

# REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH CELEBRATING 119 YEARS OF MINISTRY



## Redeemer Lutheran Church

### Church Address

246 Hulmeville Ave.  
Pennel, PA 19047

### Mailing Address

239 Fairview Avenue  
Pennel, PA 19047

Parish Office: (215) 757-2724

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Website: [redeemerlutheranpenndel.org](http://redeemerlutheranpenndel.org)

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Rev. Heeralal Mukesh Cheedie

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00am-1:00pm

Phone: 215-757-2724 Fax: 215-757-7199

Handicapped Accessible Via a Lift

## Redeemer Herald Newsletter For May 2024



**Visitors and Neighbors:  
Welcome to Redeemer  
Lutheran Church!**

***Our door is open to you!  
We would be happy to  
have you join us as a  
Partner in prayer, in song,  
and in the hearing of  
God's word.***



**Our Mission:**

As a community of faith, we worship the Triune God. We are called to love and serve all God's people and creation through word and deed.

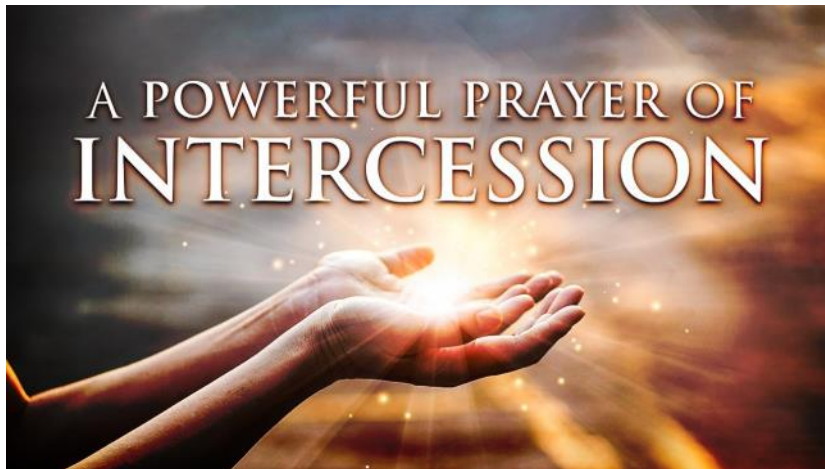


## Pastor's Page

**Grace and peace to you from God the Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.**



*Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. (James 5:14-16)*



*Continuing with the theme of Worship Practices that Forms Us, for the month of May, we will look at the **Prayer of Intercession**: "...let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of creation."*

The prayers of intercession—which include petitions for the mission of the church; for the well-being of creation; for peace and justice in the world; for the poor, oppressed, sick, bereaved, and lonely; for all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; for the congregation; for special concerns; and for the those who have died before us—certainly are about drawing all these concerns to the attention of God and asking God's benevolent intervention. As we utter these prayers, in a real sense we are participating in a cry of lament in solidarity with all the needy and suffering ones of this world. At the same time the prayers of the church are for us a mission statement.

## Pastor's Page

If we dare to beg God to address these things for which we pray, at the same time by our act of formulating these prayers we declare that these are also the very things to which we are committing our own time and energy as Christian people. For example, if we pray for the hungry or for the healing of Mr. Johnson, we are not just turning these things over to God but are also asking God to align our own energies toward feeding the hungry and offering ministry to Mr. Johnson. The prayers of intercession provide a direct connection between our worship and the service to which we are dedicated in our daily lives. Moreover, as often as we join in praying the intercessions, it is not only we who are doing the praying. In fact as we raise our prayers we are joining our prayers to Christ's own prayers for the life of the world. The Spirit of God joins us to Christ's prayer for all creation.

“Always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all.” (Philippians 1:4)

Blessings Always,  
Pastor Mukesh.

Source: <https://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Intercessory-Prayer>



## Prayer Concerns

**Members:** Lois Hershberger; Winnie Ferguson; Patti Paul; Lynn Leppo; Marty Danielson; David Erdman; Elizabeth Reinas; Don Farnham; Jim Reinas; Judy Lamb; Dee Grover; Rich Moulder; Mike Dunn; Katherine Patelunas; Heather Palladino; Ilene Kersten; Stephanie Rager; Michelle Morris; Jane Leppo; Edith Williams; Dolores Danielson David Short; Bob Winkler; Millie Murray; Denise Goccia; Denise Robinson, Mary Lou Robinson, Gary Overbagh

**Relatives and Friends of our Members:** George Rehm; Jim Mosman; Paula Sykes; Raymond Short Jr.; Terri Rehm; Cheri Shenefelt; Ann Marie Danieluk; Bill Castelberg Sr.; Maggie Taley; Wesley Webb; Martine Miller; Margaret Fleming; Trey Grover; Craig Jackson; Rush Young; Titus Dingle

**Relatives and Friends of our Members Serving in the Military:** Chad Durban; Joseph Piel; Kelly Cahill; Matthew Brandon Winter; Reid Furman; Julia Furman; Anne Furman; Matt Glaze; John Dichoso; Nicholas Ropars; Danny Parker; Billy Clark



**Remember in Your Prayers Pastor and staff of Redeemer, and our Nations Leaders:**

Pres. Joe Biden, Vice Pres. Kamala Harris, Our U.S. Senators, The Supreme Court, and the House of Representatives.

