

CROSSING THE BRIDGE

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL, STUART, FL

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

Now

- Continue *90 Days of Prayers*
- Continue reading materials; finalize your Spiritual Renewal Pledge Sheet and begin your chosen “exercises”
- Set aside time to attend the prayer vigil this weekend

Tuesday, Feb. 12

Call my RSVP to Home Gathering Host

Saturday, Feb. 16 & Sunday, Feb. 17

Participate in Prayer Vigil and Spiritual Commitment Events

Wednesday, Feb. 20 — Sunday, Mar. 3

Attend a Home Gathering
RSVP to Pledge Event

Sunday, Mar. 10

Attend Pledge Event
Return Pledge Card

Sunday, April 14

Log On!

Check out our link on the Redeemer Lutheran Church & School website home page for updated information about the campaign!

www.redeemerstuart.com

Home Gatherings Bring Members Together

This weekend, we conclude our “Time in the Wilderness” with a 24-hour Prayer Vigil. If you have not officially signed up, please take a few minutes, a half hour, or more to come to church and pray anytime from 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, February 16 ,until 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, February 17.

The next big campaign event will actually take place during the last two weeks of February. A number of our members have graciously agreed to open their homes to host Home Gatherings so that we can all learn about the *Crossing the Bridge to the Future...Together* Campaign, share our thoughts and come together to support the campaign.

Many of you have or will be receiving an invitation in the mail to one of the scheduled Home Gatherings. Please make every effort to attend a Home Gathering.

If you cannot attend, please contact your host to find another Home Gathering that is a better fit with your schedule.

Here is a peek at the itinerary:

- ◆ Chit chat, introductions, and friendly conversation
- ◆ Presentation of the campaign brochure
- ◆ Presentation of the campaign video
- ◆ Sharing of hopes and dreams for Redeemer
- ◆ Bible study on stewardship
- ◆ Closing Prayer and refreshments

There will be NO pledge cards at the Home Gatherings. The meeting should last about an hour and a half, but this is an important component of the campaign.

We want all of our Redeemer families to attend these important meetings. Please make every effort to attend!

Case Statement

Our members, school families, and visitors cross many bridges to come to Redeemer, whether year round or for a season. Bridges take us places. Bridges allow us to move past or over challenging terrain. Over time, our bridges also need care and maintenance.

Redeemer Lutheran Church and School is facing some challenging terrain to cross. Christ and His cross are able to bridge any terrain no matter how rough the waves or how much the tide surges.

God chooses each of us to be stewards of His resources at Redeemer. We have some mission-related capital improvements to address, a debt-repayment bridge to cross that will free up future offerings, and a wealth of mission opportunities to span. All these will help us increase support for our mission of “reaching out into the community to be the best for the community.”

Before we cross this stewardship bridge, God is challenging us and supporting us in greater commitment to His Word and Sacraments. With this increased faith, let’s cross this bridge to the future...together.



“Crossing the Bridge to the Future...Together”

Dear Friend of THE Redeemer,

I think all of us would agree that Mother Theresa was a gift of God to the Christian Church. Coming from a well-to-do family, she gave it all up to minister to the poorest of the poor in Calcutta.

What would ever motivate a person to do something like that? I believe it is two things. One is having a relationship with the Savior and being filled with the knowledge of His love. As Paul says, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for our sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich.” (2 Corinthians 8:9) Second is being clothed with the Savior’s compassion. “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience....” (Colossians 3:12)

May we all with the Holy Spirit’s infilling capture this knowledge of unmerited grace and unbridled compassion, and may we together cross the bridge into the future and make a godly difference in our community.

Crossing the Bridge to the Future...Together,
Pastor Dave



Remember to keep praying the prayers in the 90 Days of Prayer booklet. Important campaign dates are also listed in the booklet.



Campaign Video

If you need just one more reason to attend a Home Gathering, consider that this will be your best opportunity to view the *Crossing the Bridge to the Future...Together* video that has been produced by Jack Gebhardt in our own Redeemer Lutheran Church and School.

Jack has been working with Dave Shinnebarger to film, edit, and finalize the video which will be shown in DVD format at

the Home Gatherings from February 20 through March 3.

We were able to save on the cost of hiring professionals to produce this video. A big thank you to Jack, Dave, and all of the members who were the “video stars” for this production!

Giving Cheerfully

Rev. Matt Harrison in his book “A Little Book on Joy” describes the day when “the fetters on the little constricted box in my heart broke.” While walking the marketplace in an old Kisumu market in Africa, Rev. Harrison notes that his “natural inclination (and that of everyone I’ve ever known) is to negotiate, to walk away, to offer half, no matter what the asking price.” It is man’s (and woman’s) natural inclination to only offer half. “Offering half” simply is another way of saying “offering less.” We always want to offer less and to keep more. That’s because of the “fetters on the little constricted box” in our heart.

