The October get together takes place Oct. 8 from 10:30 a.m. until noon at Blackbird Bakery in Lakewood. Join us for a great cup of coffee (or other beverage) and conversation!

CAN WE TALK? Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27, following worship, in the lounge. Having discussions about your wishes at the end of life can be difficult: How do I talk to my loved ones about it? How do I know what I will want then, that’s a long way away? I’m not comfortable talking about those things. I just hope I go quickly and I won’t have to think about that. Learn how to talk about your wishes, power of attorney and living will, hospice, and then a celebration of having successful conversations with your loved ones. All ages are welcome for this important educational series. If you have questions, please contact Diane Kvasnicka or Pastor Brooke.

SIGN LANGUAGE YOUTH, ADULT CLASSES CONTINUE on Tuesday evenings. Youth, ages 7-13, meet 5-6 p.m. Adults, ages 14 and up, meet 7-8:30 p.m. Cost is $25/month. Full session or monthly payment options available; due at the first class if paying for the full session, at the beginning of each month if paying monthly. Youth participate in the Sharon Youth Signers group directed by Cory. Adults have the option of participating in the Sharon Adult Signers performances. For information and to sign up, contact Cory: email cvsette09@mail.bw.edu; cell 440-213-8755.

NEW MEMBER SUNDAY will be celebrated Oct. 6.

LIVING WATER OHIO NORTH EAST ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING takes place Nov. 2, from 8:30 a.m until 1:30 p.m. at Bath UCC. Pastor Brooke is going, and the association allows at least one other delegate to also attend. Please talk with Pastor Brooke if you are interested in seeing how the association works!

SUMMIT BELLS CONCERT Oct. 13, 3 p.m., in the sanctuary. Summit Bells is a community handbell ensemble, from the Akron area. Its purpose is to explore and perform challenging literature, especially transcriptions, to further the relatively new art of handbell ringing, and to foster an appreciation for the musical capabilities of this art. Don’t miss this exciting concert!

CWRU PROFESSOR TIMOTHY BEAL will give a talk — I Wish We’d All Been Ready: Revelation, Rapture, and Other Strategies for Scaring the Hell Out of Us — at Avon Lake UCC Oct. 26 at 10:30 a.m. His talk is based on his recent book, Revelation.

REDEEMER BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS takes place Oct. 12, 10 a.m., in the front yard of the church (in the Fellowship Hall if inclement weather).
Who We are and Whose We are

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.

— Psalm 139:13-14

We are created in the image of God. We know whose we are; we learn that in the early verses of Genesis. The Psalmist also reminds us that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. But do we know who we are? Of course each of us can identify that we are a daughter or son or spouse, or survivor, or athlete. But do we know who we are as Church of the Redeemer? Yes, every week during announcements I acknowledge that we are a Just Peace and Open and Affirming Congregation; but what does that mean? How do we make decisions based upon those things? Do we make decisions based mostly on our experience? How does scripture influence our decision making? How important is reason when we are figuring out what to do? What about how we have done things in the past; our traditions?

When Church of the Redeemer was preparing their profile to call a new pastor, you gathered in small groups and answered questions about what you do well, things you wished were happening, your hopes, and what has been meaningful. You answered those questions well and they were helpful in finding someone who met your needs. But how did you make those decisions? Who you are wasn’t necessarily answered in those questions.

In the upcoming weeks, I am going to arrange times to meet with small groups — some during the day, some in the evening, some at church, some in the community — to figure out who we are as Church of the Redeemer. We know whose we are, but I am interested in hearing from you about who you think we are. I hope you will make time to come to one of the small group gatherings and feel safe in sharing who you think we are. I look forward to hearing from you.

Blessings,
Pastor Brooke

The Latest News from the Leadership Team

By Diane Kvasnicka

The Leadership Team met on September 16, 2019.

Pastor Brooke reported that there will be a new member class beginning on September 22. New members will be welcomed into the Church of the Redeemer community on Oct. 6. Pastor Brooke also mentioned that she is launching a series of small group sessions to determine how we see ourselves as a Christian community and how we make decisions.

