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Church of the Redeemer UCC

A Monthly Update on the Life of our Church



Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths (streams) in the wilderness. Isaiah 43:19 (CEB)

I'm sitting down to write this after our first Sunday together. I hope it was as exciting for you as it was for me. It was also terrifying for me. New things are like that – exciting and terrifying at the same time.

Imagine getting onto an airplane for a trip, and all the pre-flight procedures were missing. No flight attendant telling you how your seatbelt works, that your seat cushion is a floatation device, the location of the exits... hearing about skipping all that boring information might not be scary. You might be thinking, "oh, great, nothing to interrupt the book I'm reading or the podcast I'm listening to." But what about when you're *actually* sitting there? It's a bit comforting to know that there is a set procedure to be followed before hurtling down the runway at 180 mph.

Every church has its' own policies, procedures, standard liturgy, and unspoken cultural norms. I've

pastored in 3 churches so far, and even though they all came from the German Reformed tradition, each approached things differently. I hope to learn lots from you, about what it is that you value in church life, what you'd like to see changed, and what you are willing to experiment with doing in new ways.

Notice that in Isaiah 43:19, the new thing involves paths or streams, plural. I remember walking in the woods with my Dad, looking for wild berries. We'd sometimes push away from the fire breaks and head into the undergrowth. Making a new path wasn't easy. Sometimes we'd abandon the effort, and head back the way we came. Other times we'd loop back to the fire break. No matter where our paths took us, we always ended up with a bowl of berries (and many more in our bellies). Those treks into the undergrowth didn't always pay off, but they weren't failures. They were adventures.

One of the lessons I've learned from IMPROV is that to fail is to make a First Attempt In Learning. Failure is not something to be afraid of; it's something to learn from. I'm sure that I will make mistakes as I learn about Church of the Redeemer. If we approach those mistakes as learning experiences, we'll have a more fulfilling trip together. It's all part of having each other's backs in the process.

I pray that we fail together, pick each other up, learn from the experience, and laugh with each other as we try again.

Remember, I've got your back!



Blessings,
Pastor Christina





Leadership Team Update..

By Kira Merkert, Chair

The Leadership Team met on June 10, 2021, for its regular monthly meeting. After our opening activities, we discussed the possibility that the PA Governor may lift the mask mandate on June 20, and how that would affect our covid procedures at the church, both for the congregation, for Life Gospel's congregation, and for the support groups. If the mask mandate is lifted, we will share the church's new guidelines at that time. Thank you to the entire Redeemer community for your graciousness and patience as we continue to navigate the pandemic.

A discussion about building security that began a couple of years ago was continued. Dick Conrad is researching the cost and what is involved in re-enforcing the sanctuary doors and adding safety locks that could be activated from the inside, which would also require keying the other exterior sanctuary doors. We will provide more information about the feasibility of this project as it becomes available.

Dave Stong and Dan Hottenstein will be looking for township records that show deed information so that we can be clear about the property division between the church and the parsonage. The parsonage was sold back in 2003, and as times have changed, we are not sure what the original arrangement was between the church and the parsonage owner. There has also been discussion about the hotel down the street possibly expanding the alley as a hotel thoroughfare, so we want to make sure we know exactly what the property divisions are to head off any future issues.

The new Pastoral Relations Committee had its first meeting to discuss the purpose and structure of the committee. The committee includes Audrey Baker, Kira Merkert, Dave Stong (chair), and Sharon Thomas. Dave will provide more information about the committee in the Contact newsletter and also during worship on June 20.

Thank you to Pastor Tom as he joined us for his final Leadership Team meeting with us. We are grateful for his time and talents over the past few years. The UCC has clear boundaries which state that when a pastor leaves a congregation, s/he is not to have contact with church congregants for a minimum of 2-3 years. This is to allow the new pastor to feel welcomed and have ministerial authority over the happenings of the church. We will all surely miss Pastor Tom and wish him well on his future path.

We discussed Jorja Barton's office report. The piano and organ were both tuned, and the piano pedal squeak was fixed, thanks to a donation from a congregation member. The pond fountain out front was also fixed, with a donation from a congregation member. Please note, if any of you noticed that water no longer pools in the bottom of the pond, that is how it is supposed to work. The fountain is a water feature, not a pond.

