

**REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH  
LCMS**

# BLESSED



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VOLUME 10 ISSUE 3**

*Redeemer Reflection Newsletter*

*Loving People To Christ*

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# REDEEMER REFLECTION

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## ANY WAY YOU SAY IT

by Pastor Michael Geml

In the tradition of common American speech patterns, some words seem to have one or more acceptable pronunciations. At the beginning of a wedding ceremony, for example, one can expect to hear the word, “beloved” as in “dearly beloved.” For some reason, maybe because it sounds more formal, the word when used in the context of the wedding ceremony is given three distinct syllables. “Dearly be-love-ed.” It would mean the same with either pronunciation. But is the statement true? Is it possible that everyone in attendance at the wedding is, “dearly beloved?” What if there are some who are only moderately beloved? or marginally beloved?

What about the word, “Blessed.” The proper way is to pronounce it as a two-syllable word, Bless-Ed. (Must be nice to be Ed.) But we know that it is used also as a one-syllable word. As with the word “beloved” so it is with “blessed.” Say it anyway you choose and it will have the same meaning. But what is the real meaning of this important word? We use it quite frequently. “I am so blessed.” “God bless you” (after the sneeze). “Our family has been so



blessed.” “God bless our country.” We even hear the word at the close of most every worship service, “The Lord bless you and keep you...”

While there are slight variations of meaning, the most traditional meaning of the word, “blessed,” is to entreat the favor of God. “The Lord look upon you with favor...” That is exactly what God has done even

before we could ever ask of Him. Is everyone blessed by God? Yes. The blessings of God come even to those who acknowledge Him not. But for those who are people of faith, the Lord has blessed us with the eternal truth of His love that we see and receive by faith in Jesus. In Jesus Christ we are the be-love-ed and the blessed. And because we are in that secure position, we should be bold to speak about our having been blessed with forgiveness, life, and salvation. But also, we must be willing and able to let the world know that the blessings we enjoy *are* the blessing God wants all people to have. After all, isn’t it true that, “Tis more bless-ed to give than to receive?”

The blessing of Almighty God be with us and sustain us all.

Pastor Geml

## WHOSE BLESSING IS IT?

*“Whose Blessing is It”* written by Rev. Harry Henneman first appeared at [michiganintouch.com](http://michiganintouch.com), the official blog of the Michigan District, LCMS on October 12, 2012. Reprinted with permission.

**Little children quickly learn that when the pastor raises his hands and offers the benediction, it’s almost time to go. Even adults sometimes forget what is really happening in those few closing moments of worship.**

It had been over two years since Moses told Pharaoh, *“This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says: ‘Let my people go!’”* Now Moses had called the Israelites to the Tent of Meeting in the Desert of Sinai to receive the Lord’s instructions for their life together. At that time Aaron, the brother of Moses, acted as the chief pastor under the supervision of Moses. Aaron’s sons assisted him as he directed the worship life and the care of the people.

In *Numbers 6:23-26* we are told that the Lord told Moses:

*“Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: ‘The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; The Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.’”*

These words make up what is commonly known as “The Aaronic Benediction.” These “good words” conveyed to the people at the close of almost every worship service are not to be confused with the command: “Let my people go!”

Something very wonderful and powerful is happening in that moment. Notice what the Lord tells Moses in the very next verse (27): *“So they will put*

*My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.”*

Are you aware of the fact that when the blessing is pronounced this is not just the good will of the pastor being expressed? The LORD is “putting His name on us.” These are not just kind words. The LORD is at work, and to remind us of this the pastor raises his hands as if reaching heavenward, signaling that blessings are about to be showered from on high.

This same dynamic is found throughout the worship service. When he pronounces the Absolution, this is not just a pastor considering our transgressions and telling us that everything will be all right. The LORD is covering the load of our sins with the precious blood of Christ. When the pastor cradles an infant in his arms before the baptismal font, the awesome thing that takes place is not seen in the loving action of the pastor but rather in the activity of a great and holy God who is receiving that little one into His family, promising grace and forgiveness for sin and actually granting that child eternal life in His Kingdom.

Again, notice: *“The LORD bless you ...”* (Not Aaron, not the pastor, but THE LORD!) Whether we talk about our physical or spiritual life, our social or family life, the holy God is the source of all that is good. (James 1:17) Knowing that, and believing that, makes us eager to receive His blessing.

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*“The LORD make His face to shine upon you.” According to Scripture, a face turned toward us signals that someone is taking joy in us. A face turned away is a sign of disapproval. As much as we deserve it, our Lord does not turn away from us. He looks upon us with love and compassion.*

## THOMAS MICHAEL - 1948

by Cathie Miller

I recently dreamed of my brother. A very strange dream indeed, for I rarely even think of him, let alone dream of him. I never met Thomas Michael; he was born and died before I made my entrance into this world. There are no pictures of him. The only remembrances I have of my sibling are the few words my parents spoke of him over the years. So, suddenly to dream of him was somewhat startling.

