

MAY 2021

our redeemer's  
LUTHERAN • BALLARD

# TheVisitor

WHEN WILL WE BE  
BACK IN-PERSON?

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Easter Sunrise Worship April 4, 2021



A Community in the Model of Christ



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*Cover: Easter Sunrise worship April 4, 2021. Below: Our young ones at the same Carkeek Park service. (Photos by David McBride and Tim Hunter)*



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## From the Pastor...



*You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of JOY; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16:1*

This year, spring just burst onto the scene! All at once, all around us — cloudless blue skies blossoms everywhere and warm sunshine. The gray, isolating, over-staying-its-welcome part of the year was no more.

### Joy!

We all know this pandemic year has been heavy and disillusioning. Hunkered down at home without our favorite distractions, all the news of our nation's ingrained racial inequality and of mass murders has battered away at our protective, collective denial.

As a result of all this, I've become acutely conscious of joy when it sparks in me. It feels like a survival skill! Connecting with the little ones in our congregation. Seeing one of you in person, at the grocery store or as I take a walk. Unexpected kindnesses, however small. Praising God for so marvelously providing for our congregation:

- The remarkable synchronicity of P-Patch, congregation, donors and community-minded credit union finding one another and preserving the P-patch garden,
- How pandemic restrictions "just happened" to sync with shutting our building for renovation,
- Our honest, talented, mission-minded contractor, architects, and project manager, who keep us on time and within budget, Most recently, God has called Elizabeth Dickinson to serve as Social Justice Coordinator, bringing her abundance of social justice experience, faith, wisdom.

### Joy!

I also began to see just how powerful joy is. Joy has power to transform not just my mood, but my whole perspective. It gives me energy when I have none.

Ross Gay writes in The Book of Delights that joy isn't a luxury or privilege. Joy makes it possible to "labor for what will make the life" we want.

*"I often think the gap in our...working for justice, is that we forget to advocate for what we love, for what we find beautiful and necessary. We are good at fighting, but imagining and holding in one's imagination what is wonderful and to be adored and preserved and exalted is harder for us, it seems."*

*Our brains are wired to get riveted by something that's scary, that's threatening. We mobilize around that. It's automatic. ....[But] the thing I noticed is that when I would experience something delightful,...so often, I'd be like, "I want to tell you." It is this thing that actually makes me reach out towards someone.*

Friends, maybe it shouldn't surprise us our capital campaign consultants speak of joyful (not dutiful or fearful) generosity. Generosity creates joy! Elizabeth Dickinson often signs her emails "Justice and Joy."

Friends, we are people of resurrection! We know joy is deeper than the worst life dishes out. We know it's power to connect us, to renew us, to give us hope.

How can we possibly joyful in a time like this? Ross Gay says, "Joy is a calling precisely IN a moment like this." And to that, I say, "Amen, Brother. Alleluia and Amen!"

Yes. We are still in pandemic mode. And God calls US to bring joy's powerful, death-defying energy for new life wherever we go, whomever we relate to, whenever we can.



### Joy!

Pastor Kathy





# LIVING GENEROUSLY

## A New Journey

*Lord, we are starting a new journey together. Give us vision for all you want to do at Our Redeemer's.*

That was part of the prayer at the beginning of our Capital Campaign team's first meeting on April 19.

The newly-formed team met with consultants Jennifer Perrow and Pastor Kris Capel of Generis. It was a lively and exciting two-hour meeting! Stephanie Running, the Discipleship Lead for our campaign, emailed afterwards, *"After the meeting last night, my brain was overwhelmed with all of this new and exciting stuff."*

We looked at an overview of the campaign, and spent a lot of time on the WHAT and WHY of our project. What are we doing? Why are we doing it? What will our financial goal accomplish? It was energizing to share, each in our words and from our own perspective, why we have undertaken this renovation. After a brief break, we brainstormed possible themes for the campaign to capture what we believe God calls us to do through it.

The team will be meeting every two weeks for a while. Jennifer and Pastor Kris have been doing a deep dive into our financial data, they have met with our Generosity Team, and Pastor Kris met with our Engaging Community Task Force.

Our campaign team is:

Co-Chairs: Margaret Berg and Mike Hlastala

Lead Pastor: Pastor Kathy

Music & Worship Lead: Pastor Gretchen

Discipleship Lead: Stephanie Running

Communications Lead: Debbie Lematta

Children & Youth Lead: Matt Grover

Events Lead: Jodi Somm

Administrative Lead: Diana Myers

Finance Lead: Karie Stearns, with Emilie Purvine

Our warm thanks to each of these folks for all they are investing in the mission and future of Our Redeemer's! – *Pastor Kathy*



## Giving Options

### CHECK

Mail to the church's temporary address:  
5306 Ballard Ave NW, Ste 226, Seattle, 98107.

### TEXT

Enter: 206-717-8465 and the amount you wish to donate and press send.

### [OURREDEEMERS.NET/DONATE](https://ourredeemers.net/donate)

Through SIMPLY GIVING or the Mobile App

**THANK YOU FOR GENEROUSLY SHARING FROM  
WHAT GOD HAS PLACED IN YOUR HANDS.**



# **WORSHIP AND MUSIC**

## Centering Prayer

Silence can be one of the most healing realities there is. When we're not used to it, we may feel awkward or uncomfortable, but even so, the quiet of a night without jets in the sky or Netflix in the background is often just what our souls need.

