

From the Interim Pastor—Living in Easter



First, I want to thank all of you for your prayers and letters and messages, phone calls and visits – all expressing your love and prayers for my recovery. There are not words that can tell how uplifting this has been to me and Peggy. As I write this, I am two days home from ten days in the hospital, feeling better every day. An old Pastor friend once told me God puts you on your back so you have to look up! And so it has been.

I somehow feel guilty for my not being there for you these past weeks. I tried but I just couldn't do it. My thanks go to Pastor Schmidt for taking over the services in my absence. I am planning, if health continues to improve, to conduct the mid-week Lent services on April 1, and then Palm Sunday and Holy Week. By that time we will know if Pastor Kress is coming to us.

What an exciting time for us at Redeemer! Yet we are still in the deep dark purple of Lent with Passion Week looming up in front. Its darkest Day: Good Friday, as I strain to peer ahead, almost obliterating the Glory of the Sunrise that is the second Sunday in April: Easter!!

Our Lenten Series, *The Body of Christ* is drawing us closer and more personally to our Savior, the God/Man Jesus of Nazareth and the Second Person of the Trinity. We are called to watch and to behold the movement of our God's Son toward the cross. Such watching takes us to our knees. Our sins required the pure and innocent Son of God to walk toward Jerusalem. To watch means that our thoughts will be reordered. What appears to human eyes to be repulsive and repugnant becomes to us the very means of God's mission...

God's mission in Christ is graphic and real. It is not sentimental. It is not pretty. It is not religiously correct as contemporary American religiosity defines correctness. The happy smiles, the giddy gazes, the self-absorption are taken from us.

As we watch, we know our emptiness. Here is suffering on our behalf, for our sake, and at the cost of God's own Son. Here is a bloody and sacrificial mission, for God's Son is now our sacrificial Lamb. The holiness and righteousness of God could not abide our sinful presence. But now the blood of the Lamb has purified us for God's presence.

Yes, the solemn Lenten walk with our Lord to the Cross is necessary if the Resurrection is to have any real meaning for us! If Christ had not risen, it would clearly show that His suffering and death had not been sufficient. But now Christ is risen, and this is conclusive evidence that the Father accepted the sacrifice of His Son for the reconciliation of the world. "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (Romans 4:25).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ does not make us just before God for the redemption was finished on the cross, but the resurrection proves to us that by His suffering and death Christ really did atone for our iniquities.

The resurrection of Christ proves that there is such a thing as a resurrection of the dead as Scripture says, "Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man" (1st Corinthians 15:20-21). And the resurrection proves that for believers there is a resurrection unto life as Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me will live, even though He dies (John 11:25-26).

Easter! What a wonderful celebration of freedom! We are truly "redeemed from all sin, death, and from the power of the devil" as the Small Catechism states in the answer to question 134. And in question 136 it says, "Through His suffering, death, and resurrection, Christ has overcome death. **Since He now gives me eternal life I need not fear death!!!**" !

Easter! Easter! The month of April is bathed in the glorious light of Easter! The Alleluia's are back! Divine Service comes alive with all of Christendom singing the praises of Him who was dead, but is alive! Every believer rejoices over the Resurrection! This is the very reason we worship on Sunday!

But, there is some sadness for me in this month of April. My job with you that started last May will soon be done. Probably this will be my last Newsletter. Oh, I am thrilled at the Spirit you have displayed and the joy in worship you have shown. I thank God for bringing us all back together as a loving family.

What a wonderful family you are! We will remember fondly the good times we've shared together – the special greetings before Worship as some of you returned "home where you belong" – the Advent and Lenten Suppers – Ladies Guild - the Yard Sale – the Boards and Committees, and all the many good works you do in the Kingdom. We will miss our wonderful children and youth. Each one of you is precious to the Lord and to us. We truly love you and will never forget you!. We plan to visit frequently, but if we don't see you again this side of heaven, we will see you there where we'll finally have time.

I am confident that your Victorious and Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will soon bring to you your new Pastor who will help you all keep on LIVING IN EASTER together, here at Redeemer.

