

Redeemer Record



SENIOR PASTOR'S COLUMN

As we enter this season of Stewardship, Redeemer's Generosity Coaches want you to know that the Kingdom of God is with us still.

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STEWARDSHIP 2025

Take some time to review the Frequently asked questions on Pledging.

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HEALTHY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

The latest Healthy Spiritual Journey column by Lanny Wilson.

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Senior Pastor's Column

BY PASTOR KATIE HINES-SHAH



Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you."

Luke 17:20-21

The Pharisees were hoping for a sign. Something definitive that made it clear that it was time. I'll admit, I can relate. I sometimes wonder why God didn't wait until there was internet or at least TV before coming among us. I don't blame the Pharisees for hoping Jesus would be more clear about his second coming.

But maybe we are missing the point.

Jesus tells the Pharisees "the kingdom of God is among you." I don't think he was talking just about that particular moment when he was literally right in front of them. I think Jesus meant that the kingdom was always among them – and maybe is always among us still. Just like how the Pharisees didn't recognize Jesus that first time, maybe we too fail to see him when he's right here with us. In the warm sun shining down, the words of a friend calling to show she cares, the opportunity of helping a stranger in need, the calling of worship and prayer – are not these all signs that God is among us now?

The question is, how will we respond?



Just like the Pharisees didn't recognize Jesus that first time, maybe we too fail to see him when he's right here with us.

As we enter this season of Stewardship, Redeemer's Generosity Coaches want you to know that the Kingdom of God is with us still.

Therefore, we have the opportunity to respond by giving our time, our talents, our treasures, and through our legacy giving. Jay and I personally support Redeemer in all four ways. It is important to us to give because here at Redeemer we have experienced God's Kingdom among us. We know it is our duty and delight to support the mission and ministry of Redeemer now – and in the years to come.

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*"The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you."
Luke 17:20-21*

But you don't just have to take my word for it. In this special Stewardship Edition of the Redeemer Record you will have the opportunity to learn more about giving to Redeemer. Articles will describe the impact Redeemer makes, patterns of member giving, Adult Forum opportunities, and most importantly, stories from your fellow Redeemer members about where they see the kingdom of God and how that inspires them to give.

You get to decide what to do next. Check out the Time and Talent Survey inside (you can turn it into the church office). Come to the Adult Forum on October 20th to learn more from Redeemer members Rick and Erik Held about planning a legacy gift.

Join me in making an annual pledge on Reformation Sunday, October 27th (pledge cards will come in the mail in October). Together at Redeemer we make God's Kingdom known!

Thanks be to God!



Associate Pastor's Column

BY PASTOR KELSEY JOHNSON



I was raised in an “every Sunday and then some” Lutheran household. My parents were active members of the congregations I grew up in. My earliest memories are of church in Apollo Beach (South, Florida. We weren’t perfect churchgoers - our family could often be seen sprinting across the parking lot most Sunday mornings, shoes in hand, trying to make it in before the opening announcements ended. Worship on Sundays was always a family endeavor, even if we were a little late, tired, or disheveled. My parents taught me from an early age that worship starts the week, and staying connected to what the church was doing was part of our mission for the rest of the week. My parents served on just about every council, committee, mission team, special project, or task force the church had.



My mom, an artistic manual-labor powerhouse, once painted the entire interior of the church building, with me as a mostly helpful pre-teen in tow. My dad, a financial planner by trade with an extroverted-to-the-extreme personality, served on council, stewardship, finance, and sang in the annual cantatas. My parents were part of a very active small group, which met for monthly dinners and discussions and blossomed into a core group of friends who would vacation together, visit one another in difficult times, and ultimately became one of the main reasons my parents moved back to Florida to retire after 12 years away. My parents taught me that contributing to the community of our church is part of who we are as Christians. Their church blossomed and grew because of it, and they have found deep meaning, purpose, and growth in faith through their giving of time and talents as well.

My parents were an incredible example of what it means to offer ourselves to the church community, and their example really set the tone for the orientation of my entire life. I don’t think they anticipated me becoming a pastor, but it certainly makes sense because of how they raised me!

Giving of time and talents doesn’t mean you have to be a pastor. It doesn’t mean you need to be on 8 committees, or be at worship every single Sunday. A little bit of who you are goes a long way in creating community.

My parents willingness to give of time and talents taught me the importance of witnessing to the love of Christ through serving and leadership in the church community.

The example of my parents is striking for a couple of reasons. First, it's amazing that their unique gifts contributed to our church community in many ways: both in some expected ways, such as finance committee for my dad, and also in some unique ways. I'm not sure how many parishioners are uniquely equipped to paint the entire interior of a church building but my mom was absolutely the right person to take that project on and she did it exceedingly well. Secondly, my parents willingness to give of time and talents taught ME the importance of witnessing to the love of Christ through serving and leadership in the church community. When we give of our time and talents, it deepens our sense of community and welcomes others to do the same with their gifts! It had a big impact on how I orient my life.

