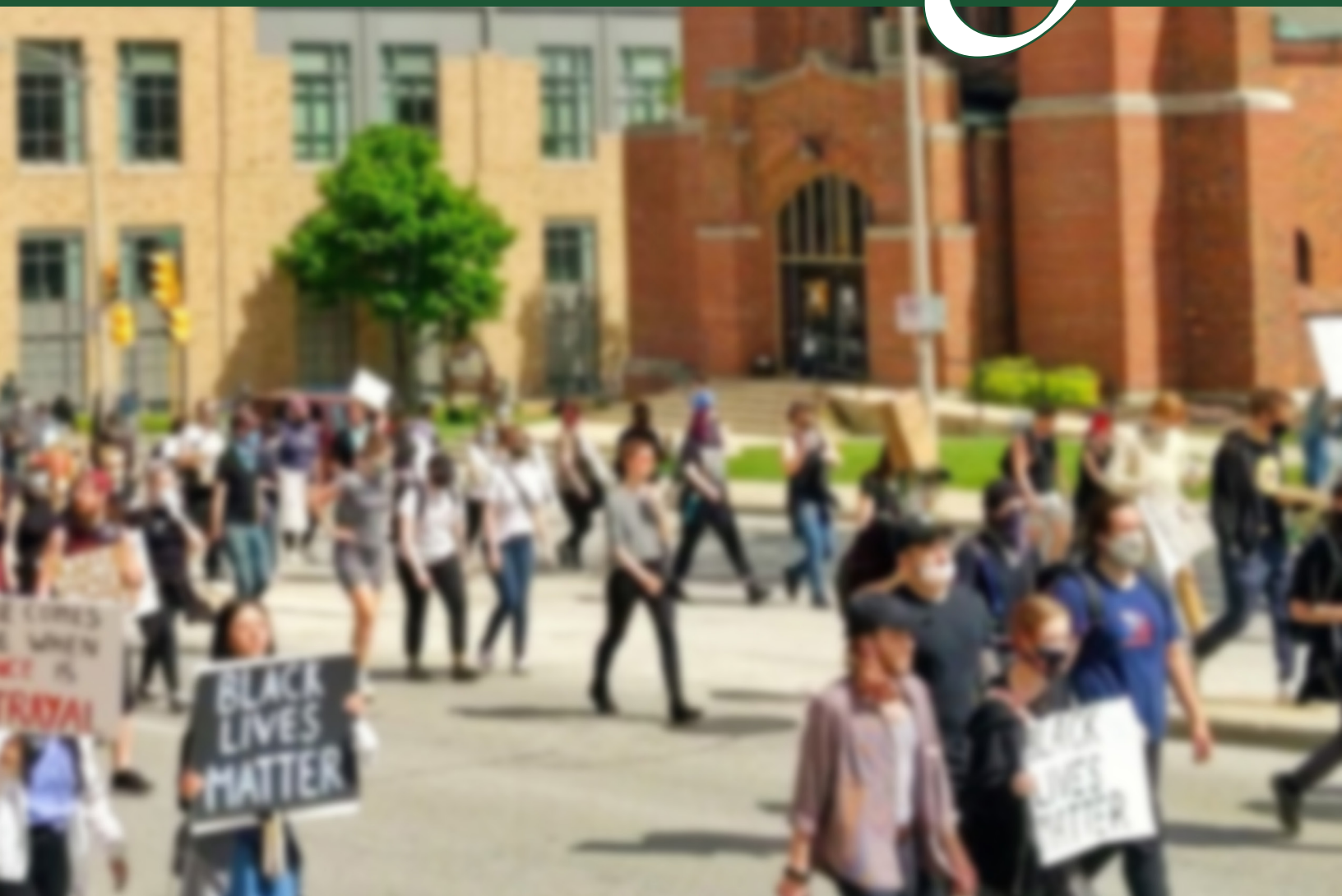




Tidings

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH



NEWS BLASTS • MONEY MATTERS
FAREWELLS • NEW EVENTS •
PARTNER SPOTLIGHTS & MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

FALL 2020
SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER
EDITION



FROM THE PASTOR

“No.”

It was the only way I could answer Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporter Tom Daykin’s question:

“Do you know when your congregation will return to regular worship in person?”

Back in March, I never imagined this Fall 2020 Tidings issue would highlight so many online opportunities for worship, connection and learning. At the same time, I give thanks for the technology and the talent that has made it possible to shift our “regular ways” to meet the moment with the compassionate love of Jesus, as best we can.

