

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
LCMS

COURAGE



JANUARY 2025 PUBLICATION
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Redeemer *Reflection* Newsletter

*Making Jesus Known In The
Places Where We Live*

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HAVE COURAGE

by Pastor Zachary Holdorf

After Moses' death, Joshua was tasked with leading the people of Israel into the promised land. Before them, there were enemies that they would have to go to war against. What a terrifying situation. Yet, Joshua is persistent in



the task at hand. He encourages the people of Israel, reminding them of Yahweh's promises. **Note the number**

of times the word courageous is used! This exchange is found in Joshua 1:1-9.

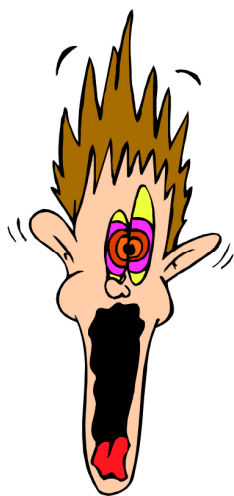
"After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' assistant, ²Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel.

*³Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised to Moses. ⁴From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. ⁵No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. ⁶**Be strong and***

***courageous**, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. ⁷Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses My servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. ⁸This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in*

it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. ⁹Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.**"

We live in a world that is quite frightening. We know the depth of the broken world and experience it even in our personal lives. There are days when we find ourselves fearful, struggling,



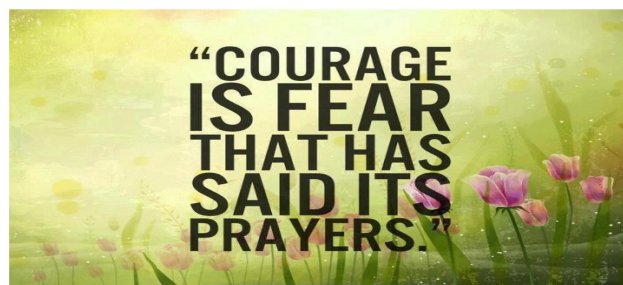
and in need of encouragement. The truth of the matter is that we can be courageous and strong. Not because of our own strength or might, but because of Jesus. God is with us always. Jesus has redeemed us, defeated all our enemies, and has eternity prepared for us.

I love how the Apostle Paul puts it in Romans 8:31-39, "³¹What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³²He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things? ³³Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the One who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ³⁶As it is written, 'For your sake we are

being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our LORD."



I have a dear friend back in Wisconsin who always reminded me that I have the King of Kings and LORD of Lords standing right beside me. It's true. The LORD is with us always! His mercy is new every morning and His grace is sufficient. So, let us take all courage and not be afraid.



Blessings, *Pastor Zach*

DOUBLE DARE

by Kimber Walsh, Director of Family Life Ministry, DFLM, FLE

"I double-dared myself to do it, but then I didn't do it." The words were coming at me, but I was still trying to make sense of them. "I knew I wasn't supposed to do it, so even though I double-dared myself, I didn't do it!"



This five-year old was describing temptation, though I'm sure they didn't intend to. The moment I realized it, I explained what it was. "That feeling is temptation and it's really great that you didn't do it. The Holy Spirit helped you."

If you don't spend a lot of time with five-year olds, you might not have the opportunity to learn these sorts of deep theological lessons. Put twenty adults in a room together and ask them to define temptation and I bet not a single one of them would think of it as double-daring yourself to do something you know you're not supposed to do. We need children around us. They can explain things in ways that we can't. And they unearth truths which we don't see. I'm not saying learn ALL of your theology from them. But I am saying, learning doesn't just happen from our elders or the more learned among us.

After this exchange, I was reflecting on temptation. When we are decades

deeper into our sinfulness, I think we are desensitized to it a bit. Oh sure, we can see other people's sins readily. But our own sin doesn't so much as give us a second thought let alone make our hearts pang for forgiveness from the depths of our depravity. That's because sinful *is* our nature. Do I even think about temptation as being temptation anymore? Or do I see it as part of the laundry list of decisions I make in a day, equal in importance, equal in mundanity?

We are doing the Armor of God right now in Sunday School, specifically the Breastplate of Righteousness. Did you know that the function of the Breastplate of Righteousness is not only to protect our hearts against the devil's schemes that seek to draw us away from following God's ways, but also to protect our hearts from our own selves and our propensity to return to our sinful folly? ("Like a dog to his vomit..." Proverbs 26:11) How alarmed we all should be that our sinfulness is so great that we need armor to protect us from our own selves! Thanks be to God



that He has given us this Armor and the Holy Spirit to live in us!

