

CELEBRATING
A NEW
BEGINNING
WITH FAITH
AND HOPE.



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The Good Newsletter of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church



A look back and a move forward

Most of you know Sally, and you know her deep love and support for this congregation and all of what we do. She carries a wide mix of responsibilities and one good gift is her writing. Here is a good take from this good addition to Our Redeemer:

As we depart from 2023 and reflect throughout that year, I'm guessing each one of us experienced some highs and lows, excitement and disappointments, successes and failures. As a church, we also experienced these fluctuations that life tosses in our path of our intentions and plans to make it a really good year. For example, we took a leap of faith as a church trying to open our building to house a charter school. I remember more than one member telling me that the congregation was not ready for an ask like this. But we all knew we needed to lean into something which would allow us to grow as a church and potentially solidify our financial budget. Great people from here did all kinds of leg work to try and make this a reality. And while the school venture didn't happen in 2023, we laid an incredible foundation—through the grace of God—that strengthened our vision for a greater impact for the future of our church.

Here are only a few of our successes we accomplished that has had an impressive impact for the betterment of us and our community:

- ♦ Delved into a deep focus of prayer by developing some good tools to encourage and welcome 'prayers and praises' on a more consistent basis for our congregation and community. We also added new prayer opportunities on Sundays.
- ♦ Collaborated with East Side churches for shared services, events, and projects which led us to increased communication among our congregations and also outreach to the various communities surrounding our churches.
- ♦ Expanded our missional outreach not only locally but also through global efforts with our Tanzania family and Doulos school.
- ♦ Grew in our connections with our community by providing over 200 meals and \$5,000 in rescued groceries weekly through our Wednesday Community Sharing program.

Let me say thank you to each one of you for whatever involvement you may have given to make all of these a possibility—time, finances, prayers—thank you for responding to God's nudges and following Him through these endeavors.

As we move forward into 2024, I could not be more excited about how God is continually leading us as a congregation as we seek to make an impact for God's glory! Our journey has already started. God's abundance, light and potential encourages us and empowers us to live courageously, boldly and lovingly today and in the days ahead. More to come on where God is taking us next, but for now we celebrate His faithfulness!

Blessings, Sally



January Worship Services—Scriptures & Lectors		
Date	Scriptures (Click on links below)	Lectors
7 14	Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11 1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); John 1:43-51	Carol Rodriguez Darleen Klemm
21 28	Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Mark 1:14-20 Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Mark 1:21-28	Jessica Prenzlów-Morgan Kathi Kirchoff
<i>If you wish to be a part of our services (lector, technology, musically, faith-sharing), please contact the office.</i>		



Budgeting Meeting—January 21

The Budget Planning team is working through an initial budget that will first be presented to the Board in mid-January, and then be up for a fuller discussion in a forum setting on **Sunday, January 21 at 11:00 a.m.** in the Fireside Room. Those of you who are on our email list heard news that the initial numbers have us looking at a shortfall of around \$24,000. That news invited people to consider Our Redeemer for a year-end gift, and had us take some more steps to explore other funding options. We have some good potential avenues but there is nothing formalized yet. We anticipate knowing more by our budget forum on January 22.

Annual Congregational Meeting—January 28

This year our Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on **Sunday, January 28, at 11:00 a.m.** in the Fellowship Hall immediately following our worship service. We will be electing two new Board representatives, approving a budget for 2024, and reflecting on ministry over this past year and into 2024. We might also be voting on having a new charter school renting our space. We hope you can plan on joining us in person, but here is a Zoom link if you prefer to join that way: <https://bit.ly/24AnnualMeeting>

Church Board Vacancies

Every year at our January Annual Congregational Meeting, one of the things we do is elect a few new people to serve on the Church Board. This year we are looking to nominate two people to fill vacancies from departing members. If you would like to be considered (no need for being shy now) or would like a one-page description of the roles, please talk to Pastor Karsten or Carmen Snaza.

Irrawaddy Charter School—Potential Lease Opportunity

We are still in serious conversations with the leaders from a new Charter School called “Irrawaddy” that is considering Our Redeemer as their site. They are down to two options and should be making a decision in early January. If they choose to come here, there are two big projects we would need to tend to – the first being fire safety protection and the other being the installation of an air exchange system for the education wing. We are working on getting firmer bids for both of these projects. We estimate the fire safety plan would be about \$45,000-\$50,000. The anticipated costs for the air exchange (a necessary item for school code) would be between \$75,000 and \$100,000. The initial contract with the school would bring in \$168,000 the first two years, so we would recoup our costs over those years and have a building ready for this or another school in the future. The Board has had one long conversation about this partnership possibility and voted strongly in favor of moving forward, but any formal decision needs to be made by the whole congregation. This would happen at our Annual Congregational Meeting on January 28, at 11:00 a.m. Be prayerful about this possibility and ponder if this would be a helpful move for Our Redeemer.