Pastor Warren Thomason

REDEEMER LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Interim Pastor Rev. Warren Thomason
Office
Secretary Jennifer Steele
Organist Doris Dykhuizen

OFFICERS

President Ron Beaber
Vice President
Treasurer Leta Stender
Secretary Dorothy Sinowetski

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Assimilation Pam DeGourse
Property Management Charlie Vovcsko
Christian Ed. Christin Wacker
Elders Tim Byrne
Human Care Marj Sterriker
Outreach Carol Haupt
School Board Michelle Finley

Stewardship Joe Friess
Youth Jim Wright
Michelle Finley
Finance Sec'y. Karen Kirkland
Newsletter Editor Leta Stender

CLUBS/GUILDS

Ladies Guild Carol Sheahan
Men's Group Bob Mortenson
Red Hat Society Sandra Distasio
Christian Support Group

President's Corner



The President's Corner

We are now well into the season of Lent, and we have a few bumps in the road. Pastor T remains out of commission as I write this in late March. He is now home and is recovering. He is getting better, but as a precaution and to allow him the time he needs to recover, the Elders have made the decision to use a guest Pastor for the remainder of March and possibly the first part of April to fill the Pulpit. Pastor Schmidt will take up the day-to-day Pastoral responsibilities and we owe him a big debt of gratitude. This is the second year in a row that he has been asked to go beyond the call of duty to fill in as Head Pastor. I don't even want to think about where we would be without him.

The decision of Pastor Kress will be announced to both his congregation in Carmi and at our service on March 29th. I have received nothing but positive feedback on the visit of Pastor Kress and his wife Lisa from their visit with us. I feel much more confident that they will be coming to Florida very soon. Our goal was to have our new Pastor installed by Easter Sunday, but God willing, we will have an answer to our Call and our Prayers. I don't even want to think about a decline to our Call.

The Child Care budget and the Church budget remain in good shape, even with some unexpected expenses. I was at the Child Care pancake breakfast, and although it was early, there were not many people in attendance. I hope things picked up after I left. Remind me to tell you about my OJ surprise sometime. I hope every one will sign up for the Stone Crabs fund raiser. It is a great deal and I know I am anxious to see the new ballpark. It will be a great time for fellowship.

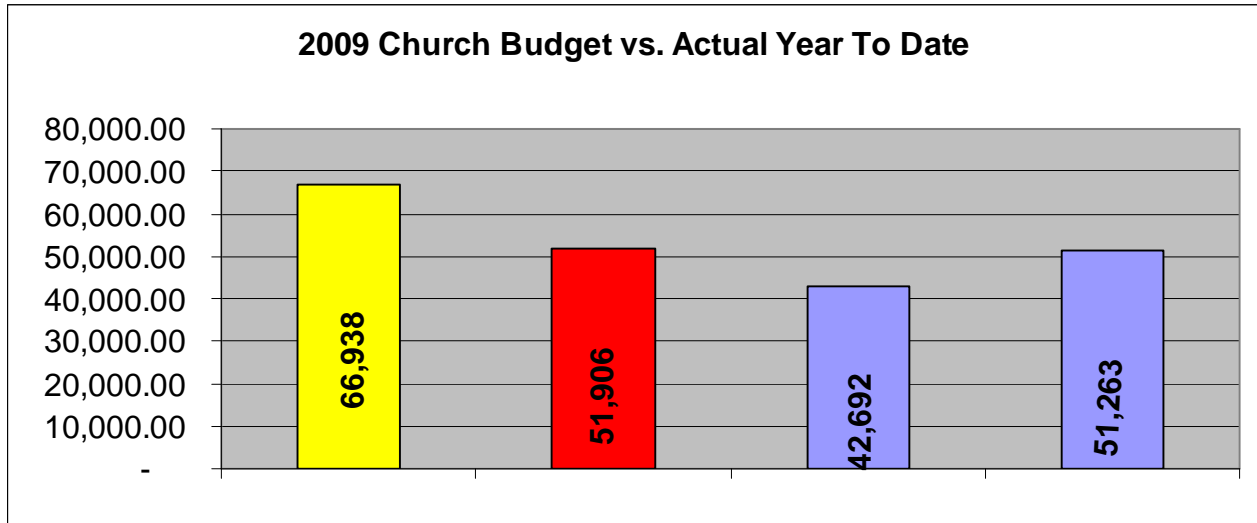
As we complete the Easter Season this month, let us be thankful for all our blessings, both as a congregation and personally.

