

REDEEMER REPORTER

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH & CHILD CARE - FEBRUARY 2014

“REHASHING THE STATE OF THE PARISH ADDRESS”

The following words come from my State of the Parish Address given on January 19th during our Quarterly Voter’s Meeting. Although a printed report was made available, I thought it wise to again repeat what I fully believe to be the status of Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care.

As some of you were likely not pleased to read my January Newsletter Article concerning the business decisions Thrivent has been making, the truth had to be made known to you. I couldn’t keep it hidden from you. A shepherd warns of oncoming danger. Flocks do not guard themselves, shepherds do (Ezekiel 34; John 10).

It is difficult, most of the time, to speak the truth in love when individuals and couples and people you care about so much will become upset and offended at you because you are trying to tenderly show them the way of Christ through His Word, which leads to righteousness and heaven, rather than show them the way of the world, which leads to sin, destruction and hell. And so, before I published my January Newsletter Article, I sent a draft to the Board of Elders. What was their response? To my amazement, overwhelming support!

What had happen was truly amazing, but when it comes to speaking the truth in love, that is, speaking of Christ and His Word, amazing things will almost always happen. My outlook changed because I realized, by the grace of God and work of God, the Board of Elders trusted me (yet not really me, but the truth and guidance given in God’s Word). Still, I earned their trust. I earned their respect and therefore they stand, not just behind me, but with me, beside me, on the sure Word of God. Put another way, I received the greatest endorsement of encouragement a man could ever receive among his peers: TRUST. To be sure, I don’t deserve it, but it is given by the grace of God through the faithful teaching and preaching of His Word.

Now I don’t know if I have earned the trust and the respect from every one of you, as I have the Board of Elders, but I will continue to speak the truth in God’s Word in order that godly trust can continue to be

established among all of us. God desires all men, that is, all people to come to Him through the means of His Word of truth. May we then humble ourselves and receive His blessing that we may walk together in unity and harmony, doing His will and His work to glory of His name in order that His kingdom may increase through the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



With this renewed confidence and trust, I give you the following message: The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Thessalonians, says, “Encourage one another and build one another up” (1 Thessalonians 5:11). With these words from the inspired pen of Paul, I am instructed to encourage you and to build you up. Moreover, I am to instruct you that we are to encourage one another and to build one another up.

Therefore, I proclaim Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care to be the year of the ENCOURAGER. That’s right, the encourager. We should all be an encourager of one another. The bible is flooded with verses of encouragement, support, hope, and love. Can you imagine the positive change that could take place, not only within each and every one of us, but also among us, all around us if we all become more and more of an encourager to one another?

According to a North America Dictionary, the word encourage, as a transitive verb, offers three distinctive meanings; (1) to give somebody hope, confidence, or courage, (2) to motivate somebody to do something, and (3) to foster something in order to occur or increase. These definitions will serve as an outline for my address.

TO GIVE HOPE, CONFIDENCE, AND COURAGE

I would be remiss if I didn’t first mention the confidence

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Pastor	Rev. James Kress
Seasonal Pastor	Rev. Mark Steinke
LHM Ambassador	Rev. Earl Schmidt
Child Care Director	Wendy Horvath
Office Secretary	Patty Lodge
Organists	Bill Bowers Lanette Schmidt
Choir Director	Collins Sita
Newsletter Editor	

OFFICERS

President	Rich Kueker
Vice President	Brian Abel
Treasurer	Judy Murphy
Secretary	Betty Clemens

BOARDS

Head Elder	Tim Byrne
Assimilation	Deb Kueker
Property Mgmt	Todd Armstrong
Christian Ed.	Pam Replinger
Human Care	Carol Carlos
Outreach	
School Board	Bill Bowers
Stewardship	
Youth	
Financial Secretary	Karen Kirkland

GROUPS/GUILDS

Ladies Guild	Sally Zierdt
Men's Group	Bob Mortenson
Altar Guild	Carol Sheahan
Coffee Hour	Lisa Kress

STEWARDSHIP

The four Sundays in February are in the Epiphany season of the Church Year calendar. Epiphany is a word that means “showing forth” or “manifesting.” The Epiphany season begins on January 6 with the visit of the Wise Men to worship the Baby Jesus as the newborn King of the Jews. The season continues with the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, the calling of His first disciples, His preaching the good news of salvation and the opening of His famous Sermon on the Mount. In the four Gospel readings for February we find Jesus teaching that we are lights in this spiritually dark world who give evidence of our new birth as Christians as we love even our enemies and seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. To live that way is truly an “epiphany experience” to show that we really belong to our Lord Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit live renewed lives.

That’s what Christian stewardship is all about! Wise Christian stewards manage all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes and do it freely and joyfully! We practice the kind of stewardship that is pleasing to our Lord when we give freely and generously of our time to serve in special ways that bless the mission of the church and the people living in our communities. This kind of stewardship is also shown when we freely and joyfully offer our talents and skills to help the church prosper and make life sweeter for those around us. This kind of stewardship continues when we give freely and joyfully of our financial resources to support the work of the church in nurturing believers and reaching out to invite others to know Jesus.

