

Special Congregational meeting  
Sunday, April 6 at 10:00 am

# OUR REDEEMER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH THE VOICE

April 2025



## Holy Week at Our Redeemer's

**Palm Sunday, April 13**  
Worship at 8:30AM and 11:00AM  
Featuring a String Quartet

**Maundy Thursday, April 17**  
Worship at 6:30PM  
First Communion and Foot Washing

**Good Friday, April 18**  
Worship at Noon and 6:30PM  
Passion Story and Solo Cello

**Easter Sunday, April 20**  
Worship at 8:30AM and 11:00AM  
Featuring Brass Quintet

Join us in celebration of the resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ!

### *There's lots in the works ... and I'm not even talking about Holy Week!*

- By now, all members will have gotten the letter announcing that the Call Committee has put forward a great candidate for our open position and introducing Pastor Adam. There are copies of that letter and a short bio of Pastor Adam on the desk in the entryway. Please take advantage of the several times to meet him offered on Thursday, April 3, and make sure you are present on **Sunday, April 6, at 10:00 am** for a **special congregational meeting** to vote to call a much-needed second pastor.
- Just as I was arriving as the interim pastor, the congregation was getting the results of a survey they'd completed, administered by HolyCow! Consulting. It was very informative, revealing things that even those quite familiar with Our Redeemer's hadn't noticed about us as an organization. In the ensuing years, we've worked to address the issues it raised, things like better communication about how decisions are made, being more transparent about finances, and improving the worship experience, particularly the music.  
  
**We are going to embark on another HolyCow! Survey in May**, the results of which will be used by the Long-Range Planning Committee as they put together a new strategic plan for Our Redeemer's. We are in a time of significant growth as a congregation and need guidance on how to shape our ministry in the years ahead, so when you get that email in early May with the survey attached, please share your insight and hopes with us. And I'm gonna be honest here: I am going to badger folks into completing this. The more input we get, the better the output. Don't make me chase you down! Look for more information on this elsewhere in *The Voice*.
- **We need some help getting the word out about our preschool.** Information patterns have so changed that there is no one good way to reach parents of preschoolers these days. We make good use of our website, Facebook, radio ads, signs on our property, and the annual summer camp supplement from the IR to spread the word, but *word of mouth from a reliable source* is one of the best ways to advertise. That's where you come in. Spread the word that we have six summer camps in June

focusing on fun topics like creepy crawlies, pirates and mermaids, and our "pawesome" four-legged friends. The fall schedule has both half-day and full-day options for ages 4 and 5, and a variety of classes to introduce 3-year-olds to a learning environment. And all of it in a Christ-centered environment, where the story of the God who loves them is reinforced for children. There are preschool brochures in the entryway with more details. And remember to support them during the basket auction being held April 6-20 in the Great Room.

#### • **On the horizon ...**

##### **Holy Week**

Lots of special music, palms waving, drama, first communion, foot washing, storytelling, hard truths, good news ... this week has it all. Join us April 13-20 for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the joy of Easter Day.

##### **Confirmation Sunday**

We celebrate those completing confirmation and moving on to the high school youth group on Sunday, May 4, at the 11:00 service.

##### **Graduation Sunday**

We celebrate those completing their high school career and moving on to new adventures on Sunday, May 18, at the 11:00 service.

##### **Summer worship**

It's back to one blended service at 9:30 beginning Sunday, May 25. Rob and Carolee Stuberger will be with us this day, renewing old friendships and sharing about their work in Tanzania.

##### **Vacation Bible School**

Join us June 23-26 for *True North: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World*. Sign up to help for just a day or all four.

And finally, a word of thanks. My birthday fell on a Sunday this year, and the outpouring of love from you all made it one of my best birthdays ever. Thank you for the way you care for me and for one another. Being in ministry with you is such joy. *Pastor Trina*



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OUR REDEEMER'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
3580 North Benton  
Helena, MT 59602  
406-442-7842

**EMBRACED BY GOD'S LOVE WE REACH OUT TO SERVE BECAUSE OUR REDEEMER LIVES**

## Did You Know?

You are probably aware that Our Redeemer's has raised enough money to purchase all the milk needed to supply the Helena Food Share's "Kid Packs" program for the entire school district for the past several years. You may also know that each of the past several years, the church has secured grants in the many thousands of dollars to supplement the contributions of congregational members to accomplish that feat. But did you ever wonder who wrote those grant applications that raised that money? That would be Karen Nelson, who joined Our Redeemer's in the early 2000s with her husband, Brent.

Karen and Brent moved to Helena from Nebraska in 1999, when they both obtained jobs with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They met in Lincoln, NE, in 1990, where Karen was in graduate school and Brent worked for Fish and Wildlife. After graduation, Karen also got a job with F & W, and they were married sometime later. Before meeting Brent, however, after graduation from Centre College in Kentucky with a degree in biology, Karen had traveled, lived, and worked around the world, including the United Kingdom, Greece, and Australia, for several years. She credits these experiences with her sense of adventure and her skills in writing job applications and grants to fund her travels.

After moving to Helena, Brent and Karen attended New Life Lutheran before discovering Our Redeemer's. They loved the sense of community at Our Redeemer's. Karen immediately connected with the Gardening Team, which later became the Hunger Team, and she has been active ever since. In addition to the Milk campaign grants, she wrote a grant to fund a drip irrigation system for the Community Garden. She also works with the Carroll College agronomy department, which grows seedlings for the garden, and she recruits students from that department to work in the garden, as well.

