



“JESUS IS COMING! JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!”

Well, you know how the ancient song goes: “He sees you when you’re sleeping. He knows when you’re awake. He knows if you’ve been bad or good, so be good for goodness sake!”

You know the song well, right? The odd thing is I am not describing some red-suited old man. Rather, I am correctly describing Jesus. Let’s face it, if Santa were peeping in your bedroom window that would be just a little creepy! It is also strange that most people shy away from talking about Jesus, and often want to limit His knowledge about their behavior and situation, but they are perfectly comfortable with the idea that some right jolly, old man has the same powers and awareness as the Creator of the universe. I suspect that they are more comfortable with Santa having those abilities because they no longer really believe in Santa, but we are stiff-necked to know that God is true and real, no matter how hard we work at dismissing such thoughts.

That idea of being stiff-necked is demonstrated by the attitude of the most unwavering atheists. They are not at peace with the idea that there is no God, and then go about life without a thought. They are aggressively and militantly – even evangelistically – atheistic. They cannot stand the thought of God in another person. They have to preach it, and argue it, and advertise it, and do their utmost to squeeze the idea of God, particularly the God of Christians, out of the public consciousness. They don’t believe there is no God, they enthusiastically wish it to be so!

Welcome to the modern Christmas season. Actually it began a couple of weeks before Halloween, this year. Not only did we begin to see Christmas sales and Christmas advertising, the Christmas specials began that early, too. I think we’re still in the “Black Friday” sale period. There have been an ever-increasing number of Christmas specials - usually dealing with Santa or one of his many

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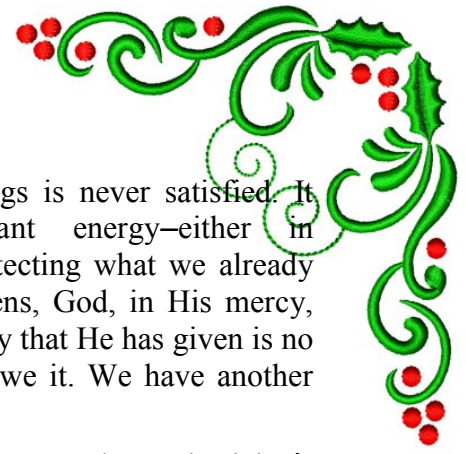
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*for Unto Us
a Child
is Born*



STEWARDSHIP



Our Lord Jesus Christ healed the man with dropsy by His Word on the Sabbath (Luke 14:1–6). He is the great physician of both body and soul. The paradoxical symptom of dropsy was an unquenchable craving for drink even though the body was over inflated with fluid, a craving that when indulged served not to ease but to feed the disease. And so if a man drinks a great deal, but is never filled, he sees a doctor to inquire about what ails him, what is wrong with his body and how to remedy it. For that is not thirst but a disease (Seneca, *Consolation to His Mother Helvia*, 11.3).

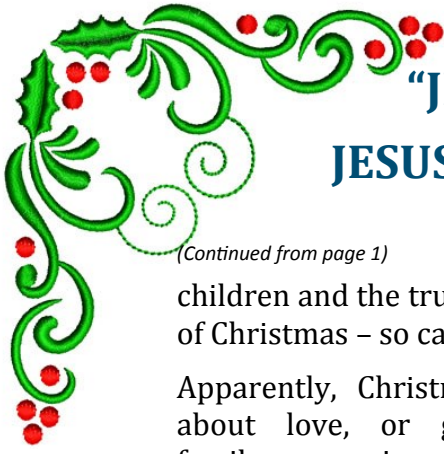
But if the owner of five couches goes looking for ten, or the owner of ten tables buys up as many again, and even though he has plenty of land and money, he remains unsatisfied and desires yet more, losing sleep and always in discontent, does he not also require a physician to diagnose the cause of this distress? For this is not want or lack, but a disease (Aristippus, quoted in Plutarch, *Love of Wealth*, 524b). As St. Augustine of Hippo wrote, “we may rightly compare the dropsical man to a covetous rich man: For the more the one is swollen with excess of water, the more he thirsts; so also the other: The more he abounds in riches . . . the more eagerly he desires them” (*The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers*, Vol. 4, 135). Both require physicians. Both require diagnosis and medicine applied from the outside to the inward being. For these are not desires to be fulfilled but diseases to be cured.

This is why our Lord instructs us on taking care not to be overmuch consumed by money. “No one can serve two masters . . . You cannot serve God and money” (Matt 6:24; Luke 16:13). The point is that our desire for money, like the disease dropsy, is never satisfied. We always desire more. We always think, if I just had this much then I would be happy. But even when that much comes, which God gladly gives, that happiness evades us. For the desire

for more of these things is never satisfied. It demands our constant energy—either in procuring more or protecting what we already have. When this happens, God, in His mercy, shows us that the money that He has given is no longer serving us, but we it. We have another master.

To overcome this, we need a physician’s diagnosis and a physician’s remedy. And our Lord, Jesus Christ, our great physician of both body and soul, like the man healed of dropsy, applies His Word to us. He shows us how we have put our fear, our love, and our trust in our money and not feared, loved, and trusted in Him above all things. In essence, He says, “Stop it! Stop chasing after these fleeting things. They are vanity. They are the things that moth and rust destroy. For you cannot have two masters. Repent!” And in seeing our great error, we are sorry that we have not fully feared, loved, and trusted in God above all things. And, in the mercy and grace, that He earned for us on the cross, He takes away this sin, restores us to health, and bids us life.

But then what? What do we do with this healing balm and care that our great physician has done? Do we simply go back to our old ways? “By no means!” St. Paul says (Rom 3:31; 6:2). We do not just go back to the old ways. That way is dead to us and leads us to death. No, we live a new life, a life filled with the grace, mercy, and love of God toward us. And God’s great mercy, grace, and love toward us is so abundant that it overflows and pours out onto those around us. So we no longer hoard money and possessions. We no longer scrape and crawl our way to amass more. We give to those around us, as God in Christ has given to us. We press our money and possessions into service for those who need it: our family, our society, and our church. For money is God’s gift to us to serve us and others. Not the other way round. It serves us because it is a gift from our Father in heaven.



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children and the true meaning of Christmas – so called.

Apparently, Christmas is all about love, or giving, or family, or magic, or believing (although the content of that believing was never actually defined), or something all warm and fuzzy – don’t forget “Santa Paws” or the “Elf on the Shelf.” It’s amazing how many ways one can speak about the wonder and magic of Christmas without actually mentioning the One whose name is the foundation of the word - CHRIST. To be honest, once in a blue moon, the Christmas special will allude to the Babe of Bethlehem, or mention Jesus, but even when they do, He bears little likeness to the One mentioned in Scripture (I should say, the One who is the Heart and Center and Meaning of the entire Scriptures).

