



Redeemer Lutheran Church

# Crossroads

February 2024

*Ash Wednesday Observed*

## Lent Begins February 14

Lent begins with the observance of Ash Wednesday on February 14. We will have Mid-day Quiet Communion at 12:15pm and it will include the imposition of ashes. Our evening worship will be at 7:00pm and will include Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes.

Lent is an important season of the church year leading up to Easter as we repent of our sin and reflect on our need for a savior.



## Drive-Through Ashes and Communion

Come get your ashes! There will be a drive through option in the Redeemer parking lot 7:30-8:30am on Ash Wednesday.

## This Year's Lenten Theme: Queries

To "query" means "to ask or inquire about." There is a sense of the word that means to demand answers. That might now be how we often think of approaching Jesus — that we demand an answer — but if we reflect on it, it often is exactly how we approach Jesus. And how Jesus often approaches us. The Gospels are full of times when people came to Jesus asking him a question, and we can often hear our own questions echoed in theirs. There are also times in the Gospel story when Jesus asks questions of people, and whenever he does, answers are demanded of them, and of us as well.

This year's Lenten Theme is Queries. Beginning on Ash Wednesday and all the way through Good Friday, we will explore questions that people asked Jesus, and questions that Jesus asked people. In both, we will see ourselves and grow as we question ourselves along with those people in the Bible. Come along for this important Lenten journey.



### Inside-

Help Load a Truck	3
Leisure Timers	4
Choral Scholars Gala	5
Chicks, Ducks, Geese	6
Shrove Tuesday	7
Council Report	8
RELU Youth	9



We think we finally have an understanding of a new behavior that our dog, Chance, has been doing. You see, lately, Chance hasn't had anything to do with Nan. Now it's true that oftentimes, dogs will give themselves more to one person than another. Angel, our other dog, is clearly Nan's dog, and Chance has always been closer to me, but lately, for Chance, it's me or nothing.

This is a dog who normally wolfs his food down as quickly as he can. If I feed them, he runs as hard as he can to get to his bowl. If Nan takes their food to them, Chance sometimes comes halfway across the yard, and then stops, or sometimes he doesn't even leave his house at all. Just a few days ago, Angel stood on our deck and barked at Chance, urging him to come up and eat his food. We've struggled to figure out why Chance is avoiding Nan.

Recently, we've come to an educated guess. We noticed that this behavior started after Nan's stroke, and so we suspect that Chance has noticed something 'different' about her that is unlike what she was before. Whatever it is, it's enough that Chance knows something isn't right, and so he's doing everything he can to avoid it.

It's made me think of Ash Wednesday. Ash Wednesday is on February 14<sup>th</sup> this year, and we will gather on that Wednesday night for worship, and we will leave with the dark mark of ashes on our heads. As we begin the imposition of ashes, part of the words are: "As disciples of Jesus, we are called to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor. I invite you, therefore, to the discipline of Lent--self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love--strengthened by the gifts of word and sacrament."



And that's why I think about Chance. You see, Chance knows that something isn't right, and he's trying to avoid it. Well, Lent — and that sign of ashes on our heads — might be understood as the same thing. We are called to notice that something isn't right in how we are living and that we are called to

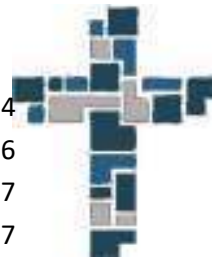
avoid it. As the Invitation to Lent says, we are called "to a discipline that contends against evil and resists whatever leads us away from love of God and neighbor." Our ways lead to death. God's way leads to life. That's what those ashes on our foreheads mean.

Our ways lead to death. God's way leads to life. God's way also leads to love.

That's the other part of that Invitation to Lent that we will hear on Ash Wednesday. Not only are we invited to self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, we are also invited to sacrificial giving and works of love. We are invited into new behaviors of compassion and care for one another. We are invited to avoid our old ways, and to embrace the new way of life in God that is expressed through love for others. And not just others like us: All Others.

Maybe it's fortuitous that Ash Wednesday this year falls on Valentine's Day. As we celebrate this day of love, we are reminded through the ashes of God's love for us. We are reminded of our need for a savior, and of God's all encompassing love for us in sending our savior to us. There's a candy heart that says "Be Mine," and on this Ash Wednesday, that's what God is saying to us. "I love you. Be mine. Take the love I have for you, and share it with others. Live love for one another." That's the Valentines Ash Wednesday message.

