

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
LCMS

WORRY



SEPTEMBER 2020 PUBLICATION
VOLUME 13 ISSUE 9

Redeemer *Reflection* Newsletter

Loving People To Christ

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REDEEMER REFLECTION

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

WORRY

by Reverend Carl Bassett,
Intentional Interim Pastor

²⁵ *"Therefore, do not be
anxious about your life,
what you will eat or what you will
drink, nor about your body, what you
will put on. Is not life more than food,
and the body more than clothing?"*

³⁴ *"Consequently, do not **worry** about
tomorrow, for tomorrow will **worry**
about itself. Each day has enough
trouble of its own."*

Matthew 6:25, 34

Dear Family in Christ,

As I reflected on a Bible passage this week from Matthew Chapter 6, which I was planning on using for a future sermon, I started thinking about the word, "**worry**." Here's what my faithful dictionary (yes, I still use that old-fashioned tool!) said: "as a verb, giving way to anxiety or unease; allow one's mind to dwell on difficulty or troubles...as a noun, a state of anxiety and uncertainty over actual or potential problems." No surprises there!



You know, reading the definition of the word "**worry**" can easily be a catalyst for worrying in and of itself, and brings to mind a wide array of troubling thoughts. Whether it's a concern over a person, a place, or a situation, a worrisome thought can cause our mood to change. Our

body may tense up as our mind is consumed with the problems and laundry lists of things that threaten to overcome us. We burn emotional energy and often trick ourselves into believing we can worry ourselves into a solution.

You see, when I **worry**, I'm initially the type of person who will say to myself, "come what may, I will succeed," but my past experiences usually result in me falling flat on my face in exhaustion from worrying. But, God be praised, I can take a deep breath when I read through verses like the ones found in Matthew 6:25-34!

It's interesting how Jesus starts this passage with a "therefore." I believe this passage exists here for a specific reason, which is to remind His disciples and us that God and His Kingdom are greater than any circumstances we could find ourselves in. And taking our worrisome thoughts captive, by keeping aware of God's existence and promises

through prayer, worship, Bible study, and service, are just a few ways we can stay aware of the reality of God's Kingdom and His awesome presence in our lives.

While there are many spiritual practices that can help lead us into the awareness of God's intimate connection to us, over the years I've found that a good prescription for **worry** has been to meditate on, and even memorize, Scripture. For example, in the first nine verses of chapter 1 in the book of Joshua, God reminds Joshua to be strong and courageous and meditate on His word day and night. Then, God concludes with these words *"I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."* Folks, memorizing these verses in Joshua and reflecting on Jesus' words in Matthew 6, can also help promote an awareness of the Holy Spirit and help reduce the trivial matters in my heart to what they really are: trivial. Being surrounded by the presence of His community allows us to let the trivial *worries* go and let the Holy Spirit's presence free us to live and love on the people around us.

May our prayer during these days of seemingly never-ending anxiety be:

"Gracious and loving God, help me to take my anxious and worrisome thoughts captive and replace them with Your life-giving word. Help me to embrace a strong and courageous life, knowing that Your presence is forever with me. Give me strength and courage to turn to You, knowing that You go with me everywhere. Amen."

Peace and Love in Christ, Our Savior,

Pastor Bassett



Photos by Claudina Kestner

Vacation Bible School this year was a totally new experience for all involved...and it was wonderful!



The Rocky Railway with Jesus in control was all we needed...and our sanctuary and pavilion were transformed into a wonderful trip learning to trust Jesus' power!



God provided us with beautiful weather and great children and helpers who made VBS a fun learning experience for all. Concentrating on all that we can do with the help of Jesus and through His power...we can do everything He gives us to do.



Thank you to Mr. Craig and Ms. Kimber for leadership and guidance in helping

to make this year's VBS a reality. Thank you also to all who helped out and gave of their time and talents to make this year's VBS a blessing to all who came



and participated.

A special thanks to the Brandt and Seidzik families for their decorating talents which amaze us every year. Redeemer is truly blessed and "we get to do this" all for Him!

Never Enough

by Kimber Walsh

"Worrying is like a rocking chair; it gives you something to do, but it doesn't get you anywhere." (Unknown)
If you're anything like me, you can be found vacillating between worry-free and a laundry list of worries on any two given days. The days when I'm tired or stressed or overwhelmed are the days when the list of worries seems longer. But why do we worry?

