



CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

A Christian Liberation Community  
in the Episcopal Tradition

CROSSROADS



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## Holy Week At Redeemer – From Palm Sunday to Easter

Holy Week runs from April 9, Palm Sunday, through April 16, Easter. This is the time we revisit and re-enact the core truth of our faith, that though death is real, life is stronger than death. This is what Holy Week looks like at Redeemer:

Sunday, April 9 the **Palm Sunday** service begins with a blessing of the Palms and a march around the church with everyone joining in. Together we re-enact Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. The festivity is hollow for this is a parade which has a cross at the end. The Passion, describing Jesus' death, is read with different people taking various parts in the story. The preacher will be Sr. Shane Margaret. After communion the altar is stripped of all vestments. The service ends without any final blessing, with a silent recessional following a wooden cross, adorned with a barbwire circle of thorns. To leave we must pass in front of this cross. We have thus begun the journey week.

Thursday, April 13 at 6:30 pm we gather in the auditorium to begin our celebration of **Maundy Thursday**. The vestry and clergy will serve a light meal, remembering Jesus' command that we love one another. "Maundy" comes from the Latin word for "commandment." Jesus demonstrated his commandment to love one another by washing his disciples' feet. In the middle of our Maundy Thursday meal we tell stories of the Passover and the Hebrew people leaving the slavery of Egypt and of Jesus with his disciples at that Last Supper. We offer our prayers of concern and hug each other at the Peace. Next we follow the bread, wine and grape juice over into the church to stand around the stripped wooden altar placed in the middle of the choir area, with all the chairs removed. Together we bless the elements and then pass them around the circle feeding each other. When all are fed, we go out in the darkened church on one of the empty pews and wait as Jesus waited in the Garden of Gethsemane. Finally, in the dark we listen to the story of Jesus in the Garden. Left in the dark, people leave when they are ready.

On **Good Friday**, April 14 at 7:30 pm begins the Good Friday service as we face the huge wooden cross and with help of a guided meditation name the broken place within us or around us. This is written down in word or symbol and then literally nailed to that wooden cross. The sound of the hammering is deafening. The service ends with our carrying this wooden cross around the Morristown Green in a candlelight procession. The cross stands outside in front of the church until Easter.

On Sunday, April 16, **Easter**, we bless the new fire and light the paschal candle. Easter flowers, fine music, white festive hangings, vestments and the sound of "alleluias" again remind us that though death is real, life is stronger than death.

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# Notes From the Right Side of the Pews... Sort of Up Toward the Front

*By The Rev. Fairbairn Powers*

I want to begin by thanking all of you for the warm welcome which you have given to Joanna Dewey and to me. It means a great deal to us to be part of this parish. Seminary professors (as Joanna has been, for much of her life) and clergy are very fussy about picking parishes, and we have sensed from our very first visit that Redeemer is a special place.

At the Vestry meeting last month, Lauren suggested that I write some notes for *Crossroads* about how your leadership and I understand the role of a non-stipendiary associate, and also a little personal information.

***Like most of you, the parish is where I come to be fed for the work I do somewhere else...***

Much of my ministry is lived out at Christ Hospital in Jersey City, where I am in charge of the Pastoral Care Department. We visit with patients and family members as they grapple with the concerns and issues that are raised by hospitalization. We also care for the staff who support the healing of this place. The television shows don't show the huge infrastructure – the men and women in the laundry, the cooks shredding buckets of lettuce, the repairmen who emerge from the second basement.

Please keep Christ Hospital in your hearts and prayers. While we were founded by Episcopalians and are affiliated with the Diocese, we serve an increasingly diverse population. Hudson County is, in the words of Geoff Curtiss, Episcopal Rector of All Saints' Hoboken and Vice-Chair of the Board, "the poorest, most diverse county in New Jersey." Our mission as a hospital is to provide quality care for the people of this county in a time of rocketing medical expenses and vanishing medical coverage.

If I'm to be able to do my work at Christ Hospital, like you, I come to the parish on Sunday to be fed and recharged for the work of the week. We need to be clear that I'm not the "pastoral" associate, even though when Phillip is away I will try to help with urgent needs. "Non-stipendiary associates" (unpaid, called "non-stipes" in the trade) are members of a congregation who preach and celebrate occasionally. Phillip and the vestry and I are talking about my preaching or celebrating approximately twice a quarter.

Very brief personal notes follow:

***Fired from Sunday School teaching over Noah and the Ark***

I've had a somewhat speckled history in teaching children's Sunday School: in college, I caught mumps from my Sunday School class. In the '80s, in an evangelical Episcopal parish near Philadelphia, I argued that Noah and the Ark weren't historical fact, and the rector took me to lunch and suggested that perhaps my gifts "might be better used elsewhere."

