

Redeemer Record



SENIOR PASTOR'S COLUMN

Advent, the four Sundays preceding Christmas, is the church's way of taking a pause, a big breath, a rest to get ready for the miracle to come.

Read More on Page 2

STEWARDSHIP 2025

Check out the progress we're making with the 2025 Pledge campaign, as we "Gather the Gifts of God's Kingdom."

Read More on Page 24

MUSIC AND WORSHIP

Wednesday evening Advent services began on December 4th. Mark your calendars to attend and contemplate the arrival of our Savior with this seasonal worship offering.

Read More on Page 5

Senior Pastor's Column

BY PASTOR KATIE HINES-SHAH



I'll admit it – I'm tired. Maybe you are too.

We are all busy: School children and teens balance sports, friends, and clubs. Elders manage far flung family, volunteer obligations, and ubiquitous doctor appointments. Middle aged “sandwich generation” folks see to the needs of their parents and children all while keeping up with their careers and managing their households. When the holidays come around the extra pressures of travel and hosting, decorating and baking, gift giving and receiving, and take us right over the edge.

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is the story of someone at his tipping point. The Prophet Elijah had just finished a monumental task of faithfulness, standing alone against the 450 prophets of Baal, proving God's power with a miraculous offering. Evil leaders still rule Israel and the task ahead of Elijah is daunting. He doesn't know if he is up to it. In fact, he finds a tree to lie under and prays that he will die.

I'll admit, there were times, particularly when I was parenting toddlers, that I felt like that.

But God doesn't let that happen. God sends an angel to minister to Elijah. Bringing him water and bread, the angel tells him to eat and rest, “Otherwise the journey will be too much for you.” Elijah does that, and the Bible tells us, that thus strengthened Elijah is able to travel for “forty days and forty nights.” Which just goes to show, sometimes what we really need is a snack and a nap...or maybe the time of Advent.

The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him, and said, “Get up and eat, or the journey will be too much for you.” He got up and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights...
- 1 Kings 19:7-8





Advent, the four Sundays preceding Christmas, is the church's way of taking a pause, a big breath, a rest to get ready for the miracle to come. Our most beloved Advent traditions speak to our longing for peace, hope, and healing and help us rest. **Join us for worship at 8:30 and 11AM Sundays and 7PM Wednesdays** where we will sing and pray for a world in need. **Take home a tag from the giving tree** as a way to alleviate some hardship for the poorest among us. **Download or take home our Weary World Rejoices devotional** to read daily – join a weekly small group to help you in your wondering. Prayer and song, acts of service, Word and Sacrament, the joy of fellowship give us the strength we need to face whatever may come.

And there will be joys along the way.



The wonderful truth about Advent is we know where it leads. Every year Christmas comes. It is a little break in our weariness, a foretaste of the God's promises fulfilled. See for yourself! Plan on attending **Christmas Eve Worship at 4, 7, and 10PM or Christmas Day Worship at 10AM**. Jesus is coming to bring healing, peace and justice to all humankind and we get to be part of it.

Come join us at Redeemer this Advent. The angels are calling. There is sustenance for the journey before us. And the promise of life to come.

Thanks be to God.



Associate Pastor's Column

BY PASTOR KELSEY JOHNSON



The Weary World Rejoices feels like a fitting title for our Advent season.

Luke's account of the coming of Christ reminds us that this world is not as it should be. There is distress, there is suffering, and there is brokenness. We feel this truth deeply in our lives—whether in the form of personal struggles, societal challenges, or global crises. Advent invites us to acknowledge that, as we live in this broken world, we also await the healing, restoration, and renewal that Christ's coming will bring. And so, we wait with hope. We wait with the truth that God has not abandoned us but is coming to make all things new.



Advent teaches us to live in hope, to trust in God's promises even when the world seems out of control. We live in the tension between the already and the not yet. We are still waiting for the fullness of Christ's kingdom, but we know that it is coming. And that gives us the strength to endure, to persevere, and to continue to work for good in the world.

Advent invites us to prepare ourselves, knowing that Christ is always present, and in this season is especially desiring to come close to us in our lives. This Advent, we can find comfort and community in Advent small groups. Groups will be reflecting together on The Weary World Rejoices devotional series by author Kate Bowler. Monday's are always a day I look forward to when there is opportunity for coffee and good company. I invite you to join my small group at **Brewed Awakening in Westmont from 7 to 7:45am**. Each week, we will focus on a different theme: truth, compassion, and restoration.

Bless this Night, our liturgy for **Wednesday evening worship from 7-7:30** in the Parish Room is another opportunity to gather together in preparation, to pray together, and receive God's grace which meets us wherever we may find ourselves this season through Communion together.

Thursdays 2gather has been moved to December 19th from 9-10:30am to offer hospitality and welcome to seniors picking up their gifts from Mission Outreach. Bring a Christmas food item to share, and get ready for some caroling and Christmas cheer!

Finally, the **Christmas pageant** is a little different this year, to offer another opportunity to prepare for the coming of Christ together. If a 'pickup pageant' sounds a little intimidating, rest assured there is a part and place for you in this new tradition. There are speaking and non-speaking parts. Best of all, there are costumes! Come by 9am on Sunday December 22nd, and join us for a short rehearsal, then participate in the pageant during the service.