A preliminary budget for 2020 was presented and discussed.

After lengthy discussion, the Leadership Team decided to defer a decision on recruiting a new Parish Nurse for four months. During this period, Pastor Brooke — who has extensive experience as a hospice professional — will perform many of the tasks previously handled by the parish nurse. In four months, the Leadership Team will again reconsider this question. Please feel free to share your thoughts on this subject with any of the members of the Leadership Team.

The meeting was adjourned before discussing the recommendations of the Strategic Vision Team. The Leadership Team has decided to have a special meeting on Oct. 7, at 6:30 p.m. to deal with this very important issue.

Animal Blessing Outreach Oct. 5

Join Pastor Brooke at Lakewood Dog Park in the Metroparks Oct. 5 for a special outreach to the community.

Pastor Brooke will be blessing animals, giving us a chance to tell people in the community about Redeemer! Set-up is at 7:30 a.m., and blessings will happen between 8 and 10:30 a.m.

Can We Talk?

Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27, following worship, in the lounge.

Learn how to talk about your wishes, power of attorney and living will, hospice, and then a celebration of having successful conversations with your loved ones. All ages are welcome for this important educational series. If you have questions, please contact Diane Kvasnicka or Pastor Brooke.
Greetings!

October has arrived and it’s time to mark your calendars with some very exciting upcoming musical events.

Sunday, Oct. 13, 3 p.m.: SUMMIT BELLS CONCERT, a community handbell ensemble from Akron.

Saturday, Nov. 23, 6 p.m.: SHARON’S SIGNERS present “Charlie Brown Christmas.”

Sunday, Dec. 22, 10:30 a.m.: Chancel Choir presents Everlasting Light, The Promise of Christmas — a Cantata by Larson/McDonald/Rouse/Shackley.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support of our music program.

Blessings to all,
Carol

New Acolytes Trained

You may notice some new faces among our acolytes who carry the Light in and out of our worship space each Sunday. Thanks to Ben and Victoria Miller for leading the training, and to Andrew Hille who created the handout. You may have noticed on Sept 15 that two of our third graders carried out their new duties as acolytes under the watchful eyes of their older partners.

Blessing of the Animals Community Outreach, Lakewood Dog Park, Oct. 5

Children and youth are invited to join Pastor Brooke at Lakewood Dog Park in the Metroparks Oct. 5, anytime between 8 and 10 a.m., to pass out dog treats as Pastor Brooke blesses the dogs.

Blessing of the Animals at Redeemer

We will have a Blessing of the Animals at Church of the Redeemer on Oct 12 at 10 a.m.

World Communion Sunday, Oct. 6

Children and youth will be engaging in activities and discussion around Communion before returning to the sanctuary at the end of worship to join us in the Sacrament. Our communion table is open to all no matter one’s age. But as always, it’s a family’s decision about whether their children partake.

Children’s Sabbath, Oct. 13

Join us as we pray for the needs of children and youth in our country and around the world. We will also bless our own children and youth to the ways they minister with, to, and along side of us.

Quilt Raffle Ticket Sale Continues

This beautiful, handmade quilt will be raffled off Oct. 27. Proceeds benefit Redeemer UCC!

Tickets $1 each; 6 for $5. Look for the raffle ticket table after worship beginning Sept. 8, or see one of our “quilt ladies”!

Looking for New Care Givers

Opportunity knocks — will you answer? We need Care Givers! All ages/genders are welcome. See Marcia Powles or Donna Greenwell for more information.