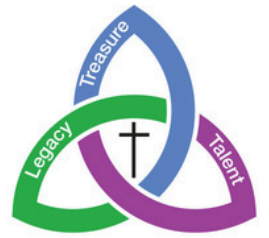
It's a beautiful thing... We each have unique gifts and talents to offer in community with one another. Whether its professional experience, hobbies, interests, or personality attributes these 'things' each offer our community something important in life together.

In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he talks about unity and diversity in the body of Christ: each member has unique abilities and gifts, and together we join with Christ as one. Each of us has something to offer, and in this season of gathering our gifts of treasures, time and talents, you are invited to fill out the time and talents survey in discernment of some of the talents you uniquely have to offer in our gathering and stewarding the gifts of God's kingdom.

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body[...] and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.”
-1 Corinthians 12:12-14

Please take a look at the time and talents survey, fill it out, and return it to the church office. It's not committing to a committee or putting you on the hook for a bunch of emails every time we need volunteers. It's an opportunity to reflect on your gifts, for Pastor Katie and I to know you a little better, and for you to perhaps discern some ministry areas where you might wish to contribute and grow—either now or in the future.





TIME & TALENTS SURVEY

What are your God-given gifts?

God calls us to be active participants in building community and ministering together, through our time and talents. It is a way to bring the kingdoms of heaven and earth a little closer together, by sharing God's love in our ever-changing world.

Whether we've known you for decades, years, weeks, or days, we want to hear from you! Please take a moment to help us get to know you better by completing this short survey.

Check all areas which you think you'd enjoy becoming involved as well as those areas where you have some skill that you can share, or areas where you want to learn and grow!

We are collecting this information in order to connect Redeemer members with each other through service in current and potential ministries, and to get to know our community members better. You are invited to fill as much or little of this as you like. Thank you for your participation.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Let us know how to get in touch with you!

Name _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Occupation (Current or Former) _____

GIFTS AND TALENTS

Know you want to get involved but aren't quite sure where yet? No problem. Please complete the below questions to help us get to know a little more about you and your gifts and talents...

Which best describes you...

Please select all that apply

- Outgoing
- Reserved/Shy
- Enjoy Working Collaboratively
- Enjoy Working Alone
- A Strong Leader
- Empathic and Compassionate
- Musically Inclined
- Enjoy serving others
- I'm a Teacher by Nature
- Artistic
- A writer

Provide more detail about your talents indicated above:

I enjoy...

Please mark all that apply

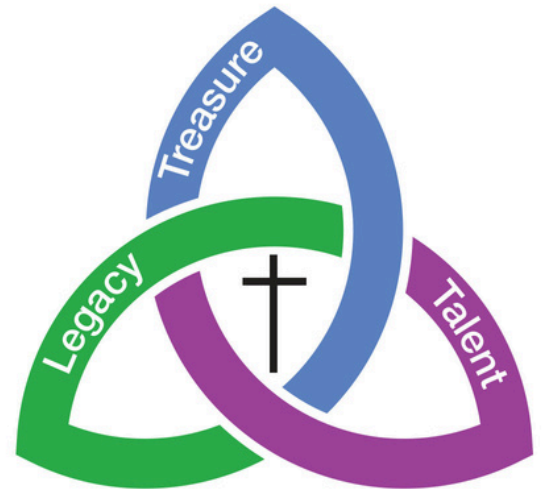
- Baking
- Cooking
- Event Planning
- Sewing
- Technology
- Gardening
- Crafts
- Construction/Woodworking
- Music
- Volunteering
- Sports
- Health/Fitness
- Teaching
- Games
- Socializing
- Reading

Provide more detail about your interests checked above:

KNOW WHERE YOU WANT TO SERVE?

Below are some of our ministry areas at Redeemer. Perhaps they connect with your gifts, perhaps they're out of your comfort zone and spark curiosity to all the new ways God might be calling you to serve. Please mark all those which you are involved in, or have interest in learning more about.

- Worship
- Spiritual Growth
 - Bible Study
 - Retreats
- Technology
- Facilities/Construction
- Music
 - Instrumental
 - Singing
 - Ringing/Bells
- Outreach
 - Mission Projects: RER and Mission Outreach Teams
 - Mission Quilters
 - Warmth, Welcome, & Hospitality to Visitors
 - Tabling at Community Events: Mental Health Walk, Farmers Market
- Events
 - Musical recitals
 - Church Picnic
 - Field Trips
- Stewardship
- Finance
- Ministries with Youth: Confirmation, High School Youth Group
- Ministries with Children: Godly Play/VBS
- Not sure yet



TIMING

- I would like to serve now
- Next 3 months
- Next 6 months
- Next year
- I will reach out when I am ready to serve

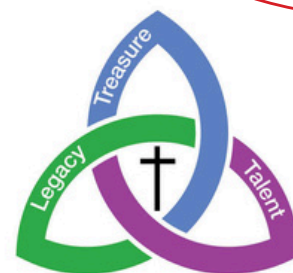
IDEAS AND QUESTIONS

Not seeing what you're looking for? Have ideas for a new area of service?

