

Church of the Redeemer
September 2009 Update
Rev. Karen Graham

Pastor's Message

Summer's over! Well, not officially, I know. Labor Weekend, September 3-6 is the last holiday of the summer, and the autumnal equinox isn't until September 21. But still, teachers and students are back in school, the weather has already started to change a bit, and our worship hour returns to 11 a.m. this next Sunday (September 6). So, summer's over!

And that means it's time to recommit ourselves to another semester, or quarter, or season of participation in the life of our church. So, are you ready? Do you have all the necessary supplies? Use this checklist as you prepare to enter the fall semester at Church of the Redeemer:

- ___ A love for God. Are you thankful for what God has done in your life? Do you want to be with others who are also thankful for what God has done in their lives? You can share that love at Redeemer through worship, through small group fellowship, through your financial gifts, through being involved in mission and ministries.

- ___ A receptive mind, willing to learn through Sunday School, Bible Study, and/or small groups. What learning group will you be part of this fall? Are you able to help teach a class? Teaching and learning are on-going ministries of our church, and one of the most important ways we grow in our Christian faith.

- ___ A compassionate heart. Do you care about others? Do you want to make a difference in the lives of other people? You can do that here at Church of the Redeemer. You can help with our monthly community meal, and with the meal we serve through InterAct. You can reach out to the homeless through Interfaith Hospitality Network. You can serve on church mission teams. You can help with Conference and District volunteer opportunities.

- ___ A friendly spirit. Do you enjoy being with other people? Do you like eating and talking with others? You can do that here at Redeemer, too! First Sunday Soup/Salad lunches; organized potlucks, holiday events. There is always the opportunity to help plan and prepare, as well as the opportunity to share and enjoy.

- ___ A giving attitude. You can give your **time** at Church of the Redeemer: you can volunteer in the nursery, you can help the pastor/church secretary/financial secretary with special tasks; you can be a liturgist in worship; you can help the youth ministry with food or transportation; you can work outside on the church's landscaping; you can visit the sick. You can give your **talents** to Church of the Redeemer: you can sing or ring in our choirs, or provide special music; you can help teach children

and youth and adults in Sunday School and Bible study classes; you can help with building repairs; you can provide meals to homebound/recovering/special needs members; you can decorate bulletin boards; you can help with our church's web-site; etc. What talents do you have? How can you share them with your church? And, of course, you can also give your **treasure**. How much is your income? What percentage of that income do you set aside to give back to God? Yes, a church is more than a building, more than staff, more than supplies and equipment, more than utilities and taxes and insurance. But without the building, staff, supplies and equipment, utilities, taxes and insurance – how we will be able to offer that more? How well will we do the spiritual without taking care of the physical? How we will provide ministry to others without a base from which to move out? In order to maintain what we have and in order to grow beyond what we have, giving our treasure is essential.

So, when you look over this list, what do you notice? You don't have to go out and buy anything, do you? There's no store where you can get all the "recommitting to church" supplies, is there? Because you already have what is needed: you have yourself! Through worship, through learning, through service, through fellowship, and through giving, I hope you'll re-commit yourself to Church of the Redeemer, and that we'll get this new season off to a wonderful start with each other! See you here!

Early Fall Worship Schedule

September 6: Holy Communion

Scripture: James 2:1-10, 14-17; Mark 7: 24-37

Sermon: Good Work!

Starting September 13, we will re-visit the theme of Intentional Faith Development from Bishop Robert Schnase's book, Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations. We touched on these themes in later spring/early summer, but now we'll look at them in more depth.

September 13: Rally Sunday

Scripture: Psalm 19; Mark 8: 27-38

Sermon topic: Celebrating God's Word

September 20

Scripture: Psalm 1; James 3:13 – 4:8

Sermon topic: Drawing Near to God

September 27

Scripture: James 5: 13-20

Sermon topic: How our prayers affect the life of the Church

In October we'll turn to the theme of Radical Hospitality :

October 4: World Communion Sunday

Scripture: Mark 10: 2-26

Sermon topic: Welcoming Children

October 11

Scripture: Psalm 22; Mark 10: 17-31

Sermon topic: Welcoming Doubtters, Seekers, and Resisters

October 18

Scripture: Mark 10: 35-45

Sermon topic: Welcoming servers and welcoming those who need to be served

October 25: LAITY SUNDAY

Other Worship items

One of the adult **Sunday school** classes reads and discusses the sermon scriptures one week in advance. Would you like to be part of this discussion? The class meets in the large classroom at the end of the downstairs hallway. Kari Sharpe and David Miller share the teaching responsibilities.

