

TIDINGS Newsletter

Redeemer Lutheran Church
1545 Chain Bridge Road
McLean, VA 22101

Vol. 71 No. 5
May 2026



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

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**A Message from
Pastor Sharon Core**



**Togetherness
May 2026**

Siblings in Christ,

As I write this, I am preparing for a week with my clergy colleagues. Roundtable is a group of clergy women who have been meeting for over 25 years. Some of us are nearing retirement and others have been ordained but a few years. We cover the country from California to Connecticut and all places in between. We are solo pastors, associate pastors, heads of staff and denominational leaders. These women are my people.

When we are together we share lectionary and sermon ideas, engage in theological conversation, ask for advice about workplace conundrums, recount the latest book we've read that everyone should read. We share what has happened in our lives over the past year and we pray for each other. We laugh a lot, eat good food, and attempt to solve the problems of the world. It is one of the best weeks of my life.

The reality of ordained ministry is that it is hard work—joyful work, yes—and hard work. We live in a time when religious leaders and communities are viewed with suspicion. Some have been weaponized. Some consider matters of faith irrelevant. Within denominations, you can find in-fighting. Some communities find it hard to stay together or figure out how to talk about issues that can divide us.

To be a leader in faith communities now requires skills and habits that were not taught in seminary—conflict resolution, appreciative inquiry, coaching, community exegesis, boundary keeping. And some that were taught now seem outdated—don't get me started on "Church Administration". It is important for me to have a group of people "in the same boat" shall we say—ones who understand and are experiencing the current landscape, ones who know the vocabulary, ones who don't need tons of backstory and explanation in order to see the situation at hand.

My star word for 2026 is togetherness. The word is not in the bible in this form. There is a lot of "together"--disciples together, people together, God with people together. As I read through some of the occurrences, I am brought back to Roundtable. We are together; we share together; we pray together; we stay together (we have a very active text thread!). I experience my word in their midst and I am grateful.

As you think about your own life, the places God takes you on a daily basis, the ways in which God invites you to interact with others, who are your people? Who are the ones who encourage you, listen to you, laugh with you? Who are the ones with whom you are together?

Blessings,
Pastor Sharon



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Traditional worship services at 8:30 am and 11:00 am
Contemporary worship service at 9:45 am
Faith Formation, Confirmation, and High School classes– 9:45 am
Table Talk (Adult Class in Conference Room) – 9:45 am

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sundays	Youth Choir Rehearsal (Music Suite B) – 10:55 am
Mondays	Social Justice and Equity Book Club (Zoom) – 7:30 pm
Tuesdays	Women’s Faith Group (Conference Room/Zoom) – 9:30 am
Thursdays	Bible Study (Zoom) – 8:00 am Bell Choir Rehearsal (Music Suite A) – 7:00 pm Traditional Choir Practice (Music Suite B) – 7:45 pm

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Week of May 3

Wednesday, May 6

Quilting Group (Fellowship Hall) – 9 am

Thursday, May 7

Congregation Council Meeting (Conference Room) – 4:45 pm

Friday, May 8

Prayer Shawl Ministry (Conference Room/Zoom) – 10:30 am

Redeemer Renaissance Process Art Show – 6 pm

Week of May 10

Sunday, May 10

Youth Leadership Sunday

Monday, May 11

Young Adult Group – 7 pm

Saturday, May 16

Congregation Council Meeting (Conference Room/Zoom) – 7:30 pm

McLean Day

Week of May 17

Sunday, May 17

Last Day of Faith Formation and Confirmation

Tuesday, May 19

Redeemer’s Annual Music Recital – 2 pm

Wednesday, May 20

Good Grub and God Dinner – 7 pm

Thursday, May 21

Quilting Group (Fellowship Hall) – 9 am

Prayer Shawl Ministry (Conference Room/Zoom) – 10:30 am

Week of May 24

Monday, May 25

Church Office Closed

**Minutes: April 13, 2026, Meeting of Congregation Council
RLC Conference Room**

Council Members Present in Person: Steve Bott, Treasurer; David Broderdorf; Pastor Sharon Core; Lee Cronin; Sabine Detweiler, Vice President; Sara Egeland; Chris Hernadi, Secretary; Gene Morrow; Tyler Posey

Council Members Attending via Phone: Annabelle Allard

Council Members Absent Excused: Karen Miller, President; Megan Kratz; Anna

Council Meeting Guests:

Call to order. Sabine Detweiler is presiding over the meeting in Karen Miller's absence. Sabine called the meeting to order at 7:35

Opening Devotions. Pastor Core led devotions with a reading from Matthew 28:1-10. Council discussed the notion of experiencing "fear and great joy" in light of both the Resurrection and our daily lives. The discussion ended with an invitation to consider this notion as a way to view the world even past the Easter holiday. Pastor Core concluded with prayer.