## Prayer Initiative for May 2024

**On May 12, 2024 please pray for:**

Dottie Simons; Liv Simons; The Stone family; Helen Susko; Steve and Lizz Szymanek; Ron and Dawn Thomas and family; Thelma Thorson; Lissy and Josh Tidwell and Sage

**On May 26, 2024 please pray for:**

Dawn Trapani ; Carey and Robert Trumpler; Jeannie and Bill Vitale; Rob and Melissa Volkman, Brayden and Cassidy; Gretchen Waldkoenig; Ken Ward; Pearl Ward

## Prayer List Guidelines

Please continue to pray for all those who are in need of healing. If you or a family member is hospitalized or is in need pastoral care, or if a death takes place in your family, please call Pastor Mukesh at 267-391-8514.

### **PRAYER LIST GUIDELINES**

After discussion, the Worship & Committee supports reinstating the 4-week rule. When someone asks Jennifer to place a person on the list, she will inform them that name will remain for 4 weeks unless she hears differently from them.

1. We will list all members on the prayer list with no limits.
2. We will list Relatives and Friends of our Members for only 4 weeks.

**You need to email the office or call the office to have them remain on longer, and you will have to call or email again in 4 weeks to have it extended again.**

We list all Relatives and Friends of our Members Serving in the Military with no limits.

## General Information

Check out our website at

<http://redeemerlutheranpenndel.org/>

Follow us on Facebook at Redeemer Penndel.

The Facebook logo, consisting of the word "facebook" in white lowercase letters on a blue rectangular background.

Articles for this publication must reach Redeemer Lutheran office not later than the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month to insure their insertion in next month's issue.

# Sponsorships

## 2024 Weekly Worship Sponsorship

Below is a list of items we generally sponsor and the names and telephone numbers of the person to call. If you are paying by check for the items you are sponsoring, please make the check payable to Redeemer and either place it in the plate during offering or put it in the mail box of those whose names are indicated below. Be sure to indicate the amount, your name and the date of the sponsorship as well as the type of sponsorship.

**ALTAR FLOWERS** \$30 per Sunday  
**ORGAN FLOWERS** \$10 per Sunday  
Deb Farnham 267-566-0043 or dgfteach@yahoo.com



**ALTAR CANDLES:** \$5.00 per Sunday  
**COMMUNION HOSTS:** \$5.00 per Sunday  
Kim Overbagh 215-499-7556 or IronsidesGirl@yahoo.com

**SANCTUARY LAMP** \$6.00 per Sunday (NOTE: price increase for 2024)  
**ROOF FUND** A contribution amount of your choosing  
**TECHNOLOGY FUND** A contribution amount of your choosing  
Gail Blinstrub at 215-891-1388 or gailaa@verizon.net



# Council Highlights May 2024

## COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS FROM COUNCIL MEETING ON 4-9-24

**WORSHIP TEAM** – We held our second Easter Vigil on Saturday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. The weather was a bit dreary, but for those who attended the service was meaningful. We celebrated Easter on March 31<sup>st</sup> by offering worship services at 9 am and 11 am. The vocal and handbell choirs performed at both services. We were fortunate that someone donated a new piano to Redeemer, all we had to do was move it from point A to point B. The piano was moved and Trevor tuned the piano. To have a piano that works well in the Parish hall is a great blessing to us all. Thank you to Deb Farnham for coordinating the sale and sponsorship of the Easter flowers and for decorating the church with the hyacinths and tulips.

**FAITH FORMATION** – Attendance is still a struggle, but we did have a decent turn out for the Palm Sunday egg hunt. The children enjoyed themselves. On Saturday, for the borough egg hunt, Jessica handed out information and goody bags to prospective families. Thank you Jess for all you do!

**STEWARDSHIP TEAM** – Still looking for a leader.

**SHARED MEAL MINISTRY** – There were 38 guests and 11 volunteers. The next shared meal will be Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. The plan is to serve ham provided by Karen and the food pantry.

**SOCIAL MINISTRY** – Four Easter baskets were prepared for each family at the Pennel Shelter. The baskets had candy, snacks, coloring books, crayons and a \$25.00 Kohl's gift card. All items were donated by members of our congregation. A tri-fold brochure from our church was also given. Our Synod is participating in the Lutheran World Relief Effort in providing quilts and kits to third world countries and war torn countries. Social Ministry will be providing four quilts which will be delivered to the Synod Assembly in May.

**EVANGELISM TEAM** – Thank you to everyone who was involved in the Lent and Easter season!. Watch for Evangelism activities on the calendar! Next is 4/26/24 Fun Committee Cabaret.

Thank you to our church secretary, Jennifer!







