



Full Nest



Empty Nest



Growth

"The Good Newsletter" of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church



A Message from Pastor Karsten:

A Greeting and Thank You from our partner congregation in Tanzania

In this time when much of our focus is tending to the important self care that is necessary, it is also good to be reminded of the world that we are tied to across the oceans. I'm sharing a note we recently received in late March from our partner congregation in Tanzania. They write with concerns about us and some news about what they are doing to keep developing their ministry. Enjoy a good read and an update about Our Redeemer's help for them.

Hi Pastor Karsten and Our Redeemer,

It has been long since when we communicated each other. How are you doing? How is your ministry? We feel very sorry to hear about how the Covid - 19 is changing the daily routine of the people in SPAS and other places (Pole sana). I want to let you know that Kidewa is praying for you every day. We ask comfort to those who have lost their family friends and for those who are suffering to be healed. We are sure God is great He will intervene soon. Also we ask your prayers because we are on the same boat.

So far, Kidewa is doing good. We are now preparing the Easter worship services through different groups like choirs, children and women who will participate in leading the worship services. How is your preparations?

We would like to share our priority plans with constructions:

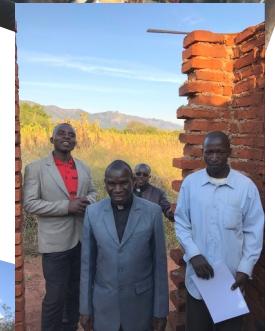
1. To finish up with ring beam and roofing the church building at Chengele.
2. To finish the walling and ring beam of the church at Nazareth preaching point.
3. To finish the walling and ring beam of the evangelist house at Ibumu.
4. To construct the foundation of the church building at Ivangwa preaching point.

We are doing the collection of stones for foundations, making the bricks, leveling, foundation and walling by ourselves, but we need support (if possible) for ring beam, roofing, plastering and finishing. Right now the priority is Chengele.

Thank you for your prayers and many gifts which we received from Our Redeemer and your family. Convey our greetings and comfort to all members and your family. We remember and welcome you. May God keep you safe and health.

*It's me
Pastor Felix Kikoti*

Following this letter, the ORLC Missions Team approved their use of \$4,226, which had been given over the past two years by all of you to complete the ring beam (metal rebar around the top of the walls to provide strength for the building and new roof), along with roofing materials. We will share more pictures soon. You can see from the 2017 photos shown here, the pile of bricks they had made to be used for the building. The other pictures are from their current very small church, the walls of the new building, and then Pastor Felix with church leaders in a doorway. Your gifts have been gratefully received and are being put to good work for benefit of these churches!





A Message from Deacon Jennifer Schneider: Cause and Effect

My daughters, Olivia and Hannah, are learning about “cause and effect” during their virtual school lessons this week. When you plant a seed and water it, then it will grow. If you get your homework done, then you will have free time. These are important lessons that they will carry with them for a lifetime.

This **cause** and **effect** has been a critical lesson during the current global pandemic.

Cause: go to heavily-used public places. **Effect:** spread germs and increase exposure to virus.

Cause: stay home. **Effect:** slow the spread of germs and save lives.

Cause: serve meals on Wednesday nights, call someone and offer to pray with them, write a note of encouragement to a Sunday School student. **Effect:** The receiving person’s burden is lightened, God’s grace is extended, and the giver sees Jesus in the eyes of another.

When it comes to Easter, I think **cause** and **effect** do double duty. Because we have sinned and have broken our relationship with God (cause), God sent Jesus to die on the cross to vanquish our sins for all time (effect). However, Easter extends beyond being an effect, beyond being the result and ultimate gift that we receive in Christ, being reunited with God after we have fallen away. Easter is also a cause.

In Easter, we become a new creation in Christ, we become Easter People. As Easter People, we are to live and celebrate Easter every day of the rest of our lives. Both individually and together as the church, we are activated to move from worship directly into the world as the body of Christ, living lives of gratitude, lives of service to others, speaking up on behalf of the marginalized, caring for God’s creation.

In the past few weeks of shelter-in-place, I have seen people caring for others by sewing masks and donating them to hospitals. I have heard of people calling to check in on the welfare of people living alone, hence lightening their burden. I have seen kids sharing their faith through art. I have experienced new life in Christ, which gives me hope to live through these difficult days of sheltering in place.