Many people view Christian stewardship as something that we have to do [a command] in order to be true followers of Jesus. That simply is not true! Real Christian stewardship is the privilege of offering all that we are and have to make a difference in this world of spiritual darkness. Just as Jesus came on that first Christmas to bring light to a darkened world, so we are called to follow His example. Will we follow in His footsteps perfectly, use all that we are and have in truly unselfish ways and be willing to make sacrifices so the mission of Christ’s church on earth may prosper and become a home for many more redeemed people? No, of course not! We are sinners and will fall short of the glory of God. But, in Christ, God has declared us to be saints because our sins and shortcomings have been forgiven and the Holy Spirit empowers us to let our lights shine so that people will see our good deeds and praise our Father in heaven.

The bottom line for Christian stewards is to hear and obey our Lord’s words when he taught: *“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things [material blessings] will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.” (Matthew 6:33-34 NIV) .*

The Board of Stewardship

Continued from page 1 ... **REHASHING OF PARISH ADDRESS**

I have in our President, Rich Kueker; or our Head Elder, Tim Byrne; or our Pastors, Rev. Mark Steinke and Rev. Earl Schmidt; the Board of Elders, George Cancellieri, Dick Clemens, Kevin Hopkins, Ty Schulte, Ed Deonges, Bob Buie, and Ed Sheahan; the Officers of the Church Council, Brian Abel, Betty Clemens, and Judy Murphy; the Church Council, Karen Kirkland, Carol Carlos, Todd Armstrong, Deb Keuker, Pam Replinger, and Bill Bowers; the School Board, which not only include many members of the Church Council, but also includes Tricia Hopkins and Dieter Euler; the leadership and staff of the Child Care, Director, Wendy Horvath; Assistant Director, Lisa Kress; teachers, Jaci Jose, Cheryl Ann Galway, Miranda Leksche, Lisa Vassallo, Kristy Melucci, Katie Weeks, Rebecca, Carrie, and Jadaline; also all the Boards, Committees, Auxiliary Committees, and Volunteers; the secretary of our church office, Patty Lodge; and I don't want to forget you, the Members and Associate Members of Redeemer Lutheran Church. I would be remiss if I didn't mention all of you first.

I have confidence in all of you. My hope is that we will continue to work together to carry out the Lord's work. However, we all know it isn't going to be easy. We will be tested and tried, tempted and deceived, yet we will not fall; we will not fail; we will not be defeated nor overcome.

Let us then, each and every one of us, put our hope and trust in God who can work miraculously through us. We can do all His work because He is the One who strengthens us to begin, carry-out, and complete His work.

Let us also then take courage in Jesus who has defeated Satan and all evil. Let us then continue to trust in Him who has conquered death and hell. Let us finally then be courageous, not wavering, but standing firm on the pure Word of God, trusting in Him above all things who has washed our sins with His innocent and precious blood in order that we may do His will.

TO MOTIVATE OTHERS TO DO SOMETHING

Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care is so very blessed to have such dedicated leaders. What I have also noticed is that many of our leaders are supported by and work with their spouses. It is amazing how many couples work together, for example, there's Rich & Deb Kueker,

Tim & Catherine Byrne, Karen & Tom Kirkland, Dick & Betty Clemens, Joe & Carol Carlos, Kevin & Tricia Hopkins, Rev. Earl & Lanette Schmidt, Rev. Mark & Laurie Steinke, and Pam & Dennis Replinger. These couples are probably the most visible among leaders working together in the church.

However, you know what is more astonishing, are the couples who work together behind the scenes, the ones you don't really see, but an awful lot of work is done by them. For example, there's Ed & Carol Sheahan, Gary & Jonti Lute, Erwin & Gudrun Janke, Diane & Martin McGrath, George & Elma Cancellieri, Sybil & Cecil Grahl, Don & Mary Blakley, Tim & Mary Ann Frees, Steven & Wendy Horvath, Dale & Pat Whipple, Charlie & Pat Finkenbine, Bob & Marion Buie, Ray & Delores Altmann, Earl & Avis Stuck, Allan & Lois Webster, Jim & KC Wright, Paul & Vicky Davis, Steve & Lee Procuk, Jim & Mary Kay Straw, Brian & Mickie Abel, Churck & Elaine Malecki, Vern & Ruth Speer, Jim & Mary Turner, Bill & Eileen Zwick, Dale & Camille Weburg, and Paul & June Brown.

And then there are those individuals who devote their time and talent to the church as well (whether they are married or single, visible or work behind the scenes); Judy Murphy, Dorothy Sinowski, Collins Sita, Sally Zierdt, Lessie Kirch, Margie Cypher, Linda Rogers, Bill Bowers, Bernice Heppner, Sharon Johnson, Georgette Callahan, Nancy Kozak, Sandy McGrath, Ty Schulte, Cathy Mielke, Lisa Vassallo, Melissa Brew, Angie Ziegler, Lynda Christoffers, Ed Doenges, Ted Simis, Doris Dykhuizen, Pat Petersen, Jane Hoivik, Sharon Grcevic, Harold Hale, Sam Jollay, Arlen Harden, Bud Harty, Claire Kieselburg, Lillian Miles, Olga Nagel, Carol Haupt, Susie Haupt, Dottie LaMere, Joyce Redding, Patty Lodge, Helen Plank, Donna Wolf, Randy Winters, Jerry Schreiner, Inge Tringali, Carolyn Plesner, Helen Sturzenbecker, Lora Lorain, and Marie Talley.

Without the dedication, faithfulness, and commitment of all these members, associate members, and some soon to be members, the work of the various boards, committees, and jobs around the church and child care would not be ready and prepared for your participation. And still there are probably couples and individuals who have contributed to this work in the past but are unable

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to continue because they are physically unable. I'm certain, that at the very least, they keep the ministry of this congregation in their prayers, at the very least.

