

### REPORTER

November 2019



#### IT BEARS WORTH REPEATING

I have been addressing the Voters' Assembly all year stating: these are exciting times here at Redeemer Lutheran Church, School and Child Care. And you know what? They remain exciting times. I would be ignorant to overlook that these exciting times produce anxiety, stress, worry and concern among Redeemer's members and leaders, teachers, and parents. And yet, I am reminded that when our Lord bids us to follow Him, He says, "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." (Matt. 16:24) You see my friends, the cross is not a symbol of an easy life, rather it is the life we are called to live – a life of suffering. For the Apostle Paul clearly states: "For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:17-18)

The Word of God is power. It is living and life giving. That is why all called, sent and ordained servants of Christ are to preach the Word in its truth and administer the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. And that is also why congregations are to hold the pastor to that standard, because it was set forth by God, believed, confessed, and taught in the Lutheran Confessions.

If you suffer as a result of your faith in Christ Jesus, be confident knowing that God has not abandoned you, rather He is working with and in you to do His will in His kingdom of grace here at Redeemer Lutheran Church, School and Child Care.

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Although the exciting times here at Redeemer produces difficulty, which our sinful nature would rather not deal with, the Word of the Lord declares, "No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." (1 Cor. 10:13)

And so through suffering, we endure! Do not forget: "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends." (1 Cor. 13:7, 8a) "God is love." (1 John 4:8b)

In almost every Parish Address and nearly every Newsletter Article this year, I have been relentless in identifying a very real spiritual concern regarding faithful attendance in the Divine Service and the financial responsibility we all share when it comes to meeting the demands of the church budget. I have prayed and thought long and hard about this final Parish Address for 2019 to this Voters' Assembly.

It dawned on me that when church attendance or financial responsibility is discussed, it is almost

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always received by the hearer from a law-based point of view. So, I decided that I would not address the Voters' today with subjects that are mistakenly perceived as Law, that is, demands made by God. Rather, I have decided to address the Voters today revealing what the preaching of the gospel produces.

You see, as much as we like to think the Law of God motivates us to doing things – because of its demands for us to do this and to do that – it's not the Law that motivates us to carry out the Lord's work. What actually motivates us to do good works is the Gospel. That's right, the Gospel. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ and only the Gospel that motivates the hearer to do good works. Doing good works is performing, executing, and carrying out the will of God.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ moves many here at Redeemer to produce the good fruit, that is, the good works He calls us to carry out. The Apostle Paul says it this way: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10).

So who exactly does the Gospel motivate to carry out the work He has prepared to accomplish here in His little vineyard we call Redeemer Lutheran Church, School and Child Care?

#### The Gospel motivates ...

A devout group of men known as the **Board of El**ders. They work with the called pastor, to provide spiritual care to all members of the congregation. The Gospel has motivated these men to assist the pastor, study with the pastor, and minister alongside the pastor. I am especially thankful for the experience of Collins Sita who, without hesitation, steps in, in my absence, as liturgist to lead the congregation in worship. I am especially thankful for the leadership of Bob Varone who continuously makes himself available to help all members of Redeemer when and where help is needed. I am especially thankful for the faithfulness of Paul Brown who is always willing to listen to the concerns of members and his ability to be patient in difficult times. I am especially thankful for the compassion Mike Nagel, displays continuously toward the members and visitors who come to worship our merciful and compassionate

#### **SERVING THE LORD**

1 doto1	rev. James reess
Child Care	
Director	Wendy Horvath

Rev James Kress

Office Admin Asst Caitlin Tilton
Organist Bill Bowers
Choir Director Collins Sita

Newsletter

Editor Pat Finkenbine

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Secretary

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**GROUPS/GUILDS** 

Ladies Guild Sally Zierdt

Men's Group

**Altar Guild** 

**Coffee Hour** 

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God and Savior. I am especially thankful for the genuine thoughtfulness of **Rob Tilton** who is always willing to act at a moment's notice to pray, visit, or call on a member in need.

The Gospel motivates ...

A dedicated and trusted Church Council that diligently strives to do what is good and right for the entire Redeemer Lutheran Community. Among the members of the Council, I am especially thankful for are Anne Varone, chair of the Board of Assimilation, who presents the narthex as a welcoming environment for everyone who enters. Lisa Kress, chair of the Board of Human Care, who provides gestures of kindness for members of our congregation who suffer or are shut-in. Alan Duburg, chair of the Board of Youth, who with a youthful attitude engages our younger members to be more involved in the care and love toward others. Mindy Duncan, chair of the Board of Finance, who provides services needed every week. Her responsibilities are vitally important in keeping financial records in good order. **Bob Varone**, head elder, who graciously gives and gives of his time and talents, not just in spiritual matters, but wherever he can assist in Christ's kingdom. Caitlin Tilton, our congregational secretary, who doesn't just take notes at meetings, but she keeps the church records in good order. Most importantly, she keeps both me and our President in good order. She is not only our congregational secretary, but she is also our office secretary. Her talents and exceptional skills have significantly improved the efficiency of the church office, boards, committees, and especially my life as a servant of Christ and His Church. Bill Bowers, our ever faithful congregational vice-president. He has been with me from the beginning serving the church as organist, School Board President, member of various committees, and the one position I treasure the most, my brother and friend in Christ Jesus. I think that's all I need to say at this time regarding the leaders serving on the Church Council.

#### The Gospel motivates ...

A dependable and experienced **School Board**. Many of the members of this Board also serve on the Church Council and yet their experience on this Board is tremendously important having oversight of the Child Care Center as well as the Day School. Besides those already mentioned above who serve on the School Board, I am infinitely grateful for the knowledge of **Jim Schluentz**, who as a retired school administrator serves as our Associate Member Representative, brings a plethora of wisdom to our School Board. **Leah Payne**, who as a working mom of two young children, sacrifices her time to contribute to the needs of the School and Child Care as our Parent Representative. The School Board works diligently hard as our Child Care Center and Day School both grow and require much needed attention toward the future needs of these two Redeemer Lutheran Ministries serving the community.