I’m reminded of the many times mentioned in the Bible when people of God and later, followers of Jesus had to function under difficult circumstances—exiled from home, traveling across a desert, relegated to underground catacombs to worship in secret, meeting in homes. For this time with no certain end, we follow the transition of our “faith forbears” and we express our faith at home and meet online. God is relentlessly pursuing us by whatever means—through the “coincidences” that bring faith to mind in nature or in conversation. To respond with our very lives has always been the call on each of us, from baptism to the very moment you are reading these words. Your community of faith remains, actively living out our mission: “to show and tell the love of God through Jesus Christ.” The pages of this edition of Tidings is meant to share that with you.

Blessings and peace,
Pastor Lisa

Rev. Dr. Lisa Bates-Froiland

Welcome to Redeemer!

Like Milwaukee, our congregation is a reflection of God’s diverse creation. Redeemer is a place where one’s faith can be active and grow through prayer and service to each other and to the neighborhood. We are a close community with tight-knit relationships. We seek to know each other.



All are welcome in our community of God’s love and grace--believers, questioners, and questioning believers alike. We live our lives as prayer. We grow our faith in conventional and creative ways. Cognizant of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, able-bodiedness, wholeness and brokenness, mental health, addictions, spiritual health, faith history, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, zip code, age, marital status, family role, housing status, musical ability, education level, immigration status, citizenship status, and every dimension of identity that lives within us, we advocate for the inclusion and equity of all.

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Sunday Worship Online: 10 a.m.
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www.redeermilwaukee.org

News Blasts

Sabbatical Postponed

Pastor Lisa's planned sabbatical leave for September through November 2020 would have been time for travel, rest, and writing some of the stories of grace experienced in ministry at Redeemer since 2011. Considering the radical changes in the pace and pattern of ministry ushered in by the pandemic, Pastor Lisa chose to postpone her sabbatical to another time.

Farewell & Godspeed, Aris Townsend

For five years, Aris Townsend devoted her considerable skills, talents, and spirit to the position of Communications Specialist. With an equal mix of sadness for us and happiness for her, we wish her the very best as she advances her career and pursues personal goals as she moves into a full-time position with a local nonprofit. Thankfully, she will remain connected to Redeemer as she continues on as Redeemer's Wedding Venue Coordinator and friend of the congregation. Please see page 5 for her parting words.

New Job Title

Director of Music Aaron Musser stepped up and did a deep dive into developing several skills to accommodate the ministry needs precipitated by the pandemic. Video production and Zoom hosting allow us to continue worshipping, learning, and meeting as a community of faith. With Aris' departure, Aaron has agreed to take on additional online tasks. To capture the reality of the work he is doing, Aaron becomes Director of Music and Media.

Farewell & Godspeed, Intern Mark Fraley

Gracious thanks for all the ways Mark has enriched our congregation since his start as Pastoral Intern last September through his work this summer for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). This fall he resumes seminary studies (online) through McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. Please see page 2 for his words on his summer experience at Redeemer.

NEW! Divine Time

Thursdays at 7pm, via Zoom. We wanted to provide a midweek evening opportunity to connect with one another and our faith each week. Join us any Thursday evening, beginning September 17th.

“The Work of a Pastor” by Mark Fraley

In May, COVID created the chance to fulfill my Clinical Pastoral Education requirement at Redeemer. Pastor Lisa presented eight pastoral projects which built on my internship.

Bible Study: Wednesdays at noon, we gathered on Zoom and dug into the Psalms.

Pastoral Calling Team: Weekly, a team contacted every household in the Redeemer community to stay connected and catch up on our highs and lows.

Vital Information Update: I reached out to the church community to gather important information spanning from accurate email addresses to hobbies so we can more effectively serve one another.

Confirmation: Helped Pastor Lisa teach confirmation classes.

Men’s Group: I worked with Brian Bock to restart the Men’s group amidst COVID.

Anti-Racism Workshops: I have been working with Solomon Tesfai to identify consultants to support Redeemer leaders through anti-racism training in the Fall.

Visitor Welcome Strategy: We are developing a plan to build from when we are all in person again.

Project Lunchbox: Every Thursday at noon, the Redeemer garage becomes an open food pantry for the community.

**This summer I experienced an even fuller picture of the day to day work of a pastor.
Thanks to all of you for making my year at Redeemer such a blessing.**

NEW UPDATE **Sacred Places Grant** *What does this mean for Redeemer?*

The National Fund for Sacred Places is a nonprofit organization that offers financial support and guidance to historic churches that demonstrate connectedness to their surrounding neighborhoods. Redeemer was one of 45 congregations selected from the entire nation to submit a grant proposal that would help us restore the 1917 sanctuary portion of the building and install modern air conditioning for the space.

