

# Reflections

VOLUME 29 August 11, 2025 ISSUE 31

# **Looking through the Tear – The Whole Story**

Those of you who read my front-page article last week may have finished it and thought, "Well, THAT was kind of thin ...." For a reason that even my IT husband can't explain, when I sent Judy the article I'd written for last week's front page, only about one-third of it arrived to Judy. So I'm sending the whole thing for this issue – and will be sure it gets to Judy intact!

The Spirituality Network is the name of the organization that runs the spiritual direction certification program I've been part of for the past year. In their August newsletter, a friend of mine from this program named **Luke McCusker** wrote an article called "House Finches." He's given me permission to quote from it.

In the article, Luke describes discovering a pair of house finches building a nest behind a petunia in the corner of his window box. Soon there are four eggs. Two hatch, with "each baby body 75 percent mouth reaching up and swaying and jerking" for food. He writes, "A friend I told called it a blessing on my home and that is how it felt. I have made a nurturing place here. I am doing something right."

Luke continues the story:

"Two days later, the nest was empty. A predator took them, and it left a house finch-sized tear in the fabric of my assumptions about the world. Can animals be evil? Was the predator feeding its own babies? Should I have protected the birds? Could I have? Should I become vegan? Of course, this is not just about birds. When I look through the tear, I see a reality that does not care what I expect or assume. Its ugliness hurts and offends me and its shimmering beauty scares me because I am afraid it will be lost. I want to look away. "But my life is here, in this world, and I want to be in my life. So I have not removed the nest, a place where possibility and loss overlapped. I am lingering at the tear. I am looking through it into a big, deep, dark, bright, ugly, beautiful, pulsing, true world. And with disappointment, or trepidation, or on my knees in trembling or in gratitude, holding tenderness and violence and everything in between, I say, 'yes.'"

I think one of the hardest things about growing up is that we gain more life experiences. And those experiences cause us to let go of our some of our most cherished assumptions about the world. It takes incredible courage to admit something has torn a hole right through one of our assumptions and to be willing to look through that tear. That takes tremendous courage because once we look through that tear, we can't unlook. We have to admit that something precious has been lost, that a certainty we were so sure of has been torn away. And we are left bereft ... able only to grieve that loss and face a new world that suddenly seems frightening and unpredictable. And though a part of us knows we need to say "yes" to this new reality in order to move forward, a part of us is terrified of that, even though we know trying to pretend our shredded assumption is still valid is no way to live.

When Jesus opened the eyes of people who were blind, I think this is part of what he was doing. He was inviting them to risk leaving behind the assumptions they so wanted to live by ... and open their eyes to see the reality right in front of them.

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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

Pianist/Chime Choir Director – Karen Kent

Reflections Editor - Judith Bird

#### **2025 CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

President – Brad Binau
Vice President – Ashley Bird
Finance Officer - Laura Warren
Secretary – Rich 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 Sara Auman Emlyn Ott Rich Pautsch

#### **SPECIAL FUNDS TEAM**

Wendy Stoica, Chair Hitoshi Phillips Emily Kent John Kennedy Terry Warren Laura Warren [ex officio]

<u>SUNDAY SCHOOL</u> Superintendent - Emily Ott

#### REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

1555 S. James Rd. Columbus 43227 614-237-1263

www.redeemerluth.com





# **The Redeemer Community**

# **Plans Announced for Attending Bolz Weber Revival Tour**

Michele Disbro writes, "Just an update to all those who have reserved tickets to see Nadia Bolz Weber. She will be holding a "Red State Revival Tour" at St. John's United Church of Christ at 59 E. Mound St. on <u>Friday</u>, Aug. 22 at 7 p.m.

"If you are interested in joining us, some of us are going to meet at Pecan Penny's for dinner. This BBQ restaurant, located at 113 E. Main St. is pretty close to St. John's Church. It offers counter service to get your food and then, people can gather at a table. So, anyone interested can join us - simply show up between 5-5:30 p.m., order food, and look for us at a table. (I'm going to call them to see if I can actually reserve a table.) Then, we'll walk from there over to St. John's. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. You can park on the street (You'll need to pay with credit card at a kiosk or on the Cbus parking app) or at the Commons Parking Garage (between Rich and Main sts., High and 3rd). If you Google map this, you'll see how close together St. John's, Pecan Penny's, and parking are.

