

Today we are going to tell you the story of our Church and how we have loved God, loved each other and worked hard together for 121 years. The story shows that over and over we took Leaps of Faith to get where we are today. A Leap of Faith take guts and courage and persistence. We have to believe that God will build a bridge under us as we leap.

Our story begins in 1893 in Glen Echo, Maryland, a sleepy little village which felt much farther from DC than it does now....

- **Narrators:** A group of people started worshipping God together by holding Prayer Book services in their homes.

Parishioners: “We are getting too big for peoples’ homes. We need to build a church. But how can we get the land and the money? WE NEED TO TAKE

THE CONGREGATION: **Hold up the sign** “A LEAP OF FAITH”

- **Narrators:** And God provided. A good man, Mr. Walter Carroll, donated the land and St. John’s Norwood, the church in Bethesda, provided us the money to build a little white wooden chapel in Glen Echo just across McArthur Blvd from here. You can still see it there today.

And we have some reminders of those early days here today. There is the Sunday School banner created in 1903. **POINT TO BANNER.** And our first altar is here too. **POINT TO ALTAR**

- **Parishioners:** “Now that we have a church, it would be even better if we had a minister to preach and lead our services. What should we do? WE NEED TO TAKE

THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”

- **Narrators:** And God provided. Students from the Virginia Theological Seminary said they would lead our Sunday services even though they had to come on a streetcar from Alexandria (a long way in those days) to get here.
- **Parishioners:** “The church is cold. How can we heat it on our tiny budget? WE NEED TO TAKE

- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”
- **Narrators:** And God provided. The manager of Glen Echo Park donated two tons of coal to keep us warm.
- **Parishioners:** “We love our seminarians, but we really need a dedicated Rector to help our little church thrive. What should we do? WE NEED TO TAKE
- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”
- **Narrators:** And God provided. Manlius Mills Perkins, graduates from the Seminary and is named the first Rector of Redeemer in 1929.
- **Parishioners:** “Now that we have Father Manlius and a warm church, we need more people to fill it up. What should we do? WE NEED TO TAKE....
- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”
- **Narrators:** And God provided. A bus is donated. The parishioners think they can grow their numbers by using the bus to bring in more children. The bus drives through neighborhoods from Brookmont to Bannockburn every Sunday morning to pick up children and take them to Sunday School. In 1938, there are 150 kids in the Sunday School; they barely fit into the church.
- **Parishioners:** “We’ve grown so much we need a new church. Where will we find the land and the money? WE NEED TO TAKE
- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”
- **Narrators:** And God provided. Trinity Parish in Northwest DC was closing down so the Diocese had the money to build a new church. They bought the land we are standing on today. The cornerstone to the new church was laid in 1940. And it is still here—right outside the door to the choir room.

- **Parishioners:** “Our Rector is retiring and we need to find a new one. Who will it be? WE NEED TO TAKE
- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”
- **Narrators:** And God provided. In 1942, The Reverend Dr. Robert Evans Browning who was at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer in Baltimore was called to be our new Rector. The congregation there had many generous and well-off members who loved Dr. Browning. To thank him for his service they gave many gifts to Redeemer including the painted lead glass windows. (Point to windows) If you look at the windows you will see that they tell Bible stories. Many are given as memorials to friends and family who died in World War II.
- **Parishioners:** “Our Rector lives 18 miles away and has to travel here over bad roads. What do we do? WE NEED TO TAKE...
- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”
- **Narrators:** And God provided. The congregation found the money to build a house next door. This is the house Amma Cricket lives in today.
- **Parishioners:** “It has been 18 years since we built our church and we are outgrowing it. Our congregation is growing older. Should we build a bigger church that can attract more young families? WE NEED TO TAKE ...
- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”
- **Narrators:** And God provided. A developer donated land on Massachusetts Avenue. It is closer to DC and there are lots of young families moving into the neighborhood. The new church is called St. Dunstan’s.
- **Parishioners:** “Ten of our families don’t want to leave. We live near Redeemer and we want to worship in our little church. But we need money to keep the church going? WE NEED TO TAKE...”
- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”

- **Narrators:** And God provided. They took out a loan on their own and once again they invited students to come from VTS to help out. The church began to thrive again. It was led by Father Ken and then Father Harry.

When Father Harry retired in 1994 Reverend Susan Burns was called to lead us. This was only 20 years after the Episcopal Church began ordaining women.

- **Parishioners:** “Susan, we are so glad you are here. We are worried about low membership and we need you to lead us forward. We think it is partly because our building is old, small and badly needs repairs. What should we do? WE NEED TO TAKE

- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”

Narrators: And God provided. In 1997 we started a building fundraiser called Faith in the Future of Redeemer. The Congregation provided enough money to hire an architect and begin building our addition. We temporarily moved into an empty church in Brookmont. The new plan moved the sanctuary from the North end of the church to the South end. The back of the church used to be here (point to where the old church used to end) and the altar was at that end, you can see the two windows over the stairs where our altar used to be.

Our addition made more room upstairs and more room downstairs, and created a beautiful, light-filled space. It is much taller than the previous sanctuary, in keeping with church tradition. The sanctuary is exalted just like God. A bell tower was added to create a welcoming new entrance. We are now celebrating 20 years in our beautiful new space.

- **Parishioners:** “Our congregation loves to worship God through beautiful music. Our electronic organ is broken. Wouldn’t it be great to have a real pipe organ? WE NEED TO TAKE

- THE CONGREGATION: “A LEAP OF FAITH”

- **Narrators:** And God provided. Michael Hart, one of our devoted members is an organ builder and with the support of the congregation, he helped us

build the magnificent organ we have today. Our choir and our music program have thrived since that day in 2007.

- **Parishioners:** Reverend Susan is retiring. Who will be our new Rector? WE NEED TO TAKE
- THE CONGREGATION: "A LEAP OF FAITH"
- **Narrators:** And God provided. In 2015 Amma Cricket came to lead us.

Over the years we have tried our best to create a place where we can come together to worship God. It took many leaps of faith to get us from where we were to where we wanted to be.

For the last 121 years we have been persistent and brave. We didn't give up when it was scary. It took guts, but we prayed and prayed and never lost heart. We knew that God would be with us. WHAT DID IT TAKE? A LEAP OF FAITH

We ask you this....what do we need to do to make sure that Redeemer is here for another 121 years?

WHAT WILL IT TAKE? A LEAP OF FAITH.