Would you like to be part of a **discussion** after the service once a month? Pastor Karen is proposing we try having an open conversation about the sermon for those who are interested. You can ask questions, you can share comments, you can witness to how this sermon or worship service intersected with your life and your faith journey or how it didn't. We can try it out **on October 11** and see how it goes! If you're interested, just stay for a bit after the service --- if this proves to be something that people like, we'll figure out a format that works for us.

Every week our Lay Leader, David Miller, puts out the request for **liturgists**. This can be a cumbersome task. Why not make it easier on him? Let him know in advance if you are willing to be a liturgist, and the weeks of the year you are available. Have you never been asked? Well let him know you are interested, and would like the opportunity to try. Pastor Karen is more than willing to work with inexperienced liturgists in preparation for morning worship. What are the qualifications? Being able to read aloud in public. That's all. You don't need to be an orator. You don't need to know Old Testament Hebrew or New Testament Greek. If you don't know how to pronounce a word, Pastor Karen will teach you. It's good for people who come to Redeemer to see the diversity of Redeemer (in all its facets) represented in worship leadership and participation. So be a liturgist! Who knows? You just might like it!

Prayer Joys and Concerns

Teachers and students returning to school

Students returning to college

Our senior and/or homebound members: Wilma Gunderson; Mary Lynch; Doris Liambeis; Ginny Goodwin; Doris Sims; Varina Riley; Alice Stills; Dorothy Lewis

Persons facing employment and/or housing transitions

Arnette Rowell singing in church on August 30 --- what a blessing! Praise the Lord!

Activities and Events

The Active Redeemer Men's (ARM) 7th annual **Rib and Chicken Feast** was a marvelous success! Held on Saturday, August 29, in both clouds and sunshine, the feast brought Redeemer and community people together in a delicious way! Over 250 meals were sold. Inside and outside work crews ran smoothly -- people were working hard, people were having fun, people were eating the best ribs and chicken anyone could ever hope for. While the final tally is still being determined, it was reported in church on Sunday, August 30 that the profit is expected to be between \$1700 and \$2000. Thanks to ARM for its faithful dedication and service, and thanks to everyone who gave their time, talent, and treasure to this successful event! Such events model well how we can work together as a church on a common goal, and how we can be a positive presence in our neighborhood.

On Sunday, **September 20**, at 4 p.m., Church of the Redeemer will host a **Pot-Luck and Presentation** on "Civil Rights in the Age of Obama." Christine Link, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Ohio, will be our guest speaker. Please invite your friends and neighbors, as we kick off a new quarterly forum series on justice issues here at Redeemer.

Coming up at Church Council – September 14

Among items of business to be discussed at the Council Meeting will be Redeemer's participation in the North Coast District's "**Walk to Bethlehem**" Health and Wellness program. A preliminary discussion will be held September 8, at 7 p.m., for persons interested in having input into this ministry activity. The "walk" lasts from October 4 to Christmas, and focuses on ways to be healthy in body, mind, and spirit between now and Christmas.

Also on the agenda will be a proposal from Michelle Gillespie and Pastor Karen regarding the **Pastor's Discretionary Fund**. A simple, yet direct, policy will be presented for consideration.

Other program planning for the fall will also be determined. Please know that you may share ideas for programs/activities at any time. Contact Phil Holland for ideas regarding worship, education, small groups, and fellowship. Contact Alma Sealine for ideas regarding communication, evangelism, and hospitality. Contact Carolyn Cacho-Bowman for ideas regarding mission and community outreach. These coordinators will be able to direct you to ministry areas, and to help you get your ideas/suggestions into discussion.

The **Finance Committee** will also present some ideas for future **fund-raising possibilities**. At its August 10 meeting, these ideas were talked about: White Elephant Sale on the Lawn; Valentine's Day Dinner Dance; Halloween Party; Hosting a church choir concert; Clam Bake, Spaghetti Dinner, etc. What fund-raising ideas do you have? There isn't a plan in place yet, but the Finance Committee will want to see the church offer at least 2 or 3 major fundraisers a year, with the Rib Feast already being a successful example. Please contact chairpersons Jim Simler and Bill Smalls, or Pastor Karen Graham with ideas and/or your willingness to help with planning and implementation.

The **Witness Area** will be requesting that we conduct a **web site review**, and that a small task force be formed of persons with this knowledge and interest to help us improve our church's web site. Contact coordinator Alma Sealine, or Communications chairperson Corbin Covault.

