



Reflections

VOLUME 25

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ISSUE 8

Espinal Leaves Sanctuary, Returns Home; Vargas Seeks to Follow

This past week, **Edith Espinal**, who had lived in sanctuary at the Columbus Mennonite Church for 40 months as she sought to avoid deportation and separation from her family, was able to return home. According to **Mennonite Pastor Joel Miller**, “This is an answer to months and years of prayer. It’s a result of Edith’s patience and persistence, and the support of this congregation and wider community.”

As a result, **First English Pastor Sally Padgett** reports that this coming Tuesday, **Miriam Vargas**, who has been in sanctuary at First English for over two years, will also meet with officials from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to work out a similar arrangement.

This step for both women is possible, according to Miller, under new federal administration directives which has found that Espinal ... and presumably Vargas ... are not a priority for removal from the country. Espinal is now under an order of supervision, which Miller says is a fairly standard arrangement.

Espinal, shortly after the Biden administration took office, had applied to ICE, along with a number of others in sanctuary, for a stay of removal, an official pause to her order of deportation. Miller reports that was denied but ICE followed up, suggesting an alternative path forward, but that required her reporting in person, which she did on February 18.

Espinal will now check in monthly with her ICE case manager which involves sending a picture of herself tagged with GPS through an app. Every four months she will do an in-person check-in.

“In the meantime, she is able to live at home, shop, dine and move about without being monitored, travel outside the state and get a work permit. This also gives her time to continue pursuing a more permanent status,” Miller said.

“Although there are no guarantees, we are quite optimistic that she is not under threat of detention or deportation under this administration.

“Edith was in sanctuary 40 months. With Lent just beginning, I’m mindful that this is a season of 40 days, mirroring Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness and the Israelites’ 40 years in the desert. After 40 years comes the promised land. After 40 days of Lent comes Easter. After 40 months of sanctuary comes a new found freedom and family reunion. ... We’re all celebrating resurrection a little early this year.”

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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

2021 CHURCH COUNCIL

President – Julie Johnson

Vice President – Wendy Stoica

Finance Officer – Margie Frazier

Secretary – Margie Farnham

Worship – Julie Larson

Education – Krista Skipper

Outreach – Sue Watson

Member Support – Elyce Herring

Property – Sue Yehling

Stewardship – Laura Warren

APPOINTMENTS

MUTUAL MINISTRY TEAM

Margie Farnham Marques Highland

Emlyn Ott Krista Skipper

SPECIAL FUNDS TEAM

Dave Engel, Chair

Michelle Clemence Nancy Magargal

Jim Riley Terry Warren

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Superintendent – Emily Ott

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

1555 S. James Rd.

Columbus 43227

614-237-1263

www.redeemerluth.com



The Redeemer Community

Schedule for Worship in Lent

Wednesdays, Feb. 24-March 24, 7 p.m.: Sung evening prayer livestream, with opportunities for you to share a brief story as described in today's *Reflections*.

Sundays, now through-March 28, 10 a.m.: Sunday worship livestream.

Thursday, April 1, 6:30 p.m.: Maundy Thursday Zoom.

Friday, April 2, 7 p.m.: Good Friday livestream worship with Christ United Methodist Church, featuring reflections on the seven last words of Christ.

Easter Sunday, April 4 – *service being planned*.

All livestream services are available on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7sGE88YtJrLWuGWO0sS-yw>

Girl Scouts Collecting Toys

The Juniors of Girl Scout Troop 2462 (usually meeting in Redeemer's basement, but not this year so far!) are working on their Bronze Award project. They are collecting preschool toys for the patients of Children's Hospital. They will have a drive-through collection day on **Saturday, March 6**.

They will also have a cookie booth that day, just in case some people would also like to purchase Girl Scout cookies. The event will run be from 10 a.m. to noon.

Sister Act to Meet Feb. 22

Because of Lent schedules, **Carol Heacock** reports that Sister Act will meet via Zoom on both **Monday, February 22** and **Monday, March 22** at 6:30 p.m.

