. 9, Jan. 13 & 27, Feb. 10 & 24, Mar. 10 & 24, April 7 & 21, and May 5 & 19.

Register [online](#) or call 703-356-3567 for more information.



GOOD BEGINNINGS
at Redeemer Renaissance Preschool

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AGES	TUITION
Children 1.5 years and older may enroll and attend with a parent or caregiver.*	\$350/child/15 Class Sessions
TUESDAYS at 9:30 AM	
October 14 & 28 November 18 & 25 December 9 January 13 & 27	February 10 & 24 March 10 & 24 April 7 & 21 May 5 & 19

REGISTER online or call 703-356-3567 for more information.

Good Beginnings will take place outdoors in small groups and space will be limited.
*Children must be 1.5 years old by Good Beginnings start date.

REDEEMER

Good Grub and God
December 16–7 pm

What is Good Grub and God? It is a night out in a local restaurant for adults for a good meal, fellowship, and a discussion on some aspect of our faith.

Come solo or bring a friend, co-worker, or partner, but come enjoy getting to spend time together.

We meet at the restaurant at 7 pm. You are welcome to come as often as your schedule allows. Each month someone will be the "host". Being the host requires no preparation or skills; you get to pick the restaurant and the topic for discussion.

If you would like to come, please sign up [here](#). You can sign up as late as the day before; we just want to be sure that we have enough seats for everyone.

Blue Christmas Dinner and Prayer Service
December 17

Blue Christmas is a special service that brings hope and comfort to those who find the holidays to be difficult. The service is not restricted to those who have suffered losses but is also a meaningful way to prayerfully end the day with hope. It is a powerful service and we encourage you to invite family, friends, and neighbors to attend as well. It will be held on Wednesday, December 17, at 7 pm. It will be preceded by a dinner in Fellowship Hall that will start at 6 pm. RSVP at this [link](#) to attend the dinner.

Living Nativity and Christmas Concert December 19

All are welcome and invited to enjoy the sounds of the season and the excitement of live animals in the crèche on Friday, December 19th at Redeemer's Living Nativity and Christmas Concert. This is a Redeemer tradition that the entire community looks forward to and attends. Please invite the community--your family, neighbors, coworkers, and friends!

Come to the manger! Experience the wonder and joy at the Living Nativity!

- The Living Nativity is from 6 to 8 pm. The event is all outside, so dress warm! Children (and adults!) love to visit the live animals, and maybe pet a bunny or baby lamb! Hot Chocolate will be served outside.

Come to the Christmas concert!

- At 7:30 pm everyone is invited inside to experience a concert of our many choirs--adult, youth, and bell choirs. People of all ages are welcome to sing along with favorite Christmas carols.

Visit the Bake Sale and buy something yummy!

- The Bake Sale will feature homemade baked goods. All proceeds will go to support the Britepaths Food4Thought program which supplies "weekend food packs" to local students in need.

There are many opportunities to participate in this wonderful night. Please sign up to volunteer:

- To serve hot chocolate, usher for the concert, or greet in the lobby, [sign up here](#).
- To bake for the bake sale, [sign up here](#).

Young Adult Group

Young adults are invited to attend our regular meetings at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9 pm. This group is open to those between the ages of 19 to 39-ish, but if you feel you are a young adult, you are welcome to attend! This group is a partnership between Redeemer, Lewinsville, and Immanuel Presbyterian Church. For more information, please contact [Grace Howie](#).

Next Meeting:

- **December 16** – Christmas Party, location TBD

Winter Retreat – January 16 to 18, 2026

Signup Deadline December 14

The Young Adult Winter Retreat to Massanutten, VA, is January 16-18, 2026. The retreat will be a time of fun, fellowship, and faith-building. Our time together will be filled with winter activities such as sledding and tubing, creating memories with old and new friends alike. Beyond the outdoor adventures, we'll gather for meaningful discussions and worship, deepening our relationships with each other and growing in our spiritual journeys. This retreat is not just a getaway, but a time to renew our spirits and strengthen our bonds as a community rooted in Christ's love. The cost of the retreat is \$50. If you are interested please register at this [link](#).

JOIN REDEEMER'S YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM

Do you want to help our Youth connect with God's Word through fellowship, service, worship and more?

Do you have ideas for events or programming?

Support our Youth Ministry by getting involved!

We are looking for Youth volunteers ages 12 to 18
Adult Volunteers Needed too!



