



THERE IS NO EASY WAY TO SAY THIS ...

THE SOBERING TRUTH

Whether you deliver it or receive it, we all have been on either side of bad news. We all have been in a difficult and uncomfortable situation. Perhaps you were called back to the doctor's office following a biopsy or an MRI exam. Perhaps you were sick to your stomach about the suspicions concerning your spouse having an affair. Perhaps you were assigned the task of giving a co-worker his walking papers. Or perhaps you had to tell a close friend that his abusive drug or alcohol use was destroying not only his family, but your relationship too. Whatever the uncomfortable circumstances, delivering or receiving bad news is never easy.

This newsletter article is about delivering some bad news to you. Like I said, delivering bad news is never easy and receiving this bad news will not be easy either. Confronting a difficult and uncomfortable situation is a challenge. It takes courage to speak the sobering truth. Friends, there is no easy way to say this: Redeemer is experiencing some serious issues. These issues involve

worship attendance and weekly contributions. And let me be clear, these issues in question involve both you and me.

Now I already know that I may lose some of you during your reading of this article, but please consider reading it in its entirety. I know you all care very much about Redeemer Lutheran Church, so please read. I trust that the Holy Spirit will open your eyes to the solution, yes, to the solution to these issues we are facing together.

DIVINE SERVICE ATTENDANCE

After the settling of the dust, this is what our membership currently looks like:

Communicant Members	139
Associate Members	52
<u>Baptized Children</u>	<u>22</u>
Total	213

Our church secretary does an excellent job tracking the attendance of all our members. With the use of Shepherd's Staff, a church management software tool, tracking attendance is made easy. So, of the 213 Communicant Members, Associate Members, and

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STEWARDSHIP

Busyness is the new black. It's stylish. We spend an inordinate amount of time comparing how busy we are with everyone else. We compare our schedules, our kid's schedules, how productive we are and how much we have because of it to everyone around us. And if we don't do or have what the next guy does or has, we just get busier and produce more so that we can.

This consumes our conversations and thoughts. And this should give us pause: Who is consuming whom, here? Are we the consumer or are we those consumed? It's no accident that our adversary the devil is described as a lion prowling around seeking to devour us, to consume us. He gives us the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. For if he can keep us busy in "muchness" and "manyness," he can be satisfied.

And this is why the Lord, after finishing all His work of creation, rested on the seventh day. This is why He established the Sabbath day—to give His people rest from all their work. As they rested, He continued to work for them, to satisfy them, to fill them with His gifts—food from heaven by His Word and Promise.

That day came when from our Lord's cross and in His death, He proclaimed, "It is finished" (John 19:30). And so His work of redemption was complete. And so His body rested in the tomb, the belly of the earth. Though He is the Lord God who always works, yet as the Lord rested on the original Sabbath, now Jesus kept the Sabbath by

resting in the tomb and rising from the dead to live forever. For this is why He came. This is why He became man: to draw all to Himself so that He could give rest and refreshment to the weary and the heavy laden.

The Sabbath is a gift, not a burden. It is a gift of time free from the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Sabbath is time for rest and refreshment, a time free from anxiety to enjoy the gifts God gives, all of them—His Word, His Promises, His Sacraments, His creation, everything. It is a foretaste of the rest we shall enjoy in heaven.

Sadly for many of us rest has become work. It's become drudgery. We long for it but we aren't able to do it because there's so much to be done and so little time to do it. But really what's the rush? Why are we so hurried and harried? Have we forgotten that Jesus is raised from the dead and lives forever?

Sabbath is God's gift of time free from all of the anxiety and hurry of this world so that we can rest, be refreshed by the gifts God gives. Society won't do it for us. They are addicted to the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Though we are in the world, we are not of it. We are the people of God, His own children by water and Word, joined to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus lives. And so shall we. So rest in the promise of our Savior that sin, death, and time have not hold on you because Jesus is raised from the dead. Jesus lives. And so shall we, forever.

FROM THE TREASURER



June 2015:

<u>ACTUAL</u>		<u>BUDGET</u>		<u>OVER/(UNDER)</u>
INCOME:	\$22,040	INCOME:	\$15,399	\$6,641
EXPENSE:	\$16,242	EXPENSE:	\$16,837	(\$595)

YEAR TO DATE (AS OF JUNE 30, 2015)

INCOME:	\$101,545	INCOME:	\$92,448	\$9,097
EXPENSE:	\$104,556	EXPENSE:	\$107,347	(\$2,791)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

In Church on Sunday July 12th as well as at the Voter's meeting, we as Brothers and Sisters in Christ said our goodbyes and well wishes to our friends Joe and Carol Carlos. Some tears were shed and it was both a happy and sad time for us at Redeemer. As they enter into yet another phase in their life, we only wish them the best going forward and safe travels. I have asked them to stay in touch with us from time to time as they initially travel the United States and eventually settle down again in Texas near their daughter.

On Sunday I also had the privilege of conducting my first Voter's meeting as your President. This is very humbling for me and I thank everyone for their support, blessing and well wishes as we continue to grow Redeemer Lutheran Church and Child Care. Please pray and consider all of the ways you can help us as we move forward.

We now have two very important positions to fill, the Office of Vice President and the Chair of the Board of Human Care. These are obviously very important positions and I ask that you prayerfully consider these and other Committees and Boards for participation.

The Property Management Board, with financial help from the Endowment Committee has repaired the Church carpeting, installed gutters on the Church and Fellowship building and will start to repair and clean our beautiful steeple in the very near future.

Please consider how you can use your talents, time and resources that the Lord has blessed you with. Feel free to contact me or Pastor Kress at any time if you have any concerns or want to help out. For now (as my friend Joe Carlos would put it), "See you in Church!"



