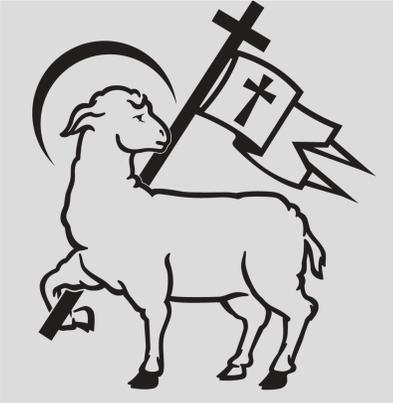


# THE REDEEMER REMINDER

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## Pastor's Message

by Pastor Michael C. Linderman, Ph. D.

On July 12, NASA released several photos from the James Webb telescope to the public. The result was a collective gasp of astonishment, as the world gazed upon amazingly detailed and colorful images from deep space. The Webb telescope, which currently orbits the earth, takes multiple layered photographs with its "Near-Infrared Camera". It makes the images from composite layers of exposures that each pick up a different wave-length of light. The telescope puts the layers together to produce these amazing pictures of stars and galaxies and space dust, all swirling and moving in space.

What I find so fascinating is that the light that was captured by this telescope is over 4 billion years old. According to my rather amateur astronomical understanding, that means that that light has been traveling (out-in all directions-at the speed of light) for over 4 billion years, and just a few weeks ago hit the lens of that telescope. Yes, that's how far across this little corner of the universe that light travelled. It also means that the things in the pictures are really that old. If we could somehow see that same space stuff as it is right now, we would see how much it's changed in over 4 billion years.

I was marveling at all this when my kids and I stayed up last weekend to see the Southern Delta Aquariids, a meteor shower that is peaking right now. I got bit by more mosquitoes than I saw shooting stars, but we did see a few! As we sat in our lawn chairs in the dark, craning our necks, I felt like we had been put in God's chest pocket and were being invited to peer out into God's ongoing symphony of creation, as it swirls and spins and changes, orbit after orbit, mile after mile, galaxy after galaxy. Psalm 8 says, "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?" We know...God does care. Indeed, God cares about it all! Happy Summer to you!+PL

## Evangelism News

The Evangelism Committee is looking forward again this year to participating in **Ramsey Day**. The date is Saturday September 10. We will be looking for volunteers of all ages to help with the Redeemer Booth. We usually have a game or two and some art projects for the kids. It's a fun day and a great way to meet new and old friends and families.

Please keep the date open if you can, and let me know if you can volunteer. We usually try to set up 2 hour shifts in addition to setting up and closing.

Looking forward to hearing from you. Send me an email for more questions and to volunteer. Thanks!

☀️☀️ Carol Dunbar  
[cdunbar4@gmail.com](mailto:cdunbar4@gmail.com)

Thanks  
for your  
donation.

The **Redeemer Quilting group** thanks everybody who has donated sheets. Now we have many! We will let you know when to donate more. Thank You!!



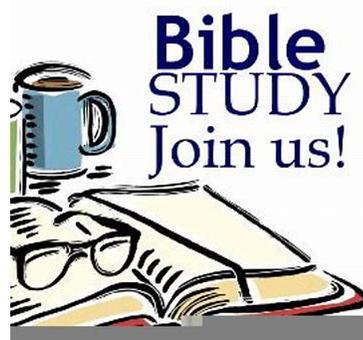
### Ramsey Day

Volunteer for 1 or 2 hours. Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0D44ADAE28A0FD0-redeemer1> to volunteer! For more information, contact Carol Dunbar at [cdunbar4@gmail.com](mailto:cdunbar4@gmail.com).

**HOW TO FIND our Sunday sign-ups:** Please go to our webpage, [www.redeemerramsey.org](http://www.redeemerramsey.org), each week for the links to sign up to **attend** worship, volunteer to **assist** in worship, and volunteer to **help out** at coffee hour.

### Bible Study Resumes Fall 2022

**Starts Wednesday, Sept 14 at 10am** in the Education building lounge and on Zoom.



**Sunday School Fall 2022**

Redeemer’s Sunday School will be back to normal this fall! Please register your child for our fall 2022 Sunday School by going to the Faith Formation drop-down menu on our website, [redeemerramsey.org](http://redeemerramsey.org).

