



THE DOORPOST

~ Newsletter ~

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Revisiting Shakespeare

What comes to mind when you think of the Shakespeare Festival? Little ladies dancing the Maypole in Elizabethan dresses and flower crowns? Young gents wielding toy swords and shooting arrows at targets? Volunteering countless hours to transform the playground into an Elizabethan festival? Constructing play sets, fitting costumes, applying stage makeup, and rehearsing lines? Or perhaps enjoying an hard-earned ice cream at the cast after-party?

With **more than 20 years of Shakespeare Festivals under our belts**, we are celebrating how the festival and play evolve while remaining true to the original vision. The Shakespeare Festival, inspired by Charlotte Mason's philosophy on teaching Shakespeare, was brought to Redeemer School in the early 2000s by former head of school Billy Creech and his wife, former teacher Carrie Creech.

From the very beginning, the Shakespeare Festival was the culmination of a schoolwide, month-long immersion in the works, creativity, and ideas of the playwright William Shakespeare and the Elizabethan period of history. To this day, each grade level participates throughout the month with age-appropriate lessons in history, sonnet writing, puppet making, acting, recitation, and more. As children engage with Shakespeare over the course of their education, they come to appreciate his literary genius bit by bit.

"There are manifold benefits in putting children in the way of beautiful language and vivid ideas. The younger child develops listening skills and appreciation for the beauty of language ... (and they) become confident readers and writers through the hearing and reading of well-written texts ... the students and teachers alike exercise the full power of the mind in analyzing, comprehending, reflecting and synthesizing. These discussions generate an interior life as ... students come into relationship with the past, the present and the transcendent."

~ Mary Ellen St. Cyr in *When Children Love to Learn*

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Editors: Kim Watkins, Ashley Murray



LIFELONG LEARNING GROWS HERE

2024



2018



2014



2009



2003



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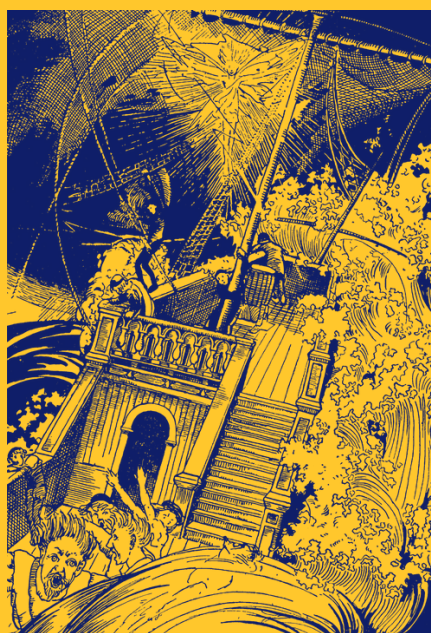
The main event of the Shakespeare Festival is the Shakespeare Play, which has evolved as the middle school has grown. In the early years, all middle school students played a part in the play; these days, students elect to participate as actors and in support roles such as assistant producer, marketing, A/V, and costuming.

This year, **our play is put on by two current Redeemer School teachers who are also alumni** – Language Arts/History and Drama teacher Preston Lindsay ('12) and Science teacher Rachel Williamson ('13). As they lead a new group of middle school actors and crew, they draw from their own experience as students in the Shakespeare Festival.

Mrs. Williamson credits the Shakespeare Festival for helping to shape her interest in and understanding of the English language in college and beyond. Looking back on the festival, she remembers the Maypole dance, as well as specific relational moments.

"One of those is [Redeemer School teacher & former Shakespeare Play director] Ashley Murray doing my hair before one of the performances and talking to me about high school. Now we're friends and we work together, so it's cool to see those relationships continue on," she said.

We're preparing for our annual Shakespeare Festival and Play! Students at all grade levels are studying William Shakespeare and *The Tempest*. **We look forward to the Shakespeare Festival and hope you will join us for an evening of Elizabethan fun!**



The Tempest

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

Current and alumni families are cordially invited to our Shakespeare Festival and Play.

- **Shakespeare Festival:** Friday, May 2 @ 4:30-6:30 pm for all families, featuring Elizabethan activities and food trucks
- **Play Performance:** Friday, May 2 @ 7:00 pm *for current families*
- **Encore Performance:** Saturday, May 3 @ 1:00 pm *for alumni families and the community*

**Don't forget a "pence" for admission to the play! Doors open 30 minutes before each performance.*

Connecting Redeemer School Alumni



Above: Recent Redeemer School graduates visited with 8th grade families to share wisdom about high school class selection.

