



RLC Newsletter

September
2023

A Message from Pastor Allman

Some years ago, I read an article titled “You, me and business: Put your customers first” by Dana Schroeder. She was writing to businesses regarding customer service, and I thought her overall message could be applicable to the Church in terms of how all of us welcome visitors. I took some ideas away from her article that I am reworking for our purposes.

Think about Redeemer as if you were a first-time visitor who is looking for a church home. 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. How does our “curb appeal” rate? Are there enough parking spaces? Are members taking the closest spaces and leaving visitors to park furthest away or perhaps not even find 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. I am sure you can think of many more questions to consider.

What will visitors need and want from people at Redeemer? That may be a hard one for us to

answer. Obviously, our needs and wants are being met or we would not stay. 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 all make it easier for first time visitors to understand our building? We have some signs around the building to help, although having a welcoming person available at the doors would be even more helpful. Consistently visitors enter through the wrong doors when they come to a program in Buhr Hall. Each time a staff member stops their work to escort the person, because that is good hospitality. Having someone who is involved with the program meet visitors at the door would be even better. Consistently visitors try to enter the doors for Buhr Hall when they are looking for the

offices and find the Buhr Hall doors locked. That makes for a bad first impression. When a first-time visitor manages on her/his own to find the correct/unlocked door it would feel welcoming to meet someone inside who can tell her/him where to find the offices, or the worship space, or the restrooms, or the conference room, or the choir room, or Buhr Hall; and, how would a visitor even know what Buhr Hall means? Consider a time(s) when you entered a big building for the first time and were thankful that there were people or signs to point you in the right direction.

Make it easy for visitors to participate. One helpful thing would be to use terms a first-time visitor would understand. What if you came here for the first time and someone said you need to go to Buhr Hall? What does Buhr Hall mean to a first-time visitor? How would they know where Buhr Hall can be found? Suppose a first-time visitor was told to go to the Welcome table in the Narthex. They would likely wonder, "What's a Narthex?" Even if we had a sign that read, "Sanctuary," how would a first-time visitor know that a "Sanctuary" was where we worship? Think of all the different ways that we use insider language, including some of our group names WELCA, Needlers (now Quilters), Social Ministry (does that designate the partiers?), Fellowship, etc. How can we help first-time visitors get acclimated?

Don't make being a visitor too much of an effort. Much of this one was covered in the previous paragraph. One thing we do well is have the entire worship service printed in the bulletin, so a first-time visitor does not have to figure out where we are in which book and miss out on worshipping because they were flipping pages. In my opinion whoever is standing by the doors, or at the Welcome table, should say, "Welcome, my name is _____" or something similar, to every person who walks through the doors. And, if you have been a member here for many years, please do not be offended when someone welcomes you. Being "welcomed" really is a good thing. And, if someone tells you their name there is a good chance that they do not know your name, so you could say, "Hi, my name is _____." This will work just as well with the people you have sat close to for the past 5-15 years and don't know their names.

Many first impressions are now made online, so how is our online presence?

How many of you know we have a Website, Facebook, and a You Tube page? Even if social media sites are not important to you, they are to the next generation following yours. 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 more questions to consider.

I once attended a hospitality seminar and the presenter asked, "What does Disney World and the Church have in common?" I admitted I had no idea. The answer was that we both need repeat customers. Let's think about our first-time visitors and how we can keep them coming back for the sake of God's Kingdom and Redeemer. Assembly, where they were added to that of other congregations, in numbers that overflowed a sixteen-foot moving truck into many vans and pickup trucks. You are evidence that God's Word fulfills God's purposes. You help provide hope. You are blessed to be a blessing. Thank you.

Pastor Allman 

July YouTube
4 New Subscribers
1,090 total views
11.4 minutes watched



News from the Office Administrator September 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:

Sunday, Sept. 24- Blood Pressure Checks following worship

Monday, Sept. 25- Movie Night & pot luck dinner

Tuesday, October 3- Medicare update

Sunday, October 8- New Member Sunday Luncheon

Wednesday, October 18 – Chair Yoga

Monday, October 23 – Oktoberfest

Wednesday, November 1 – Health Fair

Saturday, November 4 – Arts & Crafts Fair

Wednesday, November 8 – Veterans Program

Thursday, November 16 – Virtual Dementia Program

Wednesday, November 29 – Electronics Recycling Event

We hope that everyone made it through Hurricane Idalia without many issues. There has been no damage found at the church.

