



Reflections

VOLUME 28

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ISSUE 52

Joining Others to Research, Write, Deliver a Sermon: A Surprising New Year's Resolution?

I'm not a huge one for New Year's resolutions. Maybe it's because in the past, I've set them with the grandest of intentions, only to find commitment to them fading, even within a month or so. That could say as much about the quality of the resolution as it does about my willingness to try to do what I said I would.

For a couple of years now, I've told myself I wanted to offer a few interested people at Redeemer the chance to prepare and give a sermon *together*. Yet I haven't done anything to make that happen. Well, I learned something this weekend that lets me know now could be a great time to give this a try. I learned a close family friend for the past 50 years died the day after Christmas. As a way to celebrate her life and support her husband, I want to go to her memorial service in Boston on **Feb. 22**. Since I will have to miss worship here on **Feb. 23**, I've decided now would be an excellent time to make this resolution real. Between mid-January and mid-February, I will work with any of you who are interested on moving from the beginning of the sermon-writing process to the point of delivering it on Feb. 23. I would eagerly watch the service on YouTube as soon after you give it as I can.

So I'm inviting any of you who would like to give this a try to get in touch with me by **Jan. 10**. Ask me your questions; just say, "I'm in!"; or anything in-between.

To give you a sense of what you'd be saying "yes" to, here's what I have in mind:

- Before our first meeting, I'll send you the Bible passages assigned for Feb. 23. I'll ask you to take the time to read these passages several different times, and jot down words, phrases, and images that come up for you. Also, you'd jot down what strikes you? What pleases you? What confuses you? What disturbs you? What in this passage seems to speak to a question or concern you or someone you care about have right now? What in this passage seems to have something to say about an issue in the larger world? Read the passage several times over several days, and do this each time. This gives the passages a chance to marinate in you, and likely you will hear different things in the readings the different times you read them. Take note of them all!

- Several days after sending the passages to you, I'll send you excerpts from some "commentaries." Commentaries are books about Bible passages that preachers read to learn what experts have to say about the possible meanings of a given passage. As I prepare for my messages each week, I read different commentaries to see what I might discover from people who've spent years studying these texts. Often a commentator will share an insight that is helpful in offering a way into the text.

- After giving you a week or so to read these commentaries, we'll set up a Zoom conversation and talk together about what has happened so far in our individual preparation time. What did you notice in the readings the times you read them? Was there anything in any of the commentaries that you especially liked? Does one of the readings speak to you more powerfully than the others?

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OUR CONGREGATION

Ministers - All who gather here in the name of Jesus
Pastor - Rev. Dave Shull
Office Manager - Becky Trover
Office Assistant - Diane Brobeck
Custodian - Marshall Edgington
Organist/Senior Choir Director - Kathy Rapp
Pianist/Chime Choir Director - Karen Kent
Reflections Editor - Judith Bird

2025 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

President - Brad Binau
Vice President -
Finance Officer - Laura Warren
Secretary - Rick Pautsch
Worship - Michelle Clemence
Education - Karen Rider
Outreach - Mary Benis
Member Support - Kathy Mimlitch
Property - April Smith
Stewardship - Kathy Denhard

APPOINTMENTS

Treasurer - Kay Ernsthausen

MUTUAL MINISTRY TEAM

Misato In Marques Highland
Sara Auman Rich Pautsch

SPECIAL FUNDS TEAM

Ashley Bird Julie Boreman
John Kennedy Wendy Stoica
Terry Warren

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Superintendent - Emily Ott

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

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The Redeemer Community

Sunday Adult Forum to Get to Know Jolly Old St. Nick

The Sunday Adult Forum continues with its series “Getting to Know You” on **Sunday, Jan. 5** with **St. Nick** sharing about his life and times and how his spirit lives on. As a way to deepen relationships with each other, these sessions help group attendees get to know each other. **Pastor Dave** will interview St. Nick about his life and others will also have a chance to ask questions.

Then, on **Sunday, Jan. 12**, the class resumes learning more about **Donna Voelkel**.

Contact the church office for links to previous discussions with **Julie Johnson** and **Nancy Magargal**. The session with **Ashley Bird** was not recorded.

