

Coming Together and Staying Safe

Like people in faith communities around the country, you here at Redeemer have begun asking, "When might we be able to worship together again?"

It has been a long time. And for many of us, it's felt even longer.

As **Congregation Council President Margie Frazier** writes in this issue of *Reflections*, at our teleconference yesterday, Council members began talking about what issues we need to explore and address before we could seriously consider meeting face-to-face for worship.

Of course the primary concern is safety for everyone involved. As businesses in Ohio slowly begin to open up, we will watch carefully to see the choices people make about social distancing, wearing masks, and following guidelines on the numbers of people who can gather in the same place at the same time. We will be guided by the effects this opening has on infection rates.

And we are guided by the words of this May 12 document from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (<u>Considerations for Returning to In-person Worship</u>). I encourage you to read it in its entirety. In terms of the immediate question around the how's and when's of opening, the ELCA calls on congregations to pay close attention to "the guidance and directives of state and local authorities." A key element in the directives from the governor and the director of health in Ohio is the prohibition against gatherings of more than 10 people. From the beginning of the pandemic, these directives from state officials have exempted communities of faith. That being said, I believe strongly public health officials know a lot more than I do about when it is safe for people to gather in good-sized groups.

So at our Council meeting yesterday, I said I could not support any proposal on reopening public worship that allows for more people to gather in one place than public health officials say is safe, even with everyone masked, kept six feet apart, having had their temperature taken, and with all the safeguards listed in the ELCA document. I don't want to invite you back unless I know we as the leaders of this congregation have done everything we can to provide the safety you deserve. Then you can decide whether you feel safe returning.

One of the areas that it is now clear churches must address as we consider coming back together for public worship is the role of congregational speaking and singing. As the above-mentioned ELCA document says, *Singing together, even from a distance, is one of the riskiest behaviors due to the spread of aerosol and droplets that can carry the virus a significant distance and remain suspended in the air. A cloth mask is unlikely to protect you or your neighbor. Similar caution applies to unison speaking, such as reciting the Lord's Prayer and other communal speech. Like singing, playing a wind instrument initiates a spread of aerosol and droplets and poses a strong risk of infection.*

As a congregation that loves to sing – and sings really well – this is a truly sad and sobering reality about this virus. This is only one of many considerations we will have to take into account as we look ahead at "when" and "how" we begin to imagine worshiping together facemask-to-facemask.

Council will continue to monitor closely directives from state and local public health officials, and documents that come from the ELCA, like the excellent paper I've spoken of in this article.

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OUR CONGREGATION

Ministers - All who gather here in the name of Jesus Pastor – Rev. David Shull Office Manager – Becky Trover Custodian – Marshall Edgington Organist/Senior Choir Director-Kathy Rapp Pianist/Chimes Choir Director -Karen Kent

Reflections Editor – Judith Bird

2020 CHURCH COUNCIL

President – Margie Frazier Vice President – Julie Johnson Finance Officer – Secretary – Chad Eberle Worship – Julie Larson Education – Wendy Stoica Outreach – Jon Disbro Member Support – Elyce Herring Property – Sue Yehling Stewardship – Ruth Murray

APPOINTMENTS

Treasurer – Larry Trover Financial Secretary – Brad Phillips

SPECIAL FUNDS TEAM

Michelle Clemence Bruce Collins Dave Engel, Chair Nancy Magargal Jim Riley

SUNDAY SCHOOL Superintendent – Emily Ott <u>REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH</u> 1555 S. James Rd. Columbus 43227 614-237-1263

www.redeemerluth.com



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The Redeemer Community

Healing Prayer While We Are Apart Together

The Healing Prayer Team is hoping to continue Healing Prayer during this time that Redeemer is meeting remotely.

If you have a prayer request, whether "healing" or otherwise, please contact the church office with your name and a good time to reach you by telephone. This wouldn't be a specific time, but rather something like "Tuesday afternoon" or "any morning" or "Friday after 3 p.m." We'll contact a prayor who is available at your convenient time, and they will phone you to pray for and with you.

