



December 2020



**COVID-19 SHOULD NOT BE FEARED,
BUT GOD SHOULD**

As a young man growing up on the Southside of Chicago, my father and mother said that the two topics you should never bring up in conversation, and especially at the dinner table, are politics and religion. The reason being is that those are two topics which most people have strong opinions. With having gone through a turbulent presidential election, Americans are more and more passionate about the issues which are important to them.

Whether you are a Democrat or a Republican, when you pull the lever on Election Day, you do so hoping that your candidate will win the election and fix the problems of our great but corrupt nation. And quite understandably, during this time, people will wonder what relationship exists between what they believe in matters of religion and what positions they should take politically. We should make a distinction between church and state but we must also recognize that the concerns of the church and the concerns of the state often overlap. And that’s because religion is not just about what happens to you when you die but it’s about how we should live today.

Over the last 9 months, the coronavirus has played a big part in how we live today and most likely the unfriendly virus will continue to play a part in the future. However, how we live in a COVID world and how we live as Christians is a big deal. We should not live in fear of COVID, but we should fear, love, and trust in God above all things. Unfortunately, I have seen more and more Christians live in the fear of COVID and not in the fear of the Lord. This is spiritually dangerous and could be eternally damning.

Being a citizen of a nation is an important responsibility and has weighty implications. My son-in-law was born in a foreign country but has lived most of his life in the United States. According to our government, he is a full-fledged U.S. citizen because he passed the ten-step naturalization process. But according to the country of his birth, he is also a citizen of that nation. So which is it? Is he an American or a Mexican? U.S. law does not require a person to choose one citizenship over another. The U.S. government says that my son-in-law is an American. But the Mexican government recognizes he is a Mexican. I sometimes kid my son-in-law and ask, “What will you do if the United States ever goes to war against Mexico? Whose side will you be on?” While it seems unlikely that our United States will declare war with Mexico in our lifetimes, in this climate, one can never be certain of such things. It is possible then that my son-in-law will have to decide where his true loyalties lie if the priorities of the two governments ever come into conflict with each other. His dual citizenship could cause a variety of problems. After all, his children are my grandchildren (smile).

As Christians, all of us have dual citizenship. We were born into this world as citizens in the present order of things. All living human beings share this citizenship on earth. But we, who have been baptized into Jesus Christ, were adopted into the family of God which makes us also citizens of

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heaven. So like my son-in-law, only on a much more majestic scale, all of us possess DUAL citizenship.

My friends, there are two kingdoms in the universe or two realms. That's what Jesus is teaching us when He says to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and render unto God the things which are God's. There are two kingdoms: the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of heaven. But that is not to say that of the two kingdoms, one of them is good and the other one is evil. There are two kingdoms and both of them are good. They are both good because both of them are established and governed by God.

So, there are two kingdoms. But, they do not have identical purposes. They have different functions. Hopefully, they do not work against each other. That would not be pleasing to God. They have different purposes but their purposes complement one another for the ultimate purposes and the often hidden purposes of God.

God has ordained the Church and the State to accomplish His will, but they operate in quite different ways. God has ordained the Church to reconcile sinners to Himself by preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments. God has ordained the state to protect human beings from harm, to administer His wrath and justice against wrongdoers, and to generally provide for the temporal well-being of human beings.

Let me add that God did not establish civil government merely for the purpose of maintaining law and order but also to perform works of mercy for the comfort, provision and assistance of human need. Moses writes very explicitly that it was God Himself who brought Joseph to become Pharaoh's second-in-command for the express purpose of administering and distributing food during a widespread famine, a social service project which, as a matter of fact, saved Jacob's other sons from dying of starvation, one of whom was named Judah who became the great-great-great-great grandfather of Jesus (Genesis 41-50). So you could say that the governmental social program of distributing food run by Joseph, by God's own design, served to insure that the promised Savior would be born. God is even still, daily, working to preserve His creation through civil government.