It all started with the stockings. This year I decided I wanted to decorate my stairway railing for Christmas with stockings in remembrance and recognition of loved ones. The first row of spindles was adorned with four of them. One each for my and Teddy's parents. Each had a Christmas scene woven into the woolen sock, a name embroidered at the top, and a red satin ribbon for attachment. Four more stockings worked their way to the landing; these for our four grandchildren. Finally, the third and largest set graced the top of the stairs in all its glory. One stocking apiece for each son and his mate. One for both Teddy and me. Even one for Sir Tuggles, our beloved dog!

I proudly stood back and admired my work. It was perfectly complete. My whole family right there with me, with each step I took, up and down the stairs, all through the holidays. But, for some strange reason, I suddenly thought of my brother. I sadly realized that he had never gotten to be part of our family. He had never gotten to experience the joys of Christmas. The sights and sounds and magical feeling of the season of the Savior's birth.

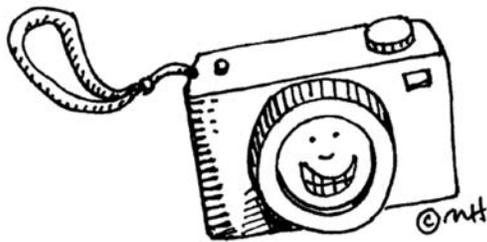
Thomas Michael Martin was born on May 2, 1948, two months too soon. A

glass incubator was his only home for eleven days before he succumbed to immature and failing lungs. Not even a blood transfusion could save him. My parents never got to hold their fragile son, except to personally carry his tiny coffin down the aisle in church, prior to burying him in a little cemetery near the graves of his great-grandparents. That is all that can be written of his time on Earth. But, though brief, his little life should never be forgotten. Though brief, his little life should always be remembered.

So, a Christmas stocking was made for Thomas Michael. And, it was lovingly hung on the railing, at the top of the stairs, right between the stockings of his two nephews. The grandkids were the first to notice the unusual and unfamiliar stocking in a picture we sent, and I spent some time writing to them about the brother I never knew. I guess those thoughts settled in my brain, and were born into a dream several nights later, after a long, distressing week, filled with the concerns of this world. I never once met him. I never once saw a picture of him. And, yet I knew the tall, slender boy standing before me in my dream was Thomas Michael. A psychologist would probably say that I needed some comfort that night. And, my mind gave me that relief in the shadowy form of a brother sent to reassure his sister that her worries were for naught. I can't explain it. Except to say that it gave me a slight shiver, followed by a measure of gentle peace. I Thessalonians 4:13 says, "*But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*"

I know that I will truly meet my brother in Heaven one day. My faith

comes from my Father in Heaven, by His grace. Through the abundant love and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, His Son. Born out in the words of Holy Scripture. So, in Heaven, I will tell my brother that he was never forgotten. That he was always remembered. That he, too, had a Christmas stocking. And, that it was named Thomas Michael - 1948.



### WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

The *Reflection* is in dire need of people willing to take and share pictures of church activities and events with our newsletter. The same deadline applies to photos as to print articles, the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. The editor is not always able to participate in events *and* take photos too. We'd love to have other perspectives and "views from the pews" to share with our congregation and online followers, with more photography selections available.

A camera, and a flash drive or thumb drive are all that are required to share your photography with the Redeemer newsletter readership. The drives would be returned to you after each month's printing. If interested, email our editor, Peggy Bennitt at [bennitt49@yahoo.com](mailto:bennitt49@yahoo.com), or give her a call at 517-529-3924.



## MARCH

Laura VanDerWeide	03/01
Sean Anderson	03/02
Michaela Biegner	03/02
Kevin Smith	03/04
James Rose	03/05
Dale Stevens	03/05
Joshua McFarland	03/06
Sara Finton	03/07
Jacob Voss	03/07
Ivan Wetters	03/07
Dawn Reaume	03/10
Bob Melton	03/10
Shannon Lockwood	03/11
Kim McFarland	03/13
Julie Wyatt	03/15
Anna Coon	03/18
Dustin Farley	03/23
Bernice Wait	03/23
Rebecca Huhn	03/25
Marilyn Mantek	03/27
Lynette Luksan	03/30
Naomi Drake	03/31

## REDEEMER FAMILY LIFE OPPORTUNITIES

by Kimber Walsh, CFLE, Director of Family  
Life Ministries at Redeemer Lutheran Church



*Faith Legacy* is a series in which parents are given resources to support them as they raise their children in the faith. As the church, it is our role to partner with parents in the faith formation of their children, and this is one of the ways we do that.