To be sure, we sometimes worry because it gives us something to do. But in part, it's also our human nature to worry. We misunderstand that God is the owner of everything and we are but His stewards. We misunderstand that God is in control of everything because

we have a false sense of control over things. And our misunderstandings justify our worries, in our minds. "If I can simply achieve a day with 36 extra hours in order to accomplish all the things I need to do, I won't have any more worries," we think. "If people just become moral and make good choices, the worries of the world would be gone," we are sure. But the reality is, we worry because we put greater stock in what we can do than in what God can do. The problem with that is, what we can do is never enough.

Any time we rely only on our own reason, strength, or ability, we **do** indeed have reason to worry! When we rightly put our trust in the One True, Almighty God, we have nothing to worry about!



Don't be afraid to take a big step if one is indicated. You can't cross a chasm in two small jumps.

David Lloyd George



SEPTEMBER

Everitt Bastien	09/03
Monica VanDerWeide	09/04
Tara Kreklau	09/05
Cassandra Lockwood	09/07
Cecil Lanphear	09/08
Steven Rauscher	09/08
Jan Trowbridge (Bastien)	09/09
Katherine Albertson	09/14
Steve Alcenius	09/14
Judy Clouse	09/17
Caleb Bahr	09/18
Cindi (Lucinda) Byrd	09/19
Josh Brandt	09/20
Sue Simonsen	09/22
Carole Varney	09/23
Ronald Kane	09/28
Beverly Wisniach	09/28
Joanna Balcom	09/29
Elizabeth Balcom	09/29
Morgan Brandt	09/29

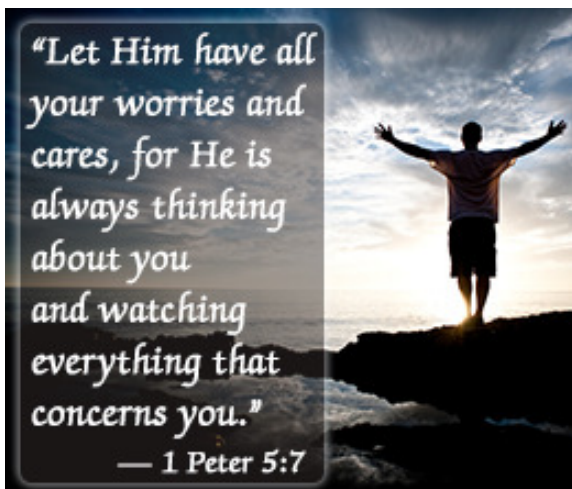


WORRY

by Peggy Bennitt

Is there something worrying you right now? Worried about bills? Or about health issues? How about children or grandchildren; are you worried about them? What about the coming school year? Will COVID-19 delay school starting? Will we be able to handle new changes to how school is done? Can we, as parents, handle both schooling our child(ren) and working from home? What if I have to go back to work outside of the home? Then what? How will we, as a family, be able to cope with all this change? What about all these health threats? Will there ever be a vaccine for the coronavirus?

Afraid of what's coming next and worried about protecting your family without becoming totally paranoid? All this insecurity for the future is scary. What will the "new normal" look like? Too many worries and questions with too few solid answers.



The definition of worry from the Merriam Webster online dictionary (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/worry>) says this: Worry is *mental distress or agitation resulting from concern usually for something impending or anticipated; anxiety.*

Hmmm. So, what does that mean in everyday language? Won't you feel silly if you worry today away and heaven comes first, and tomorrow never does come? Worry's just a waste of today. Basically, worry's just fear over something that might not ever happen. Eighty-five percent of the things we worry about **NEVER** happen. **85%!**

Therefore don't worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:34

When we worry about things that *could or might* happen, it doesn't solve the problem or make the possibility of the problem go away. It just wastes our time and sucks the joy out of the time we have. The time will be gone and we have nothing to show for it. And, the thing we worried about almost never happens, 85—97 % of the time this is true...the **supposed** problem never materializes. Wow!

Not only that, but worry more often than not makes us testy and unkind to those around us, and we hurt others. All for nothing. It's like a double-edged sword, only without a purpose.

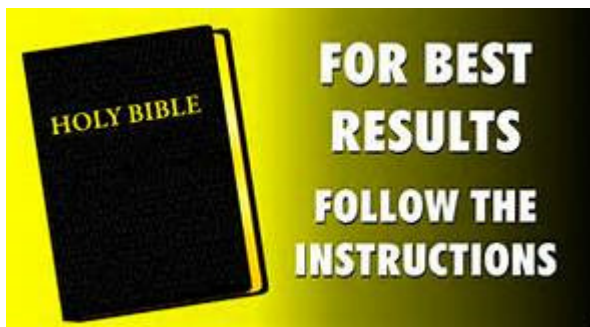
Five hundred years ago, Michel de Montaigne said: My life has been filled with terrible misfortune; most of which never happened.