Sign up at this [link](#) or by scanning the QR code

Important Dates

- **December 14** – Living Nativity Community Outreach Event
- **December 19** – Living Nativity and Bake Sale
- **December 21** – No Faith Formation
- **December 28** – No Faith Formation
- **January 11, 2026** – Youth Leadership Sunday

**For any questions or additional information, reach out to [Grace Howie](#).
For more detailed youth news, please read the Youth Newsletter.**

Christmas Worship Service Schedule

December 24 – Christmas Eve Services at 4 pm (family friendly), 6 pm, and 8 pm

December 25 – Christmas Day Service at 10 am

December 28 – Lessons and Carols at 10 am

Redeemer Renaissance Preschool and After-School Registration 2026-27 Beginning in January

It's time! Church and community families with children 1.5 – 12 years of age are welcome to register for the 2025-26 school year! Families with enrolled children returning for 2025-26 may register January 12th-16th. Waitlist Priority and new families may register January 19th – 23rd.

Program offerings promoting a sense of wonder, discovery, and exploration include a play-based curriculum with nature-based components for children to grow as happy learners. The Preschool and After-School holiday calendars align with the Fairfax County Public Schools' calendar.

- Good Beginnings Class for Toddlers and Caregivers - offered bi-weekly throughout the school year.
- 2.5 – 5-year-old Classes - offered part-time, full-time, morning only, and all day.
- K-6th After-School - daily programming including STEAM, sports, tutoring, music lessons, enrichment classes, and community building projects. Transportation provided from Churchill Road, Franklin Sherman, Haycock, and Kent Gardens elementary schools.
- K-6th Teacher Workday Special Camps – children from all schools may attend.
- Preschool and K-6th Summer Camps - children from all schools join in summertime fun with friends through games, art, workshops, and performances.

Children delight in experiencing open-ended play with peers in a safe, developmentally appropriate environment. The Creative Curriculum used by our staff engages children as they delve into topics of interest, build hands-on projects, learn new skills, and create bonds that will help them navigate their childhood years and beyond.

We can't wait to welcome you! To schedule a tour or for more information:
Preschool 703-356-3567 or After-School 703-356-3346 ext. 106



SOCIAL OUTREACH

Rise Against Hunger

McLean Community Rise Against Hunger Events would like to express its gratitude to the staff, clergy, congregation and the Endowment Committee of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer for its patience and support for the meal packaging event on November 8. Because of the generosity of time and resources from organizations, faith communities and individuals in the McLean Community, our goals were exceeded. 213,840 meals were funded and packaged by more than 1,200 volunteers. Many items were also collected for SHARE. The next event will be on November 7, 2026. It is hoped that at the 2026 event, Rise Against Hunger in McLean will top 4,000,000 meals since the first event in 2010.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Sharing God's love through hearts and hands.

Join us for fellowship and knitting or crocheting the 1st & 3rd Thursday of every month from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm in the Redeemer Library, with a virtual option.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets to knit and crochet shawls, baptismal blankets, Project Linus blankets and scarves to give to those who need a prayer, some comfort, or something warm to help in celebration. Knitters and crocheters of all skill levels are welcome, including those with no experience who want to learn to knit.

Contact Lynn Barth at lynnbarth@gmail.com for more information.

Partner for Surgery

There is a big need for pacifiers, baby socks, and travel-sized baby shampoo. These items (and more) will be packed in 80 beautiful handmade tote bags and given to kids in rural Guatemala who are undergoing life-changing surgeries to be delivered in December.

Items can be donated by:

- Placing them in the bin located in the Crossroads
- Purchasing them through the Amazon wish list using this [link](#) or the QR code.

For more information, please contact Joan Bradley at joan.bradley27@outlook.com.



Quilting Group Sewing Happiness into Every Stitch

We love what we do! The Quilting Group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, from 9:00–11:30 AM in Fellowship Hall. We're a small but mighty group on a mission to share our love of sewing and make a difference through our craft.

Who We Support: Our quilts and handmade items bring comfort and care to those in need through:

- Partner for Surgery (Guatemala) – Providing medical and surgical care in rural communities. Quilts, tote bags, and bears are hand-delivered by Frank Petersen.
- Project Linus – Supporting children in Fairfax County and beyond, including:
 - Ronald McDonald House
 - Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
 - INOVA Hospital
 - Local and national emergency response efforts
- Lutheran World Relief – Extending our reach globally with compassion.
- Redeemer – quilts for Sunrise parishioners while attending service, flannel blankets for toddler baptisms, shut-ins, or anyone else in our church family that is in need, upon request

Quilt Guidelines: We follow Project Linus sizing standards,

- Baby: 36" x 36"
- Child: 42" x 60"
- Teen: 45" x 72"

We also create fleece blankets and flannel baby blankets.

Partnering with the Prayer Shawl Group: We've teamed up with the Prayer Shawl Group to make fleece blankets for Project Linus. The Quilting Group preps the fleece, and the crocheters add a beautiful edge. Another wonderful way to get involved! For Prayer Shawl info, contact [Lynn Barth](#).