I think we would all do well to recognize when we "double-dare ourselves" to do the things that we know we shouldn't be

doing and stand up against it. And when we do the double dares, to turn back to God in repentance. Even faithful five-year olds are showing us how to do it.

Handmade Pasty Fundraiser



Support our Youth Group's upcoming Youth Gathering trips by ordering

handmade pasties! Orders will be taken from late December until January 5. Pasties will be available for pickup on Sunday, January 12 (or you can order frozen pasties to be picked up at a later time!) Pasties are \$10 each, due at the time of pickup. Order form is available in the narthex.

Grow & Go

We will be offering a whole Redeemer family opportunity to **Grow** in Biblical skills and knowledge & **Go** out into daily life equipped to live as a Christian.



Winter session topics include:

January 15	Baptism
January 22	District Engagement with President Davis
January 29	Encouragement in the Faith
February 5	Lord's Prayer

Come and get tools for your faith walk, **Wednesdays** from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

in the Redeemer Activity Center (Gym). This time together includes a dinner and fellowship. Please sign up to participate on the sheet in the narthex to give us an accurate count for planning.

Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

☺ **Coffee with Pastor Bible Study** every **Thursday morning** at 10:00 a.m. in the church library. We are studying the Book of James.

☺ **Sunday morning Adult Bible Study, Children's Sunday School, and Youth Bible Class** at 9:30 a.m.

☺ **GROW & GOs resume in January.** Wednesdays, beginning on the 15th through February 5 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. in the Redeemer Activity Center (RAC). Topics and more information on these opportunities for family learning and fellowship are in the previous column on this page.

☺ **Mobile Food Pantry at Trinity** Downtown from 10:00-11:30 a.m., **Saturday, January 25**. Volunteers should be on site from 9:00 a.m. until noon. This is a great way to serve our Lord and our community. Redeemer shares in this community ministry with our sister congregation here in Jackson, Trinity Lutheran.

☺ **Sunday, January 12: pick-up date for ordered pasties.** Can be ordered

between Christmas break and January 5 for \$10.00 each. See article on page 4 for more information.

PROMPT FOR FEBRUARY

The writing prompt for **February** is **LOVE** which can mean different things to different people. What does love mean to you?

The *Redeemer Reflection* newsletter is provided to encourage and inform our members and our community, supply learning tools and educational insights, as well as give updated information to help you through the next month and beyond. Our newsletter highlights ways in which we, as a faith family, interact with our local community and within the church itself.

Send comments, information/photos, and articles to bennitt49@yahoo.com, to be included in the following month's newsletter. All submissions are appreciated and prayerfully considered.



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Al and Pat Eichenberg

1/8/1966

Ron and Debbie Rockwell

1/12/2002



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Marilyn Rockwell	01/01
Dale Luksan	01/03
Don Zastrow	01/03
Sharon Weatherwax	01/05
James Beck	01/06
Fred Wait	01/07
Diane Siedzik	01/08
David Voss	01/09
Andy Schnebelt	01/10
Donna Wait	01/10
Bruce Harshe	01/13
Josetta Kuntz	01/18
Jamie Brandt	01/21
Karlee Gamet	01/21
Meredith VanDerWeide	01/21
Tracy Jones	01/23
Vivianna Richardson	01/23
Bill Walter	01/23
Joshua Martin	01/24
Mai Ly Nguyen	01/24
Susan Belt	01/25
Janet Jean	01/29
Amber Doxtader	01/29
Ethan Anderson	01/30
Lucas Kane	01/30
Tom Simonsen	01/30
Katrina Holdorf	01/30
George Williams	01/31

REDEEMER CHRISTIAN CARE UPDATE

by Nyla Arvy

As we reflect on the passing of 2024, we at Redeemer have much to be thankful for. Our Lord directs us to love



and serve one another as if serving Him. I encourage our church family to join in Christian Care Ministry in some way to experience purpose and fulfillment toward supporting the work of the

Church. Read on to see what we are doing.

DID YOU KNOW?

- That the Meal-a-Month program for our shut-ins has been a fulfilling way to build friendships and bring cheer to our members. There is a signup sheet in the narthex each calendar quarter with opportunities to provide and deliver a meal to these folks; check it out! ✓
- That Peggy Bennitt is overseeing the Care and Concern Card Ministry that provides an opportunity to select a card for any of our members and mail a greeting to let them know you are thinking about them. There is a card file

on a small table in the narthex—check it out! ✓

- That Sue Simonsen has organized and shopped for funeral lunches. Phone callers Donna Smith and Fran Althouse have been dedicated to contacting members for salads and desserts. We continue to need servers and folks to set up tables and prepare them for the luncheons. Volunteers to clean up and put away tables and chairs after funeral lunches are always needed.
- That Claudina Kestner and her team are responsible for the Easter and Thanksgiving food box collections for our members in need of assistance.
- That Nyla Arvy visits shut-ins each month and is encouraging others to join in these visits.

