



AUGUST 2023



Redeemer Lutheran Ministries

At the June Voter’s Assembly, the contract which was submitted for me to be the Intentional Interim Pastor for Redeemer was approved. That means I will be here for a limited time – no more than 1 year. I have already been with you for 10 months and have dealt with some significant issues regarding the overall ministry of the congregation. But there still is work ahead of us to do together.

Some items on the agenda include:

- 1. How do we envision the current ministry here at Redeemer? Do we have three different ministries – the Church, the Preschool/Child Care, the School? Or do we have one ministry – sharing God’s love with the community and the Church, the Preschool/Child Care, and the School are emphasizing different aspects of how we can do that for the community? I think a small but significant change would be to begin to refer to ourselves as Redeemer Lutheran Ministries.
2. We need to begin communicating in a more clear and concise way how the finances of each aspect of our ministry – the income and expenses – impact the other aspects of the ministry.
3. In addition, we need to be clear as to why this group of believers became involved in Preschool/Day Care ministry as well as school ministry. Are we doing it to gain members so our church numbers (attendance and finances) look better? Or did we become involved in these two aspects of ministry in order to share God’s love, and help build strong/healthy families based on the truths of God’s Word. If it’s the latter rather than the former, then we should be happy that what we are doing is growing God’s Kingdom even though our own membership numbers may not be growing. That can be difficult to accept, especially when our worship and offering numbers are down. What is driving us to do these ministries and to keep going as much as we can with the resources God has given us? Are we doing it to show God’s love or only doing it according to the business practice of ROI – return on investment?
4. I also believe we need to get serious about what it means to be a part of the fellowship called Redeemer Lutheran Ministries – aka – member. God has called each one of us out of the culture of the world to be a part of His family, to be on His team. That means we each have a responsibility to use the spiritual gifts He gave us at Baptism, to use the talents He gave us at our birth, to use the skills we have learned as we matured, and to use the resources of material blessings with which He has blessed us to focus on doing

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what He asks of us – to make disciples. To state it bluntly – participation in the ministry is not to come, sit at worship, and then go home. It is to come and strengthen ourselves through fellowship, worship, prayer and study so we can do what is necessary to operate a Preschool/Day Care, to operate a K-5 elementary school so that in both places the love of God’s Word is seen clearly and boldly by what we say and do and to help the parents be confident and secure in the raising of their children.

5. We need to continue to change the relational system that has been in place at Redeemer from a “Lone Ranger” mentality that promoted anxiousness to a “teamwork” mentality where everyone anticipates and expects other family/team members will have our back and communicate openly and honestly in Christian love.

Throughout this whole process, I will be giving regular monthly reports to President James Rockey of the FLGA District office as well as to our Circuit Visitor, Pastor Brian Stolarczyk of Chapel of the Cross in Port Charlotte.

Above all, during this time – **PRAY !!!!!** Pray for the ministry being conducted in this place through the Church, the Preschool/Day Care and the School. It’s OK to say to God in prayer – *I don’t know what to pray for, it’s too complicated. I don’t know how to solve it, but You do. You know where the resources are and how to make them available. I am relying on Your wisdom, Your strength, and Your power to get us through. And if that includes involving me as part of the solution, encourage and empower me to do, to say, to give what I can, when I can.*

God’s continued strength, peace, and powerful presence continue to be with us as we move forward under God’s leading and directing.

—Pastor Craig Mathews

## Prayer Requests

**Shut-ins:** Rita Kaufman and Dorothy Sinowetski.

**Healing for members:** Bill Bowers, Jean Cote, Ed & Jan DeTrow, Don Garay, Mike & Judy Guastella, Jane Harty, Kitty Hill, Marva Jonas, Chuck & Elaine Malecki, Cathy Mielke, Lillian Miles, Tom & Sue Poyer, Jim & Bonnie Schluentz, Joyce Schneider, Bob Varone, and Pauline Vickey.

**Redeemer School & Child Care staff & their families:** Brandi Fordham and Ashley Graham. (Both are facing recent medical/health issues. They appreciate your prayers!)

**Friends and relatives:** family & friends of Don Buro (father of Yvonne Brussel; he died unexpectedly last week)

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

## *Define Your Life by How You Give*

Winston Churchill reportedly said that “we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” According to Churchill, our lives are defined not by what we have gotten, but by what we give away.

Our Lord’s life is defined in this way. He gave completely of Himself for us. He became man for us. He taught the truth of God’s Word. He healed those with many and various diseases. He died the death that we deserved for our sins. He gave of Himself in order to save us from sin, death and hell. And so it is that by giving completely of Himself, He got for Himself us, making us citizens of His eternal kingdom by grace.

As it was for Jesus, so it also is for us. We get more from giving than we do from simply getting. For giving softens our hearts and frees us from the grip which the worries of this world and making a living has on us. For when we are singularly focused on making a living, we are singularly focused on what we get. That mindset begins to bleed into all areas of our lives — our relationships with friends and family, with neighbors and coworkers, and with the Lord. It shifts our focus from asking the question, “How can I be a friend, family member, neighbor and servant to others,” to asking the question, “What have they done for me lately?” We become more selfish instead of selfless.

