



Redeemer Lutheran Church
and 3K/4K Preschool

Rev. Thomas Schmitt Vacancy Pastor

Rev. Scott Hirssig Associate Pastor

1712 Menasha Ave., Manitowoc, WI 54220

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Newsletter – February 2024

This year, Ash Wednesday falls on Valentines Day. While this is simply an odd coincidence due to the movable feast date of Easter, the correlation of the two distinct days does remind us of this: "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8) Lent gives us a time to intensely focus on that Wondrous Love that is Jesus Christ and the grace that we have beheld in our Redeemer's bitter sufferings and death on Calvary's Cross.

No Old Testament saint attests to God's grace quite like King David. Raised from the sheepfold to the throne of the house of Israel; raised again (and again, and again) from sin: pride, murder, adultery, and despising of God; lifted clear of the snare of the wicked (Psalm 119:110), of the pit (Psalm 30:3), of the very gates of death (Psalm 9:13); with no merit or worthiness in himself, David was continually raised up by God's grace and favor.

God's grace wells up in Psalm 41, where David exults in divine mercy amid his own weakness, powerful enemies, and treacherous friends. In this psalm, David tracks the flow of divine grace back to its source at the cross and, with prophetic vision, finds it springing forth in the lives of all baptized believers—including you.

David knows that our fortunes because they are his as well:

In the day of trouble the LORD delivers him;
the LORD protects him and keeps him alive;
he is called blessed in the land;

You do not give him up to the will of his enemies. (Psalm 41:1–2)

You have a sure hope! Therefore, do not look for hope in your experiences or your emotions, which will portray for you the same bleak scene that David captures in Psalm 41:

- * My enemies say of me in malice, "When will he die, and his name perish?"
- * When one comes to see me, he utters empty words, while His heart gathers iniquity.
- * Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.

Faith offers a better vision: despite all that binds and bruises and bleeds you, God *will* raise you up. He has raised you already! In Holy Baptism, God has "raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:6). If you are *in Christ*, how can you sink? How can you fall?

Lent is the ideal time to meditate on David's ordeals and your secure position in Christ. Psalm 41 provides the ideal guide to your meditation. If the laments of Psalm 41 call to mind your numerous difficulties and need for deliverance, they depict even more clearly the work by which your deliverance has been won.

Because you are in Christ, you share in all things with Him, even the prophetic Word. David's vision in Psalm 41 has become your reality in Christ. In the day of trouble, the Lord delivers you; the Lord protects you and keeps you alive; you are called blessed in the land (see Psalm 41:1–2). Press on to know the Lord's suffering, death, and Word. As surely as the Lenten journey ascends to the victory of Easter, you shall be raised up.

Our thanks to Rev. Don Krause for serving us this year for our Midweek Lenten Services. Don't miss out on this opportunity to grow in faith, revel in the fellowship of believers, and be raised up in spirit as we walk with our Redeemer His glorious path to life everlasting.

Pastor Thomas K. Schmitt

Midweek Lent Worship

Redeemer will gather every Wednesday during Lent at **6:00 P.M.** to worship as we prepare our hearts and minds on our Lord's Passion, death, and resurrection.

Ash Wednesday

The Holy season of Lent begins on February 14th.

6:00 PM Ash Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes.

The Imposition of Ashes

At Redeemer, as part of our Ash Wednesday devotion, we offer the opportunity to receive "the imposition of ashes" upon the forehead. The following is a brief explanation about this practice.

Q. *Are the ashes "blessed?" Do they give a special blessing?*

A. No. They are simply a physical symbol to aid in your meditation. The blessings we receive are through God's means of grace, His Word and Sacraments.

Q. *Do I have to receive them?*

A. No! Any compulsion to receive the ashes would be contrary to the freedom we have in the Gospel. They are simply offered as an opportunity for you. If they will help you, please receive them. If not, please feel comfortable not receiving them. No one will think any less or more of you if you do or don't!

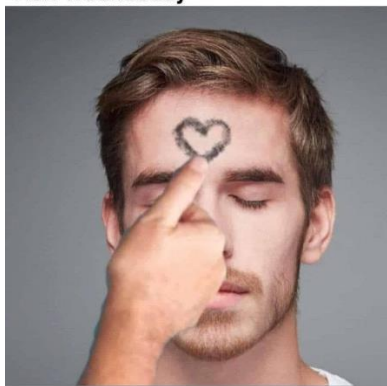
Q. *Do I have to leave them on?*

A. No. You may wash them off at any time. Again, whatever is most helpful to you. In fact, washing them off can be a joyous thing, as you remember that the water of baptism has rescued you from sin and death!

