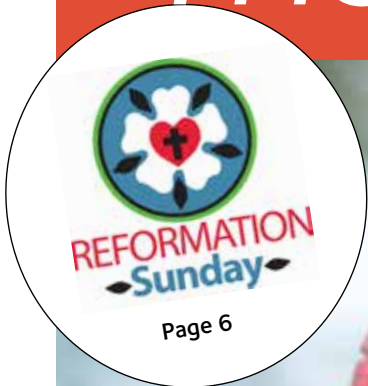


OCTOBER 2023



TheVisitor



Unashamed Generosity and the Spirit of Giving

Inside

It's Generosity Season

"Breaking Bread
Together" Dinners

Luciafest Plans

Holden Village 2024

Youth Pumpkin Carving

...and more!

A Community in the Model of Christ

From the Pastor...

The rains have returned. Like a balm upon the earth, each fall the rain and gentle breezes of October soften the soil and bring the coziness of warm sweaters and hot apple cider.

When I first moved to the Seattle area, in 2006, I was worried that the rain would be a real downer and that it would be a difficult transition for this hearty Midwesterner. But I learned two things that year.

1. While Seattle does officially have the most cloudy and rainy days, Grand Rapids, Michigan, where I spent most of my childhood has almost the exact same amount of rain and clouds – PLUS SNOW.

2. I commented on the misty, cloudy nature of the sky to my friend Seong, and she said, “Isn’t it the best? It’s like getting a hug from God.” And that has stuck with me.



But what I notice most is that I become a true viridiphile. As the days grow shorter, it is profound how lush and green everything becomes. The grass emerges from its dormancy, the moss becomes dazzling to the eye, and even the very air seems to have a chartreuse tint to it.

It can be so tempting when things seem gray and dark to recess into ourselves and hunker down. Especially when so many things are changing in our congregation and in our lives. But I want to encourage you to think of this as a season of harvest and renewal.

From Psalm 147...

⁷ Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.

⁸ He covers the heavens with clouds,
prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass grow on the hills.

Take this opportunity to sit by the window in a room with a warm fire and reflect on where you are seeing verdant growth both in this congregation and in yourself.

- **What has changed for me in the last two years? Where can I see God at work?**
- **What good things have happened in our congregation that I did not expect?**
- **Where is God leading me to renew my life? Where have I been dormant?**
- **Try to write a verse or a song or a haiku about how you are feeling spiritually in these days. Reading Psalm 147 reminds us that God brings seasons as they are needed, and loves our songs in response.**

One last thought: When first looking at the beach of the Salish Sea, it can seem monochromatic – shades of gray and green, and more gray. But when you get close to it, turn over the rocks, and truly look closely, it’s amazing how vibrant and stunning the variety of colors can be. The same is true for each of us in this season. People often comment, “I’ve lived here my whole life, and never seen the colors and creatures that you find at the beach!” I pray that we each can savor the ability to see more than just a first impression as we move through this time, and spring to new life in this season of growth and comfort.



Peace and love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gretchen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Gretchen

October at Our Redeemer's

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2 FROM THE PASTOR

4 LIVING GENEROUSLY

6 WORSHIP & MUSIC

7 FAITH FORMATION

8 SOCIAL JUSTICE

9 COMMUNITY

OUR REDEEMER'S STAFF

- Gretchen Mertes, Pastor
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- David Hahn, Transition Facilitator
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- Karie Stearns, Parish Administrator
administrator@ourredeemers.net

Phone: 206-783-7900

Office Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 10am-3pm

OUR VISION: In the model of Christ and for the life of the world, we are an inclusive, devoted, caring, and spiritual community that accepts challenges, takes risks, and grows.



