

THE REDEEMER RECORD

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March 2022



LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

Rev. James Erlandson, Pastor

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Tahnea Brown, Office Manager

Erik Krohg, Music Director

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Pastor's Letter from Home

*Return to the Lord your God, who is gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. (Joel 2:13)*

Dear Friends,

We heard these words from the prophet Joel on Ash Wednesday, as we began the season of Lent. The term *Lent* is an old English word that means "spring", as season when the earth thaws and new plants spring up. It's a season of renewal and growth for us in the Church, a 40-day season of preparation before Holy Week, as we prepare for the Passion of Jesus, his suffering, crucifixion, death, but followed by his resurrection on Easter.

This season is a time for repentance, prayer, fasting, and works of love for others. We observe these times of prayer together on Sunday mornings and on Wednesday evenings during Lent. You may observe fasting or other spiritual disciplines these days - they could be personal prayer and reading scripture. Another emphasis in the Church is what we can do in acts of love for others. There are plenty of opportunities for such loving acts, especially in our world today, in which, sadly, so many people are in need of compassion and love.

Our attention in recent weeks has been focused on the horrific acts of war committed by Russian troops in Putin's invasion of Ukraine, against innocent Ukrainian people. We are moved by the scenes we see on media of bombed out buildings, women and children leaving their homes for safety in western Ukraine, Poland or other countries. Two weeks ago they were peacefully living in their homes, but now they are refugees who don't know where they will go. Thank God for the generosity of people in Poland, Germany and neighboring countries who are taking Ukrainian refugees into their homes. Of course, we pray for their safety and an end to this senseless war. But we also can participate in their care through Lutheran Disaster Relief and other organizations that care for refugees.

We also know that there are many families in our own communities who have suffered during the COVID pandemic from loss of jobs or housing, children losing class time in school, as prices continue to rise. So we are invited to participate in helping families in Project Home with gifts to help them obtain household items as they move into housing.

So we repent, we pray, we fast, and we seek to do works of love for our neighbors here at home and across the world. Our "fast" actually is doing such works of love. All these things are consistent with our declared Christian values of faith, hope, and acts of love, mercy, compassion, forgiveness, hospitality and justice. May this season bring renewal to you, the Church, and the human family.

Peace in Christ,
Pastor Jim Erlandson

LENTEN WORSHIP

We observe the season of Lent in the Church with the disciplines of confession, prayer, fasting, and works of love. It is also our practice to gather midweek for worship together. During this Lenten season we gather every Wednesday evening at 7:00 pm for Evening Prayer, from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. *The themes are as follows:*

- **March 9 - Faithfulness**
- **March 16 - Mercy**
- **March 23 - Compassion**
- **March 30 - Forgiveness**
- **April 6 - Love**

We have been discussing the values we have as Christians, that have formed us in the past, and guide us today and into the future. These are some of those values. Please join us for these times of prayer, worship and reflection.



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS!

Remember to set your clocks AHEAD ONE HOUR on Saturday night, March 12 before sleep, because *Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 am Sunday, March 13!*

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MARCH 27

The Vestry is calling a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, March 27 at 11:15 am following worship to discuss the purchase of a new sanctuary piano. This meeting is expected to be brief, and will be held in the church undercroft.



Congregational Meeting

MARCH SCRIPTURES & READERS

We invite members and friends of Redeemer to read the appointed scriptures for each Sunday. This is a meaningful way to prepare for worship. It also binds us to our homebound sisters and brothers who we also encourage to read the same scriptures weekly.

March 6	Stephanie Stoessel
March 13	Mary Lou Knipe
March 20	Dave Dufrense
March 27	Lyle Nelson

	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
March 6	Deut 26:1-11	Ps 91:1-2, 9-	Rom 10:8b-13	Luke 4:1-13
March 13	Gen 15:1-12, 17-18	Ps 27	Phil 3:17—4:1	Luke 13:31-35
March 20	Isa 55:1-9	Ps 63:1-8	1 Cor 10:1-13	Luke 13:1-9
March 27	Josh 5:9-12	Ps 32	2 Cor 5:16-21	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32



Our Church Vestry meeting was opened at 7:03pm by Sybil on February 8, 2022 on Zoom with prayer. Sybil shared her appreciation for the Congregation meeting on Jan 30, the preparation of minutes, and the acceptance of the 2022 Budget.