We will hear if we are selected as one of the 10 to 12 congregations that will be offered up to \$250,000 to help in our effort to be good stewards of our physical structure, preparing it for ministry in the next decades, God-willing.

The catch is this—in order to receive the maximum \$250,000 we will need to raise \$500,000 in the next three years, making specific goals at specific times.

The council and leaders are ready for the challenge, and we pray and hope Redeemer friends within and outside the congregation will help us meet those goals, too. Stay tuned for an announcement in October!



In July, Lisa Myers retired from the federal government after more than 33 years. Her career took her around the world, to some of the most amazing national parks in the country, and finally to her adopted city of Milwaukee just five years ago.

She was a Peace Corps volunteer in Costa Rica, a ranger in Yosemite, Joshua Tree, Great Smoky Mountains, and Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks. Then, she spent nine years on the other side of Lake Michigan in management at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore in Michigan before studying in Indiana for her masters degree.

Five years ago, after grad school, she came to Milwaukee, switched agencies for a job with the US Forest Service, connecting urban residents to nature. That's when she joined Redeemer with her friends of many years, the Prantil family. In retirement, she plans on staying in MKE, traveling, volunteering, discovering more of Wisconsin, and visiting her very large family in both Boston and Florida.

HAPPY RETIREMENT LISA MYERS

Hey Redeemer Family, exciting news: I'm attending seminary this fall!

Last November I was fortunate to visit El Salvador with a cohort of Redeemer folks. As we traveled from place to place, learning about the deep theologies of liberation and freedom that have influenced the Lutheran Church there, I felt a deep sense of call coming back to me. This call has been there for years; in high school I hosted "Bible Bonfires" for my friends to talk about religion, in college I created worship experiences and bible studies for my summer camp. Hearing this call in El Salvador didn't surprise me. In fact, it made me realize that *this call isn't going away*.

On our last day, a few of us Redeemer folks ended up in the ocean. I mean, really *out there in the ocean*. We had been swimming and then all of a sudden the waves pulled us out to a place where we couldn't touch. Amid all the chaos of trying to swim back to shore, I felt God's presence in very real, awesome, humbling, and grace-filled ways. The moment my feet touched the sand again, the only thought in my mind was: *I need to go to seminary*.

So I'm going to seminary. Classes start on September 8th and I could not be more excited (I write this in August). I will still be on staff at Redeemer, doing what I do, so don't worry about losing me :)

Thank you so much for being a community where I can grow my faith and explore my call. It means the world to me.

Aaron



Music Ministry

Director of Music & Media, Aaron Musser



Hi everyone!

What a summer. This pandemic has changed everything! As we went from in-person to online worship, my role changed from music/worship planning/leading to YouTube video editing and social media; a little music, a lot of technology. Because of this, I'm excited to announce that my job title has changed from Director of Music to:

Director of Music and Media!

On a different note, many of our early 2020 dreams have been postponed.

I wish I could report on a successful Requiem premier.

I wish I had exciting news of upcoming music-making opportunities.

I wish we could sing in person again.

That said, I'm looking forward to the future! I'm experimenting with virtual choir ideas. Unfortunately it is a TON of work to rehearse, record, and produce virtual choir videos on my own. I would welcome volunteer assistance if this is something you are passionate about! In the meantime, if any of you know of a church that is doing a good virtual choir that is open to the public, please let one another know! Keep singing!

As you can read on page 3, I start seminary classes through the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) this fall. Everything is online so I'll still be around! I won't leave Milwaukee or Redeemer :)

Our worship videos have been well received! Thank you all for watching them, and please share the videos with people who need them. If you have suggestions, you can write them in the YouTube Worship Suggestion Box on the Redeemer website (under "worship - music"): <https://www.redeermilwaukee.org/music>

Cheers to the months ahead,
Aaron Musser

Financial Giving for Redeemer's Mission



"Hello Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
Despite the challenges that COVID-19 has brought to our way of life, as well as our way of congregating, I am filled with joy to see the positive financial position we are in. Currently, our tithes and offerings are up \$8.4K vs. budget, driven by an increase of 30% in online contributions! From an expense standpoint, significant austerity measures in energy/heat/discretionary spend, have helped us drive a major amount of favorability vs. budget, +\$27.8K. Lastly, though not shown below, we have raised \$135K in restoration funding This is a healthy position to be in and allows us greater strength in any other fund raising efforts (i.e. grant match or construction loans). I hope you all are able to enjoy the rest of your summer and fall, and are filled love, optimism, and faith that we will all come through this current challenge."

