

SEPTEMBER 2025



GOOD news

September 21
FALL KICKOFF!
Back to 9 & 11am Services
Faith Formation
Classes Begin

**Stewarding
the Gifts of
the Potato**

Page 4

*Return
Where God
Has Led Us*

A Community in the Model of Christ

From the Pastor...

Re:Turning to God

As they say, “we will now **return to our regularly scheduled programming.**” On September 21, we close the Summer months, **resuming our two-service schedule, ORCA (Our Redeemer’s Children’s Activities), Sunday Forums, Choir and Band rehearsals**, and turn our attention towards the coming seasons.

The turning of flora and foliage of the Fall reorients animals and people to times of **feast and fast—of generous banquets and of budgeting for the holidays and the new year.** Fall is a transition time, when **the seeds of spring are planted, and an interior life grows.**

The Christian faith and spirituality can be one of continual turning—**reorientation and reformation, continuation and renewal, introspection and outreach.** In a word, **“return” is an embodiment of the Christian faith**—turned towards God and neighbor, no longer fixated by our limitations and inadequacies—to be turned from one way, towards the road home.

In a sense, **return is redemption—you may have noticed the change in Newsletter title—to be called anew or named for what we are (God’s good creation)** is a righteous judgment given by our being reconciled to God in the person of Jesus Christ.

To be returned to God reminds me of *Les Miserables*, when Bishop Myriel buys a new life for Jean Valjean; Jean aims to live one sort of life—the life the national courts have deemed him: a convict. He steals the silver, and, in being returned to the bishop, the stolen silver that makes him a thief is gifted to him, instead. The graceful judgment to redeem him comes from the very person he robbed. And, as Myriel says, **“and now I give you back to God.”**

At this point, he returns to a life without an unjust doom or judgment on his head. Jean Valjean, given a new lease on life, is freed from his debt and reoriented.

With Rousseau’s view on society corrupting the will of people, a bit of Pascal’s wager. and an evolved Descartes-ian self-determination in the background, Victor Hugo portrays redemption as a **turning—and a return to an original state at that—with potential to live anew.**

Lutheran views on redemption come through a sense of **returning to origin, or source.** We, encumbered by sin and burdened by the verdict on our actions under the catchall “sinner” cannot succeed in freeing ourselves and returning to the beginning of our life with God. Instead, **God gives a new beginning—a reorientation and a reconciliation in unity with God and all creation.**

Our redemption is a return to view of ourselves, as God sees and deems us: capable of the good that God intends for the world, which we could not within our limitations. As Paul’s descriptions focus on courtroom imagery, **Our Redeemer’s Lutheran Church claims that the pronouncement of this “good” news reorients us to live not distinct from creation, but in full communion with it.**

In these ways, we return this fall:

- We resume and continue our life together in Christian faith,
- We are reoriented towards community and what the Holy Spirit is doing among us, and
- We are transformed and renewed in the ways that this community is best equipped and called as part of God’s world.



Pastor Thomas Voelp

Celebrating September Birthdays

1 Lucas Miller
1 Lucas Minus
3 Harold Allaire Laurence
4 Marilyn Schulze
5 Indio Abdullah
5 Lisa Thompson
8 Lucy Watkins
12 Genny Arrendondo
13 Linda Hintz
15 Linda Ellingboe

15 Judy Wright
17 Joe Lessard
17 Chris Lowe
18 Anne McGrew
20 Andrew Brady
20 Eric Brady
20 Tim Hunter
21 Britni Chabot
21 Isaac Dovinh
21 Phillipa Dugaw

21 Steve Ege
21 Eric Olson
24 Lisa Glover
28 Richie Neill
29 Holly Mangold
30 Gianfranco Foddai
30 *Anna Freyberg
30 Jon Hanson

**Birthday blessings to Anna Freyberg who is celebrating a 90 + birthday this month.*

IN THIS NEWSLETTER
2 FROM THE PASTOR
4 LIVING GENEROUSLY
5 WORSHIP & MUSIC
6 FAITH FORMATION
9 FAITH IN ACTION
10 COMMUNITY

OUR REDEEMER'S STAFF

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- Lake Neill, Office Support/Volunteer Coordinator
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administrator@ourredeemers.net

Office 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.