If you haven't ordered a ticket yet, please know that there's a waiting list now for tickets. You can put yourself on the waiting list and they will contact you by email if some tickets open up. To be put on the waiting list, please click HERE:

"If you are interested in carpooling from church, please let me know. So far, I know that **Michelle Clemence**, **Sue Watson**, and **Kathy Zwanziger** are interested in that. I know that for some of us, it's easier to go straight there.

"Please let me know if you have any questions. Hoping to see many of you on Friday, Aug. 22. It should be fun!"

# **Plans Underway for Fall Sister Act Retreat**

Sister Act will hold its annual fall retreat <u>Friday-Sunday</u>, Oct. 10-12 at Hopewood Pines Camp (Lutheran Memorial Camp). Cost is \$98 for the entire weekend plus an additional. \$25 for food. Costs for attending on Saturday only are \$17 plus \$15 for food.

Those interested in attending are asked to contact **Michele Disbro** by **Sunday, Aug. 24** as the group must guarantee at least 10 attending for the weekend. She can be reached at <a href="mailto:mddisbro@gmail.com">mddisbro@gmail.com</a>.

# **How to Recycle Pill Bottles, Styrofoam**

**Kathy Zwanziger** writes, "For those of you who have EMPTY pill bottles that you would like to recycle rather than toss in the trash, the Waste and Reuse Convenience Center at 2100 Alum Creek Drive is the place to go! There is a container in the coatroom to collect the pill bottles.

"To protect your identity, as well as your prescription number, remove as much of the label as you can.

"This Convenience Center also recycles styrofoam (the kind that comes when packaging fragile items, NOT food containers).

"Be aware it is only for Franklin County residents and is open Tuesday – Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m."

#### Need a Ride?

Redeemer offers a temporary transportation service for members and friends who may need a ride to an appointment or other engagement. However, there is a new email where that request can be sent: <a href="MedaRide@redeemerluth.com">NeedaRide@redeemerluth.com</a>.

# **Remembrance Garden in Operation**

Mary Benis writes, "Thanks to everyone who helped bring the Remembrance Garden to life. We fully met the cost of the new plantings, with enough left over to cover the signage that's on order. This whole endeavor has been a great reminder of the commitment and support of the Redeemer community.

"The garden is now fully open and available. In fact, it's already in use. So if you want to consider placing the remains of a loved one, human or pet, in the garden or remembering them in the Memorial Book, just connect with **Pastor Dave**, who will guide you through the process.

"We do hope you'll spend a little time in the Remembrance Garden, just enjoying that beautiful and peaceful space. It's a really meaningful addition to the Redeemer facility, which should serve us well for many years.

# **Redeemer Garden Giveaway Held Saturdays**

Redeemer's Saturday morning Garden Giveaway is now open. Stop by to pick up fresh produce from the garden beginning at 10 a.m.



# 'Noisy Offering' to Go to Kenyan Rescue Centre

**Kay Ernsthausen** reports that Redeemer's "Noisy Offering" will now go to Sikhona Rescue Centre in Kitengela, Kenya. According to Kay, this is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to provide a physically and psychologically safe space for abused women and neglected children to learn and grow.

The center is a "gender-based violence recovery center where at-risk women and their children are provided shelter, health care, legal representation, and education. Children are nurtured and empowered through primary school at Rehoboth Learning Centre while at-risk women will be employed and educated on our sustainable teaching farm."

"Sikhona" translates from Zulu to mean, "I Exist"

## **LSS Food Pantry Seeks Produce Donations**

In light of reductions in the state of Ohio budget resulting in less funds for Ohio foodbanks, Lutheran Social Services (LSS) reports that they recently learned that Mid-Ohio Food Collective has had to make the difficult decision to eliminate its daily produce shop-through service provided to food pantries for the month of July. While LSS Food Pantries will still receive produce from MOFC; "the removal of this service will significantly reduce the amount of produce we will have to offer the families we serve each week in Franklin and Delaware counties ... create[ing] a gap in the resources for the month of July ...."

As a result, LSS is asking for donations of bags of potatoes, salad kits, bags of grapes and carrots. These items can be taken to the pantry at 1460 S Champion Ave **any Tuesday in July, between 9 a.m.-12 p.m.** OR items can be dropped off at the regularly scheduled volunteer shift, at the Champion Food Pantry. Redeemer is next set to work on **Thursday, Aug. 21**.