[And] Now there's a study that proves it.

(<https://donjosephgoewey.com/eighty-five-percent-of-worries-never-happen/>) *This study looked into how many of our imagined calamities never materialize. In this study, subjects were asked to write down their worries over an extended period of time and then identify which of their imagined misfortunes **did not actually happen**.*

Lo and behold, it turns out that 85 percent of what subjects worried about never happened, and with the 15 percent that did happen, 79 percent of subjects discovered either they could handle the difficulty better than expected, or the difficulty taught them a lesson worth learning. This means that 97 percent of what you worry over is not much more than a fearful mind punishing you with exaggerations and misperceptions.

Does God know what He's talking about, or what? Amazing! And why are we constantly surprised by that? God's Word is such a great and truthful instruction book. His Word, the Bible, is



all we need to guide us and keep our faith strong. God and His Word help keep worries at bay. What don't we get about this? *"This is why I tell you: Don't worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn't life more*

than food and the body more than clothing?" Matthew 6:25

~*~

Due to frequently changing health notifications and guidelines, the printed calendar for this month is limited. We pray more events and activities will be forthcoming in September, God willing. Please see our website at redeemerjackson.org for online services and resources, and updates on upcoming activities and services as they become available. *Stay safe in our Lord's hands. May He continue to bless us all!*

~*~

TOPIC FOR OCTOBER

The writing prompt for October is *Recognize*. 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. Do you recognize where God is working in your life? Do your actions or the way you handle circumstances reflect Him to those around you? Will our neighbors and friends recognize us as Christians by the way we live our lives?

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.

Articles on the topics of Family, Prayer, and Outreach are always welcome too, 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. I appreciate and consider all submissions.

PREPARE FOR WHAT’S NEXT

Kristin Rathje, guest writer, shares selections/ excerpts from her Blog, *Next Chapter*; used with permission.
<https://kristinsnextchapter.com/author/krathje66/>

Six years ago, I said goodbye to my classroom in St. Louis. I was depleted and sick, and I was certain that I would never have a classroom again.

I'd been struggling with joint pain, systemic inflammation, and fatigue for a year-and-a-half—I had difficulty making it through a school day, let alone driving home at night. When I arrived home, I



would plunk on the couch or in my bed and accomplish little else until I had to drag myself back to school the next day.

It was a difficult time. Our family had long been experiencing trauma that began with a drastic change in lifestyle caused by a geographical relocation during which my husband went to grad school and I began teaching full time. Our children...felt the firsthand effects of bullying, social class disparity, eating disorder, depression, anxiety, and sexual assault. All the while, I just kept producing lesson plans, grading papers, and bringing my best to the classroom day after day after day.

Finally my body had had enough. If I wouldn't sit down of my own free will and assess the damages, mourn the losses, and begin to soothe the hurts, my body would simply crash. And crash it did.

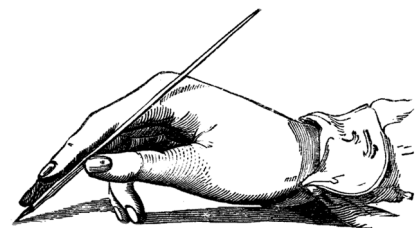
And when, in the midst of that crash, my husband took a new position in Michigan, my medical team suggested that rather than jump right into something else, I should take six months to rest.

Rest. Period.

So I did...

I didn't prepare any lessons or grade any papers, but I did begin to write. It was during that period, six years ago, that I began this blog...

I wrote about my illness, I wrote about coming back to Michigan, I wrote about loss. Many of my posts were a reflection of a renewed commitment to my faith journey, which



had also been relegated to survival mode during what I've come to call the soldiering years.



It was my writing that started the healing...I've written about victories and grief, sorrows and joy.

And all the while I've been healing, and I've been *preparing for what's next*. I've often told my children and my students that all of life is preparing you for what's next. Crawling prepares us for walking;

school (at least in theory) prepares us for work. Warm-ups prepare you for exercise; practicing scales prepares you to make music. All of life's experiences are preparing us for the experiences that are yet to come.