Besides the work and leadership of the School Board, the Gospel motivates an exceptional staff of leaders and teachers at the **Child Care Center** and **Day School**. The experienced leadership of **Wendy Horvath**, Director and **Debby Buel**, Assistant Director is by far the most skilled and proficient in the area, if not the entire state. Redeemer Lutheran Child Care is blessed to have these two outstanding leaders, motivated by the Gospel, to carry-out the work of caring, protecting, supplying, nurturing, feeding, and loving the children God sends to our Center and parents trust in order that His love may be experienced and His Word planted.

Redeemer Lutheran School is blessed with educated, talented, and skilled teachers. The Gospel motivates **Nicole Hopkins** and **Sarah Pierman** to educate, train, expand, and strengthen the young minds of our students. Nicole is gifted with not only exceptional talent, but also with a thankful and compassionate heart for teaching and loving the students. She expresses great joy in working in the Lord's vineyard at Redeemer Lutheran School. Although new to our School, Sarah is showing her talents in so many other ways that will benefit our school, students, parents, and ultimately the Lord's kingdom.

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The Gospel also motivates ...

The **Endowment Committee** that oversees the fund holding the bequests from members of Redeemer who have been delivered into Christ's heavenly kingdom. This committee is chaired by **Enid Muhme**. She brings to this committee experience and professional skills to guide us in doing those things pleasing to God as stewards of the financial resources He has bestowed upon us for His use. **Dr. Bud Harty** and **Denise Fountain** have also served most astutely alongside the leadership of Enid and other members of the Endowment Committee.

The Gospel motivates many other members in perhaps smaller but equally as important functions within the body of Christ here at Redeemer. Midweek meals, family breakfasts, and comfort meals have been provided by the loving hands of Neva Aldene and her Core of Four and more (Jean Cote, Nancy Kozart, Cathy Mielke, Catalina Bakas, Joyce Schneider, Pauline Vickey, Sue Poyer, Joe & Paula Maramonte, Bob & Anne Varone, Alan Duburg, Mike & Judy Guastella, Aldis & Janet Lemesis, Dennis & Pam Replinger and Sally Zierdt – just to name a few of the many who contribute to these wonderful occasions for fellowship). The weekly tithes and offerings are counted and deposited by dedicated counters – Mindy Duncan, Jane Schurr, Anne Varone, Joyce Schneider, and many others who have helped in the past. For many years Sally Zierdt arrives to church early on Sunday mornings to serve as a delightful greeter lovingly welcoming members, associate members, guests and visitors into the Lord's house. The beautiful sounds from the choir loft lead by Collins Sita, Choir Director, as well as the members of the choir who practice in preparation to serve the congregants in Divine Service - Cathy Mielke, Rob & Caitlin Tilton, Carrol Scheiderer, Paulette Sita, Mindy Duncan, Lisa Kress, Lana Garay, Lois Skinner, Terry Fountain, and many others throughout the seasons. The team of young gentlemen and women who serve as Crucifers, Gospel-bearers, and Acolytes: Toby and Alyssa Hancock, Ariana and John Miller, Kamrie and Kyleigh Evanicki, Mykalina Sabol, Brianna Neef, Bella Fisher, Kylee Payne, Rylie Giroux, Braeden Dolphin, Jayden Bishop, Mackenzie and Therin McDowall. The dedicated men who assist in the distribution of the Lord's Supper: Dave Giroux, Dennis Replinger, Steve and Mark Horvath. The men and women who unselfishly serve as ushers: Paul Brown, Mike Nagel, Bob Varone, Chuck & Elaine Malecki, June Markert, Rob Tilton, and many others who step in when needed. The members of the Altar Guild who prepare the chancel area and the Altar for Holy Communion: Lisa Kress, Mindy Duncan, Bob Varone, Jean Cote, Carolyn Francis, Sandi Libke, Joyce Schneider, Janet Lemesis, Catalina Bakas, and Gale Bakalik. The women who spend hours quilting and sewing dresses, shorts and comfortable quilts for those in need: Wila Bochstahler, Pauline Vickey, Margery Bleick, and others.

The Gospel motivates ...

The many, many members and associate members, even while remaining humble, who serve and work hard behind the scenes. I am grateful to the ladies who expeditiously clean the church sanctuary, narthex and restrooms in preparation for worship services, Sandy Tandy, Karen Pantaleo, and Mariana Murray. I am grateful to the faithful woman who sacrifices her time to prepare the coffee and coffee hour table for Sunday morning worship; a woman who already has plenty on her plate in caring for her loving husband. Thank Cathy Mielke for your sacrifices and praise. I am grateful to the buildings and properties crew who keep showing up week after week, month after month to maintain God's grounds in good keeping – Alan Duburg, Joe & Paula Maramonte, Bob Varone, Terry & Denise Fountain, Mike Nagel, Catalina Bakas, and the many others who come to help on Property Appreciation Day.

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The Gospel still motivates others ...

Have you ever considered all the work that is involved in putting together a monthly Newsletter or all the work to create, design and update attractive websites for the church, school, and child care? I am enormously grateful to our talented Newsletter Editor and Webmaster **Pat Finkenbine**. Her fortitude and determination to accomplish these tasks week after week, month after month, year after year is simply amazing. She, of course, relies heavily on her right hand man, **Charlie** – who himself enjoys serving the annual role of St. Nicholas.

The Gospel motivates others even in the most unexpected ways ...

