

Redeemer Lutheran Church 1545 Chain Bridge Road McLean, VA 22101 Vol. 70 No. 9 September 2025



Our mission is to share Christ's love with the greatest number of people.

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A Message from Pastor Sharon Core September 2025

Nesting

I am, by nature, a nester. When Nick and I travel, the first thing I do when we arrive at our accommodations is unpack. If clothes need to go in the drawers, they are put in the drawers. If clothes need to be put in the closet, they are hung up in the closet. All the toiletries go into the bathroom. Robes are hung on the back of the bathroom door (if hooks are available; if not they go into the closet). Shoes go on the closet floor. Glasses and charging cords on the bedside table. You get the idea. I nest.

I like things in their place. Order gives me comfort. Order helps me feel at home. However, if you were to walk by my office, that might not seem obvious! As of this writing, not one box has been unpacked and pictures are stacked up on my desk. (Edit: As of today-Wednesday-some boxes have been unpacked and some pictures are now on the walls!) I have a few pens in my desk drawer, a pair of scissors, a bouquet of flowers and a lovely plant! I have a space cleared for my computer but that's about it. In part because my focus has been on what I am learning as I come into your midst.

My first three days in the office were FULL! I am grateful to Karen Miller for setting up an orientation schedule. I have learned a lot and still have much to learn. In the week I have been with you, I can attest to the graciousness of both staff and members for showing me the ropes and answering question after question after question!

And all of this orientation is seriously messing with my nesting! I walk into my office and think "Ah, the library is a much nicer (read orderly!) place to work." Then I realize the state of my office is part of this new thing—this opportunity to be with you for a time. The boxes will eventually get unpacked and pictures will be hung on the wall. And all of it is temporary. Temporary in part because staff offices will be moved in order to be renovated and then moved back again. And also temporary because I'm here only for a time.

Recently, a colleague shared with me a practice he learned from another interim pastor. Leave an open, empty box on the bookshelf—it's a reminder of the temporary nature of this ministry. So, one of my boxes will stay on the bookshelf—open and empty. Empty because some of the nesting has been done and open because at the appointed time it will be filled again as our time together comes to an end.

And between the emptying and refilling, I am nesting. I am making myself home in your midst. And I am grateful for your welcome.

Blessings, Pastor Sharon



SEPTEMBER



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Traditional worship services at 8:30 am and 11:00 am
Contemporary worship service at 9:45 am
Faith Formation, Confirmation, High School classes – 9:45 am
Table Talk (Adult Class) – 9:45 am

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sundays Youth Choir Rehearsal – 10:55 am

Mondays Social Justice and Equity Book Club (Zoom) – 7:30 pm (beginning Sept. 8)

Tuesdays Women's Faith Group (Hybrid) – 9:30 am (beginning Sept. 9)

Thursdays Bible Study (Zoom) – 8:00 am

Bell Choir Rehearsal – 7:00 pm Traditional Choir Practice – 7:45 pm

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Week of August 31

Monday, September 1 Labor Day: Church Office closed

Tuesday, September 2 Stewardship Committee (Zoom) – 7 pm

Wednesday, September 3 Quilting Group – 9 am

Week of September 7

Sunday, September 7 First Day of Faith Formation, Confirmation and High School Class

ELCA Day of Service at Sunrise of McLean Village – 2 pm

Monday, September 8 Congregation Council Meeting – 7:30 pm

Week of September 14

Tuesday, September 16 Good Grub and God – 7 pm

Wednesday, September 17 Quilting Group – 9 am

Thursday, September 18 Prayer Shawl Ministry – 10:30 am

Construction Project Updates from July

Construction has now started in the education wing with the removal of the old building materials and the abatement of any of those materials that are deemed harmful. This will be done by specialists who are certified for this type of work, and their setup is inspected by the county. They are required to seal off that portion of the building and create a negative air pressure environment to contain the dust and filter it out of the air. The materials are then bagged and sealed and disposed of according to state regulations.

The conference room setup has been moved into Music Suite A and the old classrooms are closed. The items in the sacristy have been moved into the robe room. In December, when the first phase of construction is expected to be finished, the office wing will then be closed and the pastor and the staff will be working out of the renovated classrooms temporarily. Once the office wing construction is finished, the staff will move back into their renovated offices. This second phase of construction will also include the renovation of the bathrooms by the office entrance. Signs will be posted to direct people through the location changes.