### **Families with 8-Year-Olds:**

**Please note:** the final *First Bible Session*, as well as the Blessing Event date, has changed to Sunday, March 5.

First Bible Session for parents and 8-year-olds will be Sunday, March 5. It will be followed by the blessing event during the 10:30 a.m. worship service.

### **Families with 4-Year-Olds**

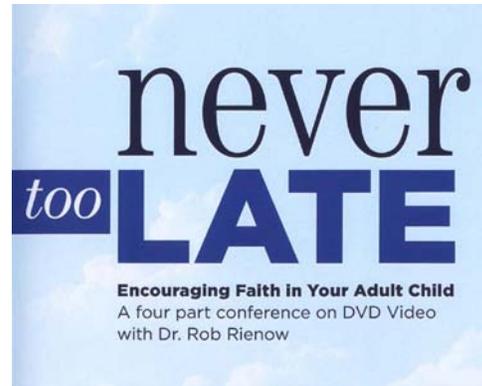
We are planning to schedule three sessions after Easter (spring or early summer). You will be receiving a letter with details about that. If you have a 4-year-old that may not be on our lists, please contact Kimber Walsh at [kimberwalsh@comcast.net](mailto:kimberwalsh@comcast.net) or 517-750-3500.

*“If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”*

C. S. Lewis

*Do not neglect the gift that is in you.*

1 Timothy 4:14



Have your adult children fallen away from the faith? Or are they simply disengaged with the faith they were once engaged with? Are you wondering how you impact them now that they're grown? This is the encouragement you've been looking for. "Never Too Late," a DVD series by family ministry expert, Dr. Rob Rienow, will help you see it's never too late for you to point your child toward Christ:

*Your children are not kids anymore. They are grown, some are out of the house, and perhaps they even have families of their own. The problem is that they are struggling with faith. Perhaps they never committed to follow Christ when they were younger. Or when they were kids they seemed to have a strong faith in God, but over the years, that faith has fallen to the wayside. The mission of parenting doesn't end when our kids become adults, but it does change. The "Never Too Late" series will encourage you that you are not alone, and that it is not too late for God to use you to point your adult child's heart toward Christ.*

You are not alone! This is one of the highest needs among our Redeemer family. Join other parents right where you are Sundays, March 5, 12, 19, and

26 in the church library 3:00-4:15 p.m.  
Please direct any questions to Kimber  
Walsh at [kimberwalsh@comcast.net](mailto:kimberwalsh@comcast.net) or  
517-750-3500.

## ALONG THE WAY

by Kimber Walsh, CFLE, Director of Family  
Life Ministries at Redeemer Lutheran Church



The “luck o’ the Irish” is a big theme this time of year. Living in the city with the largest Irish festival outside of Ireland, I saw that theme being lived out all year long. People go to extreme lengths to do something lucky or to avoid something that’s unlucky. There’s just one problem...there’s no such thing as luck. There’s no four-leaf clover; no rabbit’s foot; no certain unwashed pair of underwear (yuck!) that will happen to bring anyone any better fortune on a given day. There’s also no black cat; no broken mirror; no Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> that will ever happen to bring anyone any worse fortune either. Sorry to burst a bubble. These superstitions are the idea that things happen by chance. That the objects or the circumstances hold the power, but they don’t because they can’t!

When good things happen, they are blessings from God. We are incredibly blessed by God each day. And even when trials happen, *and they will happen because of sin in this world*, we are still incredibly blessed by God. Those hard

days, we may have to look a little bit harder to see the blessings, but they’re there. My brother-in-law once challenged us to look for five blessings for every challenge we could see. At first that was difficult, especially because we couldn’t repeat what we’d already said. After some practice, though, two things happened:

1. we stopped seeing so many challenges and things to complain about (because we didn’t want to have to counter them all with blessings!)
2. we saw more and more blessings well beyond the quota.

Instead of luck, let’s talk about the blessings God gives this St. Patrick’s Day:



Who is St. Patrick?—St. Patrick was a Christian missionary to Ireland in the 400’s. He shared the faith first with the heads of clans and then partnered with them, and using their influence, helped to convert whole clans to faith in Christ as Savior. St. Patrick’s Day can be a reminder to us to share the faith with others. Discuss one person you each might be able to share the faith with this month.



Green—Green on St. Patrick’s Day symbolizes the new life of spring time. In the Church, we use the color of green to symbolize the new life we have in Christ and how we continue to grow in our faith throughout each year. It is the color on the altar for the majority of the year; the whole season of Pentecost. Wearing green or seeing lots of green can remind us of all that Christ has done for us and the new life He gave us at Baptism.



Clovers—There are clovers on everything around St. Patrick’s Day Some misunderstand this as four-

leaf clovers thought to be a sign of good luck (see luck below). The analogy actually comes from St. Patrick's explanation of God as Triune. God is three persons, united as one, similar to the three leaves on a clover that make up one clover. There's no perfect analogy of the Trinity because it's so hard for us to understand how God can be three in one, distinct yet undivided, but St. Patrick used something that was seen often in Ireland to try to help people understand. Discuss ways that you can talk about faith using ordinary things that you see around you every day.