There are so many wonderful ways to rejoice in our faith and find community at Redeemer. I hope you will join us throughout Advent and into this new year as church!

Music & Worship

BY GRAEME SHIELDS



Redeemer has had a very busy fall. Guest organist Dr. Brenda Portman, the fourth annual Bach Around the Block (with Graeme's mom), Reformation Sunday, All Saints Sunday, an Annual Meeting, and more. The time of waiting and wondering is here, and it is very welcome indeed.

Decorating for Advent took place this year between November 24th - 30th, with a special focus on Saturday, November 30th at 10am. Fueled by hot chocolate, donuts, and Christmas music, we had a wonderful time decorating Redeemer for the season. Trees were assembled, ornaments were hung, nativity scenes were set, greens were fluffed, and wreaths were displayed. An enormous THANK YOU to all who helped make our worship and fellowship spaces look so special for Advent and Christmas.

Redeemer's Advent theme this year is A Weary World Rejoices. The season makes use of Kate Bowen's devotional resource of the same name.



Midweek worship will return on Wednesday, December 4th from 7:00pm-7:30pm in the Parish Room and will continue through Advent ending on December 18th. The liturgy comes to us from **Bless This Night**, a vespers service written for Holden Village last year. Jax Rosland experienced this service in January and was excited to share it with me so that you might all enjoy it this December. It will feature a bell peal, candle lighting, singing, Prayer for the Nations, and communion.

Cantata Sunday will take place on December 15th at 10am and will feature Festival Choir, Alleluia Ringers, and Gargoyle Brass. The music from the service is made up from hymn concertato settings by Robert Hobby, Aaron David Miller, Michael Burkhardt, and myself. Some of the liturgy from last Advent will make another appearance. Interested in singing with Festival Choir for the cantata? Join us for rehearsals on Wednesdays December 4th and 11th following midweek worship. Let Graeme know at music@redeemerhisdale.org or by calling (630) 323-5530 x404 so he can prepare a music packet for you.

A Pick Up Pageant will take place on Sunday, December 22nd at the 10am service. Join us early that morning to grab a part, a costume, and rehearse the story we know so well, told with a new script.

Christmas Eve and Day Schedule. This year, December 24th happens to not fall on a Sunday, so we'll add a late service back to our schedule. Services will be at 4pm, 7pm 10pm. The 7pm service will feature members from Festival Choir and the 10pm will have smaller musical forces. We will celebrate Christmas Day with a single 10am service.

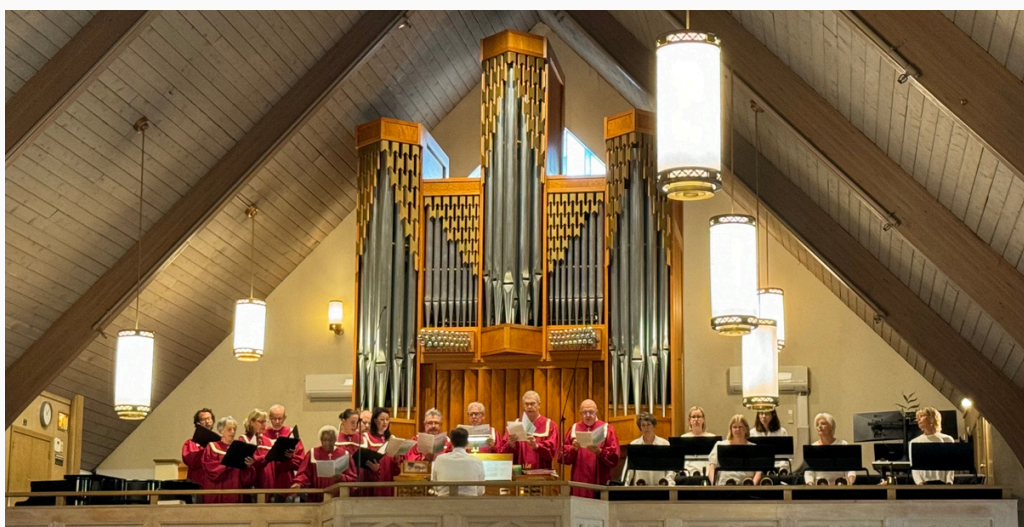
Reconciling in Christ Sunday is coming up on Sunday, January 26th. We'll celebrate with liturgy inspired from ReconcilingWorks Resilient Community and music of composer Stuart Beatch. Keep your eyes peeled for more information about ways you can both help and participate in the celebrations.

For the season of **Epiphany**, I'd like to attempt incorporating Taizé music into our worship services. I've had the pleasure of experiencing effective Taizé worship in Oak Park and have ideas on how to implement this successfully at Redeemer.

The Epiphany season ends on Transfiguration Sunday, this year on March 2nd. Andy Tecson will be leading a **Jazz Mass** this Sunday comprised of a Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei that he wrote along with hymn tune settings. I'm certain this will be a marvelous service and a fun way to kick off a Lenten season full of jazz/gospel music.

