

Redeemer's Reflections

Discovering Christ's community through building relationships

AUGUST/ SEPTEMBER 2026

This is a monthly newsletter
Of Redeemer's Lutheran
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STAFF

Supply Pstr Soren Flessen

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Pianist/Organ– Amy Ogarek

President- Steve Nowlan

Vice President- Art James

Redeemer's family.

The last 11 months have been a whirlwind of change and new direction for Debby and I, but I believe we can finally say the dust has settled! We are happy to be in our new condo, and it feels like “home” each passing day! It is great to be closer to Danielle, Ehan, and Amalia. Watching your grandchildren grow and spend time together is priceless.

We are excited for the future. Thank you to all for your prayers and well wishes on our new journey and home. Being able to pause and take a breath, I realize that this year Debby and I have been members of Redeemer's congregation for 40 years now. This is truly a spiritual family of peace and

serenity that we have come to love and care for. It is my honor and privilege to be of service to this church and all of you. Thank you for your trust and encouragement all of these years. I look forward to what is still to come.

Pastor is putting together an agenda for a new Faith and Life series to begin soon. We have always had great success with these series and wonderful participation. Please keep this in mind for early Fall. More information to come!

I still have a little work left to take care of with replacing some tile in the fellowship hall in the basement. The kitchen, library, and 2 classroom floors are done and library book shelves are back in, along with a couple of other little projects. What can I say- I am a little slower these days, plus a little longer drive!

Outdoor worships have been going well with good attendance and co-operating weather. Thank you to all for making this work each year.

Mick, thank you for keeping the lawn looking good this summer.

Marilyn, your gardens look beautiful as they do every year. Much appreciation for all the hard work and dedication to the pantry and the work you do for the community.

Sophie & Jim, thank you for your gift of the battery-operated candles that seem to be working out well. Your generosity is much appreciated.

Gary R., thank you for being you! I appreciate all you do and am so thankful that you always have my back. You are a huge asset to our congregation. Not everyone understands that, I do, thank you brother.

Jan, Amy, Linda, Deb, and BC, thank you all for bringing your talents to worship every week. You are all angels.

Thank you to the congregation at Redeemer's. We may be small but, together we are mighty. We ALL make this work together!



Notes

from our President

May God continue to bless this congregation-

Your humble servant, Steve

Time

As I get older, I am amazed at how long I have been here. 79 years in fact. And As I get older, I become more aware of the passage of time. The clock is ticking; I have always been aware of time. How long to get to work how long to make dinner, that sort of thing. Practical things.

As I look back on my own life-and I cannot not look back-I see a whole decade that I could say that I wasted. Or I could say that without those experiences, I would not be who I am today- for better or worse. Having this much time on the planet gives one much to remember and much to forget. I enjoy remembering, much like Billie Pilgrim in Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse Five, I am unstuck in time. I have no control over what I remember and when. I enjoy it-It helps me to understand how precious time is.

The opening scenes in saving private Ryan is not the D-Day scenes but much later as a middle-aged man walks in an overseas military graveyard, looking for a particular grave. The man is accompanied by his wife and about five grown children. There is no dialogue. The man breaks down and cries at the grave as the scene dissolve to Omaha beach on D-day. He is private Ryan and, in the end, he visits the grave of the man who died to give Ryan a life to live. Ryan wants to know that he is a good man.



*From our
VP*

I think we all ask that same question. Have I lived a good life, been a good person, have I earned the time I have been given.

In November of 1942, a ship-the USS Juneau-was sunk by an enemy sub, On the Juneau were five brothers from the same family, the Sullivan brothers-they all died. Because of that tragedy sole surviving sons cannot be sent to a war zone. I benefited from that because I was at the time the last of the James's. I could serve, and did, but not be sent to Vietnam thanks to their sacrifice.