Have questions? Please share them below:

Redeemer Stewardship 2025 FAQ

BY TOM REEDER



The Gifts of God's Kingdom - Stewardship 2025 Frequently Asked Questions About Pledging

What is Pledging?

Pledging is an important way to express a commitment of the total amount of money you plan to give to your church over the next year. Asking members and friends of our church to commit to a level of giving for next year has both a spiritual and a practical basis.

What is the Spiritual Basis for Pledging?

We ask members and other supporters to be generous with their pledges, taking into account the value of your church to you and the importance of our mission together. There is no required amount or percentage of income. Consider this passage from 2 Corinthians 9:

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver... You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God.

In the passage above, Paul encourages the believers at Corinth to make up their minds ahead of time about how much they should give. This is what pledging is all about.

What is the Practical Basis for Pledging?

Pledges help our Church Council and Church Leaders to better project the financial resources we can plan for in our next budget year, to help ensure that we can adequately equip our ministries to their fullest extent.

What is the money I pledge used for?

Contributions from our members and friends fund all that we do here at Redeemer. The budget created by our Church Council, working with the Finance Committee, includes funding for all of the ministries, programs, personnel, and expenses of operating and maintaining our church, including the physical space. We also budget money to give to various mission partners of Redeemer (such as Love Inc., HCS Community Services, Redeemer Engaging Refugees), and to the larger Church (ELCA).

What is tithing, and should I be doing this?

Tithing is the biblical concept of giving 10% of your income back to God. A tithe is a good goal and one worth working toward. This is analogous to how many people approach building their retirement account! They start working on a smaller percentage this year (for example 5%) and plan on increasing their contributions 1% per year. Many people find that they are able to work their way up to 10% faster than they imagined!

Does Redeemer receive any financial support from a national or regional church body?

No. In fact Redeemer pledges 7% of our annual offerings to the Metro Chicago Synod of the ELCA, which in turn pledges half of its annual receipts to the ELCA National Churchwide Office. These funds help to pay for domestic and foreign missions, direct aid programs, Lutheran colleges and seminaries, Lutheran camps, as well as administration and oversight.

I'm not sure I can predict my financial picture for 2025. Would it be better not to pledge at all, and then not potentially fall short?

Our financial future is not always easily predicted. Our circumstances sometimes change - God knows that, and Redeemer knows that. A pledge is nothing more than a plan to share some of what God has given us, and as with any plan it sometimes has to be revisited. What's important about making a pledge is that it helps us grow as good stewards and encourages us to put God first in our planning.

How do I pledge?

You will receive a pledge card by mail on or around October 20th. We are asking that you fill out this card to indicate your pledge for 2025 and return to the church on Pledge Sunday, October 27th either in person, by mail, or by email - pledge@redeemerhinsdale.org. Pledge totals for the calendar year are crucial to help the Church Council as they prepare the upcoming budget.

I pledged last year. Do I need to pledge again, or will you just assume that I will continue to donate the same amount?

No, your pledge does not automatically renew each year. As we have discussed, each year you may wish to increase your pledge by a percentage or an amount, or you may need to lower your pledge due to a change in your circumstances. We ask that you make a new pledge each year by completing a pledge card.

What happens if I fall behind on my pledge? Do I receive any reminders about my pledge?

A statement is mailed out quarterly that reminds you of your pledged amount and the actual amount you have given so far. You can use this to see the progress you are making toward fulfilling your pledge.

Who knows how much I pledge?

The only people who know how much you pledge are the Financial Secretary and the Pastor.

Can I designate how my pledge is used by Redeemer?

No. Your pledge represents a general gift to our church in support of the whole of Redeemer's ministry. If you have a specific mission or project you would like to support, you may make a designated gift at any time during the year, in addition to your pledge.



How do I pay my pledge?

You may pay your pledge on a weekly, monthly, or annual basis by placing the check or cash into your giving envelope and depositing that into the collection basket if you're at church, or by mailing to the church office. You may also donate online by going to the Redeemer website and clicking the "Give Online" button. The site will guide you through the process of giving, using your checking or savings account or by using a credit card. (If you give through a credit card, consider giving a bit extra to offset the processing fee that the church must pay.) You may also give by making a gift of stock or of bonds. (Contact our Financial Secretary to learn how to transfer those assets.) Also, using the donation of a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from an IRA or 401k to Redeemer can offer tax benefits as well as help fulfill your pledge.

Can I prepay my pledge - that is, donate money by December 31, 2024 for tax or other reasons but have it apply toward my 2025 pledge?

Yes.

I'd like to get into the specifics of Redeemer's finances.

Most question can be answered by our Nancy Hagen, or by the Financial Secretary Deborah Kraus.