In 2019, Brent and Karen took advantage of an early retirement program and purchased property in the Spokane Hills area near Canyon Ferry Road. They have a very large garden, which, along with the game Brent hunts, provides much of their food needs. Karen is a Master Gardener and volunteers with the local Master Gardener program, and she is a member of the Montana Native Plant Society. During the winters, she volunteers with the Great Divide Ski Patrol. As you can probably tell from the photo, Karen and Brent LOVE dogs and have raised puppies for the Canine Companions program.

Karen is a great asset to our community and the Helena community at large; we are fortunate to count her and Brent as part of our fellowship.



## Community Garden

Ah, Spring, when the ground turns to mud and gardeners turn impatient. If you want some soil to cultivate, **rent a plot in the Our Redeemer's Community Garden!** Plots rent for \$25 (scholarships available) and come in various sizes. Maybe garden with a friend who can weed while you are on vacation. It's not just for Our Redeemer's members, so tell your neighbors! Tools are provided, mentoring is available, and watering is handled with a garden-wide irrigation system—why not try it? Want more details? Contact Elaine at [elaineulge@yahoo.com](mailto:elaineulge@yahoo.com). Ready to commit? Garden agreements are available from either Elaine or Lori, in the church office.



The Voice is published monthly as an update on the ministry and mission of

## Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church

3580 N Benton Ave  
Helena, MT 59602  
406.442.7842

[www.ourredeemerlives.org](http://www.ourredeemerlives.org)

### Ministry Team

Ministers: **All the People of God**

**Pastor Trina Johnsten, Lead Pastor**

[Trina@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Trina@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Lori Walter, Office Manager**

[LoriW@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:LoriW@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Sarah Magee, Director of Finance**

[Sarah@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Sarah@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Jason Callon, Director of Worship and Music**

[Jason@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Jason@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Steph Richardson, Director of Youth Ministry**

[Steph@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Steph@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Liz Swenson, Director of Children and Family Ministry**

[Liz@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Liz@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Linda Keim, Organist**

**David McHaley, Custodian**

**Carol Will, Deacon**

**Lori Bigwood-Pecarina, Lay Ministry Associate**

**Jan Martin, Lay Ministry Associate**

**Jeff Martin, Lay Ministry Associate**

**Kevin Mathews, Lay Ministry Associate**

**Lisa Williams-Mathews, Lay Ministry Associate**

**Brenda Stoltz, Preschool Director**

[Brenda@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Brenda@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Wendy Vukonich, Preschool Teacher**

[Wendy@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Wendy@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Marie Grissom, Preschool Teacher**

[Marie@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Marie@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

**Kristen Sapp, Preschool Teacher**

[Kristen@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:Kristen@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

A congregation of the  
Montana Synod of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America

**Voice articles due on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month**

Tuesday, April 15 at 5:00pm

[LoriW@OurRedeemerLives.Org](mailto:LoriW@OurRedeemerLives.Org)

## Our Redeemer's Church Council

If you have questions or concerns and would like to visit with a council member, please feel free to contact any of us at the following email or phone:

**Attila Fohnagy, President**

[president@ourredeemerlives.org](mailto:president@ourredeemerlives.org)

208-640-3198

Liaison: Facilities and Administration

**Charlie Gorman, First Vice President**

[cegorman3@gmail.com](mailto:cegorman3@gmail.com)

406-202-9509

Liaison: Worship

**Jennifer Colegrove, Second Vice President**

[colegrove@bresnan.net](mailto:colegrove@bresnan.net)

406-465-3453

Liaison: Congregational Care and Fellowship

**Ingrid Childress, Past President**

[ichildress@bresnan.net](mailto:ichildress@bresnan.net)

406-431-3344

Liaison: Facilities and Administration

**Tracey Tintinger, Treasurer**

[tvting@bresnan.net](mailto:tvting@bresnan.net)

406-459-8478

Liaison: Finance

**Linda Nelson, Secretary**

[ralinelson@yahoo.com](mailto:ralinelson@yahoo.com)

406-422-3751

Liaison: Outreach

**Edward Johnson, Member at Large**

[edwardmartinjohnson62@gmail.com](mailto:edwardmartinjohnson62@gmail.com)

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Liaison: Worship

**Sarah Sampson, Member at Large**

[sarahmarieirvin@hotmail.com](mailto:sarahmarieirvin@hotmail.com)

406-460-0133

Liaison: Faith Formation

**Mary Kay Linke, Member at Large**

[marykaylinke@gmail.com](mailto:marykaylinke@gmail.com)

406-465-1099

Liaison: Outreach

**Charlotte Neill, Member at Large**

[cneill001@luthersem.edu](mailto:cneill001@luthersem.edu)

651-587-8083

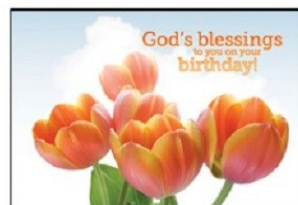
Liaison: Faith Formation

**Jack Palmer, Member at Large**

[johnpalmerpro@gmail.com](mailto:johnpalmerpro@gmail.com)

406-274-8566

Liaison: Congregational Care and Fellowship



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

(Remember our friends in Christ with a Birthday prayer!)