Today, the group will discuss the article "Journey through Lent" from the January-February issue *Living Lutheran*.

To join the group this **Monday, February 22** at 6:30 p.m., go to the Zoom app and then enter the following information: Meeting ID: 813 0688 0315; Passcode: 135652. 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/81306880315?pwd=Rm9qVm9x4VDm5Zml0MW1heStxMzYxdz09>

February Council Update

Church Council President Julianne Johnson reports that Council met last **Tuesday, February 16** via Zoom. They discussed how Redeemer could begin to regather for worship.

A smaller group will meet to ensure that systems and processes are in place, and agreed that initially only 10 people will be able to come each Sunday on a RSVP basis. More details including which Sunday this will start will be coming soon.

Council also reports it has received some very positive results from livestreaming the worship services. A small group is working on what will need to be done to make this a regular feature of Redeemer's ministry going forward.

Almost all of Redeemer's sound system is a patchwork of older technology so they are looking at technology updates as well as a small area in the sanctuary where a person could be while livestreaming the service. More to come on that topic.

Giving was down in January - at the lowest level since pre-COVID lockdown, though sometimes consistent with January giving. **Margie Frazier** presented the financial report, which still needs a couple areas clarified for future meetings. The report was a year-to-date, rather than only for January. Working with **Donald Wells** continues to be very helpful.

ELCA Touching Lives: Immigration, Refugee Services

by Kathy Zwanziger

One of the programs of the ELCA is **Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services**, or LIRS. It oversees refugee resettlement, foster care services, family reunification, and more.

Thinking back over the past few years and a campaign promise from 2016 about building a wall, it's not hard to imagine how important LIRS is. We've heard stories on the news about families being separated at the border after they had finally managed to cross into the United States following long and dangerous journeys. Often these families left violent homelands to journey to the U.S., only to be violently torn apart. The parents might be sent back home, if they make it at all; the children often are sent over the border alone, then placed in "protective custody," which might mean jail-like facilities where they sleep on the floor among strangers. It's great to know that our national church, working with the U.S. government, is trying to reunite families. That process takes time; children can be placed in foster care while the parents are being sought.

Several years ago I worked with a class of immigrants with CRIS -- Community Refugee and Immigration Services -- that met at Redeemer. We tried to empower the new (and sometimes not so new) immigrants by welcoming them and teaching them English. The students came basically from one of two regions: Cambodia and Thailand or Ethiopia and Eritrea. The daughter of one of the mothers from the first group is now a member at Redeemer (**Diane Louangrath**).

Teaching English to people who have never learned to read their own language is a challenge. I particularly remember a brother and sister from the second group of students. The brother had been a priest in his country, so he was literate in his language. When handed something in English to read, he was aware that the letters had particular sounds and meant something; he generally could read the paragraph. But when I would ask what it meant, all I would get was a broad smile. In contrast, his sister had to first learn the concept of letters and sounds before beginning to read. What a joy to see her quite by accident a few years later. She had learned enough English to get a job and communicate with her employers.

Imagine finding yourself in a country where you could not read the signs or understand the spoken language. How would you live? Consider how wonderful it would be to find a program like LIRS that would help you adjust to your new location by welcoming you and helping you learn the language, perhaps even helping you find a new place to live. We should be grateful that the ELCA provides such programs for immigrants.

Lent 2021: *Who Are You Really?*

As she reflects on the meaning of Lent, Benedictine nun **Joan Chittister** says, "Lent is about reaching back to remember who we are even while we keep on becoming more than we were."

Who are you? I mean, who are you *really*? What makes you *you* – something you deeply value, some experience that has shaped you, a person who has been a true mentor and guide for you, a story whose message continues to live in you and shape how you live in the world?

When was a time you lost touch with this essential part of yourself? What happened when you lost touch with this? How did you find your way back "home" to yourself?

When is a time you discovered that the *you* you thought you were became someone you had to let go of? Maybe you were trying to become someone that a person you admired wanted you to be, or someone you thought would be successful or popular. And at some point you realized you were chasing a fantasy. You realized that wasn't the unique *you* God created. So you had to let go of that false you ... and start to get to know the real you. What was it like to admit you'd lost touch with the real you ... and then try to discover yourself? What have you discovered?

