

The Focus

September 2023



Pastor's Message

A Season to Prioritize

I find September Newsletter articles to be confusing to write. Seasonally we are coming to the conclusion of Summer; with children and teachers going back to school. The season of vacationing is over unless you are retired then it is a time of quiet beaches and discounts at many resorts. In agriculture it is now a season for gathering in the harvest. In September the unofficial program year starts for most congregations as we move off of a summer worship schedule, music programs begin to pick up and Sunday School Classes get underway. The Church Program year should not be confused with the Liturgical calendar which means we are either into the season of Ordinary Time, Proper or Pentecost; don't panic in the end all three seasonal labels get us to the same place of the new Church year beginning with the first Sunday of Advent. (Just keep in mind that this year the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve fall on the same day.) WAIT! Did I mention football season? My point is that September is a busy month.

This is a good time to reflect upon the ever urgent strain that is felt upon our individual calendars. I normally find that come the middle of September I have recognized that my zealous desire to do it all has strained my calendar and it is time to jettison some of my commitments or find myself trying to do many things but doing few or none of them well. I find that this is a common issue for most people, especially parents with children. So how do you determine what things to keep and which to lay aside? My lament as a pastor is discovering that Church commitments are often among the first things placed on the chopping block. The logic seems to run, "If God loves me surely God will not condemn me for missing worship, Christian education, Bible studies, devotions, prayers and all those other things on the Church calendar."

Recently a young person was asked to be a baptismal sponsor and the Church, where the baptism would occur, wanted some proof that the person had been baptized. The person called thinking that they had been baptized at Our Redeemer many years ago. Sadly we had no record of a baptism or the family ever being a member of

the Church. I don't know their story but I would guess that a busy calendar had dictated the need to lighten the load and "Churchy" stuff was first to go. But had it been this person's parents or grandparents that made such a choice?

In a recent article by David Brooks in The Atlantic the author explores our changing culture that lacks moral, religious or spiritual education for people of all ages. He notes that people without a moral compass have no ideals by which to direct their lives. He writes; "Expecting people to build a satisfying moral and spiritual life on their own by looking within themselves is asking too much. A culture that leaves people morally naked and alone leaves them without the skills to be decent to one another."

In mid-September when the scheduling crush hits I urge you to think again about what things will be shed from your schedule. Being part of a faith community can be a critical part of life, not just for young people but for all of us; choose wisely.

Pastor Kevin

Fall Worship Schedule

We return to our fall worship schedule on **Sunday, September 24**

Saturday, 5:30pm worship (inside)

Sunday 9am worship

10am Growing in God

(age 3 through adults)

11am worship (livestreamed)

Church Council Information About the Call Process

The following statement was presented to worshippers on August 19 & 20:

As most or all of you are aware, in late September our congregation will be entering the call process for a new senior pastor.

Many thanks to each of you who have participated in one of the town hall meetings. We've received great feedback that will enable us to define the goals for our congregation for the next five or ten years, or even longer. Just as importantly, it will help the call committee find candidates who can help lead us towards these goals.

It's council's goal to keep everyone updated as much as possible. One unknown was that the call process could take up to three separate paths, and that depended on whether Pastor Kerri was interested in being considered as a candidate for Senior Pastor. She let council know on Thursday night that she does NOT wish to be considered. In her own words, she feels "energized by and affirmed by her current call as Associate Pastor, with half her time devoted to children, youth and families, and she looks forward to building on the relationships and programming that she has been fostering over the last 18 months as associate pastor." I'm sure that decision will be well received by many members who believe she is doing an excellent job in her current role.

With that being said, the Call process will now follow a traditional route of working only with external candidates for Senior Pastor. Council meets with Pastor Asplin from the synod on September 22 to begin this process. We will provide updates along the way as appropriate.