Who attends Church Council? All administrative and program chairpersons or representatives: Lay Leader, Lay Member to Annual Conference; Finance Chairperson(s); Staff-Parish Relations Chairperson; Trustees chairperson; Treasurer; Financial Secretary; Youth, Active Redeemer Men, Sisters in Spirit, United Methodist Women representatives; NOW coordinators (Nurture, Outreach, Witness); Lay Speakers, as well as at-large members (those elected by the Charge Conference who are not already on the committee by virtue of their leadership position), the Council chairperson, the recording secretary, and the pastor. The Church Council functions as the governing body of the church in between annual sessions of the Charge Conference.

Board of Trustees Information

Over the summer, the Trustees conducted several outdoor landscaping work-days, as well as getting some necessary outside work done at the parsonage. The church insurance carrier was changed from Westfield to Brotherhood Mutual. The building use policy continues to be edited and improved. Minor repairs on parsonage plumbing and the oven were completed. The fund to rebuild the parsonage outdoor steps stands now at almost \$3000. The estimated cost is \$5200. All building and property matters may be shared with chairperson, James Graham.

Finance Information

Receipts continue to fall behind expenses. We are current with all obligations except the East Ohio Annual Conference. Through August 30, 2009 our General Fund income totals: **\$136,797**. Our 2009 General Fund Budget is \$236,233. We need \$19,686 a month to keep current with all of our financial commitments (including apportionments). In June 2009 we received \$15,188; in July \$12,580, and in August \$17,762. Our summer total therefore was \$45,530. This total represents a \$13,528 shortfall. Expenses have been reduced. Cost-cutting measures have been taken and will continue to be taken. These measures alone, however, will not make up the difference. Additional and increased giving must follow. A monthly revenue/expense chart is posted in the coffee lounge, and copies are available outside the church office. A current financial report is included in every monthly update. For further information you may always speak with Finance chairpersons Jim Simler and Bill Smalls, as well as with Pastor Karen Graham.

Communications Report

In addition to conducting a web site review, the Communications committee has made flyers available for posting and distribution. These colorful flyers share important information about Church of the Redeemer as well as give readers a mini-view of who we are as a church. We are hoping to have flyers posted on telephone poles near our school district's elementary and middle schools. The group is also planning a walk-about day when fliers are distributed in area neighborhoods. Other future plans include improving our publicity/advertisement in local newspapers, and working on creating/purchasing outdoor signage that can be used to promote all special events and activities. Contact Alma Sealine or Corbin Covault.

Other opportunities

September 7: Labor Day 2009 Cleveland Peace Show. Noon –6 p.m. Willard Park at East Ninth and Lakeside. Presented by the Cleveland Non-Violence Network and Artists for Peace.

September 26: Ohio Fair Trade Expo at John Carroll University. Register on-line at www.jcu.edu/campuslife/campusministry/socialjustice/fairtrade/expo09registration/html

October 18-November 22: "Growing Through It: A Bereavement Seminar" at Plymouth Church, Shaker Heights. A six-week seminar/support group for separated, divorced, or widowed persons. 3-5 p.m. A speaker will address a topic related to grief and growth the first hour, and in the second hour participants will break into small groups for discussion. Registration forms available at our church.

September Birthdays:

		<u>Day</u>			
T.J. Mixon	1	Edgar Green	12	Nancy Awig	26
Jim Kaercher	1	Arthur Coleman	13	Jesse McAdam-Sellers	26
Mauri Feemster	2	Susan Holland	13	Jennifer Reaves	27
Ryan Wilson	2	Carrie Hicks	14	Nancy Gibson	28
Audrey Fields	3	John Sharpe	17	Lillian Lynn	30
Naval Jackson, Jr.	3	Kelsey Holland	20	Brenda Grover	30
David Williams	6	Jennifer Schiavone	21		
Cathy Lipton	8	Juanita Nims	22		
Kristen Radecki	8	Wayne Schmidt	24		
Susan Radecki	10	Nancy Newman	26		

September Anniversaries:

	<u>Date</u>	
Ken & Christina Hicks	9-6	
Frank & Carolyn James	9-10	
Kenny & Denise Rowell	9-11	Happy 10th Anniversary!
David & Kristin Kaelber	9-15	
Jeff & Kari Sharpe	9-19	
Marcia Mauter & Lester Stumpe	9-25	
Harold & Denise Jackson	9-26	

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