



Redeemer Lutheran Church Newsletter

December, 2025

From Pastor Anne Wickland

Happy Advent, everyone! I hope you all had a great Thanksgiving and stayed safe during the snowstorm.

Thank you to everyone who attended our Community Thanksgiving Eve worship service, sang or rang bells, brought food for fellowship, and helped organize. We raised almost \$400 for RACA and as Pastor Karrie shared, this is for us to help our community so if you know of any neighbors in need, please let me or Pastor Karrie know.

Advent is the beginning of a new church year, but also marks the end of our calendar year. Christ was born and his beginning offered hope to the shepherds, to all people, but King Herod was trying to dash that hope and put an end to Jesus' story. We're preparing for the birth of Jesus, but also anticipating the second coming of Jesus. When our cultural norms are all about the busyness and immediacy, having a time to slow down, reflect, and wait is a challenge—a challenge that Advent invites us into. So in between all the Christmas shopping and cookie baking, I invite you to take some time each day, once a week, whenever, to reflect on the weekly themes of Advent: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. One spiritual practice I learned about in my youth pastor days was "Christmas card prayers". With so many people sending out Christmas cards, gather up the cards and take the time to pray for that family. It could be a quick blessing or an in-depth prayer with specifics. But taking the time to pray for those who have sent us cards can help center us and remember the "reason for the season".

Lastly, a communion update! As you may know, we currently have been having communion when I am leading worship and not having communion when we have supply pastors. Starting in January, and through Memorial Day weekend we will have communion every Sunday. During the summer months we'll take a break and go back to not having communion with supply pastors. And then when the school year returns, we'll go back to communion more often. Theologically, I believe that communion is a physical means of God's grace and who am I to limit God's grace? I'd rather give "too much" communion than limit it. In the past few decades there's been a theological shift in seminaries, etc. towards having communion more often. I understand that many of us grew up only having communion once or twice a month and you had to speak with the pastor beforehand that you intended to have communion. I know that communion is something to be taken seriously, but it is also a joyous celebration of God's love for us. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this (or anything else with me), I am more than happy to have these nerdy theological conversations!

I wish you all a blessed and safe Advent.

Pastor Anne

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is a winter wonderland out there. With the snow, it feels like Christmas. While I am not a fan of the cloudy gloomy weather this time of year, it is beautiful outside when the sun pops through and glistens off the fresh snow. The beauty lifts my spirits and I am reminded of how lovely God's creation is.

I want to thank everyone that has contributed to help us reach our \$15,000 goal for the boiler. I am excited to share that we have now exceeded that goal and have received \$16,009. We are wrapping up our fundraising efforts for the new boiler however please remember that the church and parsonage will continue to need updates and maintenance. Your ongoing financial support at Redeemer helps us to keep everything in good condition.



I hope you take a moment to notice all the work put in to decorate and prepare the church for Christmas. Thank you to everyone that helped with this. Its looking very festive and welcoming.

I would like to thank Bonnie Pribbenow-Paddock for her work on the Nominating Committee contacting members to find nominees for Council and the other elected positions. This can be a thankless task. The only positions we are still looking to fill are for Nominating Committee. If you would like to help with the Nominating Committee in 2026 please let me know.

At the last Council meeting, the Council voted to hold the 2026 Annual Congregational Meeting on February 1st following the Church Service. All members are encouraged to attend.

I invite everyone to attend Music Sunday on December 21st. The choirs as well as several others have been working hard to get ready to share their talents with you. I encourage you to invite your family and friends to attend.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas! Happy Birthday Jesus!

God's Blessings,

Beth Laufenberg

Council President



The annual meeting is being held on Sunday, **February 1st, 2026** following the church service. All members are invited to attend.

Notice to Congregation of Proposed Constitution Changes *

At the last annual meeting on January 26th, 2025 an initial vote to approve the following Constitution changes was taken and the changes approved. Per our Constitution, a second vote to ratify the changes needs to be held at our next annual meeting. Once the changes have been ratified, they will go into effect. Excerpts from the Constitution with the proposed changes are included. Please contact the church office if you would like a complete copy of the Constitution.