Every Wednesday, the gift of 30 minutes of quiet prayer is yours.

Zoom Information:  
<https://rb.gy/djll3o>

Join by phone call:  
+1 (206) 337-9723

Meeting ID: 984 1700 9634  
Passcode: 132934

## Online/Phone Worship Instructions

*We gather each Sunday online at 11:00 AM. Here are three ways to connect.*

**By Facebook Live.** Go to [www.facebook.com/ourredeemers](https://www.facebook.com/ourredeemers). You don't have to have a Facebook account – it's a public channel.

**By Phone.** Call 1 206 337 9723, and then enter this number when prompted: 822 691 346. This method only lets you listen, but it works well.

**By Zoom.** Click this link: <https://zoom.us/j/822691346>. The link works from 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM every Sunday.

Our Welcome Minister will be monitoring the chat and make sure that our worship leaders get your questions. The bulletin each Sunday will be available on our website for download at [www.ourredeemers.net/virtual-worship/](http://www.ourredeemers.net/virtual-worship/).



### All are Welcome!

to attend our **NEW Weekly in-person Compline Service** starting Thursday, May 6, 7:00 PM.

**Location:**  
Our Redeemer's Parking Lot

Bring your own chairs and masks for this socially distant 20 minute service. Both Pastor Kathy and Pastor Gretchen will be there.  
(Note: this service will not be live-streamed.)

# BUILD THE VISION... SHARE THE VISION

## What Happened Last Month: Renovation Update

*April 2, 2021* – Sheetrock throughout the building is nearly complete. This is a key milestone in the project and allows for finishes (paint, ceilings, flooring) to begin. As part of the process for selecting the wall color throughout the building, one of the stained-glass windows in the Sanctuary was uncovered last week to see how the new wall color looked with the light entering through the window. It will be covered again to protect it from the work that continues to take place, but it was wonderful to see it shine into the space.



The lower-level entry door, sidelight, and awning have been installed. A concrete entry walk will be placed over the gravel you see in the photo below and the full wall will be parge coated (thin layer of concrete) to create a uniform appearance. This is a unique element of the project. The lower portion of the wall was below grade for many years. From inside the building, it is amazing to see how this new entry brings in light and creates a connection to the outside.



The next big milestone for the project will be demolition of the library structure. LZL plans to start preparation the week of 4/5/21. The two buildings have been separated structurally but the work will be slow and careful to prevent damage. As you have seen in previous updates, the lower-level walls are complete and ready for backfill as soon as the library structure has been removed. The new exterior windows for the Sanctuary and a small portion of the Narthex should arrive the week of 4/5/21 and will be installed shortly after the demolition is complete.

*April 17, 2021* – The library structure removal began the week of April 5th. The above grade portion of the building came down quickly. Below grade, the old footings and walls, along with the south stairway to the basement were removed the week of April 12th.

Waterproofing and insulation on the new exterior wall (which was poured with the library in place over the winter) will happen during the last two weeks in April along with backfill and grading. Once this work is complete and the exterior area is accessible, the new exterior windows in the Sanctuary and Narthex will be installed.

Inside the building, subcontractors are taping, mudding, and texturing the new sheetrock walls. Trusses in the Sanctuary are being stripped of the dark stain, and painting in the lower level and administration began in April. Cabinets, ceilings, and lighting will start in May.

*continued*



# BUILD THE VISION... SHARE THE VISION



**GOD'S CALL** | OUR VISION

SEE MORE OF WHAT'S  
HAPPENING FOR YOURSELF...  
Visit our [renovation website](#)  
page for the most current  
construction videos, pictures,  
and more!

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# BUILD THE VISION... SHARE THE VISION

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## PROJECT STATUS

Schedule: No Change – Church access late summer 2021

Date	Construction Contingency	Project Contingency
7/12/20	\$217,854	\$67,153
9/1/20	\$217,854	\$57,415
9/30/20	\$217,854	\$57,415
10/15/20	\$199,609	\$57,415
11/14/20	\$170,121	\$61,719
12/1/20	\$167,164	\$61,719
12/15/20	\$160,570	\$61,179
1/15/21	\$142,045	\$61,179
1/31/21	\$142,045	\$61,179
2/15/21	\$142,045	\$61,179
3/4/21	\$145,724	\$54,518
3/17/21	\$143,940	\$54,518
4/2/21	\$129,579	\$54,443
4/17/21	\$115,552	\$53,730

Changes affecting the Project Cost Contingency:

- Credit card charges for piano storage and moving expenses.
- Land sale attorney invoice (from September '20 – missed during move).
- Adjusted cost for groundbreaking event.
- Adjusted costs for moving.

NEW Charges reported in April 2021 against the Construction Contingency:

- Added steel at lower-level entry to support opening.
- Add heater in room 08, exterior lighting a lower-level entry, change wiring for entry overhang lights.
- Carpet at north stair from basement up to and including the 2nd floor room. Underlayment for organ room and balcony
- Added electrical for future light above baptismal font.
- Parge coat foundation walls at lower level, east entry.
- Repair brick at NW corner (due to balcony beam), credit for grout (credit).
- Replace NE Sanctuary exterior door.
- Replace doors between Fellowship Hall and Narthex



SHKS Architects' rendering of how the exterior front of the church is envisioned to look at night.