Redeemer Budget 2024/2025

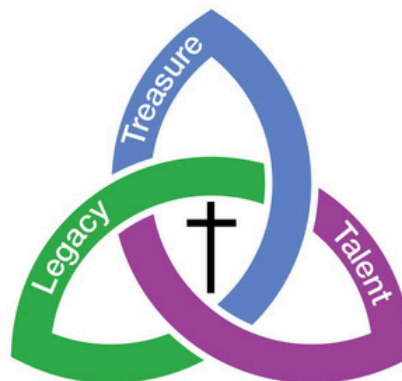


Using and Sharing the Gathered Gifts of God's Kingdom

The world is a place where conflicting priorities vie for the attention of us all.

How are we to make sense of which ones to heed and which ones to heed even more? How can we compress the world's noise to show a clearer path forward? When is it possible to see, once the noise abates, the impact of our choices on God's Kingdom and on ourselves? What paths are created by those choices? Each of these significant questions may have immediate answers, or perhaps not, but either way, we are shown that through our choices we can have a profound and fulfilling impact on ourselves, our community and the greater world beyond.

Each year the church embarks on a journey of self-reflection to make a path towards answers to these questions. While worship and other more aspirational aspects of the journey are absolute necessities, the establishment of the annual budget is one of mechanisms through which the journey comes to life. This annually prepared document provides a roadmap to organize the gathering, sharing and celebrating of the gifts of God's Kingdom.



For the 2024-2025 budget year, our estimated income has been set at \$680,800.

The source of this income is primarily your pledges, tithes, and offerings, and also a small amount of interest income and money from Redeemer's designated funds. These gathered gifts will in turn fund the operations and programs of Redeemer throughout the year. The roadmap for the sharing and use of these funds is distributed across our 5 ministry and staff areas: Mission Outreach, Worship, Education, Congregational Life and Administration expenses.

Mission Outreach will once again lead the way to take a prominent role in how we share our the gifts we have been given with the greater church and surrounding communities.

Redeemer's Mission Committee has long standing relationships with groups like Lutheran World Relief, Holy Family School, and HCS Community Services (Hinsdale's food bank). We support these groups both through supply drives and also with dollars which we know help these ministries do their work. Redeemer also contributes to the Chicago Metro Synod of the ELCA. We give to synod knowing that this allows us to tap into a network by which our funds, together with those of other congregations, will go towards helping areas in need far beyond our own reach. Lutheran Seminaries, Camps, and Ministries, and the necessary work of administration are all funded through these gifts.



Spotlight: Mission

Each year Redeemer makes hundreds of quilts and school kits that are distributed by our ministry partner Lutheran World Relief. You might have donated sheets for quilt making or school supplies to fill backpacks. Thank you! In addition to these gifts, Redeemer gives \$1,400 annually to support LWR's mission. That money covers shipping costs, personnel, and infrastructure that make sharing these needed supplies possible. Through our partnership with LWR, and thanks to your tithes and offerings, we are able to serve people in need globally.



Worship is the heart of all we do. By allocating sufficient funding for this area, critical inner workings of the church will be provided for. The gifts here come in many forms including inspirational musical experiences including Gargoyle Brass, choir leadership and altar guild support. Maintenance for the array of musical instruments Redeemer is blessed with is also supported through this area.

Spotlight: Worship and Music

Organ tuning day is Pr. Katie's least favorite day of the season, yet, even she has to admit, she loves the result. It turns out it takes a long time and professional skill to make sure each of the 1,512 pipes of our Berghouse organ are in tune. Your gifts and pledges cover the cost of hiring the right people to get the job done. The finished product is music to all our ears.



Education helps all ages learn and grow. Through broadening our knowledge do we gain a better understanding of what it means to be Lutheran and Christians in today's contexts God's Kingdom is ever present through Adult Forum speakers, Sunday School equipment and supplies, Confirmation Bibles and curriculum, Youth Group outings and trips, and periodicals like Christ in our Home. Your dollars keep these events accessible to everyone.

Spotlight: Education

Going to a National Youth Gathering is a right of passage for many teenaged Lutherans. While it is an amazing and transformative experience, it doesn't come cheap. Covering hotels and flights as well as the costs for chaperones was more than some families could budget for. Thanks to a generous designated gift to Redeemer's Youth we were able to underwrite expenses and give scholarships so that everyone who wanted to go could attend.



Congregational life funds activities that are meant to strengthen the interpersonal bonds between everyone in and around the Redeemer community. Through small group ministry, fellowship opportunities, senior events and community outreach activities, all members and friends of Redeemer come together to find common ground and congregational connections. This also promotes a welcoming atmosphere that visitors and newer members experience.



Spotlight: Congregational Life

With inflation everything has become more expensive, except for Redeemer's annual picnic. This is because Redeemer member Nathan Will is not just a professional food buyer but also a trained chef. With the generous donation of his time and talent Redeemer's picnic costs have actually gone down while the quality of food has gone up. Redeemer's council and staff work hard to make your tithes and offerings go farther.



Redeemer's administration area is where the gifts of God's Kingdom are used for the functional, "nuts and bolts" parts of the church. Gifts in this area provide the tools, facilities and technology that lay the material foundation from which the rest of Redeemer's work can function smoothly and reliably.