SERVING THE LORD

Pastor Rev. James Kress
Seasonal Pastor
LHM Ambassador

Child Care Director Wendy Horvath
Office Secretary Deb Horner
Organist Bill Bowers
Choir Director Collins Sita
Newsletter Editor Deb Horner

OFFICERS

President Stephen Wurster
Vice President
Treasurer Denise Fountain
Secretary June Brown

BOARDS

Head Elder
Christian Ed. Pam Replinger
Human Care
Outreach Cindy Johnson
Assimilation Mary Kay Straw
School Board Bill Bowers
Stewardship Rev. Mark Steinke
Youth James Straw
Financial Secretary Deb Horner
Property Mgmt. Todd Armstrong

GROUPS/GUILDS

Ladies Guild Sally Zierdt
Men's Group
Altar Guild
Coffee Hour

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Children of Redeemer Lutheran congregation, we have enjoyed the celebration of Divine Service with 174 of them for at least one

Sunday of this year so far. This number, however, does not include a number of our supportive shut-ins nor those who haven't attended a single Sunday service this year.

I might also add that of the 174 members attending Divine Service, 21 of our 22 Children have been in attendance for at least one Sunday of this year.

One more additional note reveals that 41 of our 52 Associate Members attended at least one Sunday this year, but the truth be told, 36 of the 41 Associate Members attended almost every Sunday while they were here, which for some of them covers about the first three or four months of the year. These numbers do not include the handful of Associate Members who were unable to visit our area this past season. Bottom line is this: Associate Members are faithful to our Lord and to Redeemer when they reside in their Florida home.

Let's take a look at our 139 Communicant Members, shall we? Of the 174 members who have attended at least one Sunday Divine Service so far this year, 21 were Children and 41 were Associate Members. We can calculate then, that 112 Communicant Members attended at least one Sunday Divine Service so far this year. Unfortunately, this also means that there were 27 Communicant Members who have yet to attend a single Sunday Divine Service this year. Like I said, there is no easy way to say this.

You might ask, "Hold on! What has been our Sunday attendance average each month this year?" That's a good question and I might add that even more can be made known from these numbers. Here are our monthly Sunday attendance averages for 2015:

January	123
February	157
March	158
April	124
May	87
June	66
July	58

So if 174 of the 213 Members, Associate Members, and Children attended at least one Sunday Divine Service, can we conclude that the averages above look pretty good? Unfortunately, there is one major observation that cannot be overlooked; the 174 members are those who have attended at least one Sunday service, not all 30 Sunday services. The 174 members are not attending every Sunday. The 174 only indicates that of the 213 members of Redeemer only 174 members have attended at least one Sunday Divine Service.

Shepherd's Staff can easily produce the attendance records of every individual member, but that is not the business of this newsletter article. Each of you knows well, when or how often you have made it to Divine Service on Sunday. As I bring this difficult and uncomfortable issue before you, let us remember it is neither easy to deliver it nor is it easy to receive it. However, we cannot ignore it.

The monthly attendance average also takes into consideration the large number of visitors that worship with us during the winter season as well as spring break. We receive visitors throughout the entire year,

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but the numbers are highest between January and April. In the month of January alone this year, we greeted 29 visitors on average each Sunday. And those are the folks who write their names in the red fellowship booklet. There's no telling how many visitors we actually receive each Sunday during the busy winter season.

What does this all mean? It means that if you have been in church over the last couple of months or looked at the averages above, you can conclude that of our 139 Communicant Members, a surprisingly small percentage of them are faithfully attending Divine Services on Sunday mornings. Moreover, the Communicant Members who are not faithfully attending worship services, then we can also conclude that children are not attending Sunday service as well. This is a serious issue, isn't it? But remember, this issue isn't your problem. This issue is our problem. And we face it together.

The writer to the Hebrews says, "Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:23-24).

WEEKLY CONTRIBUTIONS

This, of course, brings us to our next issue, an issue I absolutely wish I could avoid. I am duty bound to bring to your attention the issue concerning your attendance in the Divine Service because it has to do with your spiritual wellbeing. A Christian cannot survive spiritually in the world unless he is nourished with the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Word and Sacrament. Our spiritual life is dependent upon the One Who is Life, Jesus Christ, the Son

of God, the Redeemer and Savior of the world. The issue concerning worship, I am given the charged to call sinners to repentance and offer the forgiveness of sins through the means of grace. But when it comes to the discussion of your contributions, your tithes, your weekly offerings, I would rather train for a marathon than discuss this. But again, this issue concerning Redeemer's finances isn't your problem, it's our problem and we face it together. And just so you know, I am just as guilty as the next person concerning this issue.

As the low attendance averages among our members affects them spiritually, it also directly affects the weekly contributions received. And just as Shepherd's Staff can produce accurate attendance records, so can it produce an accurate record of a household's weekly, monthly, quarterly, and yearly contribution. But please, don't be frightened by that bit of news. There is only one person here at Redeemer who has access to your contribution records ... and I am thankful it is not me. This is one area I remain at a far distance. In fact, I refuse to gain any knowledge of a household's contributions. It's none of my business. Rest assured our financial secretary is the only one who has access to your contribution records. Our financial secretary is a trustworthy individual. And she is held to the highest level of confidentiality. So, let your heart take comfort knowing that your financial contributions are only known by the financial secretary – and of course, there is also you and God.

I did, however, ask the financial secretary to produce some numbers (not names) of household contributions received during the first 6 months of this year. I asked her to separate households with at least one member in the work force and all the other

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households who are retired. The households in the work force totaled 30 while the retired households added up to 92 (this number also includes our Associate Members). So based on the data entered into Shepherd's Staff, there are a total of 122 households or contribution envelopes in circulation. Now, here is where some of the numbers may begin to startle you.

WORKING HOUSEHOLDS

Envelopes in Circulation	30
Envelopes that Gave	24

RETIRED HOUSEHOLDS

Envelopes in Circulation	92
Envelopes that Gave	74

WORKING HOUSEHOLDS

Given to an Envelope	\$12,065.00
Avg. Weekly per Envelope	\$15.47
Avg. Annually per Envelope	\$804.33

RETIRED HOUSEHOLDS

Given to an Envelope	\$51,044.00
Avg. Weekly per Envelope	\$21.34
Avg. Annually per Envelope	\$1,109.65

Based on these numbers alone, we could conclude that our retired households contribute to a greater extent to the financial needs of the congregation than do our working households. It's not just because there are more retired households, but because their average weekly contribution is greater than the working household and results in a greater annual average as well.

What I believe we could speculate here is that the working household doesn't attend Sunday Divine Services as frequently as does the retired household, thus bringing the weekly and annual average envelope of the working household down.