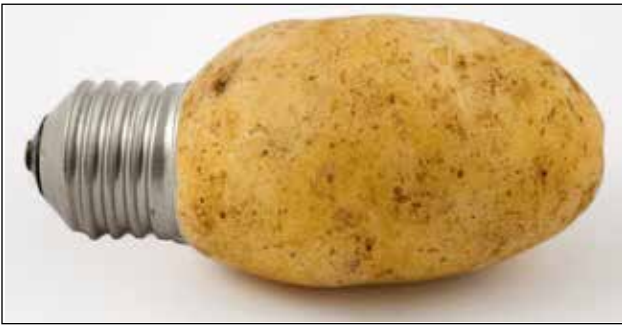
Front Cover Image:
Vlad B., Unsplash.com

What's Happening in September

September 1, Monday	Labor Day - Office Closed
September 2, Tuesday	7 PM - Church Executive Team Meeting
September 6, Saturday	9 AM - Liturgical Arts Team 4:30 PM - "Popcorn & Reels" Movie: <i>Encanto</i> Fellowship Hall
September 7, Sunday GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS	10 AM - Summer Worship 11 AM - Involvement & Ministry Conversation Fellowship Hall
September 8, Monday	11 AM - 1 PM - Monthly Volunteer Grounds Crew 5 PM - Church Ladies Beer Night Old Stove Gardens
September 9, Tuesday	7 PM - Church Council Meeting
September 12, Friday	10 AM - 2 PM - Volunteer Grounds Crew
September 13, Saturday	Church Council Retreat - Dinner at Sopranos
September 14, Sunday COMMUNITY BBQ PICTURE DAY	10 AM - Summer Worship 11:30 AM - Annual Church Potluck BBQ Our Redeemer's Front Patio & Lawn
September 15, Monday	5 PM - Monthly Youth Group Meetup Next Level Burger, Ballard
September 17, Wednesday	7 PM - Our Redeemer's Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary
September 20, Saturday	4:30 PM - "Faith in Action on Screen" Film: <i>Carlos Almaraz: Playing With Fire</i> Fellowship Hall
September 21, Sunday KICK OFF SUNDAY	9 AM - Informal Worship 10 AM - Faith Formation Kick-Off: ORCA Kids, 6th Grade Pod, Embodied Church 11 AM - Traditional Worship 1 PM - Wright's Trip to Palestine Presentation Fellowship Hall 2-6 PM - Ballard Sunday Dinner Ballard First Lutheran
September 28, Sunday THE JOURNEY BEGINS	9 AM - Informal Worship 10 AM - 6th Grade Pod Downstairs 10 AM - ORCA Kids Downstairs 10 AM - Adult Forum Fellowship Hall 11 AM - Traditional Worship 4 PM - The Journey Fellowship Hall
September 29, Monday	9 AM - 12 PM - Volunteer Grounds Crew



Living Generously



What can't potatoes do?

Stewarding the Gifts of the Potato

Save the dates! October 12, 19, and 26, and November 2, and 9 our community celebrates and recognizes the generosity that empowers and equips our ministry, and the gifts of the church as exemplified by...the humble potato! The Stewardship Team and staff have rooted ourselves in our sense of call in giving and set our eyes on the starchy blobs that not only grace our tables, but capture the imagination.

Fun crafts, meaningful and powerful stories, and potato-powered themes each Sunday ground our sense of all that God gives us to grow ministry and this community. On November 9, we end our Generosity Season eating Swedish Pancakes at our Recipe Reception and Potato Potluck between the 9:00 am and 11:00 am. services! Bring your favorite potato-based dish to share, perhaps based on a recipe you've found brings out the best the potato can offer! Commitment Cards will be gathered during the worship services.

Mission Budget FY 2025 (6 mo. budget) 16.67% thru fiscal year

Our Redeemer's regularly publishes a Mission Budget report to keep congregants informed about the current financial health of the church.

You can also access the church's most recent Financial Snapshot at this url: <https://bit.ly/45YphCO>.

For questions or to set up giving, or to change your giving, contact Administrator, Karie Stearns at administrator@ourredeemers.net.