To bring us all to the point of “offering more” many would use God’s Word of Law. The Law with its “you shall,” “you should,” and “you ought” phrases can guilt many a person into giving more. But that kind of giving is without joy. It’s not cheerful. The Lord wants us to give “cheerfully.” Cheerful givers give because they want to give. Givers who want to give, give more and give more often.

The Law can’t make us “cheerful givers.” It only makes us “guilty givers.” Cheerful giving is the fruit of the Gospel of God. Cheerful giving comes from the faith and knowledge that God is good, that He’s provided (providing) all that we need to support this body and life, and that from His

bounty we can give back to Him and to our neighbors. When faith is clinging to God’s bounty in Christ, there is no worry about money. Instead, there is joy. With joyful hearts, rooted in the Gospel of Christ and Him crucified, God’s people can return to Him a tithe, a special offering, a gift, not out of guilt but joy.

Rev. Harrison, fetters broken and his heart opened by the Gospel, shopped the marketplace. And rather than “offering half” turned the tables and stunned a local shop owner. Eyeing a beautifully carved stone box, he asked the man, “How much?” “Three dollars,” was the reply. “No. Can’t do it,” retorted Pr. Harrison. Back and forth went the two until finally Pr. Harrison said, “I’ll give you five dollars!” He offered and gave more than half, more than cost, more than he needed to. He joyfully gave because he had been set free from guilt and was free in Christ. Indeed, God is merciful to those who repent. Cheerful givers delight His heart because cheerful giving flows from faith in the forgiveness of sins. It is the sign of the heart renewed in Christ, the source of all joy, even the joy of giving.

Reverend Tony Sikora
Hope Lutheran Church
DeWitt, Michigan

Redeemer Members Come Together for Pledge Event

Our Capital Campaign Pledge Event will be held Sunday, March 10. There will be only one worship service at 10:00 a.m. The special guest preacher will be Dr. Milan Weerts of Woodlands Lutheran Church in Montverde, Florida. Directly following the service, we will all join together in the gym for the Celebration Banquet. (See enclosed invitation for details.)

You can RSVP at a Home Gathering or by calling the church office. All members of the congregation should attend this key event of our *Crossing the Bridge to the Future...Together* Campaign.



Financial Accountability

The voters of Redeemer, upon recommendation of the Finance Committee and Church Council, approved the capital campaign in 2012 to increase support for Redeemer’s mission of reaching out into the community and beyond to share the love of Christ with everyone. Funds raised will be utilized as follows:

- 40% to reduce the current debt (mortgage) so that funds will be freed up to support the missions and ministries of Redeemer.
- 40% for campus capital improvements to better serve the community who come on campus and to expand mission opportunities.
- 20% for Redeemer’s mission outreach programs (to be researched by the Board of Christian Outreach, who will make the recommendations to the voters).

Using the above guidelines, campaign proceeds will be distributed on a regular basis after May 1, 2013, as determined by the Finance Committee and Church Council, so that:

- The mortgage principal can be paid down as quickly as possible.
- Improvements around the campus can be made as funding becomes available. The Properties Board will prioritize the needed improvements based on safety, liability, necessity, and outreach potential as well as funding availability.
- Current and/or new mission project(s) can begin or be expanded as proposed by the Board of Christian Outreach and approved by the voters.

Regular reports of distributions and results will be made to the congregation and school families and friends.



Important Dates

- Feb. 16** **Prayer Vigil begins on Saturday and ends on Sunday.**
- Feb. 17** **Spiritual Commitment Sunday**
We come together to celebrate the completion of the “Time in the Wilderness”(spiritual examination) phase of the campaign and joyfully bring our spiritual pledges.
- Feb. 20-Mar.3** Home Gathering meetings in members’ homes and chosen gathering places occur.
- Feb. 24** **Begin three Sundays of sermons, Bible studies and testimonies on stewardship**
- Mar. 10** **Pledge Event (One worship service at 10:00 a.m. followed by Celebration Banquet**
We come together to celebrate the end of the stewardship phase of the campaign and joyfully bring our stewardship pledges.
- Mar. 11** Commitment Team begins to reach out to all members who still need to respond with a pledge of financial or prayer support for the campaign.
- Apr. 14** **Celebration Sunday**
The pledge total is announced during worship services, and we offer thanks to God for His abundant blessings to us.