- Sept 11 - Blessing of Backpacks
- Sept 18 - Rally Day; Outdoor service 10:15; Blessing of Sunday School volunteers
- Sept 25 - First day of in-person Sunday School at 9:15am

**Rally Day Picnic Sept 18, 2022**

Join us for **Outdoor** Worship at 10:15am. Bring your lawn chair, and a sandwich. We’ll provide the drinks, snacks and dessert!



**Confirmation Fall 2022 News**

Our confirmation program resumes in-person this fall. Entering 8<sup>th</sup> graders join our ninth graders for classes, service events and mentor meetings.

Sep 25 - Kickoff 4:30pm in Fellowship Hall.

Next classes on Oct. 2, 23 and 30.

Overnight retreat: Nov 11-12.



**Community Garden Volunteer Day!**

August 7, 2022, 9am to 3pm.

Come help out at Redeemer’s community garden, run by Common Food for Common Good. The garden is flourishing! As of July 26, we’ve harvested 40 lbs of snow peas, 4 lbs of string beans, 16 lbs of zucchini. Harvested produce has been donated to Toni’s Kitchen, a soup kitchen that provides over 1.5 million meals every year. To volunteer for Aug 7, sign up at [bit.ly/august7volunteer](http://bit.ly/august7volunteer).



## Music Notes

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by Fran Morton, Music Director

*“... lead the faithful nourished here to journey on in splendor.”*

Lutheranism is one of many Protestant denominations. As a family of belief we all have at least some music in common. Hymns like God Our Help in Ages Past; A Mighty Fortress; God Of Grace and God Of Glory belong to all. Over the coming weeks we will learn about and sing examples of hymns unique to the three sister traditions below.

**The Quakers** (Society of Friends) – founded in England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. William Penn, himself a Quaker, invited Quakers to settle in Pennsylvania. Quakers had no ordained clergy, believed in living a pure life and taking action on social issues. They became known for integrity in social and economic matters and as a denomination took positions on a number of issues. In 1745 they declared opposition to slavery. In the early 1800’s they added women’s rights and prison reform. We know them today as active globally in humanitarian activities through the American Friends Service Committee ([www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org)). Their hymnody emphasizes themes of peace, justice and service to others. Sunday services (Meetings) use no liturgy, have no ordained leader and can be an hour of silent meditation.

**The Unitarian Universalists** (UU’s) – founded in the Reformation. They are non-Trinitarian, i.e. believe that the Heavenly Father, Resurrected Son and Holy Spirit are all aspects of one God rather than three distinct persons in God. Unitarian ministers gathered individual congregations all around Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Unitarians were influential in America in Boston. In 1805 a Unitarian minister was named professor of divinity at Harvard College. Always associated with the latest

thinking in theology and science, the Unitarians merged with the Universalist Church of America in 1961. Since that merger the denomination’s identification as “Christian” waned. Rather, the merged UU tradition views Jesus and the Bible as exceptional sources of inspiration along with other holy people and traditions. Sunday services are similar to other non-liturgical protestants such as the Methodists or Presbyterians.

**Swedenborgians** (Church of the New Jerusalem) – founded in late 18<sup>th</sup> Sweden based on the theological writings of Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772). Swedenborg was the son of a prominent Lutheran pastor and spent his career as scientist and engineer. After a successful career, he took up a detailed study of the Bible and his writings formed the basis for the Swedenborgian tradition. Key tenets of his theology are – God is loving, never angry, judging or punishing; in all things God works to bring out goodness and growth; and, we are called to a life-long process of personal spiritual transformation. Sunday services are similar to Methodists or Presbyterians. Readings feature both Bible readings and readings from Swedenborg’s published works.

If you’d like to get a look at these hymnals, let me know. I own copies of all of them.

Fran

# Stirring chai



MSSEEMMAA'S MISSION UPDATE AS ELCA EAST AFRICA REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 2022

## ( SHOW-AND-TELL ISSUE )

Hi friends! In this issue, let me just show some photos from our ministries and lives in recent weeks, and tell some background about what's in the picture.