The civil government is God's instrument which

(Continued on page 3)

SERVING THE LORD

Pastor	Rev. James Kress
Child Care Director	Wendy Horvath
Office Admin Asst	Caitlin Tilton
Organist	Bill Bowers
Choir Director	Collins Sita
Newsletter Editor	Pat Finkenbine

OFFICERS

President	Wade Duncan
Vice President	Bill Bowers
Treasurer	
Secretary	Caitlin Tilton

BOARDS

Head Elder	Mike Nagel
Christian Ed.	
Human Care	Lisa Kress
Outreach	
Assimilation	Anne Varone
School Board	
Stewardship	
Youth	Alan Duburg
Financial Secretary	Mindy Duncan
Property Mgmt.	

GROUPS/GUILDS

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

He holds in His left hand to care for you and me. Thank God for civil government. Pray for our rulers because whether you like them or not, whether you voted for them or not, they are God's agents established in their offices, not for selfish gain, but to serve you in His name. Like all human beings however, our rulers are flawed instruments, so we can't blame God for their misguided and corrupt decisions. Even a skillful musician will sound bad if his instrument is out of tune. Even so, our rulers are God's men and women, doing His work, even if they fail to recognize this themselves. And that is why St. Paul urges the believers at the church in Rome to obey Caesar, to pray for him, and to submit to earthly authorities as they would submit to God (Romans 13).

Listen, we do not ever have the right to rebel against our leaders or disrespect our leader or to disobey them with only one exception. And that exception is any time the civil government makes laws that interfere or contradict the Word of God. As the disciples said when they were being beaten for preaching Christ, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). At such times, we are obligated to disobey our earthly rulers even if it means persecution or death. We must be ready to die for Christ just as He died for us if push ever comes to shove. Not only do individuals have a duty to obey God, but so do governments. And just because a thing is legal, that does not make it right. Nor does making something illegal necessarily make it wrong. Not only do individuals have a duty to obey God, but so do governments.

Over the centuries, there have been many different forms of government but all are established by God. The Scriptures give us no prescription for what type of government we should employ. Americans tend to be a bit idolatrous on this point in that we tend to think that a democracy or a democratic republic is inherently Christian. If anything, one would infer that the Bible favors having a monarchy because there is simply no other arrangement ever described in either the Old or the New Testament than that. I personally happen to believe that there are great advantages to our American way but that is always debatable. The kingdoms of men come and go. Our way of life is not uniquely divine. And if the Lord does not return in between, the odds are that there will come a day when the nation of America will cease to exist. Thus our first love and loyalty is not to any particular earthly ruler or party or form of rule, but to the kingdom of heaven and the King who sits upon its throne.

There is no such thing as an illegal government for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Even though the Romans had invaded and conquered Israel, Jesus said to Pontius Pilate: "You would have no authority over Me if it had not been given to you from above" (John 19:11). The Lord acknowledged not only that Pilate had legitimate authority over Him, but He says that authority had been given to him by God.

Some disciples of the Pharisees went along with a group of Herodians to ask Jesus a question (Matthew 22:15-21). The Pharisees were highly religious men who strongly opposed the occupying government of Rome. The Herodians were the exact opposite. They were a party loyal to Herod, Rome's puppet king in Galilee. Pharisees and Herodians had nothing in common, except apparently their desire to get rid of Jesus.

The coin belongs to Caesar because it bears his image and carries his inscription. And we belong to God because we were created in His image and were inscribed with His promises at Holy Baptism. The Christian Church on earth is the instrument God exercises in His right hand for it is the agency by which He calls all men to Himself. It is the agency by which His message of peace is made known. The church is God's rule of grace and mercy whereby He declares sinners to be righteous on account of the blood of His Son. The church does not exist to make and administer laws. The church does not exist to raise armies and levy taxes. The church exists to

(Continued on page 4)

COVID-19 SHOULD NOT BE FEARED ... (CONT'D)

conquer men's hearts with words of hope and acts of compassion.

It can be difficult and confusing to live as citizens of two kingdoms. But Jesus Christ is the link which bridges heaven and earth. He is Jacob's ladder, the path to heaven. And He descended from the realm of the angels to subject Himself to earthly rule, to suffering, poverty, hardship and even death, not because of anything wrong which He had done, but to become the substitute for us. He became the sacrificial lamb, the scapegoat, the fall guy who paid the penalty of sin for us so that when our days on this earth are ended, we will enjoy being in the presence of the King of kings forever.

