### REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH LCMS



# MARCH 2022 PUBLICATION VOLUME 15 ISSUE 3

# Redeemer <u>Reflection</u> Newsletter

## Loving People To Christ

Redeemer Lutheran Church 3637 Spring Arbor Road, Jackson, MI 49201 Phone: 517-750-3100 Fax: 517-750-4590 Email: office@redeemerjackson.org Visit our website at: www.redeemerjackson.org

# REFLECTION

#### **SILENCE**

by Pastor Zach Holdorf

One of my favorite hymns is "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence." The first verse states, "Let all mortal flesh keep silence and with fear and trembling stand; ponder nothing earthly-minded, for with blessing in His hand Christ, our God, to earth descending, comes our homage to command." When I

sing this hymn, I can't help but think of Isaiah the Prophet, especially in Isaiah 6:5, when He stands before God and says, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" Isaiah stands with fear and trembling. He recognizes and confesses his sin and unworthiness to stand before Holy, Almighty God.

This Lenten season, we gather before God and once again take stock of our own sinfulness. We too should be like Isaiah. We all are sinful and unclean. We do not deserve to enter the presence of God. In fact, we deserve eternal condemnation. Knowing this, we ought to take seriously our sins to the point that we can't help but confess immediately and turn from them in repentance.



The hymn reminds us that "for with blessing in His hand, Christ, our God to earth descending." For Isaiah, the Lord sent the Seraphim to the altar to grab a coal. It then flew to Isaiah and touched his lips. God forgave his sins and then sent him out to be prophet to God's people. For us, Christ our Lord stepped from His throne, took on flesh, suffered, was

crucified, died, and was buried, so that our sins are forgiven. Because of Christ, and by His



work, we now can without fear and trembling, but with rejoicing and praise, come into the presence of God and in glory, dwell with Him for all eternity.



#### MARCH BIRTHDAYS

#### **TOPIC FOR APRIL**

Through the *Redeemer Reflection* newsletter, our goal is to share what we

have done, or are doing, to reflect Jesus in our personal lives, as well as in our community, and the world around us. The writing prompt for April is *Mercy*.

Mercy is rare and special in this day and age. Tik Tok and other online presences focus on the "look at me" attitude so prevalent today. But is this what Jesus modeled? How often do we see our Lord in Scripture working and striving to draw attention to Himself? Not very often. He says, "Come to Me," for help, but never "Look at Me" because I'm handsome or talented. We see Him give compassionate care and mercy, often asking those around Him *NOT* to tell anyone.

Even after the first sin and the consequences of that, God made merciful plans for the future of humanity with ultimate redemption and salvation. What a great God we have!

Send comments, articles, information and/or photos by the 15th of each month, to <u>bennitt49@yahoo.com</u>, to be included in the following month's newsletter. All submissions are appreciated and prayerfully considered.



Our Faith Family wants to know how we can help you and your family. As our community, you are an important part of *our* family. Join us any or every

March Newsletter

Sunday for worship, either online at redeemerjackson.org/worship or in person at 3637 Spring Arbor Road in Jackson, Michigan. Or call us for more information at 517-750-3100 if we can be of help or if you have questions.

#### **REDEEMER QUILTERS**

by Donna Zastrow

The Redeemer Quilting Group had a terrifically productive year in 2021. We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., in the Music Room in the lower level of our church. We are a small group of six people right now and can always use more helpers. If you like to sew—even if you haven't quilted before—we would love to have you join us.

We have completed 50 quilts over



the last year, donating 25 to Lutheran World Relief, with the rest going to local charities in Jackson; such as Soar, Interfaith

Shelter, and My Place. Come be a part of this fun and purposeful outreach ministry here at Redeemer.

#### SILENCE

by Peggy Bennitt

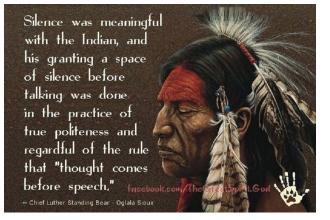
Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding. Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.

