

# FAITH MATTERS

A monthly publication of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota

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## FROM THE PASTOR Kelly Chatman

*Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:*  
*3“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. 6“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. 7“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. 8“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. 10“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

*Matthew 5:2-12*

This is the text where Jesus sits with his disciples and, as an organizer, he begins to talk about how God is with vulnerable and overlooked people. God calls the church to be with people who are overlooked, undervalued, and forgotten. In this section of Matthew’s gospel, Jesus is an organizer, preparing for a church that will speak against systems and forces that abuse and neglect. Where the world is big, scary and uncaring, Jesus organizes a church with the message, “We ready. We comin’.”

There was a time when a family’s children were younger and one of their pets died. When the youngest daughter’s cat died, they took her to find another pet. She selected a tiny peekapoo puppy. When they got home, the dad agreed to build a doghouse for the new pet to live in. The only kind of dog he knew very much about was a really big bird dog. So when he built the doghouse, he built a very large house. In fact, the house was too large for the small dog.

The size of the doghouse scared the little peekapoo puppy. No matter what they did, the little dog would not go near the doghouse. They would put his food in there, and the dog would go hungry; they would put water in there, and the dog would not drink. He would shove the dog in and hold his hands over the door; but the minute he would move, the dog would run out, unbelievably frightened. Nothing worked. The little dog would not go into his doghouse no matter what they did to entice him.



# COMMUNITY UPDATES



## **FROM THE INTERN Alissa Kretzmann**

In my most recent sermon I spoke about how Jesus calls us into the work of God in the world. I suggested that this particular time in history is a perfect time, even a crucial time, to be considering how God may be nudging and inspiring us to use our work, time and relationships for the sake of something bigger than just ourselves. But I had a conversation recently with someone that reminded me that for many of us, it can be hard to imagine that who we are, or what we have could be used by God.

Part of this challenge comes from what and whom our society tells us has value. And sometimes those messages from society start to influence our own thinking about ourselves and each other. And then pretty quickly we may start believing that since we are soft-spoken, or queer, or black, or brown, or elderly or unemployed that our voice simply is not loved and that our contribution is not valued. When these messages start to creep in, God is at work to root them out because God doesn't operate in the same value-system of society. God loves us and values each of us, exactly for who we are. This may feel strange and unfamiliar because so often we don't always experience this kind of love and value in the world, or in our families or on social media.

How can we show up in the world, offering our unique voice and gifts that God loves? How can we show up in the world in such a way that we make space for other people to offer their voice and gifts as well? This month, we'll continue talking about some of these things at our Stewardship Sunday, which is scheduled for February 19th. In the coming weeks, I invite you to keep thinking about how you may be feeling nudged to contribute your unique voice and offerings to the world.

## **From the Pastor continued**

In disgust, the dad went inside, and sat down in the den while his daughter stood outside crying over her father's impatience and the refusal of her puppy to cooperate. After a while, his daughter got down on her hands and knees and crawled into the dog house herself. When she crawled into it, something wonderful happened. That little puppy trotted right in beside her and stretched out on the doghouse floor. Before too long, the dog was taking a nap. All the shadows now stood still for him, and all the fear was taken out of the darkness because the one whom he loved and trusted had preceded him into that dark and frightening place. It no longer caused him fear.

Today, there are those who are living in fear for the environment, refugees, sexism and racism. They see a world that is big, scary, overwhelming. To those for whom the world has become one big doghouse, Jesus' message is "God is with you." "You are blessed!"

When Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor," he is not saying we are blessed because we are poor. Jesus is saying we are blessed because we are not alone. Last month, nearly 100,000 people descended on our state capital and many more were present across the nation and globe. May these words from Jesus serve to remind us and challenge us to stand in solidarity with those in our world who live in fear. Jesus calls us to share good news to those who live in fear... "We ready! We comin!"

# ARTICLES & NEWS



**Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration**



On Martin Luther King Day, Monday January 16th, Redeemer community members participated in a wood-processing work day for Standing Rock. Over 30 people of all ages showed up to process approximately six cords of wood, the equivalent of approximately 4,300 individual pieces of firewood! To learn more about this effort, visit our blog <http://www.redeemermpls.org/redeemer-happenings/redeemer-helps-fuel-standing-rock>.



## **Upcoming Events:**

- Free Performance of Fiddler on the Roof: Sunday, February 5th 2:00-4:30p.m. (Fellowship Hall)
- Confirmation & Baby Shower Sunday: Sunday, February 12th after worship
- “Race &...” Forum: Tuesday, February 14th 7:00-9:00p.m.

## **Stewardship Kick-Off Sunday: February 19th**

Redeemer Lutheran Church has a mission to serve as a beacon of hope in the Harrison neighborhood of North Minneapolis. How can you use your gifts to help Redeemer keep shining bright in the community?