Thank you

Altar Guild...A Quiet Way to Serve Our Lord

The Altar Guild at Our Redeemer cares for our worship space so that when the people gather our sanctuary is welcoming and all the elements of worship are in place. Although the work provided by the Altar Guild happens behind the scenes, we can't do without them!!!

Our Altar Guild is very much in need of some new members! Would you consider offering a few hours of your time to participate in the Altar Guild? Here is what we do:

- We work primarily on Sundays, before and/or after the worship service (both 9:00 & 11:00).
- We work in teams.
- We work quietly behind the scenes.
- We sign up for the schedule taking personal plans into consideration.
- We get together outside of Sunday morning a couple of times a year.
- We receive training/mentoring to learn what to do.

The Altar Guild is going to meet on Wednesday, September 6 at 7:00 p.m. This is a great opportunity to learn more about Altar Guild and to see if this is a ministry that you would enjoy doing. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Altar Guild Chair, Becky Long at beck.long@yahoo.com or Pastor Martha. You are welcome to check out the meeting on September 6 without making a commitment before attending!

Chancel Choir

Choir practice will resume on **Wednesday, September 13 at 7pm**. The choir meets weekly for rehearsal on Wednesday evening, and sings at the 11am service on Sundays, beginning September 24. Contact Mary Helen Barr with questions.

Pub Theology

Tuesday, September 26, 7:00pm at Voodoo Brewing Co. in Houston, PA.



God’s Work – Our Hands Sunday, September 10

The Schedule looks like this: 10:00 - 10:45 Worship Service (Sanctuary) 10:45 - 12:00 Service Activities (Fellowship Hall) 11:45 – 12:30 Lunch (Fellowship Hall) Except for the worship service, participants will be able to come and go from activities as you choose.

Our Service Activities include:

- Prepare Lasagna for the City Mission
- Make plastic canvas bookmarks for shut-ins
- Color/draw pictures and placemats for the VA Hospital
- Write letters to active-duty service personnel
- Assemble school kits for Lutheran World Relief

Please sign up using a registration card at a worship service or [online](#) so we will be prepared for everyone. Activities are designed to include children through adults. Please join us and thousands of other congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on this 10th Anniversary of our Day of Service, God’s Work-Our Hands.

Day of Service School Kits Project

One of our projects for our “**God’s Work. Our Hands.**” day of service is to put together school kits for Lutheran World Relief. Thanks to your donations we now have everything we need for 60 kits. We will make additional kits as supplies come into the church.

Growing in God classes

A new year of Growing in God (Sunday School) classes begins on **Sunday, September 24**. Students age 3 - kindergarten meet upstairs in the preschool rooms, 1st-6th graders meet in the social hall, and 7th-12th graders meet in the youth room. Parents/guardians should plan to complete the "Student Information Sheet" [online](#), preferably before classes begin. Talk to Pastor Kerri or Phyllis Permar if you have any questions.



Sunday Morning Adult Class

Pastor Martha invites all adults interested in participating in the Sunday Morning Adult Study to join her in the Conference Room at **10:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 24**. Pastor Martha will share a few ideas and hear the preferences of class members as we plan for what we will study this fall.