|    |  |    |  |    |  |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|
| 2  | Dan Adams<br>Linda Nelson<br>Kate Passage<br>Kathy Schenck             | 15 | Elizabeth Cook<br>Barb Penner                          | 25 | Joan Haubein<br>Kristi Antosh<br>Scott Robertson                 |
| 4  | Averly Dike  | 18 | Alan Forgey<br>Annelise Marble<br>Cammie Wilson        | 26 | Jeanne McCoskery<br>Oliver Welch                                 |
| 7  | Helen Bunkowske<br>Ben Olmstead<br>Elaine Ulgenes                      | 19 | Rachel Lauf  | 27 | Sophia Hill<br>Kevin Mathews                                     |
| 9  | Jeannie Ryan   | 20 | Karen Caplis<br>Octavia Welch                          | 28 | Mary Kay Linke<br>Annette Wakefield                              |
| 11 | Tess Jensen  | 21 | Rachel Dike  | 29 | Lynda Hanson<br>Carl Richards<br>Mark Thatcher<br>Dennis Trotter |
| 12 | Amy Carlson<br>Evan Coble<br>Gene Ford<br>Thomas Johnson<br>Mary Smith | 22 | Chris Brott<br>Kim Quinn<br>Bill Straley               |    |  |
| 14 | McKenna Moore  | 23 | Char Baglien<br>Ella Krumm<br>Ray Read<br>Johnny Santy |    |  |
|    |  | 24 | Abner Fohnagy  |    |  |



"I exhort everyone to see...the Earth is an environment to be safeguarded, a garden to be cultivated. The relationship of humanity with nature must not be conducted with greed, manipulation, and exploitation, but it must conserve the divine harmony that exists between creatures and Creation within the logic of respect and care..."  
Pope Francis

As we approach Earth Day 2025 on April 22, let us contemplate this planet we call home and our relationship with it. We will observe and celebrate God's wonderful Creation on Sunday, April 27 at the 8:30 and 11:00 am worship services. Watch for a display of Earth-friendly products, and even some free samples!

As always,

Creation Care Team contacts:

Nelson Bock [Nbock6552@gmail.com](mailto:Nbock6552@gmail.com) and Elaine Ulgenes [Elaineulge@yahoo.com](mailto:Elaineulge@yahoo.com)

## HUNGER TEAM NEWS

### Kid Packs

Thank you to all who have faithfully shown up on Tuesdays at Helena Food Share to assemble Kid Packs. It is hard to believe our volunteer service for this school year ends on April 15. We have April 1, 8, and 15 left to assemble bags. This task cannot happen without you. On March 4 we had **35** volunteers show up, which was a record! It is absolutely a blessing and amazing to see so many helping hands diligently working to make a difference in our community. Hunger Team is beyond grateful and blessed by your continued support.

We shall continue to collect low-sugar granola bars throughout the month of April, as well. Thank you to everyone who has kept the Helena Food Share crates full of these treats throughout this school year.

### Community Garden

**Hunger Team needs a garden manager for the Helena Food Share plot!** This job is 50% smaller this year because Elaine Ulgenes is managing the rental side of the garden (yay!). Contact Vicki at [greenxena@msn.com](mailto:greenxena@msn.com) for details.

### Family Promise

Thank you to everyone who attended the Comfort Food Challenge on March 23. Your continued support enables Family Promise to provide for the ongoing needs of unsheltered families in our community.

Our next hosting week is May 4-11. We shall once again need overnight hosts, meals, and folks to set up the rooms on Sunday, May 4, and tear down the rooms on Sunday, May 11. Yes, it takes a small village to provide for our guests. If you are interested in helping, please get in touch with one of these persons:

Overnight hosts: Linda Coty (406) 443-5857, [cotyak@hotmail.com](mailto:cotyak@hotmail.com)

Room prep: Judy McMaster (406) 465-7118, [judy1950@bresnan.net](mailto:judy1950@bresnan.net)

Meals: Linda Nelson (406) 422-3751, [ralinelson@yahoo.com](mailto:ralinelson@yahoo.com)

## 90+ years old

Let's celebrate our friends who have turned 90 years or older this month by sending them a birthday card.

Helen Bunkowske (age 99 on April 7)  
915 Saddle Drive, Rm 150  
Helena, MT 59601

Bill Straley (age 91 on April 21)  
1260 Ponderosa Rd  
Helena, MT 59602



### April Anniversaries

Celebrate with those married 40 years or more this month!

|          |                       |          |
|----------|-----------------------|----------|
| 4/3/1982 | Brad & Elaine Ulgenes | 43 years |
| 4/9/1970 | Jeff & Jan Martin     | 55 years |

**Our Members**

|                  |                 |              |              |
|------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Gordon Blomquist | Greg Johnson    | Lorna Meyer  | Laurie Simms |
| Richard Carey    | Noreen Johnson  | Dale Mickus  | Ruth Straley |
| Roberta Carey    | Carol Kimble    | Julie Mehl   |              |
| Jim Haubein      | Chloe MacIntyre | Ron Pecarina |              |

**Communion Preparation**

Classes will be held for children grades 2-4 and **any** other families interested in learning about Holy Communion.

**Please save these dates:**

- ⇒ **April 13 @1:00 - Fed and Forgiven:** An instructional time for both communicant and parents about Holy Communion.
- ⇒ **Maundy Thursday, April 17 @6:30** - We invite the children and their families to celebrate their deepened understanding of communion and for those who are not yet communing, to receive their First Communion.



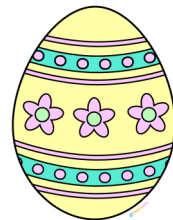
Contact Liz at [liz@ourredeemerlives.org](mailto:liz@ourredeemerlives.org) to register!

