



**Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World and
St. Theodore of Canterbury Episcopal Church**
13564 St. Andrews Drive; Seal Beach, CA 90740
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Happy Birthday

January Birthdays

<i>Wendy Alfageme</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Maria Teresa Smith</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Dale Diesslin</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Cedric Elmer</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Mickey Costello</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Evelyn Benedix</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Carmen Leslie</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>24</i>
<i>Carl Keene</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>28</i>

Happy Anniversary

January Anniversaries

<i>Tee Teclu and Dee Worku</i>	<i>January</i>	<i>10</i>
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CALENDAR NOTES

Sundays

10:30 a.m. Holy Communion Service

Wednesdays

12:00 Noon to 2:00 p.m. Office Hours
12:00 noon Bible Study in the Fellowship
Hall

JANUARY

January 5: Epiphany Celebrated

January 6: Epiphany

January 8: 12:00 noon Bible Study
Resumes

January 12: Baptism of Our Lord

January 15: 12:00 noon Bible Study
1:30 p.m. Council Meeting

January 22: 12:00 noon Bible Study

January 29: 12:00 noon Bible Study

Emergency Pastoral Care: Whenever you are in need of emergency pastoral care, please call the office and leave a message (562) 598-8697 or contact Interim Pastor Finck at (714) 345-2791.

Message from the Interim Pastor:

“Behold, I Make All Things New”

Dear Members and Friends of Redeemer and St. Theodore of Canterbury,

Happy New Year. May the promises of God who promises to always be with us give us hope and faith as we enter the New Year.

The Church Calendar in January brings us the **Season of Epiphany**, that time as the Christian Church reflects on the early days of Jesus’ ministry. The Epiphany Season will last through the next two months, as it leads us to Ash Wednesday on March 5th, the beginning of Lent. Our primary focus on Sunday mornings these next weeks will be the stories told in the Gospel of Luke about the first days and months of the ministry of Christ Jesus.

The New Year will offer us the following:

The Wednesday Bible Study at 12:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall will begin again on January 8th. For three weeks we will finish our study of the Ten Commandments and then begin a new study, yet to be decided. All are always welcome. Please invite a friend or neighbor to these 75-minute times of study, learning, prayer, and conversation.

2025 Commitments. As written about some weeks ago, in January anyone who wishes to make their **stewardship commitment** will have an opportunity to fill out a pledge card for 2025, seal it in an envelope, and place it in a box on the altar. Pledges are between God and the person making the commitment. There are no expectations for this. Each person may or may not choose to make this pledge for the New Year.

End of Life Preferences. We also wrote previously that after the New Year we would hold three one-hour gatherings wherein members and friends of the congregation will be able to fill out a form that offers preferences at the time of death. We will be able to choose the Holy Scripture passages, the music and hymns, and other details about a memorial service of thanksgiving that will gather our family and friends together in worship when that time comes. Again, there is no expectation for anyone to do this, but we want to make it available for those who would so choose as it helps family when those decisions are made in advance.

New Daily Devotionals for 2025. Two new daily devotionals are now available. ***Christ in Our Home*** and ***Our Daily Bread*** are ready to be picked up and used as a daily devotional. Please find copies in the entry way of the church.

If anyone needs to communicate with me, please feel free to email, text, or call. I am normally in Leisure World on Wednesdays and Sunday mornings. Again, a blessed New Year. In the peace and light of Christ,

+Pastor Murray D. Finck

The Rev Murray D. Finck, Bishop Emeritus
murraydfinck@gmail.com
714-345-2791



Message from Our President...

Dear Members and Friends,

Happy New Year! 2024, as in all years, brought our church many blessings and some sadness. We have been so fortunate that Bishop Finck has agreed to be our interim pastor, has re-instituted our Bible Study, and our attendance on Sunday has increased significantly since he came. We have had people come to membership, have brought back some members that had not been active, and many Sundays we have visitors attending. Our finances are in good shape, as we have several people that have blessed us with large donations some year-end, and some monthly. Indeed, we have much to be thankful for. However, the saddest time in 2024 was the passing of our dear Pastor Gil, who led our congregation lovingly for 17 years. We are so very fortunate to have known him, and had him as our Pastor. We also mourned the loss of Jerry Brady, who served as the leadership of our Church for so many years.