COVID has no claim on you, but Jesus does. He loves you and has done all things for you that you might live with Him and the whole heavenly host in eternity. As a child of God, live free because that is what you are in Christ Jesus: free. You are set free from the sin that condemned you, set free from the evil one who desires your soul, set free from the corruption of government, and set free from any disease or virus known or unknown to man. You are free to live as a Christian in this life for the purpose of showing God's love toward others that they too may know the love of the Savior who came to save us.

Your Humble Servant in Jesus,
Pastor Jim Kress



REDEEMER LUTHERAN SCHOOL

During November we began to prepare for the holiday season. The class worked hard on a skit about the first Thanksgiving to present to our families. We also memorized poems, learned songs, and read Scripture verses. The kids did so well learning their parts and presenting for their families. We are very proud of their hard work preparing for this Thanksgiving program.

Our class also worked on Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes. The students worked together to bring in supplies to fill five Christmas boxes for children who are less fortunate that live in other countries. We were able to provide some necessities such as combs and toothbrushes, as well as, some fun things in these boxes for children of various ages.

In Writing, we wrote a book as a class. Our book was written as realistic fiction about the Christmas story. A bunny named Snowflake goes to visit a different animal each day and they celebrate Christmas together. The story ends with all of the animals coming together at the manger on Christmas Day to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Each child wrote a page of our book and drew a picture for their page. Writing this book took a lot of patience and perseverance for the students. We wrote multiple drafts and had several writing conferences about their story before we could publish their part of the story.

We have learned a lot in Science and Social studies this month. Kindergarten and 1st grade have been doing hands on learning about how Magnets work and how Items Sink or Float. They have also been learning about the Mayflower and harvesting cranberries. Second grade has started learning the basics about how businesses work, different inventions and inventors, and the assembly line. Third grade started learning about the solar system and Daniel Boone. Fourth grade has been learning about all the birds that live in the United States and about states of matter, the Atmosphere, Water, Air, and Weather.

We are all very thankful for our school community. We are excited for the upcoming holiday festivities. May God continue to keep you safe and healthy!

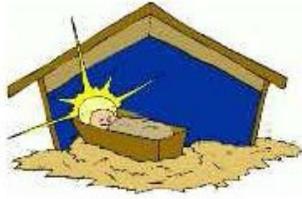
My God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in Glory in Jesus Christ. – Philippians 4:19

Submitted by Nicole Hopkins



Church: www.redeemerfl.com
Child Care: www.redeemerfl-cc.com
School: www.redeemerfl-school.com

facebook
Redeemer Lutheran Church of Englewood
Redeemer Lutheran Child Care



Merry Christmas from
Redeemer Child Care

December 2020

Bible Lessons

Chapel is on Monday
at 4:00 pm

12/7 Jesus Is Born

Luke 2:1-7

12/14 The Angels'
Announcement to the
Shepherds

Luke 2:8-21

12/21 Simeon and Anna

See Jesus

Luke 2:22-38

12/28 No Chapel



Dear Jesus, I love to hear
the story of Your birth.
Glory to God! You came to
be my Savior. Amen.

Closed

Closed on December 24,
25, 31 & January 1, 2021

Submitted by Wendy Horvath

Birthdays

Paulianna 12/4

Jelena 12/4

Ms. Kylie 12/7

Kolton D. 12/7

Brayden R. 12/15

Kylee 12/16

Melissa 12/22



Christmas Program



2020 Children's Christmas
Program. This year's theme
is:

"Jesse Tree"

December 20, 2020

6:00 pm in the Church

No School Days for VPK &
After School Children
Sign up in the Office

**Special Days This
Month!**

Dress up week to
celebrate Christmas!

12/21 Christmas Sweater

12/22 Christmas Hat's

12/23 Christmas Pajama's

**Family Christmas
Lunch**



December 23, 2020

Family Christmas Lunch will
be held in the Fellowship
Hall from 11:00-1:30

Health Checks



We will continue to have
morning health checks.
Please wash hands before
entering the school.