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.

Executive Committee Summary. The Executive Committee met on April 8 and talked about the items on tonight's agenda.

Discussion Item: General Updates from Pastor Core. Pastor Core reported on plans to induct new members and to hold Baptism and First Communion services throughout the Spring. She added that it's a sign of strength in a Congregation to be able to hold such events, even more so during a period of being "in between" pastors.

Pastor Core also shared input she had received from individual members and prompted a conversation within Council on the importance of centering on shared, Scripture-based values when acknowledging or discussing governmental issues and global events.

Pastor Core noted that the move back into the Administration wing of the building will likely occur in mid-May.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Steve Bott presented the 2026 Financial Summary through March 31, which was made available via email prior to the meeting. It was reported that Redeemer has a surplus of \$10,171 as of March 31, primarily due to the \$10,000 surplus carried forward from 2025. When comparing our current status to our position at this same time last year, Steve advised that we should expect a deficit by the end of April.

Discussion Item: Transition Team Progress. Sabine Detweiler reported that topic-specific small group discussions will be ongoing through the end of April and possibly extending through early May. Meetings have been focused, spirited, and productive. Pastor Core reiterated that the purpose of these meetings is to provide the opportunity to exchange insights and share perspectives on Redeemer's customs and practices instead of assembling a checklist for the incoming pastor. The work of the Transition Committee will end in May and be resumed by the Call Committee at that time.

Discussion Item: Nominating Team for Call Committee. Sabine Detweiler reported that the members of the nominating team for the Call Committee are as follows:

- Matt Kratz
- Ellen Kennedy
- Sabine Detweiler
- Gene Morrow

Candidates for the Call Committee must be approved by the Congregation at a full meeting. Sabine noted that the current plan is to hold the meeting between services on May 17. Per Redeemer's governing documents, the meeting will be announced two weeks prior, on May 3 and again on May 10. The bios of the Call Committee candidates will be sent via email along with the call for the meeting.

Discussion Item: Stewardship Update. Pastor Core remarked that the Stewardship Committee is “rocking.” They gathered in March and discussed the stewardship of finances at Redeemer, which over the years has received less focus than the stewardship of time or talent. For this year the aim of the committee will be to reframe stewardship to encourage people to reflect on the financial resources they have been given and how they are being called to share those resources with the church. Pastor Core placed further emphasis on understanding financial stewardship as a spiritual journey, supported by examples from Scripture.

In the Council discussion, it was noted that a degree of complacency may exist—the belief that a “Christmas miracle” will resolve any financial shortfalls and that stewardship is simply “working.” Council agreed that it was therefore important to develop new strategies to ensure that financial stewardship is performing as effectively as it should.

Discussion Item: Synod Assembly Attendance. It was noted that Redeemer is allotted 7 attendees, plus one individual who is a person of color or non-native English speaker, at the annual DC Synod Assembly in June. The proposed slate of attendees includes the seven individuals listed below:

- Karen Miller
- Annabelle Allard
- Harold Hofstad
- Josh Magnusen
- Matt Kratz
- Ellie McGuire
- David Broderdorf

Tyler Posey made the motion to approve the slate of attendees. Steve Bott seconded the motion. The slate of attendees was approved unanimously by Council.

Discussion Item: McLean Day 2026. It was noted that Redeemer has not yet selected a coordinator for McLean Day 2026 and that a booth is still available at no cost. After discussion, the Council proposed that Redeemer offer its designated booth to Redeemer Renaissance. Pastor Core agreed to follow up with Linda McConnaughay regarding the matter.

Redeemer will continue to offer parking for McLean Day. Mark Cronin will oversee the hospitality table in the parking lot. SHARE will also host a table in Redeemer’s parking area.

Discussion Item: Youth Topics. Anna reported via email in advance of the meeting that the Youth Ministry Team, along with Grace Howie, is organizing more events to get the youth involved, starting out with family events like a movie night. However, Anna noted there isn't an available time to schedule these until the summer.