***Sidetracked up muddy trails to viewless mountains...***

While at Episcopal Divinity School, I did my first chaplaincy training at Dartmouth-Hitchcock, and began hiking in the White Mountains on days off. There is a list of 4000-foot mountains in the back of the Appalachian Mountain Club guidebook, which has sidetracked thousands of us into muddy ascents of viewless mountains. I started on the list, and then was hooked. Favorite hiking partners: Joanna, my brother, and a madcap group who gathered in 2003 to do the bushwhacks of the New England hundred highest.

***Marital status: married in Massachusetts***

I came out in 1985, and a gentle priest in Philadelphia shepherded me through that process. In 1992, after graduation from EDS, I stayed on as CFO, and began to date Joanna. It was wonderful to learn what a good and sustaining relationship could be like. Thank you, whoever you are, for the weekly thanksgiving for "the love of my life." We did a holy union in 1996, and were legally married in Massachusetts in 2004.

***Other ministries in the Church***

I've been a MCC clergyperson, and planted a church in New Hampshire, a regional missionary in Western Massachusetts, priest associate in Beverly, Massachusetts, and an interim in Medfield, Massachusetts.

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# Redeemer Becomes a Peace Site

*By a Parishioner*

In the November 2005 Crossroads, with the encouragement of the wardens, I proposed that Redeemer become a Peace Site and I solicited opinions pro and con from members of the congregation. All the people who talked to me about this since then expressed full support of the idea. I was then asked to draft a resolution. Phillip and the Vestry discussed it and suggested a few changes. Then they approved the resolution unanimously, making Redeemer the world's newest peace site!

A Peace Site is a place that commits to being peaceful within its own walls and that strives to do something to bring peace to the larger community and world. What will being a Peace Site look like at Redeemer? This is for us to determine as a congregation. We are already doing a lot of things that serve the cause of peace, as noted in the resolution on the following page. As time goes on we will absorb this new identity as a Peace Site into our worship and all our activities and perhaps add new activities. I see being a Peace Site as both inspiring us and serving as a challenge.

**Inspiration** – Being a Peace Site will inspire us to be and do more to further the cause of peace and justice. Think of how our worship and our Sunday School might be inspired! How will the Adult Forum, Choir, Outreach Committee and the Racial Dialogue Group be inspired? How will our website and newsletter incorporate our status as a Peace Site? How will the Vestry, Stewardship Committee, the Book Discussion Group, the Parish Activities Committee, the Buildings and Grounds Committee and all other ministries be inspired? Peace Sites have no required activities – it is all up to us.

**Challenge** – Being a Peace Site will also challenge us to wrestle with difficult local, national and international issues of peace and justice that we might wish we could just ignore. Do we want our country to take a stand against torture? What do we think about our nation spending \$400 billion dollars on the military each year? These are just examples of the issues that may 'afflict us in our comfortableness.' We recognize that people will have different opinions on the issues; the challenge is to wrestle with them, grounded in our commitment to "Love your neighbor as yourself."

So, be inspired and be challenged. As I look ahead I am excited about all the possibilities. Think of it – our church is a Peace Site!

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## Resolution Making Church of the Redeemer a Peace Site

**Whereas** Church of the Redeemer strives to discern and bring into fruition the "Dream of God,"

**Whereas** Church of the Redeemer honors our Christian tradition in which Jesus taught, "Love your neighbor as yourself," "Love your enemies," and "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God."

**Whereas** Church of the Redeemer holds up a vision of justice and *shalom* – wholeness – through:

- Being a safe place for all people to be accepted and loved regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or ability
- Calling for peace and justice through sermons, hymns and prayers
- Observing a Reconciliation Season
- Offering a Labyrinth as a path to inner peace
- Connecting regularly with other churches, temples and mosques to build understanding among different religions
- Sponsoring an ongoing Racial Dialogue
- Allowing groups working on issues of peace to hold meetings and other events in its facilities

**Whereas** Church of the Redeemer ever endeavors to be and do more in the service of justice and peace,

**Therefore be it resolved** that Church of the Redeemer become a Peace Site as a public and visible sign of its commitment to justice and peace, and as an inspiration and a challenge to be and to do more to promote justice and peace.

By being a Peace Site we commit to:

- Infuse our vision of peace in all our activities and decision making
- Hold ourselves accountable to a high standard of peacemaking in the way we conduct ourselves with each other and the larger community
- Teach our children this standard

- o Discuss and wrestle with local, national and international issues of justice and peace, recognizing that there will be differences of opinion.

