



TINA K., ROSALIE K., &amp; NANCY C. PRACTICE BEFORE RECORDING FOR SUNDAY

# RLC Newsletter

## September 2020

## A Message from Pastor Allman

We are all old enough to remember time before GPS, and Apps that one can download to their smart phone that will give directions and tell you about accidents, traffic jams and speed traps. We used, and some may still use, these foldable paper things called road maps. I always kept a book called a road atlas in my car; and, I can remember getting "TripTiks" from AAA. Regardless of those wonderful tools, there were still times when we had to take a detour which may have left us a little confused about where we were heading, how we would get there, and how long it would take to arrive at our final destination.

Earlier this year the Council met to discern and discuss how to map out a direction for Redeemer to move forward into God's preferred future for us. It was probably less than one

month later that Redeemer got hit with a detour, along with the rest of the world. At first, we all thought this would be a slight detour, until it extended out beyond Easter; and now, we are nearly six months into this detour and the final destination is still somewhere beyond the horizon.

About a month ago a member sat in my office and asked when we were going to open the Church back up. It could have been a teaching moment about how the Church never closed, because the Church is more than a building... We are the Church, etc. This member already knows that, so I replied as honestly as I was able, "Only God knows, and God has not yet told me."

That answer is as frustrating to me as it is to you, and as it is to so many people who are

wondering the same thing, as well as "churches" that have opened, had members (some pastors) contract the virus, and are now closed again. In the midst of this frustrating time I look to Abraham as written about in Genesis and to the advice God gives in Isaiah 51:1-2: "Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you..."

The people Isaiah prophesied to had been in exile (detoured) so long that some of them had been born in exile and had never even seen their homeland. When God first called Abraham to follow him God said, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). Abraham &

Sarah were not even provided a final destination by God, much less a road map, and long before a GPS was ever dreamed up.

Many of us have become accustomed to quick answers and near instant gratification. I blame some of that on fast food places that have trained generations of Americans to expect their food to be ready within the five seconds it takes to drive from the speaker box to the window. Much of that has translated into how we pray. We tell God what we need/want, and anxiously wait mere seconds thinking “When is God going to answer me?” And, some are terribly disappointed whenever God’s answer is, “Be still; and, know that I am God.”

We are detoured, without a complete road map or a GPS, and still not within sight of our final destination, yet God wants us to be still, know he is God and look to the rock from which we were hewn – that is Jesus for we Christians. In his Sermon on the Mount, our Rock – Jesus – said, “...I tell you, **do not worry** about your life... Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by **worrying** add a single hour to your span of life?” (Matthew 6:25-27).

While we are detoured please continue to pray because we have no greater tool in our spiritual arsenal. Pray for Redeemer’s leaders, members

and friends of the congregation. Pray for our world and our nation. Pray for an end to this pandemic and a proven vaccine, readily available and affordable to all people. Pray for peace and harmony among our friends and neighbors. Pray for first responders, medical and hospital staff, teachers and students, those on our prayer list, and everyone who put their health and the health of their families at risk every day providing essential services. In other words, pray for everyone, and when you can, pray for them by name. Amen?

Pastor Allman 

## News from the Office Administrator

### September 2020

We are still in a holding pattern as this virus continues and at present, mid-August; our numbers have been starting to decrease. It is important that we remain vigilant and careful to protect our health. We are here in the office and available during office hours if you need us.

Our camera is installed and operational! We will be training next week on how to use the equipment. We are hoping to begin the streaming in September. Since we are likely looking at “safer at home” for a while, we are hoping to return to something closer to normal which the livestream will provide. How all of this is going to look has yet to be determined as we are trying to make good decisions to keep all of us safe. After the pandemic recedes and we are able to meet again, the livestream will continue for those who need to be at home. We will update all of you as we move forward.

**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.**

First and foremost, stay safe and healthy in your homes until we can safely meet again. Our first priority is the safety and wellbeing of all of you, so please be good to yourselves.

# SEPTEMBER

# STEWARDSHIP

Proclaim Jesus Christ

Steve Oelschlager, Stewardship Program Coordinator for the ELCA asks, *“How do we make space amid our daily responsibilities as (Christians) to invest in a world that we will never see?”* I think that is a great question for our demographic here at Redeemer, where some of our disciples wonder if they will still be alive five-to-ten years from now. A natural human (fleshly) reaction would be to ask, *“Why should I care what happens after I am gone?”* Whenever someone asks me that or a similar question, I say that I am glad our charter members did not feel that way in 1979. Neither the question nor the response is meant to be mean-spirited; rather it gives us a place from which to start the conversation.