I did not know of that rule when I was drafted into the Army, I just knew that I did not want to shoot anyone. I was given the opportunity to be a Medic if I signed up for an extra year which I did. Silly me, I would likely have been in the Quartermaster core for two years. Although I believed that I owed my country my service, I just did not believe myself to be combat material.

So given that circumstance I have made good use of the time I have been given. I think that we all hope to leave a good legacy. And not just a legacy but also how we see our final judgement. The Egyptians thought that your heart would be balanced against a feather and if your heart was lighter, off to heaven you go.

We live in hope that God's promises are true (Faith), and that Jesus has died for our sins He has made that sacrifice and our job is to share that Good news with others by loving others as he has loved us. Just like Private Ryan, we should ask ourselves if we have lived a "Good" life. Are we a good person?

Art



Many thanks to Pastor Flessen, who is celebrating

8 years with his Redeemer's family!



WOMAN TO WOMAN

So, recently I had some extensive dental work done and it required sitting in the chair for over an hour. There were some blank moments waiting on things to numb or dry or whatever and to pass the time the assistant asked me some questions. For instance, how long have I been married and where did I meet my husband. The one question she asked I answered pretty much right away and then when I got home and thought it over, I came up with a dozen more answers.

So, here's the question and I'd be interested to hear what you might have replied. She asked, "What's something you miss from when you were growing up?" My answer was full-service gas stations. Of course, I had to explain it to her, and she thought it was something worth bringing back. Now after some time I came up with some other things.

How about double features at the theater for about \$.25 and you got some cartoons in between. That goes along with drive-in movies. Although we didn't have a car, the drive-in was less than a mile away and we climbed the hill behind the cars and my dad would "lip read" the movie for us. He was very convincing and it was years later when the movie came on TV that I found out the real story.



How about variety shows on TV. We are so spoiled with so many channels now-a-days, but you still won't find anything like The Carol Burnett Show or The Sonny and Cher Show. My dad was a huge fan of Dean Martin and Perry Como so we never missed their shows. Even Lawrence Welk fits the bill.

Every spring you could count on the Easter Parade, garage bands and in our neighborhood, we had pet parades. It was only 4 blocks long, but you'd be surprised at what animals were marching down Keeler. Not being able to have a dog in our apartment, I marched with my bowl of turtles.

And here's one more, remember those big ice chests with soda bottles in them? You'd stick your hand in the freezing water and swish around until you found your orange Crush, Hires root beer or plain old coke. The best part was the bottle opener was right there on the front of the chest so you could drink right away.

So there you have it. Anything you've been missing?

Til next month-----nice chatting with you
Jan



Finding Stability in the Midst of Change

We live in a world defined by constant transition. Whether we are watching the physical landscape shift from the vibrant green of summer to the rich gold of autumn, or navigating personal milestones like new careers, empty nests, or retirement, change is an inevitable part of the human experience.

Scripture speaks beautifully to these rhythms in

[Ecclesiastes 3:1](#): *"For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven."*

God designed creation to cycle through times of growth, rest, harvest, and renewal. While these transitions can sometimes feel unsettling or unpredictable, they serve as a powerful reminder that we are not the ones in control. Instead, they invite us to place our complete trust in the One who orchestrates it all.

When life's landscape shifts beneath your feet, remember these three foundational truths:

- **God Remains Constant:** Earthly seasons come and go, but Malachi 3:6 reassures us, *"I am the Lord, I do not change."* His promises, love, and character remain completely steadfast.
- **Every Season Has Purpose: Summer nurtures the fruit for harvest,** just as vibrant, abundant chapters build gratitude, connection, and deeper joy.
- **Grace Appears in the Present:** Rather than longing for the past or worrying about the future, look for the unique blessings and opportunities God has placed right in front of you today.

As we navigate this current season together as a church community, let us embrace the new rhythms, seek out God's handiwork in the transitions, and lean into the enduring comfort of His presence.

Note from the editor: I couldn't help myself. This is AI again. It is addictive.