Or we could also consider some of these numbers:

CONTRIBUTING LESS THAN \$10 A WEEK

Working Households	21 of 30	or	70%
Retired Household	42 of 92	or	46%

CONTRIBUTING \$10 OR MORE A WEEK

Working Household	9 of 30	or	30%
Retired Household	50 of 92	or	54%

With these numbers I suppose we could speculate that our retired households have been better catechized or have come to the knowledge of the importance of stewardship and first-fruits giving. But, we can't conclude that all of our working households don't have the same values as the retired households. That wouldn't be fair. We all love and support Redeemer Lutheran Church, both Working Households and Retired Households. This you have all proven, especially this previous year.

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

Allow me the time to tell you a personal story about my household. More than 20 years ago, when our children were still very young and I was very much a layperson, our household made a huge change in the way we contributed to our church. You see, up until that time, we were giving our leftovers to the church rather than our first-fruits.

"What are left-overs and first-fruits giving?" you ask. After paying all the bills, getting the groceries, buying the booze, paying for the weekend away, and all the other luxuries, then what ever was "left-over" that's what we gave to the church ... IF we went to church on Sunday. First-fruits giving is giving to the church before paying the bills, getting the groceries, and anything else for that matter. Moreover, first-fruits giving is giving to the church even when we missed a Sunday here and there.

"So what was the change that took place in my household?" you say, attempting to get me

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back on track. What happened was this: a friend from church gave me a cassette with the title “Dare God” written on it. It was a lecture by a man who told his story about how he “Dared God” to out-give him. Each year he would up the ante in his weekly contributions to the church to “Dare God” to respond with His gifts of grace. The man on the cassette said God never disappointed. “Each year,” he said, “God gave more to him than what he gave to the church in his weekly offering.”

Yes, God is good and He is good all the time, but we need to be careful about our motivation to give. The man who spoke on the tape may have had the best intentions, however we need to be careful that our giving isn’t a “works righteous” giving. Holy Scripture reveals God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7). However, our giving doesn’t merit God’s grace, or salvation, or even forgiveness. We give not out of reluctance, nor out of compulsion. We give as a result of the Gospel.

After listening to the man on the cassette and searching through the Scriptures learning what God says about first-fruits giving, I was determined to convince my household to make this change. Making this change wasn’t easy. It demanded a change in our attitude. The Word of God says, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:2). Our household did not start at 10%. We didn’t believe we could start at 10%, but we agreed to start at a percent and commit to it for the entire year. After the first year, we recognized that we were never in need or want. The Lord provided all we needed.

How did we respond? We increased our first-

fruits weekly contribution for the next year and the results were always the same: we were never in need or want. Year after year we kept increasing our first-fruits giving and year after year the Lord blessed us. The Lord always provided for our needs. The Lord never disappointed us. Although we disappointed Him in our sin and selfishness, the Lord was always gracious in His giving to us.

Making a commitment to a yearly tithe isn’t easy. It’s difficult, but we live under the cross receiving God’s grace in the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Dedication of your household to a tithe, whether it’s 1%, 3%, 5%, 10% or more isn’t easy. But, the commitment should begin at some place and at some time. Talk to the members of your household. Pray as a family about it. And then cheerfully commit to it.

Speaking from experience here, you will never, ever regret making a commitment to the church in your first-fruits weekly contribution. The Lord has never disappointed our household, not once. And I am confident He will not disappoint your household. The Lord will always provide ... always. “So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones” (Genesis 50:21).

THE SOLUTION TO OUR ISSUES

My friends, if you were thinking that the solution to our declining church attendance and our decreasing weekly contributions were in us, you should be sorely mistaken. We can never be the solution to our problems. The problems are ours, yes, but we are not the solution. We are always the problem. The solution to these issues and, in fact, all issues in life is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When we fall short in our honoring, worshipping, and giving thanks to God for all

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of His benefits to us, He is ever there to forgive us of our sins and failures. The parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) is one of a thousand examples of God's ever gracious and merciful attitude toward us poor sinners. We try our best, but our best isn't good enough. We need to turn, that is, we need to rely and trust in Christ Jesus. He has done all things well for you, for me, and for His Church.

So the solution to our problem isn't you or me. The solution is Jesus. Certainly Jesus will work through us and in us to accomplish His plan for building and increasing His kingdom here on earth. However, your salvation is already guaranteed through His life, suffering, death, and resurrection from the dead.

"Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that He opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful" (Hebrew 10:19-23).

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Pastor Kress



Vacation Bible School was a great success again this year! Fifty-four children attended. A BIG Thank You goes out to all the volunteers for lending their time and talents. You helped the children discover how Jesus works through them in their everyday lives and how He gives them wisdom and courage to step out in faith and serve others.



Mark you calendars for Saturday, December 5th, 2015 at 2:00 PM. Redeemer will be participating in the Annual Rotonda West Christmas Parade. If you are interested in participating, please contact Cindy Johnson at 815-228-0536.

BELL RINGING



It was a “bell ringing” kind of day on June 24, 2015!!! It is the moment we have all been waiting for..... the last day of chemo!!! Yes

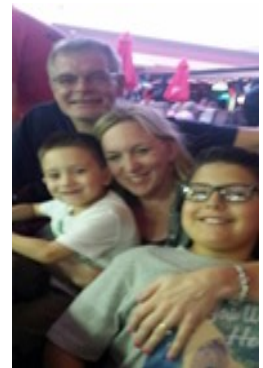
that is right, after what seemed like an eternity (just over 3 years) our dear grandson Angel has completed his chemotherapy. This is a huge relief for our family. No longer does Angel have to go through spinal taps, monthly chemo treatments and the weeks of exhaustion that Angel would endure after chemo. He even got his port out this past Wednesday, July 29.

We are so appreciative of all the prayers that the members of Redeemer have offered up on account of Angel. There are times when you feel so helpless, especially in the midst of a child or grandchild being sick, and yet the strength to keep moving forward comes from the family of believers and the prayers of the faithful. Without a doubt, Angel will still have obstacles to overcome as he has contracted Hepatitis from all of the blood transfusions that he has undergone but overall, he is now a happy, active young boy turning 10 August 19th.