Send your requests to info@RedeemerLuth.com or phone 614-237-1263.

May Council Meeting Update

Council met on Sunday, May 17 via teleconference.

Giving for April was steady with general offerings totaling \$27, 152. This is \$1,200 greater than April 2019. We were grateful to receive over \$10,000 in special gifts to the Good Samaritan Fund. Council expresses its thanks for the congregation's commitment to the operation of our building and programs during our time physically apart.

Leaders in most every sector in the U.S. have been concerned about the effects of the pandemic on budgets, employment, and longevity. When learning about nonprofit and church organizations being eligible to receive federal Payroll Protection Program dollars, we researched the opportunity and applied. We received a federal Payroll Protection Program loan of \$26,800 to be spent on payroll costs and up to 25 percent on utilities and other qualifying items. We will have careful accounting of costs and be in communication with our nonprofit lender, Illinois Facilities Fund (iff.org). Funds must be spent by early July and may be forgiven if timelines, spending and recordkeeping are met. If parts of the loan are not forgiven, the interest rate per year is 1 percent.

The major point of discussion for May's meeting was how we and the congregation view the possibility of worshipping together again. What would it look like? What steps would we need to take to have a safe environment? Are there more interim steps we can take to provide safe and social time? Our Caring Callers will be asking members some of these questions in the coming days. Council continues to base decisions for Redeemer upon information from the Centers for Disease Control and the Ohio Department of Health for recommendations for safe gatherings. Pastor Dave's message in this newsletter also offers more perspective and information.

Our building team, including our custodian, **Marshall Edgington**, has been busy buffing floors, maintaining alarms, grounds, and organizing storage rooms. Special thanks to **Sue Yehling** and **Michele Disbro**.

Garden planning and planting is in full swing. On April 23 at the first LSS/Mid-Ohio Food Collective distribution, RLC volunteers served 223 households, representing approximately 750 people. A new drive-thru delivery system was efficient and provided safety for visitors and volunteers. The next LSS/Mid-Ohio Food Collective distribution will be **Thursday, May 28**.

Adult Sunday Class Examining 'Apostles' Creed for Today '

We say the words every week in worship: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth ...

Where do these words come from? Why does this statement of faith include what it does, but say nothing about the sacraments, and nothing about what a life of following Jesus looks like in practice? Are there ways earlier Christians might have heard these words that are lost to us now? If we affirm these words in worship, what do we believe we are saying? What are we committing ourselves to? What meanings do these words have for us?

These are the kinds of questions we're exploring in our Sunday Faith Exploration class. The next one is **Sunday, May 24** from 10-11 a.m.



Join the Zoom Meeting ID: 838 4453 5238; Password: 438196. By phone, call 646 876 9923. If you don't have the Zoom app, you can join the meeting by copying and entering the following web address in your browser:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83844535238?pwd=RzFMeGM5WXkvOWxOU3NzV1Arbkkzdz09

You would bless us by your participation in this!

Sunday Worship Available on YouTube

The <u>May 17</u> Sunday worship service is available at <u>https://tinyurl.com/r6mk2xh</u>. For the Sunday Worship Bulletin, go to the Redeemer website at <u>www.RedeemerLuth.com</u> >News, Sermons, Devotions.

We are holding one another in prayer and in spirit as we work through this time. Go in peace, serve the Lord, wash your hands!

Tuesday Bible Study Dives into the Apostle Paul

This <u>**Tuesday, May 19**</u>, the Bible study group here at Redeemer continues its in-depth exploration of Paul's First Letter to the Church in Corinth. In this letter, Paul addresses how communities are formed, what the role of love is in our common life, what it means to be in a body as opposed to just spiritual beings, who Jesus is, what the cross of Jesus is and does, and how to imagine the brand new world he says people are living in here and now.