Ron Beaber, President

Finance

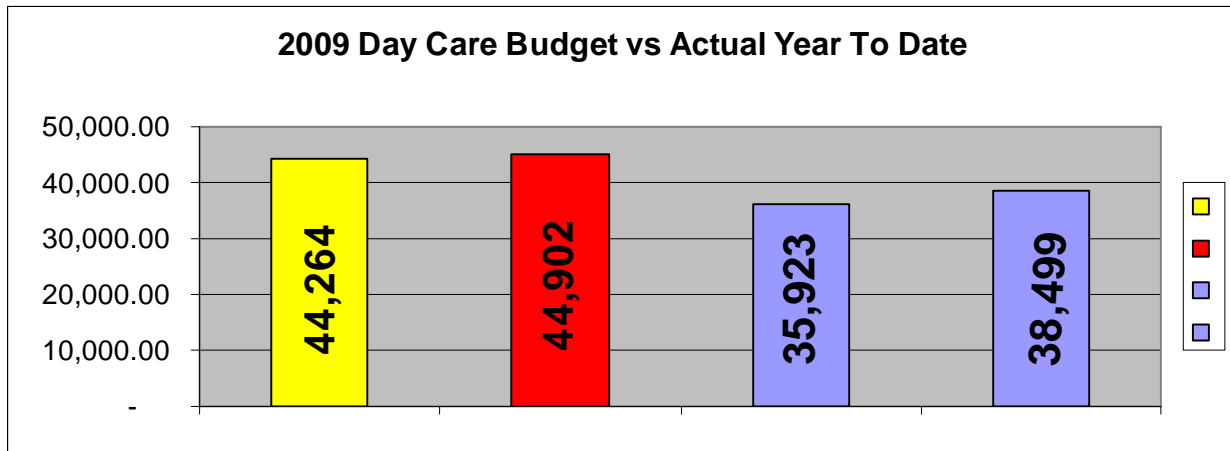
2009 Church Actual vs. Budget Year to Date Through March 20, 2009

<u>Actual Income</u>	<u>Income Budget</u>	<u>Actual Expenses</u>	<u>Expense Budget</u>
\$66,938	\$51,906	\$42,692	\$51,263



2009 Day Care Actual vs. Budget Year to Date Through March 20, 2009

<u>Actual Income</u>	<u>Income Budget</u>	<u>Actual Expenses</u>	<u>Expense Budget</u>
\$44,264	\$44,902	\$35,923	\$38,499



Youth



Feb. 28th four of the youths from our Youth Group participated in the Crop Walk. They were McKenna Heldenbrand, Naomi Sylvester, Alex Ruccatano & Billy Ruccatano. We want to thank them for getting up early & walking for a great cause. They were treated to dinner at TGIF's for their great effort.

Several of the children have also been acolyting on Sunday mornings at 8 a.m. as well as 10:30 services. Thank you to all the Youth who get up extra early to make this possible.

March 15 the Youth Group will be going to an afternoon matinee to see Disney's Race to Witch Mountain. Chaperones will be Sheila Murphy & Lisa Vassallo.

March 19th our Youth Group will be having an afternoon at the park with a picnic dinner & egg hunt following their Confirmation class.

The Youth Group will be hosting a fund raiser to "The Charlotte Stonecrabs" game on April 26 @ 5:35 p.m. Tickets will be \$24 and will include a ticket to the game, a Stonecrab baseball hat, a program & a buffet dinner. Buffett will consist of hamburgers, hot dogs, pasta salad, chips, soda, coffee & tea. We hope that you will support our youth of Redeemer Church and come out and have a good time.

We would also like to thank the Ladies Guild for their generous donations for the Youth Group, especially the t-shirts they gave to all our youths.

(LOOK FOR PICTURES ELSEWHERE IN THIS NEWSLETTER)

Submitted by Lisa Vassallo

Assimilation

The board has purchased two additional small rectangular tables to be used in the Narthex for the various activities of the church. Covers have also been made to provide a neat, orderly look in the area. For those groups using the tables, the covers are stored under the serving table on the right hand side.

Carol Sheahan has resigned as a member due to her commitments to the Ladies Guild. The board thanks her for her service.