It is difficult to escape the awareness that Christmas is coming, and, with Christmas, someone is coming. The real challenge is to discover who is coming, and for what purpose does He come. Of course, you will never find that question answered on Television!

Advent is the season for the Church to share the message that Someone is coming. He is not coming as the Babe of Bethlehem. He already did

that once. Certainly we celebrate that coming, and gifts He brought and the gifts He gives on Christmas. That celebration has been almost completely lost in the secular celebration which borrows the name but denies the true meaning of Christmas. Churches annually experience the near paradox of the influx of visitors and of the “C & E (Christmas and Easter) crowd,” and the absence of so many of their regular members, who take the holiday as a valid reason to abandon worship with their congregations in favor of family and travel and gifts.

The “C & E crowd” gathers for nostalgia – the pretty lights, and the familiar old Christmas music, and the feeling that this is how Mom and Dad used to mark these special days. How sweet to remember something that clearly doesn’t mean anything real to them any longer, because they don’t take time for it each week, as Christians would – and do.

The absent members of the congregations forget that the people they worship with each week, that communion of the saints, is their true family, their eternal family. They imagine that the giving of gifts and the joy of their families and the warm and familiar fellowship of the flesh

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SERVING THE LORD

Pastor	Rev. James Kress
Seasonal Pastor	
LHM Ambassador	
Child Care Director	Wendy Horvath
Office Secretary	Deb Horner
Organist	Bill Bowers
Choir Director	Collins Sita
Newsletter Editor	Deb Horner

OFFICERS

President	Stephen Wurster
Vice President	Terry Fountain
Treasurer	Denise Fountain
Secretary	June Brown

BOARDS

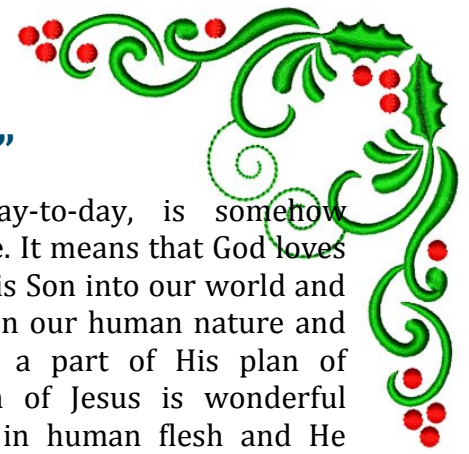
Head Elder	
Christian Ed.	Pam Replinger
Human Care	
Outreach	Cindy Johnson
Assimilation	Mary Kay Straw
School Board	Bill Bowers
Stewardship	Rev. Mark Steinke
Youth	James Straw
Financial Secretary	Deb Horner
Property Mgmt.	Todd Armstrong

GROUPS/GUILDS

Ladies Guild	Sally Zierdt
Men’s Group	
Altar Guild	
Coffee Hour	

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is the heart of Christmas. If they are dedicated members of the church, they will attend the service of a congregation local to their families, and imagine that the substitute fellowship is the same, or pretty close to the same as the family of believers they left behind at the season in which we celebrate the coming of Him who made our faith, our fellowship, and the holiday possible and important. At the time of our deepest celebration, they have separated themselves from the body with which they ordinarily celebrate the inspirational mysteries of the faith.

Meanwhile, our society pounds us with the messages of its faith and values. Christmas – they proclaim – is the time of year when the greatest number of people endure the deepest despair because they invest the season with such hope and so many memories, and the present reality does not live up to their expectations. Besides, they say, the real meaning of Christmas is family – while many have no access to their own families. The real meaning of Christmas is magic in a world utterly empty of the magic that the movies have suggested might really be out there. The real meaning of Christmas is love in a society we witness celebrating greed and hatred in the excesses of Christmas advertising on the one hand and the depressing violence of such things as ISIS or the Black Lives Matter movement going on in the streets and in the news today.

What we need is reality, true reality – the reality of Advent and the very real comforts of genuine Christian faith. Christmas does not

mean that life, day-to-day, is somehow becoming a fairy-tale. It means that God loves us enough to send His Son into our world and our reality, to take on our human nature and flesh and blood as a part of His plan of salvation. The birth of Jesus is wonderful because He is God in human flesh and He came to live for us and to die on the cross for our sins to redeem us. We celebrate love, alright, just not our love for one another or for God. We celebrate God’s love for us! We don’t celebrate magic, we celebrate mystery and miracle – that God became Incarnate, that is, He took on human flesh and blood and became true man – without giving up being true God. It is a mystery because we could not calculate it or reason our way to the truth, it had to be revealed to us in Holy Scripture – God’s inspired and inerrant Word. It is a miracle because it is beyond reason and nature. Men – some of them calling themselves Christians – are still saying that what God accomplished in the Incarnation is impossible. But God did it!

We celebrate history when we celebrate Christmas. But Advent is not about history. It is about what – and who – is coming. He is coming. Again. Jesus is not done with us yet. He did not just come at Bethlehem to make Hallmark rich or provide beautiful, touching Nativity scene displays. He came and did the most marvelous thing, which we celebrate on Easter. He died for our sins, and rose from the dead to prove and proclaim that sin and death have been defeated. Our sins are forgiven and our deaths are now but temporary things that happen to our bodies, but not to our souls. We, too, shall rise again. It is such a big celebration that we cannot confine it to Easter Sunday, one day each year. We celebrate it every Sunday – every Sunday is our Easter celebration!

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Advent is about looking forward to that day when Jesus will return and raise our bodies from the dead, just as He raised His own on that first Easter, and re-unite our bodies and our souls for everlasting life in glory, joy, and peace, with Him and with all those who have known Him and believed and trusted in Him to do what He said He would do. The Church has set aside an entire month to celebrate and rehearse and remember and look forward to that coming day when Jesus, the Lord of Life, the Creator of all that exists, will come again and claim us as His own publicly and bring us to Himself in eternity – what is commonly called heaven.

God has chosen for us to live in this world. We have the easiest world in terms of the daily business of life that mankind has ever known, particularly here in America. We have abundant food, sufficient clothing, and readily available shelter. We have devices to do many of the difficult things of life, or make them easier. We have fantastic resources of technology and information freely available to us. The poorest among us have riches that the kings of just a couple centuries ago could only dream about, and could not purchase for any cost.

One the down-side, we have a world with such awful dangers, and the enemies of the truth of God are more numerous and vicious than ever, and the tools of propaganda and disinformation in the modern media are appalling. Men can now manipulate images and audio recordings so effectively that you cannot tell if what you are seeing or hearing is real. We have been made dependent on technology which can be limited or withdrawn, and the old ways and skills are fast being forgotten. The technology which is a blessing has also

provided tools for manipulating people and information and waging war, from cyber warfare to pornography. It is a dangerous and often confusing world in which we have been called upon to live. It helps to recall that our loving heavenly Father chose for us to live in this world of blessing and danger.