The first change would be in Chapter 12 – Congregation Council. We are proposing to remove “to four” to limit the number of council trustees to two. The current Constitution allows for “two to four council trustees.” We have historically had four trustees. With the decrease in membership, it is felt that we no longer need four trustees.

Chapter 12

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. [01/27/19] The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), officers of the congregation, and two ~~to four~~ council trustees. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the State of Wisconsin, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

The second change would be in Chapter 13 – Congregational Standing Committees. We are proposing to change the word “shall” to “may” so we are not required to have a Nominating Committee. It is our understanding that not all congregations have Nominating Committees and we are finding it very difficult to find members willing to serve on the Nominating Committee.

Chapter 13

CONGREGATIONAL STANDING COMMITTEES

C13.02. [01/27/19] A Nominating Committee of three voting members of this congregation, two of who, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, ~~may shall~~ be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.

FROM A MEMBER

The time for this article has come far too quick. I always think I will have plenty of time and then, "life happens." As I sit to do this writing Thanksgiving has come and gone.

We recognized November 30 as the first Sunday of Advent. This Sunday has a theme of HOPE. We light the Prophet's candle which is to focus on the hope of Christ's coming and the promises of God.

The second Sunday's theme is PEACE. The Bethlehem candle is lit which represents peace and preparation done for the arrival of Jesus.

Week three, JOY is the theme. We light the Shepherd's candle. This is a time for rejoicing and anticipating joy at the coming of the Messiah.

The final Sunday in Advent is celebrated by LOVE. The Angel candle is lit. This represents God's love for all of us by sending his Son and the love that we should show to others.

We may also light a white candle on Christmas Day, simply called CHRIST'S candle.

Advent is a time for spiritual reflection, prayer, reading scripture or any other traditions you may celebrate as we await the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Wherever we choose to celebrate, my prayer is that we all find a place that you and your family find love and joy on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day to fulfill the promises of the Advent Season!

God's blessings for a safe Winter, but take time to enjoy the snow!

Merry Christmas to you and yours,

Bonnie Pribbenow-Paddock

Redeemer Lutheran Church Council Meeting

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

Approved Minutes

- 1) **Call meeting to order** – Meeting was called to order by Beth Laufenberg at 6:02 pm.
Present: Beth Laufenberg - **President**, Ben Brusveen, **Vice-President**, Debbie Reiersen -**Secretary**, Austin Dahnke - **Treasurer**, Steve Gilbert - **Trustee**, Lynn Bubolz - **Trustee**, Renee Miles – **Trustee**, and Pastor Anne Wickland.
- 2) **Approve Agenda** – Motion to approve the agenda as written was made by Austin Dahnke and seconded by Pastor Anne Wickland. Motion carried by voice vote.
- 3) **Devotions** – Steve Gilbert led devotions. Pastor Anne Wickland will have devotions for November 18, 2025.
- 4) **Review and approve minutes** – September 16, 2025 – Motion was made by Pastor Anne Wickland and seconded by Lynn Bubolz to approve the Sept. 16, 2025 minutes as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

5) Correspondence or guest comments. - None

6) Financial Reports –

- a. General Fund
- b. Bennett Mutual Fund
- c. Memorial Fund

Financial reports were presented and questions answered by Beth Laufenberg. Motion was made by Debbie Reiersen and seconded by Renee Miles to approve the financial reports. Motion carried by voice vote.

7) Standing Committee Reports –

- a. Property – Report provided.
- b. WELCA – no update
- c. Social Concerns – no update
- d. Outreach – no update
- e. Stewardship – no update
- f. Lay Ministry – no update
- g. Education – Three youth are in confirmation.
- h. Worship Team – Report provided.
- i. Policy Committee – no update

A motion was made by Ben Brusveen and seconded by Steve Gilbert to approve the Standing Committee Reports as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

8) Staff Reports – Review/Approve

- a. Pastor's Report – Provided verbally
- b. Other Staff – None

Pastor Anne Wickland shared that she continues to do visits, teach Confirmation, and attended the Synod Fall Theological Conference in Madison. A discussion item at the conference was on Christian Nationalism. Went with Darlene Cutsforth to Covenant House. Baptism.

A motion was made by Lynn Bubolz and seconded by Debbie Reiersen to approve staff reports. Motion carried by voice vote.