# May

<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>5/1</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Evangelism - Zoom</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>5/2</i>	<i>6:45 PM</i>	<i>Bell Practice</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>5/5</i>	<i>9:20 AM</i>	<i>Sunday Worship - Music Sunday</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>5/6</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Bible Study</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>5/7</i>	<i>6:00 PM</i>	<i>Shared Meal</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>5/9</i>	<i>6:45 PM</i>	<i>Bell Practice</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>5/10</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Stewardship - Zoom Meeting</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>5/11</i>	<i>10:00 AM</i>	<i>Garden Club - Geranium Planting</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>5/12</i>	<i>9:20 AM</i>	<i>Sunday Worship - Youth Sunday</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>5/12</i>	<i>10:30 AM</i>	<i>Mothers Day Brunch</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>5/13</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Bible Study</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>5/14</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Council Meeting</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>5/16</i>	<i>6:45 PM</i>	<i>Bell Practice</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>5/19</i>	<i>9:20 AM</i>	<i>Sunday Worship</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>5/19</i>	<i>1:00 PM</i>	<i>Book Club</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>5/20</i>	<i>7:00 PM</i>	<i>Bible Study</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>5/20</i>		<i>Newsletter Articles Due</i>

Check our website calendar and/or Facebook page for a current list of the events.

Please feel free to call or email the Church Office with any questions.



- Tuesday 5/21 12:00 Noon WELCA Meeting*
- Thursday 5/23 6:45 PM Bell Practice*
- Friday 5/24 6:00 PM Fun Committee Games Night*
- Saturday 5/25 8:00 AM Memorial Day Parade*
- Sunday 5/26 9:20 AM Sunday Worship*
- Tuesday 5/28 7:00 PM Stewardship - Zoom Meeting*
- Thursday 5/30 6:45 PM Bell Practice*
- Friday 5/31 6:40 PM Phillies Night*

Check our website calendar and/or Facebook page for a current list of the events.  
Please feel free to call or email the Church Office with any questions.



**MEMORIAL DONATIONS – APRIL 2024**

*To the Glory of God and in  
Loving Memory of:*

*Ruth Schwartz*

*A Memorial was presented by:*

*Ruth Ann Morgan*

# Changes at Redeemer

The New Roof over the sanctuary and bell tower is completed!



## Accessible Lift



The replacement of the accessible lift has started. The old lift was removed and the area prepared for the new one. We are hoping for installation soon. As soon as it is ready, we will send out a notification.



## Tree Removal

Kindly note that a tree near the church office has been removed due to safety concerns, as it was becoming a liability with branches falling. The property and garden committees will assess if there will be a replacement at a future date.



On Friday April 26th, the Fun Committee Musical Cabaret exceeded all expectations and was a tremendous success! The food was absolutely excellent, receiving high praise from everyone. It was a wonderful performance and left a lasting impact on everyone in attendance!



May 5, 2024



On Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, we will be celebrating Church Music Sunday. You may be asking yourself what is Church Music Sunday?

Here is a description provided by the ELCA:

For centuries, the Introit (a small portion of a psalm text changed at the beginning of the liturgy) for the Fourth Sunday of Easter was from Psalm 98, “sing to the Lord a new song” (“Cantate Domino”). This day was often known as “Cantate Sunday” and in some traditions, became a day to celebrate music in the church. The Introit no longer exists in today’s Lutheran worship. However, the idea of publicly recognizing ministries in the church is an excellent idea. Therefore, we will be celebrating on May 5<sup>th</sup> and all of our choirs will be singing and the bells will be ringing.

Please join us for Worship on May 5<sup>th</sup> as we publicly thank and recognize our musicians.

### **Summer Hymn Selections**

Once again the Worship & Music Committee is planning on singing your favorite hymns during the summer months.

Please write down the titles of your favorite hymns and their corresponding numbers from the hymnals and submit your list to Gail Blinstrub on Sunday mornings or via email [Gailaa@verizon.net](mailto:Gailaa@verizon.net). You can also email the information to the church [Redeemerlutheranchurch@penndel.net](mailto:Redeemerlutheranchurch@penndel.net).

Please submit your hymns by May 26 so we can begin singing them in June.

**WELCOME SPRING!**  
**FREE THINGS FOR YOUR GARDEN TO GROW HAPPINESS**

First plant **FIVE** rows of peas:

**PRAYER**  
**PERSERVERANCE**  
**POLITENESS**  
**PROMPTNESS**  
**PURITY**



Next plant **THREE** rows of squash:

Squash **GOSSIP**,  
Squash **DOUBT**,  
Squash **INDIFFERENCE**.

Then **FIVE** rows of lettuce:

Let us be **FAITHFUL TO DUTY**,  
Let us be **UNSELFISH**,  
Let us be **GENTLE**,  
Let us **FOLLOW WISDOM**,  
Let us **LOVE LIFE**.



No garden is complete without  
turnips:

Turn up for **CHURCH**,  
Turn up with a **SMILE**,  
Turn up with **NEW IDEAS**,

Turn up with **DETERMINATION** to **MAKE**  
**EVERYTHING COUNT** for  
**SOMETHING GOOD** and **WORTHWHILE**.





## **Bible Study**

Bible Study meets every week on Mondays at 7:00 pm in the church building.

Come and join us for insightful and spirited conversation, and maybe you will discover something new!

## **Social Ministry**

Social Ministry in Action at Redeemer is committed to fulfilling God's command to "...Love Your Neighbors as Your Selves...there is no commandment greater" (Mark 12:31 NIV), and "...Whatever you did not do for the least of these, you did not do it for me" (Matthew 25:45 NIV).



Social Ministry holds their meetings quarterly at 6:00 pm prior to Bible Study. Next meeting date to be determined. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

## **Financial Ministry**



We continue to collect tapes from Redner Supermarkets and Brown's Shop Rite Stores. We do receive a percentage of money from these tapes which goes to the Current Fund.