Proverbs 17:27-28 (ESV)

Too often our attention is grabbed by loud talk, flashy ads, sound bites, and amateur self-promotion. Silence is a form of wisdom often underappreciated in this present world. "*Let the wise listen and add to their learning*," is a Proverb often ignored. Silence (and listening) is a communication skill that was honored in ages past; a sign of respect and consideration, a valued part of discussion and counsel.

The Native American Lakota culture recalled by Ella Deloria, shows this in actuality: "We Indians know about silence. We aren't afraid of it," she states. "In fact, to us it is more powerful than words. Our elders were schooled in the ways of silence, and they passed that along to us. Watch, listen, and then act... This is the way to live. Watch the animals to see how they care for their young... Always watch first, with a still heart and mind, then you will learn. When you have watched enough, *then* you can act."

Good advice from an ancient culture.

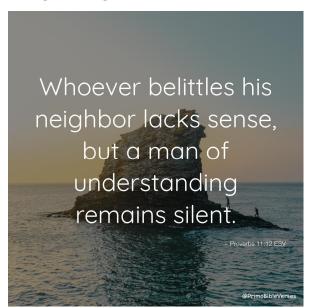


Many people in our country struggle with silence. Silence often makes us uncomfortable. Americans seem to think that *quiet* is an enemy to conquer. If we don't jump in with our opinion, others might think less of us or assume that we don't know the answer. Then we'll look foolish. Often we're more concerned with what people think of us than whether or not our comments are appropriate/necessary or even meaningful to the discussion. Taking time to think through and weigh the pros and cons of an argument before speaking, seems to be a lost art. We could take lessons in how to use silence effectively from other cultures around us.

"In many Asian countries, it is considered polite to pause for a few seconds [or more] before answering a question to show that you have reflected upon the question and your response, thus demonstrating sufficient gravitas" [gravity or serious thought]. https://www.rw-3.com/blog/culturalimplications-of-silence

Silence acknowledges the importance of another's thoughts and opinions, and respects them as being special and valuable. When we rush in to fill a conversational gap with unimportant chatter, we invalidate the emotions and take away the value of the communication. If we don't allow silence during our dialogues, we remove a key thought-processing opportunity for problem solving and the possibility of positive resolutions.

In Stephen Minister training, we acquired skills in active listening and in being comfortable with silence. Understanding the value of silence in any conversation is priceless, and if we are serious about caring for others, being silent allows others to think through how to answer a question while still guarding confidential information.



The old adage "Silence is golden" supports the value of silence in our interactions with others. Through our silences, we show respect and assign value to the thoughts and emotional processes that others must struggle through to reach mature prospective in any given position.

"...when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent."

Proverbs 17: 28b (ESV)

#### COFFEE WITH PASTOR

Come join Pastor Zach for a cup of coffee, conversation, and a



- 4 -

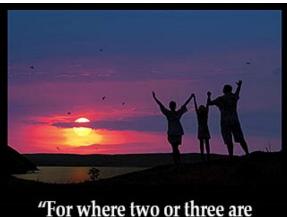
study of God's Word. This informal gathering will allow for the opportunity to pick Pastor's brain pertaining to questions you may have about life or the Scriptures, to have fellowship with others, and to grow in God's Word. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Zach at

pastor@redeemerjackson.org.

**When:** Thursday mornings during March, April, and May, beginning March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Location: Library

Time: 10 a.m.



gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

#### A NESESSARY QUIET

by Craig Britton, Director of Ministries

"My soul waits in silence for God only; from Him is my salvation. He only is my Rock and my Salvation, my Stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken." ~ King David There is a time to shut out all the world's noise. Closing the door is a

good thing now and then. And not just the door, but the noise that swirls about outside and even inside the door. Voices. music, opinionmakers.



