

Our Redeemer News

Web Page: www.ourredeemer-lcms.org

Telephone: (586) 781-5567

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January 2019

SERMON and SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY

- Jan. 5/6: **HAPPY NEW YOU – SELFLESS!**
“I Will Serve Others”
Matthew 23:11
- Jan. 12/13: **HAPPY NEW YOU – SELFLESS!**
“I Will Be More Generous”
Proverbs 21:26
- Jan. 19/20: **LIFE SUNDAY**
“Living In This World”
Matthew 5:16
- Jan. 26/27: **HAPPY NEW YOU – SELFLESS!**
“I Will Be Grateful”
1 Corinthians 10:31

Behold
I make all things new.
Revelation 21:5

Happy New Year ♪ *Happy New Year* ♪ *Happy New Year*

HAPPY NEW YEAR

**May God's glory fill this
year for you!**



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**Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."
(Matthew 16:24)**

As we start another new year, thoughts often turn to resolutions. "I will lose 20 pounds." "I will exercise." "I will spend less." Maybe even some are spiritual: "I will pray more often." All of which are wonderful, but all of which are motivated by our selfishness more than anything else. It is natural for us to live our lives through the lenses of, "What's best for me." But as followers of Jesus, we are called to look at life another way. "Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Here's a little thought as we start 2019, make some resolutions that are deliberately selfless. "I will be a better witness for Christ." "I will serve others." "I will be more generous." "I will be more grateful." (And I will be speaking on these topics in January, by the way!) The more we live life with the understanding that it is about Jesus (not me) the more abundant our lives become. Resolve that 2019 is the year to come after Jesus.

Happy New Year! In Him I am faithfully yours,
Pastor Draeger

P.S. Once again Jane and I are overwhelmed by the love and generosity of the Our Redeemer family! Thank you for all the Christmas gifts and good wishes.

God bless you! Pastor and Jane

QUEST FOR CHRIST

HOPE FOR A CHANGING WORLD

We live in a world that is changing rapidly and uncontrollably. Feelings of instability, insecurity, and inadequacy surround us, but we have an enduring source of hope; God does not change. His power and love, expressed to us through His immutable Word, have remained constant.

When we have God living through us, we can have a sense of stability, regardless of storms blowing about us. God's provision of home—carried out by His Spirit—is part of our salvation. One of the responsibilities of the Holy Spirit is the renewing of our mind. He empowers us to think about our circumstances as God does. Unless we observe the difficulties and instabilities in our life as God looks at them, we will never be able to see the best plan for dealing with our trials and stresses.

In order for the Holy Spirit to do this work effectively, we must be studying the Word of God. Our reading will reveal how God works in the life of believers, what He expects from His children, and how He expresses His love and power. Then, when we are most in need of reassurance, the Holy Spirit can bring to mind the principles and promises we have read. Anchoring us to the Bible is an important work of the Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit is absolutely essential to the Christian life. Sent by the Father to be our constant companion in this life, He helps provide stability by giving direction and showing us the wisest and most joyous ways to live.





From the Director of Worship and Music

Greetings!

I've heard it said that dogs have families, while cats have staff. I can't say if that's true of cats, but I can vouch for the part about dogs. I've also been told that a wise man once prayed, "Lord, please make me the kind of person my dog thinks I am." There's wisdom in that. My family has had numerous dogs over the years. All of them have been wonderful to have around. Our current model, about whom I've written before, is no different.. She's a paragon of faithful devotion. She worships us. No, really, she literally worships us. Almost her entire life is a devotional on what our life in Christ should look like.

Her favorite thing in all the world is to simply be near us. If I sit in front of the TV, she will lay at my feet for hours. If I touch her, that's even better. Doesn't have to be much; all I have to do is rest my foot on her, and she's in heaven. Move to another room and she's right behind you. And if I actually pay attention to her, forget it; there's no getting rid of her. If only following Christ came as naturally to me as following me does to my dog.

As much as she loves to be near us, she waits patiently for us when we're gone. And she doesn't hold a grudge. It doesn't matter if we're gone for ten minutes or a week; Once we're back it's like we never left. After the initial welcome home, that is. There's no "Where have you been?" or "What took you so long?" She's just happy that we're back. No amount of neglect or inattention seems to phase her. She's a model of perfect forgiveness. I think that if I were to beat her with a stick for an hour and then walk in the other room and sit down, she would immediately follow me and lay down at my feet. Total forgiveness.