In other words, a letter Paul wrote around the year 55 talks about issues that Redeemer has to face today if we are to be an active, vital body of Christ today.

If you have some free time on Tuesday afternoons from 1-2:30 p.m., join our community of exploration, honesty, laughter, and prayer. **The Bible study is held via Zoom.** If you'd like to join us, here's the information you'll need to connect:

If you'd like to be part of the Tuesday Bible study on Zoom and have the Zoom app, then enter Zoom and use this information: Meeting ID: 868 0900 3178; Password: 224700. To enter by phone call 646-876-9923 and enter the meeting ID and password.

If you don't have the Zoom app, you should be able to join the meeting by copying and entering the following web address in your browser:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86809003178?pwd=L2hPM2hqTG5zZSszRVhtRThmTEtvQT09 Call Dave Shull at 206-725-3785 if you have any questions.

Upper Cup Group to Gather by Zoom on Wednesday

The Upper Cup group will meet via Zoom on Wednesday from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. If you'd like to be part of the Upper Cup discussion and have the Zoom app, then enter Zoom and use this information: Meeting ID: 810 1117 6684;Password: 029820. To enter by phone call 646-876-9923 and enter the meeting ID and password.

If you don't have the Zoom app, you should be able to join the meeting by copying and entering the following web address in your browser:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81011176684?pwd=Y0JudDRZeVE2VHpxckVRUWgyUUt2QT09

Important Emails

DShull@RedeemerLuth.com – use for communicating directly with Pastor Dave.

<u>Info@RedeemerLuth.com</u> – use for communicating with the office, *Reflections* newsletter, Office Manager Becky Trover, or for general information.

<u>MemberCare@RedeemerLuth.com</u> – use for communicating with the Member Care team about needs for personal ministry such as in-home communion, a home visit, meals, etc.

<u>FinSec@RedeemerLuth.com</u> – use for communicating with **Financial Secretary Brad Phillips**, and for stewardship campaigns.

<u>Itgroup@RedeemerLuth.com</u> – use for communicating with Redeemer's IT Team for items related to the website.



<u>Property@RedeemerLuth.com</u> – use to report items that need repair in the church building. <u>SundaySchool@RedeemerLuth.com</u> – use to offer suggestions for our Sunday School ministry. <u>Transportation@redeemerluth.com</u> – use to request temporary transportation assistance.

Publishing Deadlines for Reflections, Sunday Bulletins

For Reflections

• PLEASE SUBMIT PRIOR TO **5** P.M. ON SUNDAYS.

- Send to info@RedeemerLuth.com and put Reflections in subject line.
- Or leave a note in the *Reflections* mailbox at the top of the stairs outside the church office.

For Sunday Bulletins

The deadline for information to be published in Sunday bulletins is the **Wednesday morning** before. That information can be sent to the above email: just put "Bulletin" in the subject line.

Prayers and Personals

Congratulations to **Kennedi Jacobs**, daughter of **Andy** and **Katie Jacobs**, who graduated from Bexley High School this year! She plans on attending the University of Cincinnati-Blue Ash in the fall.

Members are asked to notify the church office of any graduates in your family so we can recognize them in a future issue of *Reflections*. Just email the information to info@redeemerluth.com.

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Thanks so much to the team of volunteers who work every week to prepare and upload the Sunday worship service: **Tom Mimlitch, Michelle Disbro, Kristi Hildebrand, Tori Reed, Kathy Rapp, Karen Kent, Becky Trover** and, of course, **Pastor Dave** and all those who have served as cantors and assisting ministers. It may not be the equivalent of being in church but it is a welcome weekly reconnection to the Redeemer family!

Since Redeemer's YouTube channel was created in March, a total of 41 individuals have subscribed and there have been 1,202 views with 33 "likes" and 18 shares.