Chance stopped halfway in the yard again yesterday, but this time, Nan went out to him, and he rolled over for her to rub his belly. Love restores relationship. In love, we are restored to one another. In love, we are restored to God.



## February Birthdays

Pat Dabels	2/2
Steven Harmon	2/2
Marilyn Overcash	2/2
Janet Boatwright	2/4
Chase Davis	2/4
Tyler Richards	2/4
Martha Shealey	2/5
Brenda Owens	2/6
Libby Bryan	2/7
Dottie Eirten	2/7
Lynn Flood	2/7



Jim Bryan	2/8
Diane Davis	2/10
Preston Smith	2/11
Zakary Thomas	2/11

James Derrick	2/14
Lily Grace Thomas	2/16
Amanda Burke	2/17
James Cowan	2/17
Patsy Matthey	2/17
Merri Lewis	2/18
Drew Carter	2/20
Philip Urso	2/20
Trent Morgan	2/21
Diane Hunt	2/23
Chelsea Miracle	2/23
Jordan Crooks	2/27
Lauren Sprankle	2/27



other month or so.

## Come Help Load a Truck of Donations for Williamsburg County

We are overloaded with donations and need your help to load a truck for Williamsburg County on February 2, beginning at 4:00pm. As always, come early, come late, come when you can. And as always, cold water and warm hearts are provided. We are expecting to receive the 'leftovers' from an estate sale and need to make room for them urgently. Oh, and expect that we'll be ready for another truck to load in about an-

## Sunday Afternoon Online Book Study Continues

This month Redeemer's online book study will continue reading The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver. Anyone and everyone is welcome to join in. We meet via Zoom at 2 pm on Sundays. <https://relu.link/BookStudy>. For more information contact Pastor Amanda at [aburke@relu.church](mailto:aburke@relu.church).



## In Appreciation

Each month the Church Council recognizes and thanks those among us who have offered themselves to the work of the church in special ways. This month the council appreciated:

The **Congregational Family** for their generous support of our congregation's ministry spending in 2023,

**Herb McKinney** for strengthening the rail on the ramp leading into the Fellowship Center,

**Michelle Knight** and all who support the Food Boxers Give-away,

**Julie and Brian Crooks** for extra special work on the Altar Guild over the Christmas season.





## Leisure Timers Plan Tour of Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

Leisure Timers Reminder For those that signed up to tour the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church:

We will leave Redeemer at 10:15 this Tuesday, the 30th. The tour is free, but donations are always welcomed. Following the tour, we will have

lunch before returning to Redeemer.

We are waiting for confirmation from the McCutchen Bistro for lunch. If we go there, the cost is \$13.95 per person. If reservations are not available, we will eat at the Hampton Place Cafe. Both are wonderful! If you cannot join us, please let me know as soon as possible. Look forward to seeing you Tuesday!

Questions? Email Connie Davis,(conniedavis@sc.rr.com), call landline (803-356-0560) or text (803-317-7631)



## Pastor's Discretionary Fund Needs Support

Redeemer maintains a Pastor's Discretionary Fund to meet random and unexpected needs that appear. In the past, this fund has been used to help people in need, and also to provide the rental trucks to take donations to Williamsburg County. In late January, we checked the balance and it was \$38. This is not part of the budget and is funded through specific donations to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Here's an opportunity to help!



## Share the Warmth Shares the Warmth!

The Stewardship Committee is pleased to report that our Redeemer family contributed 90 warm coats and 154 other items such as socks, caps, gloves, and scarves to our Share the Warmth coat drive this winter season. This total is accurate as of January 21. We were amazed at the quality of the items and the fact that many of the coats were brand new! We were also astonished at the sheer number

of hand-made caps we received. All of these items were delivered to Sharing God's Love in Irmo and all of the items were distributed in this community.

### Support Your Team!

## Who Will Win Redeemer's Souper Bowl?

Redeemer youth will once again be collecting donations in soup pots for the "Souper Bowl of Caring." Each week (1/28 through 2/11) you can place change in the soup pot of your pick to win the playoffs and Superbowl. All money collected at Redeemer will be used for the Redeemer Blessing Box and to provide meal boxes for families in need at Seven Oaks Elementary School. This effort to support those who are hungry was started right here in Columbia back in 1990. The money collected stays in local communities to fight hunger and the amounts are reported to the nationwide organization. Since it's beginning Souper Bowl of Caring has collected over \$175 million dollars in a grass-roots effort to fight hunger. The Redeemer Family is happy to continue supporting this effort and thus supporting the community around us!