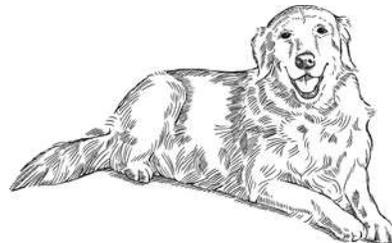
Her obedience is amazing. Call her and she comes. Sometimes reluctantly, but she comes. Tell her to sit and she sits. Granted, that's usually because she thinks she's about to get a treat. Sometimes she stumbles upon a treat, but if you say

"leave it," she leaves it alone. No temptation is so great that it can't be overcome. Sometimes she slips up; but she responds to discipline without any hint of resentment. She is perfectly comfortable with taking "no" for an answer. She receives forgiveness as easily as she gives it. She doesn't wallow in self-pity, or beat herself up. After a reprimand it's just back to being near us and obeying. She is absolutely secure in her belief that she's loved, and accepted as part of the family.

What a picture of the Christian life. I know that I, and not my dog, was made in God's image, but sometimes I wonder which one of us is the better image bearer. My prayer should be, "Lord, make me the kind of person my dog *is*." How much better my life would be if I could just learn from my dog. If I longed to be near the important people in my life as much as my dog longs to be near me. If I waited on God, or even other people, as patiently as my dog waits for me. If, like my dog, I didn't hold grudges, and forgave immediately and completely. If I accepted discipline without resentment. If I followed Christ as if I were chained to him. If I did as I was told with or without a reward. Or, most importantly, if I received grace as easily as my dog does. In a word, if I worshiped God the way my dog worships me. God grant us the grace to worship Him like that.

Until next month,

Roger Hackelberg,
Director of Worship and Music





Have You Ever Considered . . . ?

Have you ever considered the ramifications of those seemingly small social gestures that you do every day, or take for granted, or do without really consciously thinking about, or those we simply forget to do altogether because you are so busy thinking about other things?

For example, the small act of saying, “God Bless You” in response to a stranger’s sneeze among a crowd of people, rather than silence, “gesundheit” or “bless you.” Or, saying, “Merry Christmas” during the holiday season, rather than simply “Happy Holidays.” Or, putting up a nativity scene including the baby Jesus, rather than just holiday lights.

Let us consider these small gestures, and imagine, for a moment, the impact upon those who experience them, whether or not they were intended beneficiaries.

For example, the harried businessman at year-end, or the beleaguered student studying for finals. They are reminded of their childhood Christmases along with Christian upbringings from which they have strayed due to the pressure of business or school, promising themselves to return to their Christian faith as a new year’s resolution and a new beginning, and actually do so in 2019.

The passerby who hears, “God bless you” or “Merry Christmas” and is inspired to repeat those same words throughout the day, the holiday season and thereafter, who otherwise would not have vocalized, and those who heard the message, were impacted, and responded in kind.

Similarly, all those who are struck in some positive way, however small, to think about Jesus, His message of love and His impact upon the world. That seed germinates within the hearer’s heart inspiring further reflection, doing deeds and positive results. I could go on with hypothetical examples of the positive impact of these small, overt gestures embodying Christianity, but I believe you get my point. And so, it is with those gestures described in the regular inserts in the weekly bulletin entitled, “Evangelism Is as Easy as . . .” Hopefully, they serve as reminders to take action in demonstration of your faith and in fulfillment of Jesus’ Great Commission. It is easy, go and do likewise. If you can share a similar tip that you utilize, have heard or seen utilized that you like, please let us know by scribbling a note about that tip and dropping it in the offering basket on Sunday, it will find its way to the Evangelism Committee. We will share it with the congregation. It will be truly appreciated.

“Merry Christmas” and “God bless you.”

Ron Barrows, Chairman, Evangelism Committee



Mission:
Life Fellowship

HAPPY NEW YEAR! WELCOME BACK! We will resume classes on January 9th! 4:30-6:30pm (regular time).

Looking ahead—February is Children’s Ministry Month. On Mission Life Kids will be participating in ushering greeting, reading, and fellowship at the 10:30 services. Please talk with your child about what they would like to do. Also, let me know ASAP if there is a Sunday when your child CANNOT participate. I will be asking them on January 9th.

Our Mission Life kids will be sending cookies and Valentines to our college students that are away at school on February 6th. If you have a student, please give the address to the church office by February 1st. Thank you, Kathy Sowers



LWML Mites Working Hard

\$25,000 of National LWML mites will go to **Nursing Students Serving with Mercy Medical Team**. Seeking to expand their educational exposure, nursing students in the Concordia University system would be afforded the opportunity to participate in a short-term mission trip to Madagascar with Mercy Medical Team. This service opportunity for students to work with medical professionals in providing medical and/or spiritual care to the underserved is invaluable.

\$25,000 of Michigan District mites will go to **New Beginnings for Children with Learning Needs (LSEM)**. Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM) has experienced in the past few years 70% increase of its reach to serve children with learning needs. Start-up costs for interventions are significant and this grant would fund five new programs to address ever-increasing needs in classrooms while still allowing children opportunity to receive a Christian Education.