"influencers," Kings and Presidents, all take way too much of the space in my mental ears as well as my actual ones. How about you?

King David was in trouble when he penned the words of Psalm 62. Many scholars believe he wrote this psalm when his very own son Absalom was "gunning" for his throne. Now kings throughout history have always dealt with intrigue, the rebellion of sectors of their people, and even family issues. In this instance, it was a combination of all of those and more. All rolled into one assault. But David was a big boy now and had lived through a great deal in his life. You'd think perhaps just one more cycle of dysfunction and threat wouldn't bother the seasoned leader. But if the turmoil was coming here from his own flesh and blood, and there's good reason to think it was, the pain was immense.

How is your life and mine by comparison? Now there is no doubt that you and I have also had our share of difficulty, challenge, and perhaps real and debilitating pain. And if it's of the emotional variety, well, that can be the worst. If you are familiar with the Bible, and the life of David, you realize he wasn't always the king of a great nation. He didn't always have the burdens of leadership upon his shoulders. And when you and I look in the mirror, most likely we have had the



same ups and downs of responsibility, and then perhaps, easier moments. We're not leaders of nations, but our tasks take on the same weight at times. Because they're ours.

Lesson time. As you step off in reading Psalm 62, what is the lesson we learn from David, the king? Well, there's two: First, everything is spiritual. By that I mean that there is nothing allowed in your life and mine, by our Creator, that isn't supposed to have Him along for the entire ride. We belong to Him and so our lives matter. To Him. And second is this: He wants and expects that we would point our minds and hearts heavenward to gain help, perspective, and yes, even salvation. God has made (past tense) all things right in His Son's life, death, and resurrection. You read that right: "has made." Now, it hasn't been fully

disclosed to us yet. But everything is coming together.

All of that to point to David's posture before God in his troubles. His heart posture, that is. And it is silence. And we see that twice in the Psalm. (cf. vv.1, 5). David knows, or better, has learned, the power and necessity of silence. And during this conflict, David seeks His God with silence as his blanket. And while the psalm doesn't give us specific instruction to do the same, the implication is present. So, are you struggling? Are you "being pursued"? Does someone want what you have? Follow David's lead and get silent before your God. Not to hear some inner voice. NO! Open the sure Word we already possess. Find Him there, for His Word is truth. And the Scriptures contain the sure Word of the Lord. The Lord of David. Your Lord and mine.

Shhhhh! Open the book and get reacquainted with the God who is our salvation. I will too.







#### 😉 Bible Study Classes: Ongoing

Sunday School, Youth, and Adult Classes: Sundays at 9:15 a.m. in the Lower Level.

#### 😉 Wednesday, March 2: Ash

*Wednesday Service* at 6:30 p.m. With Soup Supper at 5:30 p.m., preceding the service. Soup Suppers and Lenten services will continue on Wednesdays until Holy Week, which begins on April 10 with Palm Sunday.

Content of the second s

Thursday, March 3: Chancel will meet at 4:30 p.m. Anyone interested in caring for the altar area is welcome to join us in serving as Chancel members. Come to the meeting to find out more about this rewarding service ministry opportunity. All are welcome!

Content of the second s

Saturday, March 26: *Mobile Food Pantry at Trinity.* From 10:00-11:30 a.m. This is an ongoing event on the fourth Saturday of each month.

Redeemer partners with Trinity in this outreach to serve the community. We need and ask volunteers to **be available from 9:00 a.m. until noon**.

#### A WINTER PRAYER



God of days, months, and seasons, thank You for this time deep in winter when, after the excitement of holidays, we settle back into our routines and relish the quiet. Thank You that right in the heart of this season we take time to celebrate what is at the heart of every love-filled relationship: Your love. Help us keep warm with the love that fills our families and friendships. Amen.

