



FEBRUARY 2024



Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day

Ash Wednesday is a long held church observance that began about 600 AD with the establishment of the season of Lent prior to the celebration of Easter. Lent has always been a time in the church year when believers spend time focusing on the need of a Savior because of one’s own sin.

It is a time to remind yourself that you are not capable of earning God’s grace and mercy by what you do or say and that you fail at the attempt to do so daily. Therefore the only place to turn to is to the Savior, the Messiah, which God the Father provides, and that is His Son, known by the name of Jesus when He walked this earth.

And when we turn to Jesus, we see the horrific suffering and death He endured for us, and He did that because of His mercy, so we can live with our God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit forever.

The *imposition of ashes* becomes a way to mark the beginning of Lent. The use of ashes can be seen in the Old Testament where it denotes mourning, morality and penance.

Esther 4:1

When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly.

Job 42:6

Therefore I despise myself and repent in dust and ashes.

Jonah 3:5-6

The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. ⁶ When Jonah’s warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust.

The observance of Valentine’s Day has a more obscure reason and is more of a

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ASH WEDNESDAY AND VALENTINE'S DAY (CONTINUED)

cultural observance, although some historians do try to tie it to early church history. However, for our purposes now, Valentine's Day is primarily a cultural celebration of the world's understanding of love.

So what happens when Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday are the same day? As Christians, where should our focus be, especially if as a believer, you wish to practice fasting during the season of Lent?

This hasn't happened very often. As a matter of fact, it happened only three times in the previous century – 1923, 1934, and 1945. And it has/will happen only three times in our current century – 2018, 2024, and 2029

As a disciple of Jesus, we can honor Ash Wednesday and use it as a time to reflect on the true meaning of God's Love. God's love is different from the world's version of love. God's love is outwardly directed to others unconditionally, sacrificially, and generously.

The truth of this statement is seen in what Jesus, as the Son of God, did for us. He didn't hold anything back, but gave us life, that is eternal life for all people.

And God wants us, as His disciples to love others as He has loved us. How can we accomplish this? Some aspects include:

L Listen James 1:9 - ESV

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

O Outdo one another with honor Romans 12:9-10 – ESV

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. ¹⁰ Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

V Voice your appreciation 1 Corinthians 1:4 - ESV

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus

E Encourage others as Jesus encouraged you. Philippians 2:1-2 – ESV

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

*Yours in Christ
Rev. Craig Mathews*

Pastor Matthews has given us 2 of the 6 part series of the Epiphany sermon series that asks “who are we?” at Redeemer: Evangelical, Missional, Sacramental, Bible-based-Christ-Centered, Liturgical and Confessional. On Sunday January 14th Pastor gave us the sermon on Evangelical.

Evangelical: (Greek compound word euangelion) for good news John 3:16 *“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life”*. Ephesians 2:8-9 *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -not by works, so that no one can boast”*

Missional: (Matthew 28: 19-20) *“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”*

Why does this generation need our missionary work? I recently found in many places on the internet why religion is no longer popular or wanted. This was very disturbing.

1) Valuing Individualism over tradition

“old-school religious rules just don’t fit into that picture. If your personal rules clash with traditional teaching, it’s pretty normal to start looking for fulfillment elsewhere.”

2) Chasing material success

“In our fast-paced driven world, chasing career goals and financial security often takes center stage, leaving little room for spiritual pursuits,”

3) Changing Social Values

“As society evolves, so do our values and beliefs. Traditional religious views don’t align with contemporary ideas about D.E.I. (diversity, equity, and inclusivity) It’s like we’re constantly reassessing and redefining what we stand for, and sometimes old religious doctrines just don’t fit this new framework”

4) The need for evidence

“We live in a world where seeing is believing. If you’re someone who needs solid proof and clear facts, a religious faith-based approach might not really hit

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONT'D)

the mark. People are increasingly looking for belief systems that fit the evidence-driven way we approach other parts of our lives.”

5) Finding spirituality outside religion

“If you are among those exploring spirituality on your own terms, it can be a deeply fulfilling journey. It’s about finding what spirituality means to you personally, outside the traditional structures of religion”?

This is not an isolated find. I began to see more and more of these popping up, and after questioning many younger people, this is the norm, not the exception. Pastor’s message on Sunday stated for many Americans, evangelical has become a politically divisive word.