Have you ever received a card in the mail to cheer you up when you were down, or joy when you were experiencing sorrow? Jan DeTrow is motivated by the Gospel to send you these unexpected treasures to brighten your day and remind you that you are not alone; you are loved with an everlasting love. The steadfast Thursday-morning-crew (a.k.a Group) consisting of Jean Cote and Mariana Murray doing the important work of folding bulletins, putting up hymn numbers, preparing the sanctuary for weekly services. The many members, associate and affiliate members who participate, contribute, and support the ministry of the Gospel here at Redeemer: Bud & Jane Harty, Colette Nagel, David & Cindy Johnson, Joan Bowers, Glenn Mossner, Tom & Dianne Murdock, Bob Payne, Angela Mannato, Justin Miller, Jenni Dolphin, Ron Tandy, Sue Bumgart, Randy & Myra Schaubs, Russ & Carol Spooner, June Brown, Ken Mielke, Ashley Sharp, Don Garay, Diane Giroux, Lisa Grayson, Rev. Martin & Nancy Kiesel, Chuck Muhme, Don Borwick, Jim & Sandi Libke, Doug & Maraline Meyerink, Bonnie Schluentz, Dave & Nancy Honold, Don & Carolyn Francis, Jake & Stacy Neef, Gary & Kim Beenders, Jim & Cheryl Weston, Kitty Hill, Bill & Marva Jonas, Jim & Debbie Metzker, Todd & Gretchen Armstrong, Don & Ginny Zitzkat, Del & Wava Zietlow, Tim & Nancy Nelson, Mark & Denise Mann, Roger & Carol Salisbury, Mark & Elaine Haller, Chuck & Joyce Mann, Tom & Pam Curry, and Larry DeFasio. And I would be remiss not to mention all the members, now in their senior years, the Gospel motivated in their service to Redeemer Lutheran Church: Olga Nagel, Carl Bertka, George Dykhuizen, Dorothy Sinowetski, Lillian Miles, Betty Maki, Jim Straub, and Artie Zipp.

And the Gospel motivates another important member and leader of Redeemer Lutheran Church, School and Child Care ...

No, I did not forget him. I love this man. **Wade Duncan** is a very loyal and devout leader of Redeemer Lutheran Church, School and Child Care community. He is the President of the congregation. He works impressively hard for you and for his Lord Jesus. Words cannot express the amount of respect and love I have for this man. When I didn't think it was possible, the Lord sends a man who works equally as hard as I do. Thank you Wade, for doing the work of many which is needed and necessary toward the promotion, spread and growth of the Lord's kingdom here at Redeemer.

The state of the parish is obvious, isn't it? The Gospel is preached in its truth and purity and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ's institution. The members and associate members of Redeemer Lutheran Church are motivated by the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the Lord of the Church grant that we would always be motivated by the Gospel to share His Good News in service to others.

In the Service of Christ Jesus and His Church,

Rev. James T. Kress, Sr.

Pastor, Redeemer Lutheran Church, School & Child Care

The Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity, October 20, 2019

#### UPDATES FROM THE PRESIDENT

For those of you who may have missed my after service announcements or the Voters Assembly Meeting this month, I would like to update you briefly.

The expansion of our school is progressing slower than I prefer, but it is moving forward without serious hurdles. Delays dealing with Charlotte County rules and regulations were not expected and have frustrated my efforts. The good news is our first hurdle was to get the existing church property rezoned. This was not completed or required originally when the church and other buildings were erected. This had to be accomplished before proceeding and resulted in a two month delay. The county hearing was October 9th and we were successful in getting a special exception from the zoning regulations with the expert help of Weiler Engineering. Now, with their help we apply for two more permits and await the county approval on our septic system and waste water management. After that, there will be two more permit applications to submit. They are the site clearing permit and a gopher tortoise relocation permit. I do not expect any issues in gaining these permits but it will require much patience.

The school building committee has reviewed and suggested changes to the modular buildings from ABS (Alternative Building Solutions). The building has been approved and now is ordered.

The Child Care Building committee is investigating the possibility of a new structure. They are considering design firm options and will set a meeting with the committee in the near future.

Keep in mind all these improvements to the school and child care are possible only because they are very much self-sustaining. Their enrollment grows, their needs grow, and their net gross improves. Their contributions to the church budget has reduced our deficit spending this summer.

So, while I am on the subject of our deficit, let's address it. The Church Council is already planning next year's Church budget. Next year we will be without a "safety net" from which to draw funds. Yes Pastor, I know with God we will always be protected and I surely believe that. But we will be considering some very drastic measures in order to balance our budget. We, as the Council, will be announcing a special meeting before our December Voters Assembly meeting. This will be an open-forum meeting to discuss some of these suggestions and to receive recommendations from the congregation. I urge all of you to attend. We need your help, even if you are not a voting member, as this will affect all of us and may change where we worship. Most of our expenses are fixed; that is, they can not be done away with without causing major changes around here. We may have to consider not using certain buildings, or if we can afford a full time Pastor. As I said earlier, this is a serious matter requiring serious consideration. I am sickened by this reality, but it is our burden. Monthly giving does not meet our expenses and so we must make changes. Pray and pray again unceasingly, then join us to find the fix.

I am optimistic that we can and will as a congregation survive this. We have a wonderful congregation full of support, spiritually led by the best Pastor I've ever heard who loves us all. May the Peace of the Lord be with you.

Respectfully yours in Jesus, Wade Duncan Congregation President

#### HALLOWE'EN: A SHORT HISTORY

#### Redeeming Holy Days from Pagan Lies – Hallowe'en: A short history

by Pastor Joseph Abrahamson

There is a lot of new mythology about Halloween that has been invented to claim that Halloween is a pagan holiday. It is not, and it never was a pagan holiday.

#### Where Did Halloween Start in the Christian Church?

In the first three centuries after Christ's resurrection, the lives of the martyrs of the Church were commemorated on the day and in the place where they were killed.

There were so many who were killed because of their faith in Christ during those centuries. Throughout the Christian Church different days were set aside not only for each martyr, but a special day for all Saints.

The earliest reference to a day being dedicated to the commemoration of All the Martyrs and All Saints of the Christian Church comes from the 2nd century. The document is titled "The Martyrdom of Polycarp." Polycarp was a Christian killed because he would not deny Christ. The document says:

Accordingly, we afterwards took up his bones, as being more precious than the most exquisite jewels, and more purified than gold, and deposited them in a fitting place, whither, being gathered together, as opportunity is allowed us, with joy and rejoicing, the Lord shall grant us to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom, both in memory of those who have already finished their course, and for the exercising and preparation of those yet to walk in their steps. (Chapter 18) [Emphasis added]

Later, a Christian Bishop named Ephraim the Syrian mentions a common All Saints' Day in 373. In 379 St. Basil of Caesarea chose a day when the churches of his bishopric would honor the memories of all Saints known, and unknown, alive or in heaven. Later, John Chrysostom mentions a common day of memorial for the Saints in 407 AD.