As far as the impact to parking, the construction crew will be parking in the lower lot on the Chain Bridge Road side of the building. There will be a dumpster and a storage unit in the lot throughout the construction period. Other pieces of equipment will be coming and going as needed. There will be a construction superintendent from Whitener & Jackson on site each day who will be responsible for managing the subcontractors and their activities.

As you think about how you can support Redeemer's renovation and expansion plans through the capital campaign, please consider one of the tax advantaged giving options. The giving of appreciated stocks or mutual funds will help minimize your capital gain taxes. Also, the giving of an IRA's Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) can also lower your taxable income. See Redeemer's website under the additional "Giving" heading for more information. This is an option for your regular planned giving to the church, too.

Minutes: August 24, 2025, Special Meeting of Redeemer Congregation RLC Nave

<u>Call to order.</u> Karen Miller, Council President, called the meeting to order at 9:48 AM.

Open with Prayer. Pastor Sharon Core opened the meeting with prayer.

Introduction of Single Agenda Item: Terms of the Recommended Mortgage Loan from the ELCA Mission Investment Fund.

Karen Miller engaged in a brief discussion to provide context to the issue to be addressed during this meeting. Included was a review of the approval to take out a mortgage to support our Construction Project (February 2025 Annual Meeting), as well as the process taken to select the recommended mortgage provider. A summary follows.

At the last Council meeting in July, Rob Wenk summarized to Council the financing options from two separate lenders, Chain Bridge Bank and the ELCA Mission Investment Fund, for the Congregation-approved loan of \$1.6 million for the capitol building and grounds project. After guiding Council through the details, Rob recommended to Council the ELCA Mission Investment's 25-year Amortization ARM option. He further noted that ELCA Mission Investment guidelines would require full congregation approval of the loan terms, preferably obtained by September, to proceed.

The recommendation of the council to be voted on was read to the congregation and a request to make a motion to approve the motion as presented was made. The recommendation reads as:

Redeemer's Congregation Council recommends that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's Mission Investment Fund be selected to provide a mortgage not to exceed \$1.6M for our current building project. The loan terms are that it is fully amortized over 25 years, no balloon payment, current rate is 7.375% (may adjust slightly at closing), the interest rate adjusts to the current rate every five years.

Cindy Morrow moved to approve the Council's recommendation that the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's Mission Investment Fund be selected to provide a mortgage not to exceed \$1.6M for our current building project. The loan terms are that it is fully amortized over 25 years, no balloon payment, current rate is 7.375% (may adjust slightly at closing), the interest rate adjusts to the current rate every five years.

The motion was seconded by Judy Martin.

Discussion: No discussion among the attendees at 9:00 AM service. The vote was taken by paper ballot and ballots set aside for counting after the second portion of the meeting.

Motion to pause the meeting was made by Judy Kuhagen at 9:55 AM. The motion was seconded by Mark Cronin.

Meeting was re-convened at 11:36 AM

Karen Miller provided a repeat of the context for the vote to be taken today. She announced that the motion as documented above was made and seconded. She asked if there was any other discussion.

Discussion: Two questions were asked in the second session. In response to those questions, it was confirmed that there is no limit on the 5-year rate adjustment and that there is no prepayment penalty.

The vote was then taken by paper ballot, and ballots were joined to the ballots from the previous meeting.

The Meeting was adjourned at 11:41 AM

A total of 96 ballots were made, representing a quorum for the vote. The motion passed by a vote of 94 to 2.

HAPPENING AT REDEEMER

Redeemer Renaissance First Day of Preschool – September 2 Register Now!

It's time! The first day of school for our Redeemer Renaissance Preschool will be September 2.

Church and community families are welcome to register now for children 1.5 - 5 years of age for the 2025-26 school year! Registration is open on a rolling basis.

Program offerings promoting a sense of wonder, discovery, and exploration include a play-based curriculum with nature-based components for children to grow as happy learners. The preschool holiday calendars align with the Fairfax County Public Schools' calendar.