Leprechauns—Leprechauns are Irish fairies from fairytales that are mythical miniature men. In fairytales, they are shoemakers who save lots of money that they store in pots of gold at the end of rainbows. Though leprechauns have no association with the day, because they are also Irish, they began to get lumped into the Irish celebration of St. Patrick's Day. Discuss the difference between a fairytale and real story (like things that happen to people in your life or in the Bible).

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 charges us to talk about faith as we go about life, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the way, when you lie down and when you get up."

We are blessed so that we can bless others. Count your blessings, then be a blessing to others!

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The time leading up to Easter, called Lent, is meant to be a season of reflection and repentance and to help us focus on Christ (which we all need)! This season is all about our hearts. Prepare your heart throughout Lent with a devotional (adult or family), a Lent paper chain (Easter countdown), or other Lent activities available in the narthex.

\*Each month "Relevant Resources" will feature a different resource that may be relevant to you. If you have a topic request, please email [kimberwalsh@comcast.net](mailto:kimberwalsh@comcast.net).

## LIGHT THE NIGHT

Trinity Lutheran School Fundraiser  
by Bruce Harshe

Trinity Lutheran School is hosting the third annual "Light the Night" fundraiser for Christian Education. The theme this year is *Shamrock Shindig* and is being hosted at the Gene Davis Events Center on Friday evening, March 17.

The fundraiser includes an excellent dinner and trivia entertainment following. A cash bar is also available. The tickets are \$50.00 each and are currently on sale at the school (call 750-2105). Join your friends for an enjoyable evening of dining and entertainment while and support Christian education with a fun night out.

## ***TOOL TIME:*** **2017 JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH RETREAT**

On March 25 and 26, 2017, at Concordia University Ann Arbor, Michigan, university students will host a *Tool Time* retreat for junior high youth. Participants and chaperones will have overnight accommodations on campus and the weekend event is sponsored and led by members of New Crew Youth Ministries.

### **About**

The mission of New Crew is to provide opportunities for middle school and high school youth to deepen their knowledge and faith in Christ Jesus.

### **General Information**

New Crew is a non-profit, student-led, student-run organization on the campus of Concordia University Ann Arbor that seeks to glorify God in the building of loving relationships with students from both senior and junior high. New Crew is most widely known for holding *Tool Time* junior high retreat in the spring and a senior high *Tool Time* in the fall. New Crew members also travel to and host lock-ins at various churches within a three-hour radius of Concordia Ann Arbor.

## **BLESS**

by Craig Britton

“The Lord bless you and keep you,”  
The oft-heard closing rings,  
To grant me holy exit  
To less important things.  
Less than worship, yes perhaps,  
But to my daily tread;  
I hunger for the blessing  
Brought by Word and wine and bread.

Outside the walls of sanctuary  
That we embrace each week,  
The stain of life most common,  
Whose sin begins to wreak, the havoc of  
Dark places. The hearts of all  
God’s people hold blessing for to bless,  
The din and pale of  
Worldly hearts that find no tenderness.

So, bless dear God from heaven with  
Prophet’s woe and weal,  
Fill all the hearts which You have  
blessed  
With urgency and zeal.  
To gaze upon, and to behold  
A grace so wide and grand,  
That find a hunger here below  
To grasp at blessing’s Hand.

## **RUMMAGE SALE/FROST BACKPACK PROGRAM**

by Dave Althouse

As most of you are aware, the annual Spring Rummage Sale provides the majority of funding for the



Backpack Program. In 2017, the Rummage Sale is scheduled for Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup> and Friday, May 5<sup>th</sup>. Donated items may be brought to the church from May 1<sup>st</sup> through May 3<sup>rd</sup>. However, for those of you headed south for the winter, you may bring items to the church anytime. A storage room has been set up in the church basement classroom area. A sign is posted outside the door to the area stating *Rummage Sale Storage Room*. Check with the church office if you need directions.

As in the past, all donated items should be gently used items, clean, and in good working order. We no longer accept TVs, pianos, bed springs,

mattresses, or entertainment centers. Also, we will no longer accept digital or electronic equipment, including computers, because they do not sell and are outdated so quickly.

More detailed information will be forthcoming in future *Reflection* newsletter articles. In the meantime, please call the church office or call Dave or Fran Althouse (517-787-5963) if you have questions or would like to become involved. With the Lord's blessings, we look forward to yet another successful rummage sale.