Right: Alumni showed up to cheer on the Redeemer School Rams during the CCISAA championship tournament.



Left: Redeemer School alumna Liz Hein ('24) and her mother, Jennifer Hein, returned to lead the 8th grade class in 1920s dancing for the Speakeasy. Below: Sydney Lambeth ('24), Charlotte Duncan ('24), Ariana Leon ('24), and Rosalynn Ball ('23) attended an Alumni Game Night hosted at Redeemer School.



Ashley Murray
Advancement
Coordinator & Middle
School Bible Teacher

Hello Again to a Familiar Face!

We are thrilled to welcome Ashley Murray back to Redeemer School this year.

Mrs. Murray, who has a BA in Elementary Education and Bible from Moody Bible Institute, taught Middle School Language Arts & History from 2011-2016 and Bible from 2019-2020. She returned to teach Bible this school year, and is also our Advancement Coordinator, managing the Chrysalis Fund and Community Business Partnerships, as well as connecting with Redeemer School alumni. Be sure to say hello when you see her at school events!

"It is so special to me to be able to interact with Redeemer Alumni, especially since I had the privilege of teaching some of them," Mrs. Murray said. "I love getting to see how Redeemer School has shaped their journeys and to reconnect with former students!"

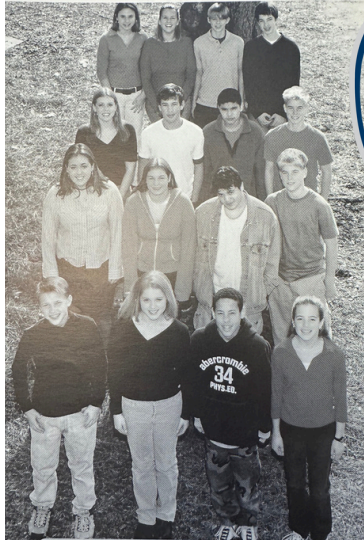
That's not the only thing that's changed—these days, Mrs. Murray is also a Redeemer School parent, with two (soon to be three!) of her children here as students. She says it feels "full circle" to be here with them.

"I always imagined it would be this way, but I wasn't sure what that would look like and now here we are," she said. "I'm living my mid 20s daydreams out in real life."

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR



1995: Redeemer Church families come together to open Redeemer School with six kindergarten and six first grade students and the vision of *Passionately Pursuing God's Wisdom*. The first Head of School, Kirby McCrary, was hired in 1998.



2002: First class of Redeemer School students graduates eighth grade.



2005: Mascot is announced:
Go Rams!



2007: Students successfully advocate for tennis court repairs at Ardmore Park by writing to the mayor.



2000: Long-serving staff member Michelle Marcey joins Redeemer School!

2002: Billy Creech joins as Head of School.

2003: First Shakespeare Festival is held at Redeemer School.



2006: Office building is constructed on the school grounds adjacent to the Melrose parking lot.



FIRST 30 YEARS



**REDEEMER
SCHOOL**

Lifelong Learning Grows Here

2012: "R" logo and Lifelong Learning motto is adopted.



2014: The ROOTS Student Support Program begins, coming alongside students with learning differences and supporting classroom teachers.



2019: New "natural" playground is built.



2019: Loryn Faile joins as Head of School.

2025: We're celebrating 30 years of the Lord's faithfulness and goodness at Redeemer School! Watch for more details about upcoming events!



2009: Beloved groundskeeper John Angle identifies and labels trees on the school campus.



2014: Redeemer School celebrates its 20th Anniversary with a formal banquet and a family day at Ardmore Park.



2020: Covid sends students home for virtual learning. Creative solutions allow students to return to in-person classes in the fall.



REDEEMER

2023: New Redeemer Rams athletics brand adopted.

A Legacy of God's Grace

We're approaching our 30th anniversary at Redeemer School, which provides a beautiful opportunity to examine where we come from, where we are now, and where we are going. We gratefully and humbly declare that every answer is because of the Lord's faithfulness and kindness to this covenant community!

