

Holidays at:

Helping Hands...



Christmas Eve—At Redeemer Church

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

- Candlelight Worship @ 7:00pm
- Holiday Hymns will be sung by all at 6:45pm
- Communion Will Be Open To All
- **Cookies, Coffee and Punch will Follow

Sunday, December 29, 2024

- Hymns & Carols @ 10:00am
- Communion Will Be Open To All
- **A light lunch will Follow

Come join in with family, friends and neighbors for a time of holiday cheer. We will share the carols you love to hear and also God's special story will be shared. What more could we ask for on the Eve of our Lord's birth? This special time together will be finalized with "Silent Night" and Candle Lighting.

So come celebrate the joy of our Savior's birth with friends, family and neighbors this **Christmas Eve** and fill your holidays with the true meaning of Christmas in a **SPECIAL** way by remembering the birth of God's Son.

May the love of our Father in heaven touch you this year in a way it has never touched you before. Remember Jesus came so that God could "**be with us**"- **ALWAYS!!**

Also, we pray we will see you, **Sunday, December 29th @ 10:00am for a Carols & Readings.** This is a time when the "love of Christmas" touches our hearts and reminds us why God sent his son as a baby to the earth—to share His LOVE with Us.

Merry
CHRISTMAS

God's Helping Hands

Redeemer Church, E.L.C.A. "...your helping hands"

A Congregation of the *NorthWest Lower Michigan
Synod of Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America*

2727 W. Holmes Road
Lansing, Michigan 48911
517-882-8000 (church voice)
517-882-8622 (school voice)
517-882-2063 (fax for both)
517-980-6250 (emergency #)

redeemerlansing.com
hhclearningcenter.com

E-Mail: janhite@sbcglobal.net
E-Mail: director@hhclearningcenter.com

Sunday Worship begins at 10:00am

*Live & Streaming

**Holy Communion is Celebrated Every Sunday and Open
To all of God's Children*

Sunday Luncheon follows worship, 11:15am
Wed. Adult Enrichment Hour, 7:00pm

CHURCH STAFF

Jan Hite, Pastor
Jeanette Eastham, Guitar
Danielle Greene, Violin
Tom Jones, Minister of Music
Sandra Walker, Council President
Vickie Crouch, Learning Center President
Rachelle Williams, Learning Center Director
Church Council meetings are open to all members.
**Their normal meeting time is the 3rd Sunday of
each month @ Noon.**

Helping Hands Christian Learning Center Board meetings are open to all to all members, parents and community members. **Their normal meeting time is the 4th Thursday of each month @ 6:00pm**

Helping Hands Newsletter

is published monthly
Editors: Rachelle Williams and Pr. Jan Hite

*Deadline for the **February 2025** edition is:
January 20, 2025

*The editors reserve the right to make changes to all items submitted.



*"Our Hands are God's hands at
work with those in need"*

Birthdays & Anniversaries

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Lisa Temple	Dec. 03
Harry Wilson	Dec. 13
Sandra Walker	Dec. 20
Edward Fitzgerald	Dec. 21
Tom Jones	Dec. 21
Gareth Zimba	Dec. 26
Denise Eulert	Dec. 31

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Ed & Carla Fitzgerald	Dec. 02
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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Barbara McGraw	Jan. 24
Katherine Jones	Jan. 27

We are sorry if we missed your special day. Please let the office know of your date by calling 882-8000, emailing, janhite@sbcglobal.net or by dropping your name and Birthdate or Anniversary date in the offering plate. **Thanks!**

ANNUAL MEETING SET...

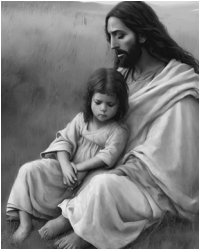
Our Annual Meeting is set for **Sunday, January 26, 2025, following worship.**

As always this is an important time as we will decide on budgets for both our church and school, elect officers for the boards of both our school and church council and highlight what we have accomplished in the year 2024 and what we plan to do in the year 2025.

Please mark 1/26 on your calendar now as it is important that we all be present. Watch for a copy of the Annual Report in you email or mailbox.



**See you Sunday, Jan. 26, 2025
following Worship!**



JESUS vs SANTA



Santa lives at the North Pole...

JESUS is everywhere.

Santa rides in a sleigh...