# FAITH FORMATION

## Renovate - Our Faith

### Adult Forum: How Do I Read the Bible?

Sundays through June 13, 1:00 - 2:30 PM

Passcode "Adult" Meeting ID: 945 4145 3039 [Zoom Link](#)

Taught by Dr. Judy Stack

#### Do I Really Want to Read The Bible?

- Ancient. Confusing.
- Some parts so offensive.
- I'm not a Bible scholar! I don't want to be one.
- So much WORK to understand it!

#### But What If...

- ...I were confident about reading it for myself?
- ... I picked it up and found and I was surprised?
- Intrigued?
- Touched?
- ...I found it speaking into my own life?



#### Does any of this resonate for you?

**How Do I Read the Bible** doesn't aim to give you a huge amount of information ABOUT the Bible. It will help you read the Bible confidently for yourself, and with others. We will take the Bible off the shelf, out of the classroom, and put it in YOUR hands, your life...connecting with God's living grace for you.

This ongoing course is an invitation to come and curiously explore the Bible. Professor Judy Stack zooms in with years of experience and passion to help us all discover, hear, and be blessed directly by the Bible.

#### HOW DO I READ THE BIBLE?: Schedule of Topics/Readings in May-June

Week 3 (May 2): Being the people of the God who is "I AM" (Exodus 1-20)

Week 4 (May 9): A people established and addressed: struggling with "chosenness" and God's challenge to be faithful (the Kings and Prophets)

Week 5 (May 16): Jesus comes to initiate the Reign of God (Gospel of Matthew)

Week 6 (May 23): Jesus shows us who God is (Gospel of John) - no class May 30 (Memorial Day Week-end)

Week 7 (June 6): The work of Jesus frees and unites those who were divided (Book of Acts & Letters of Paul)

Week 8 (June 13): God's triumph over evil and death to renew the creation and reign (Book of Revelation)



## FAITH FORMATION



### Theology on Tap

Tuesday, May 24, 7 PM

Join us for Theology on Tap on Tuesday, May 24th at 7:00pm. Grab your favorite beverage and snack and join us as we talk about the big theological questions or maybe the small ones, too. Whatever we choose as our topic, lively conversation will be had! Use the Zoom link below and please join us for conversation and fellowship.

To connect with our event, use this Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/688478249>  
All are welcome. We hope to see you there!

## Wednesday Bible Class Invites You by Carolyn Swanson

The Great Courses has joined with National Geographic to present The History and Archaeology of the Bible, which takes you on a multidimensional journey through the Bible from Genesis to the Crucifixion, seen through the lens of the latest historical and archaeological findings, and accompanied by vivid video footage of many of the sites where the stories of the Bible unfolded.

Having just completed the April sites, we offer in May the following:

**11. The Northern Kingdom of Israel – May 5 Cinco de Mayo**

**12. The Rise of Assyria – May 12**

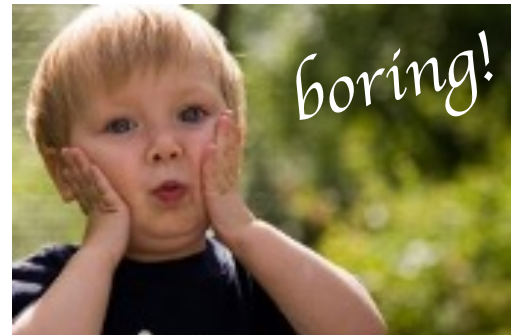
**13. The Rise and Fall of Judah – May 19**

**14. The Persian Era – May 26**

**15. The Empire of Alexander the Great – June 2**

Oh, no! Ancient history? But wait – one thing leads to another:

- Know more of the Old Testament God;
- Discover the history of God's people;
- Learn new historical facts;
- See archaeological sites of the Promised land;
- Continue to be amazed at God never giving up loving.



If you would like to join us, or at least try it, please email me at [cdkswan@gmail.com](mailto:cdkswan@gmail.com) or call 206-390-7732. We meet at 10:30am each Wednesday morning and end promptly at noon. Our media is Zoom. I send the contact link each week to participants. We have about 10-12 faithful students. Join us.

**WHO is the teacher?** Experience the Bible as Never Before. Professor Jean-Pierre Isbouts is an award-winning filmmaker and best-selling author who gained worldwide renown with his book, The Biblical World. Professor Isbouts' great flair as a storyteller and his phenomenal depth of knowledge of the subject matter make the lessons consistently enthralling and enlightening. ([www.jpisbouts.org](http://www.jpisbouts.org))





# When Will We Be Back in Person? by the Pandemic Transition Team\*

At the council's request, a team of folks from our congregation formed to do an in-depth look at what conditions would need to be met for Our Redeemer's to begin to hold in-person worship services together, both indoors and outdoors.

