



## SUMMER & FALL 2023

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Pastor's Letter

# Rev. Jen Collins

[pastor@redeemermpls.org](mailto:pastor@redeemermpls.org)



*“Some people cross your path and change your whole direction.”*

-Unknown

It was June 12, 2022 when you all gathered with anticipation to vote. Those present that day voted to call a new pastor, a person named Jen Collins. It was joyful news that both Redeemer and Pastor Jen accepted the call looking to what would happen next.

Hello, I am Pastor Jen Collins.

If we haven't met yet or connected please reach out! I really do want to meet all of you beloved people. I am so grateful to be wrapping up my year of firsts, however, I imagine there will still be more first opportunities for us ahead. I am still working to get to know many of you in this community and it has been an honor thus far to have done so many things in just short of a year. I am learning so much alongside you. We are still charting our path forward, imagining what God is up to in the world, on the corner of Glenwood and Logan in the Harrison neighborhood.

I officially joined Redeemer on August 15, 2022 and celebrated worship for the first time in joint leadership with you on Sunday, August 21. In this letter I wanted to let you know how committed I am to our mission to **Be a Beacon of Hope**. It's a prayer that WE together keep uncovering what that means to us. It is important for you to know even though I have arrived, that Redeemer has a settled, called pastor - we are not out of transitions. As I say often about us as individuals and true collectively too, we are on a journey.

Redeemer has pathways with choices and decisions, opportunities as well as hardships.

*“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and do good, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day draw near.”* Hebrews 10:24-25

So, what does it mean to YOU to be a beacon of hope?

To find the answers we will have to keep showing up, supporting one another, being willing to try - try new, old, and in-between things, asking brave and honest questions: What is best for our community? What's at risk? Who is burdened? Are we listening, engaged, invested, and connected? Where's our energy? Is Jesus at the center? Is God leading and guiding? What's our intent and purpose?

I have seen beautiful and remarkable moments in this community from Soul Food dinners to Northside Collaborative worship to Summer Cookouts and Pizza Parties to Christmas Stories with our kids and Intriguing Book Groups to Camps, Gardens and more! It has been a gift to sit, eat, laugh, cry, encourage and just be present with you. Each of these holy God moments, is an echoing in my mind, humming the catchy little tune, “this little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine...”

Jesus spoke to us about the radiant light within to let the Holy Spirit shine brightly.

This community really is uniquely gifted and there is incredible opportunities for vibrant, joyful spaces to exist for people to feel like they belong and have purpose and meaning. I want people to truly know they are loved, valued and worthy of LOVE – God's and one another's.

May we cultivate God's vision, yes Lord, "be thou my vision, oh lord of my heart...be thou my wisdom." May we keep striving to put people first. May we re-imagine our goals for spiritual growth, youth empowerment and leadership as well as fostering food solutions for those in need. I see us, a **beacon of hope** making a difference, inviting, and pointing people to community! May we offer hope when there is none, encouragement when it is needed most, kindness and compassion. It is the people through the Holy Spirit that can bring radiance and **Be A Beacon!**

"Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works, and glorify God in heaven." – Matt. 5:16

On to year two...

Peace and Blessings,  
Pastor Jen Collins (she/her)

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**FROM COUNCIL PRESIDENT MARY BRITT** [mary.m.britt@gmail.com](mailto:mary.m.britt@gmail.com)

Summer has arrived bringing many plans and activities at Redeemer! The executive and church councils continue to meet monthly and work to support and assist pastor Jen with the many needs and events at Redeemer. While the following points do not reflect all the needs and events, they provide an overview of a few of the highlights.

**FINANCIAL:** Many thanks to everyone who generously contributed prayers and funds to help with meeting our financial needs this summer. **HR STAFF SUPPORT COMMITTEE:** Thank you to all who volunteered to sit on this committee. We've begun meetings to review contracts, position descriptions, and employee benefits in alignment with the Redeemer mission, vision, and goals. **BURNING BUSH CHURCH:** The building lease/contract was renewed with Burning Bush Church for one year. **CHURCH COUNCIL:** We are still looking for volunteers to fill the following ministry positions on our council. Please prayerfully consider serving as **education, evangelism & outreach, or service & advocacy minister.** If you are interested in one of these ministries and serving on council, please feel free to contact any current council member.

