

AUGUST 30<sup>TH</sup> AT 5:30 PM

# RLC Newsletter

## August 2021

### A Message from Pastor Allman

You may have noticed that in-person worship has resumed at Redeemer, actually it resumed in November 2020; and, you may notice recently that there are not as many people worshipping in-person as there were pre-pandemic.

In June I attended (virtually) some workshops that taught about "Online Church" and "Hybrid Ministry." While these concepts may be unfamiliar to us, churches around the world have been participating in this kind of ministry for many years. While some are thinking we should stop Live Streaming now that we have in-person worship, that will not address the need to be "all things to all people" and "do it all for the sake of the gospel" as the Apostle Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 9.

The Live Stream worship service, and the recorded Bible studies, on You Tube are serving an active ministry. During the month of June alone we added 4 new subscribers and had 941 views. That does not count the people watching the live version on Sunday mornings. This benefits many of our homebound members, as well as some of our members who spend the summers "up-north," and people who were previously unknown to us at Redeemer.

The challenge before us now is how to do both in-person and online ministry – I. E. Hybrid Ministry. Our You Tube channel has 177 Subscribers. An article published in 2019 states that 90% of congregations in the USA have fewer than 100 in attendance; and, 20% have

fewer than 50. A recent poll showed that only 40% of Americans attend Sunday worship; while that same poll showed that only 20% are actually doing it in-person; so that may indicate the other 20% are attending online. Let me state again, Redeemer's You Tube channel has 177 Subscribers, which is larger than 90% of the churches in the USA.

Think about Redeemer as if you were a first-time visitor who is looking for a church home, either in-person or online. Research says that people have a first impression about a church within seven seconds! Most, if not all, of that time is taken up walking in from the parking lot for in-person people and viewing the "home page" of our online

presence (Website, You Tube, and Facebook).

How does our “curb appeal” (in-person or online) rate? Are there enough parking spaces? Are members taking the closest spaces leaving visitors to park furthest away or not finding an open space? How do visitors know which doors to enter through? Are the grounds clean and walkways easy to navigate? Once the visitor enters the building a whole new set of questions arise. Does anyone speak to them? How do they know where to go for worship, or in our age group, the bathroom? I am sure you can think of many more questions to consider.

What do our Website, You Tube or Facebook pages tell people about Redeemer? Statistics say that people will spend a year online checking out Churches before they will set foot inside a building, if they ever set foot inside a building. Our staff does the best we can keeping those pages relevant, informative and up-to-date, yet none of us are IT people. We are learning and “making it up” as we go. If Redeemer wants to survive (literally) in the future we will need someone on staff who has a background for developing our online presence.

What will visitors (in-person and online) need and want from Redeemer? That may be a hard one for us to answer. Obviously, our needs and wants are being met or we would not stay. How do we attract “younger people” which in this community means the 55-70 age group which, frankly speaking, is missing from

our congregation? Someone has said that it is crazy to keep doing the same thing and expecting different results. So, we need to pay attention to what we are not doing that would attract other people.

A proven statistic for as long as I have been a pastor is that the majority of people who become members first visited because a friend, relative, or neighbor invited them. Some of our folks have said they do not know how to talk to others about church. Maybe instead of telling them something, you could ask them what they think. Think of someone who does not go to church and ask them to speculate about what they might look for in a church if they were to go. Assure them this is not a trick question, and that you are genuinely interested in hearing their perspective. Then practice active listening: pay attention, ask for clarification if you need it, do not argue or get defensive, and thank them for their answers.

How can we make it easy for first time visitors (in-person and online) to understand who we are? Soon you will see new signs on the RT-674 side of the building and by the parking lot. Some will question the necessity and the aesthetic value. Can you imagine first time visitors from the community who did not realize this was a church? Can you imagine first time visitors mistaking us for the funeral home? Can you imagine first time visitors mistaking us for Prince of Peace? That happens a few times each month. It has happened twice this week.

In this 21st Century it is no longer enough to be a welcoming congregation because society has transitioned into something different from the 1950s and we need to become an inviting congregation. If first time visitors, whether to our building or online, think it is too much effort to come here, they will go somewhere else. How many times have you walked away from a restaurant because the line was too long? Visitors today will be looking for a user-friendly experience. What are the easiest ways to contact us? Where is that information found? Will a visitor have a hard time finding information? Will a visitor have to track down someone to ask? I am sure there a lot more questions to consider.