However, the comforts of the Gospel, the hope of Advent, and the communion of the saints are our greatest strengths in the world in which we live. Knowing that life is never really out of control is precious when world events, like Paris, and even the events in our own personal lives, are seemingly spinning out of control. God knows us and loves us, and has His eyes upon us for blessing and salvation. We have nothing to fear when the world threatens us because God is with us, and the worst the world can do is send us home to the arms of our Savior.

The world around us is in almost permanent panic mode as a result of terrorism, race and gender wars, lack of economic growth, the truth about Planned Parenthood, and a presidential race. But we have no cause for fear because God is actually in charge. The terrorism we have been seeing is in His hands. Could terrorism strike us? Yes. But it cannot destroy us. God knows where we are, and He will feed us and clothe us, just as He always has. We have seen those nations that stood up and cursed God fall apart in a day, without a shot, without a war. Do dangers threaten? Yes. But they cannot get around God. And He loves us! We see that in Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter.

He has given us one another in the Church to console each other, and remind one another of His love, and to help one

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another in times of need. Each week we sing to one another about His grace and love. We confess His goodness and forgiveness. We pray for each other and the world around us. We listen to one another and hear about our joys and our sorrows. When life gets to be a bit too much, we have each other’s shoulders to cry on. God meant our fellowship, our communion to be a very present reminder of Him and His love, and for us to take care of each other as His representatives in this world.

He has given us the Gospel to comfort us. He forgives us all our sins, so that we may never fear that He will withdraw His love or help from us. He feeds us in the Holy Supper for our strength and comfort.

And then there are the promises of the future, the promises of Advent. Jesus is coming. Yes, He is coming again. The day is surely drawing near, to quote a hymn, when God’s Son will return to announce to the world that we are His, and to take us out of this corrupt, vile world of uncertainty and fear and set us in His presence in glory where there is no fear, no more sorrow, no uncertainty, no more sickness, and no more death – just life, and joy, and peace, and the full awareness of His love and approval. Advent invites us to keep in mind that day when the clouds will part, and Jesus will be there, in the sky, with His angels visibly gathered around Him, and He will separate those that believe from the rest of mankind. And we will rise to meet the Lord in the air – without fear, but with great joy.

“You better not shout. You better not cry. You better not pout. I’m telling you why, ...” Actually, we can shout – for joy – that is. God understands our tears in this veil of tears, as long as they are not hopeless tears. Pouting? Well, it’s probably not worth the time. But it is not Santa we look forward to. It is Jesus! Jesus is coming again! And that is something to look forward to! A blessed Advent and Christmas season to all of you.

In Christ Jesus,
Pastor Kress



ISLAM KEEPING THE FACTS STRAIGHT

The following article appeared in the Lutheran Witness in May 2006. It was brought to my attention last spring by a member of Redeemer at our Tuesday Morning Bible Class during the study of the religion of Islam. If you think the article is compelling, you discover the truth about a religion that is anything but a religion of peace. The core of the teaching of Islam is hatred, violence, and even death to those who do not believe the Koran. Its ideology has and continues to quickly make its way into our country, into small towns and villages. Moreover, it is gaining more and more popularity among the younger generation – your children and grandchildren. Share the undeniable truth about Islam.

Islam Keeping the Facts Straight

American Christians ought to be more informed about the real nature of Islam and the Koran.

by Alvin Schmidt

Since September 11, 2001, the mass media have presented many views of Islam and its adherents. But they have failed to report some well-established facts that the American public needs to know in order to gain a better, more accurate understanding of Islam. Often the media's failure has been the result of reporters not doing their homework. Sometimes it is because they do not want to say anything that could be deemed "politically incorrect."

Let's look at a couple of important facts about Islam that most Americans, including us Christians, have not been told. Not knowing these facts often results in not being able to discern fabricated propaganda regarding Islam.

This makes it easier for its zealous promoters to deceive us.

Doctrine of abrogation

When two or more passages in the Koran are in conflict or contradict each other, the more recent passage(s) Muhammad reportedly received from Allah via the angel Gabriel usually abrogates (repeals) the earlier passage(s) in question. The Koran states, "Whatever communications We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than it or like it. Do you not know that Allah has power over all things?" (Sura 2:106).

When given passages were abrogated, they continued to be part of the Koran. Because abrogated verses are never deleted and because the public does not know about the doctrine of abrogation, or which verses have been abrogated, Muslim propagandists can (and do) easily deceive the non-Muslim public by citing certain abrogated verses as though they were still valid, thus falsely presenting Islam in a positive light.

For instance, since 9/11, some Muslims have placed ads in American newspapers saying that Islam is tolerant of all religions by citing the following passage from the Koran: "There is no compulsion in religion" (Sura 2:256). But this verse, spoken by Muhammad before he left Mecca for Medina in 622, has been abrogated by more recent passages.

Although there are numerous verses that abrogate the "no compulsion in religion" passage, I'll cite only two: "Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His apostle have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth" (Sura 9:29).

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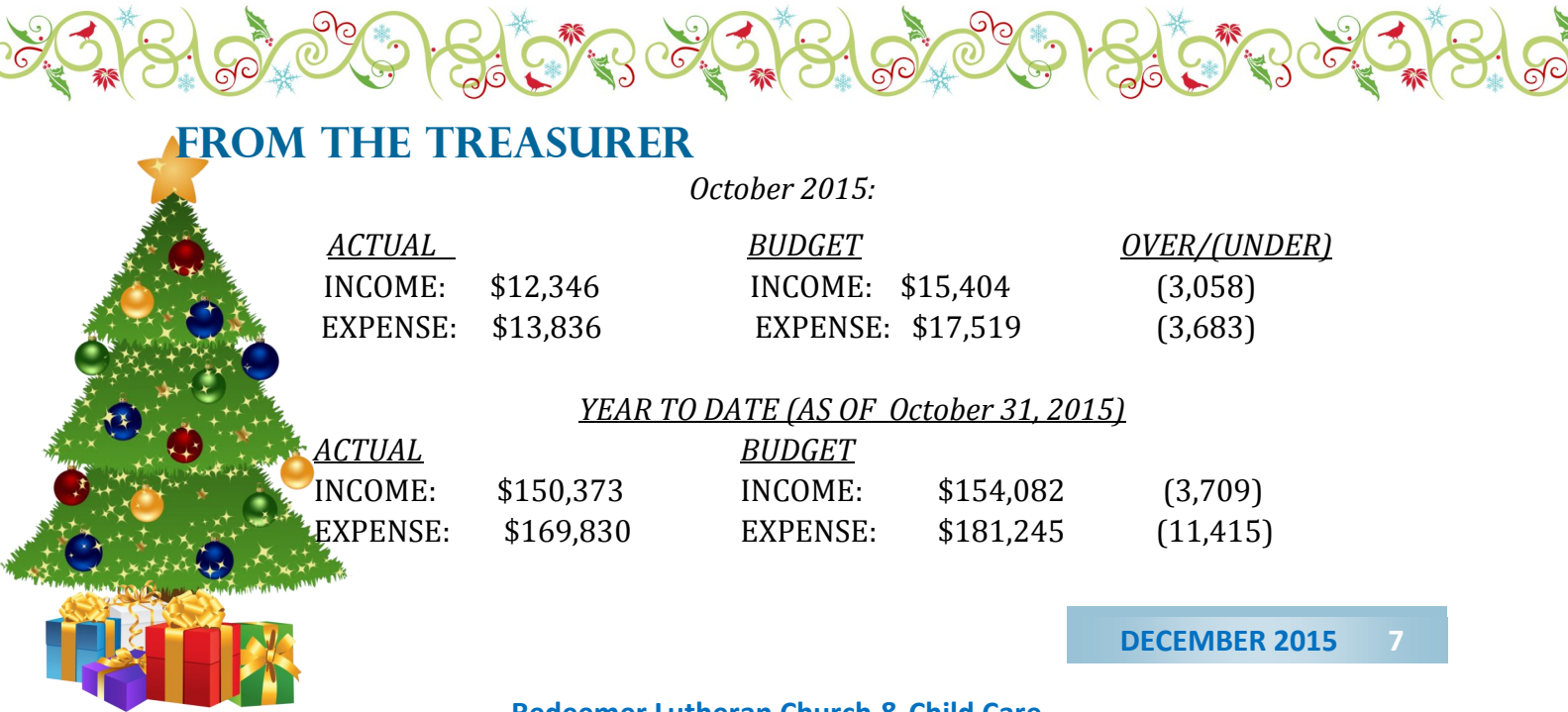
FROM THE TREASURER

