



RLC Newsletter

July 2023

A Message from Pastor Allman

The 2023 Synod Assembly was held June 8th – 10th in Orlando. The theme was “Renewed in Christ” and was based on Hebrews 13:6-8, “So we can say with confidence, *‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?’ Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*”

The largest piece of business was the election of a Bishop, which begins with a blank sheet upon which the name of any clergy, rostered in the ELCA, can be written as the first ballot. Two-hundred-eighty-two people wrote in the name Pedro Suarez, and our previous Bishop was re-

elected on the first ballot for the next six years.

Our keynote speaker was Bishop Patricia Ann Curtis Davenport, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA. Following the line “Remember your leaders... and imitate their faith.” from verse 7 (above) she asked, “Who will replace the leaders who retire?” This seemed to me an appropriate question for Redeemer, as well as the whole of Christianity that is shrinking in membership.

I add to her question, “How will Redeemer invite/welcome/encourage leaders?” We think of ourselves as a “welcoming” congregation, yet who can we welcome if we do not first invite? A common response to the request for volunteers seems to be “I am

retired, it is someone else’s turn.” Yet, my question in return is, “Who is that ‘someone else’?” I can probably count on one hand the number of people at Redeemer who are not retired. Rather than ask, “Who will replace the leaders who retire?” we at Redeemer need to ask, “How do we continue to be leaders in the Church while retired in the world?”


Bishop Davenport challenged us with discovering our “re” (prefix) word that best fits ourselves as individuals and our congregations. She named off a few, too fast for me to keep up, although here are some to ponder: renew, regenerate, rebuild, restart, rekindle, reset, reenergize, rethink, etc. Rene and I discussed some “re” words which may fit ourselves as individuals and our congregation

– “Re”deemer. I wonder which one(s) come to you as you consider for yourself and for Redeemer.

I favor the words reenergize, especially in the aftermath of the COVID Pandemic; and, rethink, especially in terms of our Mission Strategies. Our Mission at Redeemer is to “Proclaim Jesus Christ; Grow in Faith; Love All People.” I encourage each of us, individually, to rethink how we are living into those mission strategies in our individual lives; and, then rethink how our individual mission in God’s Kingdom can be lived out within the ministries at Redeemer.

How do we, as a Body of Christ in this Southshore region, discover who we are in a community that is becoming less religious? The fastest growing number on the US census, under the category of religious affiliation, is “none.” In the 2010 US census it was one in five. In the 2020 US census it was three in five. That is about a 60% increase in ten years. Conversely, in the past 50 years, the number of people in the US who call themselves Christian has shrunk from 90% to 64%; and, from those only about 20% regularly attend worship services.

The situation is not hopeless, yet hope depends on the answer to the question, “*What will you do about it?*” If not you, then who? How committed are you to God’s preferred future for Redeemer? We currently are blessed by the commitment of those who started Redeemer a little more than 44 years ago. Without their commitment and resolve to discern God’s preferred future for Redeemer, we would not be here. We are Christ’s hands, feet, voices, etc. in this Southshore region. Can we envision where Redeemer will be in 44 more years? What are we willing to do to see it happen?

Pastor Allman 

Thank you for donating items for the food pantry in the narthex closet. Please remember, NO open packages or containers.



News from the Office Administrator July 2023

It’s July, and it is insanely hot! I wish I had gone on an adventure with some of our snowbirds!

During the summer things do quiet down some around here. We will not have a bunch of our regular scheduled meetings and there will be no movie Monday this month.

Pastor Allman will continue to post bible study videos on our YouTube channel and he will respond to comments or questions about the content if you leave one.

As usual be sure you check the Welcome Table in the narthex for upcoming events. We post flyers and signup sheets there for many different activities so come and choose some fun and informative things to do!

Please know that if you are in need of financial assistance, we have funds available at the church to help. This remains confidential. Only Pastor will know that you received aid. We don’t want anyone left in need, so please speak with Pastor Allman if we can be helpful.

Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, July 4- Office closed for 4th of July

Thursday July 6th at 5:00- Bible study with Mike

Sunday, July 30- Blood Pressure Checks following worship

**May YouTube
6 New Subscribers
680 total views
9,054 minutes watched**



JULY STEWARDSHIP

What ministry at Redeemer are you part of? Where is God's Holy Spirit guiding you? How is God's voice getting through? Please do not rush to a conclusion whereby you excuse yourself from ministry in God's Kingdom, or here at Redeemer. Some, in the past, have said they already served their time and it is someone else's turn. If you are thinking that, then I invite you to look around during worship the next time you are here, and realize everyone is in the same situation as you. Everyone here has already served their time, and there is no "someone else" that has not already served in ministry.

Some may be thinking they are too old. Let me remind you that Abraham was 99-years-old and Sarah was 90-years-old when Sarah became pregnant with Isaac. I am not suggesting you become pregnant. I am suggesting you stay open to God's purpose for your life and ministry at any age. Some may be thinking that they are retired. While you are retired from your earthly vocation, that does not mean you are retired from ministry in God's Kingdom. (IMHO) there is only one retirement plan from earthly ministry, so if you are still alive, you still have a purpose in God's Mission.

Some may be thinking they do not even know what ministry opportunities exist at Redeemer. The first question to ask yourself is what are you passionate about, and then ask where your passion can best serve God and Redeemer. We need people on all ministry teams: Stewardship & Finance; Fellowship; Property; Social Ministry; Women of the ELCA; Worship & Music; Parish Nurses; Fundraising; Quilters; Visiting the homebound, with or without Holy Communion; and, others. If you want more information, please contact the office, the chair of the Ministry Team, or one of the members of Council so we can connect you with the Ministry Team that can honor your passion so you can glorify God.

I firmly believe that God has brought each and every one of us to Redeemer for a purpose, and that we

all need to serve God's purpose if we are to move forward into God's preferred future for Redeemer. I encourage you to pray and ask God to reveal to you God's purpose for you in ministry at Redeemer.



**Stewardship & Finance
Fellowship; Property
Women of the ELCA
Worship & Music
Social Ministry
Parish Nurses
Fundraising
Altar Guild
Quilters
Ushers
Worship Assistants
Visiting the homebound,
(with or without Holy
Communion)**



GROWING IN FAITH

At the 2023 Synod Assembly (June 8th – 10th), during his report, Bishop Suarez talked about the Church's need to have courage for the future. As I said in the Pastor's Page, the future for the Church is not hopeless, although hope will be found in our willingness to courageously walk into God's preferred future for Redeemer.

Bishop Suarez also encouraged us to not fear rebranding (another 're' word) ourselves within the community. Which begs the question, how does this Southshore community brand us? One might say, "Oh, that's the rummage sale place." Or, another might say, "Oh, I remember going there to vote." Or, another might say, "Oh, that's where they had a concert band play." Or, another might say, "Oh, I went there with a friend for movie night." I think the Bishop's point was that we cannot completely control how people from the community brand us, and we should not fear that, although we need to always relate to the community with the love of Jesus Christ.

Bishop Suarez shared a statistic that claims 1000 new people (mostly retired) are moving to Florida each day. He also said that, as he travels around Florida, he is overwhelmed by how many new developments have been or are being built. We can attest to many new developments in this Southshore region. How will these new residents come to know Redeemer?

Once again, we may need to rethink our Mission Strategies, as I mentioned on the Pastor's Page. "Proclaim Jesus Christ; Grow in Faith; Love All People." How do we live into those as individuals and as a congregation? The best way to do God's Mission is in personal relationships. People can see what we write on the website, on social media, in the newspaper, and on flyers, yet people will come to know us through personal relationship. It will take an effort to proactively create relationships with new residents; and, many of us would favor a passive, impersonal method, such as a mailing or something

on the new sign out front. While those are not bad, they do not cultivate relationships.