I once attended a hospitality seminar and the presenter asked, “What does Disney World have in common with the Church?” I admit I had no idea. The answer was that we both need repeat customers. Let’s think about our first-time visitors (in-person and online) and how we can keep them coming back for the sake of God’s Kingdom and Redeemer.

*Pastor Allman* 

## News from the Office Administrator

**August 2021**

As I am writing this mid-July, I am excited to go on vacation tomorrow to Michigan! Looking forward to seeing my kids and grandkids. We will all be together in a VRBO home that we rented near Lake Charlevoix. Looking forward to some cooler weather, too. I will be back at church on August 1.

We are continuing to open up more as the pandemic begins to recede here. One of the Parish Nurses told me that zip code 33573 is 93% vaccinated! That is a win for us all. Hopefully we will see the return of activities that we have been missing this past 16 months.

On another note, we have been very encouraged by an email from You Tube with a synopsis of our account for last month.

**4 new subscribers - (177 subscribers)  
941 views  
8,225 minutes watched**



This is very exciting! Those views often represent more than one person watching, that is households. We are thrilled to continue this ministry for those that are benefitting from it. We have heard from snow birds that they are watching from up north and remaining connected to our congregation.

***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.***

## Support for others

(Collection boxes are on the table in the narthex)



Search for Redeemer Lutheran Church Sun City Center Florida and hit the red subscribe button.

This will keep you current with videos from Pastor Allman.

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

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

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

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





# AUGUST

# STEWARDSHIP

(Jesus taught the crowds) *“Blessed are you who are poor”* (Luke 6:20). Or, *“Blessed are the poor”* (Matthew 5:3).

Richard Rohr writes: *What a strange thing to say! Does anyone really think today that the poor are blessed? I don't think so. Most of us are enthralled by capitalism and think it is the rich who are blessed. We have even turned the Gospel into a “prosperity” message—that if we have enough faith, God rewards us with financial success. That sure doesn't sound like what Jesus is saying here!*



The Sermon on the Mount was Jesus' first and only sermon, which appears to make it very important. The Sermon on the Mount is in Matthew, chapters 5, 6, & 7, so it is also quite lengthy. One theologian says that the Sermon on the Mount is in the very essence of Jesus' teaching, and yet it is also the least quoted of Jesus' words. Do you wonder why? Probably not, if you have ever read Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. It is filled with directives that probably make us uncomfortable.

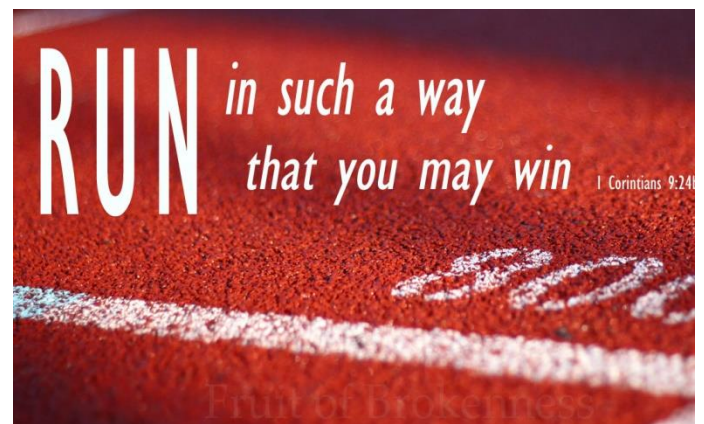
*“... unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven”* (5:20). *“I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or*

*sister, you will be liable to the council”* (5:22). *“I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart”* (5:28). *“I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery”* (5:32). *“I say to you, ‘Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you...’”* (5:44). *“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”* (5:48).

I imagine our heads already spinning with what feels impossible, and that is only chapter 5. There are two more chapters of directives from Jesus on how to live as his disciples. Is it any wonder that these chapters would contain the least quoted words of Jesus? Rohr says that the Sermon on the Mount is about living here on earth as if the Reign of God has already begun. Jesus describes what the world could look like if we really followed him; except we cannot (or will not) meet those expectations.

Should we just give up? Absolutely not! Thankfully God's Grace is not distributed according to how well we live up to expectations; rather, God's Grace is freely given to those who need it, which is every one of us. Yet, we continue to make every effort to meet Jesus' expectations, even though it may take a lifetime.

In 1 Corinthians 9:24 the Apostle Paul writes, *“Run (the race) in such a way that you may win it.”* In Philippians 3:14 the Apostle Paul writes: *“I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.”* Paul is using metaphors from what would have been the Olympics of his day.