Thank you—from the Children, Youth & Family (CYF) Team *Annual Cookie Shop*

The Christmas Cookie Shop (bake sale) was another great success bringing in \$2,233.50! We would like to thank all who supported this annual fundraiser by baking, helping set up the sale on Friday, helping with the sale on Saturday and Sunday, and purchasing cookies of course! We had so many generous donations which allowed us to spread the Christmas cookie cheer by sharing them with the Maplewood volunteer fire department, the North St Paul food shelf as well as with the North St. Paul fire department. Proceeds will assist children and youth of Our Redeemer with cost of Camp Wapo or mission trips this summer. We appreciate your continued support of our children and youth!



Thank you—from the Mission Ministry Team *Clothing Collection for North High School and Maplewood Salvation Army*

The Mission Team is very grateful for all of you who donated warm clothing and outerwear for the North High School students during December. And also for the most current clothing donations to the Maplewood Salvation Army which will be delivered to them on November 15. *(Photo to the right is from our North High School delivery.)*



Thank you—from the EastSide Collaborative *Giving "back" this season with a Reverse Advent Calendar*

Our EastSide Collaborative (ESCo) sponsored a Reverse Advent Calendar event—giving instead of receiving! We began December 1 and continued through Christmas Eve adding an item to the grocery bag we provided. The purpose for the 'giver' was to engage in a slower-paced giving opportunity either through prayer or deep appreciation of what they were thankful for during the holiday season. The 'receivers' were the North St. Paul Food Shelf for the purpose of passing along those donations to those in need. Our Redeemer collected over 600 pounds of food! *(The ESCo Collaborative consists of Arlington Hills, Grace, Gustavus Adolphus, and Our Redeemer Lutheran churches.)*

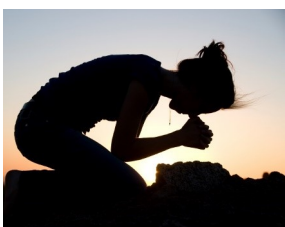


Thank you—from the Stewardship Team *2024 God Squad & Stewardship Drive*

The Stewardship Team would like to thank all of you who completed and returned a 'God Squad' form, which allows us to know what your interests are in being a part of our various ministry teams and events, and an 'Intent Card,' which provides us with your anticipated financial giving for 2024. Both of these generous giving of your time and money allows us to determine a solid budget and sustain the good ministry that happens at and through Our Redeemer.



Send us your Prayers & Praises Requests



Please keep sending us your *Prayers & Praises!* There are three easy ways:

- Pick up a prayer card from the basket on the Welcome Desk and place completed card in envelope and insert into Prayer Box slot located on the Welcome Desk.
- Email your prayers to prayers@orlcmn.org.
- Scan the QR code (shown on the right).



January—Regular Happenings		
1	Lives Worth Living (<i>canceled</i>)	6:30 PM
4	Rejoice Circle	1:00 PM
8	Quilting	9:00 AM
9	Building Crew	9:30 AM
9	Hope Circle	7:00 PM
15	Lives Worth Living	6:30 PM
15	Women in Christ	6:00 PM
16	Board Meeting	7:00 PM
18	Knitting & Crocheting	6:30 PM
20	U.F.O. Crafting Day	8:00 AM
22	Quilting	9:00 AM

Weekly Events
Bible Study—Every Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room and on Zoom
Men's Bible Study—Every Thursday at 7:30 a.m.
TOPS—Every Monday at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall
Maplewood Gamblers Anonymous—Every Thursday at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall (1st Thursday of month is open for guests)

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

2024



Celebrating the Life of Martin Luther King Day

Martin Luther King Day is observed every year on the third Monday of January — on **January 15** this year. As we know, King was an influential civil rights leader. Let's remember his life and achievements on this day—his work on racial equality and ending racial segregation have been revolutionary. Martin Luther King Day is not only a federal holiday, but it is also the first holiday honoring an African American.

