

RLC Newsletter

December
2023

A Message from Pastor Allman

In the Church calendar the season of Advent follows Pentecost; with Reformation (10/29/23), All Saints (11/5/23), and Christ the King (11/26/23) interspersed near the end.

Have you noticed any Christmas items in the stores yet? Retail stores and our consumer mentality have taught us that the season of Christmas now begins right after Halloween, if not before; and, the Christmas season ends after the presents are all opened on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. This may be why many worshippers would rather we jump right into Christmas Carols following Thanksgiving. On the Church calendar the season of Christmas starts Christmas Day and goes until Epiphany.

Advent often begins on the Sunday after Thanksgiving in the USA, although this year it begins on the first Sunday in December; which also means 12/24/23 comes on a Sunday, so we will have the 4th Sunday of Advent worship Sunday morning and Christmas Eve worship Sunday evening.

Advent is all but lost except for the hearty liturgical churches who keep trying to help regular folks understand and remember Advent. Advent is a

season observing a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas, and anticipation of the Second Coming of Jesus, also known as the Parousia.

The term Advent is an anglicized version of the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming". Advent is the beginning of the Western Christian liturgical year (Church calendar) and starts on the first Sunday of Advent (12/3/23) and ends Christmas Eve, 12/24/23 with the morning worship.

For Christians, the season of Advent anticipates the coming of Christ from two different perspectives. The season offers the opportunity to share in the ancient (Israel) longing for the coming of the Messiah (Christ in Greek), and to be alert for Jesus' Second Coming (Parousia in Greek). The color for the season is blue, and we use an Advent Wreath with candles for each of the Sundays. The names of the candles may differ by tradition, although generally they represent hope, preparation, joy, and love. The fifth candle is generally the Christ Candle lit on Christmas Day, or sometimes on Christmas Eve.

I hope this helps everyone understand and appreciate the season we call Advent and its importance to our Church calendar.

Pastor Allman 



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



**October YouTube
3 New Subscribers
746 total views
9,848 minutes watched**



News from the Office Administrator December 2023

We have a lot of stuff happening at Redeemer in the coming months. 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:

Sun., Dec. 10 – Congregational Spending Plan Meeting following worship

Mon., Dec. 11 – Southshore Concert Band, 7:00 PM

Tue., Dec. 12 – Christmas Gift Bag Assembly

Wed., Dec. 13 – WELCA Christmas Luncheon

Sun., Dec. 24 – Choir Cantata 10:00 AM

Sun., Dec. 24 – Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship, 7:00 PM

Mon., Dec. 25 – Christmas Day Worship 10:00 AM

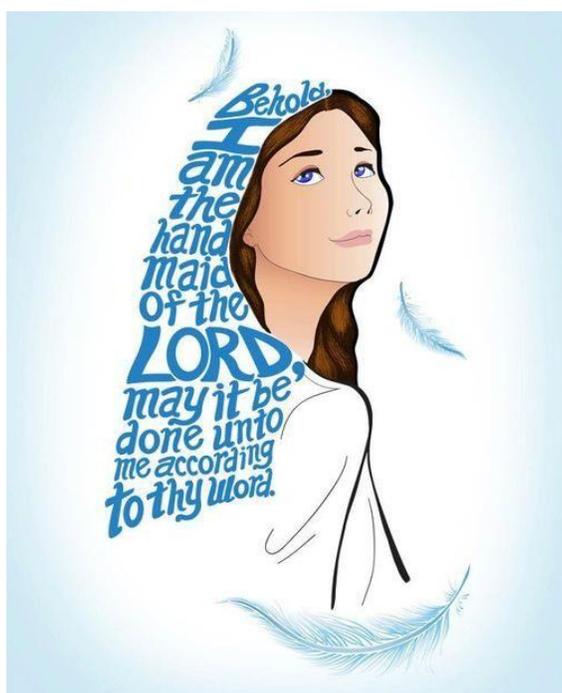
Fri. & Sat Feb. 2 & 3 – Rummage Sale

Mon. Mar. 4- Lifeline Screening



DECEMBER STEWARDSHIP

What does the Christmas Story have to do with Stewardship? When the angel appeared to Mary and they had a conversation about her being chosen to bear God's child, her ultimate response was one of total stewardship: *Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."* (Luke 1:38).



We paint pictures and build nativity sets with Mary looking very peaceful. Think for a moment though what must have been the reality of her situation. A very young, unmarried, pregnant teenager, living in a culture which undervalued women anyway, and she is claiming to be carrying the child of God. Mary's life from the moment of conception forward would have been anything but peaceful.