October 1, Sunday PET BLESSING

9 AM - Informal Worship

9 AM - Sprouts In-Person | Downstairs
10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes | Downstairs
10 AM - Confirmation | Library
10 AM - Adult Forum | Fellowship Hall
11 AM - Traditional Worship
12:15 PM - Pet Blessing | Front Patio

October 2, Monday

5 PM - A Women's Gathering | Reuben's Brews Ballard

October 3, Tuesday

12:30 PM - Staff Meeting
7 PM - LiVE Synod-wide Bible Study | Zoom

October 4, Wednesday

6:30 PM - Kid's Choir
6:30 PM - LiVE Project: Sovereignty Spirituality | Zoom
7 PM - Choir Rehearsal

October 5, Thursday

7 PM - Ensemble Rehearsal

October 7, Saturday

9 AM - Liturgical Arts Team

October 8, Sunday

9 AM - Informal Worship

9 AM - Sprouts In-Person | Downstairs
10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes | Downstairs
10 AM - Confirmation | Library
10 AM - Adult Forum | Fellowship Hall
11 AM - Traditional Worship

October 10, Tuesday

12:30 PM - Staff Meeting
7 PM - Executive Team
7 PM - LiVE Synod-wide Bible Study | Zoom

October 11, Wednesday

6:30 PM - Kid's Choir
6:30 PM - LiVE Project: Sovereignty Spirituality | Zoom
7 PM - Choir Rehearsal

October 12, Thursday

7 PM - Ensemble Rehearsal

October 15, Sunday

9 AM - Informal Worship

9 AM - Sprouts In-Person | Downstairs
10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes | Downstairs
10 AM - Confirmation | Library
10 AM - Adult Forum | Fellowship Hall
11 AM - Traditional Worship
2 PM - Ballard Sunday Dinner | Ballard First Lutheran
4 PM - Madonna's Book Group | Kenmore Area

October 17, Tuesday

12:30 PM - Staff Meeting
7 PM - Council Meeting
7 PM - LiVE Synod-wide Bible Study | Zoom

October 18, Wednesday

6:30 PM - Kid's Choir
6:30 PM - LiVE Project: Sovereignty Spirituality | Zoom
7 PM - Choir Rehearsal

October 19, Thursday

7 PM - Ensemble Rehearsal

October 22, Sunday GENEROSITY SUNDAYS BEGIN

9 AM - Informal Worship

9 AM - 6-9 Graders Youth Relator Event | Downstairs
9 AM - Sprouts In-Person | Downstairs
10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes | Downstairs
10 AM - Confirmation | Library
10 AM - Adult Forum | Fellowship Hall
11 AM - Traditional Worship
6 PM - Breaking Bread Together Dinner | Private Homes
7 PM - LiVE Synod-wide Bible Study | Zoom

continued next page

October at Our Redeemer's *continued*

October 25, Wednesday 6:30 PM - Kid's Choir
 6:30 PM - LiVE Project: Sovereignty Spirituality | Zoom
 7 PM - Choir Rehearsal

October 26, Thursday 7 PM - Ensemble Rehearsal

October 27, Friday 7 PM - Youth Event: Pumpkin Carving | Fellowship Hall

October 29, Sunday **9 AM - Informal Worship**
REFORMATION SUNDAY 9 AM - Sprouts In-Person | Downstairs
 10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes | Downstairs
 10 AM - Confirmation | Library
 10 AM - Adult Forum | Fellowship Hall
11 AM - Traditional Worship

October 30, Monday 9 AM-Noon - Monthly Volunteer Grounds Crew |
 Our Redeemer's Gardens

Our Redeemer's Mission Budget

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (Thru 8-31-23)

(16.67% thru the fiscal year)

Income	2023-2024 Approved Budget	Year to Date Income as of 8.31.23	% of Budget Year to Date	Over (Under) Budget Year to Date
Envelope & Loose Offerings	511,100	61,329	12%	(23,855)
Church Use	88,506	12,550	14.2%	(2,201)
Fundraising (Auction)	38,000	0	0.0%	N/A
Interest	1,000	44	4.4%	(122)
Special/One-Time Gifts	-	31,000	N/A	31,000
Total Regular Income (without Special Giving)	638,606	73,923	11.58%	(32,511)
**TOTAL INCOME	638,606	104,923	16.4%	(1,511)
Expenses	2023-2024 Approved Budget	Year to Date Expenses as off 8.31.23	% of Budget Year to Date	Over (Under) Budget
Social Justice/Outreach	74,549	9,233	12.4%	(3,192)
Pastoral Staff	172,820	21,951	12.7%	(6,852)
Worship & Music	38,382	4,761	12.4%	(1,636)
Fellowship & Caring	2,750	1,090	39.6%	631
Faith Formation	22,517	3,920	17.4%	167
Stewardship	11,419	631	5.5%	(1,272)
Communications	55,667	7,444	13.4%	(1,834)
Facilities	108,978	15,271	14.0%	(2,892)
Administration	150,615	19,327	12.8%	(5,775)
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$637,697	83,629	13.1%	(22,654)