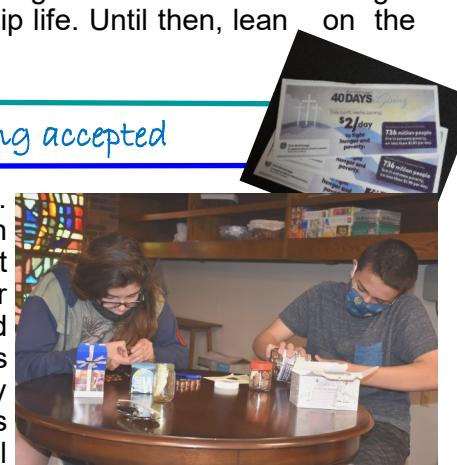
The effect of Easter is our changed lives, seeing Christ in the world, and being Christ’s hands and feet in the world. And by seeing Christ in those we meet and serve. Go therefore and proclaim the good news by embracing the new life you have been given. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

■ What is life going to be like when we are back in the church?

There are many people who are anxious to know when we will be back and many looking forward to seeing others face to face. The Board (which is meeting every second and fourth Tuesday during this challenging time) is currently anticipating that we will continue to worship online for the month of May. Now that the Governor has loosened some restrictions for safe gathering, we will explore when we feel it is appropriate for our community to safely gather – but with good social distancing and lots of masks and sanitizing work. At this point we envision having a single Sunday summer service as we have for the past many years. We will attempt to also livestream the services for those who do not feel comfortable or safe gathering yet in physical community. We will likely have greeters at the doors with masks to give. In the sanctuary, we will spread out to fill the area with space between us. We will have taken the hymnals out so the words will be on the screen. And for gathering in the fellowship, we will likely have more tables with fewer people at each one. We will smile and sing and pray and share like we did in the past – but with new twists and feel. It won’t be going back to the way things were so much as finding a new normal for at least the current time. Stay tuned for more news on our worship life. Until then, lean on the past, look forward to the future, and tend well to yourself in these present days.

■ Lent for ELCA World Hunger Appeal—Donations still being accepted

During Lent we invited members to collect money for ELCA World Hunger Appeal. The plan was to bring back cartons and envelopes and plastic containers with cash and coins. But that is not easy these days. We do have some people that have dropped them off on Wednesday nights (which you can still do) during our meals-to-go serving, but our suggestion is to write a check to Our Redeemer and make a memo “for ELCA World Hunger.” During this time of COVID-19 there is more hunger need that is growing more serve throughout the world, but especially in already impoverished areas. ELCA World Hunger works in dozens of countries and since they have long standing relationships, they are being particularly helpful right now. If you care to give a donation send it to the church or go directly to elca.org/world hunger and then let us know you made a gift directly.



Our "Counting" Staff
Natalie & Louis Barrett

Home Church – For Sunday, May 3, 2020

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

This is a simple format that allows individuals and families to take some dedicated time and enjoy the gift of worship in your home setting. These will be provided for each week we are not able to gather as a community in the sanctuary. This service works well if by yourself, or if you have others with you so multiple people can take on different parts (*blue* and *green* are options).

Gathering

Find a candle to light as it helps set aside this time as special—then start with this response:

Jesus Christ is the light of the world – now and always

We Gather in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

(you can make the sign of the cross on your forehead or over your body)

Opening Prayer

Lord, Your church today just like the early church had deep reasons to trust your leading, to work hard for its good life, and to celebrate the faith lives of those lived out this faithful expression in the world. Bless us for the continuing good work of your church and help count us as those who value the church, support the work of the church, and carry out the work of the church through our words and work. Amen.

Song—My Hope is Built on Nothing Else

You can sing, simply read together, or listen to a version of *My Hope is Built on Nothing Else*

VERSE 1

My hope is built on nothing less,
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

CHORUS

*On Christ the solid Rock I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand,
All other ground is sinking sand.*

VERSE 2

When darkness hides His lovely face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.
(Chorus)

VERSE 3

His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.

(Chorus)

VERSE 4

When He shall come with trumpet sound,
Oh may I then in Him be found;
Dressed in His righteousness alone,
Faultless to stand before the throne.
(Chorus)

Scripture – Acts 17:1-9

¹ After Paul and Silas had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three sabbath days argued with them from the scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This is the Messiah, Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you." ⁴ Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. ⁵ But the Jews became jealous, and with the help of some ruffians in the marketplaces they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar.