Redeemer Offers Mobile Messaging Service for Urgent Info

What happens if there is an ice storm or snow and you're not sure if the church will be open for worship? Do you remember last year when we needed to cancel the worship service due to some unexpected HVAC problems?

Kristi Hildebrand reminds folks “you can sign up to receive a text message on your phone whenever there is an urgent situation regarding church.

“This service will be provided by Remind, a service that many local schools use. The schools send out important messages to their families' cell phones so the families can be notified quickly. Redeemer's **Member Care Team** would like to give this service a try here.

“It's super easy to use. Once you sign up, you don't need to do anything. To sign up, just send a text message to 81010 with the message @RLCCBUS and respond to the texts that you get back. Then, If Redeemer needs to notify you of something, the church will send you a text.

“Signing up for ‘Remind’ messages is totally optional, but we anticipate it will be helpful in emergencies. Click [here](#) for more complete directions or reach out to Kristi or **Michele Disbro** for help in signing up.”

Opportunities for Worship, Breaking Bread, Conversations, Book Study with Neighbors at Christ United Methodist Church

Pastor Dave writes, “Since before I came to be with Redeemer in 2017, we have been doing a Good Friday service with the people at Christ United Methodist Church in Berwyn. As rich as those services are, they don't give us opportunities for us to get to know each other and learn from each other. **Pastor Willis Johnson** and I would like to change that. So we have some invitations for people in both faith communities.

“First, Redeemer will host a combined worship service on Martin Luther King, Jr., on **Sunday, Jan. 19**, at 10 a.m. Pastor Willis and Pastor Dave will offer a dialogue message. Following worship, there will be a potluck in Fellowship Hall with folks from both congregations seated at the tables. There will be “prompt” questions at the tables that will encourage conversation about issues surrounding issues Martin Luther King, Jr. Day bring up.

“Second, from 6:30-7:45 p.m. starting **Jan. 29-Feb. 19**, we will have four **Wednesday evening** discussions of the book *Fear of the Other: No Fear in Love*, by Duke University professor **William H. Willimon**. This is a short, readable book that explores how Christians are invited to engage with those society labels ‘outsider’ and ‘stranger.’ These classes will be held at Christ United Methodist (1480 Zettler Road) and on Zoom. Please go ahead and order a book yourself if you're interested in joining us. If you have difficulties with that, contact Pastor Dave.

“Pastors Willis and Dave invite you to participate in these opportunities to live into Redeemer's vision of ourselves as a place that fosters understanding and healing in community.”

Tuesday Bible Study to Look at Stories of Elijah, Elisha

The Tuesday Bible Study will begin looking at the stories of Elijah and Elisha when the group resumes meeting on **Tuesday, Jan. 7**. The group meets from 1-2:30 pm on Tuesdays for the Bible study. Folks can participate in-person or on Zoom.

Dinners Return to First English!! Redeemer to Serve Jan. 9

Kay Ernsthansen reports that, on **Thursday, Jan. 9**, Redeemer is scheduled to provide the dinner at First English. The menu will be Sloppy Joe sandwiches, individual potato chip snack bags, fruit cups, individual wrapped Hostess desserts and granola bars. There will also be lemonade and water available for the dinners.

“We will need enough food for 150 dinners. Dinner will be served from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. We will need to be at First English at between 4:30 and 4:45 p.m. We will need people to make Sloppy Joes which include two pounds of ground meat. If you are making sloppy joes and would like them picked up on Thursday, we have drivers who can help with this. Just let Kay know you would like a pick up.

“The rest of the menu is the same as when we did brown bag lunches. We will be using up the inventory we have so amounts are adjusted on the sign up sheet.

“We will also need people to serve. For the first night back, it would be nice to have five or six people. After we see how this goes, we will have a better idea of how many we need. Also, we will be giving out a sack lunch for people to take with them but Redeemer is only responsible for the dinner food. Another organization will be doing the lunches.”

Following is the Sloppy Joe recipe from **Kathy Mimplitch**:

- 2 pounds lean ground beef or ground turkey
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp prepared yellow mustard
- 1 1/2 cups ketchup
- 6 tsp brown sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a medium skillet over medium heat, brown the ground beef, onion and green pepper. Drain off liquids. Stir in garlic powder, mustard, ketchup and brown sugar. Mix thoroughly. Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. This makes ~ 12 servings.