* *Special Giving* denotes a one-time gift that is outside of regularly giving.

To view an updated 2023 Financial Snapshot spreadsheet for Our Redeemer's visit this [LINK \(https://rb.gy/b7i46\)](https://rb.gy/b7i46). If you have questions or concerns about Our Redeemer's financial status, contact Karie Stearns, administrator@ourredeemers.net.

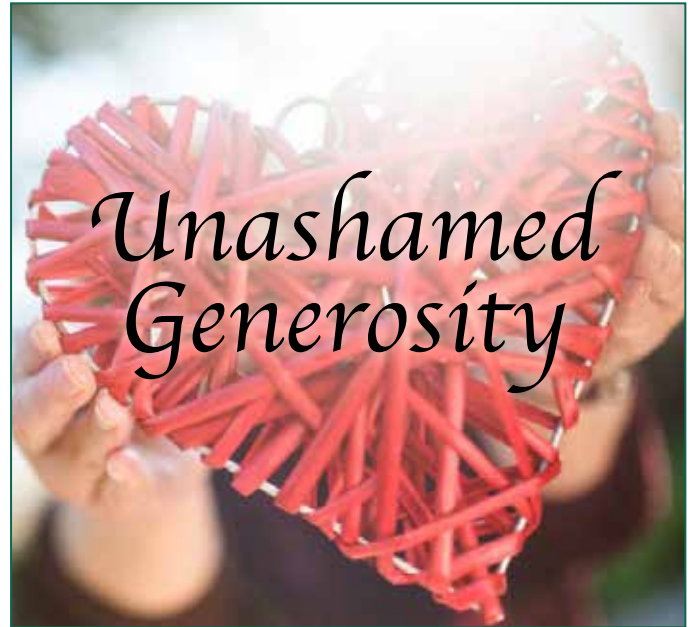


Living Generously

“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ; it is God’s saving power for everyone who trusts in God.”

– Romans 1:16

Many of us feel drawn to church because the Spirit calls us to be generous. This helps us be who we always think we should be, but let’s face it, on our own, it can be challenging. We come to church to become more faithful people. Many of the ways the church influences us are subtle, and we find ourselves returning time and time again for guidance.



Generosity Sundays begin October 22

We are generous in many different ways.

And the Spirit’s guidance isn’t always specific—it can be ephemeral. **But then there’s that awkward time of year when the church explicitly asks us to be materially generous toward the church itself!** And—you guessed it—that time is coming. Generosity Sundays are coming from October 22 through November 12.

This year, we’re taking a different approach. Rather than sending out pledge cards, we are using our generosity stories to encourage each other to move to monthly electronic donations or update our donations if we are already doing so. **As a church, we find ourselves called to be unashamed in this ask of our congregation, and it is our hope that you will be equally unashamed in your giving.**

The money we give goes directly to Our Redeemer’s operating budget, which does everything from paying our staff, to keeping the lights on, to offering our social justice tithing and gifts to our larger church, to, this year, replacing our roof! **We are a thriving and financially solvent church, and that is possible only thanks to your generosity.**

So, this Fall, please allow the Spirit to move you toward generosity as it always does, and toward generosity back to the church as well. **It is only through our tithes and offerings that we are able to do this thing—to come together as believers encouraging one another through the Spirit to be more generous—to be more faithful people of God.**

– Jon Wright, on behalf of the Generosity Team



Worship and Music



REFORMATION Sunday

Wear red! Nail your
grievances to the door!
Remember the
reformation!

