

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
LCMS

VALUE



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VOLUME 13 ISSUE 11

Redeemer **Reflection** Newsletter

Loving People To Christ

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REDEEMER REFLECTION

*From the Intentional
Interim Pastor's
Desk...*

VALUE

by Reverend Carl Bassett,
Intentional Interim Pastor

*The Son of Man did not
come to be served,
but to serve, and to give
His life a ransom for
many.*

Matthew 20:28

Dear Family,

Once again, we find ourselves just weeks away from celebrating Thanksgiving! Folks, we have so much to be thankful for even in this seemingly unending age of COVID-19. Despite all the negative things that have happened here in 2020, the Word draws us back to the truth that God inspired St. Matthew to write: *"Christ gave His life for us as a ransom..."*

Why in the world would He do that for the likes of me and you? I simply can't comprehend it, as unworthy as I am, but I am so glad, so thankful that he did!! But still, why am I so *valuable* to God that He would go through all the humiliation, the shame, the Cross, the suffering, the incredibly painful death?



Let's ponder that as we express our thanks not only one day this month, but every day, every moment of our lives!

NOW HEAR THIS:

You are *extremely valuable* to God! Think about it: The God of the Universe was so unsatisfied with having a separated life from you because of your sins that He sent His only Son to die...just so that YOU could

be restored to Him! It's an awesome thought that takes much time and meditation to actually wrap your mind and heart around it. But it is true!

You know, so many "religions" today teach us that since we are not worthy, we have to somehow do something to "get our act together" to be able to receive mercy and love from God. But that's not the case! Before the world was saved, before any person could get himself together (as if that would've been possible anyway), Jesus came and died for all mankind. This thought can bring such relief to your soul because you can know that RIGHT NOW, you are enough... you are truly *valuable* to our Heavenly Father! You will never be more worthy and deserving of His love—once you develop more spiritual maturity, clean up your life, give more to the church—

The good news is that you are enough today. Just as you are! Folks, Jesus died for you before you did anything for Him, and your **value** to



Him does not depend on anything you will ever do, say, or

achieve in the future!

God paid a huge price for you and for me. It's important to remind ourselves of this on a regular basis. The spirit of the world relentlessly impresses on us that we have to be "as good as..." or "as successful as..." or "as pretty as..." It's a ploy of the enemy, Satan, to keep us frustrated and feeling like we will never measure up to a standard that can never be attained.

God be praised! HE is not asking YOU to measure up to anything. Just be you! With a humble and repentant heart, embrace and accept who you are today. Sure, we all want to move forward and "be better." Just make sure the image you are reaching for is *who you are in Christ*. There you will find your true **value**. There you will find rest.

Here are some thoughts and promises from our Almighty God that we can "feast" on, not only during this month of Thanksgiving, but also for which we can give thanks for every moment of our lives:

- † **BELIEVE IN HIS AMAZING GRACE**
Meditate on God's love for you. Not for when you fix yourself, but His unconditional love for who you are today. Accept His love and thank God for it.

† **PRAY WITH THANKSGIVING IN YOUR HEART**

"Father, I believe You loved me and came for me, even before I could do anything to deserve it. Thank You for Jesus and the price He paid. I will live giving unending thanks for all that You gave for me, to be a part of Your heart!"

† **DIGEST THESE WORDS OF OUR LORD**

"But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, 'Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.' Then he said to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.' And Jesus said to him, 'Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'" (Luke 23:40-43)

"Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more **value** than many sparrows." (Matthew 10:27-31)

Oh, Give thanks to the Lord for He **IS** good, and His mercy endures forever!