- Good Beginnings Class for Toddlers and Caregivers offered bi-weekly throughout the school year.
- 2.5 5-year-old Classes offered part-time, full-time, morning only, and all day.
- Preschool Summer Camps children join in summertime fun with friends through games, art, workshops, and performances.

Children delight in experiencing open-ended play with peers in a safe, developmentally appropriate environment. Our staff engages the children to delve into topics of interest, build hands-on projects, and create bonds that will help them navigate their childhood years and beyond.

We can't wait to welcome you! Schedule a visit to take a tour & register: Preschool 703-356-3567 or After-School 703-356-3346 ext. 106

ELCA Day of Service God's Work. Our Hands. September 7 – 2 pm

All are invited to spend an afternoon of fellowship with the residents of Sunrise of McLean Village from 2 to 3:30 pm on September 7th (also Grandparents Day!). We will have several activities to enjoy. We will meet at Redeemer at 1:45 pm. Youth are welcome and can earn community service hours. Please sign up to attend here.

Social Justice and Equity Book Club Resumes September 8 – 7:30 pm

Redeemer's Social Justice and Equity Book Club will resume their weekly Zoom meetings on Mondays from 7:30-8:30 pm starting on September 8, when they will be discussing the first two chapters of their new book, *Go Back To Where You Came From*, by Wajahat Ali. All are welcome! Contact Teresa Schellenger at jpschellenger@aol.com for Zoom info.

Women's Faith Group Resumes September 9 – 9:30 am

The Redeemer Women's Faith Group will begin an intriguing book by Andi Andrew titled *Braving Change - Trust Where God Is Leading You*. We hope that you may join us for what is sure to be a rewarding reading and discussion opportunity. We'll meet on Tuesdays starting September 9.

If you would like to attend, please sign up here. A copy of the book is available at the church office. Questions? Contact Kim Wenk at kbwenk@gmail.com.

Good Grub and God September 16 – 7 pm

What is Good Grub and God? It is a night out in a local restaurant for adults for a good meal, fellowship, and a discussion on some aspect of our faith.

Come solo or bring a friend, co-worker, or partner, but come enjoy getting to spend time together.

We meet at the restaurant at 7pm. You are welcome to come as often as your schedule allows. Each month someone will be the "host". Being the host requires no preparation or skills; you get to pick the restaurant and the topic for discussion.

If you would like to come, please sign up here. You can sign up as late as the day before; we just want to be sure that we have enough seats for everyone.

Young Adult Group

Young adults are invited to attend as we return to our regular meetings at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 9 pm.

- September 23
 - At this meeting we will discuss future social events and dates for the YA Retreat.
- October 21
- November 18
- **December 16** Christmas Party, location TBD

This group is open to those between the ages of 19 to 39-ish, but if you feel you are a young adult, you are welcome to attend! This group is a partnership between Redeemer, Lewinsville, and Immanuel Presbyterian Church. For more information, please contact Grace Howie.

Sign Up to Host Coffee Hour

Who makes the coffee? You can!

Everyone is welcome to host Sunday morning Coffee Hour. Get your friends, family, or ministry or group together and sign up!

What does the host person/s do? Make the coffee, set up, keep the coffee area tidy and replenished, and CLEAN UP! And have fun! You can even go to service once things are set up.

If you want to provide a simple treat like mini muffins, donut holes, bite size breads or pastries, or something similar—store bought is fine—that is appreciated but not required.

It is a great way to meet people, welcome visitors, and inform people about your ministry or group. All coffee supplies, training, and written instructions are provided. If you are interested, please sign up here. If you have any questions, contact Kim Wenk.

Sacred Ground

Would you be interested in gathering for small group discussion on topics of racial justice?

Redeemer is fortunate to have a partnership with the Episcopal Church for instruction on racial awareness with the 10-month Sacred Ground course. Our once a month online discussions offer helpful insight for navigating positive conversation with those who share in God's diverse image. Along with the engaging civic and faith-based curriculum of essays and videos, we are reading thought-provoking books, such as *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman. This important course is a rewarding way to share the light of Christ while on your faith walk for learning of and learning from the challenging topics of race/racism.