Annabelle Allard reported on current plans to add new members to the team to promote Christian Education at Redeemer, both for Faith Formation and Christian Education for adults.

Announcement: Night Host Position. Steve Bott reported that the position of Night Host has been filled by Robert Swigart. He began the position on April 13.

Discussion Item: Donation to Redeemer. Council brainstormed ways to allocate recently received non-restricted donations. Ideas include:

- Tithing 10%
- Apply a portion to the cost of the building project
- A dedication plaque at the gazebo
- Create a “vision fund” for things we don’t yet know about

A decision will be made as more details about the donation become available.

Ministry Reports: Congregational Life. Lee Cronin and Sara Egeland noted opportunities for reestablishing lunch groups and extending invitations to join existing dinner groups.

New Business: None.

Close with Prayer and adjourn at 8:55.

Upcoming Dates:

- Transition Team Meetings April 19, April 26
- Executive Committee May 5, 2026
- Next Meeting of Council May 11, 2026

Construction Project Updates from April

The recently completed construction activity in the office wing includes painting the walls and door frames, laying new tile in hallways, installing new fixtures and tile in the restrooms, hanging the new office and hallway doors, finishing the electrical work and lighting, installing carpet in the offices, and adding a new doorway at the office entrance for improved building security.

Shortly, we will be wrapping up the construction in the office wing. Part of this process will be inspections from the county on electrical, mechanical, plumbing and life safety systems. Once we can occupy the space, we will start to move the pastor and staff from the classroom wing back into their renovated offices. In the meantime, during the workday Monday – Friday, continue to use the temporary member and visitor’s entrance at Door #15 on the Chain Bridge Road side of the building, unless you have been issued a door fob in which case you can use the original office entrance at Door #10.

Later in the year when we break ground for the new Columbarium, additional information will be distributed on how to reserve and purchase a niche. Individual niches will be able to hold one or two urns containing ashes. The internal size of a niche is 11.5” x 11.5” x 11.5”. Therefore, when selecting an urn for a loved one, please note these dimensions and what size of an urn or urns will fit into the space. The outside of the niche will have a granite cover plate with one or two engraved names and dates.

We are still in need of additional support for our Capital Campaign to fund Redeemer’s renovation and improvement plans; please consider one of the tax advantaged giving options. The gifting of appreciated stocks or mutual funds will help minimize your capital gain taxes. Also, the gifting 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 giving to the church too.

HAPPENING AT REDEEMER

Transition Team Update

Grace and Peace to you siblings in Christ. We are excited to share with you the progress we've made in our journey of discovery, give you a forecast of what to expect next, and encourage patience as we finish our work.

Our original mission remains, provide a transparent and complete picture of our Congregation, clearly identifying our values and character, to facilitate development of our mission site profile (MSP) to aid an elected Call Committee in our search for a permanent Pastor. As we articulated in January and February through Temple Talk and a presentation during the Annual Meeting, we've evolved to meet the challenge of identifying who we are and where God is guiding us to the future.

Our methodology is aligned with best practices. We are combining the overall master survey with smaller group sessions and following up with topic sessions identified in both the master survey and small group sessions. Following the initial data analysis and significant data coding efforts of our team (over 150 hours), we were able to build four focused sessions held in March and April. We used the results of those in-person sessions and the data from both the questions in the survey to identify two final sessions. The first focused on worship topics was conducted Sunday April 19th, and the second focused on Youth and Youth Programming held on Sunday April 26th.

You can expect us to stick with our current timeline, where we will analyze and report on the data collected in a summary report to the Church Council and the Congregation by mid-May, and hand off the information to support the Call Committee in late May. The mission we were charged with at the end of 2025 is coming closer to conclusion. Soon we'll be ready to move to the Call phase. It has been an honor and exciting for the Team to be on this journey of discovery with you. It has been our goal to provide you, the Congregation with the best information we can, presented in the clearest manner possible, so that we can, together, continue to forge our path!

We, Sam, Bonnie, Johannes, Tricia, and Jason, have worked diligently to realize Paul's exhortation, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" in pursuing completeness, objectivity, and discipline in the transition endeavor. We look forward to sharing with you our results when we have completed our stated purpose and plan!

Young Adult Group May 11– 7 pm

Young adults are invited to attend our regular meetings on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9 pm.

- **May 11- We will be going to** Level 99 (<https://www.level99.com/visit?loc=tysons-va>) in Tysons. Please RSVP to grace@redeemermclean.org by May 8 so tickets can be purchased in advance.