Everyone is encouraged to save mites (money). Mites are coins/money given to missions. The term is taken from the story of the Widow’s Mite in Luke 21. Please deposit it in the large LWML box or leave in the church office with clear mite box identification. Thank you.

Our Redeemer LWML Ministry



NEWS.

We hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and our blessings for a great 2019!

Linda Martin has been chosen for Our Redeemer's Lutheran Woman of the Year for 2018. Congratulations Linda! The luncheon to honor Linda and other recipients of the Lutheran Woman of the Year award will be at Burton Manor in Livonia on March 19, 2019. The cost is \$29.00 per person. If interested in attending, please see Kathy Sowers or Joyce Mason.

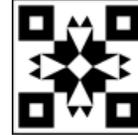
Our next Ladies Night Out will be on April 5, 2019. Look for more information in upcoming newsletters and bulletins.

Reminder there is no January meeting. Our next meeting will be on February 4, 2019 at 6:30 pm.

Hope to see you there!

Joyce Mason LWML Secretary





Quilt to be raffled off at
9th Annual Pasta & Chicken
Dinner

Step right up and get your tickets for our 9th Annual Pasta & Chicken Dinner before they sell out! We will be raffling off a beautiful quilt made by the Stitch Addict, Evelyn Washchuck, on Feb. 6 at Greystone Golf Club at our event. See the following flyer for event details.

Tickets can be purchased here:
<http://www.samaritanhousemichigan.org/SpaghettiDinner>



**Sharing Tree makes
Christmas wishes come true!**

We had another great year for Sharing Tree! In 2018, we served 200 families and 17 group/nursing homes and distributed 752 gifts, including 33 bikes! Thanks to a generous community; our many, many dedicated volunteers; our sponsoring churches; the Romeo Goodfellows for supplying gift cards to our clients; Four County Community Foundation for its ongoing financial support; and our Sharing Tree Committee, comprised of Diane Smiles, Ed Risch, Mike Lefebvre and Michelle Patrzalek. Merry Christmas and God Bless!



- soups
- cereal
- oatmeal
- jelly
- syrup
- feminine hygiene products
- laundry detergent
- canned fruit
- bath tissue
- diapers size 4-6





Appleton, Wisconsin • Minneapolis, Minnesota

Financial Column

Contact: James M. Riske, CFP®, MSF, LUTCF
E-mail: james.riske@thrivent.com
Phone: (586) 726-8899 ext. 227

Time for a financial checkup!

A changing life leads to changing finances - make sure you're up-to-date

For most of us, checkups are a regular part of life. Dental visits, auto maintenance appointments and even glances in the bathroom mirror all help us monitor performance, catch potential problems and assure us that all is – or will be – well.

What's true of teeth, engines and grooming is also true of finances: regular checkups are recommended. Why? Changes both great and small affect the strategies people have developed to help achieve their financial goals. Unfortunately, too many people act as though once their financial program is in place their work is done. But this isn't the case.

As a general rule, Thrivent Financial recommends you review your financial program at least once each year. Certain life changes – the birth or adoption of a child, a change in marital status (married, divorced or widowed), the death of a family member or changes to your health – should serve as reminders that a financial tune-up is in order.

Other changes in personal economics can also have a huge impact on financial programs. These may include shifts in employment status or salary (e.g. loss of job or a pay cut/freeze), home ownership changes, significant changes in total assets or debt, the receipt of an inheritance and tax law changes that can all make previous strategies obsolete.

If you have a do-it-yourself mentality, a number of print and electronic resources exist to help you monitor your finances on a regular basis. However, most can benefit from the knowledge, experience and insight that financial services professionals can offer.

Qualified financial professionals can help people evaluate their present financial strategies and stay current on new laws, regulations, products and economic developments. Even more important, financial professionals can challenge the unrealistic assumptions that people may have and help them overcome money management's greatest threat: procrastination.

To live is to experience change. How and when change will appear is impossible to predict, but a financial checkup is one sure way to help your financial objectives – and your sense of financial confidence – keeps pace with all that occurs.

This article was prepared by Thrivent Financial for use by local area representative James M. Riske. He has offices at 14460 Lakeside Cir. Suite 250 in Sterling Heights and can also be reached at (586) 726-8899 ext. 227.

Neither Thrivent Financial for Lutherans nor its respective financial representatives and employees provide legal or tax advice. For complete details, consult with your tax advisor or attorney.







The Sacredness of Life

Forty-five years ago this month, death became a god. The US Supreme Court *Roe V Wade* decision struck down all abortion laws and more than 64,000,000 children have died through induced abortions. Add the millions of women and men wounded by abortion and the tragedy becomes incomprehensible. A spiritual tragedy resulted as well. Death became a god that people - many of whom claim to be Christians - turn to for rescue. Hence, abortion is basically idolatry - trusting in the god of death rather than in the Lord of life.