Spotlight: Administration

\$81 doesn't seem like a lot of money when it comes to plumbing repairs, but that's what it cost in dollars to fix the automatic faucet in the women's rest room. Time is another story. . . . When the plumber's quote for the fix came in at \$925 Property Committee Chair Tom Bothen spent hours (Days? Weeks?) trouble shooting the problem, trying out solutions, calling manufacturers, and fiddling with hardware. Thanks to his persistent efforts, and that little part, the water flows free once more. This just goes to show, your pledges and offerings help to empower volunteers and save Redeemer money.



The final area of Redeemer's ministry is the largest and most impactful. Our staff of ordained and lay professionals work tirelessly to ensure that the congregation is well positioned to meet the needs of the church and its extended community. While sharing the gifts that Redeemer received with our staff, we enable them to share their gifts as leaders, colleagues and fellow Christians in organizing and moving Redeemer's work and mission to new heights.

Spotlight: Staff

Last year we made the bold Kingdom building decision to call Pr. Kelsey Johnson as Redeemer's first Associate Pastor in more than a decade! Pr. Kelsey's ministry areas include Education and Congregational Life so this year she took a group of teens to the National Youth Gathering, started Thursdays 2 Gather for Seniors, and organized a brand new youth group. We are so excited to see the Spirit at work in and through her ministry!



As Redeemer strives towards new heights, the key to these aspirations are the members and friends of the Redeemer community. It is only through your gifts of talents, treasure, and legacy giving that any of the church's ministry areas can thrive. **As we head into our pledging season, there is great optimism that the generosity and supportiveness of our community will continue to bless Redeemer and a sincere thankfulness to all for helping to make God's Kingdom real.**