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 Sweeney](#).

Stewardship at Redeemer

Stewardship is....

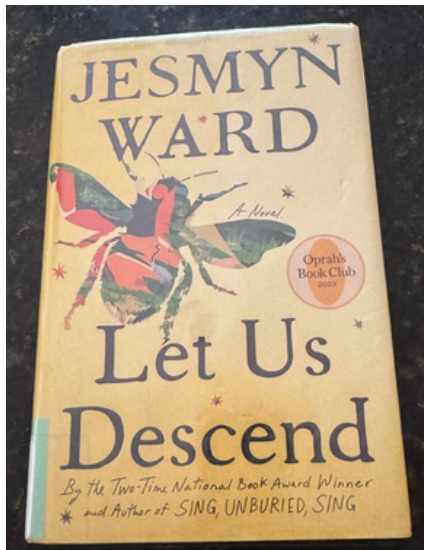
the celebration of our growing building,
delight in the congregation engaging in the process of understanding who we are as we plan to call a new pastor,
and encouraging one another to live our mission to share Christ's love with the greatest number of people.

It is an exciting time! Once again, we thank you for your ongoing generosity of giving. Following is a snapshot of our current financial picture as of the end of March 2026.

Current year through 3.31.26			
	Actual	Budget	Budget Variance
Total Receipts*	\$ 277,711.00	\$ 290,113.00	\$ (12,402.00)
Total Expenses	\$ 267,540.00	\$ 290,113.00	\$ 22,573.00
Over (Under)	\$ 10,171.00		\$ 10,171.00
*Includes \$10,000 roll-over from 2025			

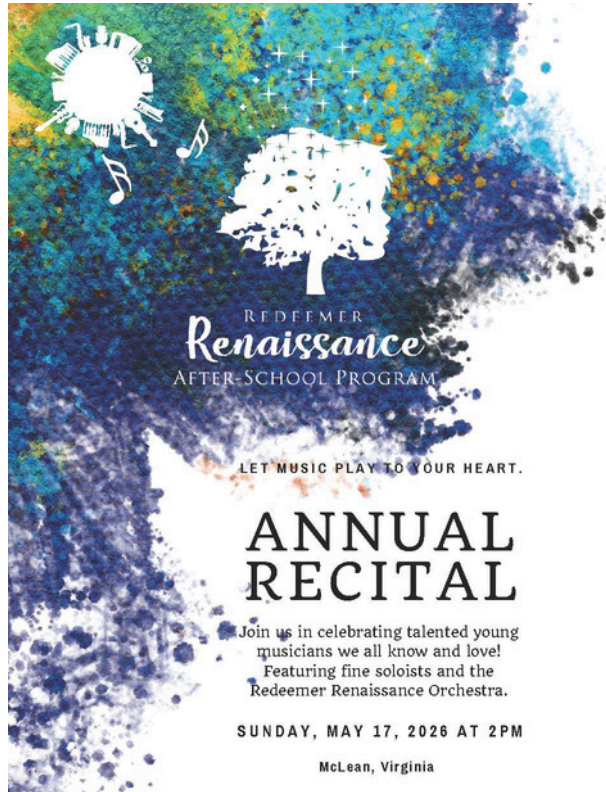
Social Justice and Equity Book Club

Check out the The Social Justice & Equity Book Club's lending cart in the crossroads! Please feel free to borrow any book but please remember to return it to the cart for others to read:) The group just finished another great book *Beloved* by Toni Morrison and a discussion on a variety of poems and essay and started a new book on April 27 - *Let Us Descend: A Novel* by Jesmyn Ward. Anyone is welcome to join us and this would be a good time to do so! We meet every Monday via Zoom @ 7:30 pm-8:30 pm. Please contact [Teresa Schellenger](#) for more information.



**Redeemer's Annual Music Recital
May 17 – 2 pm**

Join us in celebrating talented young musicians we all know and love! Featuring fine soloists and the Redeemer Renaissance Orchestra.



Youth

**Redeemer Renaissance Preschool
Register Today!**

Preschool offers classes and extended day options for children aged 1.5–5 years old. Explore summer camps for 3–5-year-olds!

Registration for the 2026-2027 School Year is currently open!

For questions or to learn more information about all Redeemer Renaissance has to offer, please call 703-365-3567. We can't wait to welcome you!