As some of you know the journey to overcome his type of cancer has taken the better part of 3 years, when he was first diagnosed with leukemia, he had to undergo an initial heavy round of chemotherapy to eradicate the majority (approximately 90%)of the leukemia cells, the treatment then calls for a monthly chemo IV therapy, along with a series of chemo pills and a monthly spinal tap to determine white blood count, etc.

Ironically, while the adults have worried about Angel and his health and shed many a tear because of what he has had to go through with this illness, Angel remains strong and steadfast. We are so appreciative to the Lord that he has pulled Angel through this and that Angel has had the opportunity to become such a strong young man despite the illness! While we were up in Chicago in June we were even able to see Angel play some pick up softball with the family. He had big smiles all around. We look forward to all that God has in store for him as he continues to grow up, we are sure it is something awesome, as God has already brought him through so much!!



We thank God for this miraculous gift. This whole experience is a constant reminder to “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.” Proverbs 3:5



LCEF—BACK TO SCHOOL TIME!!

It's "Back to School" time! Parents love it, kids hate it, and the jury is still out on the teachers! J All of us are bombarded with back to school sales for clothes and school supplies. Retailers count sales during this time as one of their biggest times. Big money is spent on clothes that are quickly outgrown. Think of how much money is spent on supplies that are quickly lost or broken. Although these things are needed/wanted, the phrase "money down the drain" comes to mind.

And then there is Lutheran Church Extension Fund. Accounts with LCEF are never "money down the drain". You are able to receive interest that is competitive and it helps LCMS congregations further their mission and ministry. Many different types of accounts are available to fit your personal needs. Let's get in the groove as we head back to school by starting an LCEF account today. It will never be "money down the drain".

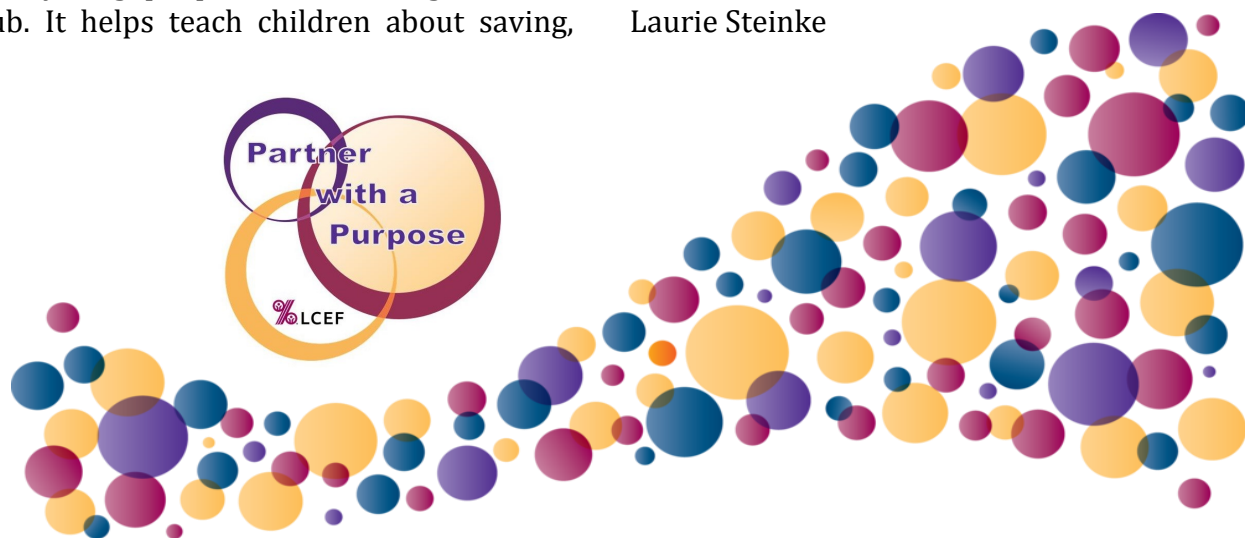
Back to school means education. It's never too early to start educating children about saving habits. The best account LCEF has to offer young people is the Young Investor Club. It helps teach children about saving,

offers a 3.5% interest, and even gives bonus money for good grades and community service.

We just started an account for our new granddaughter Catherine Anne. It's her account, her parents are the custodians of the account, but Redeemer, Englewood is the church we listed on the enrollment form. The more accounts Redeemer has listed, the more of a rebate our church will get if, and when, we need LCEF funding for mission growth opportunities.

Please also consider enrolling in LCEF's "Joyful Response" program in order to help Redeemer get on track with its' financial obligations. It is an online giving program that you can use to maintain your commitments to the church whether you are in the area, on vacation, or back home in the north! There are a variety of choices for giving that can fit your budgetary needs. You can use this program to fulfill your regular giving to the church or you can use it to share extra blessings with Redeemer. Questions??? Just ask!

In His Service,
Laurie Steinke



JOYFUL RESPONSE (LCEF) PROGRAM

Dear Members and Associate Members of Redeemer Lutheran Church,

The Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) has a stewardship program called *Joyful Response*. This program can benefit us as individuals, as a congregation, as well as our fellow Lutherans Synod-wide. What's so special about this program? It is offered at absolutely no cost to us as individuals or as a congregation.

Joyful Response is a great description of how the Gospel moves us into action. The Gospel message of Jesus' love and sacrifice for us motivates us to respond, in faith, by the power of the Holy Spirit. *Joyful Response* allows us to be more conscientious and consistent about our giving.

Through *Joyful Response*, (LCEF) allows us a very simple way to give to the mission and support of Christ's church here in Englewood and abroad as well. As already mentioned *Joyful Response* is free. It is also a secure program that allows us to give our tithes, offerings and gifts on a scheduled basis to Redeemer Lutheran Church.

This program has several advantages for so many people. Here are a few:

FOR YOU: It allows you consistent and scheduled giving in a safe and secure way. If you live here in Englewood, there is no more need to search for your offering envelopes, writing a check and waiting for it to be cashed. For those who spend time on vacations or who split their time between Florida and a northern state, it enables you to continue to support the ministry here in Englewood while away.

