A Message from Pastor Karsten—Advent “Taking the low road”

I am not sure what ideas or understandings come to mind when you read the words, ‘take the low road’. It might be that your memory goes back to the words of the famous Scottish song of Loch Lomond where we hear:

You’’ll take the high road and I’’ll take the low road,
And I’’ll be in Scotland afore you.
Where me and my true love will never meet again,
On the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond.

This song is about two physical roads between London and Edinburgh that carries various ideas of what lovers refer to when trying to unite to paths siblings had to take in a horrible time of war.

Maybe you can hear echoes of Michelle Obama in her recent book as she said one of their family phrases is, “When they go low, we go high.” This has been used something of a slogan for exercising restraint in the face of frustration.

In her book she would also add this, “I say: Let’s just do the work …I’d have to understand why you feel that way. I’d have to be your friend and get into your pain and hurt, your fears. And that takes time. That’s the work that needs to happen around kitchen tables and in our communities. When I say ‘go high,’ I’m not trying to win the argument. I’m trying to figure out how to understand you and how I can help you understand me.”

For us this Advent we are going to focus on the low road that makes this season what it is. Taking the low road refers to the road God took in sending his son Jesus to be Immanuel – God with us, God who comes down to us. Taking the low road can also refer to the path of Jesus who continued to choose the path of service and compassion during his ministry. This direction of choosing to go low so that others can be embraced, so others can be supported, so others can be lifted up is an honorable direction for our lives.

Come join us for our regular Sunday morning Advent services throughout December. But also consider joining us for the Wednesday evening services at 6:30 p.m. where in scripture, song, prayer, and faith-sharing we will hear the call and responses about the holy path of taking the low road in life. We will be meeting in the choir loft for these Wednesday services. And if you would like, there will be a Sunday morning devotion study from 9:45 to 10:30 a.m. that is based on the book ‘Low – an honest Advent Devotional’ – there is more invitation and details about this inside the newsletter.

Come have a blessed Advent with us as we celebrate the God who chose the low road into our lives through the wonderful gift of his son Jesus.
A Message from Deacon Jennifer Schneider—The Gift of Time

“The greatest gift that you can give to others and to yourself is time. Embrace the gift of time whether you give it or receive it.” Philip Zimbardo, American psychologist.

The turkey, cranberries, and pumpkin pie have settled into our guts, leaving our thoughts of gratitude and thanksgiving in the dust as we race hurriedly into Christmas. There is shopping, decorating, baking cookies, trips to see Santa and Christmas pageant rehearsal - and then all the other regularly scheduled duties of life.

Two things come to mind as I write this. One - Advent is a time of waiting and watching. Two - time is far more valuable than any toy, sweater, or electronic device. Time seems to be in short measure - especially during the holidays.

“The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah.” Jeremiah 33:14. God comes to us in form of a humble baby in a manger. If we don’t stop, look, and listen, we may miss this holy time. Schedule some quiet time for you and your family this December to dwell in the Word, pray together, look for God moments happening around you. God is at work in and through each of us and others around us. Make time to take in the splendor and joy of God with us.

We are a culture of consumers. Not just of material things, but of events, and relationships too. When we treat life like a transaction, we miss out on the richness of each other and the ways God has blessed each of us with different gifts. This month, consider how you spend time interacting with others. Recognize and bless the humanity in the cashier when you are doing your Christmas shopping. Listen to their story and encourage them on their personal journey. When you sit down for a family meal, turn off the TV and put away your cell phone. Give your loved ones your full attention. Ask your loved ones if their are some special activities that you could do together this Advent or in the New Year, (i.e. visit shut-ins, teach your grandchildren how to make a traditional family recipe, invite a new member from church to visit Como Conservatory with you, or invite a neighbor to attend the Canon Brass Concert on December 12 or the Children’s Christmas Program on December 15.) No selfies, no tweets, no instagrams of what you did or ate together. Just good old fashioned conversation and listening to the other without judgement or one-upsmanship. Enjoy each other’s stories, pray for each other, and simply enjoy the gift of time with one another.