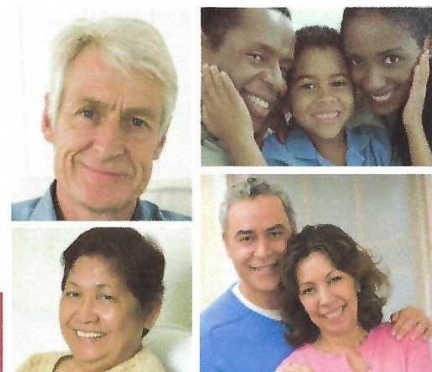
The easiest way to cultivate a new relationship is to walk up to and speak with someone on Sunday morning, someone you do not already know. And, you can open that conversation with, "Hi, my name is _____. I do not think I know you yet." You can do this before or after worship; which is also a great time to invite them to sit with you during fellowship afterward. Or, you could approach someone already enjoying fellowship time; especially if you see someone sitting by themselves. These are already brothers and/or sisters in Christ, so it is a great place to start. Once you grow in confidence, you can transfer that confidence to speak with someone outside of Redeemer, who Jesus would call "your neighbor."



From the Parish Nurse Team

Don't lose sight of Glaucoma

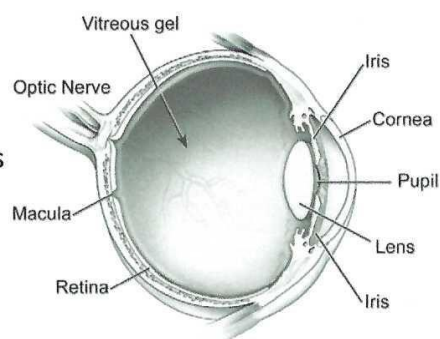
Information for people at risk



1

What is glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a group of diseases that can harm the optic nerve and cause vision loss or blindness. The optic nerve is a bundle of nerves that carry messages from the eye to the brain. The most common form of glaucoma is primary open-angle, which this informational flyer is about.



2

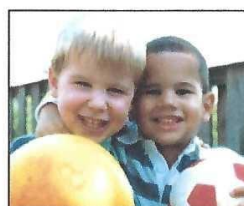
What causes glaucoma?

At the front of the eye, there is a small space where clear fluid flows in and out. This clear fluid feeds nearby eye tissue. When the clear fluid flows too slowly, it creates pressure on the optic nerve. This pressure can harm the optic nerve and cause glaucoma and vision loss.

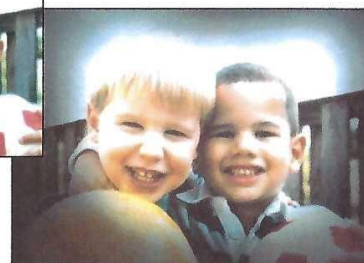
3

Who is most likely to get glaucoma?

Anyone can get glaucoma, but some people have a higher chance of getting it. People who have a higher chance are African Americans over the age of 40 and anyone over the age of 60 (especially Mexican Americans). If glaucoma runs in your family, you also have a higher chance of getting it.



Normal vision.



A scene as it might be viewed by a person with glaucoma.

4

What are the symptoms of glaucoma?

In its early stages, many times there are no symptoms or pain. As glaucoma gets worse, you may slowly lose your side vision. If it remains untreated, you may miss objects to the side and out of the corner of your eye. It is like looking through a tunnel. Over time, straight-ahead vision may decrease until no vision remains.

From the Parish Nurse Team

5

How do you know if you have glaucoma?

An eye care professional can tell if you have glaucoma by giving you a comprehensive dilated eye exam. During the exam, drops are placed in your eyes to widen, or dilate, the pupils. Then a special lens is used to look at the optic nerve for damage. After the exam, your close-up vision may be blurry for a period of hours. You may also have a visual field test to check for changes in your side vision.

6

How can glaucoma be treated?

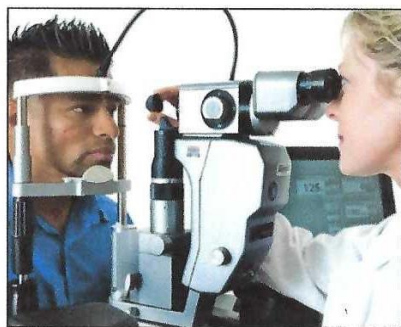
Glaucoma cannot be cured, but it can be treated to keep it from getting worse. Catching it early is key to protecting your vision. Eye drops and medicine can help your eyes make less fluid or can help drain the fluid from the eye properly. Laser surgery can also make it easier for fluid to leave the eye. Regular surgery can make a new space where the fluid can drain.