As we look toward Fall 2025, we encourage Y O U to keep the momentum going. We need Y O U to step forward, in a small group leadership role, or to join a small group, for the upcoming session. Please contact the church office at church@redeemermclean.org.

As author Debby Irving states in *Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Race*, "Self-examination and the courage to admit to bias and unhelpful inherited behaviors may be our greatest tools for change. Allowing ourselves to be vulnerable enough to expose our ignorance and insecurities takes courage and love. Opening of heart and mind to the possibility that you--even well-intentioned you--have room to change and grow so that you can work with people of all colors, ethnicities and differing ways of being, to co-create communities that can unite, strengthen and prosper."

Congratulations to four members from Redeemer and three members from other congregations for completing the 2024-2025 Sacred Ground course.

Ushers Needed

Ushers Needed: We are looking for people to help serve as ushers at Redeemer. You may only need to support one service a month or less, but you make a large impact. Ushers are the greeters as people enter worship, they support the service through offering and communion, and play an important role in helping the services run smoothly. But it is also fun and a great way to share fellowship with everyone at service. Training is provided and all ages are welcome. Talk to any usher or see or reach out to Matthew Kratz (pghkratz@gmail.com).

Youth

Register for Faith formation, Confirmation, and the High School Class

Faith Formation, Confirmation, and the High School Class will resume September 7. All students need a new registration each year. Registration is now open and families can do so online, or physical forms will be made available at the Kids' Corner table in Crossroads on Sundays before and after services. To register online, please use this link.

Parent volunteers are needed each week for the 3rd & 4th, 5th & 6th, and confirmation classes. Please use these links to sign up.

- 3rd and 4th
- 5th and 6th
- Confirmation

Join the Redeemer Youth Choir!

Our Youth Choir is looking for new members! Join for great songs and lots of fun. Rehearsals are on Sundays during the school year from 10:55 am to 11:25 am in Music Suite B. The group performs periodically throughout the year. To register, please fill out the form at this <u>link</u>.

Faith Formation Mentors Needed

We are in need of Faith Formation mentors for the upcoming school year (September 2025 - May 2026). Lead teachers and assistants are needed for the 3rd/4th grade class, and an assistant teacher is needed for the 5th/6th grade class. There is also the opportunity to be a substitute as needed for any grade level. Mentoring is a wonderful way to connect with our youth and nurture them in their faith journey. No prior teaching experience is necessary! Mentors are fully supported with training, a weekly curriculum, and supplies. Reach out to Grace Howie if you are interested in signing up or if you have any questions!

Youth

Confirmation and High School Youth Event – November 21 to 23 "Called in our Wandering"

Youth in grades 7 to 12 are invited to join the Metro D.C. and Delaware- Maryland Synod Event, "Called in our Wandering". Youth will experience a weekend of music, games, small group faith discussion, service projects, and worship. Come make new friends, strengthen your faith and make memories with youth from our 2 synods! The cost is \$200 and scholarships are available. Please contact <u>Grace Howie</u> for more details about registration.

Mission Trips - June 21 to June 26, 2026

In 2026 we will have two mission trips. One for those in 7th and 8th grade, and one for those in High School. Please see below for the locations of each mission trip. Both trips will be through the organization YouthWorks as we have done in the past. The deadline to sign up for both trips is October 19. We will need chaperones for both trips. To sign up, please contact <u>Grace Howie</u>.

- Current 7th and 8th Graders: Harrisburg, PA
- High School (Current 9th to 12th Graders): Wilmington, NC

For more detailed youth news please read the Youth Newsletter

SOCIAL OUTREACH

Little Food Pantry

Thank you to everyone who has been placing food items in Redeemer's "Little Pantry" and collection bin in the Crossroads.

Here is how you can serve your neighbors in need:

- 1. DONATE FOOD single serve, non-perishable, nutritious, ready-to-eat items are needed--no glass. No plastic fruit cups.
- 2. DAILY MAINTENANCE Since the pantry holds a limited amount of items, and is used daily, it needs to be stocked and tidied up a few times a week. Would you be willing to stop by once a week to check that it is stocked? No donation is necessary to do this; we will have donations in reserve to stock the pantry. If so, please contact Kim Wenk at kbwenk@gmail.com.