God’s salvation plan for all of creation is a work-in-progress that will probably not reach completion during our lifetimes, nor will God’s preferred future for Redeemer. Even if we continue to accomplish small steps in God’s plan during our lifetime, new goals will emerge for those who come after us. By the time I retire, I hope to leave a positive legacy for the next pastor; and, I trust that we current disciples at Redeemer want to leave a positive legacy for future disciples. Redeemer’s charter members could not see an exact picture of what Redeemer looks like today; yet, they had the courage to cast a vision where the future held a place for a Lutheran presence in Sun City Center.

There are many variations of a saying something like, *“Good enough is the enemy of great.”* Some people believe that if something is good enough it should be left alone. Other people believe that making improvements is the natural order of growth.



What would our world look like if God had stopped after the third day of Creation and said, *“Eh, that’s good enough?”* It may have been “good enough” because there would have been light, and sky, and water, and land, and vegetation, and fruit trees. It would have been a beautiful garden. We would not have had the sun, moon and stars; fresh and sea water life; birds; cattle and wild animals of every kind; and, of course, humans. Even so, there are those who would argue that the rest of Creation may be better off without humans; and, ecologically speaking Creation has shown signs of improvement during the pandemic while humans are staying safer at home.

Is “good enough” really enough? Maya Angelou is quoted as saying, *“Do the best you can until you know better. then when you know better, do better.”* Let us keep our spiritual eyes and ears open to God’s preferred future for Redeemer; and, when God reveals something better, let us choose God’s better.



## Social Ministry & Benevolence Thank you!

For July and August we have had the Sun City Center Veterans Memorial as our benevolence. Thank you for your generous support. The funds will be used for maintenance of the beautiful memorial. You are encouraged to visit and to place a brick for your loved one. This solemn place is another way Redeemer supports our community.

Good Samaritan Mission has been our project for July and August. Our Thrivent team led by Nancy Carrier presented them with diapers, wipes and other toiletries. Several items were left at church for their use. We will present them with a check to be used for their clients' needs. Good Samaritan Mission needs volunteers. If you are interested in helping, give them a call at 813-634-7136.

We wish God's blessings on both these worthy programs. Once again Redeemer has served our community.

May God keep us safe and bless us with His Grace.

Jane Trefren and the Social Ministry Team

## Social Ministry & Benevolence

There are no benevolence or social ministry projects for the upcoming months. Our Social Ministry team is without a chair currently. Many of you include money for these projects when you give to the church. At this point any money that comes in for benevolence or social ministry will go to the food pantry. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the office.

## Food Pantry

Thank you for all of your donations to the local food pantry. They are always in need and we are always accepting donations. Please keep on taking advantage of those buy-one-get-one deals to help keep the food closet stocked. Thanks again for sharing what you can!



## Support for others

(Collection boxes are on the narthex counter)

**BRING US  
YOUR**



**Thank you for donating items  
for the food pantry in the  
narthex closet.**

**Please remember, NO open  
packages or containers.**





# GROWING IN FAITH

What does it mean when God says, “*Be still?*” No, that is not God’s way of telling us to “*shut up,*” although there is virtue in listening instead of doing all of the talking. There is a modern day proverb that says something about God giving us two ears and one mouth so that we listen twice as much as we talk.



“*Be still, and know that I am God!*” (Psalm 46:10) is also not about taking a day of rest and going to the beach. Psalm 46 was used during times of trouble and war, so there is a component that encourages us to discover peace when surrounded by trouble. There is an underlying sense of a “wake up” call for people overly focused on problems to turn their attention to God, “...*our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble*” (Ps 46:1).

Psalm 46 is all about security with God, and that God is our true home. It is mostly written in third-person, although at verse 10 there is a change and God speaks directly to the people (us). God calls us to stop everything we are doing, thinking and feeling and put all of our focus on him. God is higher than all else and able to rule above all.

Have you ever tried to stop everything you are doing, thinking and feeling? I am not saying that is simple. I am saying that is what God wants from us

at times. Some called those times “centering prayer” or “contemplative prayer.” It is a time of shutting out everything else and focusing everything within us on God.

I know at least one person right now is thinking/saying, “*I could never do that.*” And, my response is “*Yes, you can; because if I could learn how, so can you.*” There is no ‘one right way’ to do contemplative prayer. A general suggestion is to sit comfortably with your eyes closed, relax, and quiet yourself. “Be” in love and faith to God. Choose a sacred word that best supports your sincere intention to be in the Lord’s presence and open to His divine action within you. It is not complicated; although it does take practice, and in this circumstance practice is a good thing.