I hope that everyone had a wonderful Christmas with friends and family. Our Advent Suppers and Christmas Eve service were especially meaningful. We have learned so much from Bishop Finck's teaching, and they always lead into such thought-provoking comments. Adding to that the time visiting and sharing a delicious meal was particularly rewarding. Unfortunately, we have had several members with a long-lasting virus, and a few that have had injuries. It's always so sad when some of us cannot be there during this special time of the church year. Many thanks to all of the volunteers that help to make our Christmas season so successful. Each of you is sincerely appreciated.

We have several issues with regard to our property. The wonderful rain brings with it water seeping into our Fellowship Hall. To help alleviate that problem, Orange County Pump has done some preventative maintenance on our pumps, and found one is not working. We are waiting on an estimate of repair or replacement. My son, who has a good understanding of sound systems, has set our speakers to the correct level, and will move one of the speakers to give us better sound. We are hoping this will help our members hear every word of Bishop Finck's inspirational messages. The loss of our furnace brings us on Sunday mornings to a very chilly sanctuary. We are looking into how we can replace our heating system, and will keep you informed as we move along in this project.

When this newsletter reaches you, it will be the beginning of a new year; a time of reflection and new opportunities. You will be receiving your sealed pledge card asking you to prayerfully consider all of your gifts to your church including your time and talents. If you are able, I hope you will find a way to be more involved in the working of your church. There are some of you that have been very active in the past, and cannot serve any longer. For those years of dedication, we are so very grateful, and we have others that will help to fill those needs.

It was an honor to have served as your President in 2024. I am so fortunate that I had such an amazing congregation that were always ready to help, and support me whenever they could, a wise, hard-working Council, a church secretary that always helps to make things run smoothly, a dedicated organist and choir that add so much to our worship service, and, of course, the opportunity to work with a dedicated man like Reverend Finck, who brought such life back to Redeemer and St. Theodore's.

As always, thank you for allowing me to serve.

Kay Pushman, Council President

ANNOUNCING

Advent Reflection and Supper and Christmas Eve Service



Thank you to all who attend our Advent Reflections and Suppers in December. It is always a gift to get together in faith and reflect, sing, and share a meal. We are truly being disciples when we come together in this way. Jesus's Last Supper was celebrated in this manner and we are continuing that today. We also appreciate all those who blessed our Christmas Eve Celebration and the brunch that followed with their presence.



Cookie Exchange



Thank you to all who participated in the Holiday Cookie Exchange on December 24th. There we many beautiful and tasty cookies exchanged, sold, and eaten at out Christmas Eve Brunch!

Annual Congregational Meeting Part 2



The Annual Congregational Meeting Part 2 will be held on February 23, 2025. Annual Reports will be presented at that time along with the choosing of delegates to the 2025 Pacifica Synod Assembly to be held on Friday, May 16 to Saturday, May 17, 2025, at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Dana Point.

Bible Study



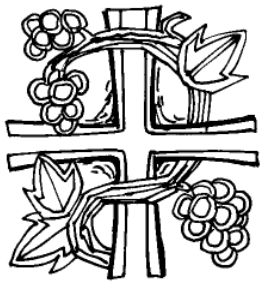
Bible Study will meet in the Fellowship Hall from noon to about 1:15 p.m. starting again on January 8. You can bring friends, your Bible, and your lunch, if you wish! There are drinks available to share. There is also, usually, a sweet treat or two to share. We will be spending the next three weeks finishing up the study of the Ten Commandments (Commandments 8, 9, and 10). Bishop Murray Finck will be leading the discussion. This is a great way to meet members and friends to share an understanding of faith and the Holy Scriptures.

Sealed Pledge Drive



Once again, we are bringing back our Sealed Pledge Drive. We did not do it during the pandemic because we all had enough on our minds. Now that we have returned to a new normal, we are encouraging you to share your time, talents, and treasures with the Church to further the work of the Lord. You will be receiving a pledge card to be returned, a copy of that pledge card for you to keep as a reminder, and a return envelope that can be mailed back or returned in the offering plate. If we have a record of your giving for the 2024 year, it will be included in this mailing. We would like them returned before Sunday, February 16 as we are planning to dedicate them at the Service on February 23 before our Annual Meeting Part 2. **Do not include any gifts in the envelope** because they are not opened, it's a SEALED pledge; it is between you and God. It will include a space for you to put in how you would like to share your time and talents, a space for evangelization, and a financial commitment. Please, pray about what commitments you can make. It will be mailed to you, if we have your mailing address. We are reaching out to everyone, member or visitor, because we are all called to share through our belief in the Christ who came as a baby, lived as a man, died for us all, and will come again.