I am also confident that I have failed to mention the names of a few couples or individuals who quietly, but efficiently contribute to the needs of the life of this congregation. If I have, I am sorry, it wasn't intentional.

However, before I conclude this second part of motivating others to do something, I wanted to save one particular couple for special recognition. I don't have a plaque or certificate to hand out, but only the following words of gratitude to give.

The couple I would like to direct all our attention is a husband and wife team who get the least amount of thanks. They clean our filthy floors, take out our messy garbage, sparkle things that didn't shine, and fill what we have emptied: Todd & Gretchen Armstrong. This dynamic custodial team is a young couple trying very hard to do the right things, make the right choices, to make a difference, a more positive difference in their lives and in ours as well. Thank you Todd & Gretchen for putting up with and cleaning up after our messes. Your contribution to our congregation does not go unnoticed. We appreciate you and your work.

Yet even with these volunteers, there is still more work to be done. Many of the couples and individuals I mentioned serve on multiple boards or committees. Positions of leadership remain vacant. Vital positions are in need of your participation.

Not only will the vacant positions of leadership in their respective boards and committees go without producing fruit and eventually die, but those positions of leadership that presently have leaders are carrying out the work of 5, 10, or 20 people. My fear is that these dedicated leaders and volunteers will grow tired and see their work, which is now to them a joy, will become a burden.

Your participation and involvement is necessary for the continued life of the church. Whether you are retired, working, unemployed, married, single, a member or an associate member of this congregation or a family member of the child care, prayerfully consider how Christ Jesus can use your gifts and talents, time, and

treasure toward the life of Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care.

TO FOSTER THE WORK ALREADY ESTABLISHED

Most recently, our congregation participated in a survey ranking seven (7) vision paths according to priority or need. As a result of the survey, the evidence was made clear. A Fostering of the needs of Congregational Younger Families ranked #1. The question is: How can this be accomplished?

The Vision Path Development Team has been working hard to best determine how this path, as well as the remaining paths, can be strategically accomplished. Dr. Bud Harty, Chairman for the Team, has been working feverishly hard to lead the Team to develop such a strategic plan. Although the entire team shares the same vision and goals based upon the results of the survey, there are team members who see the horse being the cart and others who view the cart being the horse. To move forward in this manner, not knowing or understanding who, what or how we should precede down these vision paths, I offer these words.

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11).

Please keep the members of the Vision Path Development Team in your daily prayers as well as the entire congregation at Redeemer Lutheran Church.

I don't know what lies ahead for Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care in 2014 or for the years that follow, but the Lord Almighty does. May we all continue to trust in Him and turn toward Him for guidance and direction, working in unity and harmony serving Him, each other, and our community in Christian love and mercy.

And let us encourage one another, building one another up in order that the Lord may provide the growth here in this His mission field, Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care. Be encouraged and be an encourager of one another.

In conclusion, I leave you with these words of

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encouragement from our brother in Christ, the Apostle Paul, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:8-9).

In His Service,
Pastor Kress

ENGLEWOOD CROP HUNGER WALK

Set aside **Saturday, February 22, 2014** for the 26th annual **CROP WALK**. **CROP** stands for Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty. It is a program sponsored by Church World Service (CWS), a group supported by many Christian denominations. Over 2000 communities around the country participate each year. 25% of the money raised in Englewood stays right here in Englewood. Englewood Helping Hand will use the money to distribute much needed food and assistance to help our less fortunate neighbors. In the past our small community has raised as much as \$20,000. The other 75% will go to Lutheran World Relief (LWR). In 2012 LWR reached



almost 8 million people through 189 projects in 35 countries. LWR operates under the umbrella of CWS. CWS is one of the best charitable organizations in terms of putting the highest percentage of funds in the hands of those that need help. In FY 2011, just 13.3 cents of every CWS dollar went for overhead – 3.7 percent for administration and 9.6 percent for fundraising and information. That means that 86.7 percent went directly to the cause. The National Charities Information Bureau requires that organizations spend at least 60 percent of actual expenses for program activities. As you can see, CWS is a very good steward of our gifts. You can learn more about CWS at www.cwsglobal.org. You can also visit LWR at www.lwr.org. From now until the event we will be in the Narthex handing out packets to recruiters who will be enlisting walkers and non-walkers to sponsor those who do walk. We will also have a donation receptacle for those who wish to make a donation. On February 22nd the walk will start at Community Presbyterian Church in Englewood and walk to Lemon Bay Park and back, a distance of 5 miles. Registration begins at 8 am and the walk starts at 8:30 am. The organizers of this event are hoping for a large turnout so let's show them that Redeemer Lutheran Church and Child Care is behind this wonderful cause.

We also welcome families of Redeemer Child Care to join us on this leisurely walk.

Submitted by Ed & Carol Sheahan

MEN'S BREAKFAST



The Men of Redeemer are gathering for their monthly breakfast. We meet on the 2nd Monday of each month at Country Hound Café at 7 AM. Come and join us for breakfast and fellowship. All men are welcome to join us. For more information please contact Charles Malecki (941) 697-0976.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES - December 9, 2013

PRESENT: Pastor Kress, Rich Kueker, Brian Abel, Tim Byrne, Judy Murphy, Karen Kirkland, Carol Carlos, Deb Kueker, Pam Replinger, Bill Bowers, Betty Clemens

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Rich Kueker.