Before we moved to St. Louis, I completed my master's degree in English education, which prepared me to take the position I held at Lutheran North for nine years. Before I met my husband, who had experienced divorce, I had had my own experience as a child of divorce which gave me empathy and

Before we moved to St. Louis, I completed my master's degree in English education, which prepared me to take the position I held at Lutheran North for nine years. Before I met my husband, who had experienced divorce, I had had my own experience as a child of divorce which gave me empathy and

prepared me for my role as a stepmother. God has a way of weaving our life experiences together, like a Master teacher, layering lesson upon lesson so that we are always equipped for what comes next.

* * *

It about killed me to wait six months to find a job, and I will confess that at about month four or five, I took a proofreading job for a guy working on his master's in education. His research resonated with my heart for equity, and I loved speaking into his ideas. The feedback I got from that small job gave me the confidence to promote myself as a private tutor where I supported students who struggled with English—reading, writing, speaking...

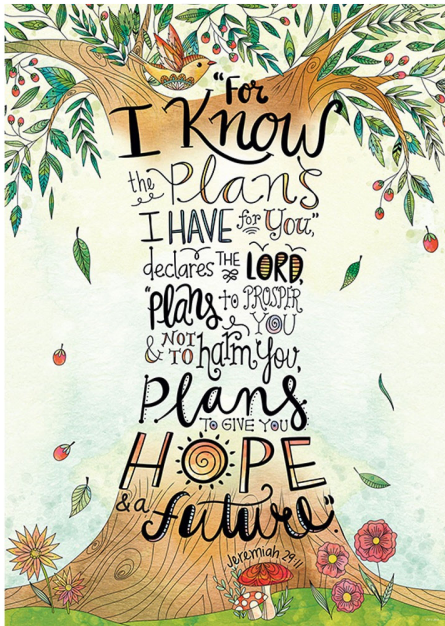


After I'd been tutoring for a while, I randomly found a job posting—to be a “tutor”—that “tutoring” position tutored me. It allowed me to start part-time while I continued to experiment with treatments for... [my] “unspecified autoimmunity.”

...By meeting with students one-on-one, by utilizing a variety of online materials and platforms, by writing instructional plans, by following instructional design, by mentoring other instructors, and by supporting my colleagues, I have been prepared for what's next...

So what's next?

Could it be that God is planning to use everything I've been learning over this six-year period of healing and growth in a position that is focused on educational equity—my long-time passion? Is God that good? He's that good; it's almost as if He'd had it planned the whole time...



WE ARE SO BLESSED!

Do you receive Mr. Craig's tri-weekly devotionals? How about Ms. Kimber's *Lead In* series of family devotions and activities for your home? These are excellent and painstakingly compiled resources to help us in our spiritual growth, especially during this time of sheltering-at-home.

There is something for everyone in these two resources, available through our website at redeemerjackson.org. Age-appropriate Bible studies, songs, and activities give each family/person a

variety to choose what best fits the ages and stages in their home. Pastor Bassett also provides worship services weekly for those of us who are worshipping at home for medical reasons or simply to further ensure the safety of our families. Check out the website for more options for worship and Bible study available online.

Hard copies of the *Portals of Prayer* are available for pickup at the church. These are also available in large print editions. We are blessed with these resources for feeding our faith, so that we too can be a blessing to those around us.

FEAR NOT!

by Diane Siedzik

"Fear is a Liar" Jason Ingram | Jonathan Smith | Zach Williams © Anthems of Hope (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) Be Essential Songs (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) Fellow Ships Music (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) Hickory Bill Doc (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) So Essential Tunes (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) Wisteria Drive (Admin. by Essential Music Publishing LLC) For use solely with the SongSelect® [Terms of Use](http://www.ccli.com). All rights reserved. www.ccli.com. CCLI License # 532625

Worry? Why do we as Christians worry? Worry, to me, is nothing more than fear. What if this? What if that? Oh my, why me?

Did you know that "fear not" is mentioned in the Bible 365 times? One for each day of the year, if you think about it. As Christians, we should not worry or fear anything. Our overwhelming God is in control. "If God is for us, who can stand against us?" (Romans 8:31). If we truly believe in all that God promises us, we should not worry. This pandemic has turned our society into a bunch of people who fear everything; seems more than just the

virus. Read Psalm 9, then read Psalm 103.

Again, I wonder why all this worry and fear? I don't understand. If God is with me, can't He protect me from getting this virus; or if I get it, can't He heal me? If I get it and die, won't I be with Him: saved? After all, He is my Savior! So, again I ask, why do we worry? The devil is the answer. He is a liar and deceiver. He puts fear and worry into us, and I personally choose to trust in my Lord and Savior. He alone knows what the future holds. He wants the best for His people, and knowing this gives us peace and comfort.