9) Boiler Project – Update/Review/Approve

a. Donations/Fundraising update

Beth Laufenberg went over the proposed funding amounts for the boiler.

b. Approve Plan to Pay Invoice

Motion was made by Austin Dahnke to approve funding sources for the boiler as presented and seconded by Ben Brusveen. Motion carried by voice vote.

Redeemer Donations/Fundraising	\$ 13,403
Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$ 5,000
Hinzman Remodel Fund	\$ 6,500
Bennett Investment Savings	\$ 10,922 *
Memorial Fund Designated	\$ 4,965
Neighborhood Table Account	\$ 710
Total:	\$ 41,500

* This amount will be reduced by any additional funds received via donations/fundraising

10) AED Training & First Aid Kit items – Discuss/Approve

Lynn is working with the Rio EMS to put together a first aid kit and first aid training for members. Pastor Anne Wickland and Lynn Bubolz will work on the planning.

11) Plan Employee Annual Reviews – Discuss

Council discussed the employee annual reviews. Church employees will be given a form to fill out about their jobs and/or meet with a council member(s).

12) 2026 Spending Plan/Budget Kickoff – Discuss

A draft budget will be prepared and presented for discussion/feedback at the next Council meeting.

The nominating committee has begun the work of finding people to serve on the 2026 church council.

13) Thanksgivings

- This is clergy appreciation month. We appreciate Pastor Anne Wickland!
- Thank you to the bell choir for once again providing music for us.
- Thanks to Darlene Cutsforth for all her work at Covenant House.

14) Adjourn/Closing Prayer

A motion was made by Lynn Bobolz and seconded by Pastor Anne Wickland to adjourn at 7:10 pm. Motion carried by voice vote. We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Dates to Remember:

- Next Council Meeting: November 18, 2025
- Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Service – November 26, 2025 at Redeemer

Debbie Reiersen
Council Secretary

December Birthdays

Staci Pribbenow	Dec. 1
Scott Swiggum	Dec. 2
Bev Stankiewicz	Dec. 2
Helen Risgaard	Dec. 15
Norman Kearney	Dec. 15
Wayne Nelson	Dec. 20
Pam Jaynes	Dec. 22
Barb Von Ahsen	Dec. 24
Judy Sandberg	Dec. 24
Marigrace Roberts	Dec. 27



December Anniversaries

William & Marilyn Rowley Dec. 11

Presentation by Ben Waldera, RIO EMS Director

During our service on Sunday, January 11, Ben Waldera, RIO EMS Director, will present Basic First Aid/Stop the Bleed Training and how to use our new AED (Automated External Defibrillator). Please consider joining us for this important information.

Boiler Funding Update



As of 11/30/2025, we have exceeded our \$15,000 fundraising/donations goal. **\$16,009 has been received.** See the breakdown on the right of what has been received so far.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to help us exceed our goal!

Donations	\$11,755
Easter Breakfast	\$1,400
Cobalt Glass, Woodworking, and Pew Sales	\$2,121
Culvers & Texas Roadhouse (including peanuts sales)	\$733
Total:	\$16,009

How We Plan to Pay for the Boilers	
Source of Funds	\$
Fundraising & Donations	\$15,000
Thrivent Choice Matching	\$5,000
Existing Church Funds	\$21,500
Total Boiler Project Cost:	\$41,500

As a reminder, here is the original breakdown of how we planned to pay for the new boiler system. The breakdown will be adjusted based on exceeding the fundraising/donations goal requiring less to come from existing church funds.

As of 11/30/2025, \$36,125 has been paid to Paul's Heating and Cooling. We plan to withhold final payment until the work is fully completed.

On-Going Prayers

We continue to hold in prayer those who have requested ongoing prayer: Don Washington; Pastor Jerome Pribbenow; Kim Huber Ross; Geri Gorman; Jane Roberts, Wayne and Norma Nelson; Janet Corning; Jeff Hendrickson (Nancy Washington's brother); Carter Schultz (age 6, great grandson of Nancy Wescott's cousin, Caryn Schultz and her husband, Carl); JoAnne Husom Dilley (Cooper Husom's grandmother); Kay Meier (Susan Brusveen's sister); Knute Nelson (Susan Brusveen's brother); Dave Hinzman; Stacie Wheeler; Nancy Drehmel; April Landphier; Bob Adams; Bev Stankiewicz; Bob Strauss; Gloria Lang; Sue Pulver; Brenda Vogeler (Harry Thompson's daughter); Virginia Olson; Ken Wescott; and Raymond Endres.