The Backpack Team

## BLESSED

by Peggy Bennitt

“How in the world do we know what God wants? To know God's will, we must totally surrender to God's will. Our tendency is to make God's decision for Him...Go to Him with a willingness to do *whatever* He says,” by Max Lucado, from his book, *On The Anvil*

I once wrote a song...well, actually, I've written many poems, songs, etc., but since I cannot read or write *music*, I'm not sure any can really be called songs...but, I digress. The fact is, when I am being “retooled” by God, (which seems to be quite often) I turn to writing.



It seems to ease the transition, from whatever twisted image I've become, into becoming—more. Even though I've never yet come through it perfected or complete, the writing of it or at least the writing *through it*, helps me endure the process.

*Anvil and Hammer* was written years ago, but it still brings me back to a retooling time I've already been through and still remember and learn from; a reminder that as long as I trust my Blacksmith to see the best shape or

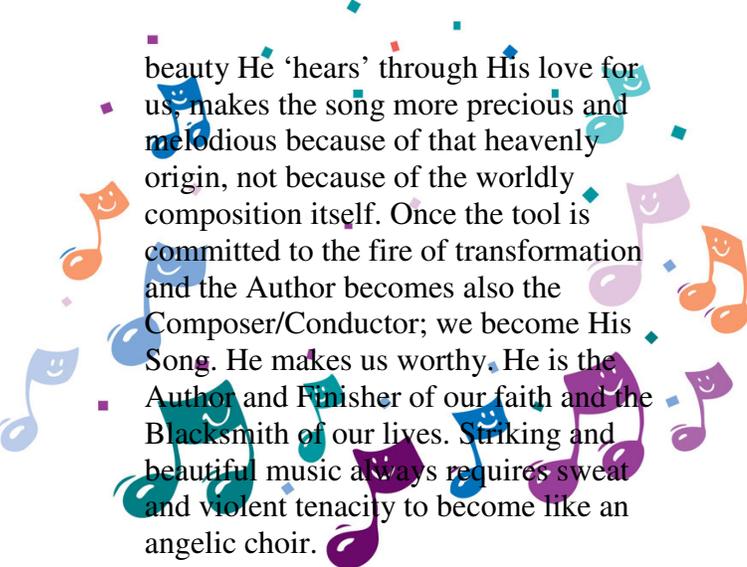


design that lies within me, the retooling of 'me' will be for my good, as well as for the good of His Plan. And just as my life is constantly in transition, this song (poem) about living transitions with each new slam of His hammer on my lifetime, is about that continual conversion. Life *is* change. As the cultural wind changes direction, so the retooling and transformation will return as well.

*Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.*

Romans 12:2 NLT

Just as change hurts, transitions bend and disrupt, but there is a beautiful song often hidden in the clang of the hammer on heated metal and the clank of the anvil that builds or tweaks the original piece. The song made by the hammer and anvil can be just as sweet as the song of angels. Sometimes the perspective of the Author, and the



beauty He ‘hears’ through His love for us, makes the song more precious and melodious because of that heavenly origin, not because of the worldly composition itself. Once the tool is committed to the fire of transformation and the Author becomes also the Composer/Conductor; we become His Song. He makes us worthy. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith and the Blacksmith of our lives. Striking and beautiful music always requires sweat and violent tenacity to become like an angelic choir.

“...play me like music, I’ll be Your song.”—Heart

### **ANVIL AND HAMMER**

by P.L. Bennitt, edited

The pounding beat of the hammer  
True and steadfast, strikes the mark  
Each blow meant to shape a lifetime  
Each mark planned by Father God.

The Blacksmith takes anvil and hammer  
With His might, He forces the shape  
Metal on metal, details emerge  
With vigor, a tool He will make.

I’m back again, Lord, for Your Anvil  
Bend, reshape me, for use in Your Way  
Refine impurities, pound out the faults  
Refine Your tool and my fate.

This tool emerges from fire  
The fire still glows from the grate  
He’s refined me to His desire  
His own hand, this tool He did shape.

Chorus:  
To the anvil I came, scarred and  
damaged  
I’ve been through the fire, once again  
The Hammer of God smashed out the  
flaws  
I’m a tool now of use for His gain.

*“Many are the plans in a man’s heart,  
but it is the Lord’s purpose that  
prevails.”*

Proverbs 19:21

Now, humor me, please. Just browse through the Scriptures and look at all the riff-raff and ruffians God grabbed hold of, threw onto the anvil, and took a hammer to in order to retool and use them for His kingdom. What a scurvy lot we are too, aren’t we? But we are blessed with a God who loves us and shows us mercy on a daily—no, hourly—basis, at the least. Why? Why does He waste His myriad powers on maggots such as ourselves?

*“I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my Anger has turned away from them.”*

Hosea 14:4

So, what does He see in us?