Pastor Kress opened the meeting by reading Psalm 84 followed by prayer.

MINUTES of the November 11, 2013 meeting were presented. Rich made an addition to the minutes under Unfinished Business, 2nd paragraph, Tim's motion: Added to the end of his motion: "AND APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET AS AMENDED." The Secretary so noted and made this change. PAM MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES WITH ONE ADDITION AS PRESENTED. BILL SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

CALENDAR for January was presented and the following changes were made: Human Care Meeting on Jan. 8th is at 10:00am instead of 10:30am; Council Meeting on January 13th will be at 6:00pm instead of 7:00pm.

PAM MADE A MOTION TO CHANGE THE CHURCH COUNCIL MEETINGS FROM 7:00pm TO 6:00pm. JUDY SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

PASTOR: Report attached. Volunteers will be needed to coordinate the Thrivent Yard Sale Event on January 24th and 25th. Diane and Sandy McGrath are physically unable to do it this year. However, Diane, will remain to be our Thrivent representative. There will be Bulletin Announcements, Verbal Announcements and it will also be in the Newsletter.

PRESIDENT: No Report Rich asked all the committee leaders for short bullet reports for the Voter's Meeting in January to be sent to the office by January 10th. This should include a short recap of the year.

VICE PRESIDENT: No Report

TREASURER: Report Attached. Not all bills have been paid.

BOARD OF ELDERS: No Report

FINANCE: No Report

STEWARDSHIP: No Report

HUMAN CARE BOARD: Report attached

Relay for Life Christmas cookie sale was a success. \$546 including donor giving \$200.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT: No Report

ASSIMILATION: No Report Deb asked to please pray for the members of her committee who are having health issues.

COMMUNITY & PARISH FELLOWSHIP: No Report.

YOUTH: No Report

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: No Report Pam announced the Christmas Program on Dec. 18th at 7:00.

SCHOOL BOARD: Report attached. Mission Sunday will concentrate on our Church's mission and will feature child care students during the "Feeding of the Lambs". Child Care Budget will be included in the Voter's Meeting packet as information, but does not have to be voted on.

VISION PATH DEVELOPMENT TEAM: Executive Summary has been completed and will be distributed at the December Voter's Meeting. It will be placed on the Agenda so it can be brought to the congregation's attention and noted a full report will be given in January.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL ... *continued*

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

Candidates for 2014 Offices: Judy Murphy, Treasurer; Carol Carlos, Human Care; Deb Kueker, Assimilation; and Pam Replinger, Christian Education all accepted to serve another 2 year term. Todd Armstrong is our new Property Manager. This will be voted on at the Voter's Meeting. The most important thing we can do is pray for one another and our congregation.

CORRESPONDENCE: A letter was received with a check for \$3,000 from Charlie and Pat Finkenbine to cover the cost of the Web Site for the Child Care and for the Church for the next 5 years. Pat is working very diligently to get these sites updated. Pastor's thank you letter was read aloud. The money will be set up in a dedicated account for the Web Site.

BILL MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN. TIM SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 with a prayer given by Pastor Kress and the singing the Doxology.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Betty Clemens, Cong. Sec.*

PRAYERS

SHUT-INS: Marjorie Boliere, Evelyn Etheridge, Erv Maki, Helen Perry, and Ruth Sutley.

HEALING: Erna Abel, Delores Altmann, Carl & Betty Bertka, Bob Boliere, Melissa Brew, Elma Cancellieri, Fred Fernald, Pat Finkenbine, Arlene Harden, Bernice Heppner, Erwin Janke, Cindy Johnson, Diane McGrath, Sandy McGrath, Marlene Mossner, Stacy Neef, Olga Nagel, Leah Norton, Braxton Payne, Carolyn Plesner, Sue Poyer, Ron Ratzlaff, Michael Sanders, Duwayne Schoeneck, Sandy Sita, Clarence Sturzenbecker, Marie Talley, Fred Toth, Lois Webster, Pat Whipple, Arlene Wiley, Ronald Woller, and Eileen Zwick

FRIENDS & RELATIVES: Anthony Abreu, Linny Aspery, Jean Bajner, Gioconda Barlow, Shirley Bloom, Grace Blum, Dennis Burchell, Georgia Bush, John Burtcher, Jack & Cathy Carlos, Diana Carr, Debbie Carr, Diane Carr, Esther Clapham, Bobbett Clark, Martin Cressman, Renee Dempsey, Irene DiTommaso, James Dodge, Barb Dumeah, Chuck & Barbara Ebert, Joel Fredette, Manual Galan, Glenn Galway, Nancy Gleis, Debbie Harrison, John Haupt, Larry Headun, Claudette Hendershot, Joel Heppner, Walter Heppner, Glory Herget, Robin Hincman, David Hirtle, Larry Hladun, the Family & Friends of Tom Holt, John Hunter, Linda Hunter, Stanley & Lynne Jablonski, Carl Jennejohn, Heather Johnson, Rachel Kagay, John Kearns, Jackie Klinger, Mary Krueger, Jim Lane, John Lewis, Ray Likowski, Denise Line, Don Luffingwell, Sean Maki, Joe Manson, Pete Mogg, Linda Mohr, Mike Morrissey, Kaye Gene Mortenson, Rev. Dana Narring, Noreen Oliver, Charles Pentecost Jr., Mary Raines, Elaine Reebe, Tucker Roberts, Ryan Sheahan, Don Shepherd, Nancy Sly, Debbie Speer Smith, Virginia Stanley, Sarah Sturzenbecker, Charles Tolley, Samantha Jo Ann Toth, George Vespa, Steven Walker, Helen Weishaar, Gordan Winkel, Reece Withers, Angel Zavala.