#### BEYOND THE WALLS WITH JESUS, REVISITED

by Peggy Bennitt

The theological conference is over for another year. Did you get to go? My husband and I participated via livestreaming, which was wonderful for us; we didn't have to go out in the cold or leave our warm living room. And, it was free, simply by registering and getting a link. What a blessing!

Through the conference, we were reminded that we are part of this world, having dual citizenship (here and in "the heavenlies") and here for a purpose, not above or better than the world, but ready to go with Jesus and share His honor and glory beyond the walls.

The eye-opening straight-talk about both cultural and social concerns addressed was phenomenal! The reminder that we are IN THIS World for God's sake and to witness for Him to this world, which is ours to care for until we're called Home, was key. We're all in this together. Caring for those we live with and interact with on a daily basis may be the only example of Jesus they ever encounter. So how do we make our time here count for Jesus?

Dr. Joel Lehenbauer talked about 1 Peter as a complete guide to the Christian life, and living holy and hopeful lives for Jesus on the "worldly front" "that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven." We are called "a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people" in Christ (1 Peter 2:9, KJV). We need to embrace this identity of being "strange and aliens" because we **are** "a peculiar people" in Christ. We are not to



be proud of being strange, but instead proud of Christ Who is our Lord.

Dr. Ted Hopkins spoke of "being strangers here" too, but stressed our **NOT** inflating the church over the world, as if we as Christians are better than others. He called that **Sacred Inflation**, where the church is considered sacred and the world profane. This is **NOT** what Jesus is about.

What a wake-up call it was to be given facts for navigating the many



landmines that are being placed all around the religious community through laws and compromises in moral interpretation and ethical parameters in our court systems.

Protection of and reinterpretation of personal rights now may jeopardize belief systems, medical sanctions, and humanitarian laws. We need to be aware of these ongoing movements in order to protect our faith and belief system from being compromised or even taken from us. That's a new reality for most of us, something we've always just taken for granted.

"America is becoming more openly and happily secular—a greater rift between church and the world." The church needs to be careful not to lose Christ to politics. The *Disappearing Church* is more about the culture than the church itself. "Let's not obscure Christ to elevate the church. Trust God to make the church what *He* has planned. We need Jesus, and Him alone: A humble Servant but also, God Almighty. **Only God builds the church!**"



Gregory S. Baylor, Alliance Defending Freedom lawyer, gave information to help us understand and plan for many of the difficulties and obstacles that are already being presented in the court systems concerning \*LGBTQIA+, SOGIE, and other gender issues. These attempts to change laws or make new ones to redefine language considered discriminatory in laws already passed, can and have affected religious freedoms and morality definitions already.

\*Activists and members of the queer community have since come together to form the current acronym, "LGBTQIA+." This denotation includes space for those identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (and in some cases, "questioning"), intersex, asexual (and sometimes "ally"), and the "+" is for a plethora of other orientations and identities.

Again, we are in this world, so we need to know the realities of life and laws around us. We cannot be foolish and ignore the unhealthy cultural trends that are a phenomenon that is increasing exponentially. By being aware and keeping informed, we arm ourselves against the powers of darkness that surround us. None of this is a surprise to our God, and He is still in charge here.

With Jesus Beyond the Walls, Dr. Dale Meyer brought us full circle to the foundation of our church and theology for everyday life: "Our Lord is over everything!" If we keep this as our

mantra of faith, we can trust that our spiritual compass is true. "Cultural deceits are Satan's work." Deceptions and lies are his livelihood.





"We (LCMS) need to do a better job of presenting Jesus to the world...we need to present Jesus as HERE and NOW! We need to make Jesus REAL to everyone we know," not just as an historical figure from thousands of years ago.

God created the visible and invisible. We live in the visible world, but He is here with us—*invisible*! Heaven is not far, far away, but is here right now, invisible. The HOPE mentioned in 1 Peter is not just the resurrection, but the revelation of Jesus in glory!