There is a Christian song on the radio that is called "Fear is a Liar." Think about these lyrics: "Fear will take your breath, stop you in your steps, rob you of your rest and steal your happiness. Cast your fear to the fire, 'cuz fear, it is a liar." How true.

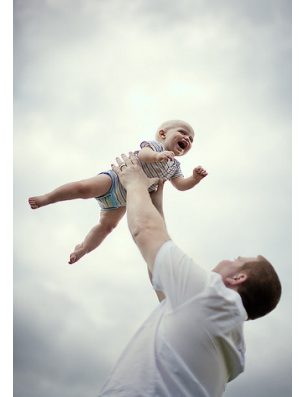
So make sure you TEST positive for faith, Keep your DISTANCE from doubt, and ISOLATE yourself from fear. TRUST in GOD through it all and you will live a much more joyful and peace-filled life. Maybe then we can start to focus on helping others come to know Jesus our Lord and SAVEior, and the eternal life He gives. Then they will have joy and peace in their lives as well. Let's SPREAD *that* virus.

NO WORRIES

by Peggy Bennett

A small child is totally dependent on its parents for everything. It does not doubt that its parents will take care of its needs and has no worries about trusting them in all circumstances. The

child/parent bond is generally accepted as being open and free of doubt...maybe one of God's truest example of pure love that we have in today's world.



This is how our relationship with our Lord *should* look. I'm not sure about you, but I have a long way to go before I reach that "total dependency" with no worries about it. 1 Peter 5:7 is much harder than it sounds. But if we, in fact, will stop trying to fix everything and be carefree



as little children like God tells us to be, God will handle the world around us **and** hold us safely in His hands as He does it. Our job—our part in all this—is to give up our worries, our cares, and give them to Him. Let God be God. Be His child. That's all He wants or expects of us. Seriously, it's that easy. And it's...Just. That. Hard.

Give it up! Give it to Him! Like the Nike slogan says, "Just Do It!"

Don't worry! Be happy!
No Worries!

You've given them all
to Him! Don't Worry! Be
Happy!



THEN I LOOKED AROUND

by Nancy Bryant

I had a problem
It was so deep
I could not eat
I could not sleep. *(Emotional pain)*

Then I looked around:
Even though I felt alone,
I met someone who had no home.

My cup was empty
I had a thirst
My Lord and Savior
Was not placed first. *(Spiritual pain)*

Then I looked around:
And I knelt down at my Lord's feet
After seeing a beggar on the street.

My body hurt
I was in pain
The tears spilled down
Like falling rain. *(Physical pain)*

Then I looked around:
My own discomfort almost ceased to be
When I studied Jesus' face on Calvary.



FORGETTING WHO HE IS

by Craig Britton

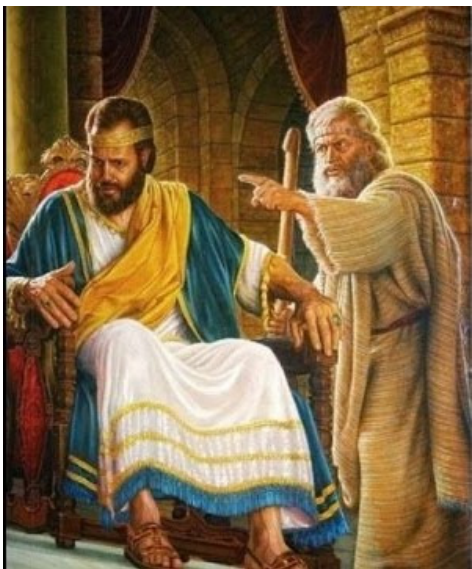
*"The LORD is my light and salvation;
whom shall I fear? The LORD is the
stronghold of my life; of whom shall I
be afraid?"* King David

Night is my most difficult time of day.
Ha! That doesn't make sense. We think
of night and day as separate entities,
but in the Genesis account of creation,
we have a Biblical [account] consisting
of both night and morning (day). And
night comes first. Yes, that's correct.
Unlike the rendering of time that we
live by in the West, the Hebrew
configuration of the day begins where
ours begins to wind down. The
Hebrews had it right. God always ...
ALWAYS sees rest coming first and
work second. And it carries so
beautifully into the consideration of our
salvation. Our rest, then our work.
Maybe even better: Our rest (His work
causing that rest) and then our work.
God never misses a detail, does He?