I'm looking forward to closing out 2024 with Redeemer and to the beginning of a new calendar year. I'm excited to decorate with you, sing with you, and worship with you.

Musically Yours,
Graeme



Important Worship Update

BY PASTOR KATIE HINES-SHAH



With Worship and Music's recommendation and with Council's blessing (and affirmative vote) Redeemer is going to ONE SERVICE at 10AM from December 15 - March 2!

Why these dates? Redeemer usually has one service the Sundays of the Advent Cantata through the end of the Christmas Season. This March, on the last Sunday before Lent, we will have one Jazz service (how appropriate for the Sunday of Marti Gras!) Changing service times is always a little disorienting - we hope this consistency for a season will help people remember when to come for those special services.

Why one service? Having one service makes for a fuller, more joyful worship experience. After the success of the Single Service Summer and Reformation Service a number of members asked staff to consider this move. A single service requires fewer volunteers and more people can enjoy unique musical offerings. A single service makes for a less divided congregation. During the winter some Redeemer members travel to warmer places decreasing attendance. Most of our neighboring churches (Grace Episcopal, Hinsdale United Methodist, Zion Lutheran) and even our friends at Grace Lutheran, River Forrest have transitioned to one service.

What would this mean for the other offerings Sunday mornings? Adult Forum would move to 9AM as would Children's Choir. Godly Play Sunday School and Child Care would be offered during the 10AM service. Livestreaming would also take place at 10AM. Coffee Hour would move to 11AM after the service.

What about those for whom a 10AM service is too early? We have heard from a couple of people that getting to a 10AM would be difficult. If it is not possible for you to attend an earlier service, please let Pr. Katie or Pr. Kelsey know and they will arrange to bring Word and Sacrament to you. Livestreaming and recorded sermons will continue to be offered.

What happens after March 2? Redeemer's Worship and Music Committee and Council will be evaluating attendance, congregation feedback, and other metrics in January and February to determine best worship practice for Redeemer.

Thank you for engaging in this twelve-week experiment! We look forward to worshipping with you!



PICK-UP PAGEANT

DECEMBER 22ND
COME AT 9AM, WORSHIP AT 10

All ages welcome + encouraged to participate!

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

2025 dates

Something different
every month!

JAN 26

.....

FEB 23

.....

MAR 23

.....

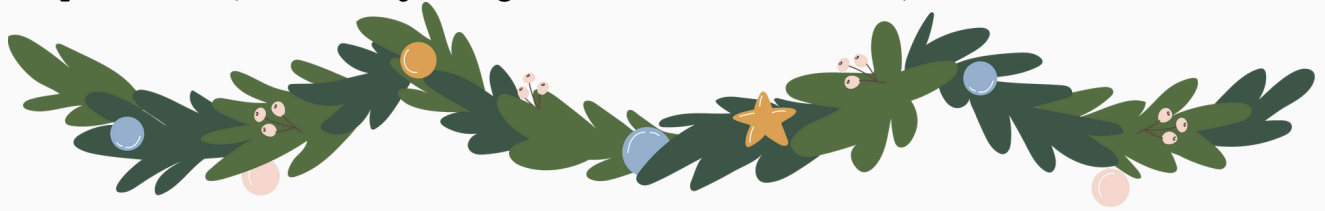
APR 27

6pm start time Friends ALWAYS welcome



Small Groups, Big Impact

Small groups are a place of community and faith formation for adult participants. They typically run during fall focus, Advent, Lent, and VBS week and are always open to new participants! If you're looking for another way to connect with others and explore faith, consider joining one this Advent season, or another season soon.



"My mother, Uta and I joined a small group led by Jay Hines-Shah. Our group had lively discussions and we learned so much! My mother and I also got to know other group members better. It's activities like these that make us feel more connected!"

Kirsten Zalik



"In small groups we're like Lewis and Clarke, exploring new and old faith worlds, trying out ideas, and asking probing questions about where we are and where we're headed. But always, scripture is our compass!"

Linnea Wilson

"We always look forward to opportunities to get together in small groups with Redeemer members. Discussing issues of the day and hearing fellow church members' ideas has been enlightening and helpful as we learn how to apply our faith to our contemporary society. Don't worry if you have to miss some sessions; your group will welcome you back when you return! People come in and out and it's all good."

Nancy Hagen, Andy Tecson



"Teach us to number our days that we apply our hearts to wisdom", Psalm 90:12. Knowing that the Holy Spirit equips pastors to lead thoughtful study, the Tuesday morning small group Bible Study has enriched my understanding which deepens wisdom and healthy growth. Each participant is a vital addition to our community together."