Reformation Sunday is October 29th

This church is Lutheran, and in the great tradition of our founder Martin Luther, each year we celebrate the protestant reformation at the end of October.

Our denomination is built on the idea that while God is powerful and unchanging, the church should not be, and in fact, cannot be and remain alive and relevant. We are called to be in a constant state of growth, asking the penultimate question from Luther's catechism: What does this mean? When our lives and God presents challenges that seem overwhelming, we know to look to the work and life of Christ and say, "Given our faith in Christ, what are we to do with this information? What indeed does this mean?"

In such a time as this, when our congregation and our lives seem to still be in so much flux, it is good for us to remember that we began our church-family walk together in a protest, seeking transparency and honesty in our lives together as Christians.

So, let's wear red, and ask our questions, and know that God is faithful and will be our rock through whatever storms may come. **We are not called to always be the same, but to always know that our God is indeed A Mighty Fortress. Thanks be to God!**



Pet Blessings: Extending the Tradition of St. Francis of Assisi

Sunday, October 1 @12:15pm

For many of us, our pets are some of our closest companions, and a gift from God throughout our lives. The feast day of St. Francis of Assisi is October 4th, and while we don't generally mark feast days in our congregation, we gladly appreciate and give thanks for Francis' heart for animals.

On Sunday, October 1, we will host a blessing of the animals. You are invited to bring your pet (leashed, caged, or otherwise controlled) both to worship and to receive the blessing. Photos are also welcomed if the creature is unable to make it to church. The pastor will offer words like these:

"Blessed are you, Lord God, maker of all living creatures. You called forth fish in the sea, birds in the air and animals on the land. You inspired Saint Francis to call all of them his brothers and sisters. We ask you to bless this pet. By the power of your love, enable it to live according to your plan. May we always praise you for all your beauty in creation. Blessed are you, Lord our God, in all your creatures! Amen."

All are welcomed to receive this blessing, members, friends, and neighbors alike!



Faith Formation



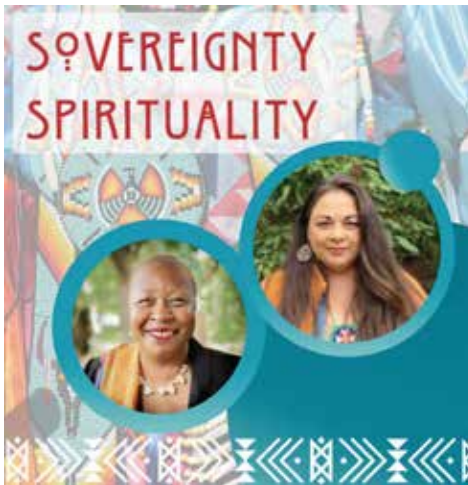
Sunday Adult Forums

Sundays, 10:10 AM | Fellowship Hall

This fall our Sunday Adult forums have two themes. All are welcome!

Parables: Hunting for Hidden Truth – For 3 weeks of each month we'll hear from various facilitators, diving deep into Jesus' parables. In our western culture, we've been trained to view the Parables as moralistic fairy tales. In reality, they were meant to be wrestled, teased apart, and ultimately to turn our conventional wisdom on its head – once coined "spiritual hand grenades." As Jesus said, "come and see..."

Experiential Church – On the 2nd Sunday of each month, we'll stop merely talking about God and stretch ourselves to experience our faith through different aspects of life each week such as creativity, nature, and embodiment. Each month a different facilitator will bring new ways of engaging our faith and prayer lives through things like art, nature walks, body prayers, and more. Some weeks O-Rock will also participate. Middle and high school youth are welcome to join the adults each month.



