

July 29, 2012

Dear St. Matthew's,

We are the Redeemer Ambassadors. We are happy to visit with you today.

You are the 47th SEPA congregation we have visited in the last two years. We are able to do so, because you, as part of SEPA Synod, have locked us out of our church.

Forty-seven visits are enough to reveal how little other SEPA congregations care.

But we will keep telling our story. If we don't SEPA Synod will continue to ignore small congregations, waiting for the day they may need their assets. We think our stand has influenced SEPA positively in that they have adopted their first balanced budget in two decades. It was their need to fund a deficit of several hundred thousand annually that influenced their treatment of our congregation.

Redeemer's story has become long and complicated by nearly five years of legal maneuvering in what has been an aggressive attack on our individual members as well as our community.

There would be no conflict whatsoever if Bishop Burkat had actually done the things she claims to have done in East Falls. There was never any attempt to work with our congregation. SEPA came to us using deceit and strong-arm tactics from the beginning. What would your members do if the bishop came to greet your congregation with a locksmith hiding out of sight?

Redeemer took action to protect our faith community.

There has always been room for honest disagreement. Two PA Supreme Court judges dissented from the majority agreeing with Redeemer's position to the letter. If the Supreme Court can't agree there was room for Redeemer to make an honest protest.

It is an enduring failing of the ELCA that there is no equitable forum within the church to discuss serious differences. We are letting the secular courts decide our polity.

Our story is on our web site, **2x2virtualchurch.com**.

With no building to call home, Redeemer is pioneering the power of the web in small church ministry. It was quite unexpected, but our ministry has continued to grow through our online presence. 2x2 reaches more than 1000 readers every month and is growing Christian community among small churches all over the world. We are supporting a congregation in Pakistan and four congregations in Kenya.

Best wishes in your ministry.

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***We are not closed; we are locked out of God's house by SEPA Synod.***