Have a blessed month for the Lord!
Peace, in Christ our Savior,

Pastor Bassett



NOVEMBER

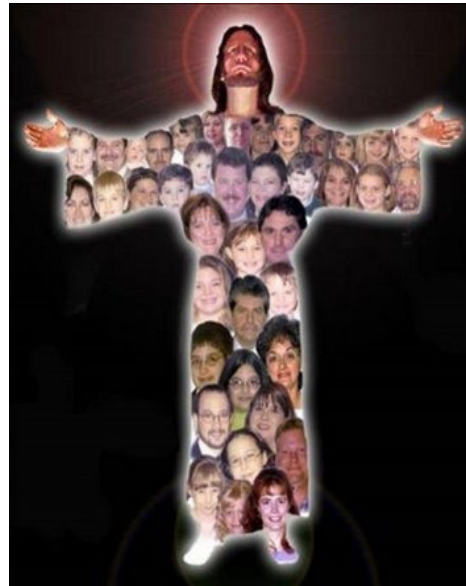
Lori Zeidan	11/01
Kirsten Mogle	11/06
Dean Potter	11/06
Leah Anderson	11/07
Richard Kline	11/07
Tony Farley	11/09
Kristofer Herrick	11/12
Tracy Delbridge	11/14
Brad Wendt	11/15
Bill Poland	11/15
Claudina Kestner	11/18
Jacob Kane	11/20
Duane Coon	11/21
Don Curl	11/21
Mary Biegner	11/24
Sherry Hood	11/25
Jon Bahr	11/27

VALUING LIFE

by Kimber Walsh, Family Life Educator

As Christians, we say we value life because the value of life is ascribed to each of us by our Creator. There are stages of life that we all rally around and value in a collective way; take the pre-born, for example. Christians picket and pray to protect the life of the pre-born, as well we should, but my thoughts lately have been on how we value life in other stages and other circumstances.

Maybe valuing life looks like offering childcare or cooking a meal for a single parent without question of how they became a single parent in the first place. Maybe valuing life looks like making regular phone calls to check in on a senior who is lacking caring support. Maybe valuing life is allowing a professional to work flex-time or allowing them to have their little one sit on their lap for a meeting without giving them side-eye. Maybe valuing life is being very mindful about how you talk about people who think differently



than you do—inviting them into conversations instead of saying ‘don’t talk to me if you don’t agree’—welcoming all perspectives instead of squelching any perspectives that don’t

perfectly align with your own, and

wishing them the best possible outcome instead of harm or death because they aren't on your side. (I am just as surprised as you are that this needed to be said.)

Just maybe, valuing life is treating each person, regardless of opinion or life decisions or history, or any other earthly qualifiers, as a beloved image-bearer of God because that is exactly what they are (Genesis 1:26-27). Each one has inherent value because the Creator of the Universe made them to have value. No sin, no misfortune, no belief can take that value away.

SERVICE SCHEDULE

2 SERVICES AGAIN

Due to COVID-19, anyone planning to attend in-person worship services on Sundays at Redeemer **must sign up** online or through the church office.

We again have two services at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., with one weekly archived service available on Monday, through our website at redeemerjackson.org. Redeemer Lutheran Church is working diligently to provide each person in attendance with a safe and healthy environment in which to worship. Please continue to **sign up the week before you plan to attend a worship service**. If the service is full, please sign up for the next service with available seating. Sign up online. You can also reserve seating by calling the church office at 517-750-3100.

- Seating is limited to 65 people at each service.
- Pews will be taped off to allow for 6 feet of distancing per family grouping.

To encourage safe practices within our worship services and facility and to limit the spread of COVID-19, Redeemer Lutheran Church encourages:

- The wearing of a face mask is required to protect all in attendance. Please bring your own face mask.
- If you have come in contact with an individual with COVID-19, please refrain from attending services for 12 days.
- If you are ill or have a temperature above 99.5 degrees, please refrain from attending services.
- Before and after each service, high volume/touch areas are cleaned and disinfected: especially door handles, countertops, elevator buttons, pew backs, bathrooms, and other public spaces.



Please note: as in any publicly accessible facility outside of Redeemer Lutheran Church, a 100% COVID-19 free environment cannot be guaranteed.

Communion is celebrated on the second, fourth, and fifth Sundays of each month at all services.

SUNDAY SERVICES LIVE-STREAMED EVERY SUNDAY

Redeemer Lutheran Church now offers live-streamed Sunday services each week at 10:30 a.m. View them online through the **Worship Tab** on our website.

MOBILE FOOD PANTRY AND GIVEAWAY

The former Community Care Day in partnership with Trinity Lutheran Church over the past few years has shifted into a monthly event. It will now be a Mobile Food Pantry, **and** each month we'll have an additional giveaway item such as **mittens and gloves in November**. If you'd like to volunteer to get involved with these fourth-Saturday-of-the-month opportunities to serve our community, please contact the office at 517-750-3100.