Outside Memorial Cross Wall



The Council has been discussing a way to honor members, friends, family, and other loved ones. It was decided to turn one wall of the Outside Cross Chapel into a Cross Memorial Wall. Currently we will be placing a cross and plaque for Pastor Gil. The Church is providing the plaque and the Moore family have chosen a cross. We will also be putting up a plaque and cross for Jerry Brady with a donation provided by Jerry's family. We are opening this up to our membership if they would like to include a loved one on this wall. Because we do want to keep it somewhat uniform, the Church will order the plaques but you will have options for the symbol on it of a Lutheran Rose, an Episcopal Flag (like the one on the bench for Betty Hobbs in the Cross Chapel), a simple Cross, or no symbol at all. We also have appropriate options for a cross to be hung if you do not want to go through finding and ordering your own. The suggested donation if you provide the cross is a minimum of \$150.00 or if the Church also provides the cross the suggested donation is \$200.00. The Church will place the cross and plaque on the wall. If you would like more information about this project, please feel free to speak to the Council President, Kay Pushman.

Free Dollar Donations

We work with Ralph's to be one of their choices for their community giving program. To date this year, we have received \$84.89 with only 4 households participating. If you shop at Ralph's, even just occasionally, we would like to invite you to participate in this free program to help the church financially. There are flyers on the bulletin board on how to sign up for this program and there are members willing to help you to sign-up, if you need it. You can speak to Kay Pushman if you want more information on this no cost to you program. There is also Thrivent Choice Dollars that Redeemer Lutheran can be designated to receive if you bank with Thrivent. We have received \$863.00 from Thrivent Choice this year. We thank all who have participated in these programs and have designated Redeemer as their charity of choice.

Personal Annual Giving Reports



We are including your 2024 donation report in with the Sealed Pledges this year. No need to request it be sent!

If you do NOT receive one and think you should have, please contact the Church at (562) 598-8697 or email the Secretary at: redeemer_lutheran@verizon.net. Please wait until **mid-January** to contact us about not receiving a report.

ANNUAL REPORTS



ALL REPORTS ARE DUE IN THE OFFICE **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025** TO BE INCLUDED IN THE PUBLISHED REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL MEETING ~ PART 2 ON FEBRUARY 23, 2025.

Reports are need from: the Pastor, the Council President, the Financial Secretary, the annual financial report for 2024, and the budget for 2025. All other ministries that wish to submit an annual report are welcome to do so but also need to be in the office by Wednesday, February 5th. Thank

You!!!

**REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
ST. THEODORE OF CANTERBURY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
FINANCE REPORT
Month Ending November 30, 2024**

FINANCES FOR THE MONTH of November 2024

Operating Income of	\$15,816.00	Exceeded
Operating Expenses of	<u>\$10,786.00</u>	
By	\$5,030.00	

[we took in more than we spent]

For the year to November 30, 2024

Operating Expenses of	\$94,633.00	Exceeded
Operating Income of	<u>\$94,310.00</u>	
by	(\$323.00)	

[we spent more than we took in]

Comparing Budgeted to Actual for 2024:

Actual Income of	\$94,310.00	Exceeded
Budgeted Income of	<u>\$80,388.00</u>	
by	\$13,922.00	

[we took in more than our budget anticipated]

Actual Expense of	\$94,632.00	Exceeded
Budgeted Expense of	<u>\$80,388.00</u>	
by	(\$14,244.00)	

[we spent more than our budget anticipated]

Other Income and Expenses for the Year:

<u>Income:</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>Expenses:</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Memorial	\$	\$8,790		\$257
Memorial Wall	\$	\$600		\$86
Disaster Relief	\$	\$40		\$40
Fundraising – Boutique	\$58	\$332		
Fundraising - Pump	\$	\$663		
Fundraising - Other	\$	\$62		
Fundraising - Bake Sale	\$	\$162		
Fundraising – Bazaar	<u>\$1,460</u>	<u>\$1,460</u>	(Craft tables: \$536, Bake sale: \$620,	
Total:	\$1,518	\$12,109	Boutique: \$316=	\$1,472
			less \$12 expense)	