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



SEPTEMBER STEWARDSHIP

“Experts believe that about one third of individual contributors in a local church make up three-fourths of the total received in contributions” (The Parish Paper, May 2017, Volume 25, #5). The same article stated that about half of U.S. worshippers regularly give 5% or more of their annual net income to their congregation. Those statistics initially surprised me, and then I thought I should not really have been surprised. Here is why...

Each year the Stewardship & Finance Team, along with the Council, propose increases to our annual spending plan; and sometimes I hear people saying that “everyone was already giving everything they could.” Because I am curious by nature, I had our bookkeeper provide a list of amounts only (no names) for annual giving – at least that which we can track through envelopes. The results showed that more than half of the congregation gave less than \$200.00 annually (per year) to our congregation (about \$3.85 per week).



The median annual income, per household, in Sun City Center is \$58,221.00 (2021 statistics). That makes the annual offering of \$200.00 less than 0.4% of the household median annual income. A survey taken in 2015 showed that only 3% of people actually tithe (10%) their annual income (from State of the Plate). Relevant Magazine (2016) shared that, “Christians are only giving at 2.5 percent per capita, while during the Great Depression they gave

at a 3.3 percent rate,” which seems to indicate that having more money causes one to give less, not more.

Being curious by nature, I wondered what would happen if people at Redeemer suddenly gave a tithe (10%) of their annual income back to God. Our records claim that we have about 370 members, plus others who attend worship here. Even if we use a lower number, say 300 members, the median annual income (\$58,221.00), and calculated 10% using that formula we would have an annual offering of \$1,746,630.00. Wow! Yes, I know this is all speculation, and there are other variables to consider, yet the possibilities are staggering.

What determines how people use their money? Giving is a heart issue, not a money issue. We saw that with the statistic above how people gave more during the Great Depression than currently. In Matthew 6:21 Jesus said, “*For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*” In other words, our hearts follow our money – not the other way around. Like in the 1996 movie, Jerry Maguire, when Cuba Gooding Jr. (playing a rising football star) was shouting out, “Show me the money!” because his family could not live on less than \$10 million per year.

So, to where is your heart following your money? If you are not already, could you consider giving 10% of your annual income to the church, or 5%, or even increasing your annual offering by 1% until you reach 5% or 10%? I wonder what kind of ministry impact Redeemer could make with a million-dollar spending plan. Just food for thought.



Growing in faith

What did you do over your summer vacation? Okay, most of you are retired, so you did not have a summer vacation. Yet, maybe you remember that question from when you were young and still in school. I remember when I was in “grade school” and we were asked that question at the beginning of the school year. When I was young, school started after Labor Day, which is why I am thinking about this for September.

Now that I am an adult, and part of the working world, I do not get summers off. Sometimes in the summer I see our attendance drop by nearly 50%, and I wonder if taking the summer off has been pre-programmed into some people’s minds from an early age. I know some people head north for the summer months, yet I did not think it was half of the congregation. Many years ago, I read about a church that closed during the “off-season” and I did not understand what that meant. I wonder if summer is the “off season” for this area.

On the other hand, I hear some complain that certain programs in this area shut down until the “snow-birds” come back, and that frustrates people who live here all year. I can appreciate that too. I was not really suggesting that the church close for the summer; or, that I get summers off. Although having the summer off and still getting paid would be a blessing {grin}.



I do love seeing the people who come to Redeemer all year; and, I love seeing people who return after their summer “off” (i.e., “up north”). I hope everyone has had a good summer, and I hope none of you took a “summer off” from growing your faith. In some ways, faith is like a muscle than needs to be exercised regularly: worship, Bible reading/study, prayer, devotions, giving, etc. If we stop for too long, it is hard to get started again.

When I was in “grade school” and had to go back after the summer off, it was an adjustment. At first, I did not want to do it, and then I got back into the routine, and it became easier. If you have been taking the summer “off” it will be an adjustment to get back into the routine of exercising your faith. The good news is that God is always “open,” and Redeemer continues to meet to worship our awesome God on Sundays at 10:00 AM. I look forward to seeing you there.



Back to Basics: The Importance of Handwashing

This is an important message from the Parish Nurse Team

It's a simple, easy and effective way to prevent spreading germs and to help yourself and others stay healthy: washing your hands with soap and water.

Having clean hands can help stop the spread of germs in a community, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). But did you know that there's a right way to wash your hands? The CDC suggests these five steps:

- Wet your hands, using clean running water and apply soap.
- Lather your hands with the soap, rubbing them together. Lather the backs of both hands, between fingers and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for 20 seconds or more; it's the amount of time it takes for you to hum the "Happy Birthday" song twice from start to finish.
- Rinse your hands thoroughly under running water.
- Dry your hands with a clean towel, paper towel or air dryer.