Back to the top. I am not afraid of the dark, but that is when I am assaulted. Sometimes I am sure it is from the enemy of our souls, but there are plenty of times when my nocturnal discomfort comes from my great weakness, my own inability to remember just who God is.

Funny. I spend the biggest portion of my life studying, digging, and having a wonderful time in the Word of God. And not just for me. But, so I can share the treasures of His Word with any who might listen; in a hospital or hospice room, in someone's home, in a class, or even in the car with my wife. It's a habit. But so much more than a habit. I love it! And much of that time is reminding others along with myself about the character of our God: His power, His compassion, His unstoppable forgiveness, and His promises to care. And perhaps the greatest issue in His care is His constant presence with His children. You and me. We cry "Abba, Father" and He hears every single time.

King David was like we are. Oh, there were times when his life and endeavors



shone like the sun. But more times than not, King David was like us in this: he was a mess. Think over

what we know about him from the pages of the Bible. Adultery, murder, deceit, to be sure, were part of who he was. But "smaller" issues too. David did sweat the small stuff. Well, small in some sense. I've never been a king. But Psalm 27, especially the first lines, gives evidence of a man that knew what it was to be afraid. Yes, David knew what it was to worry. And, I think for David and for us, it would be fair to define worry this way: worry is the response to life of one who knows God, of essentially forgetting just who our God is. We have God for our Father. Jesus made sure we understood that both in how He prayed before His disciples and how He taught us to pray. "Our Father." Wondrous thought.

But David, like you and me, struggled with fear and forgetting. Worry. I'm not sure God is there all the time. Oh, we say we know. But when I worry, when you worry, we are in effect saying, "I'm in this all by myself." One of the things I say to my sons often is this: "You're never alone." They know what dad means. And in their busy, crazy, and now Covid-marked lives, they will respond, "I know, dad." They know they have Someone with them who cares. And He cares for my sons and for all of us infinitely more than we will ever be able to care for each other, as wonderful as that care may be.

Challenges are real. Tragedies make their presence known in life every single day. The wickedness of men is increasingly on display for all of us to see. Jesus said that near the end of time, men's hearts would actually fail them for fear (worry). It is essentially the same thing. God's people forgetting just who their God is.



THE LORD IS MY LIGHT
AND MY SALVATION—
WHOM SHALL I FEAR?

THE LORD IS THE
STRONGHOLD OF MY LIFE—
OF WHOM SHALL I BE AFRAID?

Psalm 27:1 ©2005 Heartlight, Inc. www.heartlight.org

by Claudina Kestner

God doesn't need our good works but our neighbor does, and loving our neighbors includes taking care of their needs. Our congregation, at Redeemer Lutheran Church, was able to do this as we pulled together to work on a service project through Michigan District,



God is always in the details. He provided supplies even when the stores and their warehouses were sold out. He made sure our church was equipped with these supplies and the people to help assemble them. Although we called for help after all three services, we managed to get the 80 buckets assembled before the last service.

We're so grateful for [church family and] friends who are so eager to help! This is our second time helping with this service project. The buckets from the first time were used for the floods that northern Michigan experienced in May.



Thank you again to our family at Redeemer Lutheran Church for your help with this.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 September 2020		1 Hour of Prayer—Chapel 8:00 a.m.	2	3 Chancel Meeting— 10:00 a.m.	4	5
6 Divine Service 8:00 a.m. Praise Service 9:30 a.m. Divine Service 11:00 a.m. C-Communion Service	7	8 Hour of Prayer—Chapel 8:00 a.m.	9 Quilters 9:00 a.m.—Noon	10 LWML—Women of Redeemer Meeting 10:00 a.m.	11	12
13 Divine Service— C 8:00 a.m. Praise Service— C 9:30 a.m. Divine Service— C 11:00 a.m.	14	15 Hour of Prayer—Chapel 8:00 a.m. REFLECTION DEADLINE	16 Ministry Council Meeting 6:30 p.m.	17	18	19
20 Divine Service 8:00 a.m. Praise Service 9:30 a.m. Divine Service 11:00 a.m.	21	22 Hour of Prayer—Chapel 8:00 a.m.	23 Quilters 9:00 a.m.—Noon Leadership Board 6:30 p.m.	24	25	26 LWML—Women of Redeemer Board Meeting 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
27 Divine Service— C 8:00 a.m. Praise Service— C 9:30 a.m. Divine Service— C 11:00 a.m.	28	29 Hour of Prayer—Chapel 8:00 a.m.	30	31		