October 2015:

<u>ACTUAL</u>		<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>OVER/(UNDER)</u>
INCOME:	\$12,346	INCOME: \$15,404	(3,058)
EXPENSE:	\$13,836	EXPENSE: \$17,519	(3,683)

YEAR TO DATE (AS OF October 31, 2015)

<u>ACTUAL</u>		<u>BUDGET</u>	
INCOME:	\$150,373	INCOME: \$154,082	(3,709)
EXPENSE:	\$169,830	EXPENSE: \$181,245	(11,415)



ISLAM KEEPING THE FACTS STRAIGHT

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“I will cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve, therefore strike off their heads and strike off every fingertip of them” (Sura 8:12).

These verses and others like them, called the “sword verses,” abrogate those that speak of peace or American Christians ought to be more informed about the real nature of Islam and the Koran. Islam keeping the Facts straight keeping the Facts straight tolerance. The tolerance passages were uttered by Muhammad in Mecca when his followers were few in number, and he was still trying to gain converts by peaceful means of persuasion. But after his flight to Medina, he changed his tactics; he employed the sword to gain converts. He once said, “I, therefore, the last of the prophets am sent with the sword!”

Thus, when promoters of Islam cite passages from the Koran to show Islam as a religion of peace, we must not let ourselves be deceived by verses that have been abrogated. In fact, when Muslims cite certain passages in newspaper ads or on television, we would be wise to ask, “Have these verses been abrogated?”

As already noted, the doctrine of abrogation is an orthodox teaching of the Koran and is not an anti-Islamic concept. Most encyclopedias on Islam, usually written by Muslim scholars, contain reliable information on this doctrine.

Out of context

Another practice often employed by defenders and promoters of Islam in their efforts to put a positive spin on their religion is to quote a passage out of context. In trying to convince the public that Islam is a religion of peace, they often cite the following verse: “Whoever killed a person it is as if he killed all mankind, and whoever saved a life it is as if he saved all mankind” (Sura 5:32). This verse appeared as part of an almost full-page ad in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on July 20, 2005, under the title “Not In The Name Of Islam.”

Quoting Sura 5:32 was an attempt to get people to conclude that its words apply to Muslims who engage in violent acts. But that would be a false conclusion, for the ad’s quotation hides two deceptions. One, it was taken from the middle of the verse; thus it should have been printed with ellipses, both at the beginning and at the end of the quotation to indicate that there was more to the passage than what was quoted. Two, it ignored the context of the immediately preceding verses, together with the first part of Sura 5:32, which talk about Cain having murdered his brother Abel.

The complete passage reads, “On this account [Cain’s crime], we decreed to the Children of Israel that if anyone kills a person—unless in retribution for murder or spreading corruption in the land—it is as if he kills all

mankind, while if any saves a life it is as if he saves the lives of all mankind” (emphasis added).

Regarding this verse, Ibn Warraq, a former Muslim, correctly noted, “The supposedly noble sentiments are in fact a warning to Jews. ‘Behave or else’ is the message. Far from abjuring violence, these verses aggressively point out that anyone opposing the prophet will be killed, crucified, mutilated, and banished!”

So, when this verse is cited out of context, Christians and other non-Muslims must not let themselves be deceived into thinking that its words prohibit Muslims from committing violence.

It is also important to note that the above ad’s omitted words—“unless in retribution for ... spreading corruption in the land”—permit Muslims to engage in violence against non-Muslims, as in recent violent responses to cartoons of Muhammad.

American Muslim population

In recent years, many news media have reported inflated population figures for American Muslims, ranging from 7 to 12 million. The census data of the United States do not include questions about religious affiliation, but independent research groups study the population size of American religious denominations. In 2001, the American Religious Identification Survey of City University of New York reported 1.8 million Muslims in the United States. Also in 2001, the National Opinion Research Center (University of Chicago) reported 1.9 million Muslims, and the American Jewish Committee reported 2.8 million American Muslims— about 1 percent of the country’s population. [According to 2010 Census, there are 2.8 million Muslims in the US. Other reports since then put the number between 5 and 8 million Muslims in the country].

These Muslim population figures are sometimes decried by pro-Muslim groups for political reasons; they argue that the Muslim population is much higher. But the three scientific surveys just cited, as well as others, do not support the argument that there are 7 million or more Muslims in America.

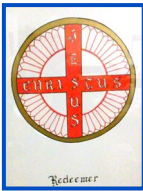
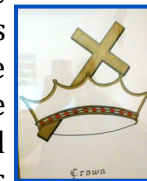
Pollster James Zogby, an Arab-American, thinks the U.S. census of 1.25 million Arab-Americans in 2000 is too low because many Arab-American have language difficulties, distrust the government, or are confused regarding racial or ethnic questions when filling out census forms. His research gives the estimate of 3.5 million Arab-Americans.

You might assume most Arab-Americans are Muslim. Interestingly though, according to Zogby 77 percent are Christians, and only 23 percent are Muslims. Of the Christian 77 percent, 42 percent are Roman Catholics, 23 percent are Eastern Orthodox, and 12 percent are

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

*Our Volunteer in the Spotlight
this month is Dorothy Sinowetski!*



I'm sure you have admired all the wonderful centerpieces on the small tables and the stunning wall hangings in the Narthex. Have you ever wondered how these magically change with the seasons or who created them? Who painted the beautiful murals in the restrooms and painted murals in the Child Care rooms? These were all done by Dorothy. But these are just a few of the delightful items she has created. She was even able to transform Pastor Kress into a butterfly one year! Therefore, we graciously recognize Dorothy as volunteer of the month for all the behind the scenes work she does, (she would have written this herself, but she is too humble).