“I usually omit the green pepper (I don’t like it)! I sometimes use ketchup and barbecue sauce instead of just ketchup. I almost double the brown sugar as I like it sweet.”

“Thank you all for your commitment to this ministry.”

Livestream Team Seeks New Members

Redeemer's Live Stream Team is looking for a few new members to help us stream the services. If you are interested in learning how to do this, training is in two sessions and is currently scheduled **for Saturdays, Jan 11** and **Feb 8**.

If interested, please contact **Tom Mimplitch**, by email or text message at: tmimplitch@yahoo.com; 614-390-1072.

He reports that **Miles Smith** has already volunteered “so come and join our party.”

Sister Act to Discuss *The Women* at January Meeting

Sister Act’s first event of 2025 will be a discussion of the book *The Women*. This will occur at 6:30 p.m. here at church on **Wednesday, Jan. 15**.

Michele Disbro reports that the group has year’s schedule of events available on the kiosk in the Narthex.

Narthex Art Explores Theme of ‘Journey’ for Advent/Epiphany

The latest Narthex Art Exhibit is now up, exploring what “Journey” means to members who contributed a wide variety of pieces. And thanks to **Michelle Clemence** and **Emily Kent** for their work installing the exhibit.

There are many amazing stories represented in the exhibit.

Sign Up Now to Read at Worship Services

Readers for Sunday morning services can now sign up for services over the winter. Readers, including youth and children, are encouraged to sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board, next to the Library.

Readings are sent out the week before to give folks a chance to go through the lessons ahead of Sunday mornings. **Readers of all ages are encouraged to participate.**

BREAD: Non-Police Crisis Response System

Since 2019, the Columbus Safety Coalition (CSC) and BREAD have advocated for a non-police crisis system to handle non-violent issues involving behavioral health, food/housing insecurity, and mediation. In February 2023, Columbus City Council allocated \$1.2 million to create a non-police alternative crisis system. However, the city has no timeline for the beginning steps, which are to begin a pilot program and to appoint a citizen advisory panel. To apply some pressure, CSC and BREAD are planning to put an initiative on the ballot for the November 2025 election, following this timeline:

- January, 2025: File (non confusing) ballot language.
- February – May, 2025: Collect signatures. The minimum needed is 25,000. Their goal is 60,000.
- November 2025: Vote on the initiative.

Lots of volunteer opportunities will start in 2025 once the attorneys have finished writing the initiative. They include:

- Collect signatures of registered Columbus voters (the signatures need to be registered Columbus voters, but the people collecting them only need to be Ohio registered voters).
- Validate the signatures against the database.
- Encourage people to come out on an “off year” election and vote for the initiative.

Also, BREAD network members, please note the annual Redeemer Justice Network Meeting on **Wednesday, March 19, 2025** at 6 p.m. before the Lenten Midweek Service. Those who are not a network member but who are interested in BREAD, please talk to **Kristi Hildebrand** or **Michele Disbro**.

Upcoming BREAD Dates

- RLC Justice Network Meeting: **Wednesday, March 19, 2025** at 6 p.m. (before the Lenten service), Room 2 and on Zoom.
- Rally: **Monday, April 7, 2025** at 7 p.m. Location: TBA.
- Nehemiah Action: **Tuesday, May 13, 2025** at 6:40 p.m. at the Celeste Center.
- Celebration: **Monday, June 30, 2025** at 7 p.m. Location: TBA.

'Noisy Offering' Going to BREAD

For Advent and Epiphany, Redeemer's “Noisy Offering” will go to support the work of BREAD. See above article for more details about what BREAD – Building Responsibility Equality And Dignity – is currently working on.

The group is comprised of many different congregations in the Columbus area which, in turn, represent many different traditions. Each of the congregations believes something different about the nature of God and the name God. But each shares a commitment to pursue justice guided by faith – to finding, in shared beliefs the strength that unity can bring.

The “Noisy Offering” is that donation of loose change that is made as one enters the Sanctuary.