CHRISTIAN CARE MINISTRY continues to serve our Redeemer family in many ways. To achieve *purpose* in our Christian journey of serving in the church, we still have ongoing need and opportunities for such experiences in the following areas:

- ✚ Overseeing and organizing funeral lunches
- ✚ Overseeing and organizing potlucks
- ✚ Organizing meals for those convalescing at home
- ✚ Meal-a-Month Program
- ✚ Shut-in visitors

Please join me in thanking all of these and unnamed members who give of their time and talents for the benefit of those in need. THANK YOU!



ABOUNDING

by Tim Hetzner, Ambassador for Spiritual Growth. *At the end of the day... Making A Difference In People's Lives and In God's Kingdom.* November 21, 2024. Used with permission.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58

In Scripture, the word “abounding” means “to overflow.” Let’s look at three “abounding” Scriptures and see what we can learn:

1) Abounding iniquity. *“Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:12).* The word “iniquity” means “lawlessness.” Do you remember your life before you met Jesus? You had no boundaries. You were ruled by your impulses. You’d go

anywhere, do anything, and say whatever you pleased. Now, we’re not bringing up your past to make you feel bad, but to make you grateful and to show you how far God has brought you. And what was God’s solution to your sin problem?

2) Abounding grace. *“Where sin abounded, grace abounded much more” (Romans 5:20).* God’s grace cannot be earned or merited. And that’s a good thing because we were all spiritually bankrupt. But as Martin Luther said, *“The recognition of sin is the beginning of salvation.”* It’s feeling bad about your sin that leads to feeling good about God’s grace. Do you remember the day Jesus found you, saved you, brought you into His family, and showered you with His blessings? What should your response to such grace be?

3) Abounding in the work of the Lord. *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”* You were saved to serve! When you don’t, you’ll feel like a fish out of water. So pray the prayer below.

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, today I give myself fully to You, to be used in Your service as You see fit. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

COURAGE

by P. L. Bennitt

It’s a new year! Have courage!

Someone with courage is bold and brave, unafraid to face tough challenges. The Cowardly Lion in the



Wizard of Oz traveled with Dorothy to the Emerald City to get courage from the Wizard because he was afraid of everything.

Having courage means acting when others are afraid of the danger, or simply acting without fear of failing. As the American poet Robert Frost advised, "Have courage and a little willingness to venture and be defeated." Courage could also be described as a quality of spirit that enables one to face danger or pain without showing fear.

Winston Churchill once said, "Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."

Showing *courage* is often thought of as facing daunting or scary situations without fear, but it also involves facing them *despite fear*. In other words, someone who has *courage* might not be fearless at all, but they face the dangerous, difficult, or frightening situation in spite of it. But *courage* doesn't always involve facing danger either. Something as simple as telling the truth when it will result in negative

consequences requires a great deal of courage.

A new year also requires a bit of courage from each one of us. What's ahead for the next year? It's a mystery, known only to God. But we are the King's Kids, no matter our ages, and He has this new year under control. We have only to trust Him and follow His guidance in each step on the way through 2025. He will be our path if we have courage enough to let Him have control of the lead.



COURAGE ON THE WAY TO GRAY... AND BEYOND

by Craig Britton, Director of Ministries

*"Now also when I am old
and gray-headed, O God,
do not forsake me, until I declare Your
strength to this generation, Your
power to everyone who is to come."*

Psalms 71:18, NKJV

I am getting older. I realize it by the calendar and by some other metrics as well. Of course, every new day brings an advance in age for everyone, but for most of that “maturing,” we don’t notice it much. Then comes the first time you miss comments at the table, or getting up from that table takes just a bit more effort. If you’ve experienced that, then you know exactly what I’m getting at.

Well, I’m there. And while I don’t consider aging to be something detrimental, it is real, and it comes with some cost. But, and this is important, it also comes with some real blessings. The Bible speaks often of the elderly person, and much of what it says of that age group is full of honor. You know, increased wisdom, experience, and hopefully humility from the longer trek.

The past two professional positions I have held have given me the great privilege of working with senior adults. Over twenty years ago I served as a hospice chaplain and, although some of my “friends” were in younger categories, the majority were well into their graying. I loved that work, and



God granted me grace to grow in my love for that community. Now, after nearly twenty years serving on a church staff, much of my work is teaching people in that age group as I was blessed enough to “inherit” teaching duties at two of our community’s senior facilities. I wouldn’t trade those weekly Bible classes for anything. And I’d do it even if I weren’t paid.