Pastor Jim reported on the important grant support of the St Paul Area Synod that the Congregation will submit for ministry in the Rondo Neighborhood with Walker West Music School. In March, there will be an adult forum on the Planting Hope campaign as well as a continuation of the discussion about Redeemer's purpose, vision, and values.

The Treasury has an overall balance of \$110,681 with mortgage due of \$65,579 plus interest. The report also includes expenditure for capital assets including the \$2,750 paid to Langer Construction.

Volunteer redecorating of the women's restroom will begin at the end of February.

Even though Redeemer is not requested to share space with Project Home, Redeemer is invited to dedicate the month of March to gather essentials for families who move into new homes with the support of a small Thrivent grant.

Sybil adjourned the meeting at 8:06p.

The next Vestry meeting will be held on March 8, 2022 on Zoom.

Saving Energy & Money

Date posted: Friday 25 February 2022—Saint Paul Area Synod Website

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer is very interested in reducing our expenses while promoting environmental efficiency. We had already changed standard light bulbs to LED, but we did not have the resources to do a full-scale conversion of all our 4' ceiling ballast fluorescent tube lights and outside lighting.

Also, we have two heating systems – one for our 100+ year historic sanctuary and another for our 50-year-old Learning Center. Our heating costs were astronomical. We learned about EnerChange through the Saint Paul Area Synod. Karen Malkowski from EnerChange met with us, toured the building, and then brought in the necessary professionals to help us assess our energy needs. With Karen serving as liaison, we were able to replace over 400 ceiling lights and upgrade our outdoor lighting, saving us over \$4000 in annual costs.

An Even Deeper Dive

Additionally, we learned we were being charged premium heating surcharges due to our lack of adjustable heat controls. Karen connected us with a proactive heating service who installed adjustable controls and repaired and serviced our boilers. With rebates and financing available through CEE, we were able to afford all of these upgrades without any increases to our budget.

Satisfying Results and Benefits

The lighting improvements will pay for themselves within two years and the heating within five. Our heat is better regulated, and our lighting makes the whole church brighter and more welcoming. The outside lighting has also increased safety for our guests and our building. Plus, we can now light up our tower in festive colors! We highly recommend EnerChange!

Tamra Davis Cownie

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, St. Paul



EnerChange offers its services at no charge to its clients. It is funded through the Conservation Improvement Program with contributions from Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy, administered by the Minnesota Department of Commerce/Division of Energy Resources. Learn more at <https://enerchange.org/>.

**"... symbols tell us who we are."
A Reflection by Diana M. Rankin
March 2022**

"... symbols tell us who we are." These words caught my attention in a January 17th *New York Times* opinion piece by Margaret Renkl. Ms. Renkl was writing about the removal of Confederate statues in Tennessee and their relocation to museums where the true slave-owning story of Confederate heroes could be told.

Ms. Renkl acknowledged that taking down a particularly ugly statue of Nathan Bedford Forrest, a Confederate general, slave trader, and Ku Klux Klan grand wizard, was largely symbolic. After all, Tennessee's General Assembly was preparing to draw redistricting lines, the effect of which would be to take away the voting power of Black and other non-white voters in Memphis and Nashville.

The Cross is the symbol that tells Christians who they are. We find crosses in churches and chapels, homes, seminaries, social service agencies, and cemeteries. Crosses appear in paintings, sculptures, stained glass windows, icons, Bibles, and hymns and prayers. At Redeemer a cross leads processions. A plain wooden cross helps us remember the Indigenous children who died in or survived boarding schools. Crosses are embroidered onto paraments, vestments, and banners. They are drawn by children and crafted out of pipe cleaners and palm branches.

An ashen cross on our foreheads begins our 40-day journey toward Easter. It traces the one first received at our Baptism, reminding us whose we are.

Throughout history, however, the cross has not always symbolized God's love for the world and all people. During the Crusades Christians carried crosses in their religious wars against Muslims in the Holy Land. With the blessing of the Church, the Spanish Conquistadores used the cross as a symbol of their righteous cause, forcibly converting, exterminating, or enslaving Indigenous populations.