"I THANK GOD  
THAT I AM  
HEALED AND  
THIS THING  
WILL NEVER  
COME BACK."

## Fistula Camp



Nyazude was in primary school in Uganda, living as a refugee with her aunt, when the government closed all schools for almost two years citing Covid. She is one of the thousands of school girls in Uganda who got pregnant during this time. While pregnant, she traveled to her parents in a camp for internally displaced people in South Sudan, where she joined her parents and 10 younger siblings. She went into labor and two days later gave birth. In delivery she developed perineal

tear. It was improperly stitched and opened three days later, causing her to leak.

She says that after she got her problem, she was worried and crying every day. "People treated me with good words, telling me, 'You are not the only one,' and, 'It happens to people everywhere,'" she said. "But I didn't believe. I told them, 'You are lying!'" She learnt to take care of her baby and she was washing her clothes constantly.

She was referred to the fistula camp by our partner MSF, which flew her to the

capital. She was operated on and kept at the center for two weeks of post-op care.

"I went to the toilet and when it all came out the right way, I thanked the Lord that he healed me." Since then she has been all smiles. She keeps her hopes for the future and plans to go back to school as soon as she can.

Nyazude is one of 29 who received fistula surgery at the ELCAMSS Lutheran clinic in Juba, South Sudan, free of charge through an ELCA program in March.



## Joyful worship

One of my favorite parts of living in East Africa is the weekly celebration of worship that happens in so many churches, across denominations - singing, dancing, expressing joy. This worship is at Ilboru Lutheran Church in Arusha. DM

## Stirring Chai?

The title of this newsletter is a reference to one of the most calming sounds I know. Much of our work of building relationship happens over cups of chai, which is something that unites East Africans of hundreds of languages, cultures, and faiths.



## Girls march for their rights

**E**mpowered Girls members took part in a demonstration on the Day of the African Child (June 16), marching through Arusha to raise awareness of child protection and violence against children. Among the hundreds who marched, many shouted a call-and-response in Swahili, "Give us... our rights". In a society where children are so often voiceless, it was a powerful statement of reclaiming voice. DM

### LWF VISIT

A delegation from the Lutheran World Federation visited recently. Leading the group was Rev. Anne Burghardt (sixth from left) from Estonia, who was recently elected as the global body's general secretary. DM



### MISSING MARK

Dr. Mark Jacobson died in February after a brief illness. He and his wife Linda served the ELCA and ELCT for 38 years. As his burial took place in Minnesota, we had a vigil for him (at right) at his longtime home in Arusha. He was an example of mission to me, and a mentor to many. It's hard to believe he's gone. DM





## Floods & Drought

Much of East Africa has been caught in a climate pattern of years of drought followed by harrowing floods. You can see the line where water had reached the night before on the brick wall of Mr. Jimen's home in Kyela, Tanzania, in May. Meanwhile, parts of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia are entering their dryest drought in a decade. ELCA is responding with drought relief support in those areas. DM



## Pace of change

In my travels in the region I am amazed by how fast infrastructure improves. I used smooth new expressways in Nairobi and Kampala, and the new Waiyaki Way in Nairobi (above) last month. But my favorite was seeing the road in front of my in-laws home in western Uganda (at right) paved and dust-free. DM



### CUTE SPIKY PET

Our children caught a hedgehog and named it Max. This was very exciting for the kids (and me!). DM



### CELEBRATIONS

Weddings, birthdays, baptisms - these are parts of being in community we cherish. My wife and I dressed up for a send-off June 16. DM

## On Recent SCOTUS Decisions...

by Pastor Linderman

Here is my attempt to explain what many Lutherans find disturbing about some of the Supreme Court's recent decisions regarding **religion**. (Other recent decisions will receive comment at a later date.) Redeemer members are free to disagree with me, but I would gently say that the perspective I'm articulating is widely shared among many Lutherans of the ELCA, plus other Christian denominations, as well as organizations and individuals representing some non-Christian religions in the US.