Mary's life would have been turned upside down. Her pregnancy would have shamed her parents. The people of her village would have shunned her. Joseph, the man to whom she was promised wanted to divorce her quietly. She would have been considered a disgrace and an embarrassment. How many people would have said, "Why me Lord?"

rather than, *"Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."*

In nine months the real beauty and majesty of Christmas was delivered, and God turned the whole world upside down. In the words of the Magnificat, Mary proclaims the hope of every good steward: *"My soul magnifies the Lord"* (Luke 1:46). God's desire is that we too respond with total stewardship (saying "yes") to God's invitation to participate in God's plan for salvation.

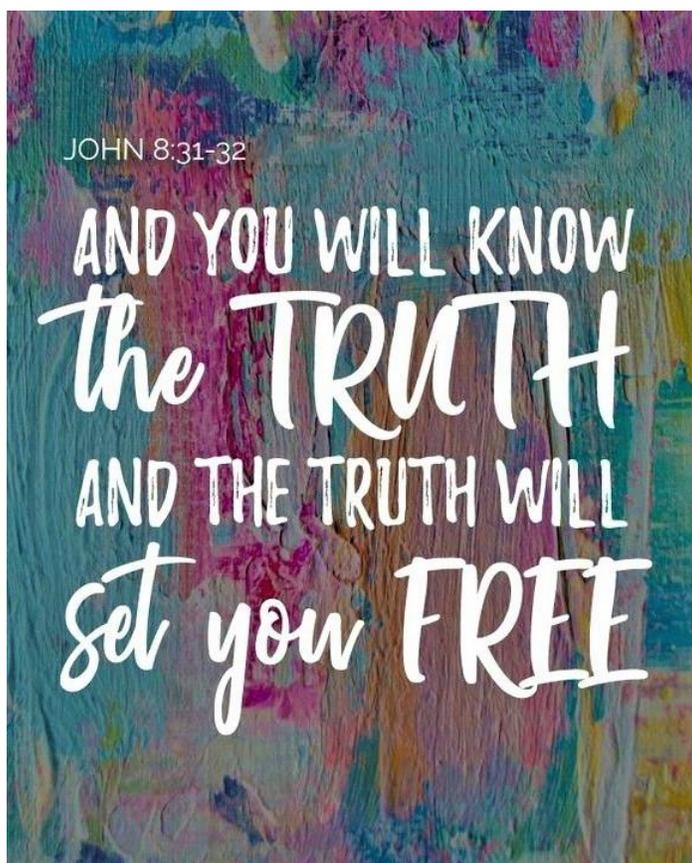


Consumerism, gaudiness, and the excesses of our cultural Christmas can be overcome by answering the call to be God's stewards in this world – especially around Christmas. In a world that seems to desire wealth and gratification above all else, the Christian steward finds hope in the stillness – the silent night – which lies at the heart of Christmas. May our souls also magnify the Lord.



Growing in faith

John 8:31-32 reads, “Then Jesus said to the ones who had believed in him, ‘If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’”



In a mini Bible study I recorded years ago I spoke about abundance and compared the Thanksgiving feast to a symbol of abundance. We hosted foreign exchange students while our daughter was little, and we experienced Thanksgiving with fresh eyes, because it was a holiday they did not have in their country. Honestly, we never hurt for food, so every day is a smaller version of Thanksgiving because we have an abundance of food.

I wonder if the Word of God has become so available that we can no longer see it with fresh eyes. I imagine that all of us have at least one Bible, and many like me have multiple translations. If you have

a smart phone, tablet or computer then you have electronic Bibles of varying translations with a few simple clicks.

What do we do with that abundance? Has it become so available that we keep it on a shelf; or, like our abundance of food do we store it in a pantry or refrigerator/freezer until we want to get it out? Each year I try to go away to Respite in the Wilderness, which gives me time to put a pause on the busy “pace-of-life” that I have set for myself or perhaps has been set for me. That busyness becomes something that detracts from God’s presence in my life. How about yours?

When I am meeting with people as their spiritual director I listen for a while and often will ask, “Where is God in all of that?” Sometimes the answer is something like, “I know God is always there.” I think that sounds like, “I know there is food in the pantry if I get hungry.”

The above Bible verse from John 8 was part of our Reformation Gospel reading. Reformation is not just something that happened 506 years ago; it is an ongoing part of our Lutheran roots – we are always reforming, or as the ELCA says it, we are always being made new. Notice that Jesus does not tell us, “If you keep my word on the shelf, you are truly my disciples...” As disciples we are to ‘continue in his word.’