Ways to Give to Our Redeemer

Giving of Your Offerings

- Mail your offering/envelope to the ORLC office: 1390 Larpenteur Ave E, St. Paul MN 55109
- Drop off your offering/envelope in the locked mailbox located near our front entrance.
- Make an online offering at the link www.orlcmn.org/donate, which is also available on the first page of our website (www.orlcmn.org) by clicking the "Giving/Donate" button and in the dropdown box, select "Secure Online Donation." Select "General" contribution button. Set up an automatic one-time donation or recurring withdrawals from your financial institution, or by using a credit card. (*NOTE: There is a fee to use a credit card.*)
- Text 844-871-2328, enter amount in message line, send, and then follow instructions to complete.



Purchasing of Gift Cards

When you purchase gift cards through Our Redeemer's "*Bucks for Our Building*" program, a percentage of your gift card value is given back to church. Purchase them for gift giving or for yourself (i.e., for gas, groceries, restaurants, etc.) Remember—the more you buy, the more our church earns! Email Barb at: bemay1635@gmail.com. Or visit her table in the Narthex on the first Sunday of each month.



Giving of Thrivent Dollars

Are you a Thrivent member? If so, check your Thrivent accounts regularly for *Choice* dollars that may have accumulated which can be designated to Our Redeemer or as you choose. If not, become a member—contact the office for details.

Estate Plan Giving

Consider giving through your estate planning directives. Name ORLC in your will to receive a portion of your assets: IRA, stocks, vehicle, boat, camper, house, etc.

Staff of Our Redeemer

Pastor Karsten Nelson
 651-772-2445 x 102
karsten@orlcmn.org

Jeremy Mattson
 Worship & Music Director
Music.orlcmn@gmail.com

Sally Kupferschmidt
 Office Administrator
 651-772-2445 x 101
office@orlcmn.org

Jill Rodriguez
 Finance Administrator
 651-772-2445 x 101
Jill@orlcmn.org

Jim Vansell, Custodian
 651-772-2445

Board Members

Carmen Snaza, President
Vicki Anderson
Joe France
Judy Koza
Sharon Peterson
Larry Pruden
Beth Renfors
Deb Spencer

Contact Information

1390 Larpenteur Avenue East
Saint Paul, MN 55109
651-772-2445
office@orlcmn.org
www.orlcmn.org
facebook.com/orlcmn

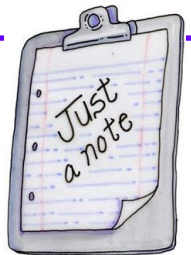
Please send us your prayer requests: prayers@orlcmn.org



1 Emmett Matteson	14 Stephen Edwall
8 Roger Svendsen	14 Zachary Peterson
9 Vicki Anderson	20 Rob Klemm
10 Riley McClaine	21 Ella Friendt
12 Roger Truen	25 Brianna Sullivan

**If your birthday is not shown in this month and it should be (or if it is, and you prefer your birthday not be announced in the future), please contact the office. Also, let us know if we can announce your MILESTONE birthdays or anniversaries.*

The "Women in Christ" ministry team did two service projects in December—we delivered cards and cookies to Homestead assisted living, three fire stations, the North St. Paul police station, and the Iowa high rise! In January, we will decide on the next social event. Contact Kathi Kirchoff if you wish to help out, or come to their meeting on the third Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at church.



Community Sharing Wednesdays—Annual Summary

WOW! What amazing results from our Community Sharing Wednesday efforts! In 2023, we provided approximately \$275,000 in groceries and served about 11,440 hot meals to our local community!

Spread the word and mark your calendars for our **Community Sharing on Wednesdays** from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Through our drive-up process, you can get your meals and groceries quickly for you and your family. **ALL ARE WELCOME!** Interested in volunteering? You can sign up at church or online at <https://bit.ly/loaves-fishes>. There are many various options for volunteering, so if you can help on a regular or even occasional basis, here are our main needs:

- Wednesdays (approx.) 12:00 — 4:00 p.m. assisting the chef with food preparation.
- Wednesdays (approx.) 3:00—5:00 p.m. sorting through the boxes of groceries.
- Wednesdays (approx.) 5:00—6:45 p.m. filling take-out meals, bagging food orders, taking/delivering orders to vehicles in drive-thru, and clean up.



Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
1390 Larpenteur Avenue East
St. Paul, MN 55109

**DATED MATERIAL
DO NOT DELAY**

Address Service Requested