We love you Dorothy!!!



ISLAM KEEPING THE FACTS STRAIGHT

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Protestants.

The American media have largely ignored this fact. As a result, Americans tend to believe that all or most American Arabs are Muslims. But they are not.

It's also interesting to note that the University of Michigan Dearborn Center for Arab-American Studies recently found that even in Dearborn, Mich., 58 percent of the Arabian descendants are Christians and 42 percent are Muslims.

Most Muslims in the United States are not of Arabic background. Some studies estimate that the American Muslim population is 30 to 42 percent

black, and about 30 percent are from South-Asian and Southeast-Asian countries such as Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Indochina, Philippines, and Indonesia. Still others are of Iranian and Turkish origin.

Americans—and especially we Christians—ought to be aware of such demographics as these. But we must be even more informed about the real nature of Islam and its holy book, the Koran, that confronts many of Christianity's noble contributions to the West.

Dr. Alvin J. Schmidt is the author of *The Great Divide: The Failure of Islam and the Triumph of the West*. His e-mail is schmidt@ic.edu

TRAVELS OF AQUILA AND PRISCILLA

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, we are now in the fourth month of our travels. New England is now pouring on it's brilliant display of fall color. One sees various shades of golds, yellows, reds, and greens no matter which way one turns.

We spent a day in Old Sturbridge Village in Mass. This is a village set up as it would have been in the late 1800's. They have people enacting life as it was back then. Some of the things we saw like the water wheel powered grist mill and the counter weight lift for the water well reminded Aquila (Joe) of his early childhood days in Portugal.

In Conn. we visited Mark Twain's home in Hartford and spent time catching up with two of Aquila's work friends and their wives. One of which was Aquila's VP of Sales. We spent a day with him and his wife traveling down the Conn. River Valley to see where the river empties into Long Island Sound and having dinner with them at an inn that has been there since 1776.

The highlight of this segment of our travels was spending three days with our grand daughter Carly in the Big Apple. We saw a Broadway Play, visited the American Museum of Natural History and the 9/11 Memorial Museum, which probably should be a must see for every American visiting New York. For the most part the people we encountered were very friendly and helpful.

Truly New York is a city that never sleeps. At times we felt overwhelmed with the masses of people and traffic in every direction.

After New York we needed a change of pace. We decided to step back about 240 years and visit the site where George Washington and his troops crossed the Delaware River. This event and the success of the battle in Trenton truly was the turning point in the history of our nation. There is a lovely state park now at

the site and they offer a very informative guided tour.

Combine a sunny day in the low 70's with a great steak sandwich with a bottle of Lutheran coffee, Independence Hall, The Liberty Bell, and the Betsy Ross house and you've had a great day in Philadelphia.

In Baltimore we visited Audrey Slusher, Marie Talley's sister. We had a wonderful time with Audrey and her two children Denise and Jeff who were kind enough to stop by to see us. What a great treat it was for us to have a great delicious home cooked meal.

Washington DC, our nations capital, is always a very interesting city to visit. Historical sites, parks, monuments, people and traffic everywhere. We visited the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials as well as the Holocaust Museum. What a sobering experience that was. We went to the National Zoo to see the baby panda. Unfortunately for us, since the baby has not had its shots yet, the pandas are only on display for about two hours each day.

Its hard to believe that in a beautiful area like Gettysburg that over 50,000 American lives were lost in three days of battle 152 years ago. That is just about as many Americans as was lost during the entire Vietnam Conflict. The presentation of the three day battle is very sobering but well done at the visitors center. We would say it is a must see for every American, also to be enlightened about the personal side of Eisenhower, make sure you visit his farm.

GOD sure has blessed our nation with one amazing vista after another. On our travels we have seen so many that it is becoming hard to remember them all. The view from

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TRAVELS OF AQUILA AND PRISCILLA

(Continued from page 10)

Jefferson's Rock in Harpers Ferry even on a cloudy grey day is very impressive and has to be added to the list of amazing vistas.

Historical Harpers Ferry the site in which John Brown raided the federal arsenal is now a national park and one can step back about 155 years by walking into the many buildings and shops with displays as they may have been in 1860.

We are just about a week behind peak foliage color on the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkways but it is still an awesome site. One spectacular vista after another. What a display of reds, yellows, golds, and browns from the hardwoods and splashes of green from the pines.

Both of us love waterfalls. Seeing a sign for a waterfall we decided to check it out. The sign said the trail was rated at moderate and round trip was only 1.25 miles. Hey no problem we can walk a mile and a quarter. What the sign didn't say is that you would be hiking down about 500 ft, and moderate refers to some one in fairly good shape and not as well rounded as Aquila. Going down was fairly easy, coming back up an was a real effort. The view was great and worth the effort.

There are a number of caverns along the Parkway. We decided to visit the Grand Caverns. It has a number of formations that are not seen in other caverns. It is amazing to see what GOD created even below ground for us to ponder and enjoy.

The Natural Bridge of Virginia is really something to see. Thomas Jefferson was so amazed by it that he purchased the bridge and the property around it from the king of England. At the site they have an Indian village where they have people acting out the roles they would have in the 1700's. In addition there is a very pretty waterfall called

Lacy Falls. We also saw something that reminded us of Moses, it's now called the Lost River.

The story is when Thomas Jefferson owned the property he allowed miners to come in and get saltpeter out of one of the caves on the property. The miners could hear water running behind a rock so they blasted a hole through the rock and ever since water has been coming out of the rock. To this day they have not discovered the source for this water even after running all different kinds of tests.

One can not travel through Virginia and not see some important sites from the early days of our history. Places like Monticello the home of the man that wrote our Declaration of Independence which united the colonies and in about an hours drive Appomattox where our country was once again reunited.

Continuing south on the Blue Ridge Parkway we saw many more awesome vistas. We also got a chance to see how life was for the people that lived in the mountains in the early 1800's.

Of course a drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway is not complete unless one stops in Mt. Airy home of Andy Griffith, and the setting for the 50's TV show Mayberry.

Further south we toured a Cherokee museum and village. It was interesting to learn of their culture and way of life. In the village they had people doing different tasks like weaving, making pottery, beading and many other crafts.

Smokey Mountains National Park has the most visitors of all of our national parks. Vistas with fall color that are too grand to describe. Waterfalls and mountain streams, also the highest point on the east coast, 6,642 ft., Clingman's Dome. To get to the top from the parking lot you have to walk a half mile to climb the last 300 ft. A challenge for old legs

(Continued on page 12)



TRAVELS OF AQUILA AND PRISCILLA

(Continued from page 11)

and lungs but worth the effort.