Income	2025 6 mo. Approved Budget	Income	% of Budget Year to Date	Over (Under) Budget Year to Date
Envelope & Loose Offerings	247,565	38,635	15.6%	(2,625)
Church Use	39,438	12,280	31.1%	5,707
Fundraising (Auction)*	-	-	-	-
Interest	300	10	3.5%	(40)
Endowment Transfer of Funds	20,000	2,354	11.8%	(979)
TOTAL INCOME	307,303	53,280	17.3%	2,063
Expenses	2025 6 mo. Approved Budget	Expenses	% of Budget Year to Date	Over (Under) Budget Year to Date
Social Justice/Outreach	23,657	3,864	16.3%	(79)
Pastoral Staff	64,085	10,837	16.9%	156
Worship & Music	35,840	6,046	16.9%	72
Fellowship & Caring	5,247	579	11.0%	(296)
Faith Formation	26,887	2,489	9.3%	(1,992)
Stewardship	4,252	507	11.9%	(202)
Communications	25,199	4,156	16.5%	(44)
Facilities	63,084	7,921	12.6%	(2,593)
Administration	84,217	11,662	13.8%	(2,374)
TOTAL EXPENSES	332,468	48,060	14.5%	(7,351)
NET INCOME (Loss)	(25,165)	5,220		9,414



Worship and Music



Choir: Share the Joy of Music

Martin Luther once said, "As long as we live there is never enough singing." I agree! Our Redeemer's Church Choir is an opportunity for you to not only sing, but to be part of a supportive, encouraging, and fun community that shares the joy of music with each other and our congregation.

I love this explanation of what happens in and through a church choir from the website, biblestudyforyou.com: "When we gather with others to sing, we not only engage our own hearts in worship but also lift up those around us... Community singing strengthens our faith and allows us to share in the joy of our collective experiences of God's grace and mercies. Together, we set an example of hope for the world every time we sing."

Our Redeemer's Choir rehearses Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 pm, beginning September 17. We sing at the 11:00 am service - meeting at 10:30 am on Sunday mornings - beginning on September 21, our Fall Kickoff Sunday.

Saint Augustine said, "To sing is to pray twice." And Ella Fitzgerald summed it up: "The only thing better than singing is more singing." Please join us! - Karen Lee, Our Redeemer's Traditional Worship and Music Director

Witness in the World: Life & Friendship in the Holy Land

Sunday, September 21, 1 PM | Our Redeemer's

Judy and Dana Wright invite you to journey with them to the Holy Land on September 21 at 1:00 pm. Through a slide presentation and personal commentary, **you'll visit Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Ramallah, and Hebron, and meet the Palestinian families who welcomed them into their homes.** You'll also be introduced to fellow Christians Zoughbi Zoughbi, Usama Nicola, and Daoud Nassar who shared their experiences of life under very difficult circumstances.

This was Judy and Dana's third visit with friends in the region, and they are excited to introduce them to you.

As part of the journey, you'll help plant grapevines on the Nassar family farm, Tent of Nations, and glimpse the challenges of sustaining life with limited water. Sharing their story brings hope that they are not forgotten.

In the spirit of the warm hospitality they experienced in the West Bank, **Middle Eastern food from Ballard's own Salt and Sugar Coffee House will be served.**



Judy and Dana Wright

Say Cheese For the Church Directory!

We're updating our church directory, and you're invited to have new photos taken for you and your family's profile! Quick photo sessions (just 2-5 minutes) will be available during the Church BBQ on September 14th, and again on September 21st from 10:00-11:00 am.

Photos will be taken on the patio or lawn outside the narthex and can be either family group shots or individual head shots. These photos will be added to our church database as part of your or your family's profile. Prefer to use your own photo? Simply email it to volunteer@ourredeemers.net.





Faith Formation

Saturday Movies in September

Saturday, September 6, 4:30 PM | Saturday, September 20, 4:30 PM | Fellowship Hall



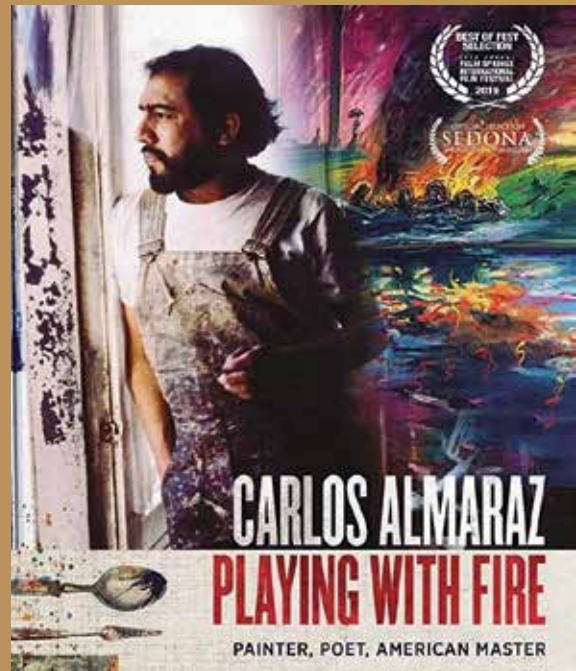
Join us in celebration of Latino Heritage Month as we connect over a story of cultural and familial heritage and discuss what makes those things unique.