**Easter Children's Choir**

Lead by Jason Callon

Our Sunday School youth will be sharing their voices at the **8:30 am** service on Easter Sunday **April 20!**

We will have one final practice before worship at **8:10 am** on Easter Sunday. **Please dress nicely!**



- 6 Sunday School—Trial & Crucifixion
- 13 Sunday School— Trial & Crucifixion
- 13 First Communion Class @ 1-2:30pm (Grades 2-4)
- 17 First Communion @6:30pm
- 20 Easter Break—*No Sunday School!*
- 23 LWR Personal Care Kit Build @6:00pm
- 27 Last Sunday School—LWR Kits & Party!



**Vacation Bible School 2025**

**Theme:** True North: Trusting Jesus in a Wild World!

**Dates:** June 23-26, 2025

**Hours:** 9AM—Noon, Monday thru Thursday



**REGISTER TODAY:** Follow the link below or use the QR code to register your child for our upcoming VBS, we can't wait to see you there!

<https://forms.gle/g2C85RovDnnE2CDd8>



Also...we need **YOUR HELP!** We are in need of **VOLUNTEERS** to make VBS possible. Please contact Liz or [register below](#) if you are interested in volunteering your gifts for an adventure this June!

<https://forms.gle/ZHrj14ch5p3k8Kj86>



Contact Liz for more information, [liz@ourredeemerlives.org](mailto:liz@ourredeemerlives.org).



**Our Family and Friends**

Danny McCaughan (nephew of Lori & Dave Swenson)  
 Scott Linke (brother of Craig Linke)  
 Ron Paulson (former member)  
 Jacki Riley (sister of Lori Walter)  
 Marge Johnsten (Pastor Trina's mother)

**Our Seminarian**

Shawn, Sara, Addie & Kaden Juers

**Our Family and Friends Serving in the Military**

|                 |                    |                 |                   |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Brandon Bach    | Adam Guay          | Cody Johnson    | Chris Oelkers     |
| Kyle Begger     | Ryan Girard        | Colton Johnson  | Scott Pocha       |
| Connor Brown    | Austin Grieve      | Chance McDowell | Tanner Reddig     |
| Erin DenHerder  | Travis Gronley     | Kent McGowan    | Cody Stipcich     |
| Kellan Elder    | Charlie Heidbreder | Dean McLain     | Darrell Stipcich  |
| Travis Elder    | Roger Henschel     | Sawyer Linke    | Victoria Stipcich |
| Micah Emmons    | Paul Horst         | Erin Mills      | Tait Strom        |
| Jessilyn Emmons | Anela Hemry        | Brian Neal      | Andrew Zimmer     |
| Grant Gagnon    | Wade Hemry         | Keith Nordquist |                   |

# WOMEN'S SPRING RETREAT REGISTRATION FORM

May 16-18, 2025 at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

Register by April 22 to save!

- **EARLY BIRD:** Register by April 22: \$185.00 (Includes meals, speaker, workshops, two nights lodging)
- **April 23- May 1:** \$200.00
- **Saturday Only:** \$95.00 (Two meals, speaker, workshops, no lodging).
- **Deadline for Registration: May 1**

### SCHEDULE:

**Friday, May 16:** Sign-in: 4-6 p.m. with dinner at 6:15 followed by the first education session and worship.  
**Saturday, May 17:** Three meals, more education sessions with Pastor Sarah, service project and workshop options, evening campfire sing-along, and worship, or time on your own!  
**Sunday, May 18:** Sunday Brunch followed by worship and closing.

**SCHOLARSHIPS:** Thanks to some generous donors we have a scholarship fund to offer \$100 scholarships on a first come, first serve basis to make our retreat available to all! Download the scholarship form from the website (see below) or contact Nancy Solum.

### BRING THE FOLLOWING WITH YOU:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> FLBC Medical form  | <input type="checkbox"/> Notebook and pen                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bedding including a pillow and blankets or sleeping bag                              | <b>Optional:</b>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking boots, or sturdy shoes          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal toiletries (soap, shampoo, towel, washcloth, toothbrush, water bottle etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Bible (FLBC also has Bibles available) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warm clothing (jacket, hat, gloves)  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sunday morning offering                |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Items or baskets for a silent auction  |

**REGISTER ONLINE WITH CREDIT CARD** (registration will include the credit card fee)

[www.imluchurch.org/womensretreat/](http://www.imluchurch.org/womensretreat/)

To register by mail, send this Registration Form with your check made payable to **Women's Spring Retreat, Attn: Nancy Solum, 2137 S. 8th St. W, Missoula MT 59801**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone or Cell Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Cabin Mates: \_\_\_\_\_

Cabins have electricity, bathrooms and some are ADA accessible.  
 PLEASE NOTE SPECIAL NEEDS: (Dietary, medical, C-PAP, wheelchair access, mobility, lower bunk, etc.)

**REGISTRATION FEE:**  \$185 Early Bird before 4/22.  \$95 Saturday only.  \$200: Apr 22- May 1

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND:** I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the Retreat Scholarship Fund so others can attend.  
 Total Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ No Refunds after May 1, 2025

Email confirmation will be sent; OR include a self-addressed and stamped envelope

## middle school.

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church



### Confirmation Sunday

Sunday, May 4 at the 11:00 am service with a brunch to follow in the Great Room.