MILITARY PERSONNEL: Mark Baranowsky, Michael Broughton, Brian Jackson, Brett Keck, David MacLeod, Michael Monson, 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.

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK

As of January 1 Through December 31, 2013

Income
\$233,942.88

Expense
\$250,234.58

PROPERTY APPRECIATION DAY

Please join us for our monthly "Property Appreciation" Day on the second Saturday of the month, February 8th!!! We begin at 8 AM. Join us in keeping our buildings and properties beautiful. There's a little something to do for anyone willing to help... THANK YOU! - *Property Management*

ANGEL SCHOLARSHIP FUND GOLF SCRAMBLE

HOW ARE A GOLFTOURNAMENT AND A CHRISTIAN EDUCATION LINKED?

A little known fact is that the LCMS operates the largest Protestant school system in the world! Amazing, but true; since 1998 we at Redeemer have been very much a part of this endeavor through our Redeemer Lutheran Day Care and Child Development Center. It is the goal of Redeemer Lutheran Church & Child Care to help any family to attend our school. Our facility provides Christ centered child care to over 60 children in our community. The Redeemer



family has set aside a limited amount of funds to help with this; a portion of these funds comes from proceeds raised at the Guardian Angel Scholarship Fundraiser also known as our annual Redeemer Lutheran Child Care Golf Tournament. The Golf Tournament is to be held on Saturday the 22nd of March. We encourage you golfers to support this fundraiser; non-golfers, at a cost of \$20, are welcome to join us for the luncheon. There are also Sponsorship opportunities. Registration forms were made available as an two-sided insert to this Newsletter. If you have any questions, contact Tim Byrne or Bob Buie.

*The deadline for the March Newsletter is February 16th
Please have all your submissions sent to redemerfl@verizon.net OR
drop it off at the church office to Patty by the time indicated above.
Thank You!*

RELAY FOR LIFE

The Relay For Life team has T-shirts available to all interested in supporting our goal of finding a cure for cancer. The suggested donation is \$10.00. They are in the narthex along with an order sheet. Order sheets can be used to secure your T-shirt at a later date. The American Cancer Society walk is **Saturday, April 5th** at Lemon Bay High School track beginning at 4:00pm until Sunday 6:00am. You can walk part of the hours or all of the 14 hours. There will be music, luminaries, food and fun. Hope to see you all, along with the Redeemer team.

Submitted by Carol Carlos



LADIES GUILD/LWML



MITE BOX IN NARTHEX FEBRUARY 2, 2014

Lutheran Women in Mission support Mission Grants to further spread the Gospel in the States and Abroad. Your individual mite offerings, added together through the LWML, make a beautiful image of how our Lord uses His people sharing the Gospel to make a global impact. A current grant of \$100,000 will be used in training Indigenous Pastors at Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, IN so that they, in turn, can teach others in their own country to spread the Gospel. Coins dropped in the large MiteBox on Sunday, Feb. 2 will be used to reach this goal. Every MITE is a blessing!

Submitted by Vicky Davis

SINGLES LUNCHEON

February 11th at 11:30 AM, the singles luncheon will be held at "Gram Cracker Café" 3031 Placida Road, Englewood. The January lunch was cancelled due to lack of attendance. This singles luncheon was started to give singles, who have no one to go out to lunch with, the opportunity to eat and have fellowship. If people do not want to go out for lunch, the luncheons will be discontinued. We will discuss this at our next lunch in February. Please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex.

Submitted by Lessie Kirch



REDEEMER YARD SALE

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You to everyone who donated, sorted, set up, picked up and delivered items, kept items orderly, prepared lunch and desserts for volunteers Friday and Saturday, cashiered, packed up unsold items, etc. for our annual yard sale. I will not mention names as I will surely miss someone. This event is a great time to get acquainted with fellow members. A special Thank You to Karen and Tommy Kirkland for their assistance.

I COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!

Submitted by Sybil Grahl



LADIES GUILD/LWML BAKELESS BAKE SALE

Every February the Ladies Guild/LWML has its annual Bakeless Bake Sale. Envelopes to enclose donations will be distributed starting Sunday, February 2nd. Instead of baking something for the ladies to sell, just donate what it would cost to benefit our special project. Deposit your donation in the "cake" on the information desk in the Narthex.

This year the members of the Guild voted, at our January 8th meeting, to use the proceeds to purchase kitchen supplies for Lenten and Advent dinners, funeral luncheons, and various functions in the Fellowship Hall. The price of paper plates—large and small, bowls, cups—large and small, plastic cutlery, coffee, tea, butter, sugar, creamers, etc., is costly.

Your donations will be appreciated

Submitted by Sybil Grahl, Redeemer Ladies Guild/LWML

A MESSAGE FROM AN ELDER

DO YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW TO START MEANINGFUL CHANGE IN THE U.S.A.?