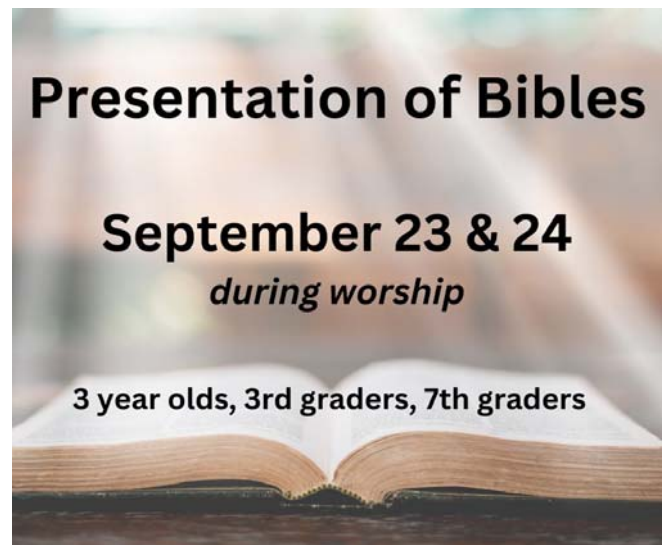


Crossroads Confirmation

Crossroads Confirmation is a time of learning and formation for students in 7th-9th grade. Classes will begin on Sunday, October 22 at 6:30pm. All new and returning students and parents should plan to attend an informational meeting on **Sunday, September 24 at 12:15pm** (following 11am worship). Please RSVP to Pastor Kerri at rev.kerri.clark@gmail.com.

Presentation of Bibles

In worship on **Saturday, September 23 and Sunday, September 24**, we will present Bibles to three year olds, third graders, and seventh graders, as we help parents fulfill their commitment in baptism to place in their child's hands the holy scriptures. Join us for worship as we celebrate!



Bible Workshop

Want to learn how to use that new Bible? Students and families of all ages are invited to join Pastor Kerri for a Bible Workshop on **Wednesday, September 27 at 6:30pm**. Bring your Bible as we share in games, crafts, and conversation!

First Communion Classes

Children who wish to begin receiving holy communion are invited to attend two preparatory classes on **Wednesday, October 18 and 25, from 6-7:30pm**. We will celebrate in worship on Reformation weekend, October 28 & 29. This class is especially suited for students in first grade and above, though parents of younger children who wish to participate may be in conversation with Pastor Kerri. Please RSVP to Pastor Kerri at rev.kerri.clark@gmail.com.

Church Picnic

Join us after worship on **Sunday, September 17** for food, fun, and fellowship! Bring a dish to share for a picnic lunch, then stay for games, activities for kids and more! See the bulletin board to sign up to set up, clean up, and/or bring a dish to share.



VBS

Thanks again to all our participants and volunteers for a great week of VBS last month! We learned all about how God's love is a seed, rooted and growing in each of us as we grow in faith, have fun, and change the world. One of the ways we changed the world this week was through our gifts and offerings. With the addition of gifts from congregation members on Saturday and Sunday, we raised \$530 - that's enough to support TWO community vegetable gardens, TWO sets of seeds and tools, and THREE fruit tree seedlings through ELCA Good Gifts! Wow!

VBS Meeting

VBS volunteers are invited to attend a debriefing meeting on **Tuesday, September 5 at 7pm**. If you've not yet completed your survey, there's still time! Let Pastor Kerri know if you need the link again.





Blessing of Animals

Save the date! A worship service including the blessing of animals will be held on **Saturday, October 8 at 5:30pm**. Bring your pets (on a leash or in a carrier) for a special blessing as we remember the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, who cared deeply for nature and animals.

Young Adult Gathering

Young adults (age 18-30ish) are invited to gather for a campfire, s'mores, and lawn games on **Tuesday, September 19 at 7pm** at the Langley home (104 Lisa Ct, McMurray). Sign up on the bulletin board or [online](#).

Family Friday

K-6th graders and families: bring your dinner and a chair and join us on the playground for Family Friday on **Friday, September 8 at 5:30pm**. In the event of inclement weather, we'll meet for games in the social hall.

Member News

Thank You

Many thanks for the cards and prayers during my recent hospital stays. They were greatly appreciated.

Ron Kilgore

Habitat for Humanity

On August 6, a group of 6 from our church worked with the Habitat for Humanity construction team on a townhome project in the Lincoln – Larimer section of Pittsburgh. Our work consisted of painting ceilings and walls in the two newly constructed townhomes. We also had the opportunity to work with a potential owner. It was a wonderful and blessed day and very rewarding for all. We look forward to another workday in the near future and invite anyone that is interested to join us. No construction experience is necessary; just a desire to serve our brothers and sisters in need.