FOR YOUR LOCAL CHURCH: It enables better budgeting. We are able to rely on specific and consistent income so that bills can be paid and mission opportunities can be planned and carried out.

FOR THE CHURCH AT

LARGE: It enables the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod to use the funds to grow mission churches for greater outreach and the spread of the Gospel saving message. This would enable a greater joyful response from more children of the faith from generation to generation.

As stated above, your automatic contributions are safe and secure in a proven system. Only one person, Deb Horner, our Financial Secretary, would know of any personal information locally. And did I mention *Joyful Response* is free?

Friends, all of this points to good and faithful stewardship on the part of the members of Redeemer Lutheran Church and for the Church as an entire entity.

If you would like an application, please contact the church office. Please look it over and prayerfully consider your participation in this stewardship program. If you believe *Joyful Response* will be a benefit to you, please complete the form, indicate on the envelope *Joyful Response* and return to our church office to the attention of Deb Horner, Financial Secretary. If you are unable to print out an application, they may be picked up at the Visitor's Desk in the church Narthex or in our church office.

Thank you for your consideration as we work and walk together to carry out the work and ministry of Christ Jesus our Lord and only Savior. The Lord richly bless you in His grace.

Stephen Wurster

President, Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care

*Rev. Mark Steinke,
Chairman, Board of Stewardship*

Rev. Jim Kress

Pastor, Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care

*Joyful
Response®*

Joyful Response®

Our congregation offers you a way to respond joyfully in meeting your stewardship commitments.



Use *Joyful Response* to:

- Give consistently.
- Help you prepare and fulfill your stewardship plans.
- Share your generosity efficiently and predictably.

Complete this form and return it to the church office.

Joyful Response service provided by:



10733 Sunset Office Drive
Suite 300
St. Louis, MO 63127-1020
800-843-5233
lcef.org



LCEF StewardAccount access features provided through UMB Bank n.a. LCEF is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, LCEF investments are not FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This is not an offer to sell LCEF investments, nor a solicitation to buy. LCEF will offer and sell its securities only in states where authorized. The offer is made solely by LCEF's Offering Circular. Investors should carefully read the Offering Circular, which more fully describes associated risks.

Let's talk about time. To the friend who refuses to move on from a broken relationship, we say, "You've got to put the past behind you." To the brother or sister who's upset because of a lost opportunity, we say, "Stop worrying. You've got your whole life in front of you."

Put the past behind you.
Your whole life is in front of you.

For years, I parroted these same things to build up others. I assumed the future was in front of me and the past was behind me. And all the while, I had things backwards.

Give me five minutes, if you will, and let me tell you the joy of a radically new—but ancient—way of thinking about time: a way in which the past is directly in front of your eyes, and along with it, incredible hope and joy for the future that lays behind you.

Walking Backwards into the Future

The foundational part of the Bible, the Old Testament, teaches this ancient understanding of time. In the language of the OT, the future is behind you and the past is in front of you. The Hebrew word for "in front of" (qedem) is the same word for "past." And the word for "behind" (achar) is the basis for the word for "future" (achareet). Thus, if you were to ask Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob where the future was, they'd point behind them. Likewise, ask them where the past is, and they'd point in front of them.

The reason for this is as simple as it is insightful: we have seen the past, but we have not seen the future. We know what has happened. It is done, finished, and laid bare before our eyes. Thus the past is in front of us, where our eyes can see it. On the other hand, we don't know what the future holds. We cannot see it, thus it is hidden from our eyes or behind us. Therefore, in the Hebrew



conception of time, one might say that we are always walking backwards into the future.

History Is Pregnant with the Future

And walking backwards into the future is not only a good thing; it is a gift from God. Because if we want to know what will be, we open our eyes to what has been. History is pregnant with the future. It cradles in its womb the child of tomorrow. And in that fact is great hope for us as individuals as well as the church. Let me give you an example.

In one of the sacred songs of the OT, Psalm 77, the poet Asaph laments how bad things have become in his life. He's so troubled that he suffers from insomnia; it's like God's fingers keep his eyelids pried open. He asks a series of painful questions, like, "Will the Lord spurn forever?" and "Has God forgotten to be gracious?" But instead of being strangled by despair, he says to himself, "I will remember the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your wonders of old." That phrase, "your wonders of old," could also be translated, "your wonders in front." These divine wonders of old, the ones in front of him, are when God redeemed Israel from Egypt, split the Red Sea in half, and led his

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

people like a shepherd leads a flock. When Asaph needed hope for the future, he looked his eyes on the past. He walked with confidence backwards into the future because he saw, before his eyes, the past wherein God had heard the cries of his suffering people, saved them, and brought them joy and hope once more. And as the Lord had done in the past, he was sure to do in the future.

We Need More Asaphs

We need more Asaphs in the church today. We have an abundance of those who forecast dark days in the near future, even storms of persecution brewing on the horizon for the church in America and around the world. That may very well be so. I'm not writing to silence or downplay their warnings. I am writing, however, to remind the church that, come what may, she is marching backwards into a future rich with hope. The past is in front of us. And that past is replete with the saving acts of God in Jesus Christ for all his baptized children.

In front of us, in the past, is the hill upon which God has already defeated every foe we might face. On that bloody beam the heel of Christ crushed the head of the lying serpent. He hung upon the walls of his resurrection tomb the trophies of victory that mock death. In fact, his victory on the cross was so utterly complete that it was like the Last Day, for even tombs opened up and saints rose and walked into the holy city (Matt 28:52-53).

Open your eyes and see. Look at the past before us. There is God, our Father, smiling

at us, his sons and daughters. There is Christ, our Brother, naming us his friends. There is the Spirit, our Comforter, filling the inner darkness of our fears and worries with the brilliant rays of his love and hope. What future calamity behind us shall separate us from the love of Christ before us? Shall tribulation or distress? Shall persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, sword? Tell me, what shall separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ? Nothing, that's what. Nothing at all.

Then why are we worried? Why, as one of my friends wrote, do we so often act like the sky is falling? "Have no fear, little flock; have no fear, little flock?" the church sings. Why? "For the Father has chosen to give you the kingdom." He made us kings and queens on the day he poured a liquid crown upon our heads in baptism. He named us priests on the day he clothed us in the vestments of Jesus our great high priest. These gifts are before our eyes. This is what God has done for us.