Redeemer will start researching the feasibility and necessity of filing paperwork to become a 501C3 non-profit organization. More details will be provided as we have them. Leadership Team will be moving paper products for our receptions from the kitchen downstairs to cabinets in the end classroom upstairs. Since we mainly gather upstairs, this will be more convenient and will also allow more room in the kitchen for Life Gospel's and the support groups' supplies. We will also tidy up the sanctuary in preparation to re-welcome Life Gospel back to the sanctuary. Life Gospel Chinese Christian Church will begin meeting in-person on June 20, 2021. They are planning to also offer their services virtually for their congregants who do not meet in-person. They are working on preparing the technical equipment to provide both live and virtual services.

Our next Leadership Team meeting will be held on Thursday, July 8, 2021, at 7pm. As always, please reach out to the Leadership Team if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
Kira Merkert, Chair



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Because we believe in the power of God and the presence of the Holy Spirit, we, the members of Church of the Redeemer United Church of Christ, are striving to spread the Good News through worship, education and caring so that all people may live rich and full lives and experience the love of Jesus Christ.

Adopted at the Congregational Meeting on December 7, 1986




July

2021



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 HERSHEY, PA 17033
 717-533-7300
www.redeemerchurchucc.org
info@redeemerchurchucc.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 12pm Nooner AA 12 pm Focused Prayer	2 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	3 7am Saturday Sunrise AA
4 9:15 am Worship Communion 11:15 am LGCCC 3pm KISS AA 	5 12pm Nooner AA 7:30pm OA	6 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	7 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	8 12pm Nooner AA 12 pm Focused Prayer 7pm Leadership Team Meeting	9 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	10 7am Saturday Sunrise AA
11 9:15 am Worship 11:15 am LGCCC 3pm KISS AA	12 12pm Nooner AA 7:30pm OA	13 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	14 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	15 12pm Nooner AA 12 pm Focused Prayer	16 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	17 7am Saturday Sunrise AA
18 9:15 am Worship 11:15 am LGCCC 3pm KISS AA	19 12pm Nooner AA 7:30pm OA	20 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	21 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	22 12pm Nooner AA 12 pm Focused Prayer	23 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	24 7am Saturday Sunrise AA
25 9:15 am Worship 11:15 am LGCCC 3pm KISS AA	26 12pm Nooner AA 7:30pm OA	27 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	28 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	29 12pm Nooner AA 12 pm Focused Prayer	30 12pm Nooner AA 6:30pm KISS AA	31 7am Saturday Sunrise AA



Happy Independence Day!





PENN CENTRAL CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



Members and friends of Penn Central Conference -

“For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall make a name for the Lord, an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.” Isaiah 55:12-13

“Are we there yet?” our children would ask as we travelled to our vacation destination. “Soon, very soon. Take a nap, do some reading.” Silence for no more than 12 minutes, and then again, “Are we there yet?” After a half dozen of these complaints, my patience wore thin, and I ratcheted up a notch: “Stop asking. We’ll get there when we get there!” Which led to the kids to ratchet it up: “Ah, we’re so bored!”

I must admit after this long year of suffering and uncertainty, I am asking God (and anyone else who will listen): “Are we there yet?” Answers of “soon” or “almost there” don’t cut it with me anymore than those responses cut it with my kids. Yes many, many people are vaccinated, and the Governor is predicting 70% by the end of June. Yes, many churches in Penn Central are opening or are planning openings soon. And yet, we’re not there yet, are we? I know I constantly look over my shoulder at the possibility of a new variant breaking through my vaccination. And many experts say that the new normal will be different from what we’ve known. But we don’t know yet what it will look like.

The Hebrew people to whom Isaiah was prophesying were asking similar questions. They had been in exile, stripped of their land, suffering great financial and person loss; and were asking “are we there yet?” Are we going back to our homeland, even though it will be occupied by the Babylonians? Unlike my children who complained that the long trip caused them tribulation, these Hebrews knew true tribulation.

We may feel like we have gone through great tribulation this past year. Many of us have suffered unspeakable trials of loss: loss of loved ones, loss of health, loss of job security. Some of us have been terribly inconvenienced and long for a return to “normal”, or a semblance thereof.

Isaiah told the Hebrew people to take heart, to be assured that they will know joy again: “Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up myrtle.” In spite of unspeakable grieving, God will make good, Isaiah is telling them. For me these words of Isaiah speak to a God who knows the peoples’ pain and brings healing out of that pain; brings hope out of understandable despair.