Our team attended our synodically-hosted Zoom meeting for all congregational leaders on March 28. At that meeting we learned many recommendations about both the Seattle and King County phase 3 COVID requirements for public gatherings, particularly for churches, which included but were not limited to:

- Hold outdoor services on the organization's property with up to 400 individuals, so long as six feet of physical distancing can be achieved between households in all directions.
- Outdoor services may be conducted under an outdoor structure (temporary or permanent) so long as the structure is not walled/enclosed on more than two sides to provide appropriate ventilation.
- Hold or provide in-home services inside a person's residence with up to ten total individuals.

We took into account a variety of scenarios and considerations:

- Indoor & Outdoor in-person Sunday service options with live-streaming options
- Our Redeemer's Mission statement & community impact
- Construction timeline and access to building in early September
- Current staff capacity for additional logistics needed
- Interest in gathering in-person
- Takeaways good and bad from Easter Sunrise and pilot June 2020 outdoor service
- Logistics and budget required for full outdoor, in-person hybrid services
- Utilities, music, chairs/seating, stage equipment, weather, setup/worship support

After much discussion, the following recommendations were made to our church council:

1. An abbreviated outdoor/in-person weekly service will start Thursday, May 6, 2021, 7:00 PM.
  - It will be a 20 minute Compline (Evening Prayer) service, 1x weekly in the church parking lot.
  - This service will NOT be live streamed.
2. Transition to indoor/in-person services with live streaming for virtual worship to begin in September 2021. Create transition plan for indoor/in-person services for early-mid August.
3. Small Group Guidelines: If you are in a small group that would like to meet in person, it is recommended that you meet outdoors, masked, and social distanced, regardless of vaccination status.

We look forward to announcing our compline service times, and to working together to meet safely in our newly refurbished sanctuary as soon as it is safely possible. Thank you all so much for your patience, and your safety, and your prayers. This has been a long haul, and we are looking forward to the end of the road.

**\*The Pandemic Transition Team: Pastor Gretchen Mertes, Karie Stearns (our Parish Administrator), Sam Altenberger (emergency management expert), Heather Cook (attorney), Barbara Dougherty (nurse), Michael Hammett (data analysis), Julie Vannoy (nurse), and Kim Ward (project management). Huge thanks to this team that volunteered their time and expertise to helping figure out a path forward for us.**



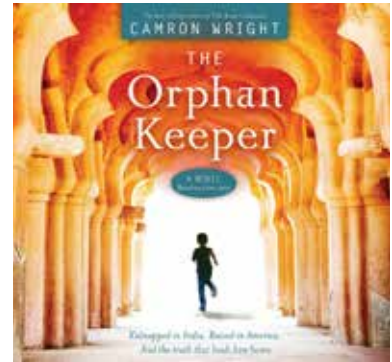
## COMMUNITY

### Madonna's Book Group by Lynne McNeill

Sunday, May 23, 4pm [via Zoom](#)

Madonna's Book Group meets monthly on Sundays at 4pm to review books, support each other, and share personal journeys. All women are welcome! Our next meeting is on May 23rd at 4pm. The group is meeting outdoors and will discuss **THE ORPHAN KEEPER** by Camron Wright. [LINK TO BOOK DESCRIPTION](#)

If you are new to the group and have questions, or want to be on the group mailing list, contact Lynne McNeill [buckomcneill@yahoo.com](mailto:buckomcneill@yahoo.com).



### MAY BIRTHDAYS

2 Jennifer Kremer	12 AJ Schoolcraft	22 Steven Jones
3 Iris Miller	12 Ed Woodfield	23 Kathy Hendricks
4 Mia Brady	13 Shelbe Kukowski	23 Eric Running
4 Victoria Hunter	15 Jean Hall	24 Allie Parrott
4 Lena Rindler	15 Mick McDonald	25 Emilie Purvine
5 Angela Beranek	16 Jodi Somm	28 Matteo Lowe
6 Megan Gleeson	17 Henrik Meyer	28 Colin Neu
6 Cyanne Tung	18 Steve Kaimmer	29 Christine Anderson
8 Carolyn Davis	19 Linda Carbone	29 Megan Richmond
9 Kim Smith	20 Mary Peterson	30 David Neu
10 Margaret Berg	21 Brian Butler	31 Shirley Holt
11 Anita Lewis	21 <b>*Elaine Stevens</b>	31 Olivia Rallo
11 <b>*June Pfeiffer</b>	22 Sonja Braasch	
12 Logan McCarthy-Fredericks	22 Malaika Dugaw	

\*BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS TO JUNE PFEIFFER AND ELAINE STEVENS WHO ARE CELEBRATING 90+ YEARS OF LIFE.

*We give God thanks for the life of Shirley Anderson - March 29, 2021 (b. 8/2/1930).*



### Caring Community Team

Saturday, May 8, 2021 at 10:30 AM [on Zoom](#).

Dedicated to sharing comfort and support through visits, meals, cards, communion, and prayer shawls, the Caring Community Team is meeting next month on May 8th. Contact [Linda Carbone](#) for more information or if you want to take part.