We know the Good News; we live in the Good News. We have shared Good News with the children at our day care center and school. but discipleship is not easy. Luke 14: 26-27 *“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters -yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.”*

Faith is a living, daring confidence in the grace of God. This confidence and knowledge of divine grace makes a person happy, bold and full of gladness in his relationship to God and all creatures. The Holy Ghost is doing this in a believer. Hence it is a person, without constraint, becomes willing and enthusiastic to do good to everybody, to serve everybody, to suffer all manner of afflictions, from love of God and to the praise of Him who has extended such grace to him.

Let us be bold to minister to the parents of our school children, the parents of our day care, and to our neighbors around our church. Let our Carillion ring out the call to service, let us go into the mission field bold to spread the Good News.

Yours in Christ

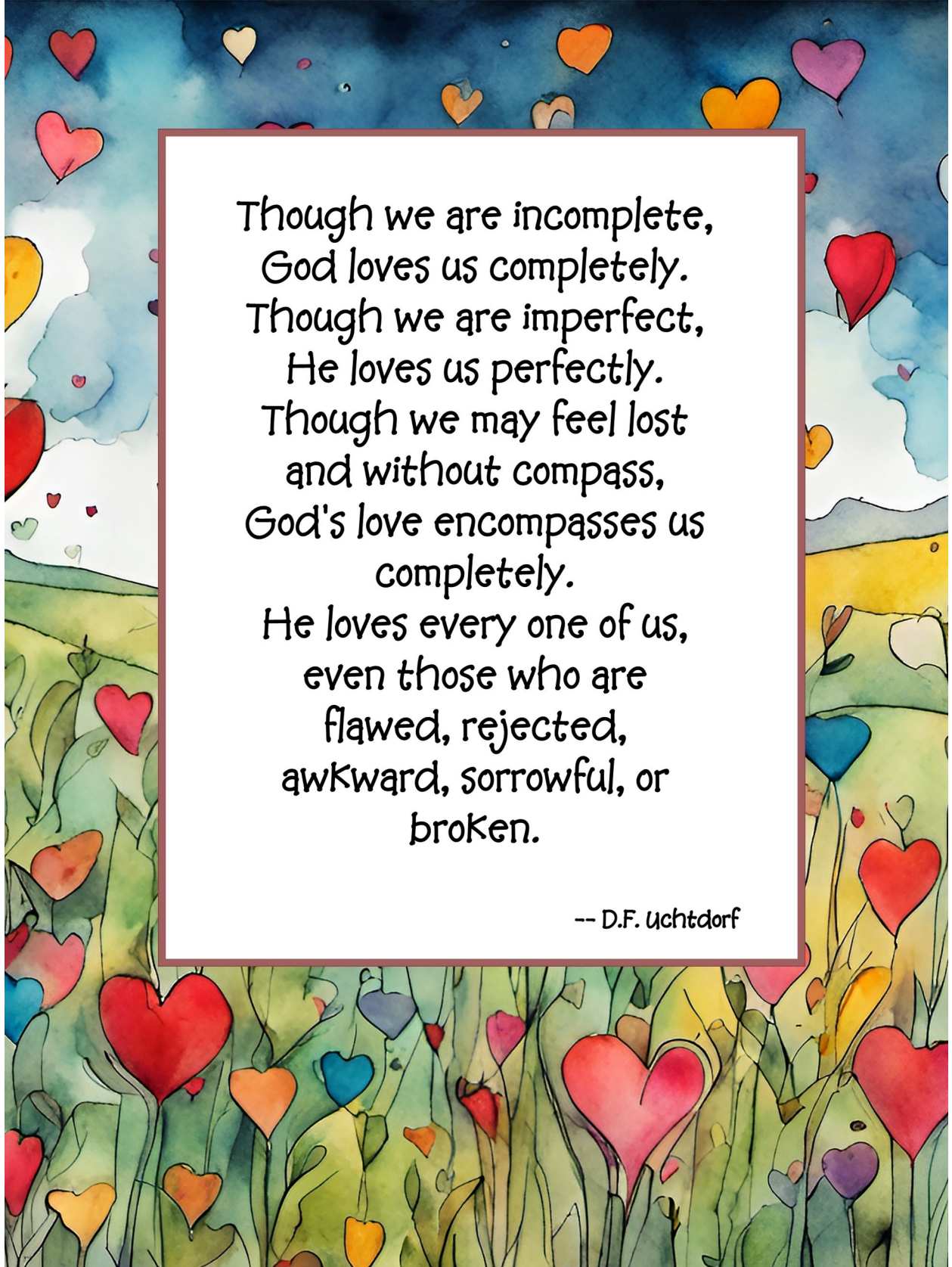
Collins Sita, President



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Redeemer Lutheran Church of Englewood
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Though we are incomplete,
God loves us completely.
Though we are imperfect,
He loves us perfectly.
Though we may feel lost
and without compass,
God's love encompasses us
completely.
He loves every one of us,
even those who are
flawed, rejected,
awkward, sorrowful, or
broken.