What is one way you are changing these days? What is an area of growth, development, discovery, or curiosity that you find alive in you right now? How do you understand why, of all the ways you could be changing, you find yourself changing in *this* way?

If Sister Joan is right, and Lent invites us to reach back and remember who we are, even as we keep on becoming more than we were, these seem to be some of the questions Lent asks us to live into. Lent invites us to keep coming back to the way of Jesus. And Jesus wants us to come as we really are, not as we think he wants us to be or as we think we're supposed to be. We take the risk to look at ourselves as we really are. And we hear God's words saying to us what God says to Jesus at his baptism: *You are chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life*. That love comes first. That love frees us to look at who we truly are. And to practice loving that person. We admit the ways we fall short, the ways we harm others and ourselves, the ways we water down the call of the Gospel. *And* none of this changes what God says about us. Trusting we always are *chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life*, we can continue to become who we truly are, and continue to go deeper in the ways we walk beside this Jesus.

On Wednesday evenings at 7 pm, from **February 24-March 24**, Redeemer will livestream a service of sung evening prayer. There's a space for a five-minute reflection. **Pastor Dave** asks, "If any of the questions above grab you in any way, and you find yourself thinking or writing about them, I invite you to share your reflections at one of these services. These reflections have helped us get to know each other in meaningful ways. And they have led the speakers to discover truths about themselves they'd never known before. Please don't be bashful. Look at the questions above and see if there are a couple that take you somewhere. And please let me know which of these five Wednesdays you'd like to come into the sanctuary and share your reflection. There will only be a few people there, all masked and distanced. Let me know if you have any questions."

Sunday Adult Ed Class to Discuss Duncan Book on Feb. 28

The Adult Sunday Education Class will be discussing chapters one through eight of the book *Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.* on **Sunday, February 28** at 11:15 a.m. In the book, ELCA **Pastor Lenny Duncan** writes about some realities confronting our denomination that we won't want to face, but which we ignore at our own peril. He writes in a very accessible style. He clearly wants to wake us up. And he knows waking people up from sleep doesn't often feel very kind to those of us who wish to ignore painful truths. But throughout the book Pastor Duncan's motivations are clear: "Dear Church, this book is a love letter to you. I know at times it hasn't felt that way."

New conversation partners are encouraged to join the group!

Join the Zoom Meeting ID: 818 8878 2023; Passcode: 630107. By phone call 646-876-9923. If you don't have the Zoom app, you can join the class by copying and entering the following web address in your browser:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81888782023?pwd=Q2Z2cW9ob3JvR1NSRi9rYVBkMC90Zz09>

Tuesday Bible Study Continues Feb. 23

The Tuesday Bible Study, which is studying of the book of Genesis, continues on **Tuesday, February 23**. If you have Tuesday afternoon free, join us. We are a group of people who are both serious about listening for the Spirit's voice in the text and in each other and serious about supporting each other through whatever we're going through – and who laugh deeply and often. Give us a try! Get in touch with **Dave Shull** if you have any questions.

To join the group this **Tuesday, February 23** from 1-2:30 p.m., go to the Zoom app and then enter the following information: Meeting ID: 871 3736 6983; Passcode: 619946. To participate 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/87137366983?pwd=T0NoUU5ORmNYN1YrajhpZ2hGR09pdz09>

Previous Sunday Worship Services Available on YouTube

Previous Sunday worship services are available at <https://tinyurl.com/r6mk2xh>. For the current Sunday Worship Bulletin, go to the Redeemer website at www.RedeemerLuth.com >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, wear a mask!

Important Emails

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

Info@RedeemerLuth.com – use for communicating with the office, *Reflections* newsletter, **Office Manager Becky Trover**, healing prayer requests or for general information.

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

FinSec@RedeemerLuth.com – use for stewardship campaigns.

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

Property@RedeemerLuth.com – use to report items that need repair in the church building.