Respectfully submitted,
Doris Weinert
Finance Chairman

CYCLE C – Year of Luke
SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS THROUGH
ASH WEDNESDAY

January 5, 2025 – *Second Sunday of Christmas*

Jeremiah 31:7-14 *or* Sirach 24:1-12
Psalm 147:12-20 *or* Wisdom 10:15-21
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:[1-9] 10-18

January 6, 2025 – *Epiphany of Our Lord*

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

January 12, 2025 – *Baptism of Our Lord*

Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 19, 2025 – *Second Sunday after Epiphany*

Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11

January 26, 2025 – *Third Sunday after Epiphany*

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21

February 2, 2025 – *Presentation of Our Lord*

Malachi 3:1-4
Psalms 84 *or* Psalms 24:7-10
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

February 2, 2025 – *Fourth Sunday after Epiphany*

Jeremiah 1:4-10
Psalms 71:1-6
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Luke 4:21-30

February 9, 2025 – *Fifth Sunday after Epiphany*

Isaiah 6:1-8 [9-13]
Psalms 138
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Luke 5:1-11

February 16, 2025 – *Sixth Sunday after Epiphany*

Jeremiah 17:5-10
Psalms 1
1 Corinthians 15:12-20
Luke 6:17-26

February 23, 2025 – *Seventh Sunday after Epiphany*

Genesis 45:3-11, 15
Psalms 37:1-11, 39-40
1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50
Luke 6:27-38

March 2, 2025 – *Transfiguration of Our Lord*

Exodus 34:29-35
Psalms 99
2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2
Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]

March 5, 2025 – *Ash Wednesday*

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 *or* Isa 58:1-12
Psalms 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Worship and Discipleship by Margo Geesing

“Epiphany and Beyond”

We hear from three of our four Gospel writers this month. John’s Gospel begins with one of the most quoted verses, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”, but he does not address anything about Jesus’s early life. In the Gospel of Matthew, we get some details of Joseph’s role in caring for Mary and Jesus and protecting them. There is just a paragraph in the Gospel of Mark referring to John the Baptist announcing the coming of the Christ and then Mark jumps to Jesus’s baptism. Luke includes a few more details of Jesus’s youth. It is in the combination of these Gospels that we get a small idea of who Jesus, before he began preaching, was. Interestingly, only two of the Synoptic Gospels include Jesus’s genealogy. Matthew does it at the beginning of the Gospel and Luke does it at Jesus’s baptism.

January 5, 2025 – *Epiphany of Our Lord* [actual: January 6th]

The Gospel Lesson is from Matthew chapter 2 verses 1-12

We hear the story of the Magi coming to worship Jesus in this Gospel. It is the presentation of Jesus to the Gentile world. The Magi bring gifts of frankincense, gold, and myrrh. Traditionally, we look at these gifts as declarations of Jesus’s Divinity, Kingship, and the Suffering Servant / his death. Frankincense was a perfume used in smoke as a gift to God, gold is worldly riches that was given to kings, myrrh was an antiseptic ointment that was often used for burial purposes. But it is not just about the Magi. It is also about Herod. It is about Herod’s fear and need to hold onto power. Herod is afraid of the potential of a new-born baby. He is so afraid that he lies to the Magi about wanting to worship this baby. Herod is so afraid that he commands his soldiers to kill every Jewish boy child from new-born to two years old in Bethlehem. So, while we celebrate the birth of Jesus and the gifts of the Magi, we are also reminded that there is also pain and suffering in the story of who Jesus was when he walked the earth. There is pain and suffering as we follow in Jesus’s footsteps in our own journey of faith.