For those wishing to send cards to Nancy Drehmel:

She is currently at Oak Park Place: 718 Jupiter Drive, Room 122, Madison, WI 53718. Should you choose to visit her there, afternoons are best.

MANY THANKS TO ALL

I sincerely want to thank the many hands that transformed our Sanctuary from Fall to Christmas the day after Thanksgiving. What a fun team of energetic volunteers it was!

Thank you to Bob Risgaard, Larry Gorman, Renee Miles, Lynn Bubolz, Lola Bortz, and Caleb Alvin (Lola's grandson from Beaver Dam). Special thanks also to *Veronica Hovland* for donating her time and talent to create a beautiful skirt for our Christmas Tree. Finally, our back entryway is always spectacular, thanks to the creative talents of our own Linda Olson.

I hope you find our efforts appealing and peaceful. May God Bless each of you during this special time of year.

Sincerely, Geri Gorman

DECEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Office Hours: 9:00 – Noon 6:30 Bell Practice	2 Office Hours: 9:00 – Noon Pastor's Hours 9:00 – 3:00	3 1:00 Sr. Choir Confirmation 7:00	4 6:00 pm- AA Meeting	5	6
7 9:00 Worship/Communion Facebook FM 101.7	8 Office Hours: 9:00 – Noon 5:30 Bell Practice	9 Office Hours: 9:00 – Noon Pastor's Hours 9:00 – 3:00	10 1:00 Sr. Choir	11 6:00 pm- AA Meeting	12	13
14 9:00 Worship/Communion Facebook FM 101.7	15 Office Hours: 9:00 – Noon 5:30 Bell Practice	16 Office Hours: 9:00 – Noon Pastor's Hours 9:00 – 3:00	17 1:00 Sr. Choir Confirmation 7:00	18 <i>6:00 – Music Sunday Dress Rehearsal</i> 6:00 pm- AA Meeting	19	20
Council Meeting 10:15 am 21 9:00 Worship No communion MUSIC SUNDAY Facebook FM 101.7	22 Office Hours: 9:00 - Noon 5:30 – Bells at Covenant House	23 Office Hours: 9:00 – Noon Pastor's Hours 9:00 – 3:00	24 <i>Christmas Eve 4:00 Candlelight Service</i> <i>January Newsletter Articles Due</i>	25 <i>Christmas Day</i>	26	27
28 9:00 Worship No Communion Facebook FM 101.7	29 Office Hours: 9:00 - Noon	30 Office Hours: 9:00 – Noon Pastor Out of Office	31			

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
610 LINCOLN AVE
RIO, WISCONSIN 53960
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

“To Live and tell the story of Jesus”
www.rioredeemerlutheran.org

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Redeemer Lutheran Church-Rio, WI

Staff & Council Contacts

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

If you have any comments or needs that should
be addressed, please contact our leadership:

THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Beth Laufenberg (President)	(608) 572-2051
Ben Brusveen (Vice President)	(608) 469-3479
Debbie Reiersen (Secretary)	(608) 347-1952
Austin Dahnke (Treasurer)	(608) 408-0018
Steve Gilbert (Trustee)	(920) 992-5219
Renee Miles (Trustee)	(920) 992-6220
Lynn Bubolz (Trustee)	(920) 992-349
Robert Risgaard (Bennett Treasurer)	(920) 992-5258
Geri Gorman (Memorial Treasurer)	(920) 992-3213

Pastor Anne Wickland

Church # (920) 992-3553

E-mail: office@rioredeemerlutheran.org

Kristi Fehrman – Administrative Assistant -

Office: (920) 992-3553 Cell: (608) 837-8144

E-mail: office@rioredeemerlutheran.org

Beth Laufenberg - Bookkeeper

April Severson - Custodian

Kurt Johnson - Yard Maintenance

Geri Gorman - Music Director

Gayle Krueger - Choir accompanist

Worship Music Provided by Multiple Musicians