Redeemer UCC October Birthdays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthdays</th>
<th></th>
<th>Birthdays</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Steffany Lynne Stone</td>
<td>14 Marcia Powles</td>
<td>19 Hollis Miller</td>
<td>21 Jim Stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Jacob Miller</td>
<td>15 Dave Evans</td>
<td>20 Jo Ann Chapman</td>
<td>23 Alyssa Sauter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Williams</td>
<td>19 Dave Evans</td>
<td>Michael Kvasnicka</td>
<td>24 Lauren Schlitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Ellie Suhart</td>
<td>20 Angela (Ross) Reed</td>
<td>Amanda Miller</td>
<td>26 Mary Kanzeg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Keeley Williams</td>
<td>20 Angela (Ross) Reed</td>
<td>Michael Kvasnicka</td>
<td>28 Andy Bischof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Brent Stone</td>
<td>20 Angela (Ross) Reed</td>
<td>21 Jim Stone</td>
<td>28 Andy Bischof</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gen Silent Showing at Redeemer Successful Community Outreach

By Barb Powell

When CHHSM members team up with local UCC churches, extraordinary things can happen. A recent presentation of the critically-acclaimed film *Gen Silent* in Westlake, Ohio, highlights just how much a local community can benefit.

The free showing Aug. 25 of the documentary about LGBTQ+ older adults deciding whether to go back into the closet to survive a transition to senior living communities was a revelation to some in attendance, and provoked additional reflection and discussion.

The Rev. Beth Long-Higgins of the Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Living with United Church Homes facilitated. “It’s a justice issue,” Long-Higgins told the WestLife newspaper. “Those of us who do not identify as LGBTQ+ need to be aware that people who are LGBTQ+ do not have the same protections as the rest of us throughout their entire lives.”

Pastor R. Brooke Baker, Redeemer’s senior minister, says that she was most surprised “that it did not occur to people that safety would be an issue to older LGBTQ+ adults when moving into an older adult community.”

Around 40 people attended the showing and subsequent discussion. Redeemer member Bonnie Hawver was surprised to learn of the complications that aging brings. “While I felt I had a more than average knowledge and understanding about the challenges faced by the LGBT community, *Gen Silent* provided a very poignant insight into the additional hurdles brought on by aging,” she says.

One scene in the film captures a man giving his partner a “very loving hand massage. His additional explanation of how he would have had to assume a more ‘clinical’ approach in a less understanding and accepting environment made me painfully cognizant of how even the smallest gestures of affection must be, at times, closeted,” Hawver adds. “How horrible to feel one’s love for another to be wrapped and taped, waiting for that secret moment to be opened and shared. I was enlightened by the obstacles each person faced and hope I have grown in my affirmation of all God’s children.”

Long-time Redeemer member Janet Kramer was surprised to find that the lessons from the film are applicable to everyone, regardless of sexual orientation. Kramer, who lost her husband several years ago, says, “After watching the documentary, I was feeling some angst about my own situation and what I will do if and when I become incapacitated and no longer able to care for myself. We are an aging population, and must think about the time when we can no longer live independently. *Gen Silent* is relevant to everyone.”

One attendee told Long-Higgins that “she was there in part because half of her grandchildren are LGBT,” Long-Higgins says. “We assume that [straight] older adults are completely opposed to conversations concerned with anything related to LGBTQ+. The reality is that there are a lot of grandparents who love their grandchildren and know that love to be stronger than the phobias and fear perpetuated in the larger culture.”

For Church of the Redeemer UCC, hosting the *Gen Silent* event is one of the many ways the congregation is finding to live into its Open and Affirming covenant, and it proved to be educational for everyone. “It is difficult to reach out to a vulnerable community if it doesn’t occur to us that they might be vulnerable,” Baker says. “As followers of Jesus, we are called to love our neighbor, but if we do not see the needs of our neighbors, it is difficult to reach out to them. This film introduced some of the challenges that older LGBTQ+ adults might be facing.”

Excerpted with permission from Diakonie, the e-newsletter of the UCC Council for Health and Human Service Ministries. Read the full article [here](https://www.chhsm.org/?p=11029).

October Mission Offering and In-Gathering

The mission offering in October will be for the UCC’s Neighbors in Need Offering. Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds supports a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. These grants fund projects whose work ranges from direct service to community organizing and advocacy to address systemic injustice. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities.

The October In-Gathering is Church of the Redeemer’s annual 75 lb. Peanut Butter Challenge! Thank you in advance for your generous donations!