Redeemer Stewardship



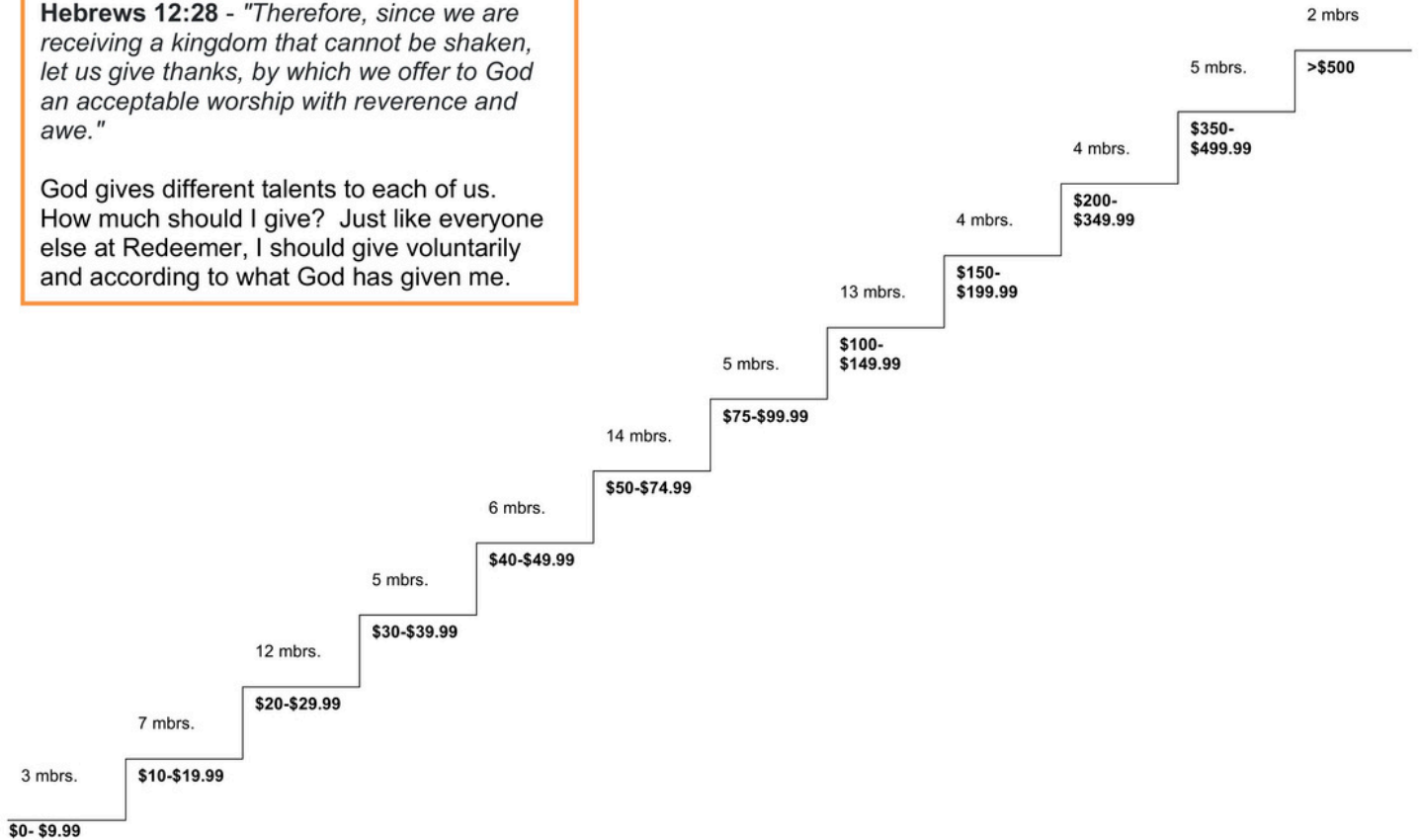
BY DEBORAH KRAUS

STEWARDSHIP Redeemer Lutheran Church

*Pledges Expressed as Weekly Giving for 2024

Hebrews 12:28 - "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us give thanks, by which we offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe."

God gives different talents to each of us. How much should I give? Just like everyone else at Redeemer, I should give voluntarily and according to what God has given me.



*Note: Fiscal Year 2025 Budget calls for \$653,000 in Tithes & Offerings. Pledges submitted (80 pledges) for 2024 were \$467,540. Pledge amounts to 72% of the budget.

Every step you take gathers gifts for God's Kingdom!

A NOTE ON OFFERING ENVELOPES

We have ordered new sets of numbered offering envelopes for 2025. In the past few years, many of you have moved to electronic giving. Others donate by grant, IRA distributions, stock transfer, or in a limited offering plan of a few larger donations. Given that shift in giving patterns, we've reduced the number of paper envelopes sets on order. If your current envelope number is greater than #90, our Financial Secretary, Deborah Kraus, will be contacting you to advise of the change in your envelope number.

You may always use one of the blue and white envelopes found in the pews should you wish to make an offering using cash or check rather than electronic or other giving form cited above. Clearly marking your name and/or offering number on the pew envelope will ensure you get proper credit for your donation.

If you have any questions, please contact Deborah at 708-436-2288 or dbkraus@comcast.net.

Redeemer Stewardship October 6th



BY NATHAN & SONJA WILL

Nathan and I had been involved in our respective churches since we were young. It started with participation in our congregations' children's ministries and grew to involvement in youth groups and choirs. For me, being involved in congregational life was about leading praise teams and incorporating visual art into worship. Nathan found his creative outlet outside the sanctuary building the playground at Grace Lutheran and, you guessed it, cooking in the church's kitchen!

Over the years, as our lives changed with college, marriage and kids, our participation in church continued to evolve. This reminds me of a passage from 1 Corinthians 12 that says, "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work."

As suggested in this passage, giving your gifts can mean different things to each person and even different things depending on where you are in life. Sharing your gifts could be generously donating your treasures or giving your time to further the work of God's Kingdom. It could also be using your skills, whatever they may be, to support the ministries of the church and touch the lives of others.

The best way to start is to find something you're interested in and be willing to put your hobbies into practice for the good of the whole community. Sharing your time and talents looks different for everyone. If you're like Sonja, and are able to commit to 2 years of serving on our council, that's awesome! If you can get involved on the Redeemer Engaging Refugees (RER) Committee for 6 months or a year, do it! If you only have the flexibility to help out for the Summer, there are ministries that would benefit from your help. Maybe you're like me and find that the best way to give my time and talents is to focus on supporting two specific events (and ultimately end up cooking for hundreds of people)! Finally, if you're limited to occasional participation, attending one or two adult forums, or bringing your kids or grandkids to just one Godly Play session, do that too!

Prayerfully consider how you can share your time, talent and treasures. Check out the Redeemer website ([Get Involved - Redeemer Lutheran Church | Hinsdale, Illinois \(redeemerhinsdale.org\)](https://redeemerhinsdale.org)) to learn more about the different ministry areas and volunteer opportunities. Join us at the adult forum at 9:45am on Sunday, October 13 and complete a survey to let our leaders know about your skills and interests and how you can share your gifts.

Redeemer Stewardship October 13th



BY ERIK HELD

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Matthew 6:19-21

Look beyond tomorrow. What is your legacy? Most of us tend to set this question aside for another day or decade, but the wisest ones know the most important projects of life need to be managed early and reviewed regularly. Planning for our kids' education, our healthcare, saving for a house, retirement: these aren't things we can put off to the last minute and just hope for success. Nor should we want to wait until, possibly, it's too late and our aspirations become just so many words. Looking farther down the road and planning for the future brings a peace of mind to our lives.

As God's people we already see – and strive to live up to – our place in the kingdom of heaven. We plan accordingly, loving our neighbors (who we hope will be there with us), sharing what we have while we are alive (the old adage holds: you can't take it with you), and planning for the future of our church (via pledging) and other charitable institutions we care about (because we all long to leave an impression, something that will last).

This is what I want to speak on. My wife, Mandy, and I look ahead and plan, setting aside funds for education, health care, retirement, and important to us all, our church. We've made the determination what is important and are being purposeful with those intentions.