Saturday

Sept. 6, 4:30 PM
Fellowship Hall



Saturday, Sept. 20
4:30 PM | Fellowship Hall



In honor of Latino Heritage Month, join us in watching this mix of footage and interviews that tells the story of one of LA's greatest Chicano art activists.



our redeemer's
LUTHERAN • BALLARD

Our Redeemer's offers movies monthly on a Saturday afternoon that offer entertainment, connection, and meaningful conversation. Popcorn and snacks provided! **In September, Latino Heritage Month, we offer these films:**

POPCORN AND REELS, September 6th: The engaging Disney family movie **Encanto** is a story of family and cultural meaning. The after movie discussion will focus on what makes cultural and familial heritage unique.

FAITH IN ACTION ON SCREEN, September 20th: Join us on September 20th for a viewing of and discussion of the documentary **Playing With Fire** in honor of Chicano activist and artist Carlos Almaraz. The intensity and confidence of Almaraz's vision tap into fundamentally human experiences and emotions. Join in!



Faith Formation



ORCA Faith Formation Kicks Off

A new season of ORCA (Our Redeemer's Children's Activities) begins September 21st! During the service, K–5 ORCA Kids will gather for fun, learning, and community care, while our “6th Grade Pod” kids dive deeper into faith, life, and connection. This year's program is full of engaging activities that spark conversation both in and beyond church.

We are looking for volunteers to help teach and engage with the ORCA Kids and 6th Grade Pod this coming fall. If you are interested in being in a rotation of volunteers, please reach out to Kenna Hight (faithformation@ourredeemers.net).



Next Embodied Church – September 21

Gesture and Posture: People at Work/Worship

Every Third Sunday in the month Faith Formation engages practices that expand our sense of worship and spiritual well being—under the catchall name “Embodied Church”. **September 21, we kick off this intergenerational part of our programming with an Embodied Church led by Pastor Thomas!** Try on, adapt, and discover your own meaningful postures and gestures that embody our worship and liturgy, beyond the words we speak in service! Come ready, to bend, move, express and articulate liturgy (“work of the people”).



Values, Community, Formation

If you cannot participate on God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday, do not worry—there is plenty of opportunity to join in the conversations as we return to our programmatic year!

This Fall, 10:00 am Adult Forums on Sundays focus on community building and deepening of relationships. Pastor Thomas and other leaders will facilitate intentional and meaningful discussion and table-conversations that grow our sense of mission and equipment for service as people grounded in values and united in call. **We'll kick off our Adult Forums on September 28!** We will be intentional about the use of time in the first half-hour, before choir rehearsal at 10:30 am.



Youth Group Meetup in September

Monday, September 15, 5 PM | Next Level Burger, Ballard, 1401 NW 46th

All youth in grades 7–12 are invited to our next monthly meetup on Monday, September 15th. Join us for an evening of connection, conversation, and fun at Next Level Burger in Ballard. Come for the community and great burgers! Bring a friend and get ready to have a great time!



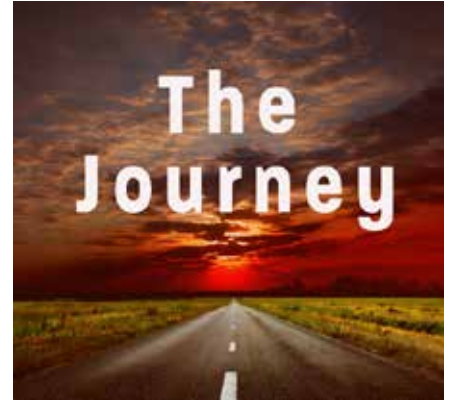
Faith Formation

“The Journey” Starts September 28 by Pastor Thomas

Sundays September 28 – October 26 (five Sundays), prospective members, visitors, and established members are invited to participate in our annual offering of “The Journey.”

The Journey is a series of discussions and conversations (with a potluck meal!) geared toward building relationships, facilitating connections to ministry, and sharing our stories of faith and the life of Our Redeemer’s Lutheran Church.

Part of the program affirms the values and perspectives of our Lutheran community, grounding further conversation about Our Redeemer’s current pursuit of valued-living. The Journey is a way of connecting and becoming more informed, regardless of membership status or membership goals, but the invitation to formally join the community is par for the course!