The German Iron Cross was a traditional military medal of honor on which the Nazis superimposed a swastika, turning it into a symbol of antisemitism. Germany ended use of the medal after World War II, but neo-Nazis and other white supremacist groups have adopted it as their hate symbol. The Anti-Defamation League notes that, by the early 2000s, biker gangs and other extremist groups in the U.S. had begun using the Iron Cross in isolation or combined with the swastika or other hate symbols.

Burning crosses originated in Scotland as early as the 12th century and were used to declare war or an uprising. Burning crosses on hillsides or suburban front lawns symbolize race hatred and invoke terror on the intended victims. The Ku Klux Klan preferred to call the practice "cross lighting" to detract from any religious connotation. Yet we know that Christian denominations and churches have used the Bible to justify race hatred.

How do we reconcile the cross as symbol of God's love as well as a symbol of race hatred? In his book [The Cross and the Lynching Tree](#), James H. Cone resolves that dilemma.

The cross and the lynching tree interpret each other. Both were public spectacles, shameful events, instruments of punishment reserved for the most despised people in society. Any genuine theology and any genuine preaching of the Christian gospel must be measured against the test of the scandal of the cross and the lynching tree. 'Jesus did not die a gentle death like Socrates, with his cup of hemlock....Rather, he died like a [lynched black victim] or a common [black] criminal in torment, on the tree of shame.' The crowd's shout 'Crucify him!' (Mk 15:14) anticipated the white mob's shout 'Lynch him!' Jesus' agonizing final cry of abandonment from the cross, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Mk 15:34), was similar to the lynched victim Sam Hose's awful scream as he drew his last breath, 'Oh, my God! Oh, Jesus.' In each case it was a cruel, agonizing, and contemptible death.

Through the Resurrection, that cross on which Jesus was crucified became the symbol of God's saving love for the world. I believe that bearing that symbol requires us to douse the burning crosses of racial injustice in all its forms. It demands that we confess the Church's complicity in maintaining the fires of terror and injustice and then lift high the Cross of Christ with our calls for justice and truth.



ADULT FORUM

March 6, 2022 11:30 . A. M. **"Planting Hope"** Presented by Pastor Jim Erlandson and Ruth Belmonte. This is a three year campaign of the St. Paul Area Synod offering an opportunity to contribute to the collective involvement of 120,000 Lutherans of this synod by inviting neighbors into the life of Christ, renewing congregations of the synod, raising up the next generations of leaders and investing in a transformative project on the East Side of St. Paul with other community partners.

March 13, 2022, 11:30 A. M. **"Holy Ground-Holy Table"** presented by Prof. Diane Jacobson and Paul Jacobson. Holy Ground roots us in the recognition that the earth is a divine gift that sustains all life. Holy table is a place of transformation of the ordinary into divine gift.

March 20, 2022 11:30 A. M. **"Six Generations of Women"** Presented by Dr. Joe Rittman, In Joe's genealogy relatives search he found six generations of women he was able to study their lives and how justice played out in a patriarchal family.

March 27, 2022 11:30 A. M. **Legislative Update.** Presented by Stephanie Stoessel

There will be an Adult Forum Planning meeting on Weds. March 16, 2022 at 10:00 A. M. You are invited to attend. For information contact Joan Foreman @ 699-0266 or foremanjoan3@gmail.com.

PROJECT HOME MOVES INTO THE PROVINCIAL HOUSE

Families experiencing homelessness begin moving into Interfaith Action's Project Home at the Provincial House on March 15, 2021, following the City of Saint Paul's Planning Commission's unanimous approval of a conditional use permit for the emergency shelter.

Interfaith Action is leasing the Provincial House, located at 1880 Randolph Avenue, from the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. The building served as offices and a residence for the Sisters for nearly 100 years and has been underutilized since 2010. The shelter will house approximately 20 families with minor children, almost all under the age of 12. Ramsey County is providing funding for the shelter.



Project Home at the Provincial House is helping address the housing and shelter crisis in Ramsey County due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic downturn. The County, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, and Interfaith Action have been working together for several months, involving faith communities and neighbors in the conversation to use the Provincial House as a shelter for families. Two town hall meetings attracted nearly 500 neighbors who offered overwhelming support.

"We are so grateful to Ramsey County for funding and to the Sisters for their partnership and commitment to helping families in our community," said Randi Roth, executive director of Interfaith Action. "The Sisters are living out their faith in a very important way for families experiencing homelessness."