### 5th-8th Grade Lock In

- What:** Get locked into the church for a full night. Dinner and breakfast will be served.
- When:** June 10, 6:00 pm - June 11, 10:00 am
- Where:** Inside the Church
- Who:** Those completing 5th-8th grade and your friends.
- Host:** I am looking for a male adult chaperone. High Schoolers, please let Steph know if you are interested in helping to lead this!
- To Bring:** Clothes to lounge/sleep in, blankets, pillows, and water bottle.

Registration will be coming soon. Save the date.

## high school.

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church



### The youth are collecting donations for the Personal Care Kits

to send off to people who have suffered from natural disasters or life threatening violence. This ministry project is through Lutheran World Relief. All donations can be dropped off at the church before April 23. Items that we are in need of are:

- Light-weight bath towels (dark in color, between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27")
- Bath-size bars of soap equaling 8-9oz. Any brand in original wrapping
- Adult-size toothbrushes in original packaging
- Sturdy combs
- Metal nail clippers (attached file optional)



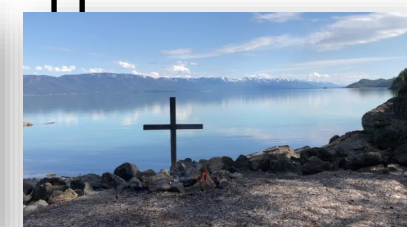
### High School Graduation Service

Sunday, May 18 at the 11:00 am service with a brunch to follow in the Community Room.

## FLATHEAD LUTHERAN BIBLE CAMP

You can register for camp on their website at flbc.net. You select your week at camp and pay a deposit of \$100 to reserve your spot. Then tell Steph that you did so, and then the church will help you pay the rest. In addition, if your child needs a ride to camp, please let Steph know by emailing her at [steph@ourredeemerlives.org](mailto:steph@ourredeemerlives.org). She is working on getting transportation to and from camp. Our Redeemer's will be going two different weeks for on-site camp.

**July 6 - 11, 2025 & July 13 - 18, 2025**



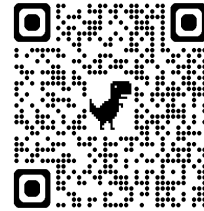
**Wear Blue on Sunday April 6!**

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. This month, many and varied organizations and agencies focus on raising awareness of both the problem and of the work many groups do to end the tragedy of child abuse. As a society, we still have a long way to go. Protective services receive millions of reports of child abuse and neglect each year to children. Hundreds of thousands of children are confirmed as victims of abuse or neglect annually. Approximately 1,600 children die every year in the U.S. due to abuse.



Blue is the signature color for child abuse awareness, as it represents the bruises of physical abuse and serves as a powerful call to action. Our Redeemer's will answer that call in part by observing **Blue Sunday on April 6**, when we will pray for God's power, comfort, and healing for abused children everywhere, for their abusers, and for those dedicated to protection and restoration. We will also display blue pinwheels throughout April as a reminder of our responsibility to care for these most vulnerable of God's children.

Many service groups rely on community support to mitigate the effects of and to end child abuse. One of those is the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children of Lewis and Clark and Broadwater Counties. Use this QR code to learn more and donate at their website. Contact Lisa Williams-Mathews with questions at lewm03@gmail.com.



**Happy Spring from the Preschool**

**Silent Auction Baskets and Donations** are currently being collected. They will be organized and ready for bidding starting April 6 and continuing through April 20. The bidding will close after services on Easter Sunday. There is quite a selection of baskets to choose from: baking supplies, new baby items, barbeque fun, movie tickets, a picnic basket with lots of goodies, a hand-painted TV tray, dog items, and the list continues.

**Summer Preschool Camps Registrations** are available. Please follow the link <https://ourredeemerlives.org/preschool/> to the registration form before camps fill up. There will be some fun themes such as *Pirates & Mermaids*, *Stars & Stripes*, *Winter in June*, *Disney Week*, *Camp Pawesome*, and *Creepy Crawlies*. Classes are June 2-20 and may be half-day or full-day attendance.

**PreK Teacher and Assistants are needed!** If you or anyone you know might be interested in being a part of our fantastic preschool program, please let us know. We are currently receiving applications for a PreK teacher and teaching assistant for next year's preschool. <https://shorturl.at/7Xxnm>

**Our Preschool Registration** for the 2025-2026 school year is well underway. Our Redeemer's Preschool offers classes for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-old students. Classes are structured to provide age-appropriate learning opportunities for each child to experience success in a Christian setting. Our passion is preparing children for life's adventures by letting them experience the joys of learning, friendships, and God's love through play-based and instructional methods. Please visit our web page at <https://ourredeemerlives.org/preschool/> to learn more about our program and classes. The brochure and registration form are also available on the website.

Brenda Stoltz  
Preschool Director



**Come for a weekend of relaxation, rejuvenation, fellowship, and inspiration with women of faith.**

**WOMEN OF FAITH: LESSONS FROM BIBLICAL HEROINES FOR TODAY'S DISCIPLES**

*with Pastor Sarah Schilcher, Copper City Parish, Butte, Montana.*

Join us for an inspiring presentation that explores the remarkable stories of women in the Bible--figures like Ruth, Esther, Miriam, and Mary--who exemplified courage, faith, and resilience. We will delve into their challenges and triumphs, uncovering the timeless lessons they offer for contemporary women. Through engaging discussion and reflection, we will connect their experiences to our own journeys of faith, empowering us to live boldly as disciples in our communities today. All women are welcome to come and share in this enriching experience of learning and fellowship!