# Summer / Fall Staff Updates



## WELCOME TYRONE WADE!

After 11+ years on staff with Redeemer Center for Life (RCFL), Tyrone is officially a church

staff member as of July 1, 2023. Due to leadership transitions over the years, Tyrone has worked for both non-profits. This month, he officially transitioned to church staff exclusively for 30 hours per week.

Tyrone does so much more than simply manage the property. Drop by and say “hello” if you haven’t met this remarkable person! If you have any questions or if you would like to volunteer with Tyrone and our property ministry team, reach out to Pastor Jen.



## THANK YOU RENEE CHRISTENSEN

We are so grateful to have met Renee and had the opportunity to be a place in her journey for learning and exploring next steps as a new college graduate. Renee's last day as our Office Admin Intern will be Thursday August 31st. Please plan to schedule a time to drop by Tuesdays

Tor Thursdays between 10:30am-2:30pm to say farewell, share a card, and well wishes!

Pastor Jen and Council Members have convened an HR team to begin the work of assessing our staffing needs and we will be sharing updates as frequently as we can. If you are interested in helping in our Church Office a few hours per week, please contact Amy Koopman ([admin@redeemermpls.org](mailto:admin@redeemermpls.org)) or Pastor Jen ([pastor@redeemermpls.org](mailto:pastor@redeemermpls.org)).

## BLESSINGS TO ALYSSA SCHWITZER

Alyssa Schwitzer, Redeemer’s Worship Director is expecting her second child. We celebrate with Alyssa, Elizabeth and Remy! We will celebrate and honor their on Sunday, August 13th after morning worship. Bring a card and well wishes!



## WELCOME TRAIVEON DUNLAP

As our Interim Worship Director beginning August 20th through November. If you are interested in volunteering to help our Sunday worship team (with ipad streaming setup or sound tech training) see Pastor Jen or Dave Scharnhorst: [Davescharn@yahoo.com](mailto:Davescharn@yahoo.com)



## FROM TREASURER JANE FRIENDSHUH

A special thanks to the Branch families and others for their memorial gift that they have donated in Cheryl Branch’s name.

To all members and friends: from June 25th through July 1st, you have donated \$2,196.00. Thank you for all of your help. If we all keep up our help both financially and with your time, Redeemer will continue to grow.

# Executive Council Update

# Redeemer Center for Life

In communion with the RCFL Board and Redeemer's executive council (president Mary Britt, vice president Stuart Munk, treasurer Jane Friendshuh, and secretary Caroline Scherer) I want to provide this update to both inform and provide context for more exhaustive updates to come. Since RCFL's Executive Director Leon Dixon arrived in February of 2023, he has done an outstanding job at navigating the organization's standings while striving to realign and rebuild connections in order to move the organization forward.

In recent months, Leon and RCFL's Board have uncovered several areas of concern. Prior to Leon Dixon's arrival, RCFL went through multiple transitions across which, we have learned, best practices were not upheld under leadership whose functioning was inadequate and unhealthy.

Over these spring and summer months, the Board has been meeting more frequently to assess pathways forward while creating the best possible outcome for tenants, staff, shareholders, and our community. They made the challenging decisions in June to release most staff members in June and decrease costs to the bare minimum. Because we know it is a complex process, we want to begin moving forward into what is next and best even if it means RCFL no longer exists as it once did.

As we make headway in these considerations, time will be of the essence for Redeemer Lutheran church voting members (per RCFL bylaws) to discuss, discern, and vote on next steps for RCFL to provide the best possible outcome for the whole community. We know many of you will have questions, concerns, and curiosities, and Redeemer Church will hold space for people to express themselves in honest and healthy ways, and to listen and heal together. With all this in mind, our need for this community to work together to identify those with the will, skills, and commitment to join us at the table and make good, sound, honest decisions. If you would like to talk to Pastor Jen or with any Executive Council, please feel comfortable to reach out

Indeed, this will be hard work. But this good work will **empower, inspire, liberate, transform, and restore** this community. We cannot let what is broken be lost, but we can rebuild and re-imagine and redevelop for the sake of our neighbors who deserve healthy, vibrant, just neighborhoods! **God is good all the time; all the time God is good!**

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# Cookouts, Camp, + More!

THANK YOU Luther Park Bible Camp in Danbury, WI for a wonderful FAMILY CAMP getaway weekend! It was a great time had by all. There were games, food, campfires, lake + art time, new friendships and lots of celebrating being in God's creation with family!