Q. *What about Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 6:16-18)? Those words read: "And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. . . . But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by others . . ."*

A. These words of Christ refer to our motivation: "that you may be seen by others." If this is why you want to receive ashes, to be seen by others, you should not receive them! This would be contrary to the Gospel.

**When Valentine's Day falls on
Ash Wednesday**



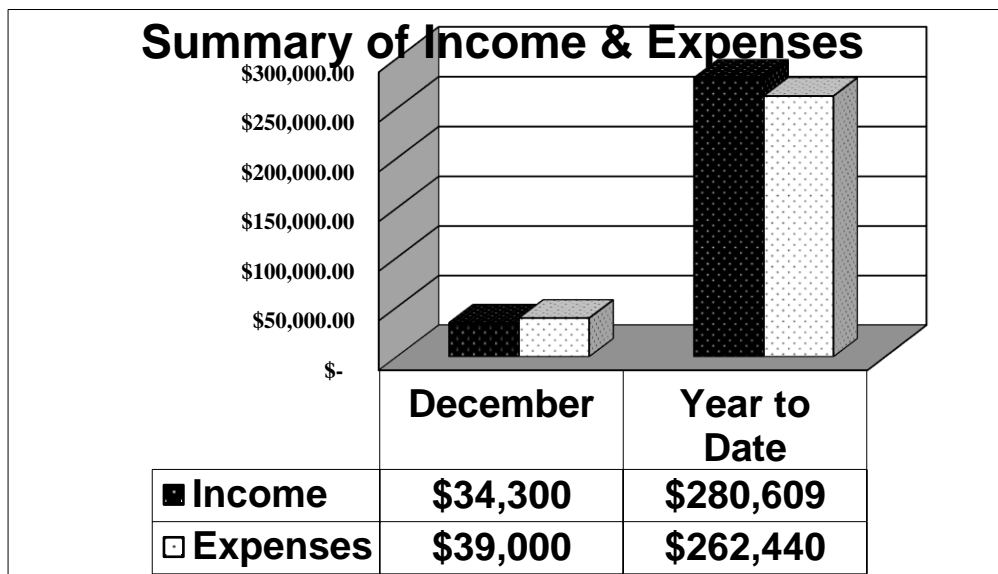
Lenten Soup Suppers

Sign-up sheets are available at the Welcome Center for our Lenten Suppers. These will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 14th and continue for the next 5 Wednesdays throughout Lent. If any group would like to host a soup supper or multiple soup suppers, please sign your group up at the Welcome Center.

Lent Coin Folders

Your Lenten coin folder will be arriving in your mailbox soon. The money collected will be donated to a charity which will be designated soon.

Financial Update



- **If you have a Traditional IRA** and are over 70 1/2, you may be able to use your IRA account to make your contribution to Redeemer and receive a tax benefit. PLEASE check with your financial institution for more information as the donation must come directly from them.
- **Thank You** to Rosemary Kautzer for donating Children's Bibles to each student in our preschool.

SLEDDING

SAVE THE DATE: FAMILY MINISTRY WOULD LIKE TO INVITE EVERYONE TO JOIN US FOR SLEDDING ON FEBRUARY 10 AT WILSON MIDDLE SCHOOL HILLS FROM 9:00 - 11:00 A.M., WEATHER PERMITTING. CONTACT BETH UTECHT 952-240-4817 WITH ANY QUESTIONS.



Executive Board and Call Committee Update

Redeemer saw the successful transition of bringing two new members on to the Executive Board – myself (Michael Gregurich) as President and Lisa Battin as Executive Board Member, replacing Mike Kaczowski and Lisa Van Sickle. We want to extend our sincere thanks to both Mike and Lisa for their time on the board and their dedication to Redeemer and the Congregation.