Bailey Walker, Austin Hinen, Amanda Walker, Desirée Richardson

## Aren't they cute?!?

They sing really well, too!

Come hear them!

Saturday, February 10 at 7:00

Fellowship Center

## “Happy Holidays”

Join us for an evening of songs from an entire year  
of holidays and season.

### **You'll enjoy holiday favorites like**

*My Funny Valentine*

*You're a Grand Old Flag*

*Autumn Leaves*

*Over the River*

*Santa Claus is Coming to Town*

*Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire*



And did I mention the treats on the table?

Yes, that's right every table will be filled

with an assortment of delicious, mouth-watering  
goodies made especially for the occasion.



## Chicks and Ducks and Geese Gonna Scurry to Make a Difference

Last November, the Council dedicated our Advent offerings to go to ELCA Good Gifts. These gifts provide lasting change in the lives of those deeply in need across our world. We do much to help in many ways locally; it feels good to reach out a little further and make a difference in this unique way.

This year our Advent offerings totaled a little over \$1500. The staff then met and chose to direct the money to purchase these items where they are needed:



**A fish farm** – A fish farm starts with a pond, training, and a few fast-growing fish such as tilapia. Soon the pond can provide the community with a longtime supply of fish, rich in vitamins, minerals and protein.

**Honeybees and a Community Vegetable Garden** – Honeybees provide honey to eat and beeswax to transform into handcrafted soaps and candles, allowing a family to start and small business. They also pollinate a community vegetable garden, starting with a shared plot of soil, drought-resistant seeds, and tools and training. The garden provides tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage, beans cassava and more to eat and to sell for income.

**A Latrine** – A startling 2 billion people lack access to basic sanitation. A new latrine, along with training to help with maintenance and hygiene leads to a much healthier community.

**A Microloan to a Woman to Start a Small Business** – A microloan can be just what a woman needs to start her business – weaving, baking, or running a storefront, for example – to create a steady source of income and help her family overcome poverty. As she repays the loan, the funds are reinvested to keep the cycle of giving growing and increase impact.

**Send 2 Girls to School** – Worldwide, girls are far less likely than boys to be enrolled in school. Helping families with school fees and uniforms can eliminate the difficult choice parents make about which child goes to school and which stays home. Educating a girl opens a world of opportunity for her future and the future of her family and community.

**Feed a Refugee Family for One Month** – Refugee camps shelter people who have fled war and violence and food supplies help them stay healthy after a long, dangerous journey to safety.

**A Family Farm** – A cow, a couple of goats, a dozen chicks, two pigs, farming tools, seeds, and agricultural training can create a world of opportunity for a family living in poverty. With eggs, milk, and meat to eat and sell, and tools and training to increase the harvest, this gift makes a big difference. In addition, we added a rooster to keep the eggs coming.

The Good Gifts Catalog is most often put out in the weeks before Christmas as a giving opportunity, but in truth the catalog is available all year long for gifts or to honor someone. You can also find it at [ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://ELCA.org/goodgifts).



 *Pastor Amanda's  
Musings, Mullings,  
and Holy Mischief*

This month we have the season of Lent coming up very quickly. Lent has always been a season of discernment for me. Perhaps it is a God Wink. Maybe it is a time of year that I pay more attention. Whatever it may be, I find that the journey through Lent provides us with the opportunity for self-reflection, discernment, and a search for the Kingdom of God in our midst.

As we enter into this time, let's make it an intentional season for growing in our relationship with God and one another. There are so many ways that we can do this. What calls to each person may be different. The part that matters is that each of us uses this time intentionally.

What sparks your imagination? Do you want to get to know others in our family of faith? That could look like reaching out to someone at Redeemer each week. Have coffee together. Talk. Share stories. Are you inclined to take up a daily reading? There are a host of various Lent devotionals available. Is serving your community more your style? There are 40 days of Lent. What would it look like to take up the challenge of 40 acts of random kindness?



If you're interested in what this might look like for you and you need some guidance or ideas reach out to me, Pastor Gary, or Jim. We'd be happy to brainstorm Lenten practices that can enrich both your life and the life of the Redeemer Family.