Join us for a Stewardship Kick-off Worship Service and Community Meal Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> where we can connect as a community to grow our many ministries: Worship, Advocacy, Financial Support, Youth, Property, Outreach/Communications, Fellowship and more. Let's imagine how we can support one another to shine our brightest in the Harrison community!

# ARTICLES & NEWS

## Redeemer represented at the Women's March in St. Paul.



## Notes from Godly Play... and a Call to Action

Last week in Sunday school, I told the story of Baptism. We talked about how we baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, what words we say and then gave a demonstration of what we do when someone is baptized. Sometimes, it can take a while for all of the kids to sit still and be ready for the story, but this week the group was very engaged and had lots of questions. I lit a candle for each child and asked them to remember their baptism. (Only I handled the candles.) Seeing all the little flames burning got some of the kids so excited that they moved forward to see them better. There were so many children in the circle that some of the group could not see what was going on. We ended up having to stop the story and rearrange to make the circle larger again.

I was looking around the circle and taking in the faces of all Redeemer's young people – some as young as 4 and wiggly as can be, others much older making sure their younger siblings pay attention. It's beautiful to see how our Sunday school class has grown so much larger than just two years ago, when would have 3 to 5 children in class every Sunday. I imagine what it would be like if we had enough storytellers and assistants to have two smaller groups, one for the squirrelier young ones to play and begin discovering their spirituality and one for older children to go deeper into their wondering about sacred stories. I would love to see our Sunday school continue to grow and meet the needs of our young people – and so we need your help! Sunday school at Redeemer needs congregation members who are passionate about sharing God's word and asking deep questions with young people. If you are interested in volunteering, or are interested in learning more about what we do in Sunday school, please contact me at [helen@redeemercenter.org](mailto:helen@redeemercenter.org) or [906-204-0917](tel:906-204-0917).

Thanks,  
Helen

# ARTICLES & NEWS

## **Racism and Criminal Justice Reform Forum** *Written by: Thomas Fiebiger*



Senior U.S. District Court Judge Michael Davis spoke at Redeemer on January 18th as part of the year long series on systemic racism and ways to make a difference that Redeemer Lutheran, Westwood Lutheran and Edina Community Lutheran churches have partnered together to present. But the Judge's presentation was so much more than a primer on our broken criminal justice system. It was inspirational and aspirational in this time of uncertainty.

Judge Davis started his thoughtful and prophetic message the way he ended, with a sense of history and the importance of taking the long view. His great grandfathers both fought in the Civil War. They were slaves who had escaped and fought on behalf of the Union to end slavery. Judge Davis aptly referred to the Civil War as this country's "second founding."

You see, prior to that, slavery permeated our country. Even after the "second founding" we continue to live in a country where black people and other folks of color are treated as less than. Our criminal justice system, according to the Judge, continues to systemically lift up and perpetuate that disparity. Judge Davis spoke of the required mandatory minimum sentences that he, as a federal judge, often through tears, was required by law to visit most harshly upon Blacks and Hispanics. We also got a glimpse into the judge's soul, as he was vulnerable in a way that let us see the human toll such a process takes over the years on a black man of great intelligence and accomplishment and who is blessed with a generous heart grounded in justice.

The Judge spoke of the need to create real opportunities for young people of color in our community if they are to have any meaningful chance to succeed. He spoke of the opportunity he had to be successful and the importance for all to have that same opportunity. The Judge noted that means tackling poverty and economic insecurity so our children have basic necessities like places to live and food to eat. It means figuring out a way to not make folks, primarily black males, continue to be punished by our society after they have already served their sentences. Judge Davis noted how when black males have convictions, it immediately limits their future options in life - including real job opportunities and housing options. These convictions prevent them from receiving student loans so they have an opportunity to move forward and can create a meaningful future.

The Judge urged people to get involved, to physically show up and view their judges hand out sentences in court and hold those judges accountable for how they sentence citizens, particularly citizens of color. He urged us, as people of faith communities, to continually contact our congressional and legislative representatives about sentencing reform and other issues that perpetuate systemic racism in the criminal justice system.

After a 40 minute presentation, Judge Davis generously spent another hour answering a wide variety of questions and responding to comments from a full sanctuary of community folks who were there to learn and engage in real dialogue.

Judge Davis made it clear to all in that sanctuary that, after a 40 year legal career of service to people and justice for all, with 34 of those years as a judge, he was as he proclaimed "still fired up."

# FEBRUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

	February 5	February 12	February 19	February 26
<b>Greeter</b>	Stephanie Holloway	Stephanie Holloway	Stephanie Holloway	Stephanie Holloway
<b>Reader</b>	Rachel Birkedal	Cheryl Branch	Jane Friendshuh	Alyssa Hanson
<b>Usher</b>	Michael Simmons Tyrik Thompson	Michael Simmons Mike Terras	Tyrik Thompson Chuck Larson	Michael Simmons
<b>Communion</b>	Michael Murray Kristi Murray		Michael Murray Kristi Murray	

## LEADERSHIP & CONTACT

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**Vice President** — Phillip Hussong

**Secretary** — Yordanos Martin

**Treasurer** — Alyssa Hanson

**Education** — Christine Belfry Johnson

**Evangelism/Outreach** — Kristen Gilbert

**Fellowship** — Kendrick Dwight

**Service/Advocacy** — Heather Nissen

**Property** — Mike Simmons

**Stewardship** — Amy Brandt

**Worship, Arts & Music** — Mike Murray

**Youth** — Mario Locust

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**Venture North Bike Shop**/ 612.377.3029

**Casey Pavak**, Shop Manager

**Derek Otte**, Service Manager

**Kendrick Hall**, Assistant Manager

# REDEEMER FEBRUARY CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
			4:00-6:00p.m. RAP	6:00-7:00p.m. Zumba, Fellowship Hall	6:00-7:00p.m. Yoga, Living Room 6:00p.m. Open 12 Step Program	10:00a.m.-12:00p.m. Men's Group
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9-10a.m. Adult Gathering 10:00 a.m. Worship & Praise 10:30a.m. Worship Liturgy 2:00p.m. Fiddler on the Roof, Fellowship Hall	3:00-6:00p.m. Harrison Health Commons, Living Room 4:00-6:00p.m. RAP 7:00p.m. Open 12 Step Program	9-12pm: Busy Fingers 11:30a.m.-1:00p.m. Pastor Text Study 3:00-7:00p.m. Harrison Health Commons, Living Room 6:00-8:00p.m. Teen Cafe	4:00-6:00p.m. RAP 6:00-8:00p.m. Women's Ministry "Tea & Scones", Fellowship Hall	6:00-7:00p.m. Zumba, Fellowship Hall	6:00-7:00p.m. Yoga, Living Room 6:00p.m. Open 12 Step Program	10:00a.m.-12:00p.m. Men's Group
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9-10a.m. Adult Gathering 10:00 a.m. Worship & Praise 10:30a.m. Worship Liturgy 12:00p.m. Confirmation & Baby Show Celebration	3:00-6:00p.m. Harrison Health Commons, Living Room 4:00-6:00p.m. RAP 7:00p.m. Open 12 Step Program	9-12pm: Busy Fingers 11:30a.m.-1:00p.m. Pastor Text Study 3:00-7:00p.m. Harrison Health Commons, Living Room 7:00p.m. "Race &.. Forum, Sanctuary	4:00-6:00p.m. RAP	6:00-7:00p.m. Zumba, Fellowship Hall	6:00-7:00p.m. Yoga, Living Room 6:00p.m. Open 12 Step Program	10:00a.m.-12:00p.m. Men's Group 11:00a.m.- 4:00p.m. Breakfast Club
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9-10a.m. Adult Gathering 10:00 a.m. Worship & Praise 10:30a.m. Worship Liturgy Stewardship Kick-Off Sunday	3:00-6:00p.m. Harrison Health Commons, Living Room 4:00-6:00p.m. RAP 7:00p.m. Open 12 Step Program	9-12pm: Busy Fingers 11:30a.m.-1:00p.m. Pastor Text Study 3:00-7:00p.m. Harrison Health Commons, Living Room 6:00-8:00p.m. Teen Night	4:00-6:00p.m. RAP	6:00-7:00p.m. Zumba, Fellowship Hall	6:00-7:00p.m. Yoga, Living Room 6:00p.m. Open 12 Step Program	10:00a.m.-12:00p.m. Men's Group
26	27	28				
9-10a.m. Adult Gathering 10:00 a.m. Worship & Praise 10:30a.m. Worship Liturgy	3:00-6:00p.m. Harrison Health Commons, Living Room 4:00-6:00p.m. RAP 7:00p.m. Open 12 Step Program	9-12pm: Busy Fingers 11:30a.m.-1:00p.m. Pastor Text Study 3:00-7:00p.m. Harrison Health Commons, Living Room 6:00-8:00p.m. Youth Bank				

# redeemer

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

MLK CELEBRATION

RACE FORUM UPDATE

& MORE!

## JOIN US!

### SUNDAYS:

Adult Bible Study: 9:00 A.M.

Prayers & Praise: 10:00 A.M.

Worship: 10:30 A.M.

\* Sunday School

\* Nursery

### Church Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday: 9:00-4:00 P.M.

Friday: 9:00 A.M.- 12:00 P.M.