In the year 609 or 610 Pope Boniface IV established a date for All Saints' Day on May 13th. And later, in the early 700s AD, Pope Gregory III changed the date to November 1st. Decrees like this took some time to propagate from Rome to the more remote areas where the Church was found. But the change in date had nothing to do with any pagan practices. Pope Gregory IV extended the celebration on this day to the entire Western Church in the early 800s. And again, the change took time as it spread from Rome.

The point is this: a common day for commemorating the Saints has been around throughout the Christian Church from very early times. And the fact that it falls on November 1st today has nothing to do with paganism.

OK, so what does this have to do with Halloween? In the Bible the day begins at sundown or evening. This is why we have Christmas Eve. Halloween is All Hallows' Eve', that is All Saints' Evening. Halloween is the beginning of All Saints' Day starting at sundown on October 31st.

These days we have "Trick or Treat," costumes sometimes too gruesome to describe: witches, goblins, werewolves, vampires, zombies, Lady Gaga; Jack-O-Lanterns, skeletons, spooky sounds, grave stones, candy and a celebration of gore and all that is un-Holy.

Many of the Christian Churches in the Reformed traditions claim that Halloween is a pagan

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celebration. Very often they do this by referring to Neopagan and Wiccan writings. And there are many in the Neopagan and Wiccan communities who have tried hard to claim Halloween as an ancient pagan holiday that had been stolen by the Christian Church.

Don't ever expect truth from Neopagans and Wiccans. They already live in a fantasy world created by their own fakelore.

The claim is that the old folklore demonstrates where we got Halloween. But folklore does not support the Neopagan or the Wiccan claims about Halloween. Instead they depend on fakelore: invented, and fake, pretend folklore, like Pecos Bill and the song "Follow the Drinking Gourd."

The typical claims in current sources are that Halloween comes from "ancient Celtic practices, Catholic and Roman religious rituals and European folk traditions." With respect to the origins of All Saints' Day these claim are false. With respect to the modern re-paganizing of Halloween, the Neopagan version of Halloween doesn't really come from ancient pagan sources. It comes from modern sources that pretend to be old but are not. These modern sources are simply fiction.

#### Doesn't Halloween Have Its Origins in Samhain?

Neopagans and Wiccans like to claim that the source of Halloween is the Celtic festival of Samhain (pronounced Sow-in). There are three basic problems with their claim.

- 1. The celebration of All Saints' Day didn't originate in Ireland or any other area populated by Celts or their descendants.
- 2. None of the days on which All Saints' Day was celebrated had anything to do with any Celtic holiday.
- 3. The celebration of All Saints' Day in Celtic regions is documented to be older than the documented celebration of Samhain.

#### So let us look at each of these three claims:

- 1. In order for the Neopagan and Wiccan claim that Samhain is the origin of Halloween to be true, then Halloween and All Saints' Day should have started in Celtic areas. But we've already seen that All Saints' Day was celebrated in Syria as early as 373 A.D., in Caesarea in 397 A.D., and in Constantinople (under Chrysostom—modern Istanbul) by 407 A.D. All Saints' Day, and Halloween didn't start in the Celtic countries. But it did take some time for the declarations of Rome to reach distant Celtic areas like Ireland.
- 2. In order for the Neopagan and Wiccan claim that Samhain is the origin of Halloween to be true the particular day chosen should have some significance to the Celts and Samhain. But here we run into some serious problems. According to the best sources, Samhain was a Lunar festival of harvest. That means that the day of Samhain can vary up to a month in difference from any Solar year day. Compare, for example, the wide variety of days upon which Easter can take place. When sources claim that Samhain was October 31 to November 1 in the modern Solar Calendar they are being dishonest and disingenuous. They are intending to deceive the reader. Due to the differences between lunar and solar dates, on the average Samhain would take place exactly on October 31st only once in about every 30 years. When the reader adds into this the fact that the Western Calendar changed over from the Julian to the Gregorian at different times in different places, the reader can better

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- understand how artificial the Neopagan and Wiccan claims are about Samhain. The Christian Church didn't get Halloween/All Saints' Day from the pagans, the pagans are trying to claim that Christians stole from them. But the Neopagans and Wiccans cannot even get their calendars straight. And they are hoping that the reader doesn't notice how weak and embarrassing their claim is.
- 3. In order for the Neopagan and Wiccan claim that Samhain is the origin of Halloween to be true Samhain they should be able to prove that Samhain is older than All Saints' Day. But, in fact, the opposite is true. We have a manuscript from 843 A.D. where the Irish Christian Bishop Óengus of Tallaght wrote about the celebration of All Saints' Day. It was celebrated in the Spring of the year at that time and in that place. The Decree of Pope Gregory IV had still not reached Ireland so that All Saints' Day should be celebrated November 1st.But the earliest-ever-mention of Samhain in Irish folklore doesn't come until the 10th Century (Ronald Hutton's 1996 book Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain). There is no mention of Samhain outside of Ireland until centuries later.

These, then, are the facts.

Samhain comes from the 10th Century A.D. and is a newer invention. All Saints' Day is older than Samhain. All Saints' Day came from the practice of honoring the Christian Martyrs in Israel, Turkey, and Syria as early as the 2nd Century and later.

All Saints' Day and therefore Halloween originated outside the Celtic sphere of influence and had nothing to do with what the Neopagan and Wiccan claims are about its origin.

In fact, the newer holiday, called Samhain, was a Lunar holiday. This means that it could be celebrated on any of 30 or so days in Autumn of a given year depending on when the harvest moon was recognized in Ireland. And very, very rarely did this moon happen on October 31st. This simple truth cannot be emphasized enough.

Any book or website or article that claims that the ancient Celts celebrated Samhain on October 31 is perpetrating a lie. Modern Neopagans and Wiccans invented their own calendar through the 1970s and 1980s and they chose Oct. 31 to be the day for Samhain. It was a move on their part to put forward the false claim that Halloween started in paganism.

#### Why Would the Non-Christians Want to Undermine This Holiday?

All Saints' Eve (Halloween) and All Saints' Day have a special place in the commemoration of the Christian Church because of the Reformation. It was on October 31st, Halloween, that Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg, Germany. It was on that date he chose to challenge the corruption in the official church about the notion that salvation in Christ could be bought with money or works. All Saints are saved by Grace, through Faith, revealed by God's Word in Christ.