Join us on September 6 and possibly October 4 for Outdoor worship.

Let's enjoy each other in the beauty of nature.



Fern Schara, Pat Kropack, Lottie White, Pete & Debbie Animagi, Mike & Traci Stephens, Ryder Conrad, Noah Coyle, Chris McAuliff, Gary Miller; John Tondini, Marie Burge, Tim Anthony, Laura Besowshek, Gary Cummins, The Kuzmanich family, Jim Thrun, Marilyn Sineni, Connie Martin, Winnie French



Winnie's new cell # 312-504-8373

*Nowlan's new home: 6815 N. Milwaukee #707
Niles, IL 60714*

John Whennen
15720 Central Av. Unit #1
Oak Forest, IL 60452
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AUGUST SELECTION

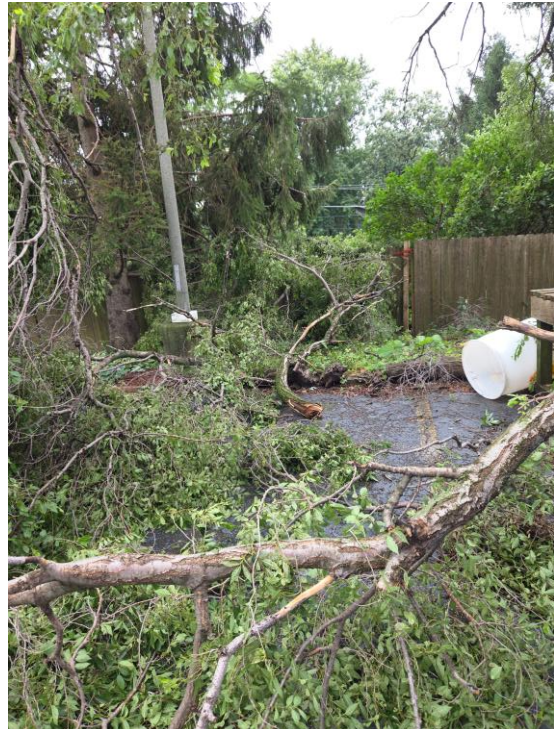
No book club in August. Read a good book.

SEPTEMBER SELECTION

Class Clown: The Memoirs of a Professional Wiseass: How I Went 77 Years Without Growing Up by Dave Barry.

In *Class Clown*, Dave Barry takes us on a hilarious ride, starting with a childhood largely spent throwing rocks for entertainment—there was no internet—and preparing for nuclear war by hiding under a classroom desk. After literally getting elected class clown in high school, he went to college, where, as an English major, he read snippets of great literature when he was not busy playing in a rock band (it was the sixties).

Join us on Monday, Sept. 21, 7pm at the home of Deb Nowlan. We will meet at 6pm in the church parking lot to carpool to Niles.



Some of the damage from our recent thunderstorm.



BIRTHDAYS

12, Jan Strojny
Carole Burge
27 Andrew Caswick

ANNIVERSARIES

23 Ernest & Nancy Ulloa



BIRTHDAYS

8 Jim Woolard
Kathy James
Marilyn Rickert
11 Jennah Kanacki
John Whennen
15 Carol DeVos
Max Minnick
25, Diana Carr
Cathy Thrun
29 Georgia Karash
30, Andrew Ogarek

ANNIVERSARIES

3....Chuck & Fern Schara
6, Tony & Amy Ogarek
8, Gary & Marilyn Rickert
10 Ray & MaryAnn White
27 Jackie & Pete Muscarella

August Reader

2 Erica Strojny
9 Alec Ogarek
16 Steve Nowlan
23 Gary Rickert
30 Tony Ogarek

September Readers

7 Jan Strojny
14 Bob Hecht
21 Dan Frawley
28 Jerry Marquardt

**Please let the office know if you do not see your special date above.
We would love to add you to the list.**