Stewardship Update—Return of Forms and the Next Step

Thank you to all who were a part of our stewardship gatherings and everyone who has returned the Commitment Card, Engagement Form, and Feedback Sheet. Each of these items is helpful as we prepare for another year of good ministry and life together as a people of God. The Budget Team will now take pledges and begin to craft a budget for 2020 that reflects these new commitments. Ministry leaders will get the results of the Engagement Form and be contacting people who expressed interest in areas where they lead. And the Feedback Sheets will be used by the Board and yet to be formed Long Range Planning Team to set direction and goals for the next five years.

A next step is 1:1 visiting to help us prepare for the future. The completed Feedback Sheets provided some general insights about hopes, joys and ideas regarding our life and ministry together as a church. One of the things the Board is going to do next is sit down with a cross section of our members to have some longer 1:1 conversations to help us prepare for the future. Your words, your stories, your insights, and your life here matter. These visits will begin in January. If you are interested and willing to sit down for one of these guided conversations that we think would take about 45 minutes, please give your name to Pastor Karsten or one of the current Board members. Feedback from these conversations will help the Longer Range Planning Team lay out future goals and directions for the congregation.

Stewardship training starts young at Our Redeemer!

Doreen & Mark Winter’s Grandsons
Project Home Sends Their “Thanks”!
Project Home was back again at Our Redeemer in November for a fifth year as we hosted five to six families facing homelessness. These families made a commitment to Project Home of Interfaith Action to help them find a permanent home. They would get dropped off every night at 5:30 p.m. where they were met by our blessed volunteers from Our Redeemer or other local congregations who stepped up to help welcome, care, feed, visit and play with them until they were picked up the next day by 8:00 a.m. to go to work, attend school, or receive counseling. The families often spoke of how grateful they were for a space like this to call “home” during a difficult time of transition. Volunteers thought this was a wonderful thing for our church to do. And the Project Home staff repeatedly thanked us for letting them come into this setting once again. To all of you who volunteered, thanks for opening “your doors” to the poor by allowing Our Redeemer to open “our doors” every day during the month of November to families facing homelessness. A special thanks to Katie Nelson who served as our church contact person with the Project Home staff, and put together a great event of making hand-tied blankets for the families! And a super thanks to all of you who helped in this much appreciated and fun gift-giving task, which took an entire “village” to accomplish in one evening!

Advent Giving Opportunity to Care for the World
This year the Missions Team has decided that during this great Advent season of focusing on taking the “low road” (being a servant, caring for the poor, etc.), we invite you to take one of the Hunger boxes or barns that will be hung on the Narthex Christmas Tree. During December, you can place coins or cash bills in it and, after full, bring it back to church (and perhaps take another empty one home to fill also). All the of the money raised with go to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal to address world hunger issues with immediate relief, and gain access to clean water, education, health care and sources of income.

The Annual Cookie Shop—Bakers Needed!
The Our Redeemer Cookie Shop will be on Saturday, December 7, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.! The cost per dozen is $7.00 per dozen or GO GREEN for Christmas and pay only $6.00 if you bring your own reusable containers. Get all your favorite holiday cookies and candies for the holidays, and at the same time support our ORLC Children, Youth, and Family ministry! They are raising money for camperships and the confirmation trip to Memphis in 2020. Bakers and candy makers are needed to stock our cookie sale. Please bring donations to the church by Noon on Friday, December 6. If you have any questions, you can contact Holly Forsberg or Carmen Snaza.

Christmas Brass Concert at ORLC
On Thursday, December 12, at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary, please come and enjoy a free brass concert by The Canon Choir of Brass who will be playing all your favorite Christmas tunes. Cookies will be served following the concert. The choir has been performing music in the Twin Cities and surrounding areas for over 43 years. They are comprised of professional and experienced trumpet, horn, trombone, euphonium, and tuba players who continue to play while maintaining a variety of careers including teachers, public defenders, and IT professionals. Their repertoire includes a wide variety of styles from the Renaissance to Contemporary era literature written specifically for brass, and arrangements of light classics and popular music. In addition to the varied music library, members arrange and compose for the group. Several members have been with the group since its inception. Hope you can come!