## Protect yourself when picking up your prescriptions

*From Parish Nurse Team*



It's important to keep taking your medications as prescribed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some tips to help you protect yourself from COVID-19 when getting your prescriptions:

- If possible, call in prescription orders ahead of time.
- Use drive-thru windows, curbside services, mail-order, or other delivery services.
- Try to make one trip, picking up all medicine at the same time.
- If you go into the pharmacy, remember to wear a face covering and maintain social distance.

During this time, you may also want to contact your Medicare prescription drug plan to see if they've temporarily waived certain requirements to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 — like waiving prescription refill limits or relaxing restrictions on home delivery or mail delivery of prescription drugs. You can also ask your Medicare drug plan about extended-day supplies.

### Stay healthy !!

- Wear a mask if you need to go out
- Wash hands frequently
- Maintain 6 foot social distancing

## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

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- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Robert Kappauf**
- 4<sup>th</sup> – Noah Allman, Jack Kitzman**
- 5<sup>th</sup> – Kenneth Heindel**
- 6<sup>th</sup> – Becky Bergman**
- 8<sup>th</sup> – Ted Wilson**
- 9<sup>th</sup> – Betty Johnson**
- 10<sup>th</sup> – Meta Boesel, John Schaefer**
- 12<sup>th</sup> – Helene Schwartz, Hal Wold**
- 14<sup>th</sup> – Dean Beltz, Mary Christiano,  
Michael Stahl**
- 17<sup>th</sup>- Joan Kopycinski, Robert Turner  
Bob Southwell Jr.**
- 18<sup>th</sup> – Jerry DeCarbo**
- 19<sup>th</sup> – Pete Robinson**
- 23<sup>rd</sup> – Edie Moose**
- 24<sup>th</sup> – Portia Conway**
- 27<sup>th</sup> – Mike Almaguer**
- 30<sup>th</sup>- Skip Erickson**



## SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

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- 10<sup>th</sup> –Chuck & Sue Kovacik  
Dick & Dorothy Paulson**
- 17<sup>th</sup> – Rich & Anne Doerfler**
- 19<sup>th</sup> – Larry & Laura Akins**
- 22<sup>nd</sup> – Walter & Esther Geissler**
- 23<sup>rd</sup> – Jim & Angela Grill**
- 27<sup>th</sup> – John & Patricia Schaefer**
- 29<sup>th</sup> – Sal & Betty Ferrara**
- 30<sup>th</sup> –Howard & Darlene Baker  
Paul & Marianne Eliassen**



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



## YouTube

If you are on YouTube use the search feature to search for Redeemer Lutheran Church Sun City Center Florida. Once you have found it hit the red subscribe button. This will keep you current with videos from Pastor Allman. We will begin livestreaming on this channel starting **September 6!**

The direct link below can be entered right in to your address bar.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUniSRGmRw4qLi2qmolnoxw>

There is also a link directly to YouTube on our church website. Just click on the second button and it will take you right to it.

## Request for help from the ELCA

### U.S. Wildfires

Fueled by a heat wave and ignited by lightning strikes, some of the worst wildfires in California's history have erupted across the state. At least four people have died, tens of thousands of people are under evacuation orders, over 1 million acres have burned, and more than 1,000 structures have been destroyed and thousands more are threatened. Some evacuees face the difficult decision of whether to stay in a shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lutheran Disaster Response is engaging with Lutheran Social Services of Southern California and Lutheran Social Services of Northern

California, along with the three California synods (Sierra Pacific, Southwest California and Pacifica), to assess the situation and determine the best ways to respond. We expect immediate needs to include food and other life necessities, as well as emotional and spiritual care for those who have been traumatized. Long-term recovery assistance may include rebuilding and repairing homes.

You can support wildfire survivors. Gifts to "U.S. Wildfires" will be used in full (100%) to assist those affected by wildfires until the response is complete.

Please join me in praying for those whose lives are being impacted by disasters at this time: wildfires, COVID-19, severe storms, hurricanes and more. Even as we face multiple crises, by working together, we can reflect Christ's light and hope to our neighbors in their time of need.

*Make checks payable to  
Lutheran Disaster Response.  
Write "U.S. Wildfires" on your  
check's memo line and send to:*

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in  
America  
P.O. Box 1809  
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009**





## Nearly New Shop

The shop is open for your private shopping Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM - 1:30 PM. To make an appointment call 813- 642-9099.