There are two religion clauses in the first amendment of the US Constitution; the free exercise clause, and the establishment clause. The first provides that no one may be prohibited from the free exercise of their religious beliefs, and the second provides that the government may not establish or promote religious beliefs among the public.

Most of the time, my neighbor's religious beliefs have a relatively small impact on my life. My Muslim neighbor can build his mosque in town because this activity is protected by the free exercise clause. Likewise for me, my church's ringing of its bells at noon every day is also protected by the free exercise clause. In both cases, we see or hear each other's presence, but we are not prevented thereby from practicing our own faith.

As for the establishment of religion, the federal, state or local government cannot teach the Christian or Muslim religion in public schools as if they were objective truth. Schools teach "about" these religions, but in a historical sense. The government may not teach "as true" or promote a certain religious point of view to citizens who are using that government's

services (like riding public transportation or going to a public-school program).

The recent SCOTUS decisions in [Carson v. Makin](#), about whether the State of Maine could refuse to fund religious schools, and [Kennedy v. Bremerton School District](#), about whether a football coach could pray on the field after games, have favored free exercise freedoms over establishment clause restrictions.

In "Carson", the court's majority ruled (6-3) that Maine had to allow private religious schools to receive tax dollar-funded tuition grants that were given to parents to promote school choice. This ruling favored parents' free exercise of religion over the "establishment" concern that the public's taxes could be used to teach religious education (in those religious schools that received the funds). In "Kennedy", the majority ruled (6-3) that the football coach could pray on school property as he saw fit, surrounded by any students and/or teachers who wanted to pray with him. Again, the ruling favored the coach's personal free exercise of religion over the establishment concern that the school might be promoting a certain religion among the students through its paid employee.

As a Lutheran Christian, my free exercise of religion is not *necessarily* threatened by a religious school receiving taxpayer-provided funding. A Supreme Court ruling a few years ago found that a (Missouri Synod) Lutheran school in Montana could receive taxpayer funds to repair its playground. However, if that school uses my taxes (if I live in Montana) to teach its brand of Lutheranism, my free exercise of religion is impinged upon. The government

## Pastor's View, continued...

is using my money to support a religious viewpoint that I don't subscribe to.

Likewise, my free exercise of religion is not *necessarily* threatened by a teacher who goes on the field and prays by himself. He is free to do that. But when he gathers students around him on school property, and then invites them to pray WITH him, then my free exercise of religion (to control my children's religious education) is being threatened by a school official promoting a religious point of view that I might not agree with. (For starters, I believe that Jesus teaches us NOT to pray in public, in Matt. 6:6, so this teacher is already NOT practicing my religious faith. The exception to Matt 6:6 would be when religious officials are asked by the government to solemnize public ceremonies, such as Memorial Day or 9/11 observances).

The problem arises when a governmental employee or institution promotes religious viewpoints. Private citizens (like me) or institutions (such as Redeemer) are free to promote their viewpoints with their own money and on their own time, but not with my (non-Lutheran) neighbor's tax money . What I'm arguing may seem shocking to some who think religion is always a good thing for our country. There has been a common criticism for many years that restricting open prayer in public schools was the beginning of some kind of downfall of our country. But to me, as a Lutheran, there are no "generic" religious actions or teachings that the government or school could promote that would necessarily "improve" our country. That's because religious practices ALWAYS embody certain views and interpretations, many of which I may not believe are healthy or correct. Instead, the best

schools can do to help our country is to encourage tolerance and respect of a diversity of views and teach how to work together with others who are different from us.

As a citizen and a religious person, I must care about both my tradition and my neighbor's at the same time. (Yes! I care about my neighbor's religion to the extent that the measure of his freedom is mine as well.) So for me, all that would come of random teachers or students praying out loud at school functions would be to have mine or my neighbor's particular brand of religion possibly misrepresented by people who can't be expected to know that tradition well, and in front of students who wouldn't necessarily know "good" religion from "bad" either. This would apply equally to the Muslim, the Hindu, the atheist, or the Christian traditions. Even if the school tried to represent all the major religions in such a school setting, which versions of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism or atheism would our children be exposed to the most? Finally, having my children feel obligated by unwritten or social pressure to participate in a pious coach's prayer practice (because that teacher necessarily has power over them to some degree) is just not fair. It infringes upon my freedoms as an American.