Halloween, October 31st is Reformation Day. On October 31, 1517 the Church of Christ began to return to the authority of Scripture alone over the traditions and will of man. It was the day that the Church began to return to salvation by Faith in Christ alone over the works of human will and deeds prescribed by humans. The day that the Church began to return to salvation by Grace alone, rather than the effort of the individual or that individual's reliance upon the efforts of the saints who had gone before him. It was the day that the Church returned to reliance upon Christ alone and not upon self.

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It should not be surprising that Satan and the World have gone to such extremes to defile Halloween with anything that would distract Christians and the unbelievers from Sola Scriptura, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia and Solus Christus (Scripture Alone, Faith Alone, Grace Alone, and Christ Alone).

#### **Halloween Traditions:**

In this world some traditions have become the mainstay of Halloween. Though these traditions are not necessarily a problem by themselves, they have been claimed by the Neopagans and Wiccans as evidence that Christianity is a fraud and newcomer that has replaced the "Older" so-called "Truth". But they lie.

The **Haunted House** started in the early 1970s. The first records of Haunted Houses were from Cincinnati, Ohio where the Jaycees (Junior Chambers of Commerce) introduced the first Haunted Houses as a way to keep kids entertained on Halloween.

So which is older, All Saints Day starting in the 2nd Century or Haunted Houses starting in the 1970s?

**Jack O'Lanterns** is an American invention from the mid 1800's. Ireland and Britain had older traditions of carving vegetables into lanterns. But those traditions are not ancient. Historian David J. Skal writes:

Although every modern chronicle of the holiday [of Halloween] repeats the claim that vegetable lanterns were a time-honored component of Halloween celebrations in the British Isles, none gives any primary documentation. In fact, none of the major nineteenth-century chronicles of British holidays and folk customs make any mention whatsoever of carved lanterns in connection with Halloween. Neither do any of the standard works of the early twentieth century.

(see this and other helpful references cited at The Scoopie)

It was in 1837 that the term "Jack O'Lantern" first appeared as a term for a carved vegetable lantern. Previously the term referred to the man or boy a town hired to keep the street lamps lit through the night. The pumpkin was used with the cornucopia as a fruit that was displayed throughout fall harvest time in America as a sign of God's providential blessing.

There is a lot of folklore about the Jack O'Lantern, but it is fakelore invented to create a fictional scary history for the Jack O'Lantern. But which is older? All Saints' Day or the Jack O'Lantern?

Trick or Treating is very popular in America and several other countries. In the Middle Ages (1300s to 1500s or so) there was a practice where children or the poor would go from door to door to beg. In some places these beggars would sing or perform in order to get gifts of money or food from householders. While this happened every day of the year, because these beggars had to eat every day, they were particular active on holidays. Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and All Saints' Day were special days when children and adults would go from home to home singing hymns and carols and begging. A good source for what these people would sing is the Oxford Book of Carols.

In Shakespeare's 1593 play The Two Gentlemen of Verona the character Speed accuses his master of "puling [whimpering or whining] like a beggar at Hallowmas." That's our All Saints' Day, November 1st.

(Continued on page 11)

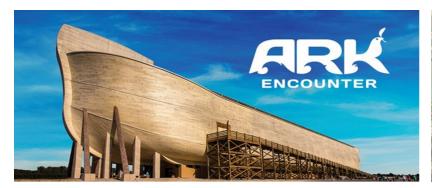
Wearing costumes on Halloween is first known in Scotland in 1895 and in the United States in 1911. The earliest use of the words "trick or treat" is from 1927 in the United States. In the early 20th Century there were thousands of postcards made with Halloween themes, but none of them showed "trick or treating" until the 1930s.

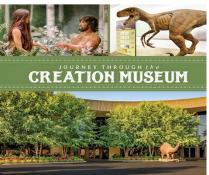
So what is older? All Saints' Day or Trick or Treating?

Halloween, Reformation Day, All Saints' Day is a very special day of the year for the Christian Church. We commemorate all saints past, present, and future with the confession that we cannot save ourselves with our own works, no price we could ever pay would be good enough. But Christ has paid for the whole world. And all believers in Christ, and these are the Saints, will be raised on the last day to eternal life. Reclaiming Halloween means knowing where it comes from, why the day was established, and the historical significance it holds for the Christian Church. Satan and the world are always willing to undermine and steal anything that is of value to the confession of the truth of Scripture. Let us not fall prey to the lies.

Enjoy Halloween! Enjoy Jack O'Lanterns, Enjoy Trick or Treating. But confess the truth!

#### THE ARK ENCOUNTER & CREATION MUSEUM TRIP





Pastor Mark and Laurie Steinke are inviting the members and friends of Redeemer Lutheran Church to join them and members of Tree of Life Lutheran Church (Inverness, FL) on this exciting trip to the Ark Encounter and the Creation Museum! The trip includes 6 days and 5 nights (June 15, 2020 – June 20, 2020) as well as bus, hotels, River Boat Cruise, and both the Creation Museum and the Ark Encounter. Information regarding itinerary, costs, and booking form will be sent out via email with the newsletter and will be available in the church narthex. For more information, contact Sue Fullerton, Walk Don't Run Travel at 352-344-0905 (office), 352-400-1721 (cell) or email travel@walkdontrunllc.com.



## **Thanksgiving Day Service**

Thursday, November 28<sup>th</sup> – 9:15 AM Divine Service\*

#### LAW AND GOSPEL

Back to Basics: Law and Gospel by Rev. Matthew C. Harrison

At the heart of virtually every problem in the church, at the bottom of every strained relationship, at the center of every reason an inactive member stays home on Sunday or leaves the LCMS is the issue of the proper distinguishing between the Law and the Gospel. Without this understanding, the Scriptures make no sense, we will have no idea why we go to church (or worse, the wrong idea) and we will have no clue as to why orthodox Lutheranism reflects New Testament Christianity in the best sense.

We may well be a royal pain and terror to those around us. Even worse, without a clear understanding of Law and Gospel, we'll be of no use to people around us struggling with spiritual and life issues. Worse still, we may even become a millstone round their necks, helping them (and ourselves) on the way to hell!