JESUS rides on the wind and walks on the water.

Santa comes but once a year...

JESUS is an ever present help.

Santa fills your stockings with goodies...

JESUS supplies all your needs.

Santa comes down your chimney uninvited...

JESUS stands at your door and knocks, and then enters your heart when invited.

You have to wait in line to see Santa...

JESUS is as close as the mention of His name.

Santa lets you sit on his lap...

JESUS lets you rest in His arms.

Santa doesn't know your name, all he can say is "Hi little boy or girl, what's your name?"...

JESUS knew our name before we were born. Not only does He know our name, He knows our address too. He knows our history and future and He even knows how many hairs are on our heads.

Santa has a belly like a bowl full of jelly...

JESUS has a heart full of love

All Santa can offer is HO HO HO...

JESUS offers health, help and hope.

Santa says "You better not cry"...

JESUS says "Cast all your cares on me for I care for you."

Santa's little helpers make toys...

JESUS makes new life, mends wounded hearts, repairs broken homes and builds mansions.

Santa may make you chuckle but...

JESUS gives you joy that is your strength.

While Santa puts gifts under your tree...

JESUS became our gift and died on a tree...the cross.

We need to put Christ back in CHRISTmas, Jesus is still the reason for the season.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

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### **Would you like to know Jesus?**

You can have peace and find hope and know forgiveness through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. You can receive Christ right now by faith through prayer. Praying is simply talking to God. God knows your heart and is not so concerned with your words as He is with the attitude of your heart.

Here's a suggested prayer:

***Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life to You and ask You to come in as my Savior and Lord. Take control of my life. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Bring peace to my world this Christmas. Make me the kind of person You want me to be. Amen***

If this prayer expresses the desire of your heart, pray it right now and Christ will come into your life as He promised. If you invited Jesus Christ into your life, thank God often that He is in your life, that He will never leave you and that you have eternal life.

## **Merry Christmas...**



## Please join us for these upcoming Community Events & Needs

### “Don’t Forget Poinsettias or Holiday Gifts” ...

Every Christmas Season we have the opportunity to purchase a Poinsettia Plant for the church or a special gift for another in need. This year our special gifts you can buy are: **10 Warm Meals @ Local Soup Kitchen \$20, Health Visit For Child \$10, or a Backpack Filled w/ Food, \$10.** If you purchase a Poinsettia Plant to adorn our worship space for Jesus on Christmas Eve **the cost of each plant is \$10/each.** Thank You for your gift!!!



### “Mobile Food Pantry” ...

**Date: On Going Dates Thru-out Our Community. Times Vary. \*See Our Website for Details**

Distribution of **FREE, fresh, non-perishable** food items available.



### Who can participate?

- The disadvantaged and vulnerable.
- Senior citizens on fixed incomes.
- Families/individuals with limited/low income jobs.

**ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST BRING A VALID DRIVERS LICENSE OR I.D.**

**THANK YOU...to ALL OF YOU** for caring for those in need. This year both *Redeemer Church and Helping Hands Christian Learning Center* put together 15 “Thanksgiving Food Baskets” for families in our surrounding neighborhood, so that they could enjoy Thanksgiving. It is always a blessing when we can be a “blessing” to others. A BIG “thank you” to **EACH OF YOU** for making this project a wonderful success. May God bless **ALL OF YOU** for the way you have chosen to bless those in need. Keep your eyes open and see where you can help a brother or sister in need, especially as the economic challenges continue for all of us and as the Christmas Season will soon be upon us. **Thanks!**



### Next Taco Dinner...

**Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025 6:00-7:30pm.**

Our next Taco Dinner is in February 13, 2025 and you are invited. You and your family and friends are invited to enjoy Tacos, chips, beans, rice, and all the toppings which include Guacamole. There will also be various drinks and Baskin Robbins Ice Cream to top off a great meal. And of course it is **ALL YOU CAN EAT!** And there is “Take Out.”



Cost is: Adults: \$10, Seniors: \$9 and Children: \$5.

**We are looking forward to seeing you on Thursday, February 13th, 2025!!**

### “Cookies For Christmas Eve” ...

**Date: Tuesday, December 24th Time: 7:00pm**

Christmas Eve will be here before you know it and with that special day comes the time for us to worship our Lord. **After our 7pm worship service we will gather for a time of Cookies/Drinks/Fellowship.**

If you can share a dozen of your special Christmas Cookies with others it would be much appreciated.