**All are welcome!**





### Our Redeemer's Council Corner | Member Bio - Emilie Purvine

Greetings Our Redeemer's Congregation! It looks like it's my turn to introduce myself in the "Council Corner". I'll start with my faith history and how I came to join this wonderful church. I was born, baptized, and raised Lutheran. Church was always something we did in my family; we attended church on Sundays, I got confirmed and participated in some youth group stuff. But for a long time, faith was not something I felt within me. For example, in my confirmation statement I misspelled confirmation as "conformation". It was probably an honest typo, but perhaps subconsciously I felt like I was "conforming" to expectations. In high school I had a singular experience of feeling the Holy Spirit around me and within me, and that feeling has remained a touchstone for me for all these years since then. Whenever I had a moment of doubt, I'd remember that feeling and know that even though I had doubts my belief was strong. But even then, in college and graduate school I wasn't a regular church goer. When I found myself in my first job out of grad school in Tri-Cities, WA I joined a church mostly because I felt like I "should". But I never really felt like I "belonged". So, when my husband Sam and I moved over to Seattle in January 2016 I wasn't in a rush to find a new church. But then something happened in the middle of 2016; my grandmother died after an acute recurrence of cancer. At her funeral, while listening to the pastor's eulogy, it hit me how her faith shaped her whole person. I hadn't fully realized until then that the things I most looked up to her for were because of her faith. I wanted to find that faith within me, and I did that at Our Redeemer's. Or at least I've started. Almost overnight, since I found Our Redeemer's, church and faith became not just something I did but something I was.



**My first impressions of Our Redeemer's were from the pastors. I came two weeks in a row and both Pastor Kathy and Pastor Gretchen remembered my name and greeted me like friends.**

I started attending theology on tap and volunteering with Ballard Sunday Dinner and getting to know more of the congregation through those activities. I've enjoyed being a part of those things plus the generosity team, social justice team, worship, and now on council. At one of our women's retreats I got hung up on part of a conversation where I couldn't think of a time where I had to be "really strong". I've led a pretty low-key life. The phrase "take risks" got stuck in my head and I couldn't shake it. Soon after that I was approached to join the council. Normally leadership like this is not at all what I'd go for. I'm more of a "go with the flow" person not a "make decisions" one. But that phrase "take risks" kept pushing at me. So, I decided to go for it! I joined council 3 years ago and became secretary in July 2020.

Professionally I'm a mathematician and data scientist with nearly 10 years at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory after my PhD. I enjoy trying to make sense of large piles of data (numerical or just synthesizing information). And I really like the challenge of boiling down what I do in a way that anybody can understand. If you ask me what I do I'll try my darndest to explain it in an intuitive way, and I always welcome questions. I enjoy educational outreach and encouraging young people to not be afraid of math. If you have kids who "hate math" it'd be a fun challenge for me to try and change their minds by showing them where math hides in unexpected places!

As you might expect from my career, I'm incredibly analytical. This means I need time to process things before I can respond. I don't throw ideas out in the open until I've thought about them and am sure I want other people to hear them. As a result, sometimes I seem very quiet, maybe like I'm not engaging. But I assure you I'm listening and trying to formulate my opinion and thoughts into a response. I often have a hard time finding an opening in conversation because I spend too much time thinking about what I could say and by that time the conversation has passed me by. If asked, I will contribute my thoughts as they are at the time.

I've enjoyed the conversations I've had because of council, but I know I need to do a better job of stepping outside of my comfort zone and having conversations with people I haven't built relationships with yet. I'm pretty horrible at small talk, but I do want to get to know people. I'm kind of an extroverted introvert. I love community and fellowship when I know the people, so I welcome outreach via a phone call, text, or email. Pull me out of my comfort zone and get to know me and I'll get to know you 😊. In the meantime, I'll try to do a better job of that myself!

## REFLECTING ON A PANDEMIC: IS IT POSSIBLE WE CAME OUT STRONGER?

by Sydney Record



It all started during a family birthday party when we heard on the news that COVID had hit a local Washington nursing home. By the next weekend at an outdoor birthday party, it was surreal as all 20 parents in attendance received a simultaneous phone call, "We are closing the school for the safety of everyone for at least 6 weeks". But how?!!! How are we going to manage this?

My anxiety and stress levels skyrocketed as I scrambled to make sense of things. Okay, take a deep breath and call mom (Kari Record)! My parents yet again came to the rescue by offering to care for Eli and Indio (then 6 and 3). Come Tuesday morning, I distinctly remember dropping my kids off with my dad fully expecting to see them that night, but with the unknown COVID cases increasing, along with my job at a nursing home (Wait, what? A nursing home? You mean like the place COVID was first discovered in the US? What am I going to do????!!!!), I quickly decided that I would send the boys with my parents to the Whidbey beach cabin. I rushed to give the boys hugs and kisses, not knowing when we would see them again, heart pounding.

The next week, my husband Umar's school shut down and he had to learn how to teach 160 sixth graders how to read, write, and communicate online. Umar is also a world champion Powerlifter (IPF Raw Bench Press champion M1 120+). The gym is his outlet, lifeline, and social network. What would we do?

Not to mention I'd just started as an Infection Preventionist four months prior, so the onus of keeping people's loved ones safe was on me. I could barely concentrate with all the new information coming out and changing literally by the hour at times. I'd come home physically and mentally exhausted, yet still consumed with the day's work and what else needed to be done. Although he desperately wanted to be with our own little boys, Umar refused to leave me, even though I encouraged him to go be with the kids. But he knew if he wasn't home I probably wouldn't eat or turn my brain off. He stayed with me, making sure I was taken care of even if that meant risking getting COVID. Within a few weeks, Umar developed a shortness of breath that would have him breathing heavily just rising to stand. Two weeks had past and we hadn't seen our boys in person. Luckily, Umar did not develop any other symptoms and his breathing improved quickly.