We come from a group of families who, in 1995, embarked on a journey to found a school based on Charlotte Mason's educational principles and to provide a different educational experience than the status quo for its covenant members. We come from a desire to see children delight in learning: providing a beautiful feast of rich literature, of story and narrative to open the mind and educate the heart, of ample opportunities to learn from and in nature, of unhurried time marveling at works of art and poetry and music. We come from families who supported their children's education with Enrichment Days, volunteering on campus, and tending to classroom gardens. We come from a desire to see children become lifelong learners. As we look back with gratitude, **we enjoy stories of God's faithfulness to our community:**

Courtney (Deakle) Dockery ('05) credits Redeemer School for her appreciation of how story is woven into everything, especially the redemptive narrative of scripture. A family counselor in her own private practice, Courtney appreciates that she was "not learning just to learn, but learning with purpose and dignity" while at Redeemer School. Discovering that her own experiences have a place in the bigger story— something she said was woven into every class and conversation— gives her peace and not anxiety.

Hannah Gaskins Pabon ('11) had a short but impactful experience at Redeemer School when she finished her last two years of middle school here. "I hold onto those years dearly, not just for the education I received, but for the compassion and love from my teachers during a difficult time in my life," she says. "The sense of safety and belonging I felt there remains close to my heart." Pabon says Redeemer School taught her to love things that other schools might have overlooked, deepening her appreciation for art, history, and learning itself. "Those years helped shape who I am today, and as I continue on my journey, I carry the Charlotte Mason philosophy with me, always seeking beauty, knowledge, and inspiration in the world around me."

Perk Steele (attended Redeemer School from '08-'13) wrote a letter of appreciation to his teachers at Redeemer School last fall, noting the ways that Redeemer School planted seeds of faith that grew in his life. He writes: "Thank you for all you taught me here—for showing me a love for God's creation through our walks around campus to see the trees and our field trips to spots of natural beauty, for promoting a love for history and literature through all the books we read ... thank you for feeding your students with all that is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and admirable, all that is timeless, excellent, praiseworthy."

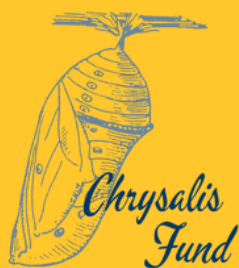


Lucy Calhoun ('13) says she appreciates that learning was hands-on at Redeemer School. "We didn't just read about Shakespeare—we built tiny versions of the Globe Theatre, complete with thatched roofs. When we studied ancient Egypt, we mummified orange peels and checked on them for weeks," she said. "Even in kindergarten, learning the alphabet meant smearing shaving cream all over our desks and fingerpainting letters into the foam. Everything was so interactive, so creative, and I realize now how much that shaped the way I think and work."

Wyatt Kearns ('24) says the teachers at Redeemer School prepared him well for high school. "Not all of my classes (in high school) are engaging and interesting, but the ones that are remind me of the classes I had at Redeemer. The way I was taught to think through what I read and learned has helped me a lot."

By God's grace, we remain committed to the values our founding families held dear. Walking the halls of Redeemer School in 2025 is strikingly similar to its origin in many ways. You will still find a kindergartener squealing with delight over Laura Ingalls Wilder's antics in *Little House in the Big Woods*. You will find fifth graders displaying their castles, second graders marvelling over Thomas Cole's landscapes, and fourth graders draped across hallway couches with their books. First graders still listen for recognizable bird sounds, third graders remain enraptured with Joshua's battle, and middle schoolers diligently memorize Shakespeare's lines. By God's grace, you will find teachers who love God and his word and foster that love in the lives of their students. You will find parents trekking in materials for E-Days or planting in classroom gardens. Book of Centuries, narrations, picture studies and classroom composers remain the fabric of who we are.

While much remains the same, it's also true that much has changed! What started as 12 children in two classes has grown to a bursting-at-the-seams school of over 250 students in 19 classes. We incorporate the best of current research-based educational methods into our classrooms and rejoice at the ways Charlotte Mason's philosophy dovetails beautifully with emerging brain science. Students of all ages enjoy enrichment opportunities—athletics, fine art and music, field trips, and servant leadership. Teachers support our children with unique learning differences to deepen their passion for learning while providing extra support to develop their academic skills and God-intended potential. God's faithfulness to Redeemer School continues to impact our covenant families, the community, and the watching world!



As we faithfully look forward to Redeemer School's future, we invite you to partner with us in prayer and by giving to the Chrysalis Fund.

Gifts to the Chrysalis Fund allow us to continually enhance our vibrant, Biblically based learning experiences, combining Charlotte Mason's pedagogy with the best of current research-based approaches to equip and inspire a new generation of lifelong learners.

We are just 20% away from meeting our goal of \$285,000 for the school year!

Give online at redeemerschool.org/give.



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**REDEEMER
SCHOOL**

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