#### Narthex Art Reflects 'Colorful Creation' for Pentecost

Inspired by the first couple verses of Isaiah 35 which mention "Wilderness and desert will sing joyously... a symphony of song and color," the Narthex art theme for Pentecost reflects a "Colorful Creation." Stop by to see the latest items on loan from members of the congregation!

# 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. Readers are still needed.

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.

# Looking through the Tear - The Whole Story

I think more and more people in this country and around the world are having to do this when it comes to the policies and actions of the Israeli government in Gaza and the West Bank. For decades, a number of voices have tried to get the attention of our policymakers so they might let go of their assumptions that people who have been victims of such horrific hatred and violence would never become the perpetrators of such hatred and violence. But most in this country have refused to believe that. Now, however, the evidence is too strong. Just as seeing police dogs attacking non-violent civil rights protestors on the evening news in the 1960s led a large number of people in this country to support national civil and voting rights legislation, so the sight of children starving to death in Gaza is leading more and more people here to let go of our assumptions about any kind of unique morality among the government or citizens of Israel.

When have you experienced a tear in an assumption that sustained you for a number of years? Are you experiencing such a tearing now? What kind of courage did it take you to look through that tear, and admit you had to face a new reality without that assumption? What had to change for you? What became possible because you are no longer basing your life on something that wasn't true?

Luke's story embraces me with the truth that the more assumptions I free myself of, the more I free myself to see all aspects of this world. I don't try to deny certain aspects of it in a futile effort to preserve the myth of some unique kind of nobility, purity, innocence, or morality. If we choose to make our life in this world, and not escape into a false reality, then we look at the tear that has shattered in our assumptions. We look through it into a big, deep, dark, bright, ugly, beautiful, pulsing, true world. And with disappointment, or trepidation, or on [our] knees in trembling or in gratitude, holding tenderness and violence and everything in between, [we] say, 'yes.'"



## 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**, 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.

NeedaRide@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**

### Pastor Dave Takes Continuing Ed Week, Vacation Beginning Saturday

While Pastor Dave is on a week-long silent retreat for his continuing education and then on his vacation starting Saturday, Aug. 16, emergency pastoral care is being offered Aug. 16-20 and Aug. 30-Sept. 5 by Rev. Julianne Smeck (734-972-6126). Aug. 21-29 coverage is being offered by Rev. Lorin Darst, pastor of First English Lutheran (503-886-9353).

While Pastor Dave is gone, Pastors Emlyn Ott, James Childs and Lynn Carter-Edmands will be preaching/presiding for the next three weeks.

#### **August Birthdays**

15-Sarah Kirkman 15-Seth Harms 16-Cathy Oldham 17-Thelma Johnson 23-Scott Steiner 25-LaVerna Reinoehl 26-Brad Binau 27-Matt Bird 29-Jon Disbro 31-Lynn Belhorn

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Prayers and blessings are asked on the Sunday wedding of Micheline Saint Felix and Wilfrantz Raymond and for their daughter Shanelle Saint Felix.

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Prayers are asked for all those students in the Redeemer family and beyond who are returning to school in the coming the weeks. May their time in classes be blessed.

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Prayers for healing are asked for **Bill Boys** who is back in the hospital, for **Al Rider** who is having surgery this week and for **Jeff Sutphin** who is recovering from a broken foot and shoulder.



# **The Wider Church**

# Yehiel Curry Elected Presiding Bishop, Lucille Mills, Secretary, of ELCA

**Rev. Yehiel Curry** was elected to serve a six-year term as presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) during the 2025 ELCA Churchwide Assembly recently held in Phoenix. In addition, Rev. Lucille "CeCee" Mills was elected to a six-year term as secretary

Speaking to the assembly after his election, Curry reflected on his membership at Shekinah Chapel in Riverdale, IL, where he eventually became a lay mission developer while he participated in the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries [TEEM] program, which prepares individuals for ordained ministry in the ELCA, with a focus on "emerging ministry contexts" like ethnic-specific, multicultural, rural and inner-city settings. He spoke to the assembly about his initial hesitation in accepting that first ministry role.