January 12, 2025 – *Baptism of Our Lord*

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 3 verses 15-17, 21-22

A couple of my own thoughts after reading Luke’s Gospel of Jesus’s baptism. First, John’s account of what the Messiah was coming to do sounds a bit scary. Do we really want our Messiah / Savior to be coming with fire? Ready to cast things into unquenchable fire? I wonder about John’s reaction to Jesus because nothing is said about it. Jesus is his cousin; how can Jesus be coming as the Messiah? Is it in the back of John’s mind all the shenanigan they had gotten up to when they were younger? I also wonder if just Jesus heard the voice of the Father and saw the Dove of the Holy Spirit at his baptism? Because, no one else is noted to have reacted. Did Luke get the story from Jesus? One would think, if all these people who were looking for the Messiah and asking John if he was the Messiah and they heard this voice from heaven declaring Jesus as “*You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.*” wouldn’t that have made Jesus’s life a little easier to get people to believe in him?

January 19, 2025 – *Second Sunday after Epiphany*

The Gospel Lesson is from John chapter 2 verses 1-11

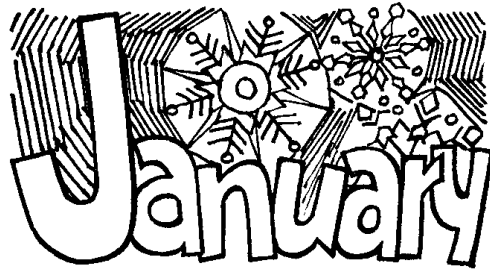
The third Sunday of January we get the story of the Wedding at Cana. This is a Mary moment of “momma”. I’m a mom. And a grandma to two little girls and soon, two little boys. I look at my son, whose nickname from his friends is “Bear”, who is around 6’6” and pretty big. Dan [although born and raised in California] was raised in a very southern style. He learned his “yes, ma’am’s” and “no, sir’s”, he was an Eagle Scout. But I recognize that “momma” moment of Mary’s. All she expected was for Jesus to do as he was “volun-told”. She tells Jesus about the problem, (they are out of wine) and his “sassy” response, “Woman, why do you involve me?” Note her answer: nothing to him. She just turns to the servants and tells them, “Do whatever he tells you.” And walks away! Jesus is now stuck. She remembers that 12-year-old boy and is giving him some of his own back. Jesus turns water into wine. This is his first miracle. This is his revelation of himself in wine at a common wedding. This is where, although in his mind it was not his time, he fully demonstrated his perfect obedience to his mother, as a human son. He continues in his perfect obedience to his Father, as His Divine Son even to death.

January 26, 2025 – *Third Sunday after Epiphany*

The Gospel Lesson is from Luke chapter 4 verses 14-21

The last Sunday of January Jesus is back in his home town. Here Jesus returns to Nazareth and reads from prophet Isaiah in the synagogue. A common happening in their worship. What is not so common is for the reader to sit down and say, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” Jesus proclaims himself as being anointed by God “to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” As we continue on the journey through Jesus’s life in the various Gospels, we find these prophecies are actually fulfilled in his life on earth. Even now, how would we react if someone did this in our own assembly? Especially if it was someone we have known for a long time? Would we believe or would we react like those in Nazareth, and drive them out? Would we be in fear of God’s retribution for allowing someone to say this and get away with it? Remember, the Jewish people are under Roman rule. They have lived through various captivities when God has chastised them before. Try as we might, it is difficult to listen to someone say astounding things and just let it pass; especially if we have known the person for a long time. These people have watched Jesus grow up. They probably remember Jesus wandering off when he was 12 and causing his parents worry. They probably remember Jesus and his cousin John running around town as kids. They surely remember Jesus working in Joseph’s carpenter shop. We don’t expect this kind of behavior from some kid we watched grow up. We know we are special enough to have this happen to us in our lives. But we need to remember we are special enough. God chose to create you just as you are. God loves you unconditionally, just as you are. Jesus died for you so you could hear and believe the Good News.

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 website: www.redeemerlutheransealbeach.com



Interim Pastor: Bishop Murray Finck, Bishop Emeritus

2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 <i>New Year's Day</i> NO Office Hours	2	3	4
5 EPIPHANY SUNDAY 10:30 Holy Communion Service	6 EPIPHANY	7	8 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Office Hours 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. Bible Study	9	10	11
12 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD 10:30 Holy Communion Service	13	14	15 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Office Hours 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. Bible Study 1:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting	16	17	18
19 10:30 Holy Communion Service	20 NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE <i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</i>	21	22 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Office Hours 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. Bible Study	23	24	25
26 10:30 Holy Communion Service Birthdays Celebrated	27	28	29 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Office Hours 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. Bible Study	30	31	