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Pastor Dave is taking a week for some time off and for continuing education between noon on <u>Sunday</u>, <u>May 24</u> until <u>Monday morning</u>, <u>June 1</u>. Emergency pastoral care coverage <u>Sunday-Thursday</u>, <u>May 24-28</u> will be done by **Pastor Dave Richie**, who pastors Good Shepherd and Reformation Lutheran Churches. His number is 740-377-5883. From <u>Friday-Sunday</u>, <u>May 29-31</u>, emergency pastoral care coverage is by **Pastor Dan Hille** of Faith Lutheran Church. His number is 614-832-2461. Redeemer member **Margie Farnham** will preach for the service which will be available on YouTube on <u>Sunday</u>, <u>May 31</u>.

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<u>Member Directory Update:</u> Tamara Wawrosch has a new address: 2467 Sherwood Rd., Columbus 43209.

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Jeremy Davis, a Redeemer member who is at the Ross Correctional Institute, is unable to receive visitors due to COVID-19 prevention efforts. In addition, Redeemer is not able to send him the group letter written each week after worship. Please send him a note sharing a greeting, thought, or prayer. It must be on a blank white 8.5x11" piece of paper; the note must be written in black or blue ink only. There can be NO enclosures of any kind. His address is Jeremy Christian Davis #758199, 16149 Ohio-104, Chillicothe OH 45601.

May Birthdays

17-Mary Benis 17-Ken Jones 19-Al Debelak 20-Jackson Harms 21-Paul Voytas 22-Dave Lippert 22-Lea Spang 26-Kathie Ehrich 27-Jeanne Eakin 29-Barbara Willmann



COVID-19 Information

To get the most up-to-date information regarding the pandemic and Ohio's COVID-19 activities, go to the Ohio Department of Health website at <u>https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/</u> or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634.

In addition, the Southern Ohio Synod has put together a number of Ohio Department of Health (ODH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO) resources online at <u>https://tinyurl.com/y9ohdaov</u>. Among the items linked to are the latest "Stay Safe Ohio" order from Gov. Mike DeWine, a checklist on face coverings and cleaning and disinfecting alternatives.

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We also want to offer ways for us to gather safely in small groups so we can see and talk with each other in person. To that end, I'd like to see who among you would be interested in bringing a folding chair and your own meal to the church and sitting in a circle on the lawn with no more than a total of 10 people to share an hour together. Those who came will have to have facemasks and wear them while we're gathering and after each person has finished eating. If the weather is poor we will gather in a room inside large enough for safe distancing.

The first two dates I'd like to suggest are for brownbag lunches from 12-1 pm on <u>Wednesday</u>, June 3, and <u>Sunday</u>, June 7. Each date will close after nine people RSVP.

We miss being together. We want all of this to end. And we need to be smart and safe. Which means being patient, and being creative about how to find ways we can meet together in small groups until the experts tell us it's ok to consider gathering in larger groups.

We are stewards of each other. And all of us want to do this right. This congregation is blessed with a council whose members take this seriously. I couldn't be more grateful to be in leadership with them.

My love and prayers are with you all.

Dave Shull

The Wider Church

Faith Lutheran Sponsoring Food Drives

Faith Lutheran Church (730 Collingwood Ave., Whitehall) is sponsoring a "touchless LSS canned goods collection" from 10 a.m. to noon the next two **Sundays: May 24** and **May 31**. There will be a blue bin in the parking lot, on the sidewalk near the front door as you enter from Collingwood Ave. People wishing to donate are invited to drive up to and deposit that Sunday's item in a touchless fashion.

The items will then be delivered to the Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry on Champion Avenue. Each Sunday LSS is asking for a specific item:

5/24 - Canned corn and green beans (no salt added) in approximately 14-15 oz. cans.

5/31- Creamy peanut butter-approximately 18 oz. jar.

Updated Guide Available

The updated guide "Lutheran Introduction to Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Gender Expression" is now available to order for \$2.25 each. Published by ReconcilingWorks, this latest edition includes revisions "to ensure that the language is as helpful and inclusive to expanding welcome to the LGBTQIA+ community...." In addition, "new pages bring some visibility to the different ways in which someone may identify – including the flags that celebrate their diversity."