"Perhaps I'm out there in one of you," Curry said. "I never saw myself as good enough, so for two years, I said no. I finally said yes. When I said yes, your support, this church's support, of that ministry meant everything. So if you want to know what your benevolence dollars look like, it looks like me, and I want to say thank you. Thank you for your investment."

Curry has served as bishop of the ELCA Metropolitan Chicago Synod since 2019. He previously served as mission developer (2009-2012) and pastor (2012-2019) of Shekinah.

He received a Bachelor of Arts from Lewis University in Romeoville, IL, in 1995 and a Master of Divinity from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) in 2013. LSTC is one of seven ELCA seminaries.

Meanwhile, Mills said, "I have to echo our newly elected presiding bishop [Yehiel Curry] — I'm the product of you. I'm also a TEEM candidate," Mills said to the assembly following her election.

"I do believe it's a new season for our church," Mills said. "I do believe that the reason why I, an African American woman who stands before you with no degrees in a church that cares so much about education ... is because you saw the gifts and potential in me. I celebrate with you that we listen to God's call and that we will become God's beloved community."

Mills has served as an assistant to the bishop in the ELCA North Carolina Synod since 2019. Previously she served as an interim pastor, as program associate for African Descent Ministries with the ELCA churchwide organization in Chicago; and as pastor of Rejoice Lutheran Church, Chesapeake, VA. She received a TEEM certification from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, SC, in 2002.

# Situation in Gaza 'Dire'

**Julie Johnson** provided the following update on Gaza: "The situation facing the people of Gaza is dire. While the U.S. continues, for the most part to ignore, it's house-less population and health care isn't considered a human right, \$3.8 billion a year is gifted to Israel to impose its system of apartheid, which includes periodic massacres in Gaza, on the Palestinian people. As we pledge to act to end racism and inequality at home, we know that our actions can reverberate worldwide. We offer the following "Lamentation for Gaza" from **Rabbi Brant Rosen** of Tzedek Chicago.

#### A Lamentation for Gaza

Gaza weeps alone.
Bombs falling without end her cheeks wet with tears.
A widow abandoned imprisoned on all sides with none willing to save her.

We who once knew oppression have become the oppressors. Those who have been pursued are now the pursuers. We have uprooted families from their homes, we have driven them deep into this desolate place, this narrow strip of exile.

All along the roads there is mourning. The teeming marketplaces have been bombed into emptiness. The only sounds we hear are cries of pain sirens blaring drones buzzing bitterness echoing into the black vacuum of homes destroyed and dreams denied.



We have become Gaza's master leveling neighborhoods with the mere touch of a button for her transgression of resistance. Her children are born into captivity they know us only as occupiers enemies to be feared and hated.

We have lost all that once was precious to us. This fatal attachment to our own might has become our downfall. This idolatrous veneration of the land has sent us wandering into a wilderness of our own making.

We have robbed Gaza of her deepest dignity plunged her into sorrow and darkness. Her people crowd into refugee camps held captive by fences and buffer zones gunboats, mortar rounds and Apache missiles. We sing of Jerusalem, to "a free people in their own land" but our song has become a mockery. How can we sing a song of freedom imprisoned behind walls we have built with our own fear and dread?

Here we sit clinging to our illusions of comfort and security while we unleash hell on earth on the other side of the border. We sit on hillsides and cheer as our explosions light up the sky while far below, whole neighborhoods are reduced to rubble.

For these things I weep: for the toxic fear we have unleashed from the dark place of our hearts for the endless grief we are inflicting on the people of Gaza.

# **Prayer Concerns from ELCA**

**August 12 International Youth Day** Half the people on our planet are age 30 or younger. Pray for every nation to honor the gifts of young people, address the challenges they face and provide easy access to resources that contribute to their physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual and economic well-being.

13 Ask God to bless those who have chosen to use their gifts, faith and time in long-term volunteer service with Lutheran Volunteer Corps, Urban Servant Corps, Holden Village or other domestic ministries.

14 Open our hearts and minds to see problems in the world as opportunities to encourage and care for one another, to seek new paths toward justice and peace, and to share the good news of God's mercy and love for humanity.

15 "Go my children, with my blessing, never alone. Waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own. In my love's baptismal river I have made you mine forever." (WOV 721). Praise God for being ever present in our lives and the world — in times of turmoil, peace, fear, joy, failure and achievement.