We also created a stunning community art project for our congregation. Check it out below to catch a glimpse, and be on the lookout for its display at church!

THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH for all your support with our summer cookouts! We had to adjust due to weather alerts and concerns due to climate change issues, But we persevered and met in our building, creating space for all to gather safely. It was a beautiful display of people coming together to feed one another, fellowship and connect.

This year we served over 100+ meals every week. We had a consistent community as well as new folks joining in as they were able to. There were seven community church partners who helped us make these cookouts happen!

WE GIVE THANKS TO:

**Nativity Lutheran in St. Anthony;**  
**St. Barnabas in Plymouth; Edina Community Lutheran Church;**  
**Salem in North Mpls,**  
**Westwood in St. Louis Park, Immanuel in Eden Prairie, and Faith in Waconia.**



New this year we added an invitation to community organizations in Harrison and N. Mpls to join in to help build connection, share resources and generate opportunities for our communities! It was a wonderful addition and we hope to see how these relationships get nourished over the year. WE GIVE THANKS TO: **Health Commons, Project Sweetie Pie, Sovereign Starts Seedlings, Minnesota Environmental Justice Table, Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement (CLNE), Metroblooms, Home Program (ECLC Ministry), Justice 4 Jamar, Robert Coleman (Instagram: godofart777), Youth Farms and Nonviolent Peaceforce.**



We invite you to celebrate the joy in feeding our neighbors, in honoring our mission to be a beacon of hope in Harrison and beyond. May we keep asking God to lead and guide us, may our next path be made clear!

*“If you cannot feed a hundred people, then just feed one.” ~Mother Theresa*

August 12th | 12-4pm

2023

free & open to all!

# BLOCK PARTY



## FREE FOOD

brats, meat & veggie burgers, hot dogs, fruit, veggies & more



## LIVE MUSIC

music, poetry, spoken word & more



## KID'S FUN

bounce house, dunk tank, face painting & more

REDEEMER'S BACKYARD | 1800 GLENWOOD AVE. MPLS 55405 | WWW.REDEEMERMPLS.ORG

## August

- 12 Block Party
- 13 Guest Preacher  
Amy Koopman  
Celebration for Alyssa, Elizabeth and Remy after worship
- 20 Food Ministry Forum: Lunch and Learn (12-1:30 pm) to hear about the newly-forming food ministry initiative at Redeemer. Blessing of the Backpacks
- 23-30 Pastor Jen out of town
- 27 Guest Preacher  
Rev. Dr. Jia Starr Brown

## September

- 3 Labor Day Worship at Christ River of Life
- 15 Pastor Jen Collins ONE YEAR anniversary at Redeemer!
- 15-17 Reclaim Gathering
- 20 Fall Kick Off - Wednesday Night Meals
- 24 New Member Gathering at La Doña Join us for Lunch (non-alcoholic drinks & sides covered)

## October

- 1 Bible Blessing - Kids & Youth receive Bibles
- 4 Food & Faith Night: Bible 101 & Wednesday Night Meal
- 8 Indigenous People's Day  
Just Faith Learning Cohorts Launch - more info to come!
- 29 Soul Food Sunday & Vaccine Clinic (Flu + Covid)

**COMING SOON: Kids & Youth Music Academy Expanding to Northside at Redeemer!** As an initiative to develop and offer safe, creative spaces for kids and youth, Redeemer will be partnering with LK Arts to begin offering music classes (piano, vocals, and drums) on Mondays and Wednesdays. We will also be creating monthly gatherings for families during our New Monthly Wednesday meals. Visit <https://lk-artsacademy.com> if you want to learn more or register for upcoming classes!

*a beacon of hope!*  
**redeemer**  
**LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
1800 Glenwood Ave. Minneapolis, MN 55405

Non-Profit Org  
US Postage  
PAID  
Twin Cities, MN  
PERMIT #3170

Return Service Requested

Mailing Address

# join us!

**SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP**  
IN-PERSON & STREAMING ON  
FACEBOOK AT 10:30AM

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:**  
TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS  
10:30am -2:30pm

**STAY CONNECTED:**  
[WWW.REDEEMERMPLS.ORG](http://WWW.REDEEMERMPLS.ORG)  
[ADMIN@REDEEMERMPLS.ORG](mailto:ADMIN@REDEEMERMPLS.ORG)  
612.886.1468

campers at this year's family camp created this beautiful collage for our coming Sanctuary Prayground Space ~ read on for more!!