We were told they have a large black bear population, and that elk also have been introduced into the park but we did not spot any. We did see a number of white tail deer and wild turkey.

Since we were in TN and close to KY we decided to check out the difference between KY bourbon and TN whiskey. Since this was a research project we of course had to force ourselves to partake of this liquid. The result of our study is as follows: both of them start out the same except that the TN whiskey goes through one additional step before it goes into the barrel. It goes through a charcoal filtering before going into the barrel.

After some hard research we found out the Jack Daniels has a Lutheran connection. Here's the connection. When Jack Daniels was six years old, his father had to remarry because Jack's mother had died and he needed help with the children. The woman he married also had children. Jack wasn't happy and asked his father if he could go live with someone else. Jack wound up living with a Lutheran minister who liked to make whiskey. Jack would help the minister and got interested in making whiskey. When Jack was 13 the congregation told the minister to make up his mind either be a minister or make whiskey. The minister decided to stop making whiskey and sold the business to Jack Daniel's for \$25.

Chattanooga was our next stop. Aquila wanted to see the Chattanooga Choo-Choo and the old train station. Chattanooga is a major rail road hub and very important during the civil war. Many battles were fought in the area and once the Union had control of the area Sherman was able to use Chattanooga as a place to marshall the supplies and forces he needed for his march to Atlanta.

Near Chattanooga at Rock City on Lookout Mountain it's possible to see 7 states. We also visited Ruby Falls. This is a 145ft. waterfall 1100ft. below the earth's surface in a cavern.

Since Aquila cannot get enough trains we took the Incline Railway, the steepest in the world, a mile up the side of Lookout Mountain.

Aquila and Priscilla are both Star Trek fans so of course we had to check out the NASA Space Museum and the Red Stone Arsenal in Huntsville, AL where our space program started. What a way to spend a day looking at the past achievements of our great country, in space exploration and looking forward to some of the benefits we might all expect due to the experiments that are now being conducted in the international space lab.

Since we just were looking at the future we decided to go back in history. One way is to drive on the Natchez Trace which is a National Park that goes from Huntsville to Natchez. Basically, it's a beautiful two lane parkway which pretty much follows the Natchez Trace which was the roadway that the frontiersmen used when they traveled from Huntsville to Natchez. Along the Trace one sees Indian burial mounds, frontier homes and ancient Indian village sites and of course portions of the original Trace which was about a 10 ft. wide dirt road.

A big part of the Unions' plan to win the Civil War was to divide the Confederacy in half; therefore, they needed to control the Mississippi River. The Union had the river in their control except for the area around Vicksburg, MS. Vicksburg sits up high on a bluff overlooking the river so no Union boat traffic could make its way past Vicksburg. In addition to that there was a railroad line that ran through the area that needed to be captured by the Union.

General Grant made several attempts to attack Vicksburg with no success and after losing about 10,000 men he decided to put Vicksburg under siege. After a 3 month siege the South surrendered, total number lost on both sides 20,000. The loses both here and at Gettysburg is believed to be why the the South lost the Civil

(Continued on page 13)

TRAVELS OF AQUILA AND PRISCILLA

(Continued from page 12)

War. It is amazing how things that you studied in your childhood about American history regarding the French and Indian Wars, the Revolutionary War and Civil War start to make sense as to why things happen the way they did when you visit and see where the action took place.

Natchez MS., once probably one of the richest cities in the South since it had the second largest slave market in the South. The largest was New Orleans. Reason being is the states north of MS had depleted their fields growing tobacco. Now their fields were only suitable for growing grass crops like wheat that didn't require as much labor so they sold their slave surplus to the cotton growers.

In Natchez we toured the city home of one of those cotton plantation owners. It is amazing to see even in those days what money could buy.

Since we were in MS we decided to checkout the NASA Stennis facility about 40 miles east of New Orleans on I-10. Among many other things they do here is testing the rocket engines that will propel our astronauts to Mars. Great place to visit.

We had not been to the Crescent City, since hurricane Katerina so we decided to check things out. The French Quarter was probably somewhat raunchier then we remembered. Some

of the establishments that we remembered have been replaced by others. But we still had a great time enjoying Cajun food and music, a hurricane at Pat O'Brien's, and of course a visit to New Orleans is not complete unless one goes to Cafe du Monde for chicory coffee with milk and beignets. A Stroll through Jackson Square with all the artists, fortunate tellers and mimes is always a fun thing. Couple that with a stroll on the river walk watching the shipping traffic on the Mississippi. Sitting on a park bench eating a muffuletta and wondering if some of that water we were seeing was some of the same water we saw coming out of Lake Itasca at the start of the Mississippi in MN was very pleasant and enjoyable for both of us.

We drove along the Gulf Coast on the Creole Nature Trail, home for a variety of birds, reptiles and animals. Since this is tidal flood water land, at times water was lapping the side of the roadway.

We are now at the home of our daughter in the Republic of Texas. We thank GOD for keeping us out of harm's way in our travels and for all the wonderful people we encountered on our way.

God willing we will be here in Texas until January at which time we plan to resume our travels and updates. We wish that all of you have a wonderful and blessed Christmas and the New Year will bring nothing but joy.



PRAYERS



SHUT-INS: Carl & Betty Bertka, Alice Borowski, Betty Keller, Helen Perry, and Ruth Sutley.

HEALING: Mickie Abel, Marion Bise, Frank Demma, Pat Finkenbine, Bernice Heppner, Susan Jahns, Dave Johnson, Rita Kaufmann, Sandy McGrath, Bob Mortenson, Marlene Mossner, Bob Payne, Carolyn Plesner, Joyce Redding, Duwayne Schoeneck, Fred Toth, Bob Varone and Robert Vickey.

Friends & Relatives: Linny Aspery, Dick & Marilyn Bjornas, Grace Blum, Michelle Bernard, Bill Bowers, Jr., Debbie Buel, Dennis Burchell, Georgia Bush, Jack Carlos, Diane Carr, Debbie Carr, Esther Clapham, Bobbett Clark, Joanne Clymo, Martin Cressman, Renee Dempsey, Dale DesJardins, Brian DeTrow, Ed DeTrow, Irene DiTommaso, James Dodge, Barb Dumeah, Bruce Everson, Darla Finkenbine, Marla Flores, Lou Fountain, Denver Fredett, Manual Galan, Glenn Galway, Liam Garland, Sandra Gettings, Nancy Gleis, Friends and Family of Richard Grayson, Shelley Roedel Gutz, Debbie Harrison, Larry

Headun, Claudette
Hendershot, Joel
Heppner, Walter
Heppner, Glory

Herget, Joan Hillis,
Robin Hincman,
David Hirtle, Larry Hladun, Carol Holmes,
Linda Holt, John Hunter, Linda Hunter,
Stanley & Lynne Jablonski, Bill Jaquest, Chris
Johnson, Heather Johnson, Rachel Kagay, John
Kearns, Elizabeth Lynn Klopfenstein, Stacey
Lampert, Ray Likowski, Sean Maki, Joe
Manson, Candace McGowan, Friends and
Family of Martin McGrath, Pete Mogg, John
Montondo, Mike Morrissey, Maureen Nesvacil,
Charles Pentecost Jr., Margo Plamondon, Mary
Raines, Rachell Sanders, Ashley Scudder,
Nancy Sly, Virginia Stanley, Charles Tolley,
Samantha Jo Ann Toth, George Vespa, Steven
Walker, Christy Wallace, Helen Weishaar,
Gordan Winkel, and Tim Wright.