*Christmas Cookies*



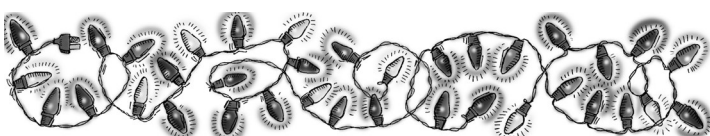
Please take time with others on that special eve to remember our Lord, before you head over to share the **JOY** of Christmas with family & friends. We hope to see you then and pray you can spare a dozen of cookies to share.

**DON'T FORGET—THE HOLIDAYS CAN BRING ON MORE GRIEF Allow Yourself to Feel...**

### Don't be afraid to feel.

Feel pain, feel joy, feel love, feel anger, feel excitement or happiness. Feeling is good and sometimes after going through the hardest parts of life, we have to remind ourselves to stop ducking cover, to stop wincing and grimacing, afraid to feel because we are afraid to break. If you are there, take a step today and let yourself feel something. It might be scary at first, it might hurt a little, but the whole thing about coming alive doesn't mean that you won't feel pain. It simply opens your heart to joy as well. What are you feeling right now? Take a minute to tap into them, to ask yourself how you're really doing beneath the surface and write it down. **Yes, allow yourself to feel...**

Visit For More Support: [hospiceoflansing.org](http://hospiceoflansing.org)





# Helping Hands Christian Learning Center

Our Mission: to provide nurturing care to God's children through our helping hands, offering a safe haven for holistic growth.

## *“Tis the Season to be less Egocentric than the Child”*

I was at a shopping mall the other day and observed something that bothers me a lot each year. A line of children, many who were crying, were waiting to sit on Santa's lap. Why is it that adults often forget the message, “Never Talk To STRANGERS” at this time of year. Isn't a man in a bright red suit, with a white beard who says, “Ho Ho Ho” pretty strange? I have the answer to this dilemma. Adults should stand in line, sit on Santa's lap and have their picture taken by their child.

This is the time of year when the holiday frenzy takes place. As soon as children are old enough to “want” the things that they see in catalogs, on television and on the internet, then adults are going to be tempted to want to provide them with those things. It is easy to be convinced that buying this toy or that toy will provide children with hours of playtime peace. The reality is that few, if any, will deliver on that promise.



Many adults purchase toys that the media says their children must have or they thought they should have received as a child but didn't. This is the time that adults have to be less egocentric than their child/children. Even well made toys have a relatively short life expectancy for young children.

Young children do not have the ability to select what they want and need in this media frenzy world. Adults are going to have to look at what is appropriate and captures the imagination of a child.

### **Holiday Shopping for Children - Beware of:**

- Gifts that say they “teach”
- Gifts that only have “one” use
- Gifts that cannot be taken apart and put back together
- Gifts that tell the child what to do
- Gifts that cannot be moved
- Gifts that can only be used indoors
- Gifts that require some form of technology, batteries or plug in

### **Buy or Put Together Gifts that expand the imagination of young children**

- Brief case filled with stamps, envelopes, writing pads, pens and pencils to pretend office play
- Flashlights of different sizes and beams for nighttime adventures and shadow making
- Measuring tapes/rulers for discovering lengths and sizes of everything in sight
- Suitcase filled with dress-up clothes
- Blocks
- Masking tape include rolls of different colors and widths
- Sheets, blankets and curtains for tent making adventures, include clothespins or clips
- Book Bundles for travel, outdoor or bedtime

**Happy Holidays...**

-Dan Hodgins

## What's Happening

### **December/January**

- 12/17: Staff Meeting
- 12/19: HHCLC Bd. Mtg. 6pm
- 12/21: 1st Day of Winter
- 12/20: HH Christmas Parties
- 12/24: Christmas Eve Worship, 7:00pm
- 12/25: **MERRY CHRISTMAS**
- 12/24: HHCLC, Closed for Holidays
- 12/25: HHCLC, Closed for Holidays
- 12/25: Hanukkah, Begins
- 12/26: Kwanzaa, Begins
- 12/23—01/03, ALL Schools
- \*Christmas Break
- \*Center Open M-F, 7am till 6pm
- 01/01: Happy New Years!!!
- 01/01: HHCLC, Closed for Holiday
- 01/06: ALL Schools Starts Up
- 01/20: Inauguration Day
- 01/23: HHCLC Bd. Mtg, 6pm

*Helping Hands Christian Learning Center* is a ministry of Redeemer Church and has been servicing the community for over 29 years. Here we offer love and quality care to God's children. Come in today to see what we have to offer you and your family.