The Lutheran Reformation began when the Lord God Himself, through the Scriptures, opened Luther's mind to the scriptural distinction between the Law and the Gospel. The Law makes demands, which we could not, cannot and never will fulfill. "No one is righteous, no not one" (Rom. 3:10). "Even our righteous deeds are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). If St. Paul laments about himself, "The good that I would do I do not do" (Rom. 7:19), where does that leave you? You have not a thought, an action or any of your physical, psychological or spiritual being that is not affected by and tainted by the reality of sin. And sin damns.

The Gospel, however, makes no demands and even gives the faith needed to believe it (Eph. 2:8–9). The Gospel is the forgiveness of sins. Christ was slain from the foundation of the world for you (Matt. 25:34). Christ was prophesied in the Old Testament for you (Isaiah 53). Christ was conceived for you (Luke 1:26). Christ was born for you (Luke 2). Christ was circumcised and fulfilled the Old Testament ceremonial law for you (Luke 2:22). The boy Christ taught in the temple for you! (You get the credit for His diligence in the catechism! See Luke 2:41.) John the Baptizer pointed to Jesus, saying, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29)—for you. Jesus was baptized for you (Luke 3:21). Jesus was tempted for you (Luke 4). All of Jesus' miracles, healings, words, promises, His Passion, His trials, His beating, His betrayal, His crucifixion, His ridicule, His words on the cross—"Forgive them, Lord, for they know not what they do!" (Luke 23:34); "Today you will be with Me in paradise!" (Luke 23:43)—His death, His descent in victory to hell and His glorious resurrection and ascension are all, all of it, for you! And that's all Gospel!

But there is even better news, and this is the point where the devil bedevils us. What Jesus attained for us some 6,000 miles away and 2,000 years ago is delivered in the word of preaching, in Baptism, in absolution and in the Supper. "I don't need to go to church to be a Christian." Oh, yeah? God says you do. "Do not give up meeting together." (See all of Hebrews 10.) But better than the Law (which says you should go to church) is the blessed Gospel! We cry like the tax collector at church, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" (Luke 18:13). And the pastor says, "In the stead and by the command of Christ, forgiven!" (see John 20:21–23). He makes the sign of the cross to remind us that we're baptized, forgiven

(Continued on page 13)

#### LAW AND GOSPEL (CONTINUED)

(Titus 3:5). The Scriptures are read, and they contain both Law (demand, threat) and Gospel (forgiveness, promise). The sermon is preached, and the texts explained. The Law threatens and drives us to Jesus! The Gospel is not merely described or spoken about, it's delivered! "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16), right now, for you!

Most people who stop going to church or get church wrong think it's about ethics. They think it's about following the rules (i.e., following the Law). No, it's finally about sinners receiving forgiveness (Gospel). And blessed by the Benediction ("The Lord bless you and keep you! The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you"—Gospel!) and all the forgiveness given, forgiven sinners head back into their vocations in life to be a beautiful leaven. If I know I'm a real "hard-boiled sinner" who's been forgiven (Luther), I cannot be an unforgiving jackass to those around me. It's a matter of Law and Gospel. I cannot but speak forgiveness—the Lord's own forgiveness—to others.

Pastor Matthew Harrison "Let's go!" Mark 1:38



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Questions? Please feel free to contact me at 603-209-0733 or rob.tilton1016@gmail.com.

Yours in Christ,

#### Rob Tilton

LCEF Congregational Advocate

#### **BOARD OF HUMAN CARE**

## **Thanksgiving Baskets**



As we celebrate a holiday that reminds us to be thankful, may we remember those who do not have as plentiful a supply of food and share the gifts that have been given to our homes by our heavenly Father. Please consider donating to the basket of plenty for a Thanksgiving meal for a

couple of families in need this Thanksgiving holiday. The basket will be available to fill in the Narthex as of Sunday, November 3. All items should be returned by Sunday, November 24. Items needed: Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes, Corn, Green beans, Gift Certificates to Walmart or Publix, Apple Pie, Pumpkin Pie, Rolls, Cranberry Dressing, Jello, a whole turkey! If you have questions, please feel free to call or text Lisa Kress 941-889-8938 or email <a href="mailto:lisakress1968@gmail.com">lisakress1968@gmail.com</a>.

## **Angel Tree**

Once again, we look forward to the Angel Tree every year, as we are able to spread the joy of Christmas with the children of the Child Care. The church will have the Angel Tree set up in the Narthex the first Sunday in Advent, which is December 1. Please pick a child's name off the tree (which will be numbered) and sign the corresponding clipboard number. Please plan on spending between



\$20-\$25 per gift. The gifts will need to be delivered back to the tree no later than December 15, 2019



Choir rehearsal is on Wednesday evenings from 6pm-7pm at the church. Come one, come all. If you love to sing - please join us and give it a try! No experience necessary. Any questions, please call Collins Sita at 941-830-6020.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

#### Treasurer's September 30, 2019

	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	OVER/UNDER
INCOME	14,281	14,543	(262)
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<u>16,156</u>	<u>18,216</u>	(2,060)
+/-	(1,875)	(3,673)	

#### YEAR TO DATE

INCOME	131,796	130,916	880
<b>EXPENSES</b>	151,782	163,975	(12,193)
+/-	(19,986)	(33,059)	



Respectfully submitted, *Jean Clappe-Mbixell*North Star Bookkeeping LLC



The youth group will be planting flowers and/or bushes at the entrance signs at both entrances to the church property sometime in November.



AJ's Mobile Wash—Heated Pressure/Steam Cleaning Free estimates. No Harsh chemicals. Licensed & Insured Call: Amber ~ (828) 371-0228 or Jason ~ (828) 226-8762

CK Clean, LLC. "Dust bunnies fear us." Licensed & Insured residential cleaning service Kristine Baltimore 941.681.6514 ckcleanfl@gmail.com

#### PROPERTY APPRECIATION DAY

We sure could use some help on our Property Appreciation Days every month. There is outside work to do and cleaning and dusting that needs done inside the Church. If you can help, please come to the church and we will put you to work. Our next Property Appreciation Day is Saturday, November 16th at 8:00 am.





St. Paul wrote to the Church of Christ in Corinth: "Each one must give as he has

decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7). *God loves a cheerful giver*. But who is a cheerful giver?