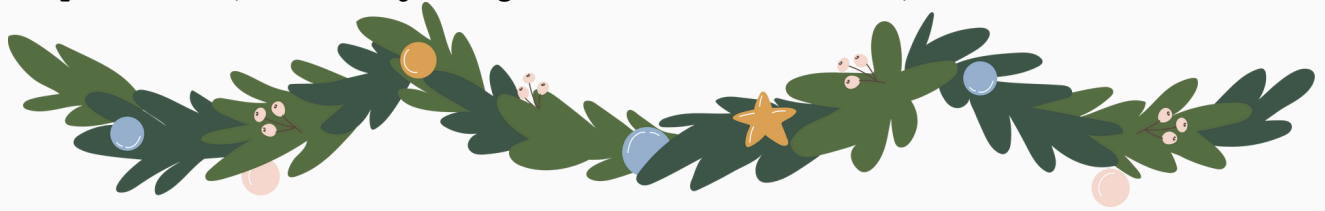
Margaret Schlegel

"I have attended small groups since its inception, with various groups and different leaders. I feel it has impacted my understanding so much of the history of the Bible, our church and the world around us. It has also given me a chance to meet members in the church and create closer relationships."

Pat Quast

Small Groups, Big Impact

Small groups are a place of community and faith formation for adult participants. They typically run during fall focus, Advent, Lent, and VBS week and are always open to new participants! If you're looking for another way to connect with others and explore faith, consider joining one this Advent season, or another season soon.



"This fall, I participated in my first small group meeting since joining Redeemer, and I appreciated the opportunity to meet a few fellow members whom I did not previously know. A small group activity is a great way to connect to others you may not have met, or to get to know someone better. The small group that I participated in (Between Two Kingdoms) provided me with some thoughtful reading on a subject I was not previously familiar with. I valued the opportunity to think more deeply about my faith and what role that faith plays in my daily life. I also enjoyed learning more about the work being done by the ELCA to explore important and challenging topics. The small group was a meaningful place where discussion could occur and ideas shared in a supportive environment - I felt comfortable being able to speak candidly and to listen to different perspectives."

Tom Reeder



"Small groups are a wonderful relaxed atmosphere where you can speak your mind and feel comfortable with those in the group. They usually have a rotating number of people who pop in-see some old faces and also new faces. Sometimes we stick to the book or reading material but discussion often goes off on other topics (some which have been new and enlightening to me)."


Susie Metzler

"Small Group Ministry at Redeemer began in about 2002. Our Fall Focus that year was the study of Rick Warren's "The Purpose Driven Life". It was a big success. Our Small Group has endured for more than twenty years. We meet monthly in various members' homes, and have developed enduring relationships."

Lanny Wilson



Youth Service + Leadership Opportunities



Traditionally, the Christmas Eve luminaria have been set up and taken down by Confirmation youth and their families. Please consider volunteering for this tradition, and help bring warmth and luminescence to the Christmas Eve service and Hinsdale community!

Set up is before the 4pm service, and take down is after the 10pm. 2-3 families are needed for each time slot.

Please let Pr Kelsey know if your family will help serve.

Acolytes Needed

Confirmation Families,
it's time to sign up for winter
and spring acolyte
opportunities



go to:
<https://signup.com/go/TtJWYdE>



Save the Date

PASTA DINNER
+ VARIETY SHOW

FEBRUARY
25TH

YOUTH FUNDRAISER
FOR NORTH
CAROLINA SUMMER
MISSION TRIP



Mission Outreach

BY KRIS MAHON & MARIE MCGANN



Leaf Raking

Thank you to the many volunteers who helped rake and bag leaves for two DuPage area seniors who required assistance!



Redeemer Giving Tree 2024

The Giving Tree is returning this year. We will be collecting \$25 Target gift cards for third graders at Holy Family School. We'll also be collecting gifts for 40 low-income DuPage seniors who qualify for assistance through the HCS food pantry.

Please look for the tree and ornament sign-outs beginning Sunday, November 24, and return your gifts to the church office by December 8.

There will also be an opportunity to help at the Senior Gift Pick-Up Breakfast on Thursday, December 19th. Thursdays 2 gather will sponsor this with carols, and refreshments from 9 to 10:30am.



Church News and Updates



Poinsettias for Christmas

Redeemer is beautifying the sanctuary again this Advent season with poinsettias. If you would like to purchase/donate toward Christmas poinsettias, be on the lookout for order forms included in the weekly emails and Sunday worship bulletins, or email the church office at: office@redeemerhinsdale.org.



6-inch poinsettias are \$6, and 10-inch poinsettias are \$18. They will be displayed in the chancel beginning Sunday, December 15th and can be picked up after the last Christmas Eve worship service.

The deadline to place your order is Wednesday, December 11th.

Thank you!

Altar Flowers

The flower sign up sheet for all of 2025 is now available in the Narthex! Sign up now to reserve your special day, whether that be an anniversary, birthday, or remembrance of a loved one. Did you know that you **don't need to spend \$100 to donate flowers** for Sunday morning worship? While this \$100 goes towards Phillip's crafting a beautiful bouquet according to your preferences and dropping it off at the church themselves, **there are other avenues**. When you sign up to provide altar flowers, donating is the easiest way to make that happen. However, you are welcome to pick up flowers from other vendors yourself, or even pick flowers from your own garden! When Sunday services are finished, you are encouraged to take the flowers home for your own enjoyment or bring them to someone you know would appreciate them. We'd love to see more flowers from congregation members during services! We hope that this knowledge of flexibility removes a hurdle and encourages some inspiration. Sign up in the hallway today!