The Journey this fall will take two paths:

1. For those who are new to Lutheranism and/or want to brush up on Lutheran perspective, and
2. A more relationally-driven course for those considering membership, or wanting to know more about Our Redeemer’s ministries and our shared life in faith.

The two offerings are designed to work together, with one following the other, for those needing both in pursuit of membership at Our Redeemer’s. However, there is no imperative to become a member at the end of the program.

The class dates are Sundays – September 28 and October 5, 12, 19, 26. Each class includes:

- Lutheran Perspective, 4:00 pm – 4:45 pm
- Break for potluck dinner, 4:45 pm
- Communal Life, 5:15 – 6:30 pm.

New members are received during worship on All Saints’ Sunday, November 2nd, 2025.

If you’d like to walk The Journey towards greater familiarity or membership this Fall, please reach out to me at PastorThomas@ourredeemers.net. If you are a current member and would like to sign up to accompany those on The Journey, let me know!

Pursuing Membership?

- “Lutheran Perspective” is required for adult catechism (confirmation) and newcomers to Lutheranism (not previously ELCA).
- “Communal Life” is required for those who have been confirmed in the ELCA, and are requesting membership with Our Redeemer’s, or transferring from another ELCA congregation for membership.
(If you are new to the ELCA, both are required for membership.)



Thanksgiving Save-The-Date

Each year, Our Redeemer’s hosts a community meal on Thanksgiving Day. This year, Thanksgiving falls on November 28th.

It takes around 90 (or more!) volunteers to pull Thanksgiving off.

You are invited to help us put on this wonderful meal for our community—whether it be by preparing the meal, carving turkeys, setting tables, distributing sleeping bags, or anything in between. Please keep an eye out for future announcements or sign ups.

We are also looking for a second person to co-chair this meal alongside Lisa Thompson. If you are interested in taking on a leadership role, please reach out to Lake Neill (volunteer@ourredeemers.net) or Lisa Thompson (egglayer@comcast.net).



Faith in Action



God's Work. Our Hands.

Sunday, September 7, 10 AM | Fellowship Hall

On September 7th we join congregations across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to celebrate *God's Work. Our Hands.*—**a day to lift up the many ways (and directions) we serve and are called.** Following the 10:00 am service, make your way to the Fellowship Hall to have a bite and participate in meaningful table conversations that pique, gauge, and grow our interests in the ways we are called and equipped for ministry. **Come with hands open and ready to share, receive, and join with others as we together discern God's work for this congregation.**

To help with lunch, or help facilitate table-conversations, please contact Pastor Thomas or Volunteer Coordinator, Lake Niell. If you have a special ministry you'd like to have represented, please let us know.

Ministry Spotlight: Welcome and Hospitality

We've all been there: **attending a party or event when we do not know anyone. Or being alone in a new place or neighborhood—not sure where we will land or who we can rely on.** Even for the extroverts among us, the story is the same: without making a connection or being introduced, without having a sense of where we fit or how to navigate the landscape, we'll likely have trouble mustering the courage to put ourselves out there again if we don't feel connected. Isolation can deepen.

Some of us had "those friends" that would find us by the buffet table or on the patio and introduce us—they seemed to know everyone—or, at very least, they were less-familiar with the surroundings, too, and helped us feel less alone. We stayed a little longer before going home from the party, we felt more familiarized with the neighborhood, or we realized that we could take the chance and meet more people and expand our network. **Those small connections can mean the world when we are stepping into an unfamiliar place.**

Welcome is an experience, not only an invitation. For this reason, **welcome has taken on the spirit of hospitality, and in fact, the measure of one's welcome is determined by the measure of hospitality,** or so the belief has been over time.

Of course, we cannot always provide the welcome that we find in the Gospels: killing the fatted calf for the prodigal son, providing lamps and robes for banqueters, giving pride of place to every guest, for example. Still, a simpler way of building a community is no less important; **how we make room and provide for new faces as well as returning visitors and regulars is crucial to the ministry of care we have been given.**

You can probably remember people or inviting language that drew us to certain communities. And church on a Sunday—talk about big events. Even if a person wants some anonymity, remembering the respect they received can be the welcome they need. **The best we can do is to put ourselves in those places, and be good neighbors—welcome to a new community is welcome to a new neighborhood.** And we know as Christians how expansive that neighborhood can be.