The Theological Conference is over for another year. If you missed it this year, consider putting it on your calendar for next February, and consider livestreaming it if you don't want to go out in the cold. A dose of reality with a fresh breath of



encouragement is always a good thing in February. It was an enlightening experience for my husband and me, and we plan to attend again next year, so we stay attuned with the world we live in **and** the one that comes next.

If you would like to see what you missed this year, it's not too late. The Theological Conference is available online and

can be accessed at:

https://michigandistrict.org/resources/ theological-conference-2022-beyondthe-walls-with-jesus/

Get a fresh breath of faith, reality, and encouragement whenever it is convenient for you.



#### THROUGH THEIR EYES

Something special and different is coming in March. Some of you have already guessed that it's Lent. And, you'd be partially right. But there's more. During the Lenten season, all our senses and feelings are awakened and called into action in various ways and degrees, culminating in Holy Week with all of its sorrows and ultimate joy.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus told His disciples to "...keep watch with me..."

The Lenten messages will let us see the Passion of Lent through the eyes of various historical figures of the Christian faith. Please join us in the journey.

March Newsletter



#### CHURCH RECORDS UPDATE

by Heidi Gannon, Church Office Manager

**HELP!** We are updating our records and we need your help!

Due to newer and more user-friendly software, and the fact that our basic congregational membership information has *NOT* been updated in several decades, we are asking each family to fill out a short questionnaire of basic current information that will help the office and staff better serve you and your families.

Things get overlooked when life gets hectic, and the church is not always the first

notification you make in an emergency. We get that! But we want to be available to serve you in all situations



and we cannot do this if we don't have basic contact information, as well as family names, and dates of important life events. We will hand out (and mail) an envelope with an enclosed one-page questionnaire to each family. Please accurately fill out your current information and return it as soon as possible.



Our Elders use this information to make caring calls or emergency response when needed, and the office uses it to send important church communications, such as event cancellations or service changes. This information also helps us provide necessary required statistics to the Michigan District, and can be used when planning activities as well. Redeemer cares, and Pastor and our staff need your family's information so that we can serve you better, and improve our ability to stay in touch with you and your needs without being intrusive.

Please fill out your Information Update Request Form as soon as you receive it. Fill out as much information as possible on this form, even if you think the church already has current information.

Solution When the Information Update Request Form is complete and ready to be turned in, please also submit a current family photo to be used in our church directory. It would be a huge help if you could submit your family photo via email to:

#### office@redeemerjackson.org, but if

that isn't possible, you're welcome

to turn in a physical photo with your completed form.

Solution for the series of the



available, to be determined at a later date. We **are not** hiring a company to take photos; this will be done in house, strictly for use in our photo directory. Dates will be determined and announced after we are able to assess the number of families that will need photos taken.

Please return the Information Update Request Form and your current family photo to: Redeemer Lutheran Church, Office Manager, Heidi Gannon, when complete. Please return before April 10, 2022.

The sooner we have everyone's information, the sooner it will be possible to incorporate it all into a much needed directory format to be printed and made available to our church family. We're counting on you to help us get this done as soon as possible.

#### LIBRARY MEDIA MUDDLE

Something has disappeared from our church library and we may have missed it because of the jumble and confusion in there. Since our youth leader/librarian relocated, no one has taken on the responsibility of restocking books and keeping the card files organized in our library. It is not a difficult job, nor does it take a lot of time when it is done in a timely manner. But it's been over a vear since books and videos have been carded and reshelved, and the result is a hodgepodge of books and other media stacked helter-skelter wherever there is an empty spot.

If you enjoy books and movies, this ministry area might be a good fit for you. If you enjoy making order out of chaos, this may be a challenge you'd like to take on. Before the pandemic, Redeemer's library was often used by book lovers and movie buffs alike. As we move toward normalizing our church environment once again, making our media area/resource center/library more user-friendly would be a step toward getting resources available to those who will use and enjoy them.