Church News and Updates



Weather Closures

- We have capacity to do remote meetings and committees will implement this when weather is bad
- Confirmation will be CANCELLED if the school district (181, Hinsdale Middle) is closed. It will not be moved to Zoom.
 - You can sign up for D181 closure notifications by texting 'yes' to 67587
- Bells, Choir, and Wednesday Worship all follow the same pattern
- The Church Office also follows suit and staff will work remotely in such a case. Please call ahead if there is inclement weather and you need to come in.
- An email notification will be sent in the event of closures.
- We will try to have Sunday Worship no matter what, and always offer a streaming/Zoom option: when in doubt, you have the choice to join us virtually.



New Directory Incoming

We will be putting out an updated directory in the coming months. The last version of Redeemer's directory came out in December 2022 (which was longer ago than it seems). Since it has been a while, please check your address and phone number in the old directory. For the next few weeks, a copy of the old directory will be located on a table under the hallway bulletin board, next to a sheet where you can fill out your updated contact information. When you have time, ensure your address, phone number, and email are up to date. If they are not, feel free to update them on the form next to the directory, or you can email the updated contact info to office@redeemerhinsdale.org.





Obituary - Dorothy Ruth Lund

April 22, 1929 to September 8, 2024



It is with great sadness that we said farewell to Redeemer's own Dorothy Ruth Lund on Sunday, September 8th. Dorothy was a longtime member of Redeemer, playing in bell choir and often accompanying worship on her cello. We were quite fortunate to have Dorothy play for us, as she was a professional cellist before starting a family, and performed at prestigious venues throughout her life. Even after she became homebound, Dorothy remained active in Redeemer's life by showing interns how to do a proper pastoral visit. A highlight of many interns' experiences was being treated to ice cream and cookies during a visit with Dorothy.

Obituary:

Dorothy Lund, age 95, of LaGrange Park; beloved wife of the late Ronald E. Lund; loving mother of Ruth (the late Burton) Wicke, Jeffrey (Shirley), & Douglas (Elena); proud grandmother of Brenton Lund, Rachel Wicke, Casianne (Robin) Wilder, & Sebastian (Madison) Lund; great-grandmother of Mila May Lund; dear sister of the late Helen (the late Jack) Garries; dear aunt of Laurie (Steven) Langhoff.

All Saints Sunday

On Sunday, November 3rd, Redeemer honored all the Saints past and present:

SAINTS WITH CHRIST

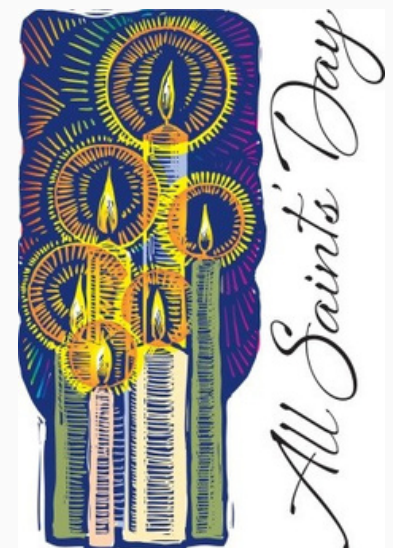
Ellen "Kitty" Weisz
Dorothy Ruth Lund
Tony Tumbarello
Jean Erickson
Rev. Paul Johns
Jeff DeTella

CONFIRMED IN CHRIST

Luke Antinossi
Dominique Charles
Zoe Melau
Luke Patterson
Carl Pederson
McKenna Workman
Lexi Zalik

BAPTIZED IN CHRIST

Owen Scott Lippold
Kensley Marie Adams
Maeva Loretta Hoyt
Wesley Thomas Jaron





New Members, New Faces

Redeemer held a New Member Class on November 23rd, and these lovely people attended. Be sure to provide a warm welcome when you see them around!

(Not Pictured: Joel, Ben, and Leah Simpson)



Jill Ravnic



Tom & Jane Reeder



Karen & Clark Neuharth



Lisa & Robert Jeffers, children: August & Scarlet



Church and Community Updates

Holiday Lights Recycling Church and Community will recycle non working holiday lights starting Sunday, December 8. The cart will be in the hallway. If you have any before or after that time, please put them in the kitchen on the cart which is behind the door from the hall. SCARCE strips the covering and recycles the wire inside.



Church and Community is in the planning process for the **Community-wide Recycling event** (with shred truck!) for May 17, 2025 which will include an Electric Car "Show". If you have an electric car and would like to participate in talking about your experience, please contact Mary Landis 630-880-1888 or mlandisgs@aol.com. Plans for a Spring congregational trip are in the works as well as speakers for MLK Day. If you are interested in participating in the annual **MLK Breakfast**, please contact Dr. Lanny Wilson.



Christmas Holiday Office Hours

The church office will be closed for the Christmas holiday on December 25th through January 1st.

Please call the office if needed at 630-323-5530 or email at office@redeemerhinsdale.org.