Ellie Ratzlaff and Pat Wilcoxon have agreed to serve on the board. Welcome to them.

Thanks to Helena DeGourse for defrosting and cleaning the refrigerator.

The Assimilation Board would like to again thank all members, especially the part time associate members at this time of the season, who willingly serve the coffee hour and as greeter. This activity has proven over and over again to be a wonderful outreach to visitors, members and potential members.

The board also encourages the many church activities that are displayed and advertised in the Narthex area while continuing to maintain a neat, dignified, uncluttered area so that members and visitors are able to move around to socialize and continue to be "Redeemer friendly".

Barbara Bishop, Secretary

GREETERS SCHEDULE



Apr. 5	Jane Hoivik & Shirley Zatkalik
Apr. 12	Easter—Ladies Guild
Apr. 19	Sybil Grahl & Carol Carlos
Apr. 26	Mary Beaber and Christin Wacker
<i>Submitted by Pam DeGourse</i>	

8:00	
Apr. 5	Bob Mortenson & Mary Ellen Graef
Apr. 12	Steve & Lee Procuk
Apr. 19	
Apr. 25	
10:30	
Apr. 5	Don & Helena DeGourse
Apr. 12	Don & Carolyn Plesner
Apr. 19	
Apr. 25	
<i>Submitted by Pam DeGourse</i>	

KIDS IN CHURCH

3-year-old Reese :

'Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name. Amen.'



Scrip

April Scrip orders will be taken Sunday, April 19, after both services. Your order will be returned the following Sunday, April 26. The order is late this month as their offices will be closed for inventory and also I don't want to take orders on Easter Sunday. Scrip is the same gift cards purchased at various retail establishments. See Sybil Grahl (475-0263) in the Narthex. The proceeds are used for various mission projects.

*Submitted by Sybil Grahl
Ladies Guild Secretary*

Ladies Guild—Lutheran Women in Mission

Camp Biloxi, MS is a crucial mission in our area devastated by Hurricane Katrina and Rita. Restoring Faith, Home and Community with a \$12,000 grant from the Lutheran Women's Missionary League will enable this mission to continue at Camp Biloxi, Camp Restore and LINC New Orleans. 2,396 homes to date have been repaired (homes in which the homeowners lacked the funds and/or labor to rebuild on their own), but thousands of other homes are still in need of reconstruction and repair. This mission is not possible without continued prayers and financial support. The large MITE BOX will be on the oak console in the Narthex on April 5 for your coins and bills. The LWML and all those who receive grants from our monthly in gatherings thank all of you who open your hearts and billfolds to other's needs each month!



SARASOTA ZONE FALL

LWML Rally at Redeemer, Nov. 7, 2009. Mark the date NOW—more info will be coming. ALL women are invited to attend, if you wish to assist in any way, please see or call Vicky Davis (941) 473-7522.

Submitted by Vicky Davis

Child Care

Child Care Ingathering Basket—Sunday—April 5. Redeemer members and friends are gathering much needed items for our mission outreach to the Child Care. Let's fill the basket on the oak console in the Narthex April 5. The following Sundays the basket will be on the bench next to the Men's Room. **NEEDED:** non-scented Baby Wipes, Foaming Hand Wash refills, paper towels, Kleenex, trash bags, window cleaner, small paper plates, Gold Fish Crackers, Gummy Bears, and pretzels. When we donate, they don't have to buy! The LWML and all the children who benefit from these items thank all of you who open your hearts to the children's needs.

Submitted by Vicky Davis

Human Care



Our shut-in list remains the same. Check your bulletins for names and visit a shut-in if you have time.

Messiah Migrant Mission is in need of items for their food shelf. Your generosity is appreciated next time we have a door offering.

Our Christian Support group continues to meet in the Narthex on the last Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. Let your friends know about this group. (It's open to the public as well.)

Sr. Fellowship is ongoing. We serve about twelve members on the first and third Thursday of the month. Cards, games and lunch are in the works. Come join us.

The Big Red Bus was here on March 22nd. I haven't got the total yet, but we had quite a few who signed up.

Stephen Ministers were commissioned on March 29th. They are Joe Carlos, Ruth Speer and Dottie LaMere.

Our Caring Network is going strong. Lessie Kirch heads this organization and is doing a super job. Thanks Lessie. Be sure to call your leader or Lessie if anyone in your team is in need of help.