On Saturday the shop is open from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Strict CDC guidelines are followed. The shop is sponsored by the Interfaith Council, of which Redeemer is a part. The Interfaith Council Organization provides scholarships for seniors at East Bay and Lennard High Schools and grants for non-profit organizations in the South Shore area.

Volunteers are needed to help at the shop, so if you have a few hours to help please contact the shop or one of your reps.

Thanks you for your help.

*Ann Miller, Jay German, Sue Pearson, Janice Walsh, and Jane Trefren*



## Office Closed

The church office will be closed on Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup> in observance of the Labor Day holiday.

## Parking Lot COVID-19 Testing

Many of you have seen the tents and cones set up in the parking lot. We wanted to share with you that drive through testing will continue through the month of September.

Testing is available on Monday & Wednesday only from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

Please call 888-513-6321 for appointments or any other questions.

## Peanut Butter Cookies- from Tina Schwartz Betty Crocker cookbook

**Prep:** 15 min

**Bake:** 9 to 10 min per sheet

**Cool:** 5 min

Makes about 2.5 dozen cookies

### Ingredients

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup peanut butter
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
- 1 egg
- 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour \*
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup peanut butter chips
- Granulated sugar

\*If you use self- rising flour, omit baking soda, baking powder, and salt.

1. Heat oven to 375 °F.
2. In large bowl, beat brown sugar, peanut butter, butter and egg with electric mixer on medium speed until creamy, or mix with spoon. Stir in flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt (if you are not using self-rising flour). Stir in peanut butter chips.
3. Shape dough into 1 1/4-inch balls. Dip tops of balls into granulated sugar. Place balls, sugared sides up, about 3 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheet (do not flatten).
4. Bake cookies 9 to 10 minutes or until light brown. Cool 5 minutes; remove from cookie sheet to wire rack.



## Virtual Holy Communion

Some are asking about virtual communion at home. I believe that we previously shared the following information from our Florida-Bahamas Synod Bishop, Rev. Pedro Suarez, from the April 7, 2020 Synod Newsletter. We have not yet received from our Bishop any statements to the contrary, so we believe these still stand.

The Bishop wrote: I interpret the ordinance that the governor has approved regarding Houses of Faith being considered “essential” to mean that a few members of staff can use their buildings for meetings with less than 10 people. This includes emergency council meetings and recording worship, all while keeping “social distance” of no less than 6 feet. The more that can be done from home, the better. I encourage you to please, stay at home! Only a few that must take the risk should do it. I continue to strongly recommend not to hold worship in any church building (except for streaming the service).

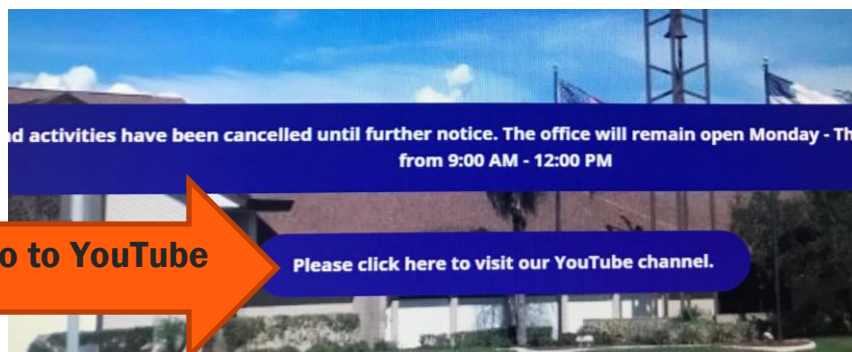
Secondly, my strong recommendation as your Bishop is to NOT do Holy Communion, but instead a Spiritual Communion (St. Thomas Aquinas described spiritual communion as “an ardent desire to receive Jesus in the most holy sacrament and lovingly embrace Him” at a time or in circumstances when we cannot receive Him in sacramental Communion). I know this may seem too “Catholic” for some, but it is the safest and better theology.

There are theological, ecumenical, and even financial complications of doing communion in other ways. I support Bishop Elizabeth Eaton in her recommendation of abstaining from Communion. This is not a situation without hope, and while we keep safe at home, it is not extreme. This will pass.

The proclamation of the Gospel is one of the Means of Grace that is completely able to transmit hope, calm, trust, healing, and salvation. Although some of you may not agree with me, I respect all of you and I know this is not an easy road to walk.

**Our first livestream service will be Sunday September 6 at 10:00 AM**

**Simple instructions: Go to our website [www.redeemerlc.com](http://www.redeemerlc.com)**



**Click here to go to YouTube**

**Please click here to visit our YouTube channel.**

mark  your **Calendar**