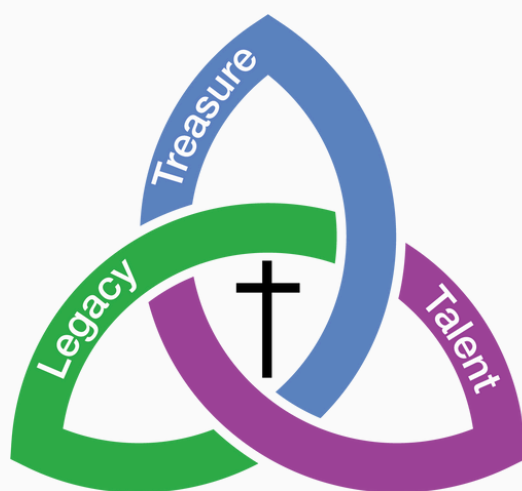
We've all become more acquainted with bequests and estate gifts over the last year. In my professional work as a financial advisor, I help many people make plans about giving in the present and in the future. For many, the church is their largest beneficiary during their lifetime. We've seen the Covenant Endowment Fund built by purposeful, generous gifts to Redeemer over the years. These gifts have allowed us to do repairs, add beautiful art, make wonderful music, and critically provide support when emergencies happen. Our pledges help grow the mission in the present, as legacy gifting provides for the church of the future.

This year on Sunday, October 20, Rick Held (Dad) and I will be giving a talk on how to be proactive in your planning, going beyond the idea to the execution. The myth that it's too complex is just that, and while it's never too early to set your wishes officially, it can be too late. We have seen, in our cumulative decades in wealth planning and management, how best-laid intentions mean nothing without a concrete plan.

- You might know your kids will split everything, but the value is degraded by court visits and attorney costs due to a lengthy probate when other plans could have bypassed that whole process.
- An institution should receive a notable legacy gift, but you never executed the documents, leaving an unfished will and arguments on what to do.
- No wishes are even scribbled down – though you have them – and with no ready beneficiaries, the state eventually claims your property.

We've witnessed many great examples of how clients successfully remember all the people and institutions they wish to see benefit from their life's work and blessings. The methods can be as simple as a will, or utilizing the structure of a revocable, living trust. You could even gift the assets while alive and still pull an income from it by using a Charitable Remainder Unitrust.

What you do is dependent on what you want to do, and in our talk we hope to provide guidance and answer questions on best practices to plan for your legacy and perhaps remember our great church in the process. So please join my Dad and me at the 9:45 education hour next Sunday (October 20th) to learn more. And as we talk about planning for the long-term, don't forget the present: consider pledging the following Sunday (October 27th), to help the Council properly budget and plan for our wonderful ministry in the year ahead.



Redeemer Stewardship October 20th



BY SARAH MCCABE

“Now to God who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

Ephesians 3:20-21

This Bible verse is one of my very favorites. Not too long ago I asked my dad for a few of his favorite verses. Turns out, he has a lot of them. This is one of them and knowing it is a favorite of Dad’s makes me appreciate it all the more. It is so encouraging. That word, “abundantly,” is wonderful. God is able to do so much more abundantly than we can even ask for or think of and then, God sends us the Holy Spirit to help us, to work within us.

Sometimes it’s a little intimidating to plan our giving. We question ourselves; “What do I have to give?” “Will I be able to follow through?” “Does my gift even matter?” Thanks to God’s amazing generosity, we can leave our self-doubt aside and remember our calling; to live as God’s beloved people. Of course God blesses us with wonderful gifts; more than we could ever count. Of course God want us to use these gifts so that we can enlarge and enrich the Kingdom for all the blessings that God has planned. You know the line- It’s not a gift if it isn’t used. We are the hands that the Spirit uses. What a joy it is to gain that confidence.

The last phrase of this special Bible verse is powerful; “To God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations.” “Forever.” Maybe we won’t get to understand where God will use the gifts that we will bring. We don’t have to know. Thanks to our willingness to make a pledge and give financially all kinds of wonderful plans are put into place to which we can’t see the ending. Generations after us will benefit in a way we can’t imagine just as we worshipping together this morning are the beneficiaries of the Spirit’s work in people who have gone before us. Our ancestors instilled in their children what it means to be a part of God’s family, and here you are. Someone invited you or welcomed you at Redeemer, and here you are. Faithful members of this Church from years ago worked together to build a house of worship, and then support it, and here you are. Generations later we get to hear sermons from Pastor Katie and Pastor Kelsey, and music from Graeme Shields. More blessings than we can count indeed.

The ways to give are endless....

Sending quilts around the world, praising God through music, visiting a Redeemer brother or sister who needs a visit, providing a welcome for refugees, raking leaves for those who cannot, sharing the gift of cooking for others, caring for our children and youth....

Time, talent, treasure + the Holy Spirit’s power. Since God gives so abundantly to us, we can be inspired to be bold and generous, too. Join me in making a pledge and give of your time, talent, and treasures to Redeemer. To God be the glory. Amen.