### Sunday Schedule

- Worship: 10:00am
- Lunch and Fellowship: 11:15am
- Wed. Adult Enrich. Class: 7:00pm

We are a church of this community and ALL are welcome. **Come as you are!**



### Happy Birthday To You...

|       |             |       |           |
|-------|-------------|-------|-----------|
| 12/07 | Javian C    | 01/20 | Aria J    |
| 12/15 | Essence T   | 01/23 | Malia F   |
| 12/17 | Ashley C    | 01/23 | Brandy W  |
| 01/08 | Tiana B     | 01/29 | Charles S |
| 01/10 | Ivory B     | 01/31 | Kohlton P |
| 01/15 | Naomi M     |       |           |
| 01/15 | Kaia R      |       |           |
| 01/19 | Ms. Michell |       |           |



No Room at the Inn

Each of Us is...  
 an Inn  
 Keeper  
 who decides  
 if there is  
 room for  
**JESUS** in Our  
 Lives!

### Exciting News For Both the Infant Room & Young Toddler's Room

By the end of January 2025 both rooms will have new paint on their walls with some wall decorations to stimulate cognitive growth in our children. This also will help to brighten up each room.

Also, both rooms will receive new carpet flooring that is well padded and bright in color. This material will be similar to what is in the "Before & After School Area," which is carpet squares and easy to keep clean.

We are excited that our little ones are getting a fresh area to run, grow and play in.

Once everything is completed, all parents will be invited to come in and view the new space their children are now enjoying.

Sometimes  
 the Best  
 Christmas  
 Present is  
 Remembering  
 What You  
 Already  
 Got!



## Helping Hands Christian Learning Center...

Child Care, Pre-School, Kindergarten Readiness,  
 Before and After School & Summer Programs  
 are here, for your "Peace of Mind"!  
 Call 517-882-8622 for more information

## CHRISTMAS—A GIFT OF LOVE

Whatever life threw at us each year, come Christmas our family had one constant tradition: our dog Pepper opening our presents for us. When our beloved Black Lab mix had been a gangly adolescent puppy, we had only given her unbreakable gifts to unwrap—things like pajamas and steering wheel covers. She proved to be so careful that we soon gave her any gift that wasn't edible. Every time, Pepper found the seam in the wrapping paper with her snout and held the present down gingerly with her forepaws. Her front teeth pried up the lip of paper with the utmost care. Then she removed every inch of wrapping paper before stepping back to lie in the midst of our gathering. She never bit or scratched the gifts themselves.

Friends and relatives who joined our family celebrations never believed Pepper could be so delicate until they witnessed her talents. Watching our sweet dog unwrap gifts always warmed the holiday, which was often a little bitter-sweet because college, studying abroad, or work commitments often kept my two sisters and me away.

One year, everyone made it home for a Christmas together. I was back from Ireland, Kaci flew in from Arizona, and Kara visited from college. Mom's jubilation kept her busy baking cookies for us all. Our Christmas season should have been perfect.

It couldn't feel perfect, though, because Pepper's health was deteriorating. Her life had already been longer than we expected—she was fourteen—and yet her mind was still sharp. Her enthusiasm for life made us feel better. But her body could not keep up with her spirit. She'd already shown the usual signs of deafness and stiffness. That year, her hips and back legs started giving out on her. We knew we would soon have to make a difficult decision.

It was likely Pepper's last Christmas, so we decided to make sure she enjoyed it. On Christmas Eve, we gathered around the tree to open an early present. We each took a turn and then called Pepper to open one more. But her tangled legs could not navigate the boxes and shredded wrapping paper on the floor. She stumbled over the obstacles, and soon she disappeared into the next room. She crumpled back to the floor, as out of the way as she could get.

We were heartbroken. Could Pepper even participate in her last Christmas? Pepper stayed on the periphery of all our holiday activities. Throughout the day, we gave gifts but did not feel very giving. We shared stories over cinnamon rolls that tasted bland. We played games by the tree whose twinkles had dimmed. That evening, Kaci said what we'd all been thinking: "I wish Pepper could have helped open presents this year."