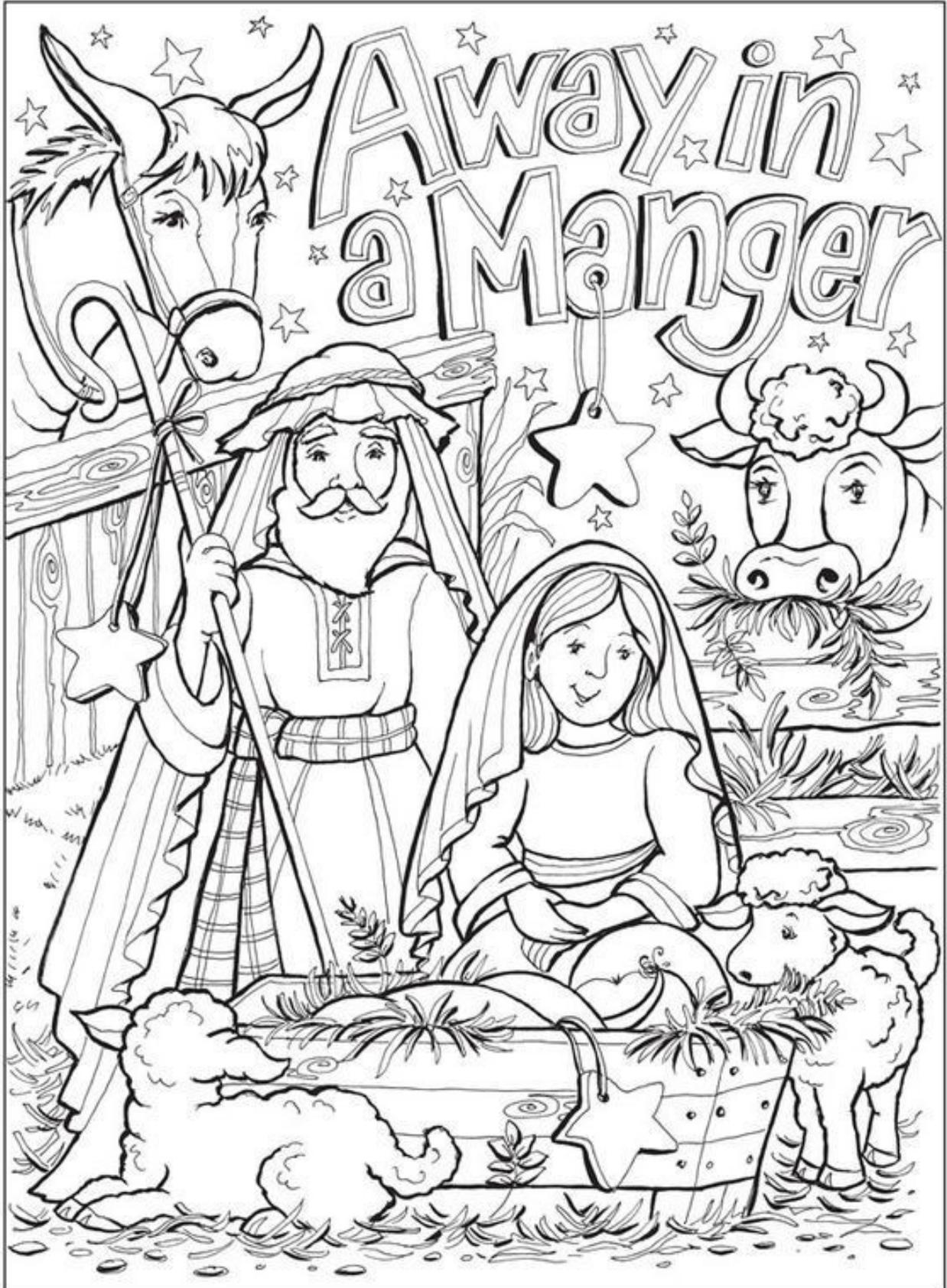
Reminder

Pastor: redeempastor1@gmail.com

Church secretary: redeemerfl@gmail.com

Church treasurer: redeemertreasurer1@gmail.com

Child Care: redeemerchildcare@gmail.com



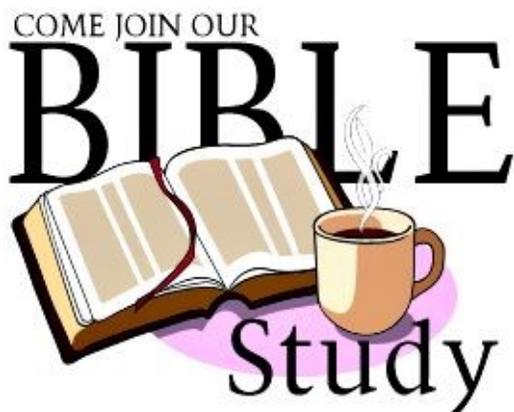
Treasurer's Report

As of October 31, 2020

	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>OVER/UNDER</u>
INCOME	14,979	14,618	361
<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>18,233</u>	<u>17,653</u>	580
+/-	(3,254)	(3,035)	
YEAR TO DATE			
INCOME	177,011	146,234	30,777
<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>184,143</u>	<u>176,557</u>	7,586
+/-	(7,132)	(30,323)	



Respectfully submitted,
Jean Clappe-Mixell
 North Star Bookkeeping LLC



Wednesday Morning Table Talk: Join us in the Church Narthex on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m., to gather with Pastor Kress around tables to talk theology, ask a wide range of interesting questions, and witness our own theology shaped by the Word of God. No one is required to know everything about anything. If you have questions or are interested in listening in on our Table Talk, you are welcome to join us in some engaging and thought-provoking conversations.

PROPERTY APPRECIATION DAY

We sure could use some help on our Property Appreciation 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 Saturday, December 19th at 8:00 am.**



Christmas is coming. It is a joyous time of feasting. The Church feasts upon the Word of God in sermon, song, and sacrament.

We hear the proclamation of the message of the angels: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). We mingle our voices with theirs as we sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased" (Luke 2:14)! We receive the proclaimed Savior, Christ the Lord, not wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in manger but wrapped in bread and wine placed into our mouths for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. We feast in great joy indeed because of this great blessing from our Lord and God.