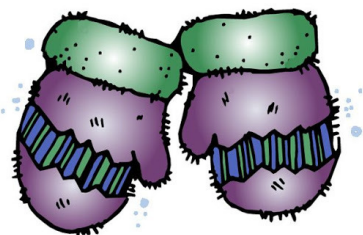
Items needed for giveaways will be communicated each month, and right now **we are beginning to collect winter items for our upcoming giveaways—gloves, mittens, hats, and scarves in all sizes can be put in the bin in the narthex.**

NOVEMBER'S EXTRA GIVE-AWAY ITEM:

Mittens and gloves!



And we have no inventory! Donations of any and all sizes are welcome!



We're also taking hats and scarves for our January giveaway.

Thank you all for being so generous during these unusual times.

VALUE

by Peggy Bennitt

⁴⁵ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, ⁴⁶ who, when he had found one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Matthew 13:45-46

What is your “pearl of great value”? Would you be willing to give up all that you own to have it?

During this pandemic, I have thought a lot about this very thing. As my husband and I both try to make intelligent decisions about “social-distancing” and “self-isolating,” wearing masks and disinfecting items that could have been exposed to the virus, we struggle with these questions. What is worth enough to us that we will set aside what we want personally, for what will be best for other people we care about? This is a harder question than it first appears.

Our son and granddaughters from Atlanta have been self-quarantined since February, the beginning of the pandemic. Mind you, this family consists of: a second grader, a fourth grader, and two career people who are now both trying to do their jobs from home. Enter: virtual internet schooling, parents working online from home, groceries and meals delivered via Amazon or Grub Hub, ZOOM schooling, meetings, and teaching. And this is just the tip of the iceberg that COVID has frozen families with.

How many of you are dealing with some, or all, of these same things? What a lot to deal with, and new decisions to make every day as more

complications are added, with doctor's appointments, virtual homework assignments, emails from teachers, and chats with administrators or tutors.

Normal is not easy to describe anymore.

With our son and granddaughters being with us for the past couple of weeks, our sedate, comfortable life has been shaken up into a lovely chaos that is challenging us to look closely at what is of value to us. What is our "Pearl of great value?" Family, as always, jumps to the forefront. Family is our support system, our foundation, our safe haven in a world we hardly recognize anymore. And bracing this bedrock of family, we find our Lord and God as the Foundation for our family. How wonderful to discover that this Foundation is the cement that makes us strong and helps us meet the challenges that seem to pop up daily.

We're finding that our Lord has met every need, given us the security to face each new challenge, and the strength to stand firmly in our faith as we enjoy this God-given time to be a part of our children's and grandchildren's lives in ways we never envisioned. He is our Pearl of Great Value! And He has scattered smaller pearls throughout our family life as well. What a great God we have!

TOPIC FOR DECEMBER

The writing prompt for December is *Star*. The *Reflection* newsletter is meant to help us reflect and share our Lord through the daily life and actions of His people, particularly with our activities and worship services here at Redeemer.



Does the star point our minds to Christmas? Do our actions or the way we approach holidays, and Christmas in particular, reflect *Him* to those around us? Will neighbors and friends think of Baby Jesus as the Star of Christmas? Is Jesus the Star in our heavens, leading us onward?

Please consider sharing personal stories of how you have seen or felt God working in your life, especially during these unusual circumstances associated with our time of "sheltering-in-place" during this pandemic. Will your family be "doing Christmas" celebrations differently this year? Does the Christmas Star play into this celebration? If so, how?

Articles on the topics of Family, Prayer, and Outreach are always welcome, as are other aspects of the Christian life. Please also share situations that can or have influenced your faith and how we can worship Him with and through our lives in this time and place.

Send articles or information to bennitt49@yahoo.com, by the 15th of each month, to be included in the following month's newsletter. This is the most easily accessed means of getting your information to me

especially now. All submissions are appreciated and prayerfully considered.

“THE VALUE IS DETERMINED BY THE PRICE PAID”

by Craig Britton, Director of Ministries

I can't tell you the book title off the top of my head, but the title above is a quote from one of my favorite and most cited pastor/authors, A.W. Tozer. So much of his writing has influenced my fellowship with God through the years. And I find that as a Lutheran believer, while some finer points of theology don't line up, so much of what he writes I can see coming from Dr. Luther's pen.