If He doesn’t see Jesus each time He looks at us, we don’t have a chance in this life or the next, right? Jesus stands in front of us, and His purity and holiness is what God sees as us. Amazing grace, right? We are blessed with a God who sees us as forgiven and perfect. He knows Who did this for us and why, and He has chosen to love us. He has chosen to leave us an inheritance of eternal life with Him! And Jesus, our Brother, chooses to share His inheritance with us, His adopted siblings. We are so blessed! If not for time spent on the anvil, would we be as far into our God as we are?

*“Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but He will heal us: He has injured us but He will bind up our wounds.”*

Hosea 6:1

Maybe we each need even more time there, on the anvil. What do you think? More time under God's hammer? laid across the rigid anvil? More time in His presence, no matter how stern and unforgiving that might seem at the time?



*"When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other."*

Ecclesiastes 7:14

We are His chosen sons and daughters. Our discipline and our retooling are a Father's true expression of grace and love; tough love for the treacherous waters of life, tempered with the cooling dip into the stabilizing waters of baptism and the Spirit's indwelling. Is there anything more refreshing...or more solidifying than a Father's amazing love and the finality of being blessed?



*"...he who loves his son is careful to discipline him."*

Proverbs 13:24b

We are truly blessed to have a Father who takes the time and grace to personally execute the difficult task of shaping a child to be of use for the kingdom. A tool of His vision and design. We are blessed!

*"You are heaven's first and final attempt at you. You are matchless, unprecedented, and unequal..."* The Spirit has given each of us a special way of serving others" (1 Corinthians 12:7 CEV)...Find your 'you-ness' and use it for the kingdom.

Max Lucado, *Glory Days*

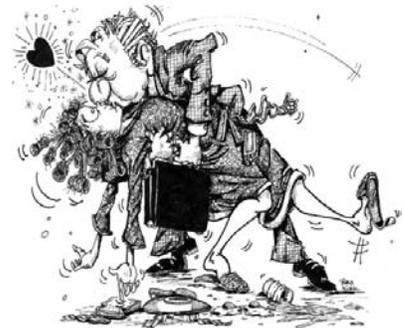
## FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR SPOUSE AGAIN ...IN 36 QUESTIONS

[http://www.imom.com/36-questions-to-fall-in-love/?utm\\_term=espressominute&utm\\_campaign](http://www.imom.com/36-questions-to-fall-in-love/?utm_term=espressominute&utm_campaign)

Yes, there really are 36 questions you can ask to fall in love with anyone. Really. A research paper presented about 20 years ago found scientific evidence that a certain set of questions can lead to two people developing feelings of love for each other.

Okay, that's a nice, optimistic bit of news if you're in the dating world, but what if you're a married [person] wanting to rekindle some love in [your] marriage?

Well, I'm a married lady and I went through the 36 questions with my husband. I found that they do create the sense of closeness the study found is needed for intimacy, but married couples have to lay down a few rules to get the best results.



So, here are the 36 questions to fall in love again with your husband [spouse], and the rules to go along with them!

**Expect good results.** Yes, you and your husband might be skeptical — mine was — but you don't want to let that skepticism get in the way of connecting while you're going through the questions. Researchers found that optimism that you will grow closer actually helps you grow closer while answering the questions.

**Do not digress.** When my husband and I answered the questions, we veered off into old issues and grievances. For example, a question about describing your perfect day turned into complaints about why we couldn't have a perfect day — work schedules, home obligations, etc. *Stick to the question.*

**Break them up.** If you can't get through the questions in one sitting, that's okay. Finally, when you get to the end of the questions, end your session by looking into each other's eyes for *four minutes*.

### Set One

1. Given the choice of anyone in the world, who would you want as a dinner guest?
2. Would you like to be famous? In what way?
3. Before making a telephone call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? Why?
4. What would constitute a "perfect" day for you?
5. When did you last sing to yourself? To someone else?
6. If you were able to live to the age of 90 and retain either the mind

or body of a 30-year-old for the last 60 years of your life, which would you want?

7. Do you have a secret hunch about how you will die?
8. Name three things you and your partner appear to have in common.
9. For what in your life do you feel most grateful?
10. If you could change anything about the way you were raised, what would it be?
11. Take four minutes and tell your partner your life story in as much detail as possible.
12. If you could wake up tomorrow having gained any one quality or ability, what would it be?

### Set Two

1. If a crystal ball could tell you the truth about yourself, your life, the future or anything else, what would you want to know?
2. Is there something that you've dreamed of doing for a long time? Why haven't you done it?
3. What is the greatest accomplishment of your life?
4. What do you value most in a friendship?
5. What is your most treasured memory?
6. What is your most terrible memory?
7. If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living? Why?

8. What does friendship mean to you?
9. What roles do love and affection play in your life?
10. Alternate sharing something you consider a positive characteristic of your partner. Share a total of five items.
11. How close and warm is your family? Do you feel your childhood was happier than most other people's?
12. How do you feel about your relationship with your mother?