Our board is no longer sending birthday cards to every member, but we are remembering members who are ill or grieving.

I find it necessary to step down from my position as chairperson of the Human Care Board. We will be spending more time in Minnesota addressing some pressing family needs. No replacement has been found, but board members will carry on the best they can. Our board consists of Diana Collins, Elma Cancellieri, Carol Carlos, Carol Haupt and Lessie Kirch. Thanks to all the members of Redeemer who have so generously supported the programs of our board!

Jesus says: My command is this: love each other as I have loved you.

Submitted by Marj Sterriker

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for submission of articles for May is **Sunday, April 19th by 12 noon.**

If you have an article you would like to submit for the newsletter, either e-mail it to letastender@gmail.com or place it in the newsletter box in the church office.

Articles received after **April 19th** will be held for the June newsletter.



Please be sure to put your name on the article so I can contact you if there are any questions.

Leta Stender

Thrivent Financial For Lutherans

We look forward to a busy and challenging 2009 for our Charlotte County congregations! Thrivent Financial participates with congregations and individuals in providing matching funds to a variety of charitable endeavors. Thrivent Financial provides these donations through the following programs:

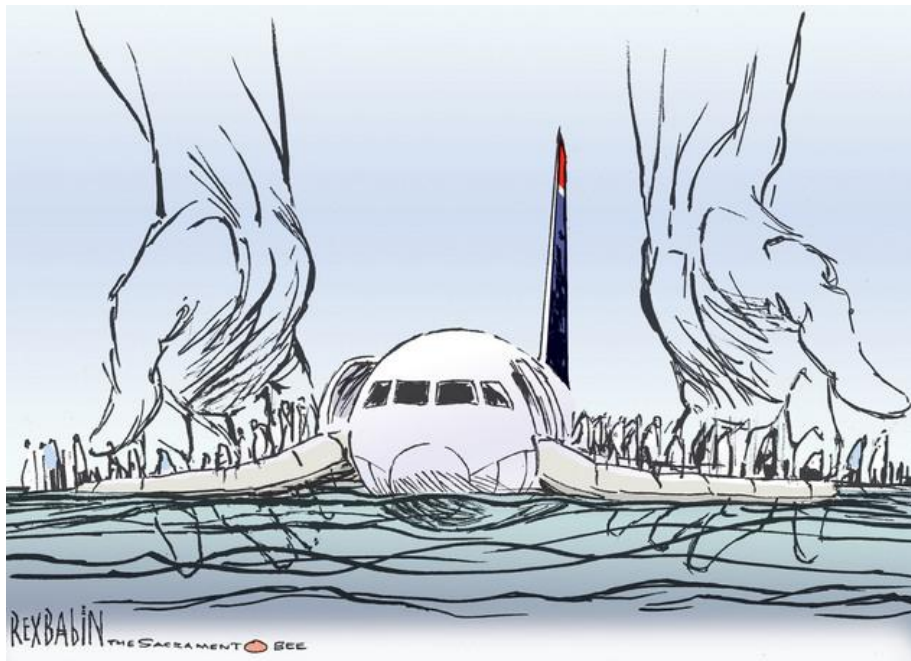
CARE ABOUND IN COMMUNITIES: Thrivent Financial members receive financial support and other resources for volunteer projects and/or fund-raising activities that benefit individuals, families, local communities or organizations, excluding congregations. Members submit activity/funding requests to their local Thrivent chapter leadership board. In 2009, the Charlotte County Chapter Board will have \$11,212 in matching funds.

CARE IN CONGREGATIONS: Through the *Care in Congregations* program, Thrivent Financial members receive financial support and other resources for volunteer projects and/or fundraising activities that benefit their Lutheran congregations and related Lutheran institutions. In 2009, Redeemer has received \$1,020 in matching funds.

THE GIVING PLUS PROGRAM: Thrivent Financial benefit members are eligible to participate in the *Giving Plus* program. This program adds \$1 for every \$2 contributed by a member to an eligible Lutheran organization (not including congregations) up to a maximum of \$300 per organization, per year. For example, one could donate \$600 to Redeemer Lutheran Child Care and Thrivent will donate an additional \$300! In order to receive these matching funds the *Giving Plus* program form must be submitted. The form is located on the Information desk in the narthex or may be obtained by calling or e-mailing the church office.