Music & Worship

BY GRAEME SHIELDS



THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTENANCE

As most of you know: Redeemer's organ turns 40 this October! I'm excited to welcome Brenda Portman, a fabulous organist who will be presenting an organ concert at Redeemer on Tuesday, October 8th at 7pm, and I hope you'll all join me in listening to her tease out the wonderful sounds of our instrument. While I'm excited, this birthday also has me thinking about the complexities of our organ and its maintenance. It has so many moving parts and, over its lifetime, most of these parts have been well-maintained. The importance of continued maintenance is not very exciting, but without it we would never be able to reach landmarks like 40-year-old organs.

I can't think of a better metaphor for the important and everyday items and services that our musicians depend on. Redeemer's music program depends on piano tunings and fresh pencils, which are in turn made possible by tithes from this congregation.



It may not be exciting to the congregation, but our handbell choir was elated when we recently received new bell gloves. Many of our ringers' gloves were so old they were filled with holes! They also received new polishing cloths and special handbell mallets. Without these additions and replacements, our bells could become damaged. Thanks to your gifts, we have 5 octaves of handbells that are in great shape.

Church music programs change with the times, and Redeemer's is no different. Sometimes that means we need different music to sing. Choirs grow and shrink; sometimes they have more sopranos than tenors. We need music to reflect those changes in a positive light, lifting up the strengths of our groups. Your contributions to Redeemer help to purchase new music that is not just a better fit for our music programs, but speaks more presently to the congregation.





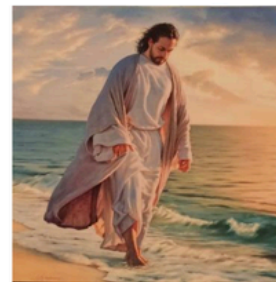
Of course, your gifts also help us in more visible ways too. We bring in Gargoyle Brass for important services, we pay for the help and expertise of our wonderful section leaders Sal and Erin, but your continued support also helps maintain the programs that our musicians experience at each and every rehearsal.

I hope you enjoyed the efforts of Alleluia Ringers and our wonderful set of bells (and new gloves) on Sunday, October 6th. Delight in the music the choir is singing this season. Thank you all who came to hear the well-tuned organ for Brenda's concert on Tuesday, October 8th. Come to Bach Around the Block on Sunday, October 13th at 12:30pm (beginning at Grace Episcopal Church) to hear the well-tuned piano *with* our organ for Redeemer's portion of the program.



Healthy Spiritual Journey

BY LANNY WILSON



The Healthy Spiritual Journey Dual Citizenship - in Heaven and on Earth September – 2024

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consumes and where thieves break in and steal...”
- - Matthew 6:19

While driving past churches, I like to read the marquee signs, those changeable messages that share weekly sermon themes and inspirational quotes. By reading them, you can learn a lot about the church and maybe receive some inspirational wisdom for the road ahead. A few weeks ago, I saw this one: “My Kingdom is not of this world – John 10:36. Interested in dual citizenship?” That church’s interpretation of Jesus’ words caught my attention. Several of our American friends hold dual citizenships to other countries - Ireland, Greece, and Poland for example. Dual citizenship sounds appealing because of the benefits and privileges offered by both countries, but was never a consideration for me until that marquee tickled my imagination. No bureaucratic paperwork is required: United States citizenship is established, and heaven is our destination one day, where Jesus has always been a citizen. But I would like to consider simultaneous, rather than sequential, citizenship on earth and in heaven.

The Lord’s Prayer, Christians’ most often-prayed prayer (it was taught by Jesus, after all!), begins: “Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven...” Most Christians have this memorized but (probably) seldom think about its meaning. Since we are God’s hands and feet and voices while on earth, it seems that it is up to each of us to help bring God’s kingdom from heaven to earth and to do God’s will on earth as it is done in heaven. If we hold dual citizenship in both kingdoms, heaven and earth, it seems that it will be easier to transfer God’s will and those portions of the heavenly kingdom that are transferable. The best navigation and instruction tools for both kingdoms are found in books of wisdom like the two testaments of the Bible for Christians. Manifestations of love’s treasures such as empathy, compassion, mercy, kindness, and humility are certainly transferable in that mysterious realm between heaven and earth. However, manifestations of earthly treasures such as wealth, real estate, jewelry, and precious art do not transfer. Therefore, if we wish to store treasures in heaven and on earth, they should be treasures of love, not of worldly items which are useful only during our short stay on planet earth.

There have been many leaders in the kingdom of earth - kings, emperors, presidents, bishops, popes - but during the earth’s entire existence, there has been only one leader in the kingdom of heaven. In 1 Chronicles 29:11, King David, of the Judeo/Christian Bible, said: “Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all.” As we embrace our dual citizenship, remember that earthly leaders come and go, but God’s leadership is steadfast and generous. Let us follow God’s heavenly lead to be generous on earth with our treasures and our hearts.

In God’s love,

Lanny F. Wilson, M.D.

“...but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” - - Matthew 6:20-21