Please try to keep them current. You can drop off your tapes Monday through Friday 9-1 or mail them to the church using the address of 239 Fairview Avenue, Penndel, PA 19047, or you can drop them in the basket in the narthex.

Thank you for your help.

## **Book Club**

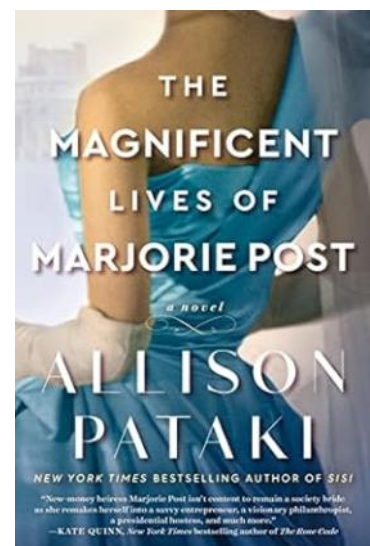
### **The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post**

By  
Allison Pataki

The book club will meet Sunday, May 19th, at 1:00 pm in the Parish Hall.

The book is available on Amazon and several used bookstore sites, and from the Bucks County library.

All are welcome to participate!



# WELCA Monthly Meeting

## Monthly Meeting

**Welca** held their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 16th with 12 members present. Marilyn offered devotions. Deb read minutes from our March meeting. Marilyn reported that the Easter Bake Sale made \$415.00 for the current fund and the Easter Flea market earned \$150.00. We thank Edna Schwenk and Mary Lou Robinson for refreshments.



## Homebound Visits

Easter visits to Redeemer homebound members went well. Deb visited Edie. Linda visited Dee Grover. Rita and Joan visited Winnie. Edna visited Jim and Liz Reinas by phone. Rita spoke

with Marge's daughter and dropped a thinking-of-you bag at Marge's door.

## Ingathering – Personal Care Kits

The Women of the ELCA Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod will once again be holding the Ingathering in conjunction with the Annual Synod Assembly on May 4. As we have done for many years, Welca at Redeemer will contribute ten (10) personal care kits. Welca women will be packing kits on Sunday, April 21 during coffee hour time.

## Community Day – Saturday, June 8

Welca is again requesting if you have any items to donate for us to sell please bring them anytime after Friday, April 26. You may leave your items in the library area. If you would like to be a vendor on June 8, please contact Rita Solt either on email or at 267-980-2971. Calling all bakers. Please help our Community Day bake sale be a success.

We will move stored items from upstairs to downstairs on Sunday, June 2. We will very much appreciate your help with the bucket brigade. Anyone who could come during the week to help with getting the "tables" ready, would also be very much appreciated.

## Father's Day Breakfast

Welca will host the second annual Father's Day Breakfast on Sunday, June 16 immediately following service. Mark your calendar!

## "Finding God in Your Wilderness"

Pastor Josephine Wright of Family of God Church in Buckingham is holding a women's program on Saturday, April 20 from noon to 2:30 pm. Welca from Redeemer will be attending.





Garden Club cleaned the lawn and flower beds in time for the outside of the church to look nice for Easter. We arrived at 8:30 am and finished before the Pennel Easter Egg Hunt started.

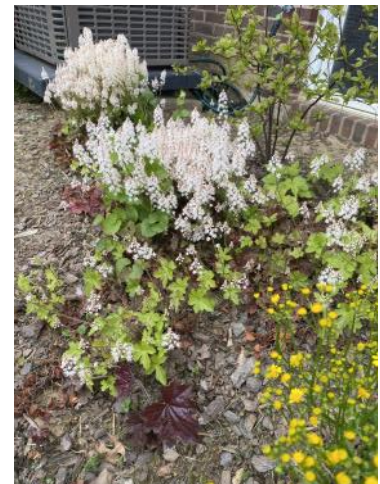
Carole Chatelain and Mike, Deb Farnham, Jeannie Vitale, Don and Rita Solt, and Heather Palladino came out to help. A flat of pansies, donated by Bob Winkler, was planted. Take a look as you arrive at Redeemer. Also, notice the Lenten Rose blooming in the front flower bed near the bell tower.



Our native gardens are waking up after a winter's rest and are already beginning to attract pollinators. Pictured above are the bee-friendly early bloomers, white foam flower "*Tiarella cordiflora*" and golden ragwort "*Packera aurea*". To experience their beauty first hand, please come visit them along the walkway behind the church office. Also for those of you who took home some butterfly and bee-friendly woodland phlox (Wild Sweet William) last year, we hope you are enjoying their early blooms.

Our garden club established a number of pollinator gardens throughout the church's outdoor spaces last year with the help of a generous native plant grant from Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve and additional funding from Thrivent. Native plants are more favorable for supporting local wildlife, including bees, butterflies and birds. As a bonus to all that glory, native species are more "user friendly" because they evolved for survival under local natural conditions and tend to be more adapted to our local soils and climate than some non-native species. We are excited to share these native plants with you in the upcoming year as their blooming schedules arrive.

Please come experience for yourself the joy of tending God's creation by wandering Redeemer's gardens and relaxing in their presence, or see Carole or Rita if you would like a personal tour of Redeemer's native gardens.