Submitted by Mary Beaber

Rex Babin's best interpretation of 'Miracle on the Hudson'



Youth Pictures

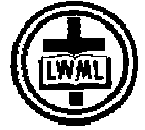
Crop Walk



Valentine's Party



Ladies Guild



We are approaching the end of another season. The Guild's last meeting was March 4th with 17 present. We welcome Gudrum Janke as our newest member. Guest Jeanell Peak was welcomed.

April 1st will be our last meeting of the season. It will be a regular meeting with no program. It was decided not to have the usual salad luncheon due to the Lenten Supper that day. We will have election of offices. If you would like any of these positions please come forward.

Margie Cypher is stepping down as treasurer. Our thanks go to her for the many years she has served as treasurer.

Easter will soon be here and a chairman is needed for the coffee hour.

Jane Hoivik is seeking cash donations for the Easter Baskets for the shut-ins.

The Spring Rally is at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Port Charlotte on April 25th. Registration is \$5.00---the deadline is April 18th. All ladies of Redeemer are invited to attend. We will car pool from Redeemer.

The child care is in need of paper towels, trash bags, non-scented baby wipes, window cleaner & animal crackers. Please bring your items to the church and place them in the child care basket in the Narthex. These needed supplies are our mission.

Come join us April 1st for dessert & beverages at 12:30--meeting begins at 1:00.

Submitted by Linda Rogers, Vice President (941) 697-1117

Service Directory/Classified Ads

Services

Beautician/Manicurist

Debbie Balogh
Linda Pontello

Purple Palace
Purple Palace

941-475-0731
941-475-0731

Pressure Cleaning - Matt & Michelle Finley - Hoover Pressure Cleaning - 697-6886 Tell us you saw us in the Redeemer Newsletter & get a 10% discount. Licensed & Insured - www.hooverpressure.com

6" Seamless Gutters-Jim W. Gossett, Residential Const, Handyman Licensed & Insured
Home: (941) 698-9940; Cell: (941) 445-2074

J & J Lawn Service—Quality service at an affordable price. Mowing, weed-eating, blowing, edging, and palm tree trimming. Call John at (941) 456-1163 for a free estimate.

John Toth Handyman. If it's broken, I can fix it. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Home: (941) 697-1670 Cell: (910) 320-4987

Grandma's Domestic Service — Pet Sitting, Errands & Dr. Visits, Help with Elderly & Invalids, Cleaning & Cooking, House & Yard Work — Call Carol (941) 474-4926

Sales—Rentals Pineapple Gulf Properties—Glenda McDorman, Owner/Broker (Lessie Kirch's Daughter)
880 S. McCall Rd., Englewood (941) 473-0300—Office (941) 330-7922—Cell

HOUSE WATCHING - Watch your house while you are back home in the north. Weekly or monthly inspection with written report on findings. Minor repairs if needed included. Monthly - \$25.00 Weekly - \$12.00 If interested, call Ed Sita 475-8116

Youth Pictures

Spaghetti Dinner



From The Office



DIRECTORY

ADDRESS CHANGES

Laura Brooks is now a resident of:
Wynwood Retirement Community
40405 6-Mile Road
Northville, MI 48168-2368
Cell: (941) 716-0778

Laura loves to hear from her Redeemer family!!

Changes are thru March 22 2009.



*Thank you,
Jennifer Steele, Church Secretary*

Christian Support Group

How do you feel? Do you give an honest answer? The Christian Support Group meet the last Wednesday of the month at 10:00 am in the Church Narthex. Share the true inner emotions. All are welcome.

Submitted by Helena DeGourse

Special Thank You

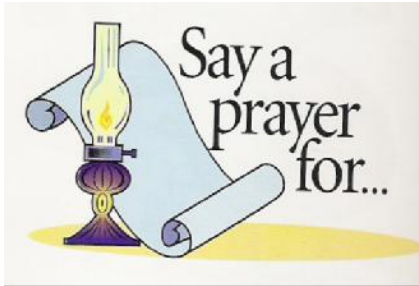
A Special Thank You to each of my Redeemer family for your many prayers, visits, cards, phone calls and gifts, during my illness. God has truly blessed me by surrounding me with wonderful Christians. Again, my sincere and heartfelt thanks for all the prayers offered on my behalf.