Here is the updated list of Redeemer's Executive Board:

President – Michael Gregurich
Treasurer – John Brixius
Director of Spiritual Growth – Kyle Olson
Director of Property/Legal – Kyle Weidmayer
Director of Education/Fellowship – Beth Utecht
Executive Board Member – Lisa Battin
Executive Board member – Lee Matthias

The Call Committee has now spoken with all the candidates that were open to an interview and will be meeting in the days ahead to confirm the final list to be presented to the Congregation, should all those candidates still be open to a call. In case some are not interested, we have pro-actively asked the District to provide more names for consideration. At the time of printing this newsletter, we are still waiting to hear back from some of the candidates that we previously interviewed so look to the bulletin to provide further updates.

It is inspiring to experience the commitment that the members of the Board and the members of the Call Committee have in serving Redeemer and her congregation – and while there some bumps in the road ahead that we will continue to navigate, we all do so with our faith in God leading the way. Your prayers and support are always welcome – as are your thoughts and ideas! Let us remember the words of Scripture in Galatians 6:2: "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ." Together, we can uplift one another and fulfill our calling to be a beacon of hope and love to those in our church and those in our community.

God's Blessings,

Michael Gregurich

Message from Pastor Schmitt

Dear friends,

I am looking forward to serving you as your Vacancy Pastor in the months to come. We certainly hope my tenure among you is short and the next pastor you call will accept your invitation to serve you for many years to come. I have arranged preachers for your Sunday Services, and will be with you for most of the Monday Evening Services, as well as the 7:00 and 9:00 Tuesday morning Bible Classes. I will be available for emergencies, hospital visits, and other pastoral duties at any time, and will be in the office Tuesdays until around 1:00 if you'd like to drop in. My cell is 920-418-1559, and my email is

stmartinlcms.pastor@gmail.com

Redeemer Pre-School Update

Our Preschool continues to be a blessing to our church and a blessing to our community – and we give thanks to God for that, and for the amazing team of teachers that make the program the success that it is. Two of our staff, Preschool Director Patti Fellows and Preschool Teacher Jerri Rathjen have advised the Board that this will be their last year at Redeemer.

Firstly, we want to express our deepest gratitude for the incredible impact they have had on the lives of so many young children that have come through the doors at Redeemer. Their dedication, passion, and nurturing spirit have created a foundation of learning and love for Jesus that will last a lifetime.

Now, we start the search for those that will fill the shoes left behind. As we work towards finalizing the details and documents to officially start the search, we also ask the members of Redeemer to think of who they might know that could step into one of these roles, or to reach out to others that might be able to offer insight or recommendations. Should you have any names to pass along – or any questions, please feel free to contact Beth Utech or Michael Gregurich.



2024-25 Preschool Registration Is Open

We are now accepting registrations for preschool. All forms are available in the office or on our website. Please share this information with friends and family! Word of mouth is our best advertising.

Youth Game Night

Youth Game Nights are on February 7th and 21st, from 6:00 - 6:30 pm (following confirmation). Please note the new location: *Good Shepherd Church in Two Rivers!* The February puzzle is below:

**Haiku from Mark 1:
The time is fulfilled,
the kingdom of God at hand
Repent and _____.**

Redeemer Lutheran Church

1712 Menasha Ave., Manitowoc, WI Phone: 920-684-3989

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00am-1:00pm

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Associate Pastor: Scott Hirssig, cell: (920) 629-2949

February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1)	2)	3)
4) Worship 9am Fellowship Sunday School 10am	5) Finance 8:15am Worship 6pm	6) Men's Bible Study 7am Women's Bible Study 9am	7) Youth Game Night	8) Exec. Board Meeting 6:30pm	9)	10) Sledding 9am
11) Worship 9am Fellowship Sunday School 10am	12) Finance 8:15am Worship 6pm	13) Men's Bible Study 7am Women's Bible Study 9am	14) Lenten Supper 5pm Ash Wednesday Worship 6pm	15)	16)	17)
18) Worship 9am Fellowship Sunday School 10am	19) Finance 8:15am Worship 6pm	20) Men's Bible Study 7am Women's Bible Study 9am	21) Lenten Supper 5pm Lenten Worship 6pm Youth Game Night	22) Book Club 1pm	23)	24) Book Club 1pm
25) Worship 9am Fellowship Sunday School 10am	26) Finance 8:15am Worship 6pm	27) Men's Bible Study 7am Women's Bible Study 9am	28) Lenten Supper 5pm Lenten Worship 6pm	29)	March 1)	March 2)

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