# Evangelism News

## Evangelism Quote of the Month

“God loves to defend his reputation. When we pray together, our needs become public. When he answers, his glory becomes public.” — **Jamie Dunlop**



## 4/26 Italian Dinner and Cabaret

As promised, this was a great time for everyone who came out. Great music and food! Thank you to everyone who made it possible!

## 5/12 Mother's Day

There will be a pancake breakfast provided for everyone provided by some of the men and flowers for the ladies.



## 5/24 Game Show Night

The fun committee presents their next big thing. Come out and enjoy game show night!

## 5/25 Memorial Day Parade

We will have a spot in the Penndel Memorial Day Parade. Those who are interested in being involved in set up and actually walking the parade, please see Karen, Rita or Chris.



## 5/31 Lutheran Phillies Night

Lutherans from all over the area get together to watch the Phillies and Proceeds benefit the Synod. I hope everyone who signed up has a great time.

## Community Day is 6/8

Now is the time to gather up anything you want to sell (or donate it and let us sell it for you). This is also a great time to come out and meet with the local community to show them how wonderful Redeemer really is.



# Evangelism News continued

## Thrivent cards

We need to be more active in recruiting new members. Everything we do should be using them. You can be an associate member for \$19.95 per year as long as you are 16 or older and still qualify for a \$250.00 action card. To sign up, please see the link below or ask Chris Ryan for help.

<https://onboard.cotribute.co/flows/55931fb6-5804-46a3-afb5-9542ecb2b996?web=1&wdLOR=cD45FA516-FD47-453B-94DB-CEE2E5715CDF>

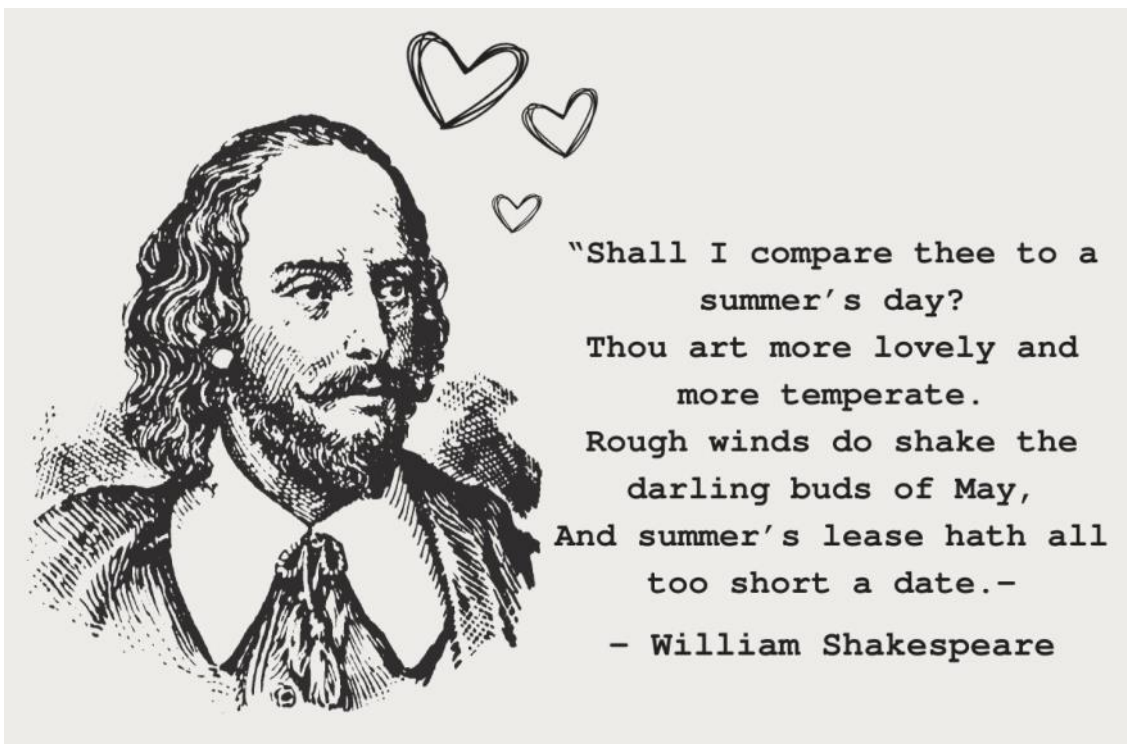


Evangelism meets via zoom at 6pm on the first Wednesday of the month if you are interested in joining please see Chris Ryan, Patti Finn, or just call or email the church so Jenn can send you the link.

**Our Next meeting will be live on Wednesday May 1, 2024 via ZOOM.**

Respectfully Submitted

Chris Ryan 4/29/2024



## Redeemer is participating in the Pennel Memorial Day Parade:



Redeemer is once again participating in the Pennel Hulmeville Memorial Day Parade, Saturday May 25<sup>th</sup>. There will be an opportunity to ride or walk the parade route.

Please wear your Redeemer T-shirt or dress in your favorite patriotic finery. If you are interested in representing Redeemer for the parade, please meet at the church at 8:00am on May 25<sup>th</sup> so we can help decorate the “float” and head to the parade.