SundaySchool@RedeemerLuth.com – use to offer suggestions for our Sunday School ministry.

Transportation@redeemerluth.com – use to request temporary transportation assistance.

Communications@redeemerluth.com – use to send church related announcements or pictures for sharing on Redeemer's social media sites. Another way is to tag Redeemer in the posts.

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

Prayers are asked for **Ken Jones** who will have valve replacement surgery on Tuesday and for **Sophie Skoog** who is recovering from a sledding accident.

+ + +

Prayers of comfort are asked for **Heidi Sherer** and family on the death of her cousin **Ann**.

+ + +

Directory Correction: Bernice Stewart's email is Bugsbunny67bs@netscape.net .

+ + +

The Redeemer Family has received a thank you note from the Marshall Edgington Family: "God bless everyone of you. Thank you so much for your prayers. I love you all!!!"

Birthday Cards Needed

Redeemer is in need of birthday cards to send to members throughout the year. If you have any to donate, please drop them off at the church. Call ahead to 614-237-1263 to make sure someone is there.

Wells CPA Firm to Mail Giving Statements

Council President Julie Johnson reports that Redeemer's 2020 giving statements will be mailed from the Wells CPA firm by the end of the month.

New Redeemer Directory Available

Redeemer's Directory of members has been updated. To receive an electronic copy or to have a hard copy mailed to you, please contact the church office at 614-237-1263 or via email to info@redeemerluth.com. Hard copies are available at the church and can be found under the bulletin board in the hallway off the Narthex.

February Birthdays

24-Linda Williams 24-Susan Yehling
25-Bernice Stewart 26-Diane Brobeck
26-Wally Jacobs 28-Colton Day

March Birthdays

1-Todd Darst 1-Kathy Denhard
3-Ranel Hoddinott 3-Larry Trover
4-Jack Miller 4-Petra Williams
5-Lily Glover Oakleaf 6-Bennett Whitaker
7-Early Bradley 8-Helen Brunston
12-Deirdre Jimison 12-Catherine McFarland
13-Dave Engel 14-Jenny Friederich
14-Lynn Nakamura 14-Tim Watson
15-Kristi Hildebrand 17-David Williams
24-Carol Heacock 30-Colin Young
31-Ed Klopfer

The Wider Church

CHOICES Faces Funding Cuts

Lutheran Social Services' domestic violence shelter CHOICES reports that in October, it experienced a \$170,000 cut in federal funding from the Victims of Crime Act grant (VOCA). In addition, the Ohio Attorney General's Office, which distributes the VOCA funding, has warned of another cut this year of up to 30 percent. This will result in a decrease in CHOICES services, the agency reports.

In 2019 Ohio became one of 33 states to provide support for domestic violence programs. The \$1 million budget annual allocation provided grants of \$17,800 to 47 residential programs that year and 69 grants of \$12,000 in 2020. This is simply not enough support for the program that last year received 4,057 hotline calls and helped nearly 1,800 victims rebuild their lives.

Domestic violence (DV) shelters around the state are advocating for a \$5 million appropriation in the state of Ohio budget in Fiscal Year 2022. This would bring Ohio's support for DV programs closer in line with other states. Among the 33 states that provide support to DV programs, Ohio's is the lowest on a per capita basis. Compared to surrounding states, Ohio spends 9 cents per capita, while Michigan spends \$1, West Virginia \$1.40, Pennsylvania \$1.49 and Kentucky \$1.50.

CHOICES provides temporary emergency shelter, a 24-hour crisis hotline, domestic violence counseling, legal advocates, peer support groups and community awareness building. To learn more about the programs or to donate directly, go to its website at <https://lssnetworkofhope.org/choices/>.

The Community Beyond

ODH Releases Details for Virtual Townhalls on COVID Vaccine

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) released more details Friday about a series of virtual townhall meetings Gov. Mike DeWine recently announced to provide information about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Each of the four town halls is designed for a specific population, but all four are open to anyone. They will feature panelists including medical experts, faith leaders, public health professionals and community leaders from those specific populations.