-- D.F. Uchtdorf

Caring for My Neighbor

If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, “you shall not murder,” goes much deeper — down to the heart.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, “You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.” But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, “You fool!” will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matt. 5:21–22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth.

In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every “do not” in the commandments also includes a “do this:” “We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but *help and support him in every physical need*” (SC, Fifth Commandment, emphasis added).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good.

So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

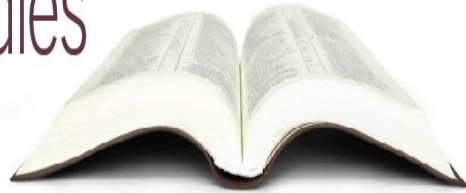
We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church’s work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church’s alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.



Treasurer's
Report

Financial information is available to all members upon request.

Bible Studies



Sunday Morning Bible Study: Please join us after the morning service (and after a cup of coffee – approximately 10:30 a.m.). We will be using a study called “The Unlocked Door:”.

Table Talk: Table talk is a very informal Bible study now held on Thursday mornings at 9:30 AM, immediately after the 8:45 school chapel service. Participants come with any sort of question. We work to answer those questions from God’s Word and from our Lutheran Confessions. In doing that we all learn more about God’s Word and its application in our lives. We are currently focusing on the book of Acts. One way or another there is always friendly and interesting discussion.

All are welcome and encouraged to come early to attend the chapel service. Who can’t be cheered by the sound of the children’s voices? There is always coffee and usually doughnuts. Please consider joining us! **Pastor Mathews** is leading the discussion; come and meet him.

SERVING THE LORD

Interim Pastor Rev. Craig Mathews

Office Admin Asst Caitlin Tilton

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Choir Director

Newsletter Pat Finkenbine

School Admin Wendy Horvath

Child Care Director Debby Buel

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Altar Guild Catalina Bakas

Coffee Hour Joyce Schneider

***The deadline for the March 2024 Newsletter is February 18th.
PLEASE have all your submissions sent to patchas123@gmail.com
OR drop them off at the church office by the date indicated above. Thank You!***

DAY SCHOOL

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5

Fifth and Sixth Grade Happenings: In the month of December, in 5th and 6th grade we participated in the school production of A Stellar Christmas. The children all did an amazing job on this production, they worked extremely hard to make it a magical night. In class we wrapped up the 2nd quarter very strong. The class put together two book reports and read them aloud to the rest of the class. We also got some great news before the Christmas break with the announcement of additional students joining our class. We are collectively at 13 students now and we keep on growing. God is good to us! In Science the classes learned different Biomes from around the World. And in History they learned the different functions of the United States Government. It has been a busy but blessed second quarter. **Mr. Don (Coach)**

The **third and fourth graders** have been factoring in Math and learning denominators and numerators in fractions. We are reviewing our capitalization and punctuation rules to write to our Pen Pals in Mississippi with better Language Arts skills. We are expanding our vocabulary and spelling skills with words that use silent letters in the fourth grade and spelling words using the rule that a “q” and a “u” are always together in a word in third grade. We have been expanding our reading comprehension skills by finding evidence in the text to write correct answers to the story’s questions. In History we have just completed a unit about Martin Luther King Jr. The scary part was that I was a witness of that era in our country. We certainly have come far since the “I Have a Dream” speech in 1963. The students told us ways they will treat others who are different from them. In health we have worked on how to treat others with kindness and follow bicycle rules and signals. **Ms. Fran and Ms. Emily**

Kindergarten through Second grade students during the month of December in our classroom have been very busy. We have been learning about different genres in reading and using our imaginations to write stories. We have been learning about Geography, the oceans, and a multitude of different cultures. We are looking forward to exploring 2 step addition and subtraction and math story problems. We are working on solving the problems together. K-2 has begun receiving Newsweek magazine curriculum in the mail, each week we explore a new topic. They have learned about Martin Luther King, New Years Eve, and next they learn about Arctic Animals. **Ms. Gina and Ms. Pam**

Upcoming events:

February 14, 2024, Ash Wednesday Service at 3:30 pm
February 19, 2024, No School
March 2, 2024, Open House from 11-2:00 pm





Letter of the month: Bb, Ll

Number of the month: 8

Shape of the month: Heart

Color of the month: Pink

Bible Lesson: Jesus Tells His Children to Come- Jesus Blesses the Children
(Mark 10:13-16)

This month we are learning about Love is in The Air

What we are learning in VPK A... This month's lesson study is different kinds of Clothing and where and how clothing is made Letters T,U,V.