We were not out of the woods yet, as my facility had our first outbreak of COVID in March, confined to one unit, affecting 13 people out of 250 residents and staff. How we managed that, well, I would like to think that our diligent hard work and education of staff and residents worked! All the while my brain was in constant fight/flight mode. Four weeks had passed and we still hadn't seen our kids.

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## REFLECTING ON A PANDEMIC continued

We waited and worked and waited and worked and waited and worked. Easter without kids. We worked ourselves to the bone as Umar was pushed to lead his school's efforts in delivering meaningful instruction online. Through it all, we leaned into each other, while deeply missing our little boys. We missed laughing with them, helping them with their schoolwork, wrestling with them, and even them crawling into our bed to get snuggles. As the weeks passed, zoom calls with the boys became fewer and less fulfilling. It became seemingly unbearable. It was then that we began wrestling with the idea of bringing them home. "They need to be with mom and dad. Or are we just being selfish? Are we being safe? Are they going to be permanently scarred by being away from us for so long? We hope they understand that we have not abandoned them. We need them. How do you make this decision when we have never faced anything like this before?"

Six weeks later, we called my mom (Kari). With great trepidation, we tried to mass our fears as we plainly stated "We need our boys home." That weekend, we could feel the life breath back into us as we finally wrapped our arms around our two amazing little boys! We were so happy to have them back, but new challenges began. Now we had to be even more diligent when I'd arrive home. "No one touches Mommy until all clothes are in the washer and she is fully showered." We designated my car the COVID car. We taught the boys proper clinical hand washing technique. We created games and physical activities that we could do indoors. We had to re-learn how to play, interact, and peacefully coexist when generally confined to a small space. In many ways, we each had to redefine ourselves, who we are, what our interests are, and how to handle stress/challenges when the whole world around us is doing the same.

Within a few weeks, we started to get into a rhythm. Suddenly, our world was rocked again as the news of George Floyd's death pounded in our heads, echoing in the wake of the murders of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery death a few months prior. We were faced with the fears of raising our bi-racial children in a country that seemingly did not want them. When would they go from being seen as cute, to being seen as a threat? My very large, very dark skinned husband began fearing for his own safety. Would police and law enforcement see this father and school teacher as a threat due to his size and skin color? How could I do more to support social justice and health equity? We decided that we could not just live in fear, that we had to act. The boys and I dropped my black husband off to attend a "peaceful" protest, nervous about what would happen. Well, it turned out, I was right to be nervous. As Umar was standing in a peaceful crowd, being

a peaceful protester, the police threw a flash bomb into the crowd without warning, hitting Umar in the side, leaving a large puffy bruise. He was whacked with the handle of an AK47 by a police officer "passing by." He witnessed a nine-year-old girl and countless others pepper-sprayed by police, again for just standing there. We were forced to have difficult conversations with our boys about racism and the events occurring in the world during a pandemic. Finally we were able to walk a peaceful family-friendly protest with 10,000+ people, to show our boys we stand by the side of social justice. There was ZERO police presence. This gave us light as we realized there was hope amidst the proverbial storm.

During this time I decided to take Our Redeemer's up on checking in on our senior church members.

### **I was assigned to Lars Sveum as one of my people, but reflecting, I'm pretty sure God assigned him to me!**

We talked several times a week for a few months until I was completely consumed with COVID and just trying to survive the second, much larger, outbreak in July.

I have personally administered over 1000 COVID tests, probably more, and never got COVID (that I know of). I lost count after our third week of mandatory weekly testing which all fell to me in September. Umar was teaching remotely full time and Eli was with him every day remote learning himself. Indio was able to go to preschool in person. As of April 2021, Umar has gone back to in-person school, so has Eli and Indio. I now have a job with the Washington Department of Health as an Infection Preventionist doing prevention work with long-term care facilities.

Reflecting on the last year, we are grateful every day for how lucky our family is. God has truly blessed us. We both have stable jobs, Umar and I truly bonded and connected during those six weeks apart from the boys. The boys in turn now hold a much stronger bond with each other and with my parents. I am so grateful for the handwritten cards that randomly showed up from church members (I cried through and cherished every card). We are grateful for the experience that led me to a new job where I get to work with more resources and the most wonderful team of colleagues I could ever hope for. We are ever grateful to have family nearby to hold us up. We are grateful that through it all we were able to see glimpses of hope that carried us through. We are grateful to be part of a church that is so dedicated to social justice!

*Sydney's story is the latest in an occasional feature in The Visitor during the pandemic. Do you have reflections or a story about your experience and faith during this time, that you're willing to share? If so, please [contact Pastor Kathy](#).*



## New Beginnings by Bob Carlson



A year plus a few months ago, my wife Karen and I were looking at our previous Easter Week food service notes and reviewing them for 2020 Easter. Well, we all know how that worked out.

