

Greetings Redeemer family,

When was the last time you took a look at the front of our bulletin? Do you know what's written there?

*To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest;
to all who mourn and long for comfort;
to all who struggle and desire victory;
to all who sin and need a Savior;
to all who are strangers and want fellowship;
to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness;
and to all who will come,
this church opens wide her doors and offers welcome
in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

This week we are taking a very special break from our Summer series on the Fruit of the Spirit. What's so special about it? We have the great pleasure this week of welcoming Rob Edwards, pastor of Mercy Presbyterian – our church's first daughter plant in Forest. That's right – our daughter church now has its own name and pastor, and is quickly gaining an identity and an impact in the Forest community. Rob will be teaching from Luke 7:36-50, asking the question, “Who is comfortable at Jesus' table?”

As I write this, I'm thinking about the developing identity of Mercy Presbyterian in Forest. I'm thinking about Redeemer's transition as we purchase, renovate, and prepare for a new season of ministry in Lynchburg. In all of this, it is my prayer that we are empowered by God's grace to live out the words quoted above. I pray that Mercy and Redeemer would be places where the weary and hungry, the struggler and the stranger, the lonely and lost might come and find hope, help, and love.

I'm also excited, because this isn't something that we need to wait for with wishful optimism. No, this is something we can have this week. We can – by God's grace and Spirit – be this kind of church on Sunday. Not because we're good people or we have everything figured out or we have great resources. We're none of those things. But we serve a God who alone is good, wise, and powerful. He proved His love for us in sending His Son, and so He will not withhold any good thing from His beloved children. Instead, He delights to bless us with the best thing we could ask for or imagine: the sweet gift of His presence. Because He has welcomed and loved us, we can turn and offer the same to each other, our neighbors, and the world.

So come expectant this Sunday, and let's ask God to make us that welcoming church this week, for His glory and kingdom.

Welcomed by our Savior,
Tim Sharpe
Worship Director
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