But the Supreme Court's current majority thinks it is more important to promote religious expression at all costs, even at the risk of putting state/government funds or representatives or agencies in "control" of that religious expression. These latest SCOTUS decisions have opened a Pandora's box of theological and philosophical problems for all of us, and we will have to watch for future cases to be argued to see how they will play out in our society. -PL



# AUGUST

Sunday	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1 VBS	2 VBS	3 VBS	4 VBS	5 VBS	6
7 9:15A Svc of Holy Communion 10:15A Coffee Hour	8	9 7:30P Council Meeting	10	11	12	13
14 9:15A Svc of Holy Communion 10:15A Coffee Hour	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 9:15A Svc of Holy Communion 10:15A Coffee Hour	22	23	24	25 RR Articles Due	26	27
28 9:15A Svc of Holy Communion 10:15A Coffee Hour	29	30	31			

**\*\*Virtual Worship Services are Live on Facebook @ The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer Ramsey, NJ. and on YouTube Channel "Lamb and Flaq Ministries"**

Join us for a virtual Fellowship / Coffee Hour every Sunday following 10:15am Worship.  
 To join this Zoom Meeting, go to:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/345715195?pwd=NVFrbTZTUU96SWRnbUgvRWZEM2tUZz09>  
 Meeting ID: 345 715 195, Password: 147185

## Celebrate!

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### Happy Birthday!

We don't get to celebrate every Redeemer member's birthday in the same way, but two recent birthdays stand out...

**Dot Dykstra** turned 94 on July 30th, and **Rusty Kaiser** turned 50 on July 26! Congratulations to Dot and Rusty!!

### Thank You!

The Kaiser family wishes to thank all who came and helped to celebrate Rusty's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday at the coffee hour on July 24<sup>th</sup>. He enjoyed it and the many cards he received!



*May God Bless You on Your Birthday*

- 8/2 Mitchell Hildebrand
- 8/3 Mia White
- 8/4 Cole Bickford, MJ Lee
- 8/6 Stacey Royle
- 8/7 Lauren Tarzian
- 8/8 Gloria Ahlers-Marsh, Dana White
- 8/9 Ashton Koch
- 8/10 Peter Manke
- 8/11 Lucas Slader
- 8/12 Kathleen Creegan
- 8/14 Lauren Cherven, Cory Klein, Dylan Pacenza
- 8/15 Kurt Pralle
- 8/16 Emma Eide, Theodore Schultz, Kylie Song, Brian Sundermann
- 8/18 Oliver Finlayson
- 8/19 Joan Piercy
- 8/21 Audrey Hommez
- 8/23 Laura Cozine, Jack Manke
- 8/24 Ali Farinaro, Kaitlyn Fullam
- 8/26 Michelle Austin, Linda DiGruttilla
- 8/27 Jake Royle
- 8/30 Joyce Backhaus, Rosa Hess
- 8/31 Ray Cusack



**Wedding Anniversaries**

- 8/1 Dina and Stewart Smith
- 8/3 Sheryl and James Van Duzer
- 8/6 Michelle and Tom Austin
- 8/7 Courtney and Michael Falbo
- 8/16 Lauren and Peter Manke
- 8/17 Roseann and Larry Thompson
- 8/21 Janet and William Brazel



**Baptismal Anniversaries**

- 8/1 Jeannie Sarreshtedari
- 8/5 Claire Bradley
- 8/6 Mason Papp
- 8/11 Alana Pra, Lorelei Thompson
- 8/16 Layla Gurney, Roy Johnsen
- 8/18 Robert Buettner
- 8/21 Aiden Daehnke-Falbo  
Jocelyn Ufferfilge
- 8/27 Richard Kunz
- 8/30 Colt Papp

Redeemer Reminder articles for the month of September are due Thursday, Aug 25th.

Please submit to [office@redeemerramsey.org](mailto:office@redeemerramsey.org) or [denise.bogatch@hotmail.com](mailto:denise.bogatch@hotmail.com).