Lately, we talk about when we will be able to have all the “Old Normalcy” again and was recently reminded that Easter is about new beginnings. Given this past year, I started to think about new beginnings and being re-born anew.

Shortly before the lock down, I helped (along with several other people) to clear out the Church in preparation for the remodel. I also had done some work in the “new” archive room and looked at an old “shop work bench” located there. It was decided that it would not be needed and was taken outside in the preschool yard area prior to be taken for disposal. I asked for (and received) permission to take it home and reclaim some of the wood it contained and then dispose of the balance.

Like many of us, maybe, I started doing some projects around the house: New trim and detail here and there, paint touch-up there, some new flooring to get rid of old carpet, things like that. One other item was the use of “bits and pieces” of wood left over from older projects and remodels. Yes, you are right, Robert can’t let a nice piece of wood go sometimes: The wood still stored in the garage is proof of that!

I decided to make some furniture; nothing real fancy or complicated, I would say “Basic Simple Homestead” design maybe. I started with some nightstands, then some small side tables and a TV table for the family room. Then decided to build a modular type computer desk for the “Office” room.

The old work bench as it was called, was actually a kitchen prep bench/table, I think. More than likely from the old kitchen/fellowship area in the basement of the original ‘48 and ‘53 building. The top was covered with thin stainless steel sheet metal and had slots at both ends that were knife storage I believe. It was also hand built and tricky to disassemble as the legs and rails were fitted together with joinery. Wood that was unsalvageable, like the plywood under the sheet metal (covered with old adhesive) and a shelf inside was disposed of. The stainless sheet metal was recycled. Some of the wood was burned. Other wood deemed usable was kept. I now have only have the two cutting boards left.

**We can see new beginnings all around us -  
if we see them.**

Our building is going through a new beginning, reborn into a new life. Just as the old prep table was broken down it too has a new beginning, reborn into a desk. All of us too can look to a new beginning once again - reborn into a new life by God’s gift of his only Son, Jesus Christ.



*I asked Bob Carlson to write about how he used an old, toss-away bench to make a whole new piece of beautiful furniture. He created this lovely piece about new life. - Pastor Kathy*





## SOCIAL JUSTICE

### Social Justice Report by Elizabeth Dickinson

It has been a whirlwind month as I have started to become acquainted with the vibrant people, worship and social justice at Our Redeemer's! I was introduced to worship through the interview between journalist Niels Running and Bill the Donkey. I have received a thorough tech download from Katlin. I have met with Our Redeemer's staff and Social Justice partners and the Racial Justice team, and had conversations about social justice at Our Redeemer's with Eric and Stephanie Running, Mandy Neill, Marie Brissette, Nancy and Paul Oldenkamp, and Rebecca Butler... with more to come I hope. Tom Bernard has given me a tour of the Ballard Commons, and Karie Stearns a tour of our Road2Housing sites. I watched in awe as Emilie Purvine, Diana Myers, Max Myers and two high school friends created and served 50 banh mi meals for Ballard Sunday Dinner. And I have joined Lars Sveum-Hanson, Dana Wright and Val Tung in the start of the Synod-sponsored "Interrogating Privilege" workshops. Whew! Thank you for your warm welcome!



#### What will be happening in May around Our Redeemer's social justice ministries?

- By the time you read this, handmade quilts and personal care and school kits for Lutheran World Relief will have been gathered in for sharing with people in refugee camps and disasters.
- Social Justice partners will be gathering on May 2 to discern how to use congregational Gifts for the World for the thriving of God's creation and people.
- Ballard Sunday Dinner takes place on May 16. Join in by cooking, serving or cleaning up!
- Racial Justice Advocates will be developing education and action opportunities for our congregation.
- Some of us will be collaborating with other faith communities in the Faith Action Network to create policies for affordable housing, food security, earth care and more.
- Look toward an e-cycling event in early June!
- Behind the scenes, I hope to be making more connections with our guests and contracted partner, the Urban League, as we seek to make our parking lot available to more people without homes. And starting to explore with you how we can faithfully respond to crises of climate change and immigrant children at our borders.

#### Anything here pique your interest?

Please contact me—[outreach@ourredeemers.net](mailto:outreach@ourredeemers.net) or 206-498-4654 and let's talk!



### Ballard Sunday Dinner Needs You!

Every third Sunday of the month members from Our Redeemer's head over to Ballard First Lutheran Church to prepare a meal for the community's population in need. We always need at least 6 volunteers to put together around 50 meals to go, hand them out, and then clean up after ourselves. You can sign up for meal prep and serving, from 3:00 to 6:00 PM, or clean up from 5:00 to 6:30 PM or so. Meal prep and clean-up are relatively COVID-safe, exposing you only to a small group of Our Redeemer's members. The next dinner is May 16th. Sign up online at [this LINK](#) or email Elizabeth Dickinson, [outreach@ourredeemers.net](mailto:outreach@ourredeemers.net) if you want to help out.



## SOCIAL JUSTICE

### Racial Justice Advocates Adopt Vision Statement

The Racial Justice Advocates team of Our Redeemer's has adopted a vision statement, and we want to share it with you here. Special thanks go to Marie Brissette and Dana Wright for drafting this thoughtful, faith-inspired and hopeful statement. Racial Justice Advocates is meeting every two weeks to educate ourselves and plan education, reflection and action opportunities for the congregation. Please join us if you feel so moved!