	Jan-Jul 20	Budget	Variance
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Total Grants	10,300.00	25,000.00	-14,700.00
Total Tithes/Offerings	89,205.37	80,800.00	8,405.37
Total Income	111,127.10	122,537.00	-11,409.90
Gross Profit	111,127.10	122,537.00	-11,409.90
Expense			
Total Disciples	4,339.77	7,754.75	3,414.98
Total Faith in Community	3,403.13	14,573.20	11,170.07
Total Building Maintenance	8,586.15	14,662.50	6,076.35
Total Insurance Expense	14,050.10	16,485.10	2,435.00
Total Payroll Expenses	13,853.55	13,267.74	-585.81
Total Utilities	12,258.11	14,967.00	2,708.89
Total Music Instruments & Suppies	98.20	990.00	891.80
Total Pastor's Compensation	38,081.72	38,819.12	737.40
Total Expense	112,671.92	140,508.40	27,836.48
Net Ordinary Income	-1,544.82	-17,971.40	16,426.58

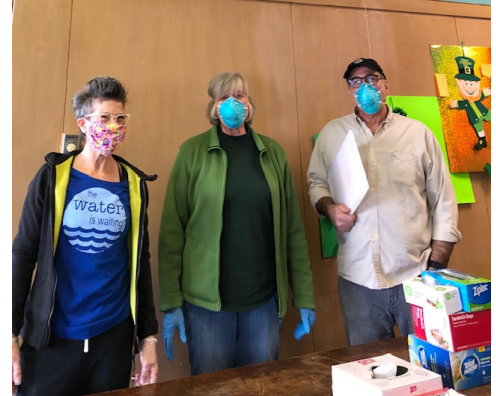


Redeemer Family,

Today is August 14th and the time is 12:24pm...I am inviting you into my real time thoughts as I near the end of my last day as Redeemer's Communications Specialist. To be honest, my stomach hurts. I am obsessing over making sure everyone knows where things are or how to do certain things or where to order things from...the point is I want as less stress as possible for my team during this tough transition. I'm dreading to hug Pastor Lisa at 2pm because I may burst into tears; I'm dreading looking in Aaron's eyes to say bye as I walk out the door. I am going to miss working with them so much and going to miss hearing from all of you on a regular basis. I hope you all know my heart will always be with you; we have a true relationship that I cherish.

Love Always, Aris Townsend

Redeemer's Picture Gallery



THE STORMS OF LIFE

by Mick & Judy Roschke

Most of you are probably familiar with the story in Mark 4:35-41. Jesus and his disciples were traveling across the Sea of Galilee one evening when a furious squall came up. As the waves broke over the boat, threatening to swamp it, the disciples woke Jesus in a panic asking him, “Don’t you care if we drown?”

These days, as we face the uncertain, sometimes frightening realities of this pandemic, it can feel as if we are in a sinking boat during a storm. We may be tempted to ask God, “Don’t You care if we get the virus and perish?” Like the disciples, it’s normal to question whether God has abandoned us, whether Jesus does not care that our lives and livelihoods are being threatened.

The story in Mark 4 goes on to tell us that after being awakened, Jesus calmed the storm. Then He asked the disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?” In other words, “Why are you afraid of storms of life?” Life is filled with storms and tragedies. It’s always tornado time. There is no promise that we will be free from the storms of life. God does, however, promise to be with us.

The disciples were letting fear overcome their faith. That fear made them doubt God’s care, to question God’s character. If we let it, fear will erode our confidence in God’s love and faithfulness. Fear can also cause “spiritual amnesia”; it makes us forget that Jesus has been with us all along. Faith doesn’t eliminate fear; it silences it, robs it of its power, and draws us closer to God.

We know that there will always be storms. God doesn’t send the storms, but Jesus promises to be with us always, to strengthen and care for us. He’s in the boat, with us, as we go through the storms. When our world seems to be coming unglued, remember Jesus’ words: “Peace ! Be still, I am in control.” It’s a question of trust, and putting our trust in Jesus will help us weather every storm.

During these “stormy days”, each of us can put our faith into action. Though many of us are physically separated because of the virus, technology can keep us connected. We can work individually or with others to support those who are in danger of “drowning” during this current storm.