This project could be taken on by a

family, a Bible study group, one person, or a group of friends



taking turns to organize and reshelf items. A little loving care can go a long

way to bring order to chaos. Check it out and see if this is a ministry that would be fun and rewarding for you. Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him.

Psalm 34:8



#### **SOUP SUPPERS**

Ash Wednesday is March 2 and the Lenten season will be officially under way. Our **soup suppers will be served at 5:30 p.m.** before each Lenten service starting with Ash Wednesday.

The Lenten services will be held each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. and continue through April 7, which will be our last soup supper and final Lenten service. Holy Week begins on April 10 with Palm Sunday, culminating in the celebration of Resurrection Sunday, or Easter, on April 17.

If you wish to provide soups for one of the Lenten meals, please sign up on the board provided in the narthex. We need at least three large pots of soup for each soup supper, as well as soup crackers and/or breads for each meal.

Soup suppers are a great opportunity for fellowship and a meal shared with your Redeemer family prior to worshiping together. HOLY WEEK

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

#### **†** April 10 Palm Sunday

Worship Services: 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School & Bible Studies: 9:15-10:15 a.m.

#### **†** April 14 Maundy Thursday

Worship Service: 6:30 p.m.

#### **†** April 15 Good Friday

Worship Services: Noon and 6:30 p.m.

#### **†** April 17 Easter Sunday

Worship Services: 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Easter Breakfast between services!



- 13 -

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
March 20	22	1 Hour of Prayer— Chapel 7:15 a.m. Adult Choir 6:30 p.m. Handbells 7:30 p.m. C—Denotes Communion	2 Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m. Soup Supper 5:15 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service 6:30 p.m. ASH Wednesday	3 Coffee With Pastor, Questions on Life & Scripture 10:00 a.m. Chancel 4:30 p.m.	4	5
6 Divine Service 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children- Bible Classes 9:15-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service 10:30 a.m.	7 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	8 Hour of Prayer— Chapel 7:15 a.m. Adult Choir 6:30 p.m. Handbells 7:30 p.m.	9 Quilters 9:00 a.m12:00 p.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m. Soup Supper 5:15 p.m. Lenten Service 6:30 p.m.	10 <i>Coffee With Pastor,</i> Questions on Life & Scripture 10:00 a.m.	11	12
13 Divine Service-C 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children- Bible Classes 9:15-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service-C 10:30 a.m.	14 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	15 Hour of Prayer Chapel 7:15 a.m. Adult Choir 6:30 p.m. Handbells 7:30 p.m. NEWSLETTER	16 Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m. Soup Supper 5:15 p.m. Lenten Service 6:30 p.m.	17 Coffee With Pastor, Questions on Life & Scripture 10:00 a.m. LWML-Women of Redeemer 10:00 a.m. St. Patrick's Day	18	19
20 Divine Service 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children- Bible Classes 9:15-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service 10:30 a.m.	21 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	22 Hour of Prayer Chapel 7:15 a.m. Adult Choir 6:30 p.m. Handbells 7:30 p.m.	23 Quilters 9:00 a.m12:00 p.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m. Soup Supper 5:15 p.m. Lenten Service 6:30 p.m.	24 <i>Coffee With Pastor,</i> Questions on Life & Scripture 10:00 a.m.	25	26 Mobile Food Pantry @ Trinity 10:00-11:30 a.m. Need Volunteers from 9 'til Noon
27 Divine Service-C 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children- Bible Classes 9:15-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service-C 10:30 a.m.	28 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	29 Hour of Prayer Chapel 7:15 a.m. Adult Choir 6:30 p.m. Handbells 7:30 p.m.	30 Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Ganton-S. A. 2:00 p.m. Soup Supper 5:15 p.m. Lenten Service 6:30 p.m.	31 <i>Coffee With Pastor,</i> Questions on Life & Scripture 10:00 a.m.		