The second part of Redeemer’s Mission Statement is to “Grow in Faith.” Jesus says we do that by continuing in his word. It forms a present participle, which means it is an ongoing thing which never ends as long as we are alive in this world. How are you growing in your faith? How are you continuing in God’s Word?



From the Parish Nurses

Do you know someone who suffers from LONELINESS?

Health Buddies can help!



Encourage better health through social connection



We empower people living with chronic conditions to:

- Enhance their quality of life
- Lower stress and anxiety
- Self-manage their health
- Live independently
- Reduce loneliness
- Connect to community resources

Refer a Friend

Any adult living with a chronic condition in Hillsborough, Pasco, or Pinellas County is eligible for this free service.

Health Buddies provide encouragement, education, and support to individuals living with chronic conditions. Through regular telephone reassurance, we are improving the health of individuals who need it most.

"Prescribe" companionship as medicine and refer a friend today using the link below or scan the QR code.

Contact us today!

Phone: (813) 492-8931

Email: healthbuddies@seniorsinservice.org

Funding for this program is provided by:



SENIORS in SERVICE
GEARED UP TO SERVE



SeniorsinService.link/HealthBuddiesInfo

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3rd – Jim Moyers, Gary Westerman

5th – Elfi Nolden

6th – Carol Crawford

8th – Sue Kovacik, Doris Hahn

12th – Richard Doerfler

14th – Hazel Crosby, Carol Thompson

15th – Joshua & Matthew Knaub

16th – Carol Miller, Kaki Speicher

19th – Steve Prieur, Jim Smeltzer

22nd – Susan Pearson, Carolyn Stahl

23rd – Heidi Oelgart

24th – Donald Munford

27th – Dale Shook

29th – Delores Turner



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

3rd – Dietrich & Helen Schaefer

23RD – Paula & David Lickfeldt



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



Please remember Redeemer when you are doing your estate planning.

DECEMBER



Time	Acolyte	Communion Assistants	Lector
Sun. Dec. 3 10:00 AM	David Lickfeldt	Mike Corbett, David Lickfeldt, Arlene Hansen	Mike Corbett
Sun. Dec 10 10:00 AM	Paul Ó Braonáin		Chuck Kovacik
Sun. Dec 17 10:00 AM	Kathy Schwartz	David Lickfeldt, Joyce Kuzmick, Kathy Schwartz	Jim Schwartz
Sun. Dec 24 10:00 AM	David Lickfeldt		Sherri Knaub
Sun. Dec 24 7:00 PM	Mike Corbett	Mike Corbett, Deb Pollert, Wendy Kitzman	Dan Pollert
Mon. Dec 25 10:00 AM	Paul Ó Braonáin	Paul Ó Braonáin, Arlene Hansen, Kathy Schwartz	Chuck Buskirk
Sun. Dec 31 10:00 AM	David Lickfeldt		

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

December Altar	December Usher Team	Sound & Camera
Erika Barfels, Doris Hahn & Judy Buskirk	Shari Flemings Team	Volunteers





Health Fair

Thanks for your support of our recent Health Fair. The event was a success, and we hope that you were able to learn something new as a result.

Arts & Crafts Fair

Thanks to everyone that made this event possible. We had a wonderful turn out and around 750 people attended.



Thank you for all the baked goods!



Artist & Redeemer member Marion Giblin

Southshore Concert Band

The Southshore Concert Band will be having a holiday concert at Redeemer on Monday, December 11 at 7:00 PM. Please bring a non-perishable food item for donation to the local food pantry. A free will offering will be collected during the event.

WELCA Christmas Luncheon

All women who attend Redeemer Lutheran Church and their women friends are invited to attend a luncheon on Wednesday, December 13th at 11:30 am in Buhr Hall. As part of the program, there will be a demonstration on flower arranging. This is also a great opportunity to meet those women who you do not know very well. Everyone who attends will need to bring a non-perishable item for the food pantry.

Gift Bags for Homebound Members

WELCA Sunshine will again be distributing Christmas gift bags to homebound members. We will meet to assemble the bags on Tuesday morning, December 12th at 10:00 AM. Your assistance to help with both assembly and delivery of the bags would be appreciated. And we are looking for donations of prepackaged food items or wrapped candies as well as personal care items such as kleenex, etc. This is a good opportunity to provide a little cheer.