Military Personnel: Mark Baranowsky,
Michael Broughton, Brian Jackson, Joshua
Jones, Jonathan Koen, David MacLeod, Steven
Seigmundt, and Charles D. Weishaar.

In Our Prayers

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!



***The deadline for the January Newsletter is December 16th
Please have all your submissions sent to redeemerfl@verizon.net OR drop it off at
the church office to Deb by the date indicated above.***

Thank You!

BIBLE STUDY

With all the hype and excitement of the new Avengers fictional movie, *Age of Ultron*, I thought it would be advantageous for us to look into a book of the Bible containing some nonfictional biblical super heroes. The Book of Judges is just such a book. Following the death of Joshua and before the rise of Israel's monarchy, God preserved His people from being absorbed by pagan cultures through the ministry of savior-judges. Although immanently human and sometimes exceedingly wicked, God's gracious work through these men and women foreshadows His greater work of deliverance through the true and perfect Savior-Judge, Jesus Christ. In Judges you will learn about: the successful woman-man team of Deborah and Barak; the



mighty Spirit-powered deeds of Samson; and God's faithfulness to His covenantal promises to His people, ultimately fulfilled in His Son, Jesus Christ. Come join us on **Sunday mornings at 8:00 AM** in the church sanctuary to learn more about these biblical super heroes. You will be amazed how God worked through men and women and how He continues to work through you. Are you a super hero?

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS: On Tuesdays, at 10 AM in the small meeting room of Fellowship Hall we have begun an exciting year diving into the Word of God. This year we shall consider: **THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST: WHAT'S IN THE NAME?** Did you know that the name *Jesus* means "the Lord saves?" So, Jesus is His personal name. Did you know that the name *Christ* means "the Anointed?" Jesus has been anointed by God, the Father with the Holy Spirit without limit to be our Prophet, Priest, and King. So, Christ is His work or office. Furthermore, have you ever wondered if there is any significance when reading God's Word sometimes scripture will read "Jesus Christ" and other times scripture will read "Christ Jesus?" I have had those same questions. Come join us on Tuesday Mornings at 10AM and let's search the SCRIPTURES and see what they have to say about it.

LADIES BIBLE CLASS ON THURSDAY: On Thursdays, at 10AM, the ladies of Redeemer Lutheran Church and their lady friends meet in the large meeting room of Fellowship Hall to study God's Word with the aid of *GOOD NEWS* magazine. We will discover **GOD'S HEALING MEDICINE FOR YOU.** Have you ever been sick and needed medicine to heal you? What would you do? You would go to your doctor and he would prescribe medicine to bring you back to health, right? Well, we are all sick with sin. We cannot avoid it. We need to go to our Divine Physician to receive from Him prescribed medicine to heal us from our sin sickness. Ladies! Come join us on Thursday mornings at 10AM to learn more about our terminal illness of sin and how God, in Christ, has provided us with the medicine of His Word and Sacraments to fight against the effects of this dreaded disease and finally deliver us into everlasting life with Him in heaven.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP

Everyone is invited to the Fellowship every Thursday, starting at 10:00AM. **The more people attending, the more FUN we can have!!!** The most popular things to play are: Pinochle, Phase 10, SkipBO, and Hand & Foot. We also have Dominoes or other games if they are requested. There must be something you would like to have fun with, so come on out. Once in awhile we have a special home made lunch but usually everyone brings a bag lunch. Drinks and dessert furnished.

KRAFT KORNER

It has been decided that at this time **ALL BOOKS ARE FREE!!!** We have an over abundance of books at this time, so stop by and see our selections. We are always in need of items we can sell in our corner. Even if you think it is junk "remember, your junk is someone else's treasurer. Please check around and see what you might have. We have a pretty good supply of books if you need to read while relaxing or waiting in doctors office.



PROPERTY APPRECIATION DAY

We sure could use some help on our Property Appreciations 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 December 12th at 8:00 AM.**



POINSETTIA ORDERS

We are accepting orders for the placement of red Poinsettia plants around our altar for the Christmas services. They may be purchased for \$11.00 per plant and you may include your payment with your weekly contribution envelope. Write "Poinsettia" on the line below Child Care on the front of your contribution envelope, show the \$11.00 amount and include this amount with your normal offering.

To order your plant, a sign-up sheet will be on the activity desk in the Narthex. You are welcome to take your plant home following the 7 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols on Thursday, Dec. 24th or following the 10 AM Christmas Day Divine Service on Friday, Dec. 25th.

ADVENT DINNERS

We will once again be enjoying our traditional Advent Dinners between services on Dec. 9th, and 16th between 5:30 and 6:30 PM. However we need your help. Help is needed to make these dinners an enjoyable time of fellowship. Volunteers are needed for: set-up, preparing entries and serving, and clean-up. Please contact the Church office if you can help out or just have questions. Thank you!



ANGEL CHRISTMAS TREE

Once again the Angel Christmas Tree will be decorated in the Narthex with tags describing name and age of each child of the children in our childcare. Please be so kind as to take a tag from the tree and buy a Christmas present for the appropriate age. The cost would be from \$15.00 to \$20.00. Wrap the present and attach the tag to the present, place under the tree. Your name and phone number should be recorded beside the appropriate age and tag number. You will find the recorder sheet under the tree. **Presents should be under the tree by December 13th, 2015.** These presents will then be distributed to the little ones at their Christmas party on December 22, 2015. The children thank you for your ongoing support every year. They enjoy the party and the presents.