Sovereignty Spirituality Course

Wednesdays, 6:30-8 PM, October 4, 11, 18, November 1, 15 | Zoom

A robust understanding of spirituality embraces the whole and authentic person and their lived experience. Many in our world have been marginalized and not given room to live fully into their own self understanding of spirituality because of domination and colonizing systems of oppression. **This course explores spirituality from a place of reclaiming one's Christian identity in light of one's ethnic identity (indigenous and womanist/black women), and how those particular identities, in fact, might help us to image life anew as Christians in today's complex world.**

How to register: Register via **THIS LINK** (<https://rb.gy/g58sg>). USE CODE "LIVEBUNDLE2023". Email welcome@ourredeemers.net if you have questions about registering. Zoom link emailed upon registration.

Dr. Beverly Wallace & Dr. Kelly Sherman-Conroy will lead this 5-session LIVE Project course

All LIVE Project classes are FREE to Our Redeemer's congregants if you use the **"LIVEBUNDLE2023"** code when registering.

You can find the 2023-2024 LIVE Course Catalog by **CLICKING HERE** (<https://rb.gy/sv8rb>).

LIVE Retreat – Waiting for God: Reimagining Church Vitality

Saturday, November 18, 9 AM – 4 PM | St. Andrews, Bellevue

In an age of declining church resources, how do we re-imagine what it means to be Church created in God's image? More information and registration can be found at <https://rb.gy/sbb39>.

Year-Long Bible Study

Tuesdays, 7-8pm | ZOOM

This is a year-long, Synod-wide weekly Bible Study that takes participants on a deeper dive into the coming Sunday's Lectionary text. Participants will have the chance to experience diverse perspectives and voices from various guest facilitators from across the synod. This is a FREE LIVE offering! No registration needed. Learn more at <https://www.lutheransnw.org/events>.



Social Justice



Ballard Sunday Dinner Needs Your Help

Ballard Sunday Dinner (BSD) is a ministry in which we partner with local churches to feed our hungry neighbors on the third Sunday of each month. Please consider signing up to help out now that the weather is cooler. All needed roles have lots of availability, and we'll partner up with you until you're comfortable! Sign up by using this link: <https://rb.gy/ea817>.

Reach out to Amy Borgmeyer (amy.borgmeyer@gmail.com) if you have any questions. Thank you for all that you do!



LWR School Kits Are Ready to Load

We have enough school supplies now (plus 2 quilts – thank you Amy!) to make 100 school kits and 25 personal care kits for Fall loading on November 3 and 4.

A huge thank you to everyone who donated so many items to complete our kits!

Can you help load the trucks on November 3rd? Contact Sharon Longaker if you can be there: slongaker@msn.com.

Celebrating October Birthdays!

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2 Tricia Kloth | 15 Marjorie Minus | 19 Skylar Perry |
| 2 Jean McCarthy | 15 Elizabeth Prentice | 22 Noel Wannebo |
| 7 Denise Ecklund | 16 Katlin Dickinson-Laurence | 22 John Borgmeyer |
| 7 Lily Lowe | 16 Karen Soine | 23 Zach McCarthy-Fredericks |
| 9 Kari Guddal | 16 Kari Trigstad | 25 Paul Hendricks |
| 11 Patrick Brady | 17 Linda Christensen | 26 John Ellingboe |
| 11 Jenny Fredericks | 17 Dave Eicke | 26 Joey Niedner |
| 11 Max Perry | 17 Tim Watkins | 27 Madeleine Fowler |
| 12 Melanie Olson | 18 Elizabeth Beranek | 28 John Gibson |
| 13 Lake Neill | 18 Valerie Tung | 30 Maria Maier |
| 15 Marie Brissette | 19 *Maxine Hansen | 31 Jordan Holt |

***Birthday Blessings to Maxine Hansen Who is Celebrating Her 90+ Birthday in October!**

If you or someone else needs to be added to the birthday list please let us know by calling the church: 206.783.7900.