**“Fit to a T” Lenten Offering  
Collection for  
Unhoused in Columbia**

This year's Lenten Offering will go toward Tee shirts to be given to the unhoused in Columbia through Lunch on the Lawn. They have advised us that Tee shirts will be a primary need after Easter, so we will focus on that. To be clear: not undershirts, but rather short of long-sleeve Tee shirts for general wearing. You may contribute to the purchase of Tee shirts, and/or bring Old ones you'd like to donate from your closet. Sizes needed are men's large up through 3xl. Together, we make a difference!



**You Are Invited!**

Mark your calendars for Saturday, February 24, 2024! The Redeemer Family is invited to a celebration hosted by the Agape Myanmar Christian Church. Look for more information to come.



## Council Working to Maintain Property

Redeemer has been blessed with an amazing facility and Council has recently been taking steps to spruce it up and make sure it is maintained well. In January, the Council heard updates on the new landscaping that will be installed soon across the front of our building, learned that the new sign should be installed beginning January 29, and heard from the Property Action Team about repairs and improvements around the campus. One important issue that surfaced is that termites were found in the room that holds storage for Family Promise, and it is being treated under our termite contract.

Pastor Gary suggested that we can go ahead and pursue our last phase of the Dominion program that retrofits our lights to more efficient LED lights and Council approved. Pastor Gary also recommended that we look at our existing lawn care contract to make sure it is what we want and then engage Maddox Davis in discussions about it. Again, Council approved.

In other matters, The Council heard reports from both pastors and from Treasurer Todd Anderson. Thanks to generous giving from the congregation, e finished the year in a strong financial position.

Chair Bill Newmyer presented a list of dates for upcoming Council meetings, and then the discussion moved to the upcoming GSB Synod Training event to be held here at Redeemer on January 27. Councils from across the

synod will come for training on how to be effective and focused in what they do. Thanks to Martha Summer and others for helping with food and other logistics.

Todd Anderson distributed information about an outside Financial Review for the Coouncil to review as we continue to consider the best option.

The Lenten Offering was dedicated to Lunch on the Lawn and we are developing items we can collect or buy with donations that the unhoused in Columbia need most.

The Council declined a request to sponsor Cupid's Chase this year and ended the meeting as they learned of the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper on February 13.

The meeting closed with prayer and the peace.



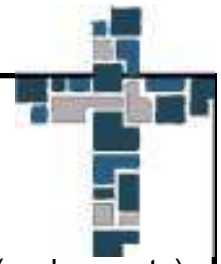
- Property Updates: new sign, new landscaping, termites being treated
- Final phase of Dominion lighting project
- Lawn care moving forward
- Strong financial close to the year
- Still considering outside financial review
- Lenten offering to Lunch on the Lawn
- Shrove Tuesday pancakes planned

## Crossroads Financial Report As of December 2023

	December YTD 2023	December YTD 2022	December YTD 2021
Total income	\$ 599,814	\$576,534	\$ 581,877
Total expenses	\$ 514,643	\$572,200	\$ 593,374
Income less expense	\$ 85,171	\$ 4,334	\$ (11,497)
Balance on mortgage loan	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Unrestricted cash balance	\$ 289,046	\$199,432	\$ 89,823
Attendance	Onsite 113, Online 104	Onsite 74, Online 77	Onsite 93, Online 223