Let's start by taking a snap shot of pop culture today. Justin Bieber throws eggs at his neighbor, gets his house raided by the police, and cocaine is found in his house. The masses don't blink an eye. Then he got himself arrested here in Florida for DUI and Drag Racing.

Miley Cyrus ... started out as Hanna Montana on the Disney Channel. Fast forward to today. She's been caught by the paparazzi smoking marijuana. Moreover, she's given the media sound bites telling the world that drugs are good. Then there was the "twerking" incident broadcast nationwide.

These are just two shining examples of what we have deemed good and right in our society. We affirm this every time we buy a CD or a tee shirt. When will the people realize if they stop buying their records and concert tickets they'll go away.

Sports figures get arrested and they seem to stick around to keep reaping the cash we throw at them. Seattle's Richard Sherman acted like a gangster thug after winning a division championship and we still allow him to play in the super bowl. FSU's quarterback Jameis Winston was accused of raping a girl. The charges weren't filed conveniently at the same time he was in contention for the Heisman trophy. Guess what ... He won the trophy, youngest kid ever to do so! Now it comes to light that the girl is suing Winston, the university, and TPD maintaining that she was assaulted. There are too many to list them all. In the NFL alone 27 players were arrested in 2013. That's not even counting MLB, NBA, or NHL! We keep on buying tickets, jerseys, stickers, and hats.

Instead we need to say, I don't care how much talent you have. Thugs and scumbags don't get the lime light.

Politicians are no better and are too many to list. I give one example from close to home. Rep. Trey Radel of Florida, after a mere ten months in congress, was arrested for buying cocaine from an undercover officer. Nice representative of the people huh? I bet he and I don't share the same values or beliefs. But, he'll apologize just like the rest of them and may even get re-elected.

We need to bring back values in America! So many "role models" who are anything but. We need to send these folks a message. Act proper if you want to be famous. If you don't, we'll find someone who does to waste our money on.

Here's an idea ... If we spent half the money we throw at these classy roll models (24.5 Billion in case you're wondering) tithing to our church and it were used to spread the gospel, how much different would the world be? You want an American Idol? How about Christ! Ever heard a story about Him doing anything close to what these idiots do? Ask yourself do you want your kids acting like Bieber or more like Christ?

Change is hard. It starts with the individual. We each must choose who and what we follow. Right now the devil is dancing with the choices we are making. It's time we scrap our priorities and start the list over ... with God as our #1 priority.

Now I have had this conversation with several people before. Most agree that this country is headed in a bad direction. You might even say we have become ungodly. You most likely agree that not one of the above pop culture "stars" is worthy of being idolized by your child. The answer is WE become the role model for our kids. Lead by example! One of the best ways to become more like Christ is to spend time in His Word. I would urge all of us (myself included) to participate in the small group Bible studies that have been going on in our Church for the past year, or sign up for Pastor Schmidt's Bible Bytes. Believe me, your kids will emulate you.

Some folks say, I don't need to go to church to worship God. That is indeed true, we were freed by Christ to worship wherever we want. Worship is our job in life and should never be reserved for Sunday mornings. I don't go to church to worship. I can do that at home or while driving in my car. It is not my place to tell you where or how to

(Continued on page 11)

Continued from page 10 ... A MESSAGE FROM AN ELDER

worship. Church is a place where Christ has promised to be present always. I go to church to be served by Christ. That's right, I said Christ serves us, because He does! The way I worship won't save me. The way God serves me, saves me. Church is where sins are forgiven and people are saved. It is the place where we hear the liturgy and rightly receive the Holy Sacraments. Christian fellowship is just a bonus. Church also serves the purpose of combining the money, time, and talent of like minded Christians to spread the gospel on a scale that we could never accomplish on our own.

Want to make meaningful change in this country? Start by looking inward. Stay with the things that are right and good. When you see the Justin Bieber's of the world, make a conscience choice to lead yourself away from American Idol's and right into Christ our Lord and Savior.

In Christ,
Kevin Hopkins, Elder

LUTHERAN CHURCH EXTENSION FUND NEWS

Wow! I Didn't Know That!-LCEF (Lutheran Church Extension Fund) Pondering Points Part II

Did you know:

- *that the Young Investor Account has a **3.5% interest rate**? (0-18 years old)
- *that **less than 5%** of LCMS members are investors with LCEF?
- *that LCEF has many services to offer congregations
- *that LCEF has many types of investment opportunities for individuals and congregations?
- *that Redeemer has **only 13 accounts** that are credited to our congregation?
- *that even if you have an account with your church/district "up north", you can open one here in Florida?
- *that your money really is safe? LCEF has to have **twice the amount of money available** to back its accounts that banks and other investment agencies in Florida have. Otherwise, LCEF is not given authority to operate in Florida.
- *that even you can help expand ministry opportunities within our synod and congregation with just a small investment?

I was given the opportunity to attend the LCEF congregational representative meeting at the FL-GA District office in Orlando on January 10-11 to learn more about LCEF and meet other congregational reps. I was honored to represent Redeemer and meet the District "behind the scenes" people with LCEF. I learned more about the services that Lutheran Church Extension Fund has to offer, besides the numerous savings products that it offers.

Why do we keep letting you know about LCEF? What's the point? We all have investments, or have thought about having them. When we choose to invest in companies other than LCEF, we never really know where our money is going. A bank can choose to use your money anyway it wants. With LCEF, you can rest assured that your money will always be working to further mission and ministry of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, both near and far. Your investment will fund loans and services that are available to congregations, church workers, and RSOs of the LCMS.