While they were searching for Paul and Silas to bring them out to the assembly, they attacked Jason's house. ⁶ When they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some believers before the city authorities, shouting, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also, ⁷ and Jason has entertained them as guests. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus." ⁸ The people and the city officials were disturbed when they heard this, ⁹ and after they had taken bail from Jason and the others, they let them go.

Home Church (continued)

Reflection questions of the scripture

The lesson says Paul had visited three Sabbath (Saturday) days – let you imagination wander to consider what else was taking place during those weeks of getting ‘planted’ in Thessalonica – the food, conversation with people beyond the temple, prayers.... The beginning of the church took time for relationships to build, for accepting the words of Paul, and for the Holy Spirit to move. Let’s be good today about accepting some of slow moving of the church.

For Paul to help people hear the news of Jesus and come to faith required “explaining” and “proving” and “persuading” others. That points to faith being something that is indeed intellectual. When and from who have you grown in the knowledge base of your faith? What else might help you grow in your wisdom and understanding? Is there anything new you are ready to try or take on as a discipline?

In verse 6, it speaks that “these people were turning the world upside down.” That means that their life was different than the wider world they were part of. How is your life different than much of the world around you? Where do you experience the work of the Holy Spirit on your life, to be different?

Prayer

invite each person to pray (one option is - “Thank you Jesus for....” and “Help me Jesus....”)

Things that can be prayed for: Those stricken with Covid-19, ORLC, Farmers and Meat Packers, Kidewa, Tanzania, all health care and other employees working during the pandemic, Governors.

Here is a set of prayers you may use:

Bless the church throughout the world; guide ministers and missionaries as they proclaim the good news of your great love for the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Bless the soil and water; make us better stewards of the finite resources you have entrusted to us. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Bless the nations; send a spirit of cooperation and compassion among all who make decisions that affect peoples’ lives. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Bless the brokenhearted; strengthen our communities and surround all people with supportive and loving groups of friends and neighbors. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Bless the sick and dying; work through hospital chaplains, doctors, nurses, and all staff to provide your peace, comfort, and hope. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Bless our church; work through our ministries in this difficult time and use us to be your hands and feet in the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Bless the saints in light; make us mindful of all who have passed the faith onto us and bring us all into your kingdom of life and light. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

May the Lord bless us (me) and keep us. May the Lord's face shine upon us and be gracious to us. May the Lord look upon us with favor and grant us peace. **Amen**

Have a blessed week!

Stewardship Updates—Text Giving, Quarterly Statements, Finances

These are different times, and we wanted to say thanks for the many folks from Our Redeemer who are able to continue to give financially through both online giving or by sending in checks. We also just received the ability to give by text! Simply enter our designated text number 844-871-2328 and, in the message line, enter the amount you want to give, and then send it. You will receive instructions to complete the gift with your credit card information, and a receipt will follow. Your financial support is important and vital for the life of Our Redeemer and the witness we are providing at this time. Here's an update to our giving options:

- 1) Mail your offering/envelope to the office*: ORLC, 1390 Larpenteur Ave E, St. Paul, MN 55109
- 2) Drop off your offering/envelope in the locked mailbox* located in our front U-shaped driveway.
- 3) Make an online gift from our website at www.orlcmn.org/donate which provides you the opportunity to make an automatic withdrawal from your bank or financial institution, or by using a credit card and set up either for a one-time or recurring contribution. (There is a minimal charge to use a credit card.)
- 4) Text 844-871-2328, entering the amount you wish to give in the message line, press send and you will receive instructions to continue making your contribution.

*The staff picks up the mail regularly.

We recently sent a letter to all of our congregation members with the first quarter giving statements that asked members to respond by mid-May to help us know what you anticipate your 2020 giving will be for the General and LIFT Funds. Knowing that many might have to change their giving plans and that this would affect our financial planning for the year, we want to have a better sense of expected income. So please help us by providing your intended giving for 2020 via mail, email to lisa@orlcmn.org, or calling the office at 651-772-2445.

In regard to Our Redeemer's current financial situation through April, our *Total Income* has been \$93,000 and our *Expenses* have been \$90,000, with the large income mainly due to a number of larger gifts received early in the year. Our March and April giving has been well below what was budgeted. March income was \$25,850 but was expected to be \$32,000. April income through the first four weeks was \$21,400 but we expected it to be \$39,000. Your generous giving in the weeks ahead will be important for Our Redeemer. On a good note we have had another 15 individuals begin giving electronically so we thank those of you who used our online option.