### **Set Three**

1. Make three true "we" statements each. For instance, "We are both in this room feeling ..."
2. Complete this sentence: "I wish I had someone with whom I could share ..."
3. If you were going to become a close friend with your partner, please share what would be important for him or her to know.
4. Tell your partner what you like about [him/her]; be very honest this time, saying things that you might not say to someone you've just met.
5. Share with your partner an embarrassing moment in your life.
6. When did you last cry in front of another person? By yourself?
7. Tell your partner something that you like about [him/her].
8. What, if anything, is too serious to be joked about?

9. If you were to die this evening with no opportunity to communicate with anyone, what would you most regret not having told someone? Why haven't you told them yet?
10. Your house, containing everything you own, catches fire. After saving your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a final dash to save any one item. What would it be? Why?
11. Of all the people in your family, whose death would you find most disturbing? Why?
12. Share a personal problem and ask your partner's advice on how he or she might handle it. Also, ask your partner [spouse] to reflect back how you *seem* to be feeling about [the problem the two of] you have chosen.

### **TOPIC FOR APRIL**

The topic for April is *Showers*. What does the word showers bring to your



mind? Summer rains? Dreary, grey and brown days? The Creator quenching the earth's parched surface? Showers of blessings? How far can your thoughts stretch and do they include God and

His love? His grace and mercy? Our physical needs as earth-dwellers at this point in time?

The *Reflection's* purpose is to *reflect* our Lord in our daily lives and actions. Do you have stories or thoughts to share of God working in your life or in those around you? Please share these in an article or feature to let others be a part of an experience of our Lord, Who is obviously active in our world today.

Send articles or information to [bennitt49@yahoo.com](mailto:bennitt49@yahoo.com), by the 15th of each month, to be included in the following month's newsletter.

## TOO BLESSED TO BE STRESSED

by Lynne Gatz

When I hear people use the word, "blessed," I immediately feel a sense of comfort that this person is a Christian. This is not always so. Those in the secular world, often use the word "lucky" or "blessed" interchangeably. Luck seems to signify the worldly view of fate's role in a person's destiny. A dictionary definition of blessed implies holiness or having God's favor. *A faithful man will abound with blessings* (Proverbs 28:20). I also believe that the Lord blesses us to be a blessing to others.

Many of us at Redeemer have been blessed to be a part of the "Secret Sister" program in years past. I immediately think of the women who blessed me in the past. I remember Birdie Rozelle; her love of angels and how they surrounded us with God's love and protection. My final secret sister was Jeanette Schlenker at the end of her life, whom I loved dearly. I also had a wonderful Secret Sister in Loretta Rice, who I could literally feel praying for me.

Many years ago, I felt blessed to be encouraged by Sandy Rogeven, (Kim McFarland's mom) who insisted I teach

the very young children during VBS. As this is now my vocation in early childhood education, I believe the Lord used Sandy to guide me in the direction He wanted me to go. Those experiences in VBS with her, stood out in my life as a time of fulfillment. We need to listen to those the Lord places in our path and has "blessed" us with. Unfortunately, sometimes it is in hindsight that we truly recognize how "blessed" we were/are.

I recently lost my phone. I went from thinking I had simply misplaced it, to heart-pounding panic! My phone is very old, but nevertheless quite valuable to me. I feel very blessed that I've had the same phone for almost eight years as I am quite frugal. Last fall, I checked into my options of purchasing a new phone. The account representative was fascinated by my phone as if it were an antique, and took a picture.

My dad insisted we pray together about the loss of my phone. Actually, losing a phone is a huge and horrible event. Praying helped me calm down. That day, I had been to an all-day training at Baker College. I decided to drive out to Baker and two other locations at 10:00 p.m. that night...just because. I never found my phone that evening but I did finally reach a sense of peace. As I continued to pray for the situation, I became convinced that I lost it at Baker College. I even came to grips, that it was time to get a new phone. After all, it was just a phone, a *replaceable* phone.

I barely thought of my phone that weekend. I tried calling Baker College, but kept reaching voicemail. When I called them Monday morning, they did in fact, have my phone, as the Lord had led me believe. The security officer at



Baker College had taken such good care of my beloved phone. It had officially been logged and tagged and I had to identify and sign for it.

I felt truly blessed to be reunited with my phone. While I am definitely pricing new phones, I still want to see how long this one will actually function. My pink phone has little value to anyone other than myself. I felt the Lord's divine presence as I put the situation into His hands. *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see* (Hebrews 11:1). Just as Birdie believed that angels were all around us, I too feel "blessed" just knowing that they are there and that our Creator wants to bless us.

## **PERSONAL PRAYER— A PRIORITY?**

by Carol Faris

We look forward to receiving responses to the **Prayer Questionnaire** that was given handed out to all in February after services. Redeemer's Prayer Ministry exists to help us all in our prayer journey, and your answers to the questionnaire will assist us in providing prayer opportunities that will help us grow in our prayer relationship with the Lord, and in growing His kingdom at Redeemer. If you have not yet filled out the **Prayer Questionnaire**, please see Pastor, Craig, Ed, or Carol for a copy.