By the time you read this the Olympics will have begun. When I have time, I have been watching the competitions to decide who will represent the USA in various events. Often times only two out of the ten-twenty competitors will be earning those spots, although every single one of them puts forward their best effort during the competitions. Even those who know they cannot meet the expectations put forward their best effort that day, and vow to work hard to improve for the next time.

The goal is not to become one or two people that earn heaven by keeping all of the commandments. The point is that Jesus has “set the bar” high enough for each of us to continue trying to become better and better disciples of Jesus; and, Paul is using an Olympic metaphor as encouragement that we not give up when we do not meet one hundred percent of the expectations today, or tomorrow, or the next day – we press on.

I encourage all of us to take the time to read (and re-read) the Sermon on the Mount. The point is not to make us feel guilty about our past life; or, to feel deflated about not being able to live up to those expectations today, or even tomorrow or the next day. The point is to “press on” toward the kind of life God/Jesus would like to see us live. Our best life!

### Bible Study

Please join us for bible study on our YouTube channel. Videos are loaded daily Monday thru Thursday.



## MOVIE NIGHT IS BACK!!!

### THE LAST MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH IS GOING TO BE MOVIE NIGHT!

Our movie for August 30<sup>th</sup> will be:

## In the Heights

In the Heights is a 2021 American musical drama film based on the stage musical of the same name. The film follows a similar plot to the musical, telling the story of a corner in the predominantly Dominican Washington Heights neighborhood of Upper Manhattan in New York City, where all members of the community pursue their dreams of a better life.

Dinner served promptly at 5:30 (this movie is 2-1/2 hours long)

Movie begins at 6:00

Pizza will be provided by Redeemer

We invite you to bring a dessert or salad to share.

B.Y.O. Beverage

**PLEASE SIGN UP AS WE NEED A COUNT TO ORDER PIZZA**

This is a free event.

# GROWING IN FAITH

Peggy Hahn, Executive Director of LEAD asks, *“Do you agree or disagree with this statement? ‘Most people believe that there is a way the world should be and a way the world shouldn’t be.’”* My initial response to reading that was, “Yes.”

Hahn then asks, *“If that is true, do we also think that there is a way the church should be and a way the church shouldn’t be?”* My initial response to that was, “Absolutely Yes!”

I was not a pastor for very long before I realized that people have very strong opinions about how the Church should and shouldn’t be. People also have very strong opinions about how a Pastor should and shouldn’t be; what a Pastor should and shouldn’t wear; what a Pastor should and shouldn’t say from the Pulpit; what kind of vehicle a Pastor should and shouldn’t drive; what kind of movies a Pastor shouldn’t and shouldn’t watch; how a Pastor’s family should and shouldn’t be, wear, say, drive, watch, etc. And, quite frankly, many of those opinions are more worldly based than biblically based. At times when I ask someone for the foundation of said opinion, they can only reply, “Because you’re the Pastor.”

Life and Church will not always turn out the way we think they should, and we typically react by becoming anxious, resentful, or controlling and try to force the world/church/pastor to fit into our own beliefs. Sometimes people will walk away from one particular congregation in search of one that fits into their beliefs, until that one does not. I have seen that become a repeat pattern for some people.

There is an old joke: How many Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb? And the punch line is “Change!?” Church people in general, and many Lutherans in particular, do not handle change very well. Yet, the world and the church will not stop changing, or in other words “is always being made

a new creation,” so the result for those who insist on their own way can be increased turmoil, pain, and alienation.

What do we do when life and church do not turn out the way we think it should? Traditions have taught us to think that 1 Corinthians 13 is a passage about weddings and love between two people. That is not biblically accurate, it is simply another example of the way people think it should be. Listen to this part of what Paul wrote and consider how it may apply when life and church do not go the way you want. *“Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it ...rejoices in the truth (Vs 4-6).”*

When someone asked Jesus to name the greatest commandment, he actually named two, which were already a daily recitation of faith by every Jewish person; also known as the Shema Yisrael found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11. *“‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’”* (Matthew 22:37-39).

Initially the “Church” was called the “Followers of the Way,” which would have been the Way that Jesus taught us to live in this world. It is not simply a contrived sentiment that Jesus was teaching. Jesus said *“On these two commandments (the Shema Yisrael) hang all the law and the prophets”* (Matt. 22:40). In other words, this is the Way; and, Jewish people recited it every day to remind themselves of God’s Way. Does this mean that life and the church will always be the way that we want? No. It means that we each get to choose to be the Way God wants – the Way of ἀγάπη Love.