Digital Presence

Invite your friends! Thanks to social distancing, now it is easier than ever to invite your friends to worship with you. From the comfort of your own home, you can send a text or email to a relative or friend inviting them to join you for worship or Bible study at ORLC. Forward any of our links and newsletters that you wish to share. Perhaps you could include a brief intro like this:

Dear _____

I know that during this pandemic your anxiety is running high and you are feeling isolated from your loved ones. I am sharing a link with you for the worship service/Bible Study I attend online and hope you will join me. It is a great way to connect with others who care and find rest & renewal in the word of God and community of believers.

Reconciling in Christ: Building an Inclusive Church

Our newly-created **Inclusive Church** team will host another adult forum on **Sunday, May 10**, following our online service, during the **Our Redeemer Connection Time** at 11:00 a.m. on Zoom (see *Important Links* below). Our topic for this month will be continuing the conversation of welcome and what an inclusive church looks like. Come and learn about the journey of what it could mean to become a congregation that is publicly recognized as welcoming people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities by hearing from a few congregations that have gone through the process. We hope you join the Zoom meeting on Sunday, May 10, at 11:00 a.m.!



Gift Cards for Sale!!

Good News! We are selling gift cards if you preorder them by contacting the office. You can then pick them up with your payment on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month from 5—6:30 p.m.

Important Links for Worship & Zoom gatherings!

Sunday's @ 10 AM Worship Services on YouTube <http://bit.ly/ORLCMNYoutube>

Sunday's @ 11 AM Sunday School on Zoom : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87487610887>

Sunday's @ 11 AM Our Redeemer Connection Time on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/77524309472> or call into 1-312-626-6799 (*This is a long-distance number.*)

Wednesday's @ 9:30 AM Bible Study on Zoom - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/851377018?pwd=S2EwU1FoVU8xdIQ0c1hVRHGN3psUT09>

Staff Contact Information—We are here for YOU!

Pastor Karsten – karstenn@comcast.net, 651-271-5134,

Deacon Jennifer – jennifer@orlcmn.org, 651-494-7943

Sally, Office Administrator – office@orlcmn.org, Church Office 651-772-2445 (←Send photos to Sally)

Lisa, Finance Administrator – lisa@orlcmn.org, Church Office 651-772-2445



ORLC Serving at Dorothy Day

On Monday, April 27, Our Redeemer prepared and served 234 individuals at the St. Paul Opportunity Center and Dorothy Day Residence. A special thanks to the nine volunteers from Our Redeemer! We couldn't do this ministry without you, and well as those who contribute to the Noisy Collection. Also, we appreciate *Thrivent Financial's* involvement for making grants possible to its members, which tremendously helps offset our costs.



Loaves & Fishes—Wednesday Take-Out Meals and NOW offering FREE delivery!

During this difficult time when many of us are not venturing out of our homes, we have decided to offer FREE delivery of our *Loaves & Fishes* FREE meals on **Wednesdays** from **5:30 to 6:30 p.m.** We ask that you contact the office by email or phone by **noon on Sundays** to request delivery (and how many meals) for the upcoming Wednesdays. Or, as always, you may stop in to **pick up** take-out meals. Let us know if you can help us with delivering or if you would like to be placed on the list to receive delivered meals every Wednesday. Remember to tell your family, friends, neighbors—**ALL** are WELCOME! (If you come in to pick up your take-out meals, we ask that you respect the recommended six-feet social distancing from others so that we can stay healthy and safe!)

Rummage Sale Postponed

Unfortunately, our annual mid-May rummage fundraising sale is being postponed, and we are now looking at a late summer date, but that too might need to change. If you have done some cleaning of your house and have items you would like to donate, we ask that you hold on to them until we have firmer plans for this sale that provides funding for Our Redeemer and good deals to the neighborhood.



Jim McDonough's Handywork—Flag Cases
(donating to Lisa D for a good cause)



Our New Welcome Receptionist - Vanessa Barrett



Madeline 'Home Working' in Comfort
(Nelson's adopted daughter)

Address Service Requested

DO NOT DELAY
DATED MATERIAL

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
1390 East Larpenteur Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55109