7

What can you do to protect your vision?

Get a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once every two years. This is more important if you are African American over age 40; are over age 60, especially if you are Mexican American; or have a family history of glaucoma. Finding and treating glaucoma early can help keep the disease from getting worse and reduce your risk of vision loss.

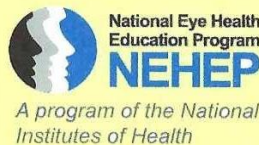
Medicare will help pay for an annual dilated eye exam for some people at high risk for glaucoma. This includes people with diabetes, people with a family history of glaucoma, and African Americans age 50 and older.



For more information, visit

<http://nei.nih.gov/glaucoma>

**National Eye Institute
National Institutes of Health**



NIH . . . Turning Discovery Into Health®

NIH Publication No. 12-3251 (revised 2012)

JULY BIRTHDAYS

- 2nd – Ruth Lehnors**
- 4th - Linda Miller, David Schierenbeck**
- 6th – Doris Long, Nancy Philips**
- 7th – Audrey Erickson, Jackie Flynn,
Theresa McKee, Bob Shields**
- 8th – Laura Akins**
- 9th – Betty Johnson**
- 10th – Howard Baker, Phyllis Mead**
- 11th – Judy Quitsch, Wendy Kitzman**
- 13th – Linda Kovach**
- 14th – Joe Ercegovich**
- 15th - James Fredrickson**
- 17th - Jim McCaw, Sammy Samuelson**
- 20th – Nina Smart, Linda Cockerham,
Harry Oelgart**
- 21st – Mirdza Drengers**
- 22nd – Margaret Miller**

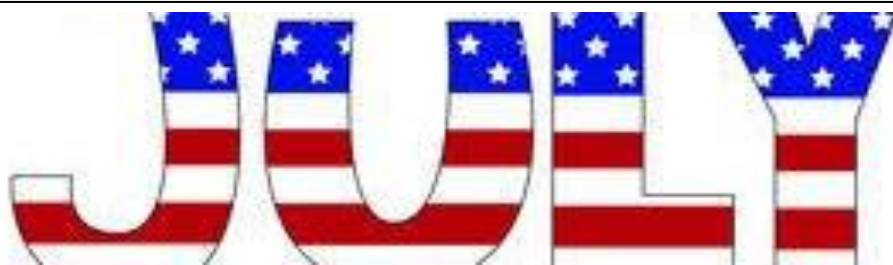


JULY ANNIVERSARIES

- 1st - Jim & Sue Smeltzer**
- 22nd – Jim & Kathy Schwartz**
- 23rd – Vlado & Eva Michna**
- 26th – Michael & Carolyn Stahl**



We ask if you notice information is missing or incorrect please, let us know. Thank you!



Time	Acolyte	Communion Assistants	Lector
Sun. July 2 10:00 AM	Kathy Schwartz	Paul Ó Braonáin, Walter Geissler, Kathy Schwartz	Jim Schwartz
Sun. July 9 10:00 AM	Walter Geissler		Sherri Knaub
Sun. July 16 10:00 AM	Walter Geissler	Paul Ó Braonáin, Walter Geissler, Wendy Kitzman	Chuck Kovacik
Sun. July 23 10:00 AM	Kathy Schwartz		Jim Schwartz
Sun. July 30 10:00 AM	Paul Ó Braonáin		Wendy Kitzman

Please contact Carolyn Cole at 813-812-7527 if you have any questions or need to about the worship assistant schedule or if you would like to be added to the upcoming schedule.

July Usher Team	July Altar Guild	Sound & Camera
Arlene Hansen's Team		Volunteers





School Supplies

WELCA will be collecting school supplies for children at Cypress Creek Elementary School during July. Items can be placed on the table in the church narthex. If you would like us to do the shopping for you, please write "school supplies" on your envelope or the memo line of your check. Below is a list of needs.

