

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

700 South Broadway
New Ulm, MN 56073

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WORSHIP

Sunday 9:00 AM

Monday 6:30 PM

*Following 1st & 3rd
Sundays of the Month
With Communion*

FELLOWSHIP TIME

10:00 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:15 AM

ADULT STUDY

10:30 AM

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Grant T. Bode, Pastor
Tammy Gramstad, Youth/Music
Jaime Kirtz, Secretary
Lucy Dolly, Organist
Jim Krapf, Custodian

CHURCH PHONE

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WEBSITE

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THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI SYNOD



REDEEMER VIEWS JANUARY 2009

*An excerpt for Epiphany from a sermon by Saint Peter Chrysologus (AD400-450).
St. Peter Chrysologus was the bishop of Ravenna, Italy in the middle of the 5th century.
His sermons were so inspiring that he was given the title "Chrysologus"
(greek for "Golden-worded") and was eventually declared a "Doctor of the Church."*

In the mystery of our Lord's incarnation there were clear indications of his eternal Godhead. Yet the great events we celebrate today disclose and reveal in different ways the fact that God himself took a human body. Mortal man, enshrouded always in darkness, must not be left in ignorance, and so be deprived of what he can understand and retain only by grace. In choosing to be born for us, God chose to be known by us. He therefore reveals himself in this way, in order that this great sacrament of his love may not be an occasion for us of great misunderstanding.

Today the Magi find, crying in a manger, the one they have followed as he shone in the sky. Today the Magi see clearly, in swaddling clothes, the one they have long awaited as he lay hidden among the stars.

Today the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, man in God, God in man, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body. As they look, they believe and do not question, as their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die. So the Gentiles, who were the last, become the first: the faith of the Magi is the first fruits of the belief of the Gentiles.

Today Christ enters the Jordan to wash away the sin of the world. John himself testifies that this is why he has come: *Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.* Today a servant lays his hand on the Lord, a man lays his hand on God, John lays his hand on Christ, not to forgive but to receive forgiveness.

Today, as the psalmist prophesied: *The voice of the Lord is heard above the waters.* What does the voice say? *This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Today the Holy Spirit hovers over the waters in the likeness of a dove. A dove announced to Noah that the flood had disappeared from the earth; so now a dove is to reveal that the world's shipwreck is at an end for ever. The sign is no longer an olive-shoot of the old stock: instead, the Spirit pours out on Christ's head the full richness of a new anointing by the Father, to fulfill what the psalmist had prophesied: *Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows.*

Today Christ works the first of his signs from heaven by turning water into wine. But water has still to be changed into the sacrament of his blood, so that Christ may offer spiritual drink from the chalice of his body, to fulfill the psalmist's prophecy: *How excellent is my chalice, warming my spirit.*

Pastoral Annual Report for 2008

Each year gives us an opportunity to reflect. Some have experienced in the past year great joy... graduation from college perhaps or the birth of a new baby, or maybe the purchase of a home or the beginning of a new job. Others over the past year have experienced sorrow... the loss of a loved one, an injury or medical problem, maybe the loss of house or job. The Good News of Christ though is that in all circumstances of life he is with us, for we read his promise... *I am with you always, to the very end of the age. Mt. 28:20* Whether in good or difficult times we look to our Lord for guidance purpose and love. We trust that in God all things work for the good of those who love him (Rom. 8:28). When we gather together as a congregation we gather to worship the Triune God and most of all to receive from him his blessing by the hearing of his holy Word and the receiving of the Holy Sacraments. Together we are the body of Christ in the world (1Co 12:27). We inspired by our Lord are to reflect his love and light with one another and with all people so that whatever the year may bring us — we might know Christ and confess with true faith the hope we have in his Name.

n WORSHIP & CHURCH LIFE:

- § New Carillon System. For a number of years the outside carillon did not work and the inside system was aging to the point the parts were no longer available. This past fall we were able to update this with a state of the art digital system that has a wide range of pealing and tolling bells along with nearly 800 (if I remember correctly) programmed hymns. It chimes on the hour and currently is set to play a few hymns throughout the day.
- § New Hymnals. Well almost new. Last year we purchased the Lutheran Service Book—LSB. What a blessing this worship resource is! New and familiar liturgies, hymns and service settings that give variety to our worship life and still retain our beautiful heritage as a liturgical church that cherishes her rich traditions and practices. We are learning new service orders and are adding gradually to our list of “familiar and favorite hymns”.
- § Our bi-monthly Monday worship service provides an opportunity to worship for those who are gone on the weekend or are shift-workers. We average between 20-25 in numbers.
- § A number of special services such as Holidays, Advent and Lenten Services.
- § Children sermons. Children Worship Tote Bags for our little worshippers.
- § A joint worship service each year with Immanuel, Courtland. This year at Redeemer January 25 at 9:00AM.
- § A good number of Baptisms and some new members. Our elders continue to work steadily to encourage worship by regular members especially those who have become inactive. We pray the day soon arrives where the positive growth during the year of new members and reactivated members can outperform the removal of long term inactives.
- § Printed sermon copies and home visits with pastor as scheduled throughout the year.
- § Altar Guild and various volunteers (ushers/counters) that help with various details of worship life.
- § A fellowship time after worship to foster a warm and caring community within our congregation.
- § Important dates... April 21, 1968 (40 years ago last year) building was dedicated which was recognized in our worship service that week. FYI our congregation was established September 14, 1947 which means this coming year Redeemer Lutheran Church will have existed 62 years.