In Our Prayers

We lift up the following members of our congregation so that they may be strengthened by our prayers of intercession:

Trudy Wagner, Peggy Barczak, John Till, Aaron Steffick, Ron Kilgore, Chris Decker, Amy Foertsch, Randy Stonemark, Beth Ricciuti, Steve Broome, Carol Ausefski, Gary McGaffic, Mandy Jarosh, George Andrewson, Kathy Russman, Ray Hrabar, Cindy Cox, Kerri Evans, Dorothy Dillemoth, and Edith Bencic.

We remember those friends and family members who have asked for our prayers:

Betty Rively, Sarah Joyce, Mike O'Brien, Nancy Galley, Jessica Mannion, Anthony Santaguida, Gary Graff, Steve Lombardi, D. Tom Emery, Dan Stimmel, Margaret "Peggy" Stopko, Ray Keisling, Jan Shaw, Rick Wilson, Bob Hohowski, Tom Caley, Marcy Raeford, Nancy Lyons, Leo Patrone, Bob Ruppel, Kevin Ruppel, Paul McKosky, Phil Neubauer, Nancy Adams, Margaret Moran, Ellyn Whitt and family, Lynn Oberg, Jess Izzi Reiter, Jennifer Kepple Styles, Judy Concannon, Samantha L. Middlemiss, Gracie Patton, Nikki Baselj, Beth Gallagher, George Langford, Jeff Schwarz, Stan Karoleski, Robert Hildebrand, Jean Orth, Linda Moeslein, Joe Sarubbi, Brad Olson, Megan Meseck, Ellen Deutsch, Cyndi Quinn, Sam, Beth Napolitano, Wendy Brosky, Jess Lee, Carolyn Dagg, Lisa Grimes, Lee Gauden, Adam Miskow, Kathy Oberle, Diane Ley, Doug Bush, Mildred Maize, Owen Miller, Catie Geory, Dolores Munsick, Larry Arch, Jeanie Rose, Chuck Miller, Ian Gonzalez, Rhianna Wilk, June Lance, Gary Stinson, Chris, Doug, Terri Strawn, Jolie Mihalik, Art W., Kate, Tina Thielet, and Dave Schrader.

We remember those who grieve:

Jim and Carol Locher and family on the death of Jim's mother, Marilyn Locher.

The most recently added names appear at the beginning of the list and will remain for three months. You may add names, remove a name, or ask for renewal by submitting your request in writing and placing it in the offering plate, drop off in the church office, or submit by email to orlc@comcast.net.

Stewardship— How Are We Doing?

Year to Date as of July 2023

	This Year			Last Year		
	Current	Building	Total	Current	Building	Total
Income	\$274,714	\$31,026	\$305,740	\$277,727	\$34,375	\$312,102
Expenses	\$251,785		\$251,785	\$269,775		\$269,775
Surplus (deficit)	\$22,929	\$31,026	\$53,955	\$7,952	\$34,375	\$42,327
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Other Outreach Offerings	Year to Date
Abiding Missions	\$700
City Mission	\$378
City Mission Food Pantry	\$161
ELCA World Hunger	\$3,530
ELCA Disaster Relief DOM	\$94
ELCA Disaster Relief Intl	\$895
Lutheran World Relief	<u>\$220</u>
	\$5,978