And Isaiah also tells the people: “You shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace” Will we experience that? “The mountains and the hills before you shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.” Can we imagine that for ourselves? Can we grasp these words of the prophet speaking the word of God to us?

“Are we there yet?” Maybe we won’t know exactly where “there” is. But I think God is saying to us that God has been with us every step of the journey this past year. And I am reminded of another prophesy from Isaiah:

“Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. God does not faint or grow weary; God’s understanding is unsearchable. God gives power to the faint and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” Isaiah 40:28-31

“Are we there yet?” Maybe not quite yet and we don’t know quite when. But maybe until then we can embrace and bind our wounds, heal and soothe those who have known tribulation, and enter—together--onto the journey toward joy, peace, strength, and hope.

Praying for you to know blessing upon blessing, Marisa

Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola
Associate Conference Minister
Penn Central Conference



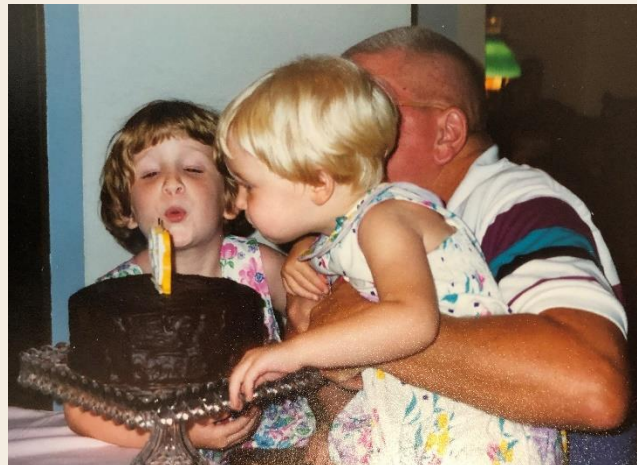


Baker's Chocolate Cake

This month's scrumptious recipe was submitted by Redeemer Audrey Baker. Audrey tells us *"This cake has become a tradition in our family for birthdays and special occasions. When asked what cake you want, it is always the Baker's Chocolate Cake!"* Pictured are Audrey's granddaughters Laura and Cara, with Grandpa Bill Baker. *"We start them young!",* she said.

Ingredients

- 3 squares of unsweetened chocolate (3 oz)
- 2 ¼ cups sifted flour
- 2 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup soft butter
- 2 ½ cups brown sugar packed
- 3 eggs
- 2 tsp vanilla
- ½ buttermilk
- 1 cup boiling water



Instructions:

1. Melt chocolate over hot water (or microwave) and let cool
2. Sift flour, soda and salt
3. Combine butter, brown sugar, eggs and vanilla at high speed, about 5 minutes
4. At low speed, add in melted chocolate
5. Add flour mixture alternately with buttermilk and beat 1 minute. Beat in boiling water until smooth.
6. Pour batter into greased and floured pans (2- 8" or 9" round or 1- 9" x 13")
7. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes until toothpick comes out clean!

Icing for Baker's Chocolate Cake (makes enough for two 9" round layers)

- 4 TB butter
- 4 oz. unsweetened chocolate
- 1/3 cup of milk
- 3 cups sifted confectionery sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/8 tsp salt

Instructions:

1. Melt butter and chocolate in double boiler or microwave, stirring until blended.
2. Stir milk into sugar and beat until smooth.
3. Stir in vanilla, salt and chocolate mixture and beat until smooth, about 5 minutes.
4. Ice the cake and enjoy!





**RUN
YOUR
RACE**

Love INC 5K Run / Walk

Saturday, July 3, 2021 • 8 AM

Cocoa Beanery • 1215 Research Blvd • Hummelstown, PA 17036

Love INC of Greater Hershey would like to invite participants of all ages to join us for our annual Run Your Race.

On **Saturday, July 3**, people from all over South Central Pennsylvania will come together to run, walk, and have fun while supporting families in need.

This *professionally timed event* winds along a scenic trail consisting of hills and flats, starting and ending at the [Cocoa Beanery](#). On the day of the race, **check-in and packet pick-up begin at 7 AM**. The **Competitive 5K Race starts 8 AM, followed by our 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk at 8:45 AM**.