God's people in ancient Israel also feasted with great joy. The Lord showered His abundant blessing on His people. And He commanded them to feast upon it (Deuteronomy 16). The people were to go to the place appointed, where the Lord would make His name dwell, and give offerings, each man as he was able, according to the blessing of the Lord that He had given them (Deut. 16:10, 15, 17).

And there the Lord would bless them with joy as they feasted upon what the Lord had provided. They ate of the choice parts of their offerings. They enjoyed the company of all the people of God as they together heard His promises of blessing, sang of His bountiful goodness, and partook of what He gave.

We feast on the Word who became flesh to dwell among us, not just during Christmas but throughout all the year. We feast not just on the salvation He has wrought for us in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, but we feast also on all the temporal blessings that God gives out of His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us. We enjoy the rich bounty that God provides, not only in Word and Sacrament, but also in house and home, property and income, family and friends.

Let us then, as did our brothers in the faith from ancient Israel, give as we are able, according to the blessing of the Lord our God that He has given us. Let us, like them, give generously of the first fruits of our income, which He gives, so that all may know and enjoy the salvation He gives and the joy we have in the Savior born in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.



Choir

The choir has resumed. All are welcome and encouraged to join. Contact Collins Sita or come on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm and sing to your Risen King.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

The deadline for the January Newsletter is December 18th

PLEASE have all your submissions sent to patchas123@gmail.com

PRAYERS

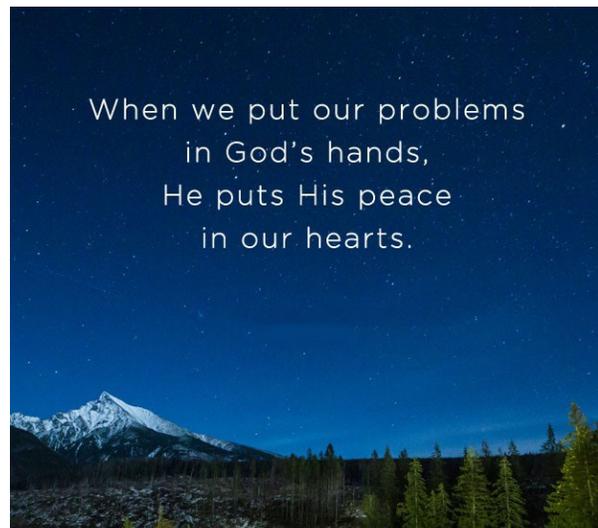
SHUT-INS: Susan Jahns, Rita Kaufmann, and Donna Weston