The CDC recommends that you wash your hands often, particularly when you might get germs on your hands:

- After blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing
- Before, during and after you prepare food
- Before you eat food
- Before and after you treat a cut or wound
- Before and after you care for someone who is sick
- After you use the toilet
- After you change diapers or clean a child who has used the toilet
- After you touch an animal, animal waste or animal feed
- After you touch garbage



When soap and water aren't immediately available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60 percent alcohol. If your hands are greasy or have visible dirt, it's best to wash with soap and water.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 4th – Noah Allman, Jack Kitzman**
8th – Ted Wilson
12th – Hal Wold
14th – Dean Beltz, Mary Christiano
17th– Robert Turner, Bob Southwell Jr.
18th – Jerry DeCarbo
23rd – Edie Moose, Kurt Nolden
24th - Sandra Glenner, Paula Lickfeldt
27th – Mike Almaguer, Dottie Drouin
28th – Joyce Kuzmick

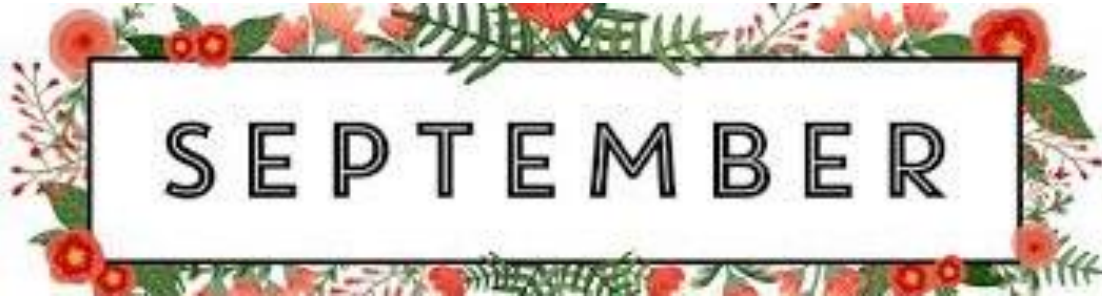


SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 8th – Heidi & Harry Oelgart**
10th –Chuck & Sue Kovacik
Dick & Dorothy Paulson
13th - Justin & Maureen Hill
17th – Rich & Anne Doerfler
19th – Larry & Laura Akins
22nd – Walter & Esther Geissler
29th – Sal & Betty Ferrara
30th –Howard & Darlene Baker



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



Time	Acolyte	Communion Assistants	Lector
Sun. Sept. 3 10:00 AM	Mike Corbett	David Lickfeldt, Mike Corbett, Walter Geissler	Mike Corbett
Sun. Sept. 10 10:00 AM	Walter Geissler		Chuck Kovacik
Sun. Sept. 17 10:00 AM	Kathy Schwartz	Kathy Schwartz, Arlene Hansen, Wendy Kitzman	Wendy Kitzman
Sun. Sept. 24 10:00 AM	Walter Geissler		Jim Schwartz

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



September Usher Team	September Altar Guild	Sound & Camera
Shari Fleming Team	Diane Brace, Linda Kovach Doris Hahn and Judy Buskirk	Volunteers





Bible Study

Beginning with September 7, 2023, Pastor Allman will record reflections on the Acts of the Apostles for his weekly Bible Study. You can find these recordings on our YouTube channel on Thursdays (beginning 9/7/23) at 10:00 AM. If you need help subscribing to Redeemer's You Tube channel, please let us know.



Medicare Presentation



Do you need information for making good decisions on your Medicare coverage? Diane Daniels will do a presentation in Buhr Hall on Tuesday, October 3rd at 11:00 AM. Many of you may remember her from past presentations. She is an expert in Medicare and will also answer your personal questions. With Medicare open enrollment starting on October 15th, this is a timely presentation that you will want to attend.

Ms. Daniels is a successful entrepreneur, Medicare consultant, and the author of "The Medicare Nation" book, which is a concise and balanced introduction to Medicare. She is a global consultant for investors in the Medicare space as well as consulting for Medicare beneficiaries across the United States. Many community residents have benefitted from her expertise.

Following the presentation, a light lunch will be served. There is no charge, but you need to sign the sheet on the narthex counter if you plan to attend.

New Member Sunday Luncheon October 8

As a welcome to our new members, we are planning a light luncheon following the October 8th worship service. The luncheon will be **finger food only**. If you plan to attend, please bring a finger food item to the kitchen before the service. Do not bring anything that needs to be heated. Suggested items include small sandwiches, deviled eggs, cut up ham/cheese squares, shrimp, cut up raw vegetables or fruit, breads, cookies/cupcakes, or other appetizers - or just use your creativity!! Beverages will be provided.