It can be ordered by going to <u>https://tinyurl.com/y6ugynf5</u> where other print items are also available.



The Community Beyond

ODA Starts New Program to Keep in Touch with Seniors

To help ensure that older Ohioans stay connected while staying at home, Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) Director Ursel McElroy recently announced a new service to provide a daily check-in by phone for Ohioans age 60 or older.

The "Staying Connected" program will call older adults who sign up for the service during a predetermined window of time. When participants answer the phone, they will be asked to respond via touch-tone to confirm that they are OK or to access live support.

If no one answers after three attempts, a call is then made to an alternate contact (if provided) or to non-emergency services.

"Staying Connected" can be cancelled at any time.

"Especially during this very challenging time, we encourage older Ohioans to sign up for the Ohio Department of Aging's Staying Connected phone program. This program will help reduce isolation and support the health and well-being of older adults in our state," said Robert Cornwell, executive director of the Buckeye State Sheriff's Association.

Eligible Ohioans can sign up at <u>www.aging.ohio.gov</u> or by calling 1-800-266-4346.

"Staying Connected" is not an emergency response service and participants should always us 9-1-1 or their emergency response system if they are injured or in need of emergency assistance.

ODJFS Announces Unemployment Expansion through CARES Act

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) announced Wednesday the rollout of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), a federally funded program stemming from the CARES Act that will expand unemployment benefits to individuals affected by COVID-19, including those who have been diagnosed with the disease and family caregivers.

Others who can receive PUA but cannot receive traditional unemployment benefits include selfemployed individuals, 1099 tax filers and part-time workers. In addition, parents of children who cannot go to school because of COVID-19 can receive PUA. There is no minimum income requirement.

"The benefit amount will be similar to traditional unemployment benefits plus an additional \$600 per week," according to ODJFS. The additional \$600 per week will be available from March 29, 2020 through July 25, 2020.

The benefits will last for up to 39 weeks, but not past Dec. 26, 2020, and are retroactive until the earliest date someone is eligible, as early as Feb. 2, 2020.

Funding for PUA was provided through the federal coronavirus response package, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

ODJFS Director Kimberly Hall said in a news release, "We appreciate everyone's patience as we diligently worked to build this new system in record time for the agency. We encourage anyone who believes they may be eligible to apply. Even after you return to work, you still may be eligible to receive retroactive benefits, dating from as early as Feb. 2."

According to the department, more than 1 million unemployment claims have been filed in the past seven weeks, more than the previous three years combined.

Someone can receive PUA if they are in one of the following situations:

- The individual has been diagnosed with COVID-19, or is experiencing symptoms and is seeking medical diagnosis.

- A member of the individual's household has been diagnosed with COVID-19.

- The individual is providing care for a family member or member of the household who has been diagnosed with COVID19.

- A child or other person in the household for which the individual has primary caregiving responsibility is unable to attend school or another facility is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 emergency, and the school or care is required for the individual to work.



- The individual is unable to reach the place of employment because of a quarantine imposed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

- The individual is unable to reach the place of employment because a health care professional has advised him or her to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 concerns.

- The individual was scheduled to commence employment and does not have a job or is unable to reach the job as a direct result of COVID-19.

- The individual has become the breadwinner or major support for a household because the head of the household has died as a direct result of COVID-19.

- The individual has quit his/her job as a direct result of COVID-19.

- The individual's place of employment is closed as a direct result of COVID-19.

More information about the program is available online at <u>https://unemploymenthelp.ohio.gov/expandedeligibility/</u>.

Columbia Gas Suspends Late Payment Charges

According to information provided by Columbia Gas, the utility company has suspended late payment charges until June 1. It has also voluntarily suspended shutoffs for nonpayment and it is also offering flexible payment plans to customers "who indicate either an impact or hardship as a result of COVID-19." To learn more, go to www.ColumbiaGasOhio.com/COVID-19.