Pastor Thomas and leaders are seeking to rebuild the Welcome Team in this way—**we need people who can be good neighbors for long-time residents and newly arrived on the block.**



Contact Pastor Thomas to find out how you can be one of "those friends" that can introduce visitors to Our Redeemer's on Sundays.



Community



Tending to Our Gardens This Fall

Upcoming Grounds Crew dates:

September 12, 10 AM – 2 PM & September 29, 9 AM – noon

Does pruning viburnum and transplanting Black Eyed Susans sound like fun to you? These satisfying tasks are September's main focus in addition to overall tending to our garden beds.

Come join us Friday, September 12, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm or September 29, 9:00 am – noon for an hour or the whole time. Bring your favorite tools, water bottle and enjoy your time gardening with others. Questions? Contact: Connie Sandstrom, conniesandstrom05@gmail.com.



If you need a ride or have questions, reach out to Kari Guddal at kari_guddal@outlook.com. We'll see you there!

Church Ladies Kickoff the Season

Monday, September 8, 5 PM | Old Stove Gardens Brewery

Join other women of Our Redeemer's as we toast the summer goodbye and welcome the fall. Enjoy good company and great conversation at a relaxed early evening of laughter, connection, and community at Old Stove Gardens Brewery. This monthly meetup is the perfect way to unwind, share stories, and support one another in faith and friendship.

All women (and those who identify as female) are warmly welcome. We gather every month just off the Ballard Bridge at 1550 NW 49th St—where you'll find hearty bites, warm drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic), and plenty of free parking nearby. Come as you are, and let's celebrate the beauty of the season together!

Community Barbecue – September 14th at Our Redeemer's

This September 14th, we will be hosting our church-wide BBQ at 11:30 am after the 10am service. We invite all to join us in community and enjoy good food!

The BBQ will be thrown in a potluck style in the narthex and on the front lawn. All are welcome to bring side dishes, grills and propane, meats/veggies to grill, drinks, or fun lawn and tabletop games.

Condiments, coffee and popsicles will be provided; but any other food items are welcome. Please email volunteer@ourredeemers.net if you have any questions. Along with an online sign-up there will also be a paper one posted in the narthex. Whether or not you bring dishes, you are invited to join us!

Sign up to bring food or help out online: <https://rebrand.ly/48by8mq>





Community



Spring Auction 2026 – Call For a Co-Chair and Volunteers

Save the Auction Date: March 14, 2026

Step into the heart of our community and help shape one of the year's most anticipated celebrations! If you enjoy bringing people together, organizing lively festivities, and turning creative ideas into reality, the Auction is the perfect opportunity. **This event is more than just a fundraiser—it's a chance to make connections, spark joy, and leave a lasting mark through food, décor, laughter, and shared purpose.**



We're looking for a Co-Chair and volunteers to join the team. Planning begins mid-September, so if you're ready to help, contact Diana Myers at auktion.ourredeemers@gmail.com or dm3myers@gmail.com. You can also reach out to the office to get involved. Don't miss out on the fun!

Together For Each Other, Together For the Earth

Save the Recycle Date: Saturday, October 18th



As part of our "God's Work, Our Hands" focus, Our Redeemer's is hosting a special fall E-Cycle Community Recycling Event on Saturday, October 18, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm in the church parking lot.

This is more than just a chance to recycle unwanted electronics and Styrofoam—it's a reflection of who we are as a community. By coming together to care for the earth and for one another, we put our shared values into action: honoring creation, supporting sustainability, and strengthening the bonds of community.

Living Green Technology is once again partnering with us to make this possible. We'll accept most electronics along with clean Styrofoam.

We need plenty of volunteers to help things run smoothly, so stay tuned for sign-up details. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact Connie at conniesandstrom05@gmail.com or Aaron at aduke987@gmail.com. **Come join us in this ministry of earth care—every small act makes a big difference!**



2400 NW 85th Street
Seattle, WA 98117

www.ourredeemers.net
(206)783-7900

return service requested

SUNDAY WORSHIP



10 AM Summer Worship
thru September 15th

Stream Online

Facebook: facebook.com/OurRedeemers

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/822691346>

Church office hours:

Monday-Thursday

10 AM - 3 PM

You are invited to the
Annual Church BBQ
Sunday, September 14, 11 AM
Our Redeemer's Front Patio

- Potluck Style – Bring a side, drink, or something to grill - basics provided
- Bring a lawn or board game to play
- Volunteer to help out or bring a grill!
- Sign up using the QR code

Questions? Email volunteer@ourredeemers.net



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