I invite each of us to reach out to those who need support during this stormy time. Offer a life line to someone who is in danger of drowning by calling them, sending a card, or providing financial support. Support Alan Goodman, our official church baker, by purchasing bakery goods or sending a financial donation to keep his small business afloat during the pandemic. Reaching out to others in need will empower us and reduce our fear by putting our own circumstances in perspective.

I’d like to close with a line from a song by Sister Maria Teresa, “Joy is Like the Rain”: “Christ asleep within my boat, whipped by wind but still afloat, life is tried by storm.” Whipped by wind but still afloat!!! Don’t just wait for this storm to pass. Ask God to guide you to reach out and help others in the midst of the storm.

Partner Spotlights



Alan Goodman's startup Milwaukee bakery was gaining more visibility when the COVID-19 pandemic struck, hurting his business. But he's hanging in there thanks to community support -- including help from Redeemer! "The timing --

the divine timing -- just kind of worked out," Goodman said.

Goodman operates A Goodman's Desserts LLC, which sells cookies, cakes and other scratch-baked treats. A Goodman's Desserts was selling items through its website and at farmer's markets when in September 2019 it won the Rev-Up Mke small business plan competition sponsored by Near West Side Partners Inc. Along with winning prizes, including \$10,000 of startup business funding from WaterStone Bank, A Goodman's Desserts also connected with the Ambassador Hotel, an anchor business for the near west side.

Pastor Lisa Bates-Froiland in May approached Goodman about serving as the baker for church social events. That included offering to pay two months rent at the Ambassador's kitchen used by Goodman, with the money donated by church members the Rev. Mick Roschke, a retired Lutheran pastor, and his wife, Judy, a retired teacher. "They just did it out of the goodness of their hearts," Goodman said. "That kind of allyship ... I thought it was awesome," he said. "And really needed."

In a thank you video, posed at the church's Facebook page, Goodman said, "It's good to know that we have partners in the community, and in the struggle, like Redeemer Lutheran Church."

- text taken and adapted from MJS article,
"Divinely Delicious"

Following a national Interfaith service on August 16 that kicked off the 2020 Democratic National Convention, members of the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee gathered on the roof of Redeemer Lutheran Church on August 17 for a Milwaukee-focused prayer message just prior to the start of the convention.

Pardeep Kaleka, Executive Director of the Interfaith Conference and Zeidler Group, led the program with opening remarks:



In 1970, nine Christian denominations and the Jewish community came together to form the Interfaith Conference. Today, there are 21 different Christian and non-Christian member judicatories, organizations that oversee a total of more than 500 congregations. We include mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Baha'i, Hindus, Latter-day Saints, Moravians, Pentecostals, Sikhs, Unitarian Universalists, and others.

At our core, we are a humanitarian organization whose motto is, 'To uphold the dignity of every person.'

This year is our 50th Anniversary of celebrating faith diversity and the love for religious pluralism, and just like so many in Milwaukee, we anticipated a much different 2020.

...

2020 represents a numerical clarity. This year we have been forced to humble ourselves and think about the frailness of our existence. We have been forced to be inconvenienced.

This inconvenience and isolation has led to much needed reflection and introspection.

We have been asked to prioritize both our value systems and whom we value. Not having access to all, provided us the opportunity to deepen our relationships to our immediate families and circles. And for some, deepen our relationship with ourselves.

...

My simple prayer for our city and world is that we trust the vision and the dangers that our creator is attempting to show us, and we come together and invest in a reconnecting with ourselves, with our families, our communities, and this one and only earth that we call home.

- transcription from Milwaukee Independent article
service can be viewed on Redeemer YouTube page

Wednesdays at noon: Bible Study

Bible Study via Zoom, with one-click access from Redeemer's website: www.redeermilwaukee.org. Join on your lunch hour!

Thursdays at 7pm: Divine Time

One-hour "Divine Time" (see description in News Blasts) via Zoom, with one-click access from Redeemer's website: www.redeermilwaukee.org.

Saturdays at 5pm: YouTube Worship Video

Each week, check the website for easy "one-click" access to Redeemer's worship video. Usually 30 minutes long, it offers stirring music, views of Redeemer's physical structure, readings by many Redeemer voices, a pastoral message, and a few surprises. www.redeermilwaukee.org.

Sundays at 10am: Zoom Gathering

Jump on a 30-minute Zoom, with one-click access from Redeemer's website: www.redeermilwaukee.org. A great time to see and hear from Redeemer friends and join hearts together in Prayers of the People.

September 13th

Vote Common Good Rally on Redeemer lawns at 3pm. www.votecommongood.com



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