Loaves and Fishes to be Reshaped for 2020
In order to continue to provide free meals to the community every Wednesday (as we have done for the past three and a half years), we need to have other people help make this ministry happen. We have a couple interested in the lead kitchen roles but are looking for two or three more people to be kitchen help (preparing food, serving and kitchen clean up), and to help with food delivery (near State Fair). This help can be on a monthly, bi-monthly, or every week basis. Please talk to Pastor Karsten or Deacon Jennifer for more information.

Our Political Process Matters: Our vote matters in the elections ahead
Having a good foundation for what our elected officials should hold as values and directions to lead our state is critical. Come join us on Sunday, December 8, 9:45—10:30 a.m. for our next Sunday Adult Forum entitled “Political Engagement Matters.” Hear about the “Claiming our Voices Faith Agenda” being supported by a large number of faith leaders across the state as the grounding for leading well at this crucial time. Come hear about how our participation in the process is important to help shape the state we want to live in.
Narthex Christmas Tree
Over the years, members have been invited to bring one of their own ornaments from home to decorate the Narthex Christmas tree in a special way. It is one way we become family together. We will continue this again this year, so please add to our tree an ornament from your family.

Buy Gift Cards for EASY Holiday Shopping! “Bucks for Our Building”
Shopping can’t get any easier than this for that hard-to-buy person on your list! Cards will be sold on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month during December. Stop by the gift card table to purchase cards that we have on hand or special order others from a list of hundreds of retailers. Remember that the “Bucks for Our Building” program receives a percentage of the card value for each card that you buy. The more you buy, the more we earn!

Shutterfly Shoppers—8% of your purchases goes to ORLC
Another new way to help bring money to Our Redeemer—the church will receive 8 percent of all sales from anyone who places orders through our special Shutterfly storefront only by using our following designated link: http://orlcmin.shutterflystorefront.com/. Share it on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest asking your family, friends, and coworkers to shop through it as well!

New Church Directory in the Making—Volunteers Needed
We are starting the process to create an updated church directory. Lifetouch will be here Tuesday and Wednesday, January 21 and 22, to take photos. Signing up for appointments can be done online or on Sundays. Everyone who participates will receive one free 8x10 print and a church directory, in addition to 20 percent off any orders you place. There are many new features including a new, smaller-size directory, and making it easier for Our Redeemer to update the directory in future years—and for all of our members, it offers the convenience of providing access to our directory from a cellphone, tablet, or home computer. We are looking for two to three volunteers to take the lead in working with Lifetouch. Please let Sally or Pastor Karsten know if you would be interested.

Dorothy Day Serving and Lead Volunteer Needed!
Our Redeemer’s next serving opportunity for Dorothy Day will be Monday, December 23, at the new Richard M. Schultze Family Foundation St. Paul Opportunity Center which opened in October. The new center can serve up to 350 people in one sitting. We couldn’t do this ministry without the great people who volunteer time to prepare and serve the meal. Words can’t thank them enough! Also, thank you to everyone who applies for a Thrivent Grant or donates to the noisy offering to help fund this important program. New volunteers are welcome and no experience required. Also, Dennis Paulson is currently serving as our lead organizer, and he is stepping down at the end of this year—please let us know if you would like to serve in this role for 2020. Thank you! And a special thanks to Dennis for his many years of guidance!

Kids’ Cartooning Class at ORLC
From January 29 to February 26, Our Redeemer will be welcoming the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation to provide kids, ages 6-14, free class on cartooning on Wednesdays, 6:00-7:00 p.m. They will learn the basics of cartooning and creating their own characters! They will learn the following techniques used in cartooning: characteristics, features, exaggeration, action and personification. They will apply their new skills every class to create their own original cartoon characters. Registration is done through Saint Paul Parks & Recreation, and questions can be answered by contacting the Hayden Heights Recreation Center at 651-298-5716.