So let us, with Asaph, remember the days of old, the days in front of us. Christ has died for you. He has been raised to a life that cannot end. He has joined you inextricably to his death and resurrection in the waters of baptism. These past acts are present gifts. And they are the basis for the confidence by which we walk backwards into the future fidelity of the Christ who is the same yesterday and today and forever.

You can read more of Chad's writings at <https://birdchadlouis.wordpress.com/> also known as the Flying Scroll.

PRAYERS

SHUT-INS: Carl & Betty Bertka, Betty Keller, Helen Perry, and Ruth Sutley.

HEALING: Mickie Abel, Neva Aldene, Alice Borowski, Melissa Brew, Pat Finkenbine, Bernice Heppner, Susan Jahns, Martin McGrath, Sandy McGrath, Bob Mortenson, Marlene Mossner, Carolyn Plesner, Don & Bonnie Roussin, Duwayne Schoeneck, Ashley Sharp, Mary Kay Straw, Fred Toth, Bob Varone, Arlene Wiley and Robert Vickey.

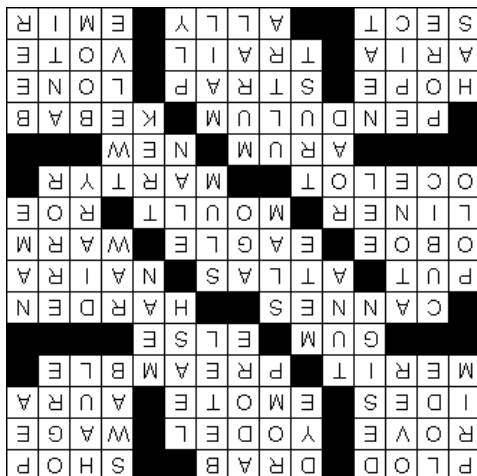
Friends & Relatives: Linny Aspery, Dick & Marilyn Bjornas, Grace Blum, Michelle Bernard, Debbie Buel, Dennis Burchell, Georgia Bush, Jack Carlos, Diane Carr, Debbie Carr, Esther Clapham, Bobbett Clark, Joanne Clymo, Bob Cote, Martin Cressman, Renee Dempsey, Dale DesJardins, Brian DeTrow, Ed DeTrow, Irene DiTommaso, James Dodge, Barb Dumeah, Bruce Everson, Darla Finkenbine, Marla Flores, Lou Fountain, Denver Fredett, Manual Galan, Glenn Galway, Liam Garland, Nancy Gleis, Shelley Roedel Gutz, Debbie Harrison, Larry Headun, Claudette Hendershot, Joel Heppner, Walter

Heppner, Glory Herget, Joan Hillis, Robin Hincman, David Hirtle, Larry Hladun, Carol Holmes, Linda Holt, Roger Houser, John Hunter, Linda Hunter, Stanley & Lynne Jablonski, Heather Johnson, Rachel Kagay, John Kearns, Elizabeth Lynn Klopfenstein, Stacey Lampert, Ray Likowski, Sean Maki, Joe Manson, Candace McGowan, Pete Mogg, John Montondo, Mike Morrissey, Maureen Nesvacil, Charles Pentecost Jr., Margo Plamondon, Mary Raines, Rachell Sanders, Ashley Scudder, Ryan Sheahan, Don Shepherd, Nancy Sly, Debbie Speer Smith, Virginia Stanley, Charles Tolley, Samantha Jo Ann Toth, George Vespa, Steven Walker, Christy Wallace, Helen Weishaar, Gordan Winkel, and Tim Wright.

Military Personnel: Mark Baranowsky, Michael Broughton, Brian Jackson, Joshua Jones, Jonathan Koen, David MacLeod, Steven Seigmundt, and Charles D. Weishaar.



Pastor and members of the church are always willing to pray for you, family members and friends. If a loved one appears on our prayer list above, please call Pastor or the church office to give us a health update so that we may either keep or remove their name. Thank you!



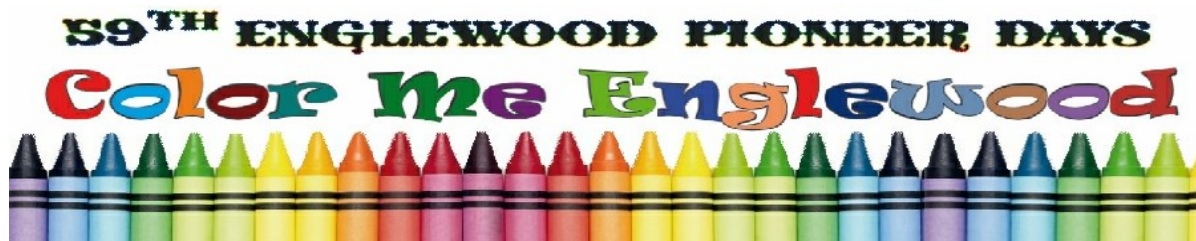
***The deadline for the September Newsletter is August 16th
Please have all your submissions sent to
redeemerfl@verizon.net OR
drop it off at the church office to
Deb by the date indicated above.
Thank You!***

BIBLE STUDY

With all the hype and excitement of the new Avengers fictional movie, *Age of Ultron*, I thought it would be advantageous for us to look into a book of the Bible containing some nonfictional biblical super heroes. The Book of Judges is just such a book. Following the death of Joshua and before the rise of Israel's monarchy, God preserved His people from being absorbed by pagan cultures through the ministry of savior-judges. Although immanently human and sometimes exceedingly wicked, God's gracious work through these men and women foreshadows His greater work of deliverance through the true and perfect Savior-Judge, Jesus Christ. In Judges you will learn about: the successful woman-man team of Deborah and Barak; the



mighty Spirit-powered deeds of Samson; and God's faithfulness to His covenantal promises to His people, ultimately fulfilled in His Son, Jesus Christ. Come join us on **Sunday mornings at 8:00 AM** in the church sanctuary to learn more about these biblical super heroes. You will be amazed how God worked through men and women and how He continues to work through you. Are you a super hero?