More info at [www.imluchurch.org/womens-retreat](http://www.imluchurch.org/womens-retreat)

Questions: Call or email Nancy Solum 406-240-0023 or [WomensSpringRetreatMT@gmail.com](mailto:WomensSpringRetreatMT@gmail.com)

**Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp**  
May 16-18, 2025  
550 Lutheran Camp Rd, Lakeside, MT

- REGISTER BY APRIL 22 and SAVE!**
- EARLY BIRD: Register by April 22: \$185.00 (Includes meals, speaker, workshops, two nights lodging)
  - April 23- May 1: \$200.00
  - Saturday Only: \$95.00 (Two meals, speaker, workshops, no lodging).
  - Deadline for Registration: **May 1**

Scholarships Available



**SPRING LUNCHEON Saturday, May 10**

WELCA is planning a Spring Luncheon for Saturday, May 10, at 11:30 am in the Great Room. We are looking for five or six individuals willing to plan and coordinate this event with us. If you are interested or want more information, please call or visit Charlene Mayala, 406-465-0956 or email her at [csmayala66@gmail.com](mailto:csmayala66@gmail.com).

**QUILT SUNDAY - APRIL 27**

Please join us to celebrate with our Lutheran World Relief quilters and all the women of our church, thanking them for their fabulous work and love that goes into this ministry.

Quilts will be on display in the church on Sunday, April 27. Special thanks to (pictured left to right) Karen Darlow, Rose Oelkers, Janet Benson, Tonia Docter, Niki Whearty, and Connie Metcalf for all their time and loving efforts in these quilt creations.



The Lutheran World Relief Quilters need more fabric for quilt tops. It can be cotton, cotton blends, or corduroy. Larger pieces are appreciated. They can also use gently-used flat twin sheets or new flat twin sheets and all-purpose thread of any color. Thank you.



**Long-Range Planning**

The Long-Range Planning Committee has spent several months getting input from the congregation as they begin to create a strategic plan for our ministry together at Our Redeemer's. They visited with most of the groups that regularly meet (WELCA, youth group, Council, staff, men's group, Hunger Team, bell choir, Sunday fellowship time...), getting feedback on these questions:

- What is working well at Our Redeemer's?
- What could be working better?
- What are your hopes for the future?

If you didn't get a chance to share your thoughts on these questions, please email Lonnie Cook at [mtcookies@hotmail.com](mailto:mtcookies@hotmail.com) with your ideas. We want to make sure everyone gets heard.

Another way we will be gathering information is by using the HolyCow! survey again. Our Redeemer's has twice used this tool (2016 and 2021) to gauge our effectiveness in worship, outreach, stewardship, and education. It has helped us respond to needs and concerns and helped direct us to areas of emerging ministry that interest the congregation.

In May, you will receive an email with a link to the survey. We want all adults in your household who are actively involved in the life of the congregation to complete the survey. Parents, if you have youth you feel can answer the survey questions in an informed manner, please have them fill out one too. During the fellowship time on May 11 and 18, members of the Long-Range Planning Committee will be present with laptops to assist those who don't have access to a computer at home or want some help with the technology. There will also be paper copies of the survey if you'd prefer to complete it that way.

The greater the participation, the better the data we'll get from it. Please help shape the future of Our Redeemer's by completing the HolyCow! survey.



**Offered at St. John's Lutheran**

***This Is Your Brain on God: Discover how faith and science connect***

Last fall, Pastor Keith Weatherford (St. John's) and three other pastors from the Montana Synod attended the National Spirituality in Education Conference at Columbia University. The conference's focus was the groundbreaking work of Dr. Lisa Miller, who has been exploring how spirituality impacts and strengthens the brain. Dr. Miller's research provided valuable insights into the profound connection between spirituality and mental health.

Pastor Keith, joined by Pastor Kay Wittman from the synod office, a neurologist, and a specialist in early childhood education, are bringing some important findings from that conference to Helena. Join them on Sunday, April 6, 2:30-4:00 pm at St. John's Lutheran (1000 Helena Ave) for a fascinating and accessible workshop exploring how your brain is wired for spirituality.

Whether you're new to contemplation, a seasoned churchgoer, a parent, or just curious, this event is for everyone - no science degree or spiritual expertise required! Through easy-to-follow stories and practical exercises, the presenters will explore how neuroscience and faith shape our minds, hearts, and lives. This workshop is especially helpful for families looking to support their children's spiritual development.

There will be a soup and salad dinner following the presentation. To RSVP or to learn more contact Pastor Keith at [saintjohns@helenastjohns.org](mailto:saintjohns@helenastjohns.org) or [pastorkeith@stjohnshelena.org](mailto:pastorkeith@stjohnshelena.org) or 406-442-6270.

**Call Committee**

Abigail McLane reported on the recommendation of the Call Committee. The Council received the recommendation and agreed to schedule a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, April 6, at 10:00 am for the purpose of voting on the candidate for Pastor.

**Update on Solar Panels (Borrowing Resolution)**

Herb Kulow reported that someone from the Church Council should be assigned to sign the borrowing resolution from Valley Bank on behalf of the Congregation. The immediate request is for the transfer of \$170,000 from the Horseshoe Bend account to a 12-month CD at 3.85%. Herb will bring more details about the requirements for borrowing against the CD to the April Council meeting.

**Financial Report and Recommendations**

Healthy giving was noted in February. February receipts for the Ministry Fund totaled \$50,349, and Building Fund donations totaled \$16,911. The Council agreed to transfer Building Funds of \$16,707.23 and Dedicated Funds of \$3,563.03 to the Mission Investment Fund, but held the Benevolence payment of \$4,262.69 because of the property tax bill that is due in May.