*Resolution passed by the Vestry of Church of the Redeemer on March 13, 2006*

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## Shalom Ministry Award – March 19, 2006

This year, as for the past seventeen years, the Vestry, in order to hold up a particular model of ministry within our common life, presents the Shalom Ministry Award to a member or members of the parish. Focusing on a different model of ministry each year, the vestry honors the great variety of ways the people of Redeemer live out their individual commitments to be of service to others. This year we present the Shalom Ministry Award to only one person, and honestly, it is long overdue.

This year's recipient is as concerned about worship as much as about a person being treated unfairly in life... as concerned about the beauty of language as much as about the nitty-gritty of a person with no place to live. This year's Shalom recipient came to Redeemer many years ago with a heritage both Protestant and Catholic, with a spiritual hunger and a lack of interest in church. Once here, this person found a church that gave her new life, and this person has been breathing new life into Redeemer since that first day. This person has made a lasting and profound mark on the Church of the Redeemer.

There are few ministries this person has not been involved with throughout the years, but the two that she has most profoundly influenced are the Worship Committee and Interfaith Hospitality. There is no longer any use trying to keep it a secret. The 2006 Shalom Ministry Award is presented to **Carol Goodwin King**.

Carol was one of the founding members of the Women's Group and has had various roles in its leadership, especially in the planning of the Celebration of Women's service.

Carol was one of the original members of the Redeemer hymn writing group and she kept on even after the other members of the group did other things. Today some of the favorite hymns of Redeemer have been written by Carol: *Dance into Life*, *Great Earth Mother*, *Just As God Made Me*, *Mary*, *When the Angel's Voice*, *Close Not your Heart*, *Keep My Sister's Fiery Spirit* and *Wind of the Spirit*, which she wrote for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the parish. Carol's Advent song of Mary was published by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company in one of its hymnals and pays the grand royalties of somewhere between \$10 and \$20 a year.

Carol has shepherded the Worship Committee through some of its most creative ventures: the Reconciliation Season, special services such as Longest Night, Celebrating the Divine Feminine and the Lenten Wednesday Eucharist. Carol has made sure that all that we do in worship is an expression of the Redeemer vision and done in the most beautiful language possible.

Carol is a life long learner and has been involved in the Adult Form and various retreat groups since she came to the parish. She takes her place in worship leadership, especially as an intercessor with the Prayers of the People, and because of Carol, we mean "prayers of the people" and not of a clerical dress-up. Carol is a founding member of the Healing Prayer group and has been part of that ministry from its inception.

One of Carol's great contributions to the life of Redeemer was the resurrection of the Hospitality Network. This ministry was literally dying. Fewer and fewer people were volunteering. Carol volunteered to be one of the ministry heads. Because of the respect which everyone has for Carol, when she called for volunteers, people responded. She is tireless in details. When Redeemer is asked to take an extra week due to an emergency, Carol's immediate response is to say, "Yes."

Carol has made a permanent stamp on the worship and the life of Redeemer because of who she is and the gifts she has shared. Our life is richer because Carol Goodwin King is part of this family.

The Vestry is honored to award her the 2006 Shalom Ministry Award – long overdue.

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## Thank God for Jack Spong

*By Gene Williams*

I was born in Baton Rouge and grew up in Louisiana, Texas, and Georgia. We moved about seven times before I reached high school, so I was always the new kid – and the ugly ducking. That was slightly traumatic for me, but now, 40 years later, I'm practically over it. I know that's true because I'm here now. Let me explain.

For the past 20+ years, my family and I were deeply involved and felt very much at home at a wonderful Episcopal church 30 minutes from here in Bridgewater. My wife and I had moved from California to New Jersey in 1984 with our 16-month old daughter. We fell in love with that little church and the people in it – or vice versa. Our son was born a year later and was baptized there. The rector and his wife became our best friends. Their children and ours grew up together. They were all acolytes. My wife and I got involved with almost everything at one time or another – Eucharistic minister, various vestry responsibilities, warden, convention delegate, adult education, you name it. Today, she is still just as involved as ever, and I'm at Redeemer.

It all started around 10 years ago. I considered myself a committed Christian – or at least a committed Episcopalian, but my sense of faith always competed with my sense of logic and reason. One day I was browsing the religion shelves at Border's and a paperback with an irresistible title caught my eye. It was Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism by John Shelby Spong, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark. It was a revelation for me. Over the next few years, I dug into Bishop Spong's other books and heard many of his lectures. This brave and brutally honest man transformed my understanding of God and of the Christian tradition. For the first time in my life it made sense. It was real.