Redeemer will be participating in the 59th Englewood Pioneer Day parade to be held on September 7th. We will have a float and people walking in the parade. If you would like to participate in decorating the float and/or being in the parade, handing out goodies, please contact Cindy Johnson at 815-228-0536. We encourage everyone to participate in this great community event! ***Let's get Redeemer Lutheran Church and Child Care back into the community's vision and start growing our church again.***

ENGLEWOOD HELPING HANDS

At this time of year, Englewood Helping Hands is very busy and are always in need of supplies for their pantry. **Also, if you would like to volunteer to help at the pantry, contact Englewood Helping Hands at 941-474-5864.** If you would like to donate to their pantry, following is a list of the current needs: canned chicken, tuna or ham, peanut butter & jelly, mac & cheese, canned fruit, cereal, rice, soups, toilet paper, paper towels, bar soap, shampoo, clothes detergent and dish soap. Thank you for all your support.



SENIOR FELLOWSHIP

Everyone is invited to the Fellowship every Thursday, starting at 10:00. **The people attending, the more FUN we can have!!!** The most popular things to play are: Pinochle, Phase 10, SkipBO, and Hand & Foot. We also have Dominoes or other games if they are requested. There must be something you would like to have fun with, so come on out. Once in awhile we have a special home made lunch but usually everyone brings a bag lunch. Drinks and dessert furnished.



KRAFT KORNER

We are always in need of items we can sell in our corner. Even if you think it is junk "remember, your junk is someone else's treasurer. Please check around and see what you might have. We have a pretty good supply of books if you need to read while relaxing or waiting in doctors office. Come check it out.

LUTHERAN WITNESS SUBSCRIPTION

If you are not familiar with the Lutheran Witness magazine, it has undergone some wonderful improvements this past year. Renewed or new subscriptions are now being received. If you would like to renew or begin a subscription, please contact the church office. Yearly subscriptions are \$11.00 and all checks should be made out to Redeemer Lutheran Church c/o The Lutheran Witness. The Lutheran Witness can also be obtained electronically or by way of a mobile application. Go to the following link in order to get connected today: <http://www.lcms.org/resources/publications>.

PROPERTY APPRECIATION DAY

We sure could use some help on our Property Appreciations Days every month. There is outside work to do and cleaning and dusting that needs done inside the Church. If you can help, please come to the church and we will put you to work. **Our next Property Appreciation Day is August 8th, 2015 at 8:00 AM.**



SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS IN SEPTEMBER

September 5th will be the start of our Fall Sunday School session. Sunday School is held at 9:15 AM after the Children's Message in Divine Service. If you would like to volunteer your time to teach Sunday School, please contact Pam Replinger at 472-9018.

THANK YOU!!

Thank you to all who sent cards of sympathy and for everyone's thoughts and prayers at John's death. I'll never forget him as Santa last year and the joy it brought to his heart doing that.

Karen Sleichert





Redeemer Child Care!



Bible Lessons

Chapel is on Mondays at
3:45

8/3 Hannah Prays For A
Child

1 Samuel 1:1-20

8/10 Samuel As A Boy

1 Samuel 1:21-28;3

8/17 David Defeats
Goliath

1 Samuel 17

8/24 David And
Jonathan

1 Samuel 19:20



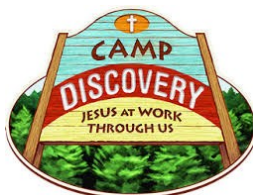
Dear God,
You heard Hannah's
prayer. You gave her a
child at just the right
time. Thank You for
hearing all my prayers.
Thank You for giving me
what is good for me at
just the right time.
Amen

Birthdays

Rylan 8/7
Tucker 8/7
Nicholas C. 8/7
Caleb B. 8/8
Bryant 8/8
Peyton 8/10
Kacen 8/13
Kira 8/15
Carson 8/17
Gavin 8/20



VBS



Thank you to all the
Volunteers! VBS would
not be a success without
you.
This year's VBS had 54
children attend.

What We Are Learning



8/3 God Answers
Prayers
8/10 God Calls His
People to Serve
8/17 God Saves Us from
Our Enemies
8/24 God's People Help
One Another

Special Days in August

8/2 Friendship Day
8/10 School Starts

Congratulations on your years of service!



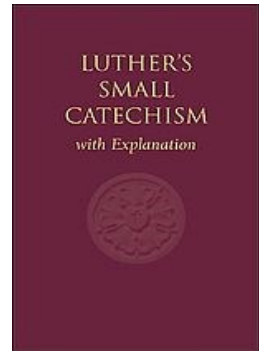
Ms. Wendy 13 Years

submitted by Wendy Horvath

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW...

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW, "WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?"

Another opportunity to attend information classes will begin very soon (a full schedule of classes is provided below). We will meet in the large meeting room in Fellowship Hall and classes will begin at 7 PM and run for about an hour and a half. This is a wonderful opportunity to understand more clearly what God's Words says and how His Word is relevant in your life today. The atmosphere of the classroom is relaxed, full of laughter, and yet, the teachings remain faithful to Holy Scripture and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church.



- If you have been attending worship services here at Redeemer and would like to become a member of Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care, this is the class for you!
- If you have been attending worship services at Redeemer, but are not sure what it is Lutherans believe, teach, and confess, this is the class for you!
- If you have a child in our Child Care Center and would like to further establish you and your child in a Christian congregation, this is the class for you.

If you are member of Redeemer, but haven't brushed the dust off the old catechism in some time and would like to be refreshed in the teachings of the Christian faith, this is the class of you!

If you are interested in attending, contact the church office to reserve your seat. You may have received a personal invitation from Pastor Kress. Please call the church office a let him know of your intentions. He really does care about your spirituality and your eternal salvation. Pastor also believes these classes are great for couples to attend.

Information classes will begin on **Wednesday, August 19th** and conclude on **Wednesday, September 23rd**. There are a total of 10 classes scheduled with a total of 15 hours of instruction from the pastor. Upon completion of these classes, it is our hope of welcoming new members into our fellowship on **Sunday, September 27th** by way of either confirmation, transfer, affirmation of faith, or association. Should you ever have a question about the classes or the Christian faith, please ask the Pastor. See you in class!