State Provides Resources for Job Search

The state of Ohio provides a couple of website listing jobs available: they include the COVID-19 Job Search which can be found online at <u>https://jobsearch.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/jobsearch/</u>. There is also the opportunity for employers to list jobs on this site.

Another state website, OhioMeansJobs.com offers a variety of resources beyond the jobs search including virtual job fairs. It can be found at <u>https://jobseeker.ohiomeansjobs.monster.com/</u>. Individuals can register by calling 614-559-5052 or emailing <u>info@omjcfc.org</u>.

<u>Getting Ready for Sunday</u> Seventh Sunday of Easter Sunday, May 24, 2020

Lessons

Sunday Readings: Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 66: 8-20; John 17:1-11

Prayer for the Times

A Pandemic Prayer for Children and People Everywhere

By **Marian Wright Edelman**, Founder and President Emerita of the Children's Defense Fund Hear the cries of all Your children young and old everywhere during this scary pandemic

Who are threatened and ravaged by a virus we cannot full discern or know how to stop with confidence Who still daily face violence, poverty, racism, abuse and neglect

Are scared, profiled, arrested and imprisoned by those in authority

Ignored by those with power as they languish in crumbling schools and neighborhoods all over our nation and world

Labeled often by some entrusted with their education as dumb, disruptive and failures

Marginalized by those who vote and are elected because they cannot vote or make campaign contributions

Resented by some of those forced to care for them in too often inhumane child welfare and juvenile justice and adult criminal justice systems

Hear our cries for our children all powerful God, by all the names we call You, especially during this dangerous pandemic



Protect their bodies and fight their battles during this dangerous threat we don't yet know how to fully stop

And protect them too from the violence of drugs and guns and poverty

Open the Red Sea to their safety and future in this time of unprecedented threat

Send them Your manna in the pandemic wilderness

And lead us and our children throughout the world into a safe future.

Prayer of the Day

O God of glory, your Son Jesus Christ suffered for us and ascended to your right hand. Unite us with Christ and each other in suffering and in joy, that all the world may be drawn into your bountiful presence, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.. **Amen.**

Intercessions & Thanksgiving

+ For the people of Zion Lutheran Church, Danville.

+ For Redeemer community member Barbara Connors

Each week we remember in our prayers in worship those who cannot be with us and those with special needs and concerns:, Bebe McCoy, Robin Stokes, Lea Spang, Heidi Carman, Cora Marquez, Mary Kennedy, Kelly Scott, Diane Louangrath, Sue Baker, Julie Denniss' uncle Ed Stewart, Kevin Bailey's sister Kleta Childs, Kathie and Nancy Ehrich, Stan Heacock, Jeremy Davis, Amy DeLorenzo, Linda and Don Williams, Pamela Andrews, Val Farnham, Bebe McCoy's brother-in-law Walt, Brittany Parsons, Lynn Belhorn's mother Maryland Belhorn and friend MaryAnn, Laura Warren's brother Walter Hudson and his wife Jan, Bill Boys, Doretha Holland, Dolores Brannigan's husband Dave, Bonnie Hegreness, Becky Trover's sister Maddie, Jack and Shirley Miller, and Redeemer visitors.

Noisy Offering will be for Kaleidoscope Youth Center.

Sunday Faith Exploration Class

10 a.m., Sunday May 24: The class continues a study of the "Apostles'

Creed for Today" - Led by Dave Shull

This class is held via Zoom. See separate story about how to participate.

This Week at Redeemer May 19 – May 25, 2020

<u>Tuesday</u>	1 p.m. 5:30 pm 6:30 p.m.	ZOOM Bible Study ZOOM Outreach Team ZOOM Sister Act
<u>Wednesday</u>	11 am	ZOOM Upper Cup
<u>Sunday</u>	YouTube 10 a.m.	Worship with Holy Communion ZOOM Adult Sunday School