

FELLOWSHIP

NEWCOMER PROFILE

PEOPLE MAKING THE REDEEMER THEIR FAITH COMMUNITY

INTERVIEWED BY KEN GARNER



This month, Nancy, Polk, Nora, Margot and Vaughn Smartt.

Thank you very much for sharing your story with us about your entry into The Redeemer community.

How long have you been attending services here?

We started attending The Redeemer in September, 2012. We have three young children so we try to make services as much as possible, but it's not always in the cards! Our children were baptized at The Redeemer in May, 2013 which was a wonderful, memorable moment for our whole family.

Are you life-long Episcopalians?

We are not life-long Episcopalians. Nancy, originally from Chestnut Hill, was raised Catholic and attended Catholic schools. Polk, originally from Huntingdon Valley, was raised in the Presbyterian faith and attended a Quaker school. Ten years ago, we were married at Christ Church in Philadelphia. We both liked the welcoming feeling of the Episcopal services.

How did you find The Redeemer?

Technically, the kids found The Redeemer playground before we found the church ;) but The Redeemer was impossible for us to miss—we live just a few houses away! The beautiful walk up the hill from our home to church is one

of our—and the children's—favorite parts of our neighborhood.

What inspired you to attend?

Several reasons. We knew we wanted God in our lives and our children's lives, not only in our hearts but in a church home. We also knew we liked the idea of the routine and tradition of family church attendance. Plus, our children attend non-secular schools so we are committed to guiding their faith in church the best we can.

What would you want to tell others about The Redeemer to encourage them to come and explore our parish?

The services are thoughtful. The church itself and the music are beautiful and inspiring. There is a unique warmth and sense of community at The Redeemer. The fun and well-organized church events make it easy to meet other people.

Since we're in the midst of our annual stewardship campaign, can you share with us why you feel it's important to financially support the church?

We understand that what we all gain from being a part of The Redeemer is not possible without the support of the congregation.

Tell us a bit about yourself outside of The Redeemer—your jobs, your family, your hobbies.

Polk is a finance director for Aramark. We have three children. Margot (6), Nora (6), and Vaughn (4). Margot and Nora are in the first grade at Agnes Irwin. Vaughn is in preschool at the West Hill School. I am on my third career—first, editor/writer; then lawyer; now housekeeper, I mean, housewife. Momager? There has to be a better way to say "Runs the family." More than anything, we enjoy spending time together as a family! This summer, we traveled down South, took walks, explored the beach, played, swam, read books and did lots of yard work. This fall, we hiked Bushkill Falls and Hawk Mountain. The kids loved both! The children enjoy tennis and swim lessons and we love to watch. Polk and I used to have hobbies but we seem to have forgotten what they are at the moment. But we do enjoy working on updating our home and garden!

Advent Luncheon and Talk

by Michael Diorio DMA, Organist & Director of Music

"Rediscovering Christmas"

intriguing tales and traditions of carols from around the world.

Sunday, December 8, 2013
at 12:30pm
in the Parish House

RSVP by December 3
to Tish Zaleta
610-525-2486, ext. 10
tish@theredeemer.org
www.TheRedeemer.org/RSVP



FROM THE RECTOR

ADVENT'S FOCUS ON TIME

BY PETER VANDERVEEN

When I was in graduate school, I had the great fortune of happening upon a book entitled: *Time and the Art of Living*, by Robert Grudin. It is a book, the author confessed, about a topic that very few people have interest enough to ponder. Who has time to think about time? Or who would want to spend their time contemplating time? There are so many other things to do and to be busy about. Grudin never expected that his manuscript would be picked up by a publisher. My copy is now nearly thirty-five years old and well worn; for it is a book to which I regularly return. I've found it endlessly rewarding—because examining time often leads to experiencing the whole of life in a new way, as if refreshed and brightened. It's redeeming.

Near the end of the book, Grudin makes this splendid observation.

* * *

"Freya Stark, remembering her maternal grandmother:

She carried about her that best of grandmotherly atmospheres—a sense of amplitude in Time. No hurry ever came near her. A whole series of episodes in my childhood show her peacefully reading, or dressing, or brushing the long white hair that could still reach her knees, while a babel of agitated voices urged departing carriages or trains. She always had a book in her hand and never seemed busy; she would put it down and her arms would open to enclose any human being, but particularly a child, who needed refuge there; what she gave was affection pure and simple, deliberately free from wear and tear of understanding or advice.

Love, which more than any other emotion exists in all four dimensions, is impossible without the gift of time. It cannot exist amid haste and confusion; or between people who

parcel their affection into short periods. The most impassioned actions and assurances, when punctuated by days of coldness or distraction, are as puny in their own way as limp handshakes and pats on the head. We love only when we love across time, when love offered is love remembered and love promised."

* * *

This entry really needs no explication. It stands on its own. All it asks from the reader is the time and patience to consider each line slowly.

- How rare and yet how rich is the vision of the amplitude of time, shown in the habits of a person. What have we lost in the frenzied desires to always stay young and restless and hungry?
- How rare and yet how rich is the vision of affection pure and simple. We seem unable to imagine this now. Affection comes laden with the greed of many things exchanged and consumed.
- How rare and yet how rich is the vision of love expressed across time, carrying with it memories and hope. Love in our present context is much more of the moment, transient and needy, demanding and fragile.

One of the great beauties of Advent is its focus on time: time experienced in waiting; time expanded in expectation; time gathered in promise, rather than lost in the relentless passing of minutes and hours and days and years, ad infinitum. December has ironically become the busiest months: its time seems shortened and compressed. But the focus of the church's worship is just the opposite. We are invited, from the very beginning of the church year, to see time in its fullness and its completion; and we are invited to see love in its intimacy and its continuity. These are the greatest gifts we can imagine and share and realize together.