Joining Others to Research, Write, Deliver a Sermon *cont'd from p. 1*

What is it about that reading that interests, excites, or challenges you? We'll discuss what each of you discovered on your own. Then we'll talk about what we've learned from each other, and where this conversation takes us. Is there one passage that speaks to all of us? Or might we focus on the passage that speaks most powerfully to each of us?

- Then we'd see where we want to go from there ... and see what each of you comes up with. We'd gather together at least a couple more times because key to preparing a message is editing, rewriting, narrowing, letting go of what we were so sure we wanted to say and writing something else instead! I'm happy to work with folks individually as you prepare what you want to say.

- As we get a sense for where our message is going, we'll look at the hymns that the Hymn Picking group has selected for that Sunday, and see if they reflect that theme we're hearing from the assigned readings. If they do, fantastic. If a couple do, and a couple don't, then we'll look for a few replacement hymns whose words express images from your message.

- Finally, we will practice the message in the sanctuary a couple of times before I leave town on Feb. 20.

This can be a really fun, engaging, challenging process that might take you places you never imagined going. I'd love working with whoever of you might wish to give it a try. If we get a group that too large to work with, then we'll see who most interested in preaching on Feb. 23, and who's open to doing this later in the year.

The reflections folks have offered during Wednesday night sung prayer services over the years prove beyond any doubt whatsoever that you are already excellent preachers. This would just give you an experience of doing a bit deeper dive into what you can already do. And if you've never shared a Wednesday evening reflection, so much the better! I'd love to work with you!

So please let me know in the next week or so if you'd like to do this, or if you have questions. I'd like to group to get started by the middle of January.

Thank you for being open to this! And for giving me a chance actually to follow through on a New Year's resolution – even if I made it several years ago!

Happy 2025 to you all.

Dave Shull

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 continue to be asked for **Ruth Boys** who is recovering from surgery for a broken ankle and as she **Bill** contemplate next steps. Prayers are also asked for frequent visitor and friend of the Riders, **Eileene Welker**, whose cancer has returned.

Prayers are asked for **Linda Williams** and family following the death of her brother **John Huber** on Christmas Eve day.

Prayers are also asked for the family and friends of former Redeemer member **Neil Bruce**. It was just learned that he died May 31, 2024 in St. Louisville OH. He was 95. He is survived by his sister **Betty Kealiher**, who was also a member of Redeemer.

Christ in Our Home for January-March Available

The latest edition of the daily devotional booklet "Christ in Our Home" for January through March is now available on the kiosk in the Narthex. Copies are free for anyone who would like one.

Flower Sign Up Sheet for 2025 Now Up

The sign-up sheet to provide flowers for the worship services in 2025 is now up on the bulletin board next to the Library. This is a good opportunity to remember a loved one, a special occasion or just because. To pay for the flowers use the special envelop that is also available on the bulletin board. They run \$20.

December Birthday

31-John Kennedy

January Birthdays

1-Connie Criswell 2-Don Luck*

4-Kristen Ullman 5-Tamara Wawrosch

9-Marques Highland 11-Rich Pautsch

13-Michelle Skoog 20-David Detweiler

20-Corinne Montgomery 20-Tony Naess

21-Elizabeth George 21-Shirley Miller**

22-Maureen Callahan 22-Shirley Cannon

24-Sophia Brush 24-Marshall Edgington

24-Kathy Rapp 24-Heath Wolfe

25-Rosalie Highland 26-Jeff Montgomery

28-Bebe McCoy

*Don turns 92 this year. Cards can be sent to him at Kensington Place 407, 1001 Parkview Blvd., Columbus 43219-2274

** Shirley turns 89 this year. Cards can be sent to her at 4050 Wiston Dr., Groveport OH 43125-8910.

The Wider Church

Capital Sponsors 'Day of Learning' on Jan. 20

Capital University is sponsoring the "Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Learning:" on Monday, Jan. 20 at the Harry C. Moores Student Union. The day begins at 9 a.m. in the student union and then moves to Mees Auditorium for the opening

Prayer Concerns from ELCA

Dec. 30 Christ's church is diverse and global, manifested in different Christian faiths and traditions. Pray for ELCA congregations and ministries, ecumenical partners, global companions and neighboring faith communities that join us in sharing the gospel and doing God's work in the world.