Cash prizes of \$100 will be given to the male and female winners of the Competitive 5K Race. Awards will also be given to the top three male and female runners in the following age groups: 14 and under, 15-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and 70+. Children under the age of 10 will receive a gift bag and medal.

Entrants may **register online** at LoveINCGreaterHershey.org/RunYourRace. Prior to June 15, the race and fun run/walk entry fees are \$30 for adults and \$20 for children ages 18 and under. *All registrations before June 15 are guaranteed a race T-shirt.*

For additional information, please contact the Love INC Office by calling (717) 835-0101 or by emailing Office@LoveINCGreaterHershey.org.

All proceeds from this race will benefit Love INC and its community outreach programs.

Love INC is grateful to **Diamond Sponsor Gabrinda Franklin Foundation, Platinum Sponsor The Good Family, and Gold Sponsor UPMC** for their generosity and help making this race a success.



Love INC


Love In the Name of Christ

[SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER](#)

[REGISTER TO RACE](#)

Mobilizing the church to transform lives

*Love INC of Greater Hershey is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.
Contributions to which are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.*



Redeemer Gives Pastor Tom a Warm Send Off

On Sunday, June 13, Redeemers gave Pastor Tom Caruso a warm send off as he ended his term as interim pastor. The Farewell Service ending an authorized ministry was poignant and very meaningful for those who attended and certainly for Pastor Tom. Vows of Release were shared, confirming Pastor Tom's release both his pastoral duties and members' outreach to him as dictated by the UCC Conference Boundaries and Best Practices Policy.

A particularly moving segment of the service was the Healing Oil of Forgiveness and Strength. Members and guests approached Pastor Tom and were anointed with oil as he shared a special individual message with each person.

What's next for Pastor Tom?! Well, he was happy to share that his feet have already hit the ground! He's registered for several courses and has been invited to guest preach at three churches. He hopes to find a new interim position at some point.

Redeemers thanked Pastor Tom for his time, his talents and his guidance during his time with us. A reception was held following the service where Pastor Tom was presented with a beautiful handmade stole and served a giant donut cake. After all, his favorite dessert is donuts!

Best Wishes, Pastor Tom, as you embark on the next phase of your ministry. God Bless!

A special thanks goes to George Kapp for the photos!



*Goodbye
Good Luck
and Thank you!*



Special Thank You's

PASTOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE (PRC)

Submitted by Dave Stong, Chair

Dear Jorja,

The **Contact** has given me so much pleasure lately! I love Pastor Tom's thoughts and really agree with them.

Redeemer is going forward and I'm so pleased. You have been a real blessing and I thank you!

Jane Gallozzi

June 2021

Words cannot describe the joy, gratitude and humility I felt during my final worship at Redeemer on June 13. Many thanks for the beautiful stole, reception, flowers, gifts, hugs and prayers. I am so touched and blessed.

I continue to lift Redeemer, Pastor Christina and everyone there in prayer!

Blessings,
Pastor Tom

One of the recommendations that came out of the Profile and Search process was the idea of a Pastor Relations Committee here at Redeemer once we had a settled pastor in place. With help and resources from the Conference and Rev. Dr. Laviola, I'm happy to report that we had our first meeting on June 3rd and established some guidelines and structure for the committee. The committee is currently made up of 4 members (Audrey Baker, Sharon Thomas, Kira Merkert, and Dave Stong (chairman)).

Purpose

The purpose of a PRC is to support the healthy relationship between a pastor and his/her congregation. It does this in these primary ways:

1. Serves as an advisory group to the pastor, sharing ideas, dreams, expectations, and concerns of the congregation with the pastor.
2. Serves as a support group for the pastor's leadership, interpreting roles, functions, boundaries, opportunities, and needs of the pastor to the congregation.
3. Serves as a conduit and/or intermediary when the pastor and congregant(s) cannot work out differences. PRC's are places to help the pastor and the congregation maintain appropriate expectations for the scope of the pastor's work, maintain appropriate boundaries, and receive support for continued growth in ministry.

In simple terms:

Act as a liaison between the pastor and the congregation

Ensure direct communication, avoiding anonymous "triangulation" conversations

Need to be honest with pastor about any concerns that arise

What we're envisioning some of the additional roles of the PRC to be:

1. Support pastor in outreach/visitation to members (not exclusively PRC, can involve others on LT and congregation)
2. Provide feedback to pastor and LT to be used for pastor performance reviews, in conjunction with staff committee and the LT

Meeting Structure

We're planning on meeting once a quarter, with additional meetings as needed. We'll get together with Pastor Christina to schedule our first after she's had a chance to settle in.