Pencil bag/Pouch
 Box of Ticonderoga #2 yellow/wood pencils with erasers
 Glue Sticks
 Package of loose leaf/filler paper, wide ruled
 Scissors
 3 Ring binder with inside pockets and clear view cover
 Spiral notebook wide ruled, 1 subject
 Reusable water bottles
 Backpacks - no wheels
 Composition notebook
 Colored pencils - box
 Post-it notes, 3" x 3"
 Pocket Folders, plastic
 Pocket Folders with prongs/brads
 Erasers, large
 EXPO dry erase markers
 Highlighters
 Clorox disinfecting wipes (bleach free), canister
 Kleenex brand facial tissue
 Ziploc brand storage bags, quart and gallon
 Hand sanitizer, 30 oz.



A gift from Southshore Community Church

We never celebrate the closing of a Church; although, we can appreciate that God can make something good come from such a sad event. Redeemer has been blessed by the closing of the Southshore Community Church, formerly known as the United Church of Christ, in many ways. First, some of their members have been joining Redeemer for worship and other ministries for many months, and we are glad to welcome them. Second, on June 25th Redeemer was presented with a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the building. Many ministries in Sun City Center are being blessed in a monetary way from their Board Members' decisions. Redeemer has been blessed with an offering of \$20,000.00; and, we extend our gratitude for their generosity toward our ministries in the Southshore area. Obviously, decisions will need to be made for the best way to use this gift to the glory of God. I am sure that such conversations will be happening at future meetings of the Stewardship and Finance Ministry Team and the Congregation Council. Please join us in thanking God for the blessings of these disciples that have joined our ministries and for the monetary gift.

God
is so
good

Blood Pressure Check

The next blood pressure checks will be on July 30th and continue on the last Sunday of every month. Honey Ashley and Rosalie Kelleher will be in Buhr Hall following the worship service. This is a convenient opportunity to keep check on your numbers.



Returning to Communion Practices prior to COVID-19

The Parish Nurse Team, the Worship and Music Team, and the Congregation Council have all agreed that the precautions held over from COVID-19 can be loosened. That being said, we plan to return to pre-COVID communion practices around the Altar Rail. Because we have not done this since March 1, 2020, I wanted to review how we did this before.

The Pastor and one communion assistant will commune each other at the Altar first. The ushers and remaining communion assistants will commune next at the Altar rail, followed by the choir, and then the congregation.

We will return to having four ushers per Sunday. For the gathering of the offering, the four ushers will process to the Altar where the Acolyte will meet them with the offering plates. The ushers will make their way to the back of the sanctuary, pew by pew, passing the offering plates across each pew. After the offering is gathered the congregation will sing the offertory and the ushers will bring the offering forward to be received by the Acolyte.

Just before we begin communion, two ushers will place the center rail and kneeling cushion into the front opening of the Altar rail. Each side will have two ushers in the outside aisles; one to stay up front and one making her/his way back pew by pew. The ushers will count off people as they send them up the side aisle to ensure that we have the right amount of people to fill their side of the Altar rail, and that we do not have people forming too long of a line in the aisles. At the same time the ushers will check with those remaining in the pews to see if they wish holy communion brought to them.

Those coming forward to the rail must decide for themselves whether to kneel or stand. Please remain standing if you are unable to rise from kneeling without pulling on the Altar rail. The Altar rail is not secure enough to use as one would use a safety bar (i.e., bathroom, shower, etc.); especially if multiple people are all pulling it at the same time.

The people coming forward for communion will come to their side of the Altar rail starting at front center, and filling in toward the back of the Altar, so

that when they return to their pews up the center aisle, they will not need to scramble past each other in the pews. Each “group” will remain at the Altar rail until the Pastor dismisses them with a blessing. The people at the Altar rail will then return in line up the center aisle to their respective pews.

Communion assistants will distribute either the wafer or the wine/grape juice. We will return to handing the wafer to each communicant; no longer using the contactless wafer apparatus. If anyone is not comfortable with this process, you are free to take the wine/grape juice only, as the next communion assistant comes with the tray of individual glasses. The center section will have grape juice for those who do not wish to have the wine.