Abel was. By faith, Abel gave the firstborn of his flock, and it was acceptable in God's sight. Abraham was. By faith, Abraham prepared cakes and a tender choice calf for God and entertained angels unaware. So also were David and Solomon. By faith, David would not make a sacrifice to God that cost him nothing, so he paid Araunah his due. By faith, Solomon built a house for God, where his name would dwell and thereby where He would dwell to be Israel's God and they His people.

What more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of all those who gave not simply for the joy of giving but for the joy of knowing the One to whom they gave.

So also our Lord, who for the joy set before Him, gave everything, yes, even His life, enduring the cross and scorning its shame. He gave to the shedding of His blood, willingly and resolutely setting His face toward Jerusalem to die for the life of the world. Though He was rich in every way, He became poor, so that by His poverty we might be rich beyond measure.

So then, let us – like Abel and Abraham, like David and Solomon, and even like our Lord Jesus Christ – give cheerfully to God for the work of His kingdom in our midst. Like them, let us decide in our heart – for the joy set before us – the joy of knowing the One to whom we give is the One who gives us all good things.



## Hanging of the Greens



All Congregational members are invited to join the Altar Guild in the Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, November 30th, 2019. This will take place beginning at 9:00 AM in the Church Narthex. This is to prepare the church for the Season of Advent and Christmas. If you would please consider lending a helping hand the Altar Guild would be very grateful! Many hands make light work! I promise to have goodies and coffee! Thank you in advance for your consideration of helping in this event! Lisa Kress

#### **BIBLE STUDY**

#### **Sunday Morning Bible Study**

Join us after the morning service for Bible Study, "The Intersection of Church & State." This is a 4-part video series and a discussion study guide is available at the visitor's desk. All members are encouraged to join us for the next several Sundays at about 10:45 a.m. in the sanctuary to explore this insightful study.



#### WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE

CLASS: Come join us on Wednesdays at 10:15 AM in the Narthex for an exciting Table Talk discussion. Ask Pastor just about any question. We will search the Scriptures. We will have open dialog in the study of the Holy Scripture. Again, your questions and our discussion may range from current events to ancient church history. This is your time to "ask the pastor."



#### **PRAYERS**

**SHUT-INS:** Judy Clasen, Susan Jahns, and Rita Kaufman.

HEALING for Members: Neva Aldene, Deb Anderson, Carl Bertka, June Brown, Jean Cote, Ed & Jan DeTrow, Charlie & Pat Finkenbine, Mike & Judy Guastella, Bud & Jane Harty, Chuck Malecki, Angela Mannato, Ken Mielke, Lillian Miles, Glenn Mossner, Mariana Murray, Bob Payne, Tom & Sue Poyer, Dorothy Sinowetski, Russ & Carol Spooner, Caitlin Tilton, Bob Varone, Robert Vickey, Sally Zierdt, and Artie Zipp

FRIENDS & RELATIVES: Michelle Bernard, Grace Blum, Gerry Borwick, Bill Bowers, Jr., Mary Brissette, Dennis Burchell, Georgia Bush, Diane Carr, Sally Chambers, Esther Clapham, Bobbett Clark, Donna Connors, Lisa Copeman, Martin Cressman, Molly Criely, Renee Dempsey, Trudy DesJardins, Dale Irene & Dumeah. DiTommaso. Barb Bruce Fancher. Everson. Donna Darla Finkenbine, Gerald and Mary Fischer, Marla Flores, Manual Galan. Liam Garland, Barbara George, Sandra Gettings, Nancy Gleis, Mary Ann Guilfoyle, Shelley Roedel Gutz, Mikayla Hacksunda & her unborn child, Marlene Hagen, Jake Harper, Debbie Harrison, Larry Hladun, Dennis Hegarty, Claudette Hendershot, Glory Herget, John Hill, Rick Hill, Robin Hincman, Roger Hinzmann, David Hirtle, Larry Hladun, Linda Holt, John Hunter, Linda Hunter, Chelsea Hutchinson, Stanley and Lynne Jablonski, Larry Jackson, Deb Jacobsen, family & friends of Ray Janssen, Bill Jaquest, Heather Johnson, Rachel Kagay, Daniel & Michelle Kalstrup, John Kearns, Barb Kern, Elizabeth Lynn Klopfenstein, Erin Kress, Nancy Lake, Stacey Lampert, Rev. Rusty Leavitt, Gary Letizia, Ray Likowski, Janet Lixey, Joe Manson, Candace McGowan, Rev. Paul Mier, Pete Mogg, Mike Morrissey, Rev. Herbert Mueller, Ron Mullins, Esther Murphy, Jean Nesbitt, Bev Parkinson, Charles Pentecost Jr., Robin Potts, John Purdy, Mary Raines, Rev. Ronald Rock, Paul Rollo, Sandra Scheel, Ed Sheahan, Nancy Sly, Don Stewart, Paul Sullivan, Charles Tolley, Richard Traversa, George Vespa, Jim & Judy Wahl, Steven Walker, Christy Wallace, Helen Weishaar, Donna Weston, Gordan Winkel, Wava Zeitlow, and Martha Zimpfer

Military Personnel: Mark Baranowsky, Michael Broughton, Joseph Garay, Thomas Francis Stynes II, Brian Jackson, Jonathan Koen, and Charles D. Weishaar



Pastor and members of the church are always willing to pray for you, family members and friends. If a loved one appears on our prayer list above, please call Pastor or the church office to give us a health update so that we may either keep or remove their name. Thank you!