Young Adult Collaboration
The Young Adult Collaboration (YAC) is a group of 20s/30s who are looking to do life and faith in a new, fresh, and meaningful way. They meet at various locations to eat, talk, serve, and build community. Their next gathering is a brunch on Saturday, December 28, at 11 a.m. (location TBD). After the first of the year in 2020, they will be gathering at Our Redeemer on January 23, at 6:00 p.m. to cook dinner. All are welcome! You can find out more about their schedule on their Facebook: @youngadultcollaboration. If you have questions, you can contact Deacon Jennifer.

Second Harvest Heartland Volunteers—Join ORLCs Kingdom Assignment Ministry
Come join our FUN team at Second Harvest Heartland on Tuesday, December 10, 5:30—7:30 p.m.! We have spots to fill—bring your family and friends, but remember to sign them up at the Welcome desk, or contact Amy Krohn.

Our deepest Sympathy to the families of Mary Forsberg and Melrose Emilie Ida Diekman
A Story Illustrating the Wider Work of the Church

“Lutheran ‘changed my life,’” says Amare Mulaw. The Ethiopian farmer is not referring to the Christian denomination, at least not directly. He speaks about the benefits of a new crop variety introduced by The Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The new crop is part of a development project which supports small-scale farmers in Amhara province who are dealing with climate change. For farmers like Mulaw, wealth lies in the soil. They spend their lives hoping for rain and a good harvest.

In the past years, however, rain has not come often enough, sometimes not at all. LWF started working in Mulaw’s community in 2016, as a response to the El Niño-induced drought. The response had various components: natural resource conservation activities through cash-for-work helped to prevent erosion while providing financial aid to the farmers, whose harvest had failed. The most vulnerable were supported with direct cash payments as well as seed distribution including corn, lentils and teff, a local grain which is very popular and used to make injera-bread.

In 2019 when the project ended, LWF made sure the short-term emergency aid was transformed into a long-lasting development program to the communities who keep struggling with extreme droughts. Today, farmers are growing and benefitting from the seeds that were distributed in 2016.

In 2015, LWF had introduced new and improved corn and lentil varieties, which soon became very popular. The corn is popularly known as “Lutheran” and has become a staple in this region where people used to farm teff. It is also more popular than the corn variety used before, which is called “Raya.”

Amare Mulaw is a model farmer successfully growing ‘Lutheran’. “For the first time, I was able to earn almost ETB 9,000 (310 USD) from the sale of Lutheran grown on 0.12 and a half hectare of land,” he says. He has now tripled his income from just one crop.

Enthusiastically, he explains why he prefers the new grain. “To start with, it has a superior taste. Secondly, the corn stalk holds three large cobs whereas the Raya only holds one or two small ones maximum. Furthermore, due to the leafiness and thickness of the cob cover, it does not get attacked by birds and pests. I now get 6 ETB (20 cents) for one cob whereas before I used to get half the amount.”

According to Amare, the demand for Lutheran is very high, but he and the other farmers only have enough production to satisfy demand in Erffa and the nearby Gragn Amba village. His next plan—with the support of LWF—is the multiplication of the grain so that it reaches more farmers at little or no cost. In the long run, this would not only mean an economic benefit to the farmers. “Lutheran” is an improved variety of a local corn type, higher in protein and more drought resistant. Through seed multiplication, LWF helps farmers preserve that diversity and sustainable agricultural practices in a market increasingly under pressure from high yielding varieties and use of chemical fertilizers.

“My life has changed,” the farmer says. With the increased income, he now plans to buy a bajaj, Amharic for tuk-tuk, a ubiquitous and affordable mode of transportation in these parts. He has already made improvements to his house and is sending his children to school.

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Worship

An evening of six churches gathering to worship and sing praises and hear messages of hope and indulge in wonderful desserts!