**Ministry Team and Committee Reports**

Staff reports continue to reflect healthy involvement in all aspects of the church. Pastor Trina has worked more with the preschool during the last few weeks while Brenda Stoltz was out for surgery. The preschool is expanding options for next fall, and there are still several openings for each age group.

**Unfinished Business**

- Charlie Gorman has agreed to serve as First Vice-President of the Council.

**New Business**

- The Council supported the Call Committee's recommendation to offer the call as Pastor, rather than Associate Pastor, due to the candidate's level of experience.
- The Council approved the salary and benefits package to be offered to the candidate. As part of this process, the council also decided to offer the same housing allowance to both pastors. The housing allowance will be reviewed annually in order to be in line with present housing costs in the Helena area.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Nelson, Secretary



Creation Hikes are a fellowship opportunity to join one another in a community while enjoying God's creation together. There will be four hikes this summer: May 25, June 8, July 13, and August 3. Gretchen and Blair Krumm will lead the hikes, which depart from the Church parking lot at 11:00 am. These moderate hikes are open to all ages. More details for each hike will be shared in upcoming newsletters.

**MAY 25: TOUR DE RODNEY RIDGE**

**JUNE 8: SKIDWAY WILDFLOWER HIKE**

**JULY 13: EDDY MCCLURE EAST**

**AUGUST 3: TROUT CREEK CANYON**



**COME MEET PASTOR ADAM**

Thursday, April 3  
Great Room



|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Meet Pastor Adam before work<br>breakfast sandwiches, juice & coffee | 7:00 -<br>9:00 am  |
| Mid-morning coffee & pastries with<br>Pastor Adam                    | 9:30 -<br>11:30 am |
| Afternoon snacks with Pastor Adam<br>before Holden Evening Prayer    | 4:00 -<br>6:00 pm  |
| Nightcap with Pastor Adam<br>after Holden Evening Prayer             | 7:00 -<br>8:30 pm  |

The Council and the Call Committee are excited to bring Pastor Adam to Helena!

Please join us at one or more of the meeting times for fellowship and conversation.







**CAREGIVER'S SUPPORT GROUP**

Spring is upon us, and we rejoice in budding trees and bulbs pushing green shoots through the ground. There are changes in the lives of caregivers also, some welcome and some not so easy to accept. Please join a small group of supportive people who are adjusting to different ways of achieving goals and a new "normal" with loved ones. We will meet on Sunday, April 27 at 9:45 am in the Conference Room. Companionship for your loved one is provided.



**GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP**

The grief group will meet Sunday, April 13, between services. All who are grieving are welcome to join us. Together, we share our journeys through grief, our challenges, moments of healing, and moments of sorrow. The grief journey is challenging and unpredictable; no two journeys are alike, and instead of telling each other the steps we should take, we give each other the gift of presence. We honor our loved ones with our memories, remembering that love lasts forever and they will always be a part of us. If you have questions, feel free to call Lori Bigwood-Pecarina or Jane Peachey.



**If you wish to speak to one of the leaders during the week or have any questions, please get in touch with us at the following numbers:**

**Lori Bigwood-Pecarina 406-672-2470**

**Jane Peachey 234-567-1461**

**Touchmark Worship Services**

Our Redeemer's members Lori Bigwood-Pecarina, LMA, and Sharlene Kolb will provide a service of Worship and Communion at Touchmark Retirement Community during Holy Week. We will meet on April 15 at 10:00 am in the Forum. If you would like to join our member residents and other worshipers, you are welcome. Touchmark is located at 915 Saddle Drive.

March 20, 2025

In our last update to the congregation, we reported that after Rocky Mountain Development Council determined they were unable to move forward with our development project, we were in communication with alternative affordable housing developers.

Since then, the committee had a very encouraging meeting with a local for-profit affordable housing developer who currently has a project called Twin Creek Apartments under construction here in Helena at the corner of Alice Street and Dorothy Street. That project has 72 units in total, providing a blend of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units. They also have a project in the pre-construction phase in Bozeman.

This developer introduced themselves to the committee and proposed developing just a portion of our property (approximately 4.3 acres) for 64 units of senior affordable housing. This was an intriguing proposal to the committee. While the land purchase price would be significantly less, they would be installing Horseshoe Bend Rd. and the church would retain the remainder of the property, which would then be much more valuable and developable since the access road would be in place.

Since that meeting date, there has been significant turbulence at the federal level which has trickled down to this developer and the entire affordable housing market. These affordable housing developers use a complex combination of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and HUD grant funding to make these projects feasible. Recently, the market price for tax credits has become depressed, and HUD has cut a lot of staffing, creating uncertainty with their grant funding. This developer is concerned about HUD removing commitments they have already made to their Bozeman project.

So, while we feel like we may have found the right development group to make this happen, the current market and policy climate are not providing any assurance of success. We will continue to be in touch with this developer, and stay tuned to changing conditions.

Please continue to keep this group of discerners in your prayers.

Gretchen Krumm

**Stewardship Work Day  
Saturday, April 12**

Roll up your sleeves and join the Men's Group and the Stewardship Committee for another Stewardship Work Day.

Last fall nearly 40 members completed 36 tasks as they spruced up the landscape, washed windows, and organized and cleaned the interior of the church. This year we will have about 30 tasks which get our church ready for Easter Sunday as well as our spring and summer ministries.