Winter Scarf Drive

HOOKS AND NEEDLES ONCE AGAIN: The prayer shawl group is hosting the annual winter scarf drive once more. Please consider crocheting or knitting a winter scarf for the Women of N Street Ministries. Gently used and newly purchased winter scarves are also welcome. Thank you to all the anonymous crafters who have dropped off their beautiful scarves already.

Pick up a "scarf in a bag" kit in the Crossroads, or pick up just the yarn you need. Directions for both crocheted and knitted scarves are included, or use any pattern of your choosing. There is plenty of yarn available in the yarn closet for artisans to use as well. Contact the church office to arrange to visit the yarn closet.

Collection boxes for the scarves will be put out in September, and the drive will end in early October.

The scarves will go to the women being served by N Street ministries. Redeemer has had a long-term relationship with N Street, a ministry that helps homeless women in DC with a wide range of programs that foster independence. Here is the link to the website for more information: https://www.nstreetvillage.org

The prayer shawl group meets the first and third Thursdays of most months. Our next meeting is September 18. The hybrid (Zoom and in person) meetings run from 10:30 to noon. All are welcome. Beginners are enthusiastically welcomed! Please email Lynn Barth at lynnbarth@gmail for more information or yarn.

Share of McLean

Share of McLean has been seeing an increase in requests from the community and clients for financial and food assistance. During the summer months, the donations typically slow down and the shelves start to get bare. Please keep Share of McLean in mind. To find a list of most needed items, please visit: https://www.shareofmclean.org/most-needed-list

To make a financial contribution, please indicate Share of McLean on your donation envelope.

Upcoming Community Events for SHARE

Come to family fun community events helping to support SHARE in September!

- **Saturday, Sept 6**: Tyson's Boro is hosting a <u>Back-to-School Bash</u> to celebrate the new school year with creativity, outdoor fun, and the chance to donate school supplies to Share.
- Friday, Sept 12: Food Truck Friday at Immanuel Presbyterian Church offers a family-friendly evening with delicious food and entertainment Bring a non-perishable item from our Most Needed List and be part of the fun!
- **Saturday, Sept 13**: <u>Stuff the Bus is Back!</u> Stop by the McLean Giant from 10:00am 3:00 pm and donate non-perishable food items or gift cards.

July Ham Run Report

The following is the ham run report for July:

On July 10, Laura Wareham delivered 3 boxes weighing 90 pounds from Fairfax to Martha's Table. On July 17, Laura Wareham delivered 4 boxes from Fairfax and 3 boxes from Falls Church weighing 342 pounds to Rising Hope Mission Church (yes, they weighed it!). On July 24, Steve Greanias delivered 2 boxes from Fairfax weighing 50 pounds to SOME. On July 31/August 1, Ralph Dutrow delivered 5 boxes from Falls Church and 1 box from Fairfax weighing 90 pounds to SOME.

Our total delivery weight for July is 572 pounds and 2734 pounds year to date. Thank you all.

Sincerely, Laura Wareham

Food for Others

Join with Redeemer family members for a 5K and Fun Run/Walk opportunity on Saturday, Sept. 27, 2025 at 8 am at Tyson's Corner Center

Register today! Proceeds go toward Food for Others

In our nation's capital area, the high cost of living forces many families who are struggling to make ends meet to choose between spending money for food, or on other basic needs such as housing and healthcare. Food for Others is an important part of Northern Virginia's safety net for those needing food when an emergency strikes and for the growing number of working poor who need to supplement their inadequate food supplies. For further race-day details, please contact Mary Eckberg. Hope to see you there!

Britepaths

September Donation Drive

Please support Britepaths as part of the September donation drive. As part of this drive, we are collecting funds which will assist our Fairfax County neighbors in need through Britepaths' Emergency Food Support program. Every donation directly assists individuals and families facing temporary crises by providing them with necessary household and personal hygiene products and a gift card for groceries. This crucial support allows recipients to purchase essential groceries and find relief during their challenging times, allowing them to focus on stabilizing their situation. Your contribution ensures that we can continue to provide timely assistance to those experiencing hardship in our community. Join us in making a tangible difference in the lives of our neighbors by donating today to Britepaths' Emergency Food Support program. Together, we can provide vital support and foster resilience within our community.