When we invest with LCEF, we extend God's church. Hence the "Extension" in Lutheran Church Extension Fund. For the price of a dinner out, we can extend God's Kingdom and start to fulfill His mission command to bring the lost to the saving knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

Please see the LCEF display in the narthex or talk to me, your LCEF congregational representative. I will answer any questions you might have regarding investing in LCEF. Prayerfully consider becoming an investor with Lutheran Church Extension Fund.

Respectfully submitted Laurie Steinke

LUTHERAN HOUR MINITRIES

CHRISTIANS KILLED FOR FAITH NEARLY DOUBLED IN 2013

Rev. Faye Pama Musa knew immediately why suspected Boko Haram militants burst into his home last year as his wife prepared dinner in the family's northeastern Nigeria home. His stance against Christian persecution in the divided African nation had long made him a target.

Musa, who served as the general overseer of the Rhema Assembly International Church and secretary of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Borno, saw the intruders near the front door of his home in Maiduguri as his wife, Mercy, prepped food. One of the couple's daughters, Zion, had spotted the armed men just seconds earlier jumping a fence.

'Today you are a dead man,' one of the gunmen reported said on May 14 as he dragged Musa to the porch. 'Call your Jesus to help you, Mr. CAN man!'

Zion Musa then begged the attackers to spare her father, a request met with a misfired bullet that caused her to faint. She survived but her 52-year-old father — a man who worked closely with Open Doors, a nondenominational group tracking persecuted Christians worldwide — did not.

Musa, according to the group, was one of 2,123 Christians killed last year due to their faith, compared to 1,201 in 2012. More than half of those reported killings (1,213) occurred in Syria, followed by Nigeria (612) and Pakistan (88).

But North Korea — a country of more than 24 million, with an estimated 300,000 Christians — remained the most dangerous country worldwide for Christians for the 12th consecutive year, followed by Somalia, Syria and Iraq.

"Like others in that country, Christians have to survive under one of the most oppressive regimes in contemporary times," according to a release on the report issued Wednesday. "They have to deal with corrupt officials, bad policies, natural disasters, diseases and hunger. On top of that, they must hide their decision to follow Christ. Being caught with a Bible is grounds for execution or a life-long political prison sentence. An estimated 50,000 to 70,000 Christians live in concentration camps, prisons and prison-like circumstances under the regime of leader Kim Jong-Un."

A sub-Saharan African country — Somalia — was ranked second on the organization's list for the first time. Islamic extremism is the primary source of Christian persecution in the country of more than 10 million and while the capital of Mogadishu is under more moderate Muslim control recently, converts from Islam are threatened with execution, sometimes by the al-Shabaab militant rebels.

"In Somalia, a Christian cannot trust anyone," one Christian reportedly told an Open Doors researcher. "One false confidence and you literally lose your head."

Syria, meanwhile, which had not previously cracked the group's list of top ten most oppressive places for Christians, ranked third last year. Like in Somalia, Islamic extremism powered the prosecution, according to Open Door officials, and many towns that previously had large populations of Christians have become ghost towns.

'The face of persecution in Syria has changed,' the group's World Watch List reads, adding that nearly half of rebels in Syria have a jihadist background. 'The influence of these groups that are linked to Al Qaeda and other extremist factions has risen considerably in the past year.'

More than 80 percent of people worldwide identify with a religious group, according to 2011 survey by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. Of those, 2.2 billion, or 32 percent, identified themselves as Christians, followed by 1.6 billion Muslims (23 percent) and 1 billion Hindus (15 percent).

The survey also found that roughly 1.1 billion people, or 16 percent worldwide, have no religious affiliation, making that segment the third-largest religious group globally and roughly equal in size to the world's Catholic population."

Author: Joshua Rhett Miller, published January 10, 2014

(Continued on page 13)

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS

Tuesday morning Bible Class at 10:00 AM continues with another exciting topic of study: **What Does God Say About . . .?** An ellipsis (three dots) is intentionally placed at the end of the question to indicate that we will examine what God's Word says concerning almost any concern (question) you may have. Some of the questions we will consider at the onset will be what God says about same-sex marriage, the sanctity of life, the end times, Bible prophecy, etc. Certainly these are some 'hot topics' but just as the average Lutheran layman today may not know any Latin, he probably knows what the phrase 'sola Scriptura' (Scripture alone) means. It means that we Lutherans base our theology, our teaching, the doctrines of the church solely on the Scriptures of God and nothing else, not tradition, not human speculation, not modern scholarship, not our experiences, our feelings, or our emotions, or anything else. Sola Scriptura is a watchword, a guide for action, for every true Lutheran, pastor or layman.



Everything we need to believe and do as Christians is told us in the Scriptures. In other words, what God has to say about this or that issue. Just as our Lord Jesus was a man of one Book and drew all His teaching from that One Divine source and submitted Himself to it utterly in all He said and did, so we too who are His disciples today place ourselves joyfully under that prophetic and apostolic Word. So come join us **Tuesdays at 10:00 AM** in the small meeting room in Fellowship Hall and discover "What Does God Say About . . .?"

cont. from page 12 ... LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES

In spite of persecution, it is hard to suppress information in this digital age of communication. It is another critical reason members of Redeemer can support the outreach efforts of LHM (Lutheran Hour Ministry) as they penetrate this world of darkness with the Gospel. LHM Sunday was Feb. 2 -- yet, if anyone wants to contribute toward LHM, do so by the end of February. Put your donation in the offering plate anytime during the month of Feb. In addition, pray for persecuted Christians worldwide and for enemies. Also, "thank the Lord" He gives religious freedom in our country. Let us use this freedom to His glory.