### Calling ALL Graduates!

The Evangelism Committee would like to recognize each of our High School, Trade School and College graduates this year and we don't want to miss anyone! Please contact the office at 215-757-2724 or via email

at [redeemerlutheranchurchpennel@verizon.net](mailto:redeemerlutheranchurchpennel@verizon.net) to let us know if you have anyone graduating and provide us with a picture and information about the student such as high school, college, major, activities, etc. by May 20<sup>th</sup> so the information can be printed in the June newsletter.



## Food Pantry

Every second Saturday in May, this year May 11<sup>th</sup>, letter carriers in more than 10,000 cities and towns across America collect the goodness and compassion of their postal customers, who participate in the NALC Stamp Out Hunger National Food Drive — the largest one-day food drive in the nation.

Carriers collect non-perishable food donations left by mailboxes and in post offices and deliver them to local community food banks, pantries and shelters. Nearly 1,500 NALC branches in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands are involved.



To donate, just place a box or can of non-perishable food next to your mailbox before your letter carrier delivers mail on the May 11<sup>th</sup>. The carrier will do the rest. The food is sorted, and delivered to an area food bank or pantry, where it is available for needy families.

If you would like to help unload the collected food for Redeemer's Food Pantry, please meet at the church hall on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> about 5:00 pm.

## Technology Committee

On behalf of the Technology Committee, we are making the switch from a personal page to an organization page. While this switch will be gradual, we would like to share it with you! This is great news for our congregation, and we hope that this will grow our worshipping community! Please “LIKE” and “FOLLOW” our new organization page! The tech committee thanks you!

**Redeemer Lutheran Church Penn del**

<https://www.facebook.com/RedeemerLutheran1904>



## Fun Committee

Help needed: We are always looking for items to fill our basket raffles, members to help us plan and execute events, and members of the church to share the great news of Redeemer at our events.

## Shared Meal

Shared meal for April was held on Tuesday, April 2 with 38 guests and 11 volunteers. Eight people arrived on the homeless bus with the driver and aid. Seven generous bakers provided ziti which was served along with frozen mixed vegetables, roll and butter, salad, dessert, and drinks.



Thank you to all the most generous volunteers who make ziti and deliver it hot to the Redeemer kitchen. Shared meal could not happen without you. Also, thank you to all the volunteers who arrive on the day and work to prepare and serve the meal.

Next shared meal will be Tuesday, May 7. We plan to serve ham donated by Karen and the food pantry.

Upcoming shared meals will be

Tuesday, May 7, 2024

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

# Stewardship Ministry

A word on Christian Stewardship  
by Denise Robinson

The ELCA stewardship page is a wonderful resource for those who want to learn more about stewardship.

“Growing stewardship step by step” is one of these resources. Each month for the next few months, we will share devotions from this publication to help you on your discipleship through stewardship spiritual journey. For May we continue with devotions 3 and 4.



## **Growing Stewards Step by Step Twelve Devotions and Prayers Devotions 3 and 4**

Stewardship is a spiritual issue not a financial issue. The journey to being a good steward has many steps. For some people this starts with reading, reflection, and prayer. Here are twelve devotions for this purpose. The inspiration for these writings is taken from “Stepping Stones of a Steward” by Ron Vallet (Eerdsmans Publishing; Grand Rapids, MI; © 1989)

### **Devotion 3 Responding to God’s Overtures Matthew 13:1-9**

Corporations spend millions of dollars each year producing media to reach their audience. In most cases the purpose is clear: to use our products or services. The clever jingles, lines and vignettes are intended to give us a particular glimpse of reality. Yes, some of the Super Bowl commercials are entertaining. And just who comes up with those ideas? It must be a writer or director somewhere. These intriguing, targeted messages may suggest it is easy to listen to and challenging to create, write and produce. However, Jesus suggests the opposite.

What happens when you go to a meeting with a large number of participants? I was recently at a conference with almost sixty people. We addressed some difficult issues about our future direction and working relationships. There were many interpretations of the initial presentation, and even more when individuals began sharing their reactions. Jesus knew listening would be difficult. Yet it is through careful and faithful listening that God makes overtures to each one of us.

We see this clearly in the parable of the soils. The four kinds of soils may be characteristic of the four kinds of hearts in those who listen to God’s word. Some of the seeds fell on the trodden path. The soil was hard to penetrate. The seeds danced in the wind and were readily eaten by birds. This soil represents the hard-hearted listener. This is the person who has closed their heart and mind to the will of God. All may seem so clear, yet there are no roots for a foundation. As in Jesus’ day, there were many people whose assumptions and prejudices would not allow them to conceive of Jesus as the Messiah.

Some of the seeds fell on rocky soil. Seeds can become lodged in this ground and take some root. However, soon the roots reach impenetrable rock and are unable to reach the necessary nutrients. Denied this nourishment the plant withers in the sun and dies. In the parable this seed represents the listener with a shallow heart. Everything may look good on the surface, but underneath there is a barrier to spiritual growth. The listener is unable to sustain their faith.

# Stewardship Ministry (continued)

Jesus observed that some seed fell into ground that was infested with weeds. There was both good seeds and weed seeds. With nourishment both would sprout and flourish. Eventually however, the resources of the soil would be sapped by the weeds. The good seed would be crowded out and die. In our culture many voices strive to get our attention. We listen intently for the Word of God and the voice of the Holy Spirit. However, the distractions are many. The Gospel of Jesus Christ can be choked out. God calls us to listen selectively and set our priorities clearly.