MINISTRY SCHEDULE/SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 2023						
	September 3, 2023	September 10, 2023	September 17, 2023	September 24, 2023		October 1, 2023
WORSHIP LEADER	10:00am	10:00am	10:00am	9:00am	11:00am	9:00am 11:00am
Acolyte	Jaclyn Capezzuto	Jack Binotto	*	Sam Scher	Jaclyn Capezzuto	* *
Lay Assistant	Kim Maize	Susan Loeser	Kim Chupinka	Laura Culp	Max Rush	Mohylyn Yocca Maegan Bregenser
Lector	Mohylyn Yocca	Debbie Healey Langley	Karen Smith	Tim Prex	Heather Morelli	Ruth Ann Lowery Jennifer Milavec
Communion Assistant	Barb Hrabar	Jackie Beck	Sarah Dagnal	Tina Borra	Susan O'Brien	Missy Bookhammer Eliana Beck
Communion Assistant	Sue Lambert	Missy Bookhammer	Barb Hrabar	Karen Glass	Carl Ruppel	Kim Chupinka Jackie Beck
Communion Assistant	Linda Nickles	Garrett Langley	Soheila Lunney	Linda Nickles	Sally Ruppel	Susan Loeser Sarah Dagnal
Communion Assistant	Phyllis Permar	Susan O'Brien	Linda Nickles	Phyllis Permar	Jamie Whyte	Linda Nickles Barb Hrabar
Greeter	Ruth Brosky	Binotto Family	Dani Mizia	Ann and Sophie Scher	Paula Reese	Phyllis Permar Karla Lance
Usher	Joe Maize	Drew Lance	Jim Mizia	Dave Borra	Jacob Casper	Keith Lowery Drew Lance
Usher	John Yocca	Karla Lance	Max Mizia	Ken Rigby	Eric Reese	John Yocca Doug Meley
Gift Bearer	*	Henry Binotto	Penny Mizia	Eliza and Norah Prex	*	* *
Altar Guild	Lori Greene	Susan Loeser	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD TBD
Altar Guild	TBD	Sally Ruppel	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD TBD
PowerPoint	Rolf Otterness	Meredith Pomposelli	Garrett Langley	Dan and Sam Scher	Jennifer Hewitt	TBD TBD
Camera	Sam Mizia	Sam Mizia	Sam Mizia	X	Sam Mizia	X Sam Mizia
Head Teller (Monday)	Judy Pilof (Sunday)	Carol Locher	Susan Loeser	Barb Schumacher		Gary Milavec (Sunday)
Council Teller (Monday)	Jennifer Hewitt (Sunday)	Martha Rhone	Jena Oberg	Jackie Beck		Becky Long (Sunday)

*Child volunteer(s) is requested.

If you find that you cannot serve when scheduled, please contact the church office.

OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

105 Gateshead Drive
McMurray, PA 15317-3101

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724-941-7467

SUMMER WORSHIP SERVICES

SATURDAY 5:30 PM (Usually outside—weather permitting)
and SUNDAY 10:00 AM (In-person and live-streamed)

Online services are available through [facebook.com/ORLutheran](https://www.facebook.com/ORLutheran), YouTube
and the church's website.

GROWING IN GOD (Sept. - May), 10:00 AM, Age 3-Adults

THE REV. MARTHA CLEMENTSON, INTERIM PASTOR
443-699-9837, clementsonmartha@gmail.com

THE REV. KEVIN CLEMENTSON, INTERIM PASTOR
443-699-8534, kclementson@yahoo.com

THE REV. KERRI CLARK, PASTOR - 724-603-5589, rev.kerri.clark@gmail.com

HEIDI GARNER, DIRECTOR, NOAH'S ARK PRESCHOOL - 724-942-6699
noahspreschool@comcast.net

MARY HELEN BARR, MUSIC DIRECTOR - 412-780-3357 (cell)

ELAINE DOLCICH, OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR

THE REV. JOHN F. YEDLICKA, PASTOR EMERITUS

Office 724-941-7467 Fax 724-941-3262

E-mail: orlc@comcast.net

Website: <https://www.OurRedeemer-peters.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ORLutheran>

YouTube: <https://tinivurl.com/ORLCyoutube>

OUR VISION

The vision of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church is to be a welcoming church where people of all ages and backgrounds will: encounter God in worship, experience Christian community, discover their God-given gifts, grow in faith, and be equipped for service and witness as we are sent out into God's world.