I’d like to share one other trait that I have come to appreciate in those who are walking the later laps of life:

Courage. In both my hospice and



church positions, I have seen courage exhibited by those whose increased time of living may have delivered to them difficulties beyond their conceiving. At least we might say challenges that they thought they might never encounter. Loss of loved ones. Especially devoted spouses or children. I’ve had conversations with those past 100 years of age concerned for their “81-year-old daughter who lives in a nursing facility in the next town over.” Imagine that reality. I’ve walked with people whose levels of pain, even with medication, would cause the bravest among us to howl. And even more than that, I’ve seen people who have loved the Lord their entire lives begin to ask the most wrenching of questions. Not so much filled with doubts as the ugly

realization that they simply didn't expect their lives to "end up like this."

The psalm I quoted at the beginning is a plea. And the "cause" mentioned in it shows a different type of courage. The writer pleads with his God to not forsake him in his old age. And why? "Because I'm still on Your mission, Lord," might very well be the answer. It's not, "Please give me more days to enjoy," or "I can't leave my family yet." No. This plea comes from a heart that has received much grace and mercy and knows it. And beyond that, the writer knows there are many in younger generations who have yet to meet the source of such grand gifts. I have seen



that courage in so many. Men and women both. Those with formal education and those who "grew up with no plumbing or electricity until after I married at 18. And then we were side-by-side on the farm the next many decades." One thing I know for certain, and it is something I thank God for, is that God *does* give wisdom to His children. Not all the same wisdom for every person. But the wisdom He knows will best serve them. Really, it has been stunning to watch and learn over these many years.

Then, there is the privilege, and I mean that, of walking many dear ones to the final steps and breaths of this world delivering them to the nearer

presence of Christ. And that takes courage. Not mine, but theirs. And not



because they lack faith or any such thing. But simply because it is the biggest journey that none of us here have ever taken. Even with a hand outstretched to the waiting hand of the Master, it takes courage. I've seen it with the most "seasoned saints," and I've seen it in babes in Christ who are perhaps wearing diapers for the second stretch in their lives. Yes, with new converts, it is breathtaking to watch.

What makes this courage a reality? Perhaps the better question is, Who makes this courage a reality? Well, you and I know that it's that wonderful "first grade Sunday School answer" that is always appropriate: JESUS. Indeed, it is. And it comes from those lips that have been promised a constant presence and have been assured that "I will never fail you or forsake you." And perhaps one more precious quote from the lips of the Savior: "Let the little children come to me." Wait a minute. I thought we were talking about those advanced in age. I am. You see, there may be no greater time for courage, and it is truly exhibited at those moments by those who have learned that with all their

experience, what they have really discovered is that they *are* still children. Young they are and ever young they will be. Jesus does not forsake us as our heads gray. Rather He opens doors to treasures we would never see without that experience. I



have been and am blessed by being in the presence of real courage, and the Lord lets me experience it nearly every day. I couldn't be more thankful for watching time go by.

"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

ANVIL AND HAMMER

by P.L. Bennitt ©2003



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

The Blacksmith takes up hammer
to anvil
With all His might, He forces the shape
Metal on metal, He forges each detail
With muscle and sinew a tool He will
make.

I'm back again, Lord, Your anvil
awaits me
Bend and reshape me, for use in
Your Way
Refine impurities, pound out
the defects
With fire and hammer a tool
You will make.

This tool emerges from under
the hammer
The anvil behind me, fire still aglow
He's pounded and prodded to
make me useful
With love and His own hand this tool
He did make.

I am this tool on the Blacksmith's anvil
I've been through the fire,
time and again
Thank God for the hammer, it's made
me worthy
Through refining fire, I'm the tool He
has made.

JANUARY 2025

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
			1 OFFICE CLOSED 	2 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Canton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	3	4
	6 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	7 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m. Choir 6:30 p.m. Handbells 7:30 p.m.	8 Quilters 9:30 a.m.	9 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Canton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	10	11
5 Divine Worship 8:00 a.m. Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship 10:30 a.m.						
12 Divine Worship-C 8:00 a.m. Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship-C 10:30 a.m.	13 Craig's Bible Study Countryside 1:30 p.m. Praise Team 7:00 p.m.	14 Hour of Prayer 7:15 a.m. Choir 6:30 p.m. Handbells 7:30 p.m.	15 GROW & GO 5:30 p.m.	16 Coffee with Pastor Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Craig's Bible Study Lloyd Canton-S. A. 2:00 p.m.	17	18
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