31 New Year's Eve: Our faith, hope and joy in Christ do not ebb and flow with the seasons, the holidays or our church calendar. They are an ever-present reality, nurtured and strengthened by the Spirit's presence in our daily lives. Give thanks and praise to God!

Jan. 1 New Year's Day: Ask God to grant us strength, wisdom and patience to accomplish new goals this year. Give thanks for God's forgiveness and for the support of others, which help us to continue when we fail, grow frustrated or are redirected in our pursuits.

2 "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Our newness in Christ is realized in our present life and in the future, when we enter the kingdom of God. Pray for the Spirit to strengthen our faith and to help us embrace our new selves — every day.

3 Pray for the Spirit to stir our patience, understanding and respect for others when we find ourselves in conflict with our neighbors or siblings in Christ.

4 Pray for our synod bishops attending the Bishop's Academy in Puerto Rico as they study and reflect on the challenge and promise of Lutheran mission and theology in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean.

5 Give thanks to God that Jesus Christ lived among us, that we might believe in God's grace and truth and be filled with joy and relief as children of God who are set free to live as Jesus did in service to our neighbors.

6 Epiphany "This star, as bright as day, that will never lead astray with its message so appealing, is the word of God, revealing Christ, the way, the truth, the life" (ELW 301). Praise God for the gift of Jesus Christ, who reveals to us the way, truth and life of God's love, forgiveness and promises.

Getting Ready for Worship

Second Sunday of Christmas

January 5, 2025 – 10 a.m.

Lessons

Readings: Isaiah 60:1-5; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Matthew 2:1-12

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

A Prayer for Peace

Gracious God, grant peace among nations. Cleanse from our own hearts the seeds of strife: greed and envy, harsh misunderstandings and ill will, fear and desire for revenge. Make us quick to welcome ventures in cooperation among the peoples of the world, so that there may be woven the fabric of a common good too strong to be torn by the evil hands of war. In the time of opportunity, make us be diligent; and in the time of peril, let not our courage fail; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Intercessions & Thanksgiving

+ For the people of Good Shepard Lutheran Church in Columbus.

+ For Redeemer community members Michele, Jon and Elaine Disbro.

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, Bonnie Hegreness, Mary Kennedy, Kevin Bailey's sister Kleta Childs, Bebe McCoy's brother-in-law Walt and her sister Jan, Brittany Parsons, Mary Bowling's sister Val, John Kennedy's niece Michele Wolfe, Becky Trover's sister Maddie Sutphin, her son-in-law Brandon James, and her niece Olivia Theissen, Skye Andree, Kris Kauffman, Ruth Murray's daughter Ellen Rose, Kathie Ehrich, Barbara Hairston and family, Dottie and Larry Bird, Karen Kent, Ruth and Bill Boys.

Worship Leaders

Presiding Minister	Pastor Dave Shull
Assisting Minister	Connie Criswell
Cantor	Jennifer Young
ASL Interpreter	Marilyn Floyd
Organist & Senior Choir Director	Kathy Rapp
Pianist & Chime Choir Director	Karen Kent
Usher	Helen Brunston
Verger	Michelle Clemence/Wendy Stoica
Producers	Tom Mimplitch, Scott Steiner
Communion Prep	Misato In, Diane Brobeck, Karen Rider
Hospitality	Michelle Clemence

The Noisy Offering will go to BREAD.

Week to Come at Redeemer
December 30- January 6

Monday	5:00 p.m.	TOPS
Tuesday		New Years Eve
Wednesday		New Years Day – Happy New Year
Sunday	8:45 a.m.	Senior Choir Rehearsal
	10:00 a.m.	IN-PERSON and LIVESTREAM Worship with Holy Communion
	11:15 a.m.	Adult Ed IN-PERSON and ZOOM “Adult Ed
Monday	3:00 p.m.	Suzuki Music
	5:00 p.m.	TOPS
	5:00 p.m.	ZOOM Executive Team
	5:30 p.m.	Girl Scouts Troop 2462

Redeemer’s mission: To be followers of Jesus, sharing God’s love with all

Redeemer’s vision: To foster understanding and healing in community

Redeemer’s Values: Inclusion, Compassion, Justice