Allison Ann Jolly



Kylee Brooke & Braxton Reis Payne



Thomas Lee Evanicki



Logan Thomas Powell



2015 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES:

Wednesday, December 2nd – 4:30 PM & 7:00 PM

Wednesday, December 9th – 4:30 PM & 7:00 PM

Wednesday, December 16th – 4:30 PM

Wednesday, December 16th – 7:00 PM Children’s Christmas Program

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDELIGHT SERVICES:

Thursday, December 24th – 4:30 & 7:00 PM

Service of Lessons and Carols

CHRISTMAS DAY DIVINE SERVICE:

Friday, December 25th – 10:00 AM

The Nativity of Our Lord



Date	Set-up	Take-down
Sunday, Dec. 6th	Gretchen Armstrong	Bernice Heppner Mickie Abel
Sunday, Dec. 13th	Lisa Kress	Carolyn Francis Sally Zierdt
Sunday, Dec. 20th	Sandi Libke Jane Harty	Deb Horner Vicki Fernald
Friday, Dec. 25th	Lisa Kress	Lisa Kress
Sunday, Dec. 27th	Jim & Mary Kay Straw Bob Varone	Sandi Libke Carolyn Francis





ONEBLOOD—BLOOD DRIVE

**Blood Donor
HONOR ROLL**

Thank you for participating in the blood drive at
Redeemer Lutheran Church on Sunday, December 13th

**SEE YOUR NAME ON THE HONOR
ROLL!!**

**DONATE BLOOD ON DECEMBER
13TH, 2015**

facebook.com/myoneblood youtube.com/enebloodvideos twitter.com/my1blood oneblood.org

Let's meet our goal of 10 units of
donated blood this time!!! Get your
name on the blood donor Honor Roll

Every two seconds, someone needs blood. The blood donated at our blood drive will likely be transfused into a patient within 48 to 72 hours. The turnaround is that fast and is that constant.

Our next scheduled blood drive is 12/13/15 from 8:30am to 12:00pm. If the number of donors does not increase with this drive, we run the risk of not having this service available at our convenience, just outside our doors. If we want to continue to give this lifesaving gift, please set time aside on Dec. 13th to donate.





Redeemer Child Care
would like to wish you a
very Merry Christmas!



Bible Lessons

Chapel is on Monday at
3:45

11/30 God Has a Plan for
Salvation

Luke 2:1-7

12/7 The Good News Is
Spread

Luke 2:8-21

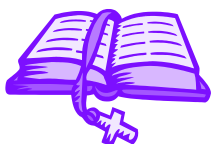
12/14 God Keeps his
promises

Luke 2:22-38

12/21 Christmas

12/28 God Leads Us to
Worship

Matthew 2:1-12



Dear Jesus, I love to hear
the story of Your birth.
Glory to God! You came to
be my Savior. Amen.

Closed

December 23, 24, & 25
December 31 & January 1

Birthdays

Myles 12/13

Alex 12/13

Kylee 12/16

Ms. Summer 12/19

Jenna 12/21

Kaylee 12/23

Weston 12/28

Rosemarie 12/31



Christmas Program

Come and join us for the
2015 Children's Christmas
Program. This year's
theme is:

"Joy to the World"
December 16, 2015
7:00 pm



Thank you to all the
members of Redeemer
Lutheran Church who gave
to the Angel Scholarship
Fund this year.

**What We Are
Learning**

12/1-12/5 Jesus Is Born

12/8-12/12 The Angels'
Announcement to the
Shepherds

12/15-12/19 Simeon and
Anna See Jesus

12/22-12/26 Christmas

12/29-1/2 The Wise Men
Find Jesus

Santa Lunch



Please join us on
December 22, 2015 at
11:00 am for a Pot Luck
Lunch in the Fellowship
Hall. Santa will arrive at
12:00 to bring Child Care
Children a gift donated by
Members of Redeemer
Lutheran Church. Angel
Tree is in the Narthex.

Submitted by Wendy Horvath

Choir



Voices Needed

Choir meets each Wednesday at 6:00 PM. Choir is preparing for a new season of performances and is inviting you to join them. If you love to sing, prayerfully consider responding to their invitation and join the choir. There is always room for more angelic voices or voices that love to sing praises to God! Rehearsals are every Wednesday in the Choir Room located behind the altar. If you are interested in becoming a member of the choir and have questions, please contact Collins Sita for more information.





CLASSIFIEDS

Lawn Care

Call Todd Armstrong at (941)961-7584 for your lawn care needs.

Cleaning Services

CK-Clean LLC—Residential cleaning service—Kristine Bowers
Baltimore (941) 681-6514

FREE IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS, HERE IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!!! We have limited space, but space available, for you to place your FREE advertisement. Please contact the Church office by phone or email if you would like to place an ad.

LOST AND FOUND

If anyone is missing any items, namely eyeglasses, gloves, umbrellas, etc., please check the Lost & Found box located in the narthex.

GREETERS

Dec. 6

Dec. 13

Dec. 20

Dec. 27 The Giroux Family

*Submitted by
Assimilation*



COFFEE HOUR

*Dec. 6 Laurie Steinke
Valen Straw*

Dec. 13 Giroux Family

Dec. 20 Anne Varone

Dec. 27 Pam & Dennis Replinger

*Submitted by Brd. of
Community &*



PUZZLE PAGE

A	B	Y	M	E	L	C	H	I	O	R	R	E
B	D	E	L	B	A	T	S	L	A	A	E	S
S	I	V	D	L	E	O	N	Z	T	R	H	N
A	S	R	E	J	O	S	A	S	T	E	R	E
N	G	G	C	N	O	H	O	S	P	E	T	C
T	N	Y	O	M	T	S	A	H	G	I	J	N
A	I	B	R	L	Y	M	E	N	T	E	R	I
C	K	A	A	S	T	R	A	P	S	A	C	K
L	A	B	T	S	D	M	R	U	H	T	O	N
A	B	R	I	G	H	O	S	H	O	L	Y	A
U	M	R	O	O	R	E	E	D	N	I	E	R
S	H	E	N	L	E	S	N	I	T	A	R	F
C	R	I	S	D	S	Y	R	A	M	I	N	G

- | | |
|----------------|--------------|
| CHRISTMAS TREE | ADVENT |
| DECORATIONS | CAROLS |
| HOLLY | ANGEL |
| REINDEER | CRIB |
| TINSEL | HOLY |
| MANGER | NOEL |
| BABY | MARY |
| JOSEPH | BALTHAZAR |
| JESUS | MELCHIOR |
| SHEPHERD | CASPAR |
| KINGS | GOLD |
| STAR | FRANKINCENSE |
| STABLE | MYRRH |
| SANTA CLAUS | |



Come let us adore Him!



Redeemer Lutheran Church



Web—Church: www.redeemerfl.com



Web—Child Care: www.redeemerfl-cc.com

REDEEMER LUTHERAN
CHURCH & CHILD CARE
6970 Mineola Rd.
Englewood, FL 34224

ADDRESS SERVICE

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PLACID, FL
PERMIT 774



REDEEMER LUTHERAN
CHURCH & CHILD CARE
6465 Mayport Street
Englewood, FL 34224

REV. JAMES T. KRESS, SR.

Church Phone: 941-475-2410

Church Fax: 941-475-9726

Child Care Phone: 941-475-2631

E-mail: redeemerfl@verizon.net

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:

Bible Study: 8:00 AM

Divine Service: 9:15 AM

Sunday School: 9:15 AM

CHURCH OFFICE PHONE: 941-475-2410

The Redeemer Lutheran Church & 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.*