In 2002 I found out that the bishop would be at the Church of the Redeemer in December, as part of its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. I had never been there, but my wife and I took our children to Morristown that Sunday to hear him speak. We enjoyed him and the event, but I wasn't prepared for how different the church would be from anything I had experienced in Episcopal churches throughout my life. It wasn't just different. Everything about it was as honest and courageous as my hero was. To me it felt like the kingdom of God.

I loved my home church, but thoughts and images of Redeemer stuck in my mind for some time. I enjoyed telling everyone about it. I even said that I hoped that in ten years or so our church would be like Redeemer. I thought I could wait. Then on Good Friday, 2004 something happened. I felt compelled to look for new meaning in that dark celebration. So I went with my children to Redeemer. It was, as you know, beautiful and meaningful. Walking around the Green that evening in the procession following the cross, I knew that this is where I belong. Not in ten years (maybe), but now.

Separating from my church was difficult and emotional, but I never felt that I was doing the wrong thing. I wanted to experience and learn more about new ways of being the church, as Redeemer was. I also wanted just to somehow support what Redeemer was doing. I saw it as risky (I still do), and I didn't want it to fail. I was voting with my feet.

My wife continues to go to our beloved other church and I try to visit from time to time. Our friendships with people there have continued and I hope they always will. But I have never regretted coming to Redeemer. And I realize now that I had put myself in the position of being the stranger ("new kid") again – still the ugly duckling. I'm proud of myself for having done that, but thanks to the loving people of Redeemer I don't feel like a stranger any more.

I was very surprised and feel honored to be elected to serve as warden. I will do my very best to support, with you, the mission of Redeemer. I ask for your help and prayers.

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## The World Council of Churches – An Unforgettable Experience

*By Sr. Shane Margaret, CSJB*

When I entered the convent, I thought I would never travel again. Senior Sisters said I was wrong – “join the convent, see the world,” they told me. This year they were proved right. I went with a group from Drew University to Porto Alegre, Brazil, to the 9<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the World Council of Churches.

The WCC is the largest ecumenical group in the world. (“Ecumenical” derives from the Greek word “oikumene,” which means “the whole inhabited world.” It refers to work among Christians across denominations.) The WCC includes most Protestant “mainline” churches, national independent or united churches, and Orthodox churches. Membership is on a national basis – the Methodist Church in Argentina is a member, as is the Ethiopian Coptic Orthodox Church. The Roman Catholic Church is not a member, as it is not organized nationally, but it does work with the WCC on many committees and projects. The Pentecostal and Evangelical churches have not been members, but discussions are ongoing to change that. The WCC also does a lot of interfaith work, and we met Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and Sikhs as well as Christians of all sorts.

Every day we began and ended with prayer in big circus tent – the only structure that could hold 4,000 people! I think people from Redeemer would have enjoyed these a lot – the music was from all over the world and every tradition, the prayers were thoughtful, the symbols used were meaningful, and the WCC's strong concern for social and environmental justice was evident throughout.

During the day there were meetings. The core of the ecumenical experience is one person talking to another, seeing what we have in common in spite of differences. Delegates met in formal sessions, and made decisions by consensus (among 1,500 delegates, that's impressive!). Observers like my group met in sessions called “mutiraos,” Portuguese for “encounter” or “discussion.” There were mutiraos on refugees, on spirituality, on interfaith dialogue, on economic justice, on liberation

theologies from all over the globe, on youth, and on Orthodox issues. These were tremendous chances to hear from people all over the world, to hear what works and what needs to be done.

Then there were the plenary sessions. Each day had a theme: Unity, Economic Justice, Latin America, and others. We got to hear from Archbishop Rowan Williams (who also met with the members of the Anglican Communion), from Archbishop Desmond Tutu (who later led a walk through the city for economic justice), as well as youth and senior leaders, musicians, filmmakers, and activists. I cannot begin to do justice to the whole.

For me, one of the big learning times was around the coffeepot (espresso, of course) provided between sessions. There I met people whose lives are impacted by ours, by our country and its policies, and by our church's decisions. It is humbling to realize how big our footprint is on the world. I also got to debate women's ordination with Orthodox men, to talk with Kenyans about foreign policy and its impact on the church, and to learn the history of the Episcopal Church in Brazil.

I can't begin to tell you everything here. If you want to know more about the council, its programs, and the assembly, go to [www.wcc-coe.org](http://www.wcc-coe.org). We are all connected, for good and for ill. Pray for the work of this council, and for the many organizations and churches that struggle to work in situations we cannot imagine.

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