We all put down our mugs of spiced tea. "Maybe she still could," Kara said. "But there's none left," Mom reminded her. Kara jumped up and left the room. We heard her opening drawers and cabinets in the kitchen. She returned with a box of dog biscuits, scissors, and a roll of tape. "Hand me that green paper," Kara told me, pointing at a large sheet at my feet. She cut a small section from the paper and wrapped a single dog treat in it. She held it up as if she had just struck gold. "Now there's a present for her!"

I knelt on the floor next to Kara and wrapped another dog treat. Kaci and Mom joined in, too. Soon, we had four elegantly wrapped dog biscuits in a row on the floor. We cleared the floor of discarded wrapping paper. We tucked our legs under us as we perched out of the way on the furniture. "Go get Pepper," we urged Mom. We all bounced like eager children.

Mom went into the next room. "You want to open a present, girl?" she coaxed. In a moment, Pepper stuck her head into the room. Her ears were fully perked with anticipation and curiosity.

She skidded on stilted legs to the row of presents. She sniffed all four in order, and looked back and forth between them. She'd never had such a wide choice of gifts before.

Soon, Pepper selected her first Christmas gift. She nimbly turned the present with her forepaw, just like she was a spry young dog once more. She tugged every last scrap of paper off the dog treat before she chewed it with her customary grace.

**Our family swelled with glee.** Pepper licked the last crumb from the floor. She eyed the remaining three presents, then turned to Mom as if asking, "May I please open another?" "Go ahead, girl!" Mom encouraged.

For the next few minutes, Pepper opened each of her Christmas presents. While she did, she reminded us of the sheer joy of being together. Our family felt whole—not because we were in the same room, city, or country, but because love bonded us together.

In the new year, Pepper let us know it was time to call the veterinarian. Her passing, while tearful, was peaceful. In its own way, her passing was also a celebration of life, because she gave my family so much love and laughter.

Long after I forgot each of my presents, I still cherish Pepper's final Christmas gift. She taught me that no matter where we each spend the holidays, and no matter what the passing year brings, the smallest act of heartfelt giving can unite our family through our love. For me, that knowledge is the longest-lasting gift of all.

**May the GIFT of Jesus help each of you remember those you have to love and those you have had to love each day of your lives.**

—Zach Hively



**Redeemer Church, E.L.C.A.**  
“...your Helping Hands”  
**Helping Hands Christian Learning Center**  
2727 West Holmes Road  
Lansing, Michigan 48911  
[www.redeemerlansing.com](http://www.redeemerlansing.com)  
[www.hhclearningcenter.com](http://www.hhclearningcenter.com)

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**TIME-VALUED  
MAIL**

Please deliver by:  
**Dec. 20**

*Christ  
IS Born!*



We invite you to visit us. **Everyone is welcome here!** We are people of God who give ourselves freely and joyfully to God, to one another and to others. This community witnesses to a God who is

active in the world. *We proclaim God's active love for all people:* poor and rich; people of all cultures and races; women, men, children, younger, older, single, married, divorced, widowed, those of all lifestyles, blended families, single-parent households, ... all are welcome! You are invited to meet this community that seeks to reflect God's open and loving embrace.

***SUNDAY MORNINGS  
Praise Time!***

- ♦ Worship begins at 10:00 a.m.
  - Holy Communion is shared each week
  - ALL are welcome \*Dress is casual
  - Lunch is served the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday. Please join us for a great time of food and fellowship.

**ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO  
JOIN US!!**

**WE ARE A DIVERSE, AND  
WELCOMING COMMUNITY.**



**Join Us At...**  
**Helping Hands Christian  
Learning Center**  
**December 23—January 3**  
**7:00 a.m. till 6:00 p.m., M-F**

While your elementary age children are on break from school, Helping Hands Learning Center will be offering full-day care for children, ages 5-11. There will be indoor and outdoor activities to keep them busy along with movies, crafts, games, and some field trips. Also breakfast, lunch and snacks are included. **OUR SPACE IS LIMITED**, so call to reserve your spots soon!!

**\*We are closed Tuesday & Wednesday  
December 24 & 25 and  
Wednesday, January 1st.  
517-882-8622**

*Winter Break*