Holiday Quilt Sale is coming! Sunday, December 8th

Consider the cozy, warm gift of a quilt for someone you love! The sale will feature Christmas quilts, but a variety of other options will also be on display and available for purchase. All quilts are priced at \$40 and, as always, proceeds will go to support Redeemer's Lutheran World Relief quilting mission.

Merry Christmas from the Quilters!



Redeemer Quilters also wish to thank everyone that participated in our quilt Sunday Education Hour or drove boxes to the LWR InGathering in Naperville.

We thank everyone for continuing to support Mission Quilting through your generous donations and purchasing our quilts. We couldn't do it without you!

Mission Quilts and Kits are now being distributed in the US when needed. Veterans in Asheville, NC received quilts and Health kits after Hurricane Helene destroyed their housing.

Redeemer Quilters:

Ina Alikhan, Bev Beener, Connie Bothen, Gwen Entsminger, Dick Goers, Sue Graunke, Bridget Gregory, Diane Homann, Elizabeth Hunter, Karen Johnson, Faith Masek, Hadley McCarthy, Sue Murphy, Ann Roberts, Joan Rosland, Trish Rosland, Judy Rosland, Kate Sahlas, Joan Romer-Sheppel, and Ellie Whitmer



Progressive Dinner Thank You

Thank you to everyone who attended this year's Progressive Dinner! It was a great success!

Extra special thanks go to the Women's Connection Committee for organizing, planning, and overseeing the dinner!

Women's Connection Committee:

Marilyn Lindberg, Kathy Selcke, and Marge Chapello





2024 Year End Giving Reminders

As the 2024 draws to a close, please consider your financial support in aiding Redeemer's mission and ministry.

2024 OFFERING DEADLINE:

All offerings must be turned in by **noon on Monday, December 30, 2024**, in order to receive credit on your **2024** statement. (The date on a mailing envelope or your check will NOT affect the statement year in which your gift appears).

WAYS TO GIVE:

- Check or cash offered in collection basket or dropped at the church office
- Electronically on our website: <https://redeemerhinsdale.org/give/>
- Stock Gift: <https://redeemerhinsdale.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Stock-Fund-Transfer-Instructions-Redeemer.pdf>
- An IRA Distribution
- Through a family foundation or donor advised fund

Envelope Number Changes

We have placed an order for new sets of numbered offering envelopes for calendar year 2025. In the last several years, many Redeemer members 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.

Church Database Change

During the month of November, Redeemer will be migrating our church database software from Church 360 to Tithely (Breeze). This move will allow Pastors and Staff to better organize our membership information and improve communication capabilities with the congregation and community. Our hope is that this transition will be transparent to our membership. However, you may notice a different look to our calendar year end giving statements and, in the new year 2026, some changes to online giving. Thank you in advance for your patience as Redeemer works its way through this process.

Your support of Redeemer through your time, talent and treasures is vital to our Worship, Mission Outreach, Education, Congregational Life and Administration. We are grateful to all our Redeemer Family.

Deborah Kraus, Financial Secretary



Financial Report

BY NANCY HAGEN

Redeemer Lutheran Church 2024-25 First Quarter Financial Review

Thanks to the generosity and commitment of Redeemer members, our church is in a strong financial position, enabling us to continue our mission and expand our outreach programs. Together, we are not only supporting the spiritual growth of our congregation, but also reaching out to the world with God's Love.

The total revenue for the first quarter ending September 30, 2024, was \$180,815, expenses were \$142,883, resulting in net income of \$37,932 for this quarter.

Last year's first quarter numbers were revenues of \$137,630, expenses of \$121,823, and a net income of \$15,807.

Expenses this fiscal year were higher but well under our budget of \$170,325 for the first quarter. We are fortunate to have Pastor Kelsey as an addition to our staff, Brent Ellerbee as our interim office manager, and Janelle Miller, our outside accountant.

While the offerings portion of total revenue increased by 26% in comparison to last year, it should be noted that contributions from our members come in randomly throughout the year. Some people give their entire pledge at one time. We were fortunate to receive some larger gifts earlier than normal in this fiscal year. The remainder of the increase in total revenue is mainly due to our new and improved accounting procedures of booking certain funds to revenue that were previously coded to balance sheet accounts.

The Balance Sheet shows total equity amount of \$ 1,540,185 which consists of:

- Restricted funds: \$797,546 (52%)
- Special Purpose funds: \$331,783 (22%)
- Unrestricted plus net income: \$410,856 (26%)

Redeemer's total equity increased by 9.3% in comparison to 2023 first quarter total equity of \$1,409,502. We have been able to meet our monthly obligations through current revenue this quarter. The number of months of cash reserves at the current rate of expenditure was 7.89 as of September 30, 2024.

Finally, we are in stewardship season and thank you in advance for your willingness to participate with your financial gifts and pledges. Your support is vital for sustaining our mission and we appreciate your generosity.