The events and their target audiences are as follows:

- Monday, Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m., African-American Ohioans
- Tuesday, Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m., Hispanic/Latino Ohioans
- Monday, March 1, 6:30 p.m., Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Ohioans
- Tuesday, March 2, 6:30 p.m., Rural Ohioans

Links for watching the events are available at www.coronavirus.ohio.gov/townhall

In addition to the live event times, the townhall meetings will air on public television via the Ohio Channel, as follows:

- Saturday, Feb. 27, 6 p.m., Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall for African-Americans
- Saturday, Feb. 27, 7 p.m., Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall for Hispanic/Latino Americans
- Sunday, Feb. 28, 2 p.m., Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall for African-Americans
- Sunday, Feb. 28, 3 p.m., Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall for Hispanic/Latino Americans
- Saturday, March 6, 6 p.m., Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall for Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Ohioans
- Saturday, March 6, 7 p.m., Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall for Rural Ohioans
- Sunday, March 7, 2 p.m., Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall for Asian-American and Pacific-Islander Ohioans
- Sunday, March 7, 3 p.m., Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall for Rural Ohioans

"It is important to share reliable, factual information about COVID-19 vaccines with all Ohioans. These vaccines are safe and effective. There are many myths about vaccines and about the COVID-19 vaccine, in particular. Having questions answered with credible information can impact whether someone chooses to get the vaccine. We are excited to provide accurate and reliable information from trusted sources," said ODH Director Stephanie McCloud.

"As we strive toward health equity in our state, all Ohioans need accurate information about and access to COVID-19 vaccine. We are pleased to make vaccine more accessible by distributing it to every county in Ohio, supporting bilingual vaccination pop-up sites in underserved neighborhoods, recruiting vaccine providers in highly vulnerable areas, and planning a COVID-19 vaccine webpage specifically addressing equity," McCloud said.

Getting Ready for Sunday

2nd Sunday in Lent, February 28, 2021

Lessons

Readings: Romans 4:17-25; Psalm 22:24-31; Mark 8:31-9:9

Prayer of the Day

O God, by the passion of your blessed Son you made an instrument of shameful death to be for us the means of life. Grant us so to glory in the cross of Christ that we may gladly suffer shame and loss for the sake of your Son, 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 St. Paul Lutheran Church in Columbus.

+ For Redeemer community member Thelma Johnson.

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, Bonnie Hegreness, 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, Bebe McCoy's brother-in-law Walt and her sister Jan, Brittany Parsons, Lynn Belhorn's friend MaryAnn, Laura Warren's brother Walter Hudson and his wife Jan, Doretha Holland, Shirley and Jack Miller, Deidre (DJ) Zimmer, Jon Denniss, Mary Bowling's sister Val, Carolyn and Ed Klopfer, Nancy Stinson's brother Tom Starkey, Kathleen Zwanziger's brother Mark Zwanziger, David and Barbara Hairston, Kay Ernsthausen, Marshall Edgington and his wife, Ken and Grace Jones, Dora Pinder and family, Bill Boys, Kathy Rapp, John Kennedy and Kevin Bailey, Michelle Clemence's sister Nancy Roebuck and her niece and family: Kaarina, Michael, Natalie, Liam and Tiffany Scales, Pamela Andrews and Heidi Sherer' and family on the death of her cousin Ann,.

Noisy Offering will be for Kaleidoscope Youth Center.

Sunday Faith Exploration Class

Sunday, February 28: *Book Discussion on Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S. - Chaps. 1-8*
Led by Pastor Dave

This Week at Redeemer February 23 – March 1, 2021

<u>Tuesday</u>	1:00 p.m.	ZOOM Bible Study
	7:00 p.m.	ZOOM Journaling Workshop
<u>Wednesday</u>	1:30 a.m.	ZOOM Stewardship
	7:00 p.m.	LIVESTREAM Lenten Worship on YouTube
<u>Sunday</u>	10:00 a.m.	LIVESTREAM Worship with Holy Communion on YouTube
	11:15 a.m.	ZOOM Adult Sunday School