Christian churches developed Sanctity of Human Life Sundays/Months to help counter the lies of the world by sharing the truth about life. *Sanctity*. This "churchy" sounding word means being considered sacred or holy, and therefore entitled to respect and reverence. Why? God gives human life sanctity because He creates, redeems, and holds life in the palm of His hand.

With 4-D ultrasound, you may have seen your unborn child or grandchild's photo. As God knits us together in our mother's womb, He gives us amazing abilities. The heart beats at 21 days. The brain functions at around 6 weeks. By 8 weeks, all organ systems are in place. We tread water, swim, hear, suck our thumbs, do somersaults, wave, and kick mom.

But there is one thing these little ones can't do. They cannot speak. Scripture calls us to speak for the defenseless such as

these. We speak of the value God gives them as their Creator and Redeemer and also as little ones Jesus desires to gather in

His arms through Holy Baptism. We are called to speak the love of Christ to moms who may likewise be in vulnerable situations. But it doesn't stop there.

Feeling frightened, the pregnant college freshman wants her "problem" to go away. Grieving the loss of abilities, the homebound grandma wants her suffering to end. Terrified, new parents hear the news of "problems" in their unborn child. Society offers death, but Christians offer Christ. Christ ransomed us from slavery to death by shedding His holy, precious blood. He offers forgiveness. He offers His presence and mercy in our fears and suffering. He offers to make sense out of suffering and best of all; He gives what He offers.

No circumstance, no matter how frightening, can separate us from God's love. No sin, no matter how horrible, can separate us from God's forgiveness (Romans 8:31-39). God did not choose us because we were special, but we ARE special because God chose us (1 Peter 2:9).

And so to those who might be burdened with the guilt of an abortion, we say "welcome!" Welcome here with the rest of us sinners. Be bathed in the grace and mercy that is yours in Christ. It is far too easy to condemn others or ourselves. But God does not condemn. He forgives the repentant sinner.

Besides speaking up for the vulnerable unborn, the elderly, the disabled, and the woman with an unplanned pregnancy, we offer them our gifts of love and help. During the month of January, you will be able to pick up an empty baby bottle and put your monetary gifts inside. When collected, these gifts will support Lutherans For Life (LFL) and a local pregnancy center. We also challenge you to make yourself available to visit a shut-in, take a meal to someone in crisis, drive someone to an appointment or church, or do something of your choosing.

It's a New Year and there are plenty of opportunities to share the love of Christ with the least of these. May God bless us all as we serve Him by serving others.

[Donna Zuehlk, LFL representative]



Baby Bottle Drive will be held once again during the month of January. Please take an empty baby bottle and put your coins, dollars, or checks inside it. We will be supporting Lutherans For Life and the Luke 5-2 crisis pregnancy center. If you prefer to write a check, please make it out to Our Redeemer and write "baby bottle drive" in the memo line. Please return the baby bottles by the 1st of February. Thank you so much. (Our Redeemer Life Team)



TALK WITH GOD *(Please remember these friends in your prayers)*
THOSE WITH LONG- or SHORT-TERM ILLNESS:

Barb Pieters *(broken hip)* Dorothy Brinker
Barb Pellegrino *(Muellers' friend; cancer)*
Frank Cody *(Margo Schuch's brother)* Mona Pfent *(Christin Peyerk's mom; cancer)*
Colin Segerlund *(Margo Schuch's grandson; asthma)*
Rae Lynn Koen *(Lanny Shepherd's sister; thyroid cancer)*
Lawrence Thom Anna Roper *(Currins' friend; Lyme Disease)*
Tina Hayden *(Haydens' daughter-in-law; cancer)*
Grace Angela Beachnau *(Mueller's granddaughter)*
Kim Cameron *(Brenneckes' friend; cancer)*
Sharon Allen Marilyn Lapadat *(Scott Johnston's Aunt-uterine cancer)*
Carlo DeAngelis *(friend of Nancy Ray's; stomach cancer)*
Ron Barrows *(MS)*
Orlin Allen *(Lymphoma/Hospitalization)* Janice Repphun *(surgery)*
Bill DeMeulenaere *(Cy's brother; stage 4 bone cancer)*
Bob Wales *(ALS)* Janet Rohrbeck Norma Milligan
Mike Gill Ken Coles
Joan Hemingway *(cancer)*
Allan Currin *(surgery)* Dick Ferguson
Judy Laurie Lee Newton *(knee)* Heidi Wolfe
Denise Neddermeyer



OUR FRIENDS & FAMILY ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE ARMED FORCES:



Jim Pfahlert *(June Shaver's nephew)*
Jon Ede *(June Shaver's nephew)*
Brad Morris
Sean Duggan *(Bridget Felax's brother)*
Mary Hampton *(friend of Orlin & Sharon Allen)*
Jordan Lenhart *(Ron & Christy's Hudson's son)*