There will be two shifts: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 - 4:00 pm, with lunch in between. You can work either shift or all day. Or you can come and work for an hour or so. In preparation for the stewardship event, each team leader will identify the tasks, tools and time for that category. The event categories and descriptions will be posted in the church publications and online with a solicitation to sign up at least a week prior to Saturday.

If you have any questions, call Jerry Hoover at 406-431-2303.

# April 2025

| Sunday   | Monday  | Tuesday   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Child Abuse Awareness Month</b>   |   | <b>1</b><br>9:00am - Quilting for Lutheran World Relief –CR#5-6<br>10:30am - Knitters for Peace<br>6:30pm - Falling Upward class - Great Room   |
| <b>6</b> Blue Sunday - Wear Blue<br><br>8:30am - Worship + KidTime<br>9:45am - Sunday School<br>9:45am - Confirmation - Loft<br><b>10:00am - Congregational Meeting</b><br>11:00am - Worship + KidTime<br>2:30pm - This is Your Brain on God - St. John's Lutheran | <b>7</b><br>10:00am - Staff Meeting   | <b>8</b><br>9:00am - Quilting for Lutheran World Relief –CR#5-6<br>10:00am - WELCA Board - Small Conference Room<br>10:30am - Knitters for Peace<br>6:30pm - Falling Upward class - Great Room<br>6:30pm - Executive Committee - Conference Room                      |
| ----- Preschool Silent Auction -----   |   |   |
| <b>13</b> Palm Sunday<br><br>8:30am - Worship + KidTime<br>9:45am - Sunday School<br>9:45am - Confirmation - Loft<br>9:45am - Grief Support Group - Conference Room<br>11:00am - Worship + KidTime<br>1:00pm - Communion Instruction - Fed and Forgiven            | <b>14</b><br>10:00am - Staff Meeting<br>6:00pm - Preschool Advisory Board Meeting - Conference Rm | <b>15</b> <b>Voice Articles Due</b><br>9:00am - Quilting for Lutheran World Relief –CR#5-6<br><b>10:00am - Touchmark Worship and Communion</b><br>10:30am - Knitters for Peace<br>5:30pm - Council Meeting - Youth Loft<br>6:30pm - Falling Upward class - Great Room |
| ----- Preschool Silent Auction -----   |   |   |
| <b>20</b> Easter Sunday<br><br>8:30am - Worship<br>9:30am - Easter Brunch<br>11:00am - Worship<br><br>Last Day of Preschool Silent Auction   | <b>21</b><br>10:00am - Staff Meeting  | <b>22</b> Earth Day<br>9:00am - Quilting for Lutheran World Relief –CR#5-6<br>10:30am - Knitters for Peace  |
| <b>27</b> Quilt Sunday<br><br>8:30am - Worship + KidTime<br>9:45am - Sunday School<br>9:45am - Confirmation - Loft<br>9:45am - Caregivers Support Group - Conference Room<br>11:00am - Worship + KidTime   | <b>28</b><br>10:00am - Staff Meeting  | <b>29</b><br>9:00am - Quilting for Lutheran World Relief –CR#5-6<br>10:30am - Knitters for Peace<br>6:30pm - Hunger Team - Conference Room  |

| Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday   | Saturday                          |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>2</b><br>9:00am - Men's Group - Great Room<br>9:00am - Contemplative Prayer - Youth Loft   | <b>3</b><br>9:30am - Sew In Love - CR5-6<br>7:00 - 9:00am - Meet Pastor Adam<br>9:30 - 11:30am - Meet Pastor Adam<br>4:00 - 6:00pm - Meet Pastor Adam<br>6:30pm - Holden Evening Prayer<br>7:00 - 8:30pm - Meet Pastor Adam | <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b>                          |
| <b>9</b><br>9:00am - Men's Group - Great Room<br>9:00am - Contemplative Prayer - Youth Loft<br>6:00pm - Youth Night<br>6:00pm - Confirmation                                  | <b>10</b><br>9:30am - Sew In Love - CR5-6<br>6:30pm - Holden Evening Prayer<br>6:30pm - Family Promise Volunteer Training   | <b>11</b>  | <b>12</b><br>Stewardship Work Day |
| ----- Preschool Silent Auction -----  |   |  |                                   |
| <b>16</b><br>9:00am - Men's Group - Great Room<br>9:00am - Contemplative Prayer - Youth Loft<br>1:00pm - Women's Bible Study<br>6:00pm - Youth Night<br>6:00pm - Confirmation | <b>17</b><br>9:30am - Sew In Love - CR5-6<br><b>6:30pm - Maundy Thursday Worship</b>  | <b>18</b><br>12:00pm - Good Friday Worship<br>6:30pm - Good Friday Worship | <b>19</b>                         |
| ----- Preschool Silent Auction -----  |   |  |                                   |
| <b>23</b><br>9:00am - Men's Group - Great Room<br>9:00am - Contemplative Prayer - Youth Loft<br>6:00pm - Youth Night<br>6:00pm - Confirmation                                 | <b>24</b><br>9:30am - Sew In Love - CR5-6   | <b>25</b>  | <b>26</b>                         |
| <b>30</b><br>9:00am - Men's Group - Great Room<br>9:00am - Contemplative Prayer - Youth Loft<br>6:00pm - Youth Night<br>6:00pm - Confirmation                                 |   |  |                                   |

**Special Congregational meeting  
Sunday, April 6 at 10:00 am**