Hahn concluded the article with these words: *We can reframe our questions with “hmmm, how can I (we) love God, ourselves and our neighbors through this unique time to be the church?” This is not a rhetorical question. This is our question, and it is on our watch as leaders. When we hang on to love as our anchor, we can become open-minded, and open-hearted. We can grow in our faith as the church grows with new ways of being.*



## Thanks to Sandy McCaw for preparing the Parish Nurse article this month

### Final Care Plan

Nursing has always been about care plans – individual care plans to personalize care and meet patient needs. We tend to be planners in our society – school plans, holiday plans, wedding plans ... But wait... do we feel as interested in pre-planning our funerals? No! It's a dreaded topic for many. We are all aware that life on earth will end. That occurrence throws many families into fear, anger, money woes, angst about funeral arrangements and burial or cremation decisions.



Nurses acting as care providers can assist families with pre-need decisions. Having everything preplanned negates questioning, family feuds, monetary concerns, etc. There are services provided by funeral homes that allow us to make our wishes known and to prepare and pay for them in advance. It's heartbreaking to see a Go Fund Me page requesting help with funeral expenses. We've all heard of Potter's Field. What a way to end a Christian life.

When we planned on moving out of our home state where our families were buried, we knew we had to make some decisions. I met with our local funeral director and proceeded to put a plan in place. Since I was still fairly healthy, I wasn't emotional about making plans (relatively speaking). When I picked out our caskets, not top of the line, we progressed to funeral parlor services. The Funeral

Director, whom I had known for some time, was insisting on a two day "viewing" before the funeral. Finally, totally exasperated, I told him that I wanted one day because I never wore the same outfit twice. In disbelief, he said "ok." If you are negotiating during intense grief, the control slips away.

Years later, my Mom passed away. I needed to order the headstone and wanted it to match the others in the plot. While on the phone, I asked if it was morbid to order a "pre-need" headstone. The owner assured me that it was becoming more common. So my husband and I ordered our headstone, with a quote that we liked. The final dates will be added later, much later I hope. Our daughters were shocked when they saw our plaque in the ground. I assured them that it was for their benefit. We didn't want them to incur any expense and we specified that there would be money for lunch. I always want "to go out for lunch."

Our wills are drawn up, our Advance Directives and Power of Attorney are in place. We are comforted by the fact that our children will see this as a token of our love for them.

Since some time has passed, our children have seen friend's other family members struggle with arrangements, bills, hurt feelings, etc. They have told us that they appreciate our caring. There is some mention that funeral arrangements can assist with the grieving process. Grieving is painful and it is best done with loving family and friends and with prayer. Worrying about final cost expenses doesn't seem to measure up...

For questions or support, feel free to contact one of our parish nurses.



## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Robert Viohl Jr.**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Jennie Flietner, Margery Ruse**
- 4<sup>th</sup> – Anne Doerfler, Marty Gifford,  
Dr. Oliver Hackett, Nancy Hayes,  
Judy Kiel**
- 6<sup>th</sup> – Audrey Ercegovich**
- 7<sup>th</sup> – Dan Pollert**
- 8<sup>th</sup> – Jenise German**
- 10<sup>th</sup> – Denise Fitzpatrick**
- 12<sup>th</sup> – Nancy McIntosh**
- 14<sup>th</sup> – Betty Morrison**
- 21<sup>st</sup> – Dick Fricke**
- 26<sup>th</sup> – Richard Johnston**
- 27<sup>th</sup> – Grace Springer**
- 28<sup>th</sup> – Ginny Acker**
- 29<sup>th</sup> – Hans Barfels, Pete Moose**



## AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Sally & Michael Trenski**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Kurt & Elfi Nolden**
- 10<sup>th</sup> – John & Emma Jean Mostoller**
- 16<sup>th</sup> – George & Susan Grosskopf**
- 20<sup>th</sup> – Vlado & Eva Michna**
- 22<sup>nd</sup> – Dianne & Joe Good**
- 24<sup>th</sup> – Paul & Nancy Carrier**
- 29<sup>th</sup> – Jerry & Carolyn DeCarbo**
- 31<sup>st</sup> – Dr. Oliver & Kathie Hackett,  
Valerie & Bob Southwell Jr.**



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

### Join our Choir

**We are hoping to have some new choir members. We would love to have you join! Choir practice begins again on Thursday, August 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:45 PM**