16 Pray for students attending ELCA colleges, universities and seminaries, and other institutions of higher education, that they will grow in faith, knowledge, wisdom and commitment to serve others.

17 Ask the Spirit how we might align ourselves with the commandments, desires and priorities of God, the very things Jesus made clear to us through his life, suffering, death and resurrection.

18 Pray for the church leaders gathering for the Ecumenical School on Governance, Economics, and Management for an Economy of Life in Seoul, South Korea. Organized by the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and other ecumenical organizations, the school helps leaders to bridge theology and economics and to advocate for a global economic system that meets the needs of humanity and responds to the crises we face today.

# **The Community Beyond**

#### **Virtual Death Cafes Now on Zoom!**

**Emily Kent** hosts a virtual Death Cafe on the fourth Tuesday of every month. They run from 7-8:30 p.m. Zoom Meeting ID 880 4396 8579, passcode 478465. "Please join us for a non-judgmental conversation about death and dying." The next one is set for **Tuesday**, **Aug. 26**.



# **Reynoldsburg Community Band Announces Concerts**

The Reynoldsburg Community Band has announced the schedule for its free concerts this summer. Please come and join the band ... and **April Smith** and **Linda Williams**, who both play in the group! More information about the band can be found <u>HERE</u>. *Mark your calendars for the following concerts:* 

Monday, August 11 at 7 p.m. Reynoldsburg Senior Center 1520 Davidson Drive, Reynoldsburg

Sunday, August 17 at 7:30 p.m. Village Green Park 47 Hall St, Powell, OH

# **Getting Ready for Worship**

Tenth Sunday after Pentecost August 17, 2025 – 10 a.m.

#### Lessons

**Readings**: Jeremiah 23:23-29; Psalm 82; Hebrews 11:29—12:2; Luke 12:49-56

#### **Prayer of the Day**

O God, judge eternal, you love justice and hate oppression, and you call us to share your zeal for truth. Give us courage to take our stand with all victims of bloodshed and greed, and, following your servants and prophets, to look to the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen** 

#### **Intercessions & Thanksgiving**

- + For the people of Bethel Lutheran Church in Grove City.
- + For Redeemer community member Shirley Miller.

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 sisters Kleta Childs and Karla Weaver, Bebe McCoy's brother-in-law Walt and her sister Jan, Brittany Parsons, Mary Bowling's sister Val, John Kennedy's niece Michele Wolfe, Maddie Sutphin, the Trover's son-in-law Brandon James, Skye Andree, Kris Kauffman, Ruth Murray's daughter Ellen Rose and family, Kathie Ehrich, Dottie and Larry Bird, Kelley Frank's mother Charlotte Frank, Al Debelak and Karen Riccio, Edwina Bradley, Karen Rider's niece Tammy and her friend Betsy Wagner, Sue, Tim and Lisa Watson, Heidi Carman, Bill Boys, Larry Jones.

#### **Worship Leaders**

Presiding Minister
Assisting Minister
Michele Disbro

Cantor Heidi Sherer
ASL Interpreter Marilyn Floyd

Organist & Senior Choir Director
Pianist & Chime Choir Director

Kathy Rapp
Karen Kent

Usher Jon Disbro

Verger Michelle Clemence/Wendy Stoica

Producers
Communion Prep

Becky Fisher, Eileen Day and Kay Ernthausen

Hospitality Scott Steiner

The Noisy Offering will go to Sikhona Rescue Centre in Kitengela, Kenya. Flowers are given by the Steiner family celebrating Scott's birthday



# **Upcoming Events at Redeemer August 11- August 18, 2025**

Monday 3:00 p.m. Suzuki School

5:00 p.m. TOPS

Tuesday 3:00 p.m. Suzuki School

6:30 p.m. A Brewing Faith, Seventh Son (1101 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St.)

Wednesday 3:00 p.m. Suzuki School

5:00 p.m. Worship Planning Team

Thursday 10:30 a.m. Suzuki School

6:30 p.m. Berwick/Bexley Dementia Support

**Saturday** 10:00 a.m. Garden Giveaway

Sunday 10:00 a.m. IN-PERSON and LIVESTREAM Worship with Holy Communion

Monday 3:00 p.m. Suzuki School

5:00 p.m. TOPS

5:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop 2462