But when we give, we do not have less, we do not become less; rather, we have more and become more. When we give, we join in the bond of friendship and family, the bond of service to those around us out of love for them. And love is the fulfillment of the Law. It is the nature of God Himself, for God is Love. Thus, we are participating in the divine nature. As Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry:





Where there is love,  
there is life.

Where there is life,  
there is hope.

Where there is hope,  
there is faith.

Where there is faith,  
miracles happen.

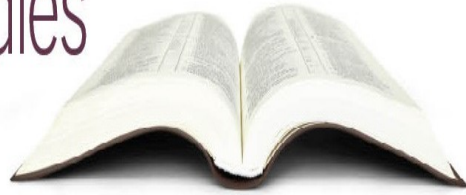
Where there is peace,  
there is God, and when  
you have God, you have  
everything.

Amen!





# Bible Studies



**Sunday Morning Bible Study:** Bible study on Sunday mornings has resumed. 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 “Exploring God’s Word: Old Testament.” Description below is from the CPH website:

*Understanding God’s Word often means looking at it from a fresh perspective – getting “the big picture” as well as the important details. Exploring God’s Word includes 12 individual sessions, maps, charts, a glossary, and a section of intriguing Bible facts. Exploring God’s Word helps you gain a broader understanding of what the Bible means when viewed as a whole – not simply as a collection of individual books.*

**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 Exodus. 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

Vacancy Pastor    Rev. Craig Mathews

Office Admin Asst    Caitlin Tilton

Organist    Bill Bowers

Choir Director

Newsletter    Pat Finkenbine

School Admin    Wendy Horvath

Child Care Director    Debby Buel

School Admin Asst

### OFFICERS

President    Collins Sita

Vice President    James Kruse

Treasurer    Lucia Kruse

Secretary

### BOARDS

Head Elder

Christian Ed.

Human Care    Jean Cote

Outreach

Assimilation    Joyce Schneider

School Board    Catalina Bakas

Stewardship

Youth

Financial Secretary    Sherrie Keesee

Property Mgmt.    Steven Horvath

### GROUPS/GUILDS

Altar Guild    Catalina Bakas

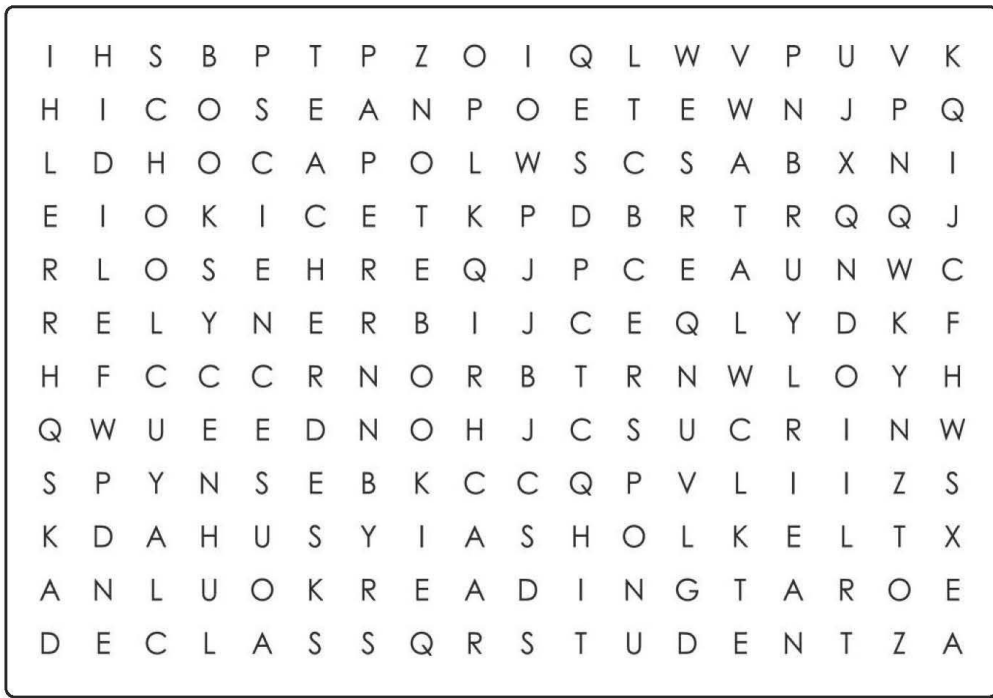
Coffee Hour    Joyce Schneider

***The deadline for the September 2023 Newsletter is August 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!***

# BACK TO SCHOOL WORD SEARCH



Find the words hidden in the puzzle.



- |         |          |         |         |
|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| BELL    | FUN      | READING | STUDENT |
| BOOKS   | LEARN    | RECESS  | STUDY   |
| CLASS   | NOTEBOOK | RULER   | TEACHER |
| CRAYONS | PAPER    | SCHOOL  | WRITE   |
| DESK    | PENCIL   | SCIENCE |         |



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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 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).*