## **Devotion 4** **Understanding God's Purpose** **Luke 7: 31-35**

Do believe God created everything for a purpose? Have you discovered your purpose in life? Has that purpose changed as you have grown from one stage to another in life? As the New Year arrives, what do you see as your purpose(s) in the coming year?

Often people define their purpose in terms of what they want or need. "I want a vacation." "I want a new house." "I need a new car." We often want what we cannot have, at least not immediately. We sometimes forget that we have matured into adults within society and struggle to leave "childish things" behind.

When we look beyond material wants or desires, we often observe adults do not escape from engaging in childish behavior. Even church conversations can lead to disputes where one person's desire or way reflects a narrow self interest.

The discussion may focus on worship style or worship schedule. What is most comfortable and convenient for you? The discussion may focus on how much someone should be paid or how much should go to missions. What is affordable for me? The list goes on. What examples can you think of in your setting?

This struggle extends beyond our local congregation. States and countries engage in the same conversations. Remember the Cold War. Look at the direction conversations are taking between the West and Middle East today. Simple listening reflects the frustration - "We cannot trust them."; "They never keep their word"; "They got what was coming to them", "If we don't have enough arms and troops, then we cannot control the outcome. What would happen then?". Each party feels the other is naïve and unrealistic.

Where is God's purpose in all this? In this parable from Luke, Jesus compared the "people of this generation" to the children arguing in the marketplace about the game they would play. One group wanted to play weddings. Another group wanted to play funerals. They taunted each other. Each group wanted to get their own way.

A key to understanding this parable actually comes in the preceding verse, "but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves" (Luke 7:30).

Having rejected the purposes of God, these leaders also rejected the messengers of God – John the Baptist eating no bread and drinking no wine and Jesus eating and drinking with tax collectors and sinners. One seemed too serious. The other was not serious enough. Both gave their life for the same God.

## Stewardship Ministry (continued)

The purpose of God often does not make sense unless we understand a common assumption – God is the Creator and Owner of everything. We hear this in Psalm 24:1, “The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it ...”. Yet in ancient Israel leaders thought they controlled the religious institutions, the rules and the regulations. When John the Baptist and Jesus called for acceptance and repentance to God’s rule, they met strong resistance. Have we seen this in our own time?

As God’s stewards in this world, we recognize God’s love. We experience the joy of God reaching out and touching our life. We respond to God through graceful and grateful living. And, we are willing to be guided by God’s purpose. Within this covenant relationship, we realize we are not in control, but God is. As stewards we are the servants entrusted with what God has given each of us. In Philippians 2:5-11, we read how Christ emptied himself and took the form of a slave. As we pursue our purposes in life, we too empty ourselves from being in control and become transformed into a servant.

As you think about your purpose(s) for the coming year, how are you being a servant of God? As you consider major decisions in the life of your congregation, how willing are you to give up control to God’s will? Yes, God is making overtures to us every day. Are we listening? Are we open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit? Or, are we like the Pharisees and lawyers who rejected both God’s purpose and messengers? The answers begin with accepting our role as God’s faithful stewards and servants.

***Let us pray:*** Lord, you have spoken to us through the Word and the Spirit, yet we often struggle to listen and understand. Sometimes like the Pharisees we are overcome by our own desire to control the rules and regulations. We forget that you are the Creator and Owner of all. We ask you to be patient with us. We ask you for the strength to let go of our selfish purposes, and to embrace your way for our life. We are called to be your steward and servant. Guide us as we make our daily decisions and touch the lives of others in ways that are acceptable to you. We ask this in the name of Jesus, Our Savior, Amen.





# Sharing God's Bounty

May 2024

## Keeping Our Eyes on the Prize

If a runner in a race takes his eyes off his goal for even a fleeting moment, he risks losing his focus and, along with that, the race. So it is with the Christian who must be diligent to keep his focus on his stewardship. If he takes his eyes off his heavenly goal and directs them toward his possessions, his worldly aspirations, or his temporal difficulties, he loses his focus and risks losing the race. The words of Paul provide encouragement for us: *“Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 3:13). Focusing on our Earthly circumstances can lead us in two directions – both of them deadly! We may either find things of the world to be so attractive, they become the prize toward which we strain, or we find things to be so dismal that we despair.

Our Chief Steward, Jesus, our Savior, focused on the prize. We are exhorted to follow his example: *“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”* (Hebrews 12:2). Talk about keeping focus! *“Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart”* (Hebrews 12:3). Talk about running a race! And he did it for us, *“so that [we] will not grow weary and lose heart.”*

And look at the prize he won! He ascended into Heaven and now sits *“at the right hand of the throne of God.”* Heaven is our prize, too – a prize beyond compare. Christ's promise is this: *“Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life”* (Revelation 2:10b). Should we falter, as we are certain to do, we claim another of his promises: *“The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it”* (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

*“I have learned to manage on whatever I have. I know how to be poor and how to be rich...”*

*There is nothing I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength.”*

# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



## SUNDAY MORNING CLASSES

Sundays @ 9:20 AM

All ages welcome to join us!

Last day of classes - May 5th!