May & June Worship Attendance

		Attend	Visitor	Total
May	05/02/21	18		18
	05/09/21	19		19
	average	05/16/21	21	21
	18.4	05/23/21	16	16
		05/30/21	18	10

June	06/06/21	21		21
	06/13/21	20		20
	average	06/20/21	20	20
	21	06/27/21	23	23



This month's issue of **CONTACT** is sponsored by: **Jane Gallozzi** in honor of her daughter and son-in-law, **Karin and Craig Rank.**

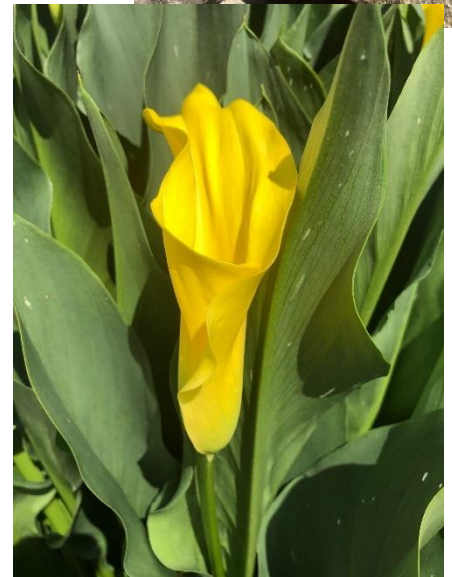


Redeemer's Refresh Brightens the Day!

Redeemer Worker Bees, George and Nancy Kapp and Dan Hottenstein, have been very busy giving our property a facelift! Dan and George tackled the chipped and rusted railings in the front of the church, along with giving a fresh coat of paint to the front sign. They look beautiful! Be sure to check them out.

George and Nancy have also been periodically planting new annuals to add a little color in the beds just outside the rear entrance. They are master weeders too! Thanks Nancy, George and Dan for all of your hard work to keep the property looking beautiful!

The painted rocks are compliments of *Set In Stones Hidden Rocks*. A new batch seems to just show up during each summer. Feel free to take one to share!



REVISED COVID-19 Guidelines for In-Church Services Due to recent changes in mask policy from both the CDC and PA DOH, we are no longer requiring masks, but we still encourage those who are not vaccinated to continue to wear a mask for their own safety, at the same time respecting each individual's decision. Everyone is still welcome to wear a mask, if they feel safer doing so.



Community Resource Corner

PP&L Program Offers FREE Products!

Great news! You might be eligible for FREE products from PPL Electric Utilities!

Your home or apartment is filled with opportunities to save money and reduce energy. The **WRAP** program, a PPL Energy Efficiency Program, helps qualified residential customers save money on electric usage. The program offers free installation of free home energy upgrades, including:

- LED light bulbs
- Advanced power strips
- Night light replacements
- Water-saving shower heads*
- Faucet aerators*
- Helpful energy education

The program is beneficial whether you rent or own a home, and regardless of the type of heat you use. If you live in a multifamily building or complex where your landlord pays the electricity, tell him or her to call for more information so that we can service the whole property.

Start saving today! Visit www.pplelectric.com/WRAP or call **1-888-232-6302** to schedule your personal appointment for a no-cost energy assessment.

(*Some items are available only for homes with electrically heated water. Services are subject to the customer meeting eligibility requirements.)

**In The Next Issue
coming soon >>>**

- Note from Pastor Christina
- Special Celebrations
- Leadership Team Update
- Hummelstown Arts Fest is coming!



July Celebrations

Happy Birthday!

7/3 Virginia Fleck

7/3 Suzanne Cook

7/8 Tim Conrad

7/13 Annette Mastrangelo

7/16 Jane Gallozzi

7/17 Kemmy Himmelberger

7/20 Shirley Conrad

7/21 Richard Conrad, Jr.

7/22 Gary Mastrangelo

7/28 Nancy Kapp

7/28 Susana McLin

Happy Anniversary!

7/30 Dwight and Lorna Davis

Congratulations Everyone!



CHURCH OF THE
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HERSHEY PA



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Be sure to visit us on Facebook page and our website at
www.redeemerchurchucc.org!