Sara Liegl, director of Project Home, said the neighborhood has embraced the new shelter. "Dozens of people wrote letters of support for this project, and so many have sent donations or offered to volunteer," she said. "We are fortunate to have neighbors who have said 'yes' so loudly and clearly."

Project Home has provided shelter and supportive services for families experiencing homelessness for more than 23 years at area synagogues and churches, including many in the Highland Park and Mac Groveland neighborhoods. Project Home at the Provincial House, combined with the shelters at synagogues and churches (which will re-open post-Covid), has a significant impact on eliminating the waiting list for families seeking shelter. Interfaith Action's rapid exit support team will be on site at the Provincial House to help families find permanent, affordable housing and connect them to employment and educational opportunities.

Help Our Families As They Move Out of Shelter

Looking for a way to help? Here's a contact-less option to provide much-needed items for our families as they move out of shelter into more permanent housing. Prices on this list range from \$5-89.



PROJECT HOME WISHLIST

- Twin and full size Blankets
- Sheets for a Twin or Full size Bed
- Toilet Paper
- Dishes
- Air Beds (Intex Dura Classic Airbed) \$34.90
- Electric Air Pump Inflator BOMPOW \$12.99
- Pillows
- Shower Curtain Rings
- Pot and Pans
- Towels
- Soft Soap
- Puzzles for Kids and other toys
- Dove Antiperspirant
- Antibacterial all purpose Cleaner
- Plastic Lunch and Breakfast dishes (kids)
- Broom and Dust Pan

LINK TO WISHLIST: <https://redirect.is/f399y3t>



The Planting Hope Campaign expresses our confidence that God is at work in the 110 congregations and mission starts in the Saint Paul Area Synod. This three-year campaign offers an opportunity to contribute to the collective involvement of 108,000 Lutherans of this synod in four activity areas:

INVITE neighbors into life in Christ

RENEW the congregations of the synod

RAISE UP the next generations of leaders

INVEST in a transformative project on the East Side of St. Paul with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

The Saint Paul Area Synod ✦

unites the work of congregations, provides support to rostered ministers, builds mutually transformative partnerships and emboldens witness for justice. The synod:

- assists congregations with call processes and guides seminary students
- provides education and support to ministers and lay leaders
- encourages public witness in the areas of racial equity, caring for creation, and prevention of sexual exploitation and gun violence
- nurtures congregational vitality
- accompanies companion synods in Tanzania and Guatemala



For more details, scan the code or visit www.spas-elca.org/planting-hope



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EcoFaith Network
Minneapolis Area Synod
of the ELCA

ECOFAITH SUMMIT

NOW THE GREEN BLADE RISES:
STORYTELLING FOR THE HEALING OF CREATION

SATURDAY, APRIL 17TH 9-12:30PM

Minneapolis Area Synod
Lutherans
Restoring Creation

Minneapolis Area Synod
EcoFaith
Minneapolis Lutheran Church, A Synod

Minneapolis Area Synod
Care of
Creation
Work Group

Minnesota
INTERFAITH
POWER & LIGHT

Lutheran Advocacy -
Minnesota

[HTTP://BIT.LY/ECOFAITHSUMMIT21](http://bit.ly/ecofaithsummit21)

Dear Pastor James and My Family in Christ, the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer,

First, I am so thankful for your prayer; I was able to visit my family in Tanzania and returned back to the U.S. My trip was good and safe. Also, my family and friends are so grateful and thankful for the love that you showed me during the time of trial.

Secondary, I am humbled inviting you to wedding that will take place in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in July 30th, 2022. I will be lucky, grateful, and blessed to have you witness our marriage vows. There will be a Send-off ceremony in July 27th, 2022 and wedding ceremony in July 30th, 2022. All ceremonies will be held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. It will be joyful and lovely to have you during our ceremony.

I thought that it would great to inform you now because the distance and the costs of the trip. The fare ranges between \$1,300 to \$1,700 per passenger for a round trip. I am also asking if please anyone will want to attend the wedding, I will be happy to know so that we can prepare for the place to stay.

Your presence to our wedding will be my blessings and joyful in our lives! Please you are all welcome.

Karibu Sana!

Yours,
Michael N. Mulokozi

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