## UPCOMING CALENDAR EVENTS

- SUN. MAY 5TH
  - SCS - LAST CLASS DAY!
  - MUSIC SUNDAY
- SUN. MAY 12TH
  - MOTHER'S DAY
  - YOUTH IN WORSHIP
- SAT. JUNE 8TH
  - PENNDEL COMMUNITY DAY



## LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS & HELPERS

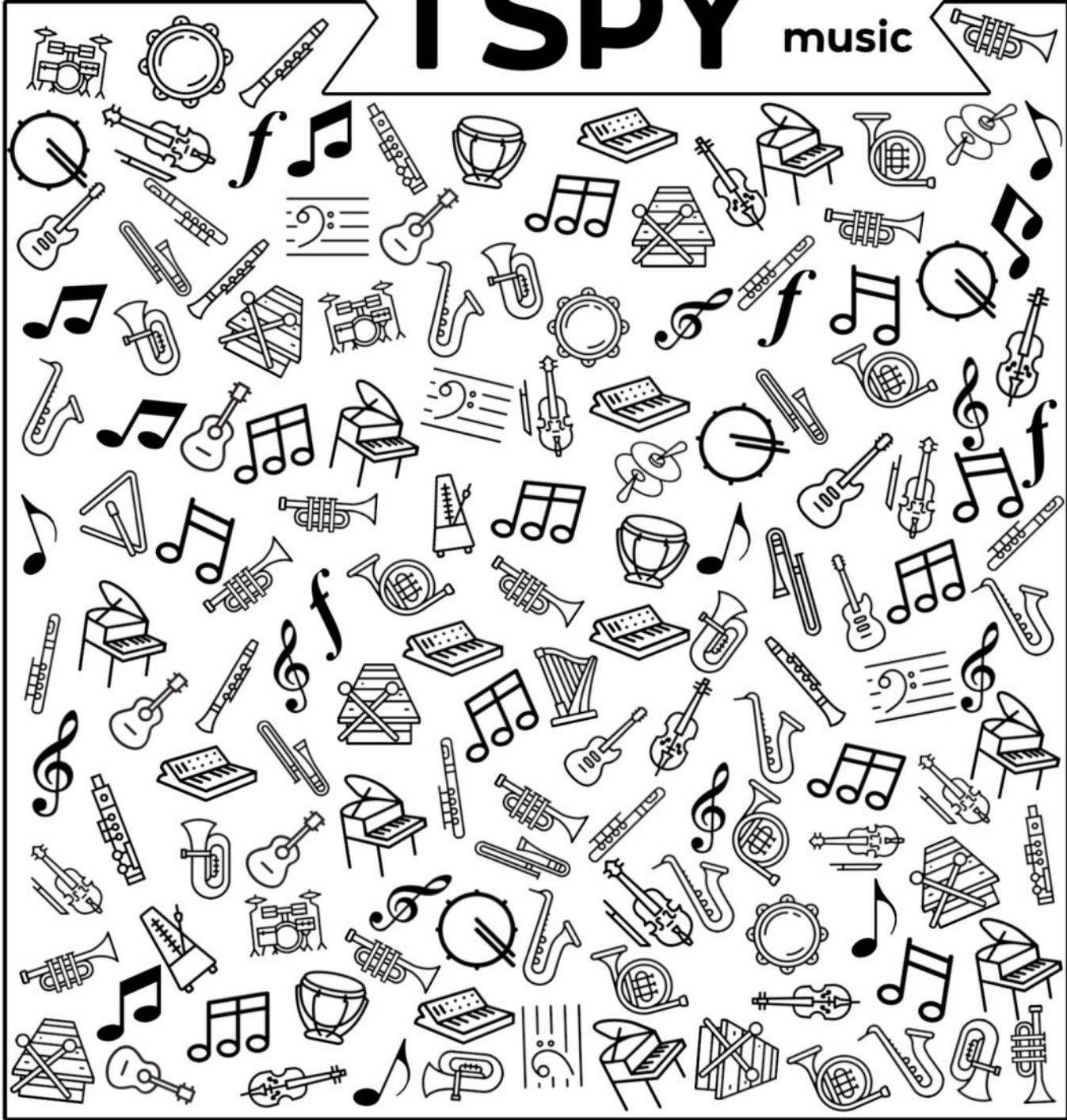


VBS coming soon!!!! More Information to come!!!

Reach out to Jess if your interested in helping  
out this summer or have any questions

xmissjessx92x@gmail.com

# I SPY music



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# May Celebrations



5/1	Charles Saul III	5/20	Jasmyn Davis
5/3	Darrel Martin	5/21	Mukesh Cheedie, Pastor
5/4	Marilyn Bilofsky	5/21	Heather Depero
5/4	Lauren Morris	5/21	Ian Ryan
5/5	Lew Oser	5/22	Christopher Ryan
5/13	Lynn Engle	5/22	Julie Anna Martinsen
5/14	Linda Lee	5/25	Karen Brown
5/14	Philip Herrington	5/27	Karen Kondrk
5/15	Rick O'Connell	5/28	Jane Leppo
5/17	Kenneth Ward	5/29	Ann Marie Winter



5/9/1987	Anne Marie Parfitt-Clee
5/17/1980	Bill and Diane Anderson
5/21/1973	David and Rose Erdman
5/26/1996	Erica Bose and husband
5/28/2005	Michelle & Dean Brownlee

“Did we miss your birthday or anniversary? Sometimes our records are incomplete. Please let us know.”