#### Vision Statement of Our Redeemer's Racial Justice Advocates

(adopted 4/12/2021)

In response to the Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric Social Policy Resolution CA19.04.18, the Racial Justice Advocates of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church sees a future in which we are fully cognizant of the struggles of our members and neighbors due to racial inequality and we pledge to partner with them to rectify this egregious situation. We are strategizing and coordinating efforts within our congregation to repent of this sin and live into the vision of the beloved community now.

#### Theological/Biblical Justification


The Racial Justice Advocates of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church witnesses to a future grounded in our biblical and theological identity as a prophetic and priestly community (Ex. 19:4–6; 2 Pet. 2:9–11) and as a penitent (repentant) people (Matt. 4:17; Acts 2:37–9) called to the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18; Acts 2:40–47; Eph. 2: 11–21; 3:7–21) in the world to work for the peace and well-being of all (Jer. 29:7). We pledge therefore to work to be more fully cognizant of the enduring unjust conditions in our society that bind our members and neighbors, and to expose the injustices stemming from racial bias in our nation's history of white supremacy fostering chronic and systemic inequality (Eph. 5:8–14). We also pledge to partner with our members and neighbors and other agencies that work to rectify this egregious situation by working for true peace in and throughout the world (Jer. 29:7). In this ministry of reconciliation we anticipate and witness to God's vision of the "beloved community," Martin Luther King's shorthand for "the reign of God" revealed in Jesus Messiah (i.e., Matt. 12: 28) and in Paul (Gal. 3:28–9).



Note: The events on this calendar are online meetings or events; all groups may choose to meet online. Check with your group leader or email office@ourredeemers.net for Zoom info

# MAY 2021

ourredeemers.net/calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>2</b> 9:30am Sprouts <b>11am Worship</b> 1pm Adult Forum 3pm Social Justice Budget Meeting	<b>3</b> 7pm Faith Formation Meeting	<b>4</b> 10am-1pm Pastoral Online Office Hours: Pastor Gretchen 7:30 Generosity Team	<b>5</b> Office Closed# 10:30am Bible Study <b>6:30pm Centering Prayer</b> 7pm Adult Choir	<b>6</b> 9am-12pm Pastoral Online Office Hours: Pastor Kathy 3:45pm Staff Meeting <b>7pm Compline Service</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>9 MOTHER'S DAY</b> 9:30am Sprouts <b>11am Worship</b> 1pm Adult Forum	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 10am-1pm Pastoral Online Office Hours: Pastor Gretchen 7pm Executive Team	<b>12</b> 10:30am Bible Study 1pm Staff Meeting <b>6:30pm Centering Prayer</b> 7pm Adult Choir	<b>13</b> 9am-12pm Pastoral Online Office Hours: Pastor Kathy <b>7pm Compline Service</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 9am-4pm Northwest WA Synod Assembly (online)
<b>16</b> 9:30am Sprouts <b>11am Worship</b> 1pm Adult Forum 2pm Ballard Sunday Dinner	<b>17</b> June Newsletter Content Due	<b>18</b> 10am-1pm Pastoral Online Office Hours: Pastor Gretchen 7pm Council Meeting	<b>19</b> 10:30am Bible Study 1pm Staff Meeting <b>6:30pm Centering Prayer</b> 7pm Adult Choir	<b>20</b> 9am-12pm Pastoral Online Office Hours: Pastor Kathy <b>7pm Compline Service</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23 PENTECOST</b> 9:30am Sprouts <b>11am Worship</b> 1pm Adult Forum 4pm Madonna's Book Group	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 10am-1pm Pastoral Online Office Hours: Pastor Gretchen 7pm Theology on Tap	<b>26</b> 10:30am Bible Study 1pm Staff Meeting <b>6:30pm Centering Prayer</b> 7pm Adult Choir	<b>27</b> 9am-12pm Pastoral Online Office Hours: Pastor Kathy <b>7pm Compline Service</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 9:30am Sprouts <b>11am Worship</b> (no Adult Forum)	<b>31 MEMORIAL DAY</b> Office Closed					

#Staff devotes the first Wednesday of each month to professional development and planning.





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**return service requested**

Join Us 11:00 AM Sundays  
for Worship Service

On Facebook: [facebook.com/ourredeemers](https://www.facebook.com/ourredeemers)

- By Zoom. <https://zoom.us/j/822691346>
- By Phone. Call 1 206 337 9723;  
+822 691 346 when prompted
- NEW! Watch video of past services,  
sermons and music on [YouTube](#)

The liturgical color for the Day of Pentecost is the red of fire, one of the day's symbols for the Holy Spirit. The Bible often portrays God's transforming presence through the symbol of fire: Moses and the burning bush, the pillar of fire that led the people of Israel through the wilderness, the fires of Mount Carmel and the temple in Jerusalem that consumed sacrificial offerings. The fire of the Pentecost story signifies how a collection of fearful disciples was transformed by the Spirit into a bold and active church.

**Remembering that the gift of the Holy Spirit is not just for the church of the past or only a few, everyone is invited to wear red to worship on Sunday, May 23rd.**



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