**Take-Home Service Project for April
Placemats for Sunrise of McLean Village
Return by May 3**

Our April Service Project created placemats for Sunrise of McLean Village. Please return your completed placemat to the bin in Crossroads by May 3, thank you!

Process Art Show
May 8 from 6 to 7 pm



Redeemer Renaissance
Art Show

An Interactive Process Art Exhibition
featuring
Preschool and After-School Artists

What is Process Art?
Kids of all ages need to be messy, busy bees to be OKAY...the process of creating art is joyful! Spontaneous exploration of the world affords each child the opportunity to make a meaningful connection with their environment.

- It Fosters Curiosity, Imagination, and Exploration
- It Encourages Communication and Language Development
- It Practices Good Concentration and Nurtures Future Skills
- It Promotes Physical Development
- It Supports the Ability to Play Independently

“It’s the process, not the product.”

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM
May 8, 2026



Youth Leadership Sunday
May 10

Youth Leadership Sunday is an opportunity for children to actively participate in worship services as they attend with their parents. Sign up your youth to serve as greeters, ushers, acolytes, and readers by going to this [link](#)! There are many volunteer opportunities still available.

Last Day of Faith Formation and Confirmation
May 17

The last day of Faith Formation and the Confirmation class will be May 17. Please note the High School Class will continue meeting.

**Good Beginnings at Redeemer Renaissance Preschool
Outdoor Classes for Ages 1.5 and older with Caregiver
April 7 & 21 –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: April 7 & 21, and May 5 & 19.

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

**Redeemer Renaissance Summer Camp
June 22 to August 14**

To register please visit <http://redeemerrenaissance.org/>



SOCIAL OUTREACH

Honeybaked Ham Donations for March

We provided 331 pounds of donated ham products to our community in March.

On March 5 Tyler Posey delivered 4 boxes of ham weighing 105 pounds from the Fairfax Honeybaked Ham store to So Others Might Eat.

On March 12 Steve Greanais delivered 3 boxes of ham weighing 146 pounds from Fairfax Honeybaked Ham to Rising Hope.

On March 26 Roberta Pittman delivered 3 boxes weighing 80 pounds from the Falls Church Honeybaked Ham store to Thrive DC.

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 are 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, we provide quilts, flannel blankets, tote bags, and bears for the children.
- Project Linus – Supporting children in Fairfax County and beyond, we provide them with quilts and fleece blankets.
- Redeemer – Providing parishioners with quilts during service, flannel blankets for toddler baptisms, shut-ins, pre-school/after school care, or anyone else in our church family that is in need.

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. For Prayer Shawl info, contact [Lynn Barth](#).

How You Can Help: We desperately need sewers! Either in person on Wednesdays or if you cannot attend in person, we will provide you with:

- Quilt squares already designed, and marked for sewing a quilt top
- Bundled quilt kits that include a sewn top, pre-cut batting and backing, yarn and/or binding)

Other ways to support:

- Monetary donations (please designate for "Quilting Group") to purchase batting, fabric, thread, and other essentials.
- Fabric, thread, and sewing supplies that you or someone else no longer needs/uses.

Interested? Please contact: [Darlene McCoy](#) or [Joyce Clarke](#).

Britepaths Help Our Neighbors Meet Basic Needs!

Donate to the Britepaths Pantry

- Donate Via the Amazon Wish List: [Click Here](#) to donate supplies via Amazon that will be sent directly to the Britepaths office. Please note that Amazon does not provide Britepaths contact information. To ensure you are thanked properly, please include this in your order notes.
- Donate In Person: The pantry is located in Fairfax office, near the intersection of Route 50 and Route 66. Britepaths accepts donations during the hours of 10am-2pm, Monday through Friday. The 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. Phone 703.273.8829 or email info@britepaths.org to coordinate the time and date of your delivery.

There is also 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
- Paper towels
- Diapers (all sizes)
- Diaper wipes
- All-purpose cleaning spray
- Dish soap

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	Robert Swigart		
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		
Office Manager	Cynthia Finocchiaro	ext. 101	cynthia@redeermclean.org
Organist	Joy Mentzel		joymentzel@gmail.com
Pianist	Kathy Detwiler		
Youth & Communications Coordinator	Grace Sweeney	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
David Broderdorf
Lee Cronin
Sara Egeland
Megan Kratz
Gene Morrow
Tyler Posey
And a Youth Representative