Pat Wilcoxon



HEALING:

Members



Henrietta Appold
 Ione Comstock
 Marie Elphick
 Cecil Grah
 Tonyua Hollis
 Bob Johnson
 Joan Johnson
 Charles Keller
 Cliff Larsen
 Leona Morrison
 Harriet Payne
 Carolyn Plesner
 Don Plesner
 Tom Poyer
 Sharron Schultz
 David Sinowetski
 Ed Sita & family
 Pastor Thomason
 Dick Voelker
 Pat Wilcoxon

Friends & Relatives
 Elaine Baron
 Ella Boegeman
 Casimer Boroski & Family
 Georgia Bush
 Kay Cypher
 Dorothy Doenges
 Debbie Harrison
 Hal
 Larry Headun
 Michelle Hickner
 Howard Kagay
 Rachel Kagay
 Jeremy Krienke
 Rev. Howie Krienke
 Estella Lewis
 John Lichty
 Marie Liebl

Elsie Malecki
 Ann McCullough
 Kaye Ann Nagel
 Judy Nagel
 Charles Pentecost, Jr.
 Sherrie Rhoades
 Audrey Slusher
 Nancy Sly
 Michael Stio
 Marion Talley
 Katie Taseff
 Polly Tice
 Phyllis Tucker
 Kathy Walsh
 Helen Weishaar



Ilse Berner
 Herb Bohm
 Gloria Carlson
 Evelyn Etheridge
 Earl Gossett
 Ruth Jansch
 Clara & Walter Mitchell
 Ruth Sutley



Military Personnel

Daniel Anderson
 Adam Buchner
 Eric Byrne
 Kevin Copeman
 Christopher Dutch
 Stephen Geib
 Brian Hollis
 Nathan Hudson

Brian Jackson
 Jennie Janssen
 Keith Janssen
 Joshua Jones
 Jeremy Twombly
 Matthew Walenta
 Charles Weishaar

Day Care Graduation



Day Care Pancake Breakfast



Stewardship

Gratitude for God's Blessings, April 2009

"Taxes, Tips, and Tithes"

Many people dread April 15th because it is the deadline for filing 2008 tax returns. Others may not be all that concerned because they had so much withholding tax that they will actually get a refund.



Most Americans would be thrilled if they had to pay only 10% of their income for taxes. But we know better. In many places the state sales tax alone is 8%. Social Security tax is another 7.65% (15.3% if you are a pastor, professional church worker, or others who are considered self-employed for tax purposes). State and federal income taxes are in addition to these other taxes. It doesn't take long to figure out that we are paying "double and triple tithes" for state and federal taxes.

And how about tips when we go out to eat at a nice restaurant? 10% used to be the standard tip, but in most people's minds it has moved up to 15-20%. We may grumble a little about this extra charge, but we pay it.

What happens when our pastor preaches and teaches about a tithe (10% of income) for the support of the Lord's work through the local congregation? Some people view that as an impossible expectation. Others may view that as a good starting point and rejoice that they are able to move beyond the tithe because they want to respond generously from what God has graciously bestowed upon them.

Is giving a tithe of the financial blessings that God has given to us an impossible expectation? For most of us it probably isn't if we practice discipline and good judgment in managing our financial resources. Some have learned to use the 10-10-80 plan. This plan involves giving the first 10% to the Lord, using the next 10% for saving and investing and then learning to live on the remaining 80%. It is not the perfect plan or the only plan, but it is a good one to start with if you find that you have not been disciplined in your handling of money.

Is giving a tithe a command for Christians? No, it isn't, because to make the tithe into a command would make it more like taxes and tips. The big spiritual question about Christian giving is this one: "*What percentage of the financial blessings that God has entrusted to me do I believe He is calling me to give?*" We do not give in order to meet the church budget, or do our fair share or because someone puts a guilt trip on us. 2 Corinthians 9:7 gives us this wise counsel: "*Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful [literally, hilarious] giver.*"

The key is to talk to God in prayer, asking for His guidance regarding giving, and then moving forward empowered by His Holy Spirit to be free and joyful in our Christian giving.

Joseph Friess, Stewardship Chairman