Please mark Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup> on your calendars and join us for our monthly **FIRST SUNDAY INFORMAL PRAYER GATHERING** in the Prayer Chapel at 5:00 p.m.

We were encouraged to have 11 people at our February Prayer Gathering, and we look forward to these numbers increasing as we become more aware of

the blessing garnered by meeting together for times of prayer.

*Other prayer opportunities are:*



### **EVERY THURSDAY MORNING**

Prayer Time—**7:00 a.m.—8:00 a.m.** in Redeemer's Sanctuary. For many years, Wendy Wight of *TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE HOUSE* has spearheaded this time of intercession as we pray especially for our pastors and our Jackson community. Please join us for any or all of these precious Prayer Times.

### **PRAYER CHAPEL MINISTRY**

Members of Redeemer's Prayer Team are available after each service on Sunday and are happy to pray for your specific needs, as well as prayers to grow God's kingdom at Redeemer and in the Jackson community. You can fill out a prayer request card (in the pew rack) and/or come to the **Chapel** to be prayed for. All requests are confidential! More prayer volunteers are needed. Can you help?



### **REDEEMER'S E-MAIL PRAYER CHAIN**

Your prayer request(s) can be sent to [redeemer\\_prayers@comcast.net](mailto:redeemer_prayers@comcast.net) and will be covered in prayer by the 60+ members on our Prayer Chain. *For more information, contact Ed and Carol Faris at 517-750-3057.*

*You will pray to Him.  
and He will hear you. Job 22:27*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <h1 style="text-align: center;">MARCH 2016</h1>			<p style="text-align: right;">1</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 1:30 p.m.— Countryside</p> <p>Lenten Service 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Praise Team 8:00 p.m.</p> 	<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p>Community Prayer 7:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 2:00 p.m. at Ganton's, S. A.</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Confirmation Classes 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">4</p> <p>Men's Choir 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Men's Buddy Ball 10:00 a.m.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">5</p> <p>Divine Service— C 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Adult Bible Study 9:20 a.m.-10:20 a.m.</p> <p>Praise Service 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Hour of Prayer 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">6</p> <p>Adult Choir 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Elders' Meeting 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Hand Bells 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">7</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">8</p> <p>Quilters 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 1:30 p.m.— Countryside</p> <p>Lenten Service 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Praise Team 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">9</p> <p>Community Prayer 7:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 2:00 p.m. at Ganton's, S. A.</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Confirmation Classes 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">10</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">11</p> <p>Men's Choir 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Men's Buddy Ball 10:00 a.m.</p>
 <p style="text-align: right;">12</p> <p>Divine Service 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Adult Bible Study 9:20 a.m.-10:20 a.m.</p> <p>Praise Service— C 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">13</p> <p>Adult Choir 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Hand Bells 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">14</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">15</p> <p>Countryside Service 10:15 a.m.</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 1:30 p.m.— Countryside</p> <p><i>REFLECTION DEADLINE</i></p> <p>Lenten Service 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Praise Team 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">16</p> <p>Community Prayer 7:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 2:00 p.m. at Ganton's, S. A.</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Confirmation Classes 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">17</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">18</p> <p>Men's Choir 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Men's Buddy Ball 10:00 a.m.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">19</p> <p>Divine Service— C 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Adult Bible Study 9:20 a.m.-10:20 a.m.</p> <p>Praise Service 10:30 a.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">20</p> <p>Adult Choir 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Hand Bells 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">21</p> <p>Leadership Board/ Ministry Council 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">22</p> <p>Quilters 9:00 a.m.</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 1:30 p.m.— Countryside</p> <p>Lenten Service 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Praise Team 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">23</p> <p>Community Prayer 7:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 2:00 p.m. at Ganton's, S. A.</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Confirmation Classes 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">24</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">25</p> <p>Men's Choir 9:30 a.m.</p> <p>Men's Buddy Ball 10:00 a.m.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>TOOL TIME Junior High Youth Gathering</i></p>
<p style="text-align: right;">26</p> <p>Divine Service 8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Adult Bible Study 9:20 a.m.</p> <p>Praise Service— C 10:30 a.m.</p> <p><i>TOOLTIME ENDS</i></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">27</p> <p>Adult Choir 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Hand Bells 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">28</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">29</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 1:30 p.m.— Countryside</p> <p>Lenten Service 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Praise Team 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">30</p> <p>Community Prayer 7:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Craig's Bible Study 2:00 p.m. at Ganton's, S. A.</p> <p>Pastor's Bible Study 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Confirmation Classes 7:00 p.m.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">31</p>	