For communion assistants: those distributing wine/grape juice will precede the one distributing the wafer to front/center in order that the distribution of the elements goes smoother as we make our way toward the back/side of the Altar distributing the elements to each communicant. Even so, the wafers will be given first, then the wine/grape juice. After each person at the rail has received communion, the Pastor will pronounce a blessing and dismiss those gathered around the Altar rail to return to their pews. Once the participants have returned to their respective seats, we encourage worshippers to spend time in prayer and/or contemplating the gift of Grace provided by God.

After those who are able have come to the Altar rail for the bread and wine/grape juice, the communion assistants will go to those who wish to receive holy communion in their pew. At this same time, two of the ushers will remove the rail piece and kneeling cushion from the center front. Once everyone who wishes to participate has received holy communion, the communion assistants will return to the Altar and cover the elements. Following this the Pastor will invite those who are able to stand and complete this part of worship with a blessing for the gathered congregation. The remainder of worship will continue as printed in the bulletin.

Visitation Volunteers Needed

You may not be aware that Redeemer has more than 50 homebound people. Prior to 2020 and the pandemic, we had two teams of members who would volunteer to visit and/or take Holy Communion to our members who cannot come to Sunday worship. For a variety of reasons, volunteerism has declined in many not-for-profit organizations around the country; which is also true for Redeemer. We have lost nearly everyone who served in this vital ministry. Please prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to visit and/or provide Holy Communion to these homebound members and friends of Redeemer.

Worship Assistants Needed

Please consider being an acolyte and/or communion assistant.

Please contact Carolyn Cole at 813-812-7527 if you have any questions about being an acolyte or communion assistant or if you would like to be added to the upcoming schedule.

Property Team Members Needed

Redeemer is in need of some handymen. We are looking for men to help us assess work that needs to be done at the church. This may include some hands on work but often times you may just be writing up a contract for the scope of work that needs to be done & getting quotes for the work. There are no structured meeting schedules, the property team meets on an as needed basis. If you might be interested in lending a hand please contact the office.

Indoor Community Garage Sale

Redeemer had its very first indoor garage sale. This is different from our Rummage Sale every February. During this event, people from the local community were able to purchase a table for \$20 and sell their own items. Profits from this event will benefit Redeemer. We will share final profits very soon.

We would also like to thank all of the volunteers that helped ready Buhr Hall for this event. We would also like to thank all of the volunteers that were there to help in all the areas we did not know we needed help in. We are so blessed to have all of your support! I never like to call anyone last minute to ask for help, but I am so grateful that when this

happens, I am greeted with the support I need. Redeemer's volunteers are truly amazing.



Red Rover

Just like the childhood game, we need someone to let us come over and use your available garage space. In previous years, congregation members volunteered a portion of their garage for our Rummage Sale storage. Garage space allows Redeemer to increase the amount of inventory available on sale days. If you are willing to help us, please contact Mary Ann Sigler by e-mail at masigler67@gmail.com or by phone at 614-313-8082. We need to begin storing items in September of this year.

Save the Date!

Holy Ground- God Still Speaks
November 10-12, 2023

Warren Willis Retreat Center Fruitland Park

July 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:00 AM-Holy Communion Worship	3 10:30 AM-AI-Anon	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5	6 10:00 AM-OA Group 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:30 PM-Choir practice	7 9:30 AM-Quilters	8
9 10:00 AM-Worship	10 10:30 AM-AI-Anon 10:00 AM-Fundraising Mtg	11 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop 3:30 PM-Women's AA	12	13 9:00 AM Parish Nurse Mtg 10:00 AM-OA Group 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:30 PM-Choir practice	14 9:30 AM-Quilters	15
16 10:00 AM-Holy Communion Worship	17 10:30 AM-AI-Anon	18 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop 3:30 PM-Women's AA	19	20 10:00 AM-OA Group 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:30 PM-Choir practice	21 9:30 AM-Quilters	22
23 10:00 AM-Worship	24 10:30 AM-AI-Anon	25 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop 3:30 PM-Women's AA	26	27 10:00 AM-OA Group 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:30 PM-Choir practice	28 9:30 AM-Quilters	29
30 10:00 AM-Worship 11:00 AM-BP Check	31 10:00 AM WELCA Board 10:30 AM-AI-Anon					