To make a donation, please include "Britepaths" on your donation envelope or the memo line on your check. We will collect donations from September 15-October 13.

Secret Garden Book Nook at Britepaths Collecting Until September 15

Britepaths has opened <u>The Secret Garden at Britepaths</u>, a welcoming in-office book nook where children of client families can browse and take home new and like-new books to start or build their personal libraries. Created with client families in mind, The Secret Garden at Britepaths is a welcoming space for young readers, offering a variety of new and like-new books for children and teens to enjoy during their visit and take home to keep.

Please consider donating any new and like-new books for children and teens. Books written in Spanish, Amharic, Dari, and Pashto, along with culturally diverse titles, are especially welcome. Books can be dropped off in the bin labeled "Britepaths book donations" in Crossroads.

Quilting Group

We hope you enjoyed seeing all of our creative quilts in April and May when they were blessed. As you can see, we've been busy! Obviously, we love our mission.

The Quilting Group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 9:00-11:30 am in Fellowship Hall. We are a small group of five ladies on a mission to share our love of sewing. We continue to support Partner for Surgery in Guatemala along with Project Linus (which we started supporting in 2024). Our quilts are various sizes based upon Project Linus guidelines: minimum sizes: 36" x 36" for baby blankets, 42" x 60" for children's blankets, and 45" x 72" for teen blankets, in addition to fleece blankets.

Project Linus supports local Fairfax County organizations such as Ronald McDonald House, Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS), kids who have lost a military service parent, local emergency situations and national emergency situations when a call for assistance is received, and INOVA Hospital, to name a few.

Partner for Surgery, Guatemala provides medical and surgical care in rural Guatemala, helping impoverished Guatemalan children and families living in remote locations. Our quilts are hand delivered by Frank Petersen. Additionally, we provide handmade tote bags and bears for the children.

Additionally, this year, we "teamed" up with the Prayer Shawl Group to make fleece blankets for Project Linus. The Quilting Group purchased the fleece, rotary skip blade and prepped the fleece for the crocheters to put an edge on. Additionally, any leftover fleece from the blankets was made into scarves to support the Prayer Shawl's scarf drive later this year. The Quilting Group will deliver both quilts and blankets made by Prayer Shawl to the Project Linus drop off location.

Our group is always looking for assistance, and we welcome new sewers into our small group. If you are unable to attend in person, we can provide you with supplies to design a quilt or even a bundled set (quilt top, batting, backing fabric, and yarn) to make at your leisure at home. Other ways to help include monetary donations; fabric, thread, and other sewing/quilting items are welcome. When donating money, please designate it for the "Quilting Group." Monetary donations will go toward the purchase of much-needed batting, fabric, thread, and any other supplies as needed.

If you are interested, please contact either Darlene McCoy or Joyce Clarke.

PASTOR AND STAFF OF REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH					
Interim Senior Pastor	Pastor Sharon Core	ext. 102	sharon@redeemermclean.org		
Bell Choir Director	Waka Osifchin		waka.soprano@gmail.com		
Director of Music	Matt Osifchin		mosifchi@hotmail.com		
Director of Afterschool	Linda McConnaughay	ext. 106	Imcconnaughay@redeemermclean.org		
Director of Preschool	Katrina McNair	ext. 111	preschool@redeemermclean.org		
Evening Facility Host	Brian Doyle				
Executive Director of Redeemer Renaissance	Linda McConnaughay	ext. 106	lmcconnaughay@redeemermclean.org		
Facilities Director	Bill Parks	ext. 110	bparks@redeemermclean.org		
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Office Manager	Cynthia Finocchiaro	ext. 101	cynthia@redeemermclean.org		
Organist	Joy Mentzel		joymentzel@gmail.com		
Pianist	Kathy Detwiler				
Youth & Communications Coordinator	Grace Howie		grace@redeemermclean.org		
Youth Choir Director	Waka Osifchin		waka.soprano@gmail.com		

CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS

President Karen Miller
Vice President Sabine Detweiler
Secretary Chris Hernadi
Treasurer Steve Bott

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

Annabelle Allard
Lee Cronin
Sarah Getter
Megan Kratz
Lena Martikainen
Gene Morrow
Tyler Posey
And a Youth Representative