Time	Acolyte	Communion Assistants	Lector
Sun. Aug. 1 10:00 AM	Lucy Ann Clark	Wendy Kitzman, Walter Geissler, Lucy Ann Clark	Debbie Andrews
Sun. Aug. 8 10:00 AM	Lucy Ann Clark		Chuck Kovacik
Sun. Aug. 15 10:00 AM	Walter Geissler	Arlene Hansen, Walter Geissler, Lucy Ann Clark	Debbie Andrews
Sun. Aug. 22 10:00 AM	Lucy Ann Clark		Vorin Johnston
Sun. Aug. 29 10:00 AM	Walter Geissler		Jim Schwartz

**Worship Assistants Needed** - We are in need of worship assistants to help on Sunday. If you have helped in the past and would like to again, or would like to help for the first time please call Carolyn Cole so she can add you to the schedule. 813-812-7527

**Our biggest need is acolyte and communion assistants.**



August Usher Team	August Altar Guild	Sound
Debbie Andrews's Team	Myrna Strom & Carolyn Cole	Noah Allman



## School Supply Collection

### School supplies for school aged students

Redeemer will be collecting school supplies for students. Pastor Allman will be attending the SYNOD assembly and will be bringing the school supplies with him. Many families are on a budget and school funding is limited. When you are out shopping, you might consider picking up some school supplies. We hope to provide the schools with some needed supplies. Please consider picking up school supplies while you are doing your shopping. If you would like to donate money (we will do the shopping for you), please write "school supplies" on your check and make note on your church envelope.

Thank you for your help



## God Spa is Back!

October 1-3, 2021

Candy Allman announces that God Spa is back! Join other women of faith at Luther Springs' God Spa for Women. Soak in the beautiful scenery and solitude of Luther Springs, relaxing your mind, body, and spirit. Activities may include faith-filled conversation, devotions, music, journaling, guided meditation, relaxing and spa-type activities such as facials, manicures, pedicures and foot treatments. Massages will be available at an additional cost (therapist and client will both remain masked).

Luther Springs website states that in order to hold the retreat safely participants will be limited to 30 people and small groups will consist of 5-6 women. Everyone will be required to wear masks indoors except in housing and while eating. Dining room seating will be spread out so guests are distanced while eating, and activities will be adjusted so participants are spaced out.

Cost: double room: \$185; single room: \$235

Contact Candy at 813-777-7803 for more information.

To register you can use this link:

<https://luthersprings.org/fallspringprograms/god-spa-for-women>

## Memorial Garden helper needed

The memorial garden is in need of some weeding. There have been volunteers in the past that have weeded, watered, and cared for the garden but we are needing new volunteers. If you would be willing to help, please consider volunteering your time. Please contact Kadie in the office if you have any questions.



# August 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 10:00 AM-Holy Communion Worship	<b>2</b> 10:30 AM-AI-Anon	<b>3</b> 10:00 AM-Staff Mtg 1:00 PM-Barbershop 3:30 PM-Women's AA	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 10:00 AM-OA Group 6:45 PM-Choir practice	<b>6</b> 9:30 AM-Quilters	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 10:00 AM-Worship	<b>9</b> 10:30 AM-AI-Anon	<b>10</b> 10:00 AM-Staff Mtg 1:00 PM-Barbershop 3:30 PM-Women's AA	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 10:00 AM-OA Group 6:45 PM-Choir practice	<b>13</b> 9:30 AM-Quilters	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 10:00 AM-Holy Communion Worship	<b>16</b> 10:30 AM-AI-Anon	<b>17</b> 10:00 AM-Staff Mtg 1:00 PM-Barbershop 3:30 PM-Women's AA 7:00 PM-Finance Team Meeting	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 10:00 AM-OA Group 6:45 PM-Choir practice	<b>20</b> 9:30 AM-Quilters	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 10:00 AM-Worship	<b>23</b> 10:30 AM-AI-Anon 1:00 PM-Council Meeting	<b>24</b> 10:00 AM-Staff Mtg 1:00 PM-Barbershop 3:30 PM-Women's AA	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <b>11:30 AM PA out of office</b> <b>Committal for J Ruse</b> 10:00 AM-OA Group 6:45 PM-Choir practice	<b>27</b> 9:30 AM-Quilters	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 10:00 AM-Worship	<b>30</b> 10:30 AM-AI-Anon 5:30 PM- Movie Night	<b>31</b> 10:00 AM-Staff Mtg 1:00 PM-Barbershop 3:30 PM-Women's AA				