It is always a good time to join. If you would like to become a member, you can find a membership form on the welcome counter. Forms can be returned to any member of the office staff.



Blood Pressure Check

The next blood pressure checks will be on September 24th 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.

WELCA Fall Gathering – God Still Speaks to Us



Did you spend time at church camp when you were young? Do you remember camp songs and crafts? Join the Florida-Bahamas Women of the ELCA at our 2023 Fall Gathering where we will celebrate Holy Ground and discover how God still speaks to us. The gathering will be held in a new location - The Warren Willis United Methodist conference Center in Fruitland Park. This retreat center has beautiful grounds and great spaces for us.

The gathering will be a wonderful time of fellowship, Bible study, worship, learning, singing, and even eating s'mores. Registration forms are on the welcome counter in the narthex or you can also register online at <https://www.flwelca.com/2023-fall-gathering>. **The registration deadline is September 10th.** For questions, see Lois Hobratschk.

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.



School Supplies Thank you

Thanks to everyone who donated school supplies. Your donations plus items we purchased with cash donations and the Thrivent card were delivered to Cypress Creek Elementary School just in time to be put out for parent's day when they could pick what they needed. The picture shows one of two loads of items. Shown in the picture are Meleah Braddy (school social worker), Arlene Hansen, Jeanne Pruett, and Lois Hobratschk. And thanks to Richard Meredith for doing the Thrivent Action Team.



Save the Date!
Saturday, November 4th
9:00 AM – 2:00 PM



ARTS & CRAFTS FAIR



This will be the 4th Arts and Crafts Fair that Redeemer will be hosting. There will be a variety of arts & crafts, a raffle for gift baskets, 50/50 raffle, bake sale, and a food truck. Please save the date and come to support Redeemer and local vendors.



Monday, September 25th at 5:30 PM

Join us for movie night this month on September 25th at 5:30 PM to see *Love Again*. Dinner will be potluck style, bring a dish to share. Bring your own beverage and a non-perishable food item to be donated to the food pantry.



About the movie: Coping with the loss of her fiancé, Mira Ray sends a series of romantic texts to his old cellphone number, not realizing it was reassigned to journalist Rob Burns. Rob becomes captivated by the honesty of her words in the beautifully constructed texts. When he's assigned to write a profile of superstar Celine Dion, he enlists her help to figure out how to meet Mira in person – and win her heart.

Thivent Disaster Support

Make a donation & Thivent will boost it with a \$250,000 matching opportunity! Donate to support disaster relief efforts. For every \$2 you donate through Thivent's online giving platform, Thivent will add \$1*. Thivent will also pay all the processing fees so 100% will go directly to the cause.** Here is a list of the national disaster response organizations included in the matching opportunity.



Reminder we will be closed September 4th for Labor Day!

Oktoberfest Hymn Sing

On Monday, October 23rd, Buhr Hall will host our Oktoberfest event. Come and join us for Oktoberfest at Redeemer. Bring your own beer, wine, or non-alcoholic beverage. Munchies will be provided in theme with Oktoberfest, such as brats, hot dogs, potato salad, ice tea, and more. If you would like to bring something to share you are welcome to do so. We'll drink and sing hymns beginning at 4:30 PM until 6:00 PM—early enough for our friends on golf carts to get home before dark. Beer and Hymns has been done in many ELCA churches over the past several years. It will be a fun evening. Please bring a non perishable food item for the local food pantry. Everyone is welcome to attend. Bring a friend! Put October 23 on your calendar for an enjoyable evening.



September 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 9:30 AM- Quilters	2
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 6:45 PM-Choir practice	8 9:30 AM- Quilters	9
10 10:00 AM-Worship	11 10:30 AM-AI-Anon	12 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop 1:00 PM-Finance Team Mtg 1:30 PM-Worship & Music	13 10:00 AM- Fundraising Mtg	14 9:00 AM-Parish Nurse Mtg 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:45 PM-Choir practice	15 9:30 AM- Quilters	16
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 6:45 PM-Choir practice	22 9:30 AM- Quilters	23
24 10:00 AM-Worship 11:00 AM-BP Check	25 10:30 AM-AI-Anon 1:00 PM-WELCA Board 5:30 PM Movie Night	26 10:30 AM-Barbershop Quartet 1:00 PM-Barbershop	27	28 5:30 PM-AA Group 6:45 PM-Choir practice	29 9:30 AM- Quilters	30