How You Can Help: We're always looking for helping hands—especially more sewers! If you can't attend in person, we'll provide you with:

- Supplies to design or sew quilt tops
- Bundled quilt kits (includes sewn top, pre-cut batting and backing, yarn and/or binding)

Other ways to support:

- Monetary donations (please designate for "Quilting Group")
- Fabric, thread, and sewing supplies

Donations help us purchase batting, fabric, thread, and other essentials.

If you are interested, please contact either [Darlene McCoy](#) or [Joyce Clarke](#).

Britepaths

Donate to the Britepaths Pantry - Help Our Neighbors Meet Basic Needs!

Britepaths provides personal hygiene and household items that are not covered by SNAP benefits and can be expensive to purchase so they can focus their funds on food. Here are the ongoing needs for the pantry hygiene and household essentials. See the list of needed items and drop-off information below.

Donate to Britepaths Pantry

- Donate via Amazon Wish List: Click [here](#) to donate supplies via Amazon that will be sent directly to Britepaths office. Please note that Amazon does not provide your contact information. To ensure you are thanked properly, please include this in your order notes.
- Donate In Person: Britepaths pantry is located in the Britepaths Fairfax office, near the intersection of Route 50 and Route 66. Donations during the hours of 10am-2pm, Monday through Friday. Closed on most major Fairfax County/federal holidays, as well as the week of Thanksgiving and the last week of the year.

Britepaths address: 3959 Pender Drive, Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22030; Phone: 703.273.8829

Please get in touch with Britepaths to coordinate a drop-off day and time in advance. They will meet you in the parking lot to collect your donation. Phone 703.273.8829 or email info@britepaths.org to coordinate the time and date of your delivery.

PLEASE NOTE: Britepaths is no longer accepting food donations and is focusing on pantry hygiene and household essentials. They cannot use items that have been opened or repackaged. Personal hygiene items and cleaning supplies should be packaged in regular-sized containers to facilitate easy distribution throughout the household. For hygiene donations, full-sized (versus sample-sized) are preferred. They also have an ongoing need for reusable grocery bags.

Greatest Needs

- Laundry detergent
- Toilet paper
- Shampoo/conditioner/2-in-1/shampoo for textured hair
- Deodorant
- Body wash
- Feminine hygiene products (pads/tampons)

On-Going Needs

- Dental hygiene: Toothpaste, toothbrushes (preferably one per package), floss, mouthwash
- Bar soap
- Razors
- Sponges
- Paper towels
- Diapers (all sizes)
- Diaper wipes
- All-purpose cleaning spray
- Dish soap

Little Food Pantry

Current Little Food Pantry Needs

- All food donations are welcome, but currently, the Little Food Pantry supply is especially in need of:
 - peanut butter (plastic containers only)
 - oatmeal packets
 - hearty soups/stews
 - canned vegetables (not black or pinto beans)
 - breakfast bars.
- Volunteers are needed to help regularly restock the LFP with food that has already been collected. Contact Paula Green at pegreen@verizon.net for more information.
- Thrivent members – did you know you can apply for (2) \$250 grants each year for great causes like the LFP? Contact your Thrivent rep for more details.



PASTOR AND STAFF OF REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

Interim Senior Pastor	Pastor Sharon Core	ext. 102	sharon@redeermclean.org
Bell Choir Director	Waka Osifchin		waka.soprano@gmail.com
Director of Music	Matt Osifchin		mosifchi@hotmail.com
Director of Afterschool	Linda McConnaughay	ext. 106	lmconnaughay@redeermclean.org
Director of Preschool	Katrina McNair	ext. 111	preschool@redeermclean.org
Evening Facility Host	Brian Doyle		
Executive Director of Redeemer Renaissance	Linda McConnaughay	ext. 106	lmconnaughay@redeermclean.org
Facilities Director	Bill Parks	ext. 110	bparks@redeermclean.org
Financial Coordinator	Sara Nail	ext. 103	sara@redeermclean.org
Nursery Care	Bernarda Rodriguez Lusbi Pina		
Office Manager	Cynthia Finocchiaro	ext. 101	cynthia@redeermclean.org
Organist	Joy Mentzel		joymentzel@gmail.com
Pianist	Kathy Detwiler		
Youth & Communications Coordinator	Grace Howie	ext. 105	grace@redeermclean.org
Youth Choir Director	Waka Osifchin		waka.soprano@gmail.com

CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS

President	Karen Miller
Vice President	Sabine Detweiler
Secretary	Chris Hernadi
Treasurer	Steve Bott

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Annabelle Allard
Lee Cronin
Sarah Getter
Megan Kratz
Lena Martikainen
Gene Morrow
Tyler Posey
And a Youth Representative