Wednesday, August 19th

Thursday, August 20th

Wednesday, August 26th

Thursday, August 27th

Wednesday, September 2nd

Wednesday, September 9th

Thursday, September 10th

Wednesday, September 16th

Thursday, September 17th

Wednesday, September 23rd

CLASSIFIEDS

Real Estate Services

Lora Laurain
Placida Properties 888-941-9444 or Cell 941-408-5292

Lawn Care

Call Todd Armstrong at 941-961-7584 for your lawn care needs.

FREE

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS, HERE IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!!!

We have limited space, but space available, for you to place your FREE advertisement. Please contact the Church office by phone or email if you would like to place an ad.

LOST AND FOUND

If anyone is missing any items, namely eyeglasses, gloves, umbrellas, etc., please check the Lost & Found box located in the narthex.

GREETERS

August 2nd Gwen & Steven Wurster

August 9th TBA

August 16th TBA

August 23rd TBA

August 30th TBA

*Submitted by
Assimilation*



COFFEE HOUR

August 2nd TBA

August 9th Martha Winters

August 16th TBA

August 23rd TBA

August 30th TBA

*Submitted by Brd. of
Community &
Parish Fellowship*



PUZZLE PAGE

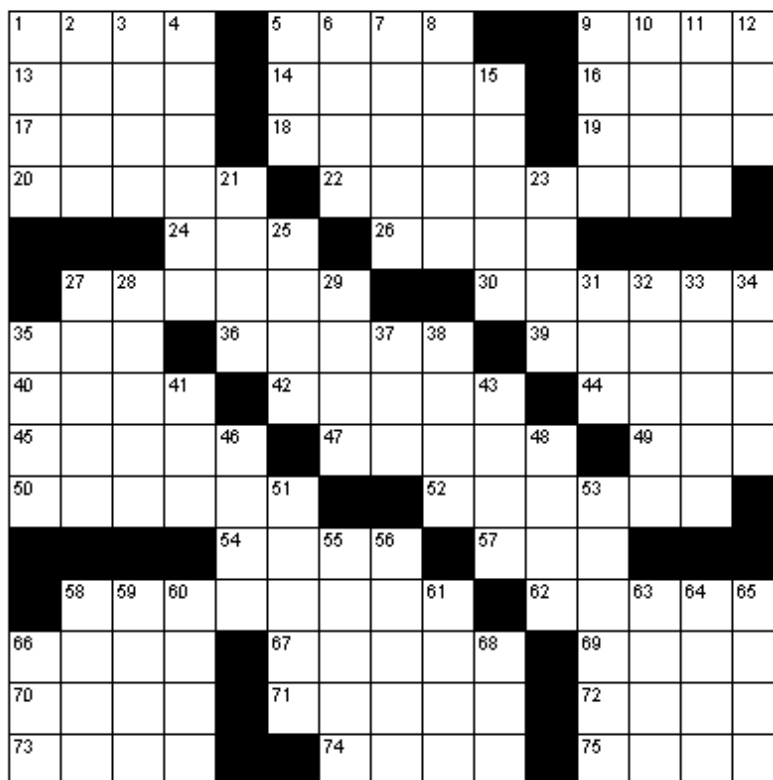
Standard Crossword- usp008

Across

1. Trudge
5. Dreary
9. Retail outlet
13. Wander
14. Warble
16. Remuneration
17. Part of the Roman calendar
18. Play or represent
19. Nimbus
20. Virtue
22. Introduction
24. Type of tree
26. Additional
27. French film festival
30. Temper or season
35. Place
36. Book of maps
39. Currency of Nigeria
40. Woodwind instrument
42. Bird of prey
44. Heat up
45. Ocean vessel
47. Exuviate
49. Fish eggs
50. Nocturnal wildcat
52. One who suffers for the sake of principle
54. Sagolike starch
57. Novel
58. Part of a grandfather clock
62. Meat cooked on a skewer
66. Promise
67. Narrow length of leather
69. Solitary
70. Song for solo voice
71. Path
72. Ballot
73. Religious order
74. Friend
75. Ruler or chiefain

Down

1. Dainty
2. Valuable ore deposit
3. Finished
4. Blueprint
5. Coloring substance
6. Frolic
7. Worship
8. Asian pepper plant
9. Mop
10. Drag
11. Fiend
12. Leguminous plant
15. Tether
21. Large food and game fish
23. Miserly
25. Administer or ____ out
27. Having three dimensions
28. Expiate
29. Close violently
31. Uncooked
32. Personal journal
33. Mistake
34. Epithet
35. Game played on horseback
37. In the past
38. Shantytown
41. Long fish
43. Panache
46. Route
48. Journey
51. Reliance
53. Roman XII
55. Radical
56. Wall painting
58. Small opening in the skin
59. Long narrative poem
60. Orderly
61. Post
63. Economic prosperity
64. Opposing
65. Alcoholic beverage
66. Possesses
68. Travel a route regularly



Redeemer Lutheran Church



Web—Church: www.redeemerfl.com



Web—Child Care: www.redeemerfl-cc.com

Solution on Page 12

REDEEMER LUTHERAN
CHURCH & CHILD CARE
6970 Mineola Rd.
Englewood, FL 34224

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED - OPTION 1

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PLACID, FL
PERMIT 774

AUGUST
2015

REDEEMER LUTHERAN
CHURCH & CHILD CARE
6465 Mayport Street
Englewood, FL 34224

REV. JAMES T. KRESS, SR.

Church Phone: 941-475-2410

Church Fax: 941-475-9726

Child Care Phone: 941-475-2631

E-mail: redeemerfl@verizon.net

REDEEMER REPORTER

Published monthly for members, Associate
Members and Visitors of Redeemer Lutheran
Church a member congregation of the Lutheran
Church Missouri Synod.

WORSHIP SERVICES:

Bible Study: 8:00 AM

Divine Service: 9:15 AM

Sunday School: 9:15 AM

CHURCH OFFICE PHONE: 941-475-2410

*We, the members of Redeemer Lutheran Church are called into the service of our Lord by
accepting His command (Matthew 28:18-20):*

- Making disciples of all nations/peoples*
- Baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*
- Proclaiming the Gospel and teaching the Word.*

Christ's love for us compels us to serve our neighbors as He served us.