VPK B ... This month's lesson study is learning about Buildings; how they are built and what materials can be used to build them. Letters X, Y, Z.

Calendar days:

VPK is going to give out flowers at a nursing home on February 14th for Valentine's Day.

February 19th - Child Care closed for Presidents Day

Prayer Requests

Please pray for:

Shut-ins: Rita Kaufman and Dorothy Sinowetski.

Healing for members: Ed & Jan DeTrow, Don Garay, Judy Guastella, Jane Harty, Steven Horvath, Nancy Kozak, Kitty Hill, Chuck & Elaine Malecki, Lillian Miles, Colette Nagel, Tom & Sue Poyer, Jim & Bonnie Schluentz, Joyce Schneider, Bob Varone, and Pauline Vickey.

Friends and relatives: Barbara George, Mikayla Hacksunda, Daniel & Michelle Kalstrup, Dave McMullan, Esther Murphy, Rob Powers, Becky Rurade, Laurie Steinke, and Wava Zeitlow.

Valentines Day Word Search

G I J C P C E U W O
 T X N G D V I V V N T N W Y
 Y V L Z F I V S L M A G S X R V Q A H S
 S O M J V X O L X R U T E H R J A E F O A M N J
 L K U I C A N D Y R R V A T Y E O E D H E A L L W W
 V R F J L I N L X J R S Q R O H H W F H G V Q S C E A T V X
 O R O K O Y D G E J Q X V O I B O P T P M R O M A N C E U K
 J V I S V E I B X N S C G Z K L A E O T M R N L D J I B L S
 O D L N E A L E N E T T E H F Z E L E B F O O V Y Y I B R F
 E X O R Y S L A C Q H I V M E W T M L V Q S J J Z J O E B O
 Q V V X O S L E A T P O N A S A F L N O W E M M P X T D W B
 R E E E U B Y O N W R O J E L Z R F V Q O S B Y O T Y N J T
 M P T I I V R E D T M T C M N E L T B G G N N X E E E V P Z
 T P L P S R O Y D I V G G D X N K S S K J S L P E S K G
 J P I O B N Q H C O N V E R S A T I O N H E A R T S Y V
 V C N I B Q E N L R E D L M P U I O E V G E V U C F
 T U K G Z A W Z S J S Z C V Y M N O I Q Y R X Q
 F P Q Q R O R K L W D K F E M L E E P T G T
 I I C T B L H U G S A N D K I S S E S A
 P D S Q X F N Y S A Y U Q U N Y G Z
 I C E X X T C H O C O L A T E F
 H Q F T U E B E L O V E D U
 D V Z F E B R U A R Y E
 S T B R F A L A B N
 H B N R Z Z A I
 G V Q B L M
 N H P E
 Q B

BALLOONS
 CANDYHEARTS
 FEBRUARY
 ILOVEYOU
 RED
 STVALENTINE
 XOXO

BELOVED
 CHOCOLATE
 FLOWERS
 LOVE
 ROMANCE
 SWEETHEART

BEMINE
 CONVERSATIONHEARTS
 HEARTS
 LOVELETTERS
 ROSES
 VALENTINE

CANDY
 CUPID
 HUGSANDKISSES
 PINK
 ROSES
 VALENTINEDAY

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.
 (1 Corinthians 13)

**REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH,
SCHOOL & CHILD CARE**

6970 Mineola Rd.
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**REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH,
SCHOOL & CHILD CARE**

6970 Mineola Rd.
Englewood, FL 34224

Church Phone: 941-475-2410

Church Fax: 941-475-9726

Email: Church.Office@redeemerfl.com

School Phone: 941-473-7998

Email: School.Office@redeemerfl.com

Child Care Phone: 941-475-2631

Email: redeemerchildcare@gmail.com

REDEEMER REPORTER

Published monthly for members, associate members and visitors of Redeemer Lutheran Church. Redeemer is a member congregation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. (LCMS).

WORSHIP SERVICES:

Divine Service: 9:15 am

Bible Study: 10:30 am



The Redeemer Lutheran Church, School & Child Care Family are called into the service of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by His command (Matthew 28:18-20) to:

- ◆ *Disciple all nations, that is, all people;*
- ◆ *Baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;*
- ◆ *Proclaim the Gospel and teach His Word in its truth and purity; and*
- ◆ *Never be ashamed of the Gospel—it is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16)*