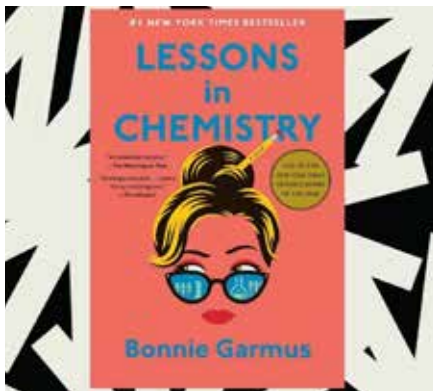
Community



“A Women's Gathering” Meets Again In October

Monday, October 2, 5 PM | Reuben's Brews, 5010 14th Ave NW

Come hang out with other Our Redeemer’s amazing women! On the first Monday of each month we gather for conversation and laughter at Reuben’s Brews. We meet next on October 2nd from 5:00-6:30 pm. Bring a card or cash to purchase alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages, and food. All identifying as a woman are welcome. Questions? Contact Kari Gudhal, kari_guggal@outlook.com or Connie Sandstrom, (206) 375-5449.



Madonna’s Book Group’s October Meeting

Sunday, October 15, 4 PM | Kenmore Area

The Madonna’s Group is meeting at 4:00 pm, on October 15 to discuss the book LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY by Barbara Garmus. The meeting will be held at a home in Kenmore. All are welcome!

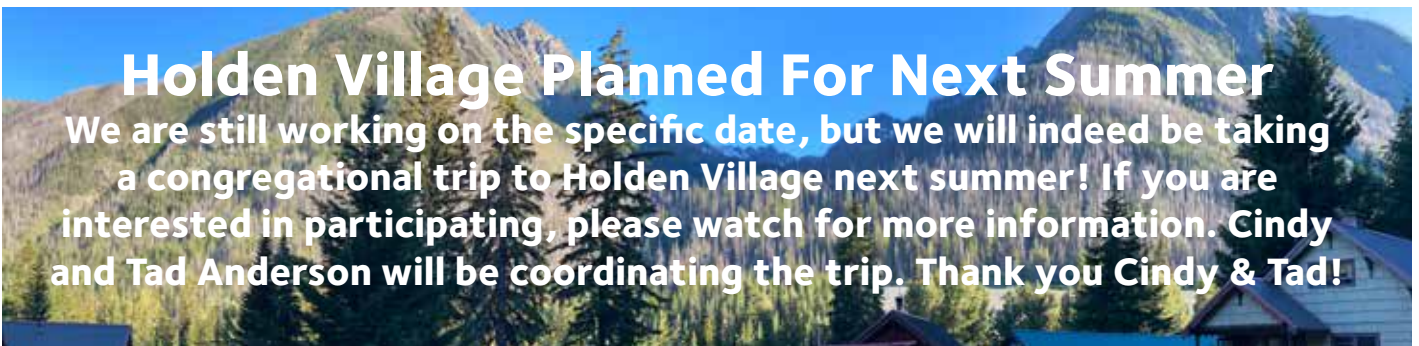
Madonna’s Book Group meets to review books, support each other, and share personal journeys. Contact Lynne at buckomcneill@yahoo.com for more information.



Breaking Bread Together

Sunday, October 22, 6 PM | Various Homes

Have you been wanting to get to know more folks at Our Redeemers? Starting in October we’re facilitating **Breaking Bread Together Dinners**. On Sunday, October 22 at 6:00 pm, groups of about 3 family units (around 6 people) will gather at group member’s homes for dinner. The host will provide the main course, while others bring side dishes. (A family unit consists of couples, singles, kids... whatever constitutes your family who would like to attend). **Sign up to participate or host** at this link: <https://rb.gy/zvjOp>.



Holden Village Planned For Next Summer

We are still working on the specific date, but we will indeed be taking a congregational trip to Holden Village next summer! If you are interested in participating, please watch for more information. Cindy and Tad Anderson will be coordinating the trip. Thank you Cindy & Tad!



Community



Monthly Grounds Crew Event

Monday, October 30, 9 AM - Noon | Our Redeemer's Gardens

Come join other passionate garden folk as we care for Our Redeemer's garden beds! **Our goal is more naturally shaped and overlapping plants to create a richly textured bird and bug friendly garden.** Our efforts will supplement the landscape service that provides weekly ground crew services.

Tasks may include weeding, deadheading, and trimming so bring your favorite garden tools, on Monday, October 30, 9:00 am - noon.