Churches: Good Samaritan Lutheran * Grace Lutheran * Hope Lutheran * Our Redeemer Lutheran * Progressive Baptist * Saint Pascal Baylon Catholic,
## December 2019 - Worship Assistants and Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worship Assistants</th>
<th>December 1</th>
<th>December 8</th>
<th>December 15</th>
<th>December 22</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hosts</td>
<td>Dean Ersfeld</td>
<td>Dennis Peterson</td>
<td>Amy Krohn</td>
<td>Rita During &amp; Bruce Ring</td>
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<td>Hosts</td>
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<td>Gift Cards</td>
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<td>Hospitality/ Kitchen Help</td>
<td>Darlene Harwood, Sandy &amp; Larry Pruden</td>
<td>Jan &amp; Dennis Peterson</td>
<td>Michelle Rebholz &amp; Matt Kuhn</td>
<td>Jessica Morgan, Doreen &amp; Mark Winter</td>
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<td>Sharon &amp; Dick Peterson</td>
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<td>Lectors</td>
<td>8:45 a.m. Jim Burke</td>
<td>10:45 a.m. Cherie Kilbride</td>
<td>8:45 a.m. Carol Rodrigez</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. TBD</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. Scott Torvi</td>
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<td>Ushers</td>
<td>8:45 a.m. Rob Klemm, Dennis Paulson</td>
<td>10:45 a.m. Matt Kilbride, Carla Shipstad, Scott Torvi</td>
<td>8:45 a.m. Baryogar Johnson, Roger Ollila, Dennis Peterson</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. Bill Maynard, Jim Riemenschneider, Bruce Ring, Jessica Morgan, or Kari Keating</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. Mike Kahrau, Larry Pruden, Sandy Pruden, Mark Winter, or Doreen Winter</td>
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<td>Communion Servers</td>
<td>8:45 a.m. Judy Triplett</td>
<td>10:45 a.m. Amy Krohn</td>
<td>10:00 a.m. Cliff Pearson, Claire Sexton</td>
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### Finances through the month of October (updated):

- 2019 Beginning Balance: $4,268
- Member Giving: $206,608
- Supplemental Giving: $96,876
- Total: $307,752
- Expenses: $332,291
- Difference: ($24,539)

### Thank you for your support of Our Redeemer!

Contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account or processed once using your card. Our electronic giving program offers convenience for you and much needed donation consistency to our congregation. We appreciate your gifts!

Email lisa@orlcmn.org for further information.

### GIFT CARDS—Twice a MONTH!

A reminder to purchase gift cards on the first and third Sundays of December! We have several on hand OR you may special order others from a list of hundreds of retailers. Remember that the Bucks for Our Building program provides our church with a percentage of the gift card value. The more you buy, the more we earn!
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<th>Sun</th>
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<td>6:00 am Mensajes de Poder (SS)</td>
<td>9:30 am Project Home Pack Up</td>
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<td>9:30 am Bible Study (FR)</td>
<td>6:45 am Men’s Bible Study</td>
<td>6:00 pm Savior Alliance (FR)</td>
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<td>8:30 am Gift Card Sales</td>
<td>11:30 am Staff Lunch</td>
<td>5:30 pm Loaves &amp; Fishes</td>
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<td>6:00 pm Child-Youth-Family Team</td>
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<td>9:45 am Sunday School</td>
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<td>10:45 am Worship &amp; Praise (Com)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation Key:</td>
<td>Com = Communion</td>
<td>CR = Cassee’s Room</td>
<td>FH = Fellowship Hall</td>
<td>FR = Fireside Room</td>
<td>MDP= Mensajes de Poder</td>
<td>S= Sanctuary</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
1390 Larpenteur Avenue East,
St. Paul, MN 55109
Phone: 651-772-2445  Fax: 651-771-4548
Web: www.orlcmn.org
Email: office@orlcmn.org
Twitter: https://twitter.com/orlcmn
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/orlcmn

Sunday Services and School
- Traditional Worship 8:45 AM
- Sunday School 9:45 AM
- Worship & Praise 10:45 AM
- Fifth Sunday in a month ONE service 10:00 AM

Our Redeemer Staff

Reverend Karsten Nelson, Pastor
651-772-2445 x102
Email: karsten@orlcmn.org

Deacon Jennifer Schneider, Associate Minister
651-772-2445 x103
Email: jennifer@orlcmn.org

Curt Morales, Music Director
Email: curt@orlcmn.org

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