Nancy Hagen, Treasurer



Bending Towards the Light

A JAZZ NATIVITY

Sunday, December 15th

4:00 pm

St. Cletus Parish Center

600 W 55th St, La Grange, IL 60525

All are invited! Mark your calendars for Bending Towards the Light, a Jazz Nativity, on **December 15 at 4PM**, St. Cletus Church Parish Center located next to the church at 600 W. 55th St., LaGrange. Free admission and parking. The jazz nativity, produced by our member Andy Tecson, tells the story of Jesus' birth using both improvisation and traditional holiday songs. This performance features 24 of Chicago's top jazz musicians, singers and two dancers.

Come and hear the story in a new way!





Sing-Along

Messiah

BY GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

sunday,
december 22, 2024
4:00pm

**EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL
CHURCH OF LA GRANGE**

203 S. Kensington Ave
La Grange, IL 60525

CONDUCTOR: Dr. Mary Hopper

FEATURING: Organist Jeremy Zimmer,
Music by Kaia String Quartet, soloists,
and YOU, the audience, as the Chorus!

All listeners and singers welcome!

GENERAL ADMISSION: \$25 Available
online at emmanuel-lagrange.org

SCORES: \$10 or bring your own

 **SOUNDS IN
THE SANCTUARY**

PRESENTED BY
Friends of Casavant 3062



Building Community Unity Through Music

Stewardship 2024-2025 Recap

BY LANNY WILSON



Gathering the Gifts of God's Kingdom

Committee Members/Generosity Coaches: Pastor Katie Hines-Shah, Pastor Kelsey Johnson, Nancy Hagen, Rodney Holmes, Deborah Kraus, Tom Reeder, Mark Rosland, Jim Toomey, Lanny Wilson

The Theme: At our first meeting, August 27, 2024, we began discussing our theme. Since Pastor Kelsey's Fall Focus would be "**Between Two Kingdoms: Citizens of Heaven, Citizens of Earth**", we wanted to choose a theme that complimented that concept. Pastor Katie and Pastor Kelsey chose multiple Bible verses which resonated; but we especially like the message in Luke 17:20-21: "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.**" Out of that, evolved "**Gathering the Gifts of God's Kingdom**". We wanted our theme to have:

- 1) an action verb – **Gathering**; and
- 2) Assurance that the Gifts of God are abundantly bestowed, and
- 3) acknowledgement that the Kingdom of God is among us!

Components of the 2024 - 2025 Stewardship Campaign

Temple Talks

- October 6: Nathan and Sonja Will's talk was about Time, Talent, and Treasures.
- October 13: Erik Held talked about Legacy Giving.
- October 20: Sarah McCabe talked about the annual campaign and giving in general

In addition to delivering their temple talks at both services, the speakers provided written versions of their talks. These were published in the Stewardship Newsletter. Oh my goodness, how these Redeemer members stepped forward to deliver inspirational messages! Thank you so much!

Informative information

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): These questions and answers were included in the Redeemer Record Stewardship Edition. From What is Pledging? to The Spiritual and Practical Reasons for Pledging, the "Frequently Asked Questions About Pledging" were masterfully answered by our team.

The Stair-step for Weekly Giving was, once again, prepared by Deborah Kraus. There was consensus that Rodney's wording and Deborah's additions provided excellent information and (hopefully) inspiration to help Redeemer members decide what their pledge might be for 2025. Deborah simply used the pledges from last year to fill-in the steps and act as guidelines for our members to decide.

Mailings: The consensus was that we should communicate our message in as many different ways as we were able. In addition to the temple talks, we used email, the Redeemer Weekly Updates, regular mail, and the Stewardship Newsletter:

- Whatever email messages we shared should be short and informative.
- The Redeemer Weekly Updates should contain stewardship messages, including information about the upcoming temple talk.
- Three weekly postcards, handsomely designed by Jim Toomey, were full of information:
 - a. Bible verses: Matthew 6:19-21, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 3:20-21
 - b. A Trinity and Cross design with our areas of interest: Talent, Treasure, & Legacy, and
 - c. The upcoming Temple Talk Speakers for each Sunday
- The Stewardship Newsletter was abundantly full of information, such as: The Pastors' Columns, Graeme Shields' Music & Worship, copies of the three Temple Talks, FAQs, Stair-step information, Lanny's HSJ entitled "Dual Citizenship - in Heaven and on Earth", and more...

Social Media: is being utilized more - especially to get the attention of our younger members.

Artwork: Jim Toomey's talents draw attention to our messages using eye-catching art.

Time and Talents Survey: Pastor Kelsey, Tom Reeder, and Jim Toomey designed the survey to be easily accessible. Copies were shared in Church and in the Redeemer Record Stewardship Edition. In Pastor Kelsey's words "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."

Pledge Sunday: was October 27th. There were mailings in advance to announce this, along with fresh pledge cards.

Other Matters:

- Pastor Katie's introductory letter "Welcome to Stewardship 2024" helped to set the tone for our autumn stewardship program as the leaves were beginning to change and as we were anticipating another year in God's unshakable kingdom: "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude by which we may offer to God an acceptable worship with reverence and awe." Hebrews 12:28
- Rodney had suggested that - this being an election year - it might be quite contentious; and so, Redeemer might fulfill a need to be the source of calm, peace, and hopefulness amidst the turmoil. We hope that Redeemer has been exactly that! In fact, Graham's gift of music on the afternoon of Election Day, 2024 was a superb example of that calm, peace, and hopefulness.