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>31</p> <p>8:45am - Faith</p> <p>9:30am - Choir practice</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>2pm - Agape Myanmar</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Church Office Closed</p> <p>6pm - Worship</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6pm - Choir Practice</p> <p>7:30pm - Handbell Choir</p>	<p>4</p> <p>10am - Bible study</p> <p>10am - Thursday Bible</p> <p>6pm - NAMI support</p> <p>7pm - Thursday Bible</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6pm - Private Event @ Fellowship Center</p> <p>6pm - Agape Myanmar</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>7</p> <p>8:45am - Faith</p> <p>9:30am - Choir practice</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11:30am - Confirmation</p> <p>2pm - Agape Myanmar</p> <p>2pm - Book Study @</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10:30am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>2pm - Ruth Circle @ back</p> <p>6pm - Worship</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Practice</p> <p>7:30pm - Handbell Choir</p>	<p>11</p> <p>10am - Bible study</p> <p>10am - Thursday Bible</p> <p>6pm - MS and HS Youth</p> <p>7pm - Thursday Bible</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6pm - Agape Myanmar</p>	<p>13</p>
<p>14</p> <p>8:45am - Faith</p> <p>9:30am - Choir practice</p> <p>10am - Council</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>11:15am - Property</p> <p>2pm - Agape Myanmar</p> <p>2pm - Book Study @</p>	<p>15</p> <p>10:30am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Worship</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>6pm - MS Youth Group @</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Practice</p> <p>7:30pm - Handbell Choir</p>	<p>18</p> <p>10am - Bible study</p> <p>10am - Thursday Bible</p> <p>12pm - Leisure Timers @</p> <p>6pm - NAMI support</p> <p>7pm - Thursday Bible</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6pm - Agape Myanmar</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>21</p> <p>8:45am - Faith</p> <p>9:30am - Choir practice</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>2pm - Agape Myanmar</p> <p>2pm - Book Study @</p> <p>6pm - Church Council @</p>	<p>22</p> <p>10:30am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Worship</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Practice</p> <p>7:30pm - Handbell Choir</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10am - Bible study</p> <p>6pm - HS Youth Group @</p> <p>6pm - NAMI support</p>	<p>26</p> <p>6pm - Agape Myanmar</p>	<p>27</p> <p>GSB Synod Training @</p> <p>10am - Agape Myanmar</p>
<p>28</p> <p>8:45am - Faith</p> <p>9:30am - Choir practice</p> <p>10am - Worship</p> <p>12pm - Agape Myanmar</p> <p>2pm - Book Study @</p>	<p>29</p> <p>10:30am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Worship</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir Practice</p> <p>7:30pm - Handbell Choir</p>	<p>1</p> <p>10am - Bible study</p> <p>10am - Thursday Bible</p> <p>6pm - NAMI support</p> <p>7pm - Thursday Bible</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6pm - Agape Myanmar</p>	<p>3</p> <p>10am - Agape Myanmar</p>



## Calendar

Always subject to change!

Sun, February 4, 2024  
OK Youth Group, Littles-K (and parents)  
11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Sun, February 4, 2024  
Elementary Youth Group, 1st-6th  
11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Sun, February 4, 2024  
Confirmation Class, 7th-11th  
11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Wed, February 7, 2024  
HS Youth Group, 9th-12th  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

February 9-11, 2024  
2024 SCLCY Winter Retreat, 6th-12th

Sun, February 11, 2024  
MS Superbowl Party, Time TBD  
HS Superbowl Party, Time TBD

Th, February 15, 2024  
MS/HS Youth Group & Dinner, 6th-12th  
6:00-8:00 pm

Th, February 22, 2024  
MS Youth Group, 5th-8th, 6:00-8:00 pm

Th, February 29, 2024  
HS Youth Group, 9th-12th, 6:00-8:00 pm

Wed, March 6, 2024  
MS/HS Youth Group & Dinner, 6th-12th  
6:00-8:00 pm

Sat, March 23, 2024  
Community Easter Egg Hunt  
Everyone's invited, 10:00 - 11:30 am

Sun, May 19, 2024  
Rite of Confirmation during Worship  
10:00 am

July 15-21, 2024  
ELCA Youth Gathering  
Current 8th-12th Grades  
New Orleans, LA



6th-12th graders...  
We are so excited  
for the SC Synod's  
LCY Winter Retreat  
coming up  
February 9-11.

Register today to  
join in on the fun  
and the learning!  
Contact PAB for  
any questions!





**Redeemer Lutheran Church**

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www.relu.church

Address Service Requested

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pastorgary@relu.church  
Rev. Amanda Burke, Associate Pastor  
aburke@relu.church  
Yvonne Krouse, Parish Financial  
Administrator  
ykrouse@relu.church  
Jim Boatwright, Director of Music  
jboat@relu.church  
Betty Pearce parish Secretary  
bpearce@relu.church

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**Sunday Services**

8:45 a.m. Sunday School  
10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

**2023 Congregation  
Council Members**

Term Expires End of 2023  
Carroll Lorick  
Steve Summer  
Julie Crooks

**Executive Committee**

President	Bill Newmyer
Vice President	Steve Summer
Treasurer	Todd Anderson
Secretary	Kai Jørgensen

Term Expires End of 2024  
Bill Newmyer  
Carol Valovcin  
Linda Wells

Term Expires End of 2025  
Kai Jørgensen  
Fauni Lowe  
Mike Parker

**Online Giving**

Scan this symbol with  
your smart phone to be  
connected to our online  
giving page.