Questions? Contact Connie Sandstrom at conniesandstrom05@gmail.com.



Luciafest Is December 10th

December 10, 5 PM | Our Redeemer's

Luciafest at Our Redeemer's is on December 10th this year! This traditional Swedish celebration of Saint Lucia's Day will have all the traditional trappings: **Sankta Lucia, her attendants, star boys, Tomte, Scandinavian goodies, and dancing around the Christmas Tree.**

All youth ages 5 through 18 are invited to participate in this festival of light and hope for the Christmas season. Rehearsals begin Saturday, November 4, 9-11 am. There are plenty of roles for anyone interested! Come join us in this fun annual Christmas tradition at Our Redeemers!

For information contact Marie Nordquist lutequist@yahoo.com



Women's Retreat
Save the date for our annual retreat for those who identify as female: May 3-5 at Seabeck Retreat Center. More details to come!

Rest Retreat
"Come All who are Weary"
Stay tuned for a NEW adult retreat in January or February, open to all genders, with a focus on Holy Rest.

Upcoming Retreats!



Community

Youth Relators Event

Sunday, October 22 | Downstairs Youth Room

All youth, 6th grade through 9th grade, are invited to our first Relator Event of the year on Sunday, October 22 during the 9:00 am service. Meet in the youth room downstairs for donuts, discussion, and fun activities with your adult Relators. Please email Mandy at welcome@ourredeemers.net to RSVP.

October Youth Event: Pumpkin Carving!

Friday, October 27 | Our Redeemer's

On October 27 we're inviting all middle school youth to get in the Halloween spirit with Our Redeemers for a night of pumpkin carving! **Put your gourd based art skills to the test and squash the competition!** Weather permitting, **we'll also have our first annual pumpkin gut fight!**

Note to parents: Our Redeemer's safety with youth guidelines asks that we have two adults present whenever we have youth at the church. If you have the time, please email Andrew Shimer at ashimer528@gmail.com with your availability.



New Welcome Ministry Volunteer Roles

You may have noticed that every single week, we have had new folks visiting Our Redeemers. It's very exciting! **We strive to extend the hospitality of Christ to each person who walks through our doors, and we have two new Welcome Ministry volunteer roles that will help us to do that:**

Hospitality Hosts – If you are someone who can tolerate making conversation with new folks, this is the perfect volunteer role for you! Hospitality Hosts are folks who make an effort to introduce themselves to new faces they see in the service. No need to sign up for certain dates, no required training (although helpful tips will be provided). This is a VITAL role, so if you're willing to try it out, let me know!

Welcome Ambassadors – We are currently in the process of training some folks to be Welcome Ambassadors. The role of the Welcome Ambassador will be to help extend hospitality and any needed guidance to those occasional visitors who might not fit within our standard behavioral norms.

If you're interested in either of these roles, please email Mandy at welcome@ourredeemers.net.



Expanding On The Ministry Fair

On Kickoff Sunday we had 32 Ministries represented at our Ministry Fair, along with a delicious reception. Ministry leaders were on hand to answer questions and everyone was able to learn more about the many things Our Redeemer's does to serve our church community and our neighbors!

In this time of transition you are challenged to try "One New Thing": One new ministry to get involved in. One new way to serve our community. The Ministry Fair was intentionally set up as an opportunity for you to gather information and see all that is available before signing up for that "One New Thing." Now that you've learned more, get more information or go ahead and sign up by filling out this Google form: <https://rb.gy/pp0y8>.



2400 NW 85th Street
Seattle, WA 98117

www.ourredeemers.net
206-783-7900

return service requested

SUNDAY WORSHIP

9 AM Informal Worship
11 AM Traditional Worship

Stream Online (11 AM only)
Facebook: [facebook.com/OurRedeemers](https://www.facebook.com/OurRedeemers)
Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/822691346>

Church office hours:
Monday-Thursday
10 AM - 3PM

Pet Blessings

Sunday
Oct 1
12:15 pm
Front Patio

All animals and their humans welcome!