n BIBLE STUDY & EDUCATION LIFE:

- § Sunday morning Adult Bible Studies began with a study of the Sermon on the Mount and currently we are studying Luke's Christmas (Chp. 1-2). And throughout the year we always have some Christian book studies. Last summer we did a study on Mormonism and how to share the True Gospel of Jesus Christ with Mormons.
- § Evangelism Board hosted a Evangelism Workshop “Equipping to Share” this past year. We had nearly 40 attend.
- § This past fall we have a grief study using as our study the book by C.S. Lewis's “A Grief Observed”.
- § Sunday School (Preschool-High School) with rotating stations.
- § LWML Bible Studies, Faith, Hope and Charity, Working Women's Study, the occasional ad-hoc study topic.
- § An exciting VBS program this past summer with Camp Omega Counselors.
- § Our Confirmation Program. The program focuses on Old and New Testament Lessons for grades 5-6, and the Catechism, Bible, Hymnal for grades 7-8. And too group events including and servant event opportunities. Last year we introduced some singing as well and the classes have sung for an Advent service. We plan the same for Lent.
- § Support of Immanuel's parochial grade school. We have currently 11 students there that are members at Redeemer out of 56 total students. Parents within the congregation are encouraged to consider Christian schooling for their children.

n YOUTH LIFE:

- § Our youth groups (RAY and LYF) continue to be active. With monthly scheduled activities within our congregation, and too events that involve our circuit and district. The Board of Youth continues to plan activities and we encourage parents to bring their children/teenagers to these events and to be helpful in carrying them out by volunteering their own time and talent to make it a success.

n MUSIC LIFE:

§ We are grateful for our organist Lucy Dolly. And too for Marilyn Schauland on occasion, as well as for Tammy our Director of Music. A BIG thank you to the members of our Choirs, Hand Bell – Youth and Adult, and all who contribute their talents for special music in our worship services.

n SENIORS, SHUT-INS, NURSING HOME VISITING:

§ Every other month a chapel service at Oak Hills conducted by Pastor with Scripture, hymns and sermon.
§ Hospital, shut-in, nursing home visits by Pastor monthly with Holy Communion. CALL PASTOR if you are hospitalized or in need of special spiritual care. Do not assume he knows or someone has told him. CALL the OFFICE or HIM directly.
§ “Prayer Shawls” made for those undergoing illness.

n CHURCH STAFF, COUNCIL, AND VOLUNTEERS

§ Thank you to Jaime, our parish secretary.
§ Thank you to Lucy and Tammy for their work, as well as Jim and Jan Krapf who keep our building clean and presentable.
§ Wonderful volunteers who give of themselves on various boards and Church positions, as well as the many members who serve and volunteer on special Church fundraiser events, projects, jobs, or needs that arise.
§ Jeanne Holten, Cindy Wiederhoeft and all at Kinder Haus Daycare that provide a loving Christian environment for children from our congregation and community.

n BUILDING – MAINTENANCE – AND MISCELLANEOUS

§ New Handicap Bathroom.
§ New doors. Each year we are looking to continue to replace other exterior doors that need updating.
§ New paint in our halls and some of our classrooms. New carpet and chairs in our Sunday School video room.
§ Upcoming projects such as Kitchen remodeling, updating of existing bathrooms (Voter’s Action Needed to proceed)

§ A new look for our Church website address: www.redeemernewulm.net

Where are our future goals, vision, and growth areas?

- n Congregational worship continues to be the #1 goal. Worship attendance reflects our commitment and love for Christ and His Bride the Church for which he shed his blood. We are a congregation of almost 600 souls with an average worship attendance on Sundays/Mondays of a little under 200 or so, thus about 30%. Our Bd. of Elders has worked progressively with care and diligence throughout the past few years to encourage inactive members to worship regularly, and has been successful in bringing our congregational roster more in line with what is our actual participating membership. It is our intention that if you have been on the receiving end of letters or phone calls about worship attendance that you would make it a higher priority this new year. We desire and expect members on the roster of our congregation to be present in worship. The only exclusions should be shut-ins, nursing home, or those with medical needs that require home pastoral communion visits.
- n Our congregation strives to be holistic in ministry. Our desire is to always think of our congregation not as segments of different interests, but as one body under the Headship of Christ. Overall worship, activities, outings, special events are always geared with the mind-set of including everyone. This continues to be a goal to work towards.
- n Congregational Involvement . Although I believe this congregation does a good job of involving as many members as possible in various ministries (teachers, choirs, readers, and service groups) we can always improve. We give thanks for our Church Officers and Board members and volunteers in all capacities. Be sure to encourage them, and help them when tasks need doing. We are always in need of “new” members volunteering for various boards and positions of need.
- n Giving and Missions. Our general budget ran in the red this year \$18,000.00. We pray that you would remember our congregational needs and ministry. Thank you to ALL who give so generously for the ministry of our congregation. Member offering boxes are given to all adults and/or families. Ask the church office for a box if you cannot locate yours in your church mailbox in the narthex.
- n Inviting people to Church! Be evangelical and mission minded! Share the good news by inviting a friend to Church with you. The Church of our Lord grows because people blessed by the Spirit, live and speak well of their Church-family, which causes others to desire to come and hear the Word and be a part of that Christ-family! Be sure to invite new neighbors and people in town to our Church and be kind, warm and welcoming to all who worship with and around you. Remember the stranger sitting next to you may be an angel in disguise (Heb. 13:2).