Rev. Earl Schmidt, LHM Ambassador for Redeemer

LADIES THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS

The picture here represents the feeling many people, maybe even you, as we struggle with the basic questions of life.

- **Why was I born?**
- **Why is my life so meaningless?**
- **Why do I experience so much inner conflict in my life?**

You may also have experienced the inner conflict of trying to lead a decent life, but you fail constantly (Romans 7:9). Why are many people – even Christians – afflicted with deep inner struggles? This Bible Class will help you find answers, not in the wisdom of man, but in the cleansing, hope-giving, and living Word of God.



Ladies of Redeemer: Come and learn of God's abundant mercy for you. God has answers of hope to your questions of struggle and despair. "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2).

We will once again use *GOOD NEWS* magazine as our guide through this amazing study of God's victory over 'THE POWER OF SIN' through the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Let our Divine Physician, Jesus diagnose the causes of frustration in your life. Join us on **Thursday at 10:00 AM** in the large meeting room in Fellowship Hall. All ladies are welcome to join us. You may also invite your girlfriend, sister, mother, or daughter.

CLASSIFIEDS

- Sales—Rentals** Pineapple Gulf Properties—Glenda McDorman, Owner/Broker (Lessie Kirch's Daughter), 350 S. Indiana Road Englewood, FL 34223.
Office: 941-473-0300, Cell: 941-330-7922.
- Cleaning Services** Free estimates! Please contact Sheila Murphy at 941-473-1747.
- Lawn Care** Call Todd Armstrong at 941-961-7584 for your lawn care needs.
- Construction** Call Rob Long! A.C.S., Inc. - Licensed General Contractor - Anything from full remodels, full lanai's, window and door installation and ALL phases of construction. State certified licensed and insured. Please call for a free estimate at 941-475-5008 or 941-232-6606!
- Real Estate** SURF & SAND REALTY - Pat Whipple, Realtor 2350 N. Beach Road, Unit 3B, Englewood, 34223. I'd love to help you find your perfect home or sell it, because I really care. Please contact me at 941-882-2725 or 941-474-7755!
- For Sale** Best offer over \$30, 1/2 the money will go towards the church rummage sale: 50 + LP records, excellent condition. Many collectables!
Call Sammy Jollay. You can leave a message at 941-697-5905

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

- Feb. 2nd: 8:00 AM – Donna Wolf & Helen Plank
10:30 AM – Linda Rogers
- Feb. 9th: 8:00 AM – Donna Wolf & Helen Plank
10:30 AM – Rich & Deb Kueker
- Feb. 16th: 8:00 AM – Steve & Lee Procuik
10:30 AM – Gary & Jonti Lute
- Feb. 23rd: 8:00 AM – Rich & Deb Kueker
10:30 AM – Margie Cypher
- Submitted by Assimilation*



COFFEE HOUR

- Feb. 2nd: Vicky Davis & Marion Buie
- Feb. 9th: Tim & Catherine Byrne
- Feb. 16th: TBA/Volunteer
- Feb. 23rd: Todd & Gretchen Armstrong
- Submitted by Lisa Kress*



REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHILD CARE

Happy Valentines Day!



February 2014 Bible Lessons

Chapel is on Tuesday at
3:45

2/4 Jesus Tells His
Children to Come

Mark 10:13-16

2/11 Jesus Says to
Show Mercy

Luke 10:25-37

2/18 God Provides for
His Children

Luke 21:1-4

2/25 Jesus Came to
Save Sinners

Luke 19:1-10



Dear Jesus, Thank You
for pastors and
teachers who tell me of
Your love. I rejoice
that my name is written
in heaven.
Amen.

Birthdays

Laura 2/1
Ms. Lisa K 2/18
Hajnalka 2/20
Jackie 2/24



Congratulations on your years of service!



Ms. Miranda 5 years

Closings

Child Care will be closed
February 17th for
Presidents' Day.



What We Are Learning

2/3 Jesus Blesses the
Children

2/10 The Parable of
the Good Samaritan

2/17 The Widow's Mite

2/24 Jesus Eats with
Zacchaeus



GOLF Scramble Fundraiser

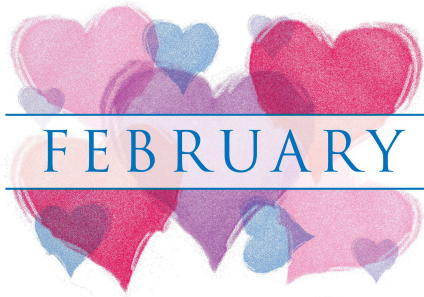
Redeemer Lutheran
Child Care is sponsoring
a Fundraiser for the
Angel Scholarship Fund.
Please see Bob Buie or
Tim Byrne for
information or look in
the Church Narthex.
The golf outing will be
Saturday, March 22,
2014 at 7:30 A.M.

Submitted by Wendy Horvath

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REV. JAMES T. KRESS, SR.

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:

November—April: 8:00 & 10:30 AM

Sunday School: 9:15 AM

Bible Study: 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.