Thanks for Donations

Thanks for your generous support of My Warrior's Place. Redeemer raised \$1,544 and WELCA donated \$100 to help them with hurricane recovery. In addition, a Thrivent card was used to purchase paint for them.

Christmas Sale

As you prepare for Christmas decorating, are there items that you no longer use and could donate for the Christmas sale? They can be dropped off on Sunday mornings or during hours when the church office is open. Items are currently for sale in Buhr Hall on Sundays through December 17th. This is your chance to find a new or slightly used Christmas item at a good price.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

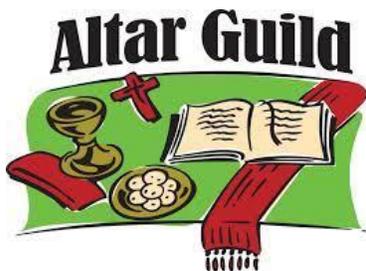
We are looking for individuals that enjoy knitting or crocheting or sewing to help Redeemer's Prayer Shawl Ministry. If you are interested, please call Wendy Kitzman at 813-362-0783. Please leave a message with your name and number if she is not able to answer.

This group will meet Fridays at 10:00 AM after the beginning of the year. Blessings.

Altar Guild Luncheon

To all current and past altar guild members or anyone looking to join altar guild. Please join us for a special luncheon on Jan 16th 12:30pm in Buhr Hall Please rsvp to Judy Buskirk at 813-335-5445. If no answer please leave a message and she will get back to you. We look forward to seeing you there!

Judy Buskirk & Doris Hahn

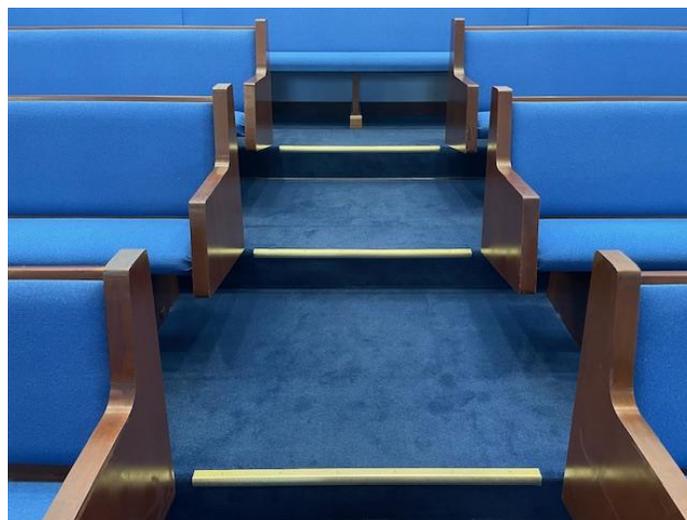


Reminder the office will be closed on Monday, December 25th and Monday January 1st.



Thank you to John Moore Flooring

We would like to thank John Moore of John Moore Flooring for the donation and free installation of the carpet strips which are located behind the alter and up the choir steps.



Garage Space needed

We need someone to let us come over and use your available garage space or even space in your spare room. 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.

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 9:30 AM- Quilters	2 10:00 AM- RJSB practice
3 10:00 AM-Holy Communion Worship	4 10:30 AM-AI-Anon	5 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop	6	7 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:30 PM-Choir Practice	8 9:30 AM- Quilters 10:00 AM- Fundraising Team Mtg	9 10:00 AM- RJSB practice
10 10:00 AM-Worship 11:00 AM- Spending Plan mtg 2024	11 10:30 AM-AI-Anon 7:00 PM- Southshore Concert Band	12 10:00 AM- Gift Bag Assembly 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop 1:00 PM-Finance Team Mtg	13 11:30 AM-WELCA Christmas Luncheon	14 9:00 AM- Parish Nurse Mtg 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:30 PM-Choir Practice	15 9:30 AM- Quilters	16 10:00 AM- RJSB practice
17 10:00 AM-Holy Communion Worship	18 10:30 AM-AI-Anon 1:00 PM-Council Meeting	19 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop	20	21 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:30 PM-Choir Practice	22 9:30 AM- Quilters	23 10:00 AM- RJSB practice
24 10:00 AM-Worship Choir Cantata 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship	25 Office closed 10:00 AM- Christmas Day Worship	26 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop	27	28 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:30 PM-Choir Practice	29 9:30 AM- Quilters	30 10:00 AM- RJSB practice
31 10:00 AM- Lessons & Carols 11:00 AM-BP Check						

Office Email: scredeemerlc@gmail.com