The Apostle Paul is, of course, another favorite. And he wrote much on the “what” and “why” of the Savior's work. Paul was convinced that God's love for us was an everlasting love that was somehow fueled by our helpless state—not hindered by it. But in His coming and dying, Jesus would not refashion old treasure. The value was to be found in what Jesus had created us



to be in our original mom and dad, Adam and Eve. And what we had since become due to their hard skid in the garden, left us with only one rescue possible: the making of something new. So, God's love never wavered—it never does—and rescue was always on His mind. Enter the Savior, Jesus.

“From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Cor. 5:16-17). Not enough to refashion, Jesus came to re-create. The value—perhaps better—the “val-YOU” of humanity as a whole and as individuals, brought about the re-creation of the race in the redeeming power of Christ. As Lutherans, we believe in “Universal Atonement.” Not Universalism—the idea that all are saved. But the truth from God's Word that all have been redeemed by Christ and are simply waiting to hear the good news that they may respond with God-given faith. Not all will respond with a “yes,” but God makes the offer to all because He believes we are a treasure. Even as far away as we may be from Him. As far away as we walk from Him. As much as we may blatantly oppose Him. God sees, loves, and comes after His created treasure with the life, death, and resurrection of His Family Treasure, Jesus.

The Father paid for those created in His image and destroyed by sin (and sins), treasure for treasure. To make us new we see, “All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18a). All

this is from God, and why? Because the value is determined by the price paid.



God *only* could have made the payment. From eternity past, God knew it to be true and sent not just his best, but his most precious. Treasure for treasure. Aren't you glad?

SUNDAY SCHOOL IS BACK!

Redeemer has moved forward carefully with a return to a regular two-service Sunday worship schedule that began on October 11. With great caution and heartfelt prayer, we resumed Adult Bible Studies and Children's Sunday School Classes as well. The classes are from 9:30-10:15 a.m. between the two Sunday morning services.

Pastor Bassett's class, *God's Grace/Our Response*, meets in the large **Fellowship Room** on the lower level directly under the sanctuary. Using references from various books of the Bible, Pastor will guide participants to a fresh understanding and appreciation of God's grace to us and what our response should be to this undeserved gift.

Mr. Craig Britton will facilitate the study of 1 John, titled *Love Has a Witness*, which meets in the upper level library. All materials will be provide for both classes, but please bring your own Bibles for personal and environmental safety.

VALUE

Food for Thought:



"Why is God keeping me around?" "The quality of Grandma's life just isn't what it used to be." You may have said similar things. Take note: such statements reflect a view of the value of life based on people's abilities rather than God's ability. Assigning value to human life based on mental or physical capacity can lead to the foreboding conclusion that maybe there is [some] life not worthy of life.

NOT SO! All life is worthy of life because God makes it so. He created life with His hands. You and every life have handmade value! God redeemed life with His outstretched hands. You and every life have been bought with a price! God's power is at work in those He calls His own. You and every child of God are instruments of His power (Jeremiah 1:5). Thank God for the gift of life! Thank God for the value He gives to every life!



The above excerpt is adapted from James I. Lamb, Executive Director, Lutherans for Life, www.lutheransforlife.org, also included in The Lutheran Study Bible.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Divine Service 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children's Bible Classes 9:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service 10:30 a.m. 	2	3 Hour of Prayer— 7:15 a.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	4	5 Chancel 10:00 a.m. Bethel Series 6:30 p.m.	6	7 C—Denotes Communion Services
8 Divine Service—C 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children's Bible Classes 9:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service—C 10:30 a.m.	9	10 Hour of Prayer— 7:15 a.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	11 Quilters 9:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon	12 Bethel Series 6:30 p.m.	13	14
15 Divine Service 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children's Bible Classes 9:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service 10:30 a.m.	16	17 Hour of Prayer— 7:15 a.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	18	19 LWML—Women of Redeemer 10:00 a.m. Bethel Series 6:30 p.m.	20	21
22 Divine Service—C 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children's Bible Classes 9:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service—C 10:30 a.m.	23	24 Hour of Prayer— 7:15 a.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	25 Quilters 9:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon	26  Thanksgiving	27	28 Mobil Food Pantry @ Trinity 10:00-11:30 a.m.
29 Divine Service—C 8:00 a.m. Adult & Children's Bible Classes 9:30 a.m.-10:15 a.m. Contemporary Service—C 10:30 a.m.	30	<div> <div>2020</div> <div>   </div> </div>				