Pledge Summary

- For 2022, there were 66 pledges totaling \$430,566
- For 2023, there were 77 pledges totaling \$467,477
- For 2024, there were 81 pledges totaling \$467,060
- For 2025, there have been (thus far) 66 pledges \$401,534

In Conclusion: This was an extremely engaged stewardship team. We had important conversations around the theme as we laughed and prayed. Your Generosity Coaches hope that we have provided inspiring information and want to continue encouraging every member of Redeemer to pledge toward our mission and ministries. We will be accepting and expecting pledges through the end of the year. If you have already pledged, thank you. If you are still considering a pledge, we want to encourage you!

In God's love,
The Stewardship Team of Generosity Coaches

Healthy Spiritual Journey

BY LANNY WILSON



Our Finest Gifts

“Our finest gifts we bring, pa rum pum pum pum - to lay before the King, pa rum pum pum pum...”
-“The Little Drummer Boy”



Yesterday, Linnea and I saw the movie “The Best Christmas Pageant Ever”, a story about a group of six, unchurched, poor brothers and sisters – the Herdmans – who take over a Christmas pageant. The Herdmans were recipients of the local church’s charitable works committee’s Christmas food basket, which included a ham. The children were saving the ham for Christmas and were really looking forward to their Christmas ham feast, but something more important happened. To learn their parts for the Christmas pageant, the Christmas story was read to them for the first time. They knew that Christmas was Jesus’ birthday and that Jesus was a really important King, but everything else was news to them – the crowded inn, the stable, the shepherds, the star, the Wise Men and their

gifts. While the story was being read, they asked many good questions – including what gifts the kings brought for Jesus. When she heard what they were bringing, Imogene (the oldest Herdman who would be playing the part of Mary), hollered “Oil! What kind of cheap king hands out oil for a present?” So, when the three Herdman Wise Men marched up the aisle, the middle child was carrying the one precious gift they agreed would befit a King – the family’s Christmas ham. To everyone’s surprise, the pageant became the best in its seventy-five year history.

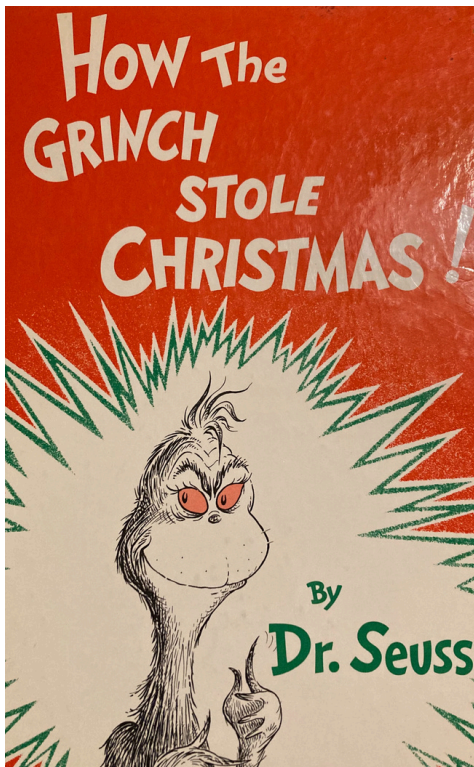
The movie was extraordinary! Amid our tears and laughter, we heard a powerful message about giving, the same message sung by the little drummer boy who, because he was poor, believed that he did not have a gift fit for a King. We read a similar message in the Christian Bible about an impoverished widow who gave her heavenly King all she had to live on. The Herdman children the little

“Oil! What kind of cheap king hands out oil for a present?!”
-The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

“To love another person is to see the face of God.”
-Victor Hugo

drummer boy, and the widow all wanted to bring their finest gifts to the King; little did they realize that the Herdmans’ Christmas ham, the little drummer boy’s music, and the widow’s two small copper coins were worth more than those who contributed out of their abundance.





In this season of giving, we might ask what our finest gifts truly are. After the Grinch stole all of the presents in Whoville, he learned that he hadn't stopped Christmas from coming. To paraphrase: It came without ribbons, packages, boxes or bows. Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas means a little bit more. Rather than presents, maybe the finest gift we can offer is our presence. To quote from Victor Hugo's novel, *Les Misérables*: "To love another person is to see the face of God." Maybe our finest gifts come from loving one another so that we are the face of God for one another. Maybe our finest gifts are found in love's treasure chest: forgiveness, empathy, reconciliation, mercy, compassion, kindness, humility, generosity, and gratitude. Our finest gifts might then bring peace on earth and good will to all.

In God's love,

Lanny F. Wilson, MD

"Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for [they] have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on."

- Luke 21:3-4



Tear this page out and send to a friend.
Or hang it on your fridge to remind yourself that Christmas is coming!

Worship with Redeemer

December 24 • Christmas Eve
4:00pm • *7:00pm • 10:00pm

December 25 • Christmas Day
*10:00am

*livestream option on
redeemerhinsdale.org