November 2019 Page 18





## **ELDER & COMMUNION ASSISTANT SCHEDULE**

Date	Elder & Reader	Communion Asst
Sun, Nov 3rd	Rob Tilton	Dave Giroux
Sun, Nov 10th	Collins Sita	Steve Horvath
Sun, Nov 17th	Bob Varone	Rob Tilton
Sun, Nov 24th	Mike Nagel	Collins Sita
Thu, Nov 28th	Rob Tilton	Dave Giroux



Date	Crucifier	Gospel Bearer	Acolyte
Nov 3rd	Kamrie Evanicki	Ariana Miller	Rylie Giroux
Nov 10th	Mackenzie McDowall	John Miller	Therin McDowall
Nov 17th	Mykalina Sabol	Bella Fisher	Kylee Payne
Nov 24th Mackenzie McDowall Jayden Bishop Therin McDowa		Therin McDowall	
Nov 28th	Toby Hancock	Alyssa Hancock	Rylie Giroux

## ALTAR GUILD SCHEDULE

Aı	Altar Guild	
Date	Set-Up	Clean-Up
Sun, Nov 3rd	Bob Varone	Carolyn Francis/ Jean Cote
Sun, Nov 10th	Lisa Kress	Catalina Bakas
Sun, Nov 17th	Mindy Duncan	Sandi Libke
Sun, Nov 24th	Lisa Kress	Gale B/Joyce
Thu, Nov 28th	Bob Varone	Mindy Duncan
Sat, Nov 30th	HANGING OF THE GREENS	All hands on Deck Please!!

November 2019 Page 19

#### REDEEMER SCHOOL

It's November already!

We have been super busy at school! In October, we visited the pumpkin farm. We went on a hayride, fed the animals, picked out a pumpkin, and went through a wild flower maze. We learned all about vegetables and many students purchased them for their families.

Third grade has been learning about the plant world. They learned that after God divided the seas from dry land, He created the colorful and unique plants that cover the Earth. We have learned about different seeds, and dissected and labeled the parts. We grew our own plants and made art using beans. We learned how plants grow, reproduce, and make their own food. We even learned how and why leaves change colors. We collected fall leaves and used them to make fall art. The students are very creative. We had people, animals, and self-portraits made with the leaves they found.

We just completed our first book reports of the year. Every student read a book and made a scarecrow to tell about it. Each piece of the scarecrow's body had a different part of their report on it. The second and third graders also had to write a recommendation if they would recommend the book and why. You can see them hanging on the walls in our room! They all worked so hard and they turned out really cute!

We also started our P.E. dance class. We have a dance teacher coming in once a week and teaching the kids different dances and routines. The kids (and teachers) love it! It gets them moving and gives them the exercise that they need. It has been fun watching them trying something new!

Have a great month!

Mrs. Nicole

We are pleased to welcome our new teacher's aide to our school. Sarah joined us at the end of August and has been a great addition.



Hello,

My name is Sarah Pierman and I am new to Florida! I recently moved from Battle Creek, Michigan to the North Port area. In April of 2013, I graduated from Grand Valley State University with a Bachelor's Degree in English and Elementary Education. Throughout the past six years, I have worked in a variety of roles in West Michigan schools. Most recently, I taught Fourth Grade and Kindergarten before moving to Florida. I am an only child and my parents are both still in Michigan, but I do have extended family in the Tampa area. My passion has always been to

teach and my students are my very own kids. When I am not at school, I love to go for walks, listen to podcasts, read a book, cook or bake, visit the beach, or just be out and about exploring in the sunshine. I enjoy 5Ks and Cardio Drumming to stay active and have fun as well.

#### REDEEMER SCHOOL



# inspiration



November 2019 Page 21

Redeemer Lutheran Church, School & Child Care



November 16, 2019

#### Bible Lessons

Chapel is on Mondays at 4 pm

11/4 The Tabernacle Is Built Exodus 35-36

11/11 Gideon Wins the Battle Judges 7

11/18 David, the Singing Shepherd

t Samuel 16; Psalm 23

11/25 God Loves Naomi and Ruth

The Book of Ruth



Lord,

You helped Gideon lead Your people to love and trust in You. Forgive me when I do wrong. Lead me to love and trust in You too. Amen

#### Important Days

Lifetouch Photos Christmas setting November 7

Submitted by Wendy Horvath

#### **Birthdays**

Ms. Jazmyne 11/2
Alivia 11/2
Jackson 11/2
Kayley Ann 11/5
Bailey F. 11/6
Braeden 11/13
Sky 11/14
Ms. Debbie M. 11/18
Kaleigh C. 11/21
Nathan Mc 11/21
Ms. Wendy M. 11/24
Ms. Wendy H. 11/28



Our Annual Child Care Fall
Festival will be held on
November 16, 2019 from
3:00-6:00. Stir up a pot of
your best Chili and enter it
into the Cook-Off.
Please join us and bring the
whole family for Food, Crafts
Hayride, Bounce House, Raffle
Baskets, and More

# Upcoming Holiday Schedule

November 28 & 29 Closed December 24 Closed December 25 Closed December 26 Closed December 31 Closed January 1, 2020 Closed

#### Christmas Program



Ms. Brandi's class, VPK, After School and Day School children will be telling the story of "The Birth of Jesus" on December 8, 2019 at 6:00 pm in the Church. All ages and families are welcome to join us.



#### Santa Lunch

December 20, Santa Lunch for Child Care is at

11:00 am and The Santa After Party for After School is from 3:30 - 5:00 pm

The deadline for the December Newsletter is November 18th.

Please have all your submissions sent to patchas123@gmail.com

OR drop them off at the church office by the date indicated above. Thank You!



## Thanksgiving Day

Fourth Thursday of November



AMERICA
CANOE
COLONY
CORNUCOPIA
ENGLAND
FALL
FAMILY
FEAST
FREEDOM

GRATITUDE
HARVEST
HOLIDAY
INDIANS
MAIZE
MAYFLOWER
MILES STANDISH
NEWWORLD
NOVEMBER

PILGRIMS
PLYMOUTH
PUMPKIN PIE
PURITANS
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REV. JAMES T. KRESS, SR. Pastor

Church Phone: 941-475-2410 Church Fax: 941-475-9726 School/Child Care Phone: 941-475-2631

email: redeemerfl@gmail.com

#### **REDEEMER REPORTER**

Published monthly for members, Associate Members and Visitors of Redeemer Lutheran Church, a member congregation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

#### **WORSHIP SERVICES:**

Divine Service: 9:15 AM Bible Class: 10:30 AM Sunday School: 10:30 AM

The Redeemer Lutheran Church, School & Child Care Family are called into the service of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by His command (Matthew 28:18-20) to:

\*Disciple all nations, that is, all people;

◆Baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

◆Proclaim the Gospel and teach His Word in its truth and purity; and

◆Never be ashamed of the Gospel—it is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).