HEALING for Members: Neva Aldene, Carl Bertka, Bill Bowers, Sr., Jean Cote, Kathryn Demma, Ed & Jan DeTrow, Charlie & Pat Finkenbine, Don Garay, Mike & Judy Guastella, Bud & Jane Harty, Kitty Hill, Mark Horvath, Marva Jonas, Chuck Malecki, Angela Mannato, Ken Mielke, Lillian Miles, Glenn Mossner, Mariana Murray, Michael Nagel, Bob Payne, Tom & Sue Poyer, Myra Schaub, Dorothy Sinowetski, Paulette Sita, Russ & Carol Spooner, Ron & Sandy Tandy, Rob & Caitlin Tilton, Bob Varone, Cheryl Weston, Robert Vickey, and Sally Zierdt.

FRIENDS & RELATIVES: Michelle Bernard, Grace Blum, Bill Bowers, Jr., Mary Brissette, Wayne Buel, Dennis Burchell, Georgia Bush, Diane Carr, Pat Carroll, Sally Chambers, Esther Clapham, Bobbett Clark, Donna Connors, Lisa Copeman, Martin Cressman, Molly Criely, Renee Dempsey, Irene DiTommaso, Barb Dumeah, Bruce Everson, Donna Fancher, Darla Finkenbine, Gerald and Mary Fischer, Marla Flores, Manual Galan, Liam Garland, Barbara George, Sandra Gettings, Vinnie Giannola, Nancy Gleis, Mary Ann Guilfoyle, Shelley Roedel Gutz, Marlene Hagen, Jake Harper, Debbie Harrison, Dennis Hegarty, Claudette Hendershot, Glory Herget, John Hill, Robin Hincman, Roger Hinzmann, David Hirtle, Linda Holt, John Hunter, Linda Hunter, Chelsea Hutchinson, Stanley and Lynne Jablonski, Larry Jackson, Bill Jaquest, Heather Johnson, Rachel Kagay, Daniel &

Michelle Kalstrup, John Kearns, Parker Kern, Elizabeth Lynn Klopfenstein, Nancy Lake, Stacey Lampert, Ray Likowski, Janet Lixey, Joe Manson, Dave & Roberta McMullan, Pete Mogg, Mike Morrissey, Mike Moyer, Ron Mullins, Esther Murphy, Louis Nanni, Bill & Jean Nesbitt, Riley Emilia Paquette, Charles Pentecost Jr., Bill Pinkston, Robin Potts, Rob Powers, John Purdy, Mary Raines, Elaine Reebe, Paul Rollo, Sandra Scheel, Ed Sheahan, Nancy Sly, Don Stewart, Celeste Stromberg & her newborn baby, Juliette Renee, Charles Tolley, Gwyneth Tolman, George Vespa, Jim & Judy Wahl, Steven Walker, Christy Wallace, Helen Weishaar, Gene & Donna Wensel, Gordan Winkel, Wava Zeitlow, and Martha Zimpfer.

Military Personnel: Mark Baranowsky, Michael Broughton, Joseph Garay, Brian Jackson, Jonathan Koen, 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!

If you look for me at Christmas,
You won't need a special star.
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem
I'm right there where you are.
You may not be aware of Me,
Amid the celebrations.
You'll have to look beyond the stores,
And all the decorations.
But, if you take a moment,
From your list of things to do,
And listen to your heart, you'll find
I'm waiting there for you.
You're the one I want to be with,
You're the reason that I came.
And you'll find Me in the stillness,
As I'm whispering your name.

Love,
Jesus



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

ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED - OPTION 1



REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH,
SCHOOL & CHILD CARE
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REV. JAMES T. KRESS, SR.
Pastor

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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 and 11:00 am

Bible Class: *temporarily postponed*

Sunday School: *temporarily postponed*

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).