

# HELLO summer

# The Messenger

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church Newsletter July/August 2025

## Mark Your Calendars!

July 6— **NO SERVICE AT ORLC WORSHIP AT DRIVE-IN**

July 13— Sunday worship with Communion

July 20— Sunday worship w/o Communion

July 27— Sunday worship with Communion

Aug. 3— **NO SERVICE AT ORLC WORSHIP AT DRIVE-IN**

Aug. 10— Sunday worship with Communion

Aug. 17— Sunday worship w/o Communion

Aug. 24— Sunday worship with Communion

Aug. 31— Sunday worship w/o Communion

## Bible Studies at Church

**TAWG: (time away with God):** evening Bible study Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

**Ladies' Bible Study:** Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m.

## Miss something from the Sermon?

All of our worship services are livestreamed and archived on our Facebook page! You can also find them on our website at:

[www.orldcknoxin.com](http://www.orldcknoxin.com)



IN GOD  
I TRUST;  
I shall not  
be afraid.

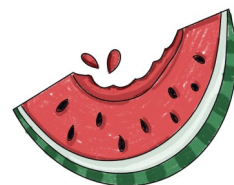
Psalm 56:4, ESV

## Welcome!

To our July and August Church Newsletter! As we step into the heart of summer, we celebrate the warmth not only of the season but also of our vibrant church community. We invite you to join us in worship, fellowship, and celebration as we continue walking together in faith.

In the weeks ahead, look forward to uplifting sermons, thought-provoking Bible studies, and meaningful opportunities to connect and grow. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, our doors and hearts are open to you. Whether you're seeking comfort, direction, or a deeper sense of belonging, you'll find a home here.

Let us come together in faith, love, and service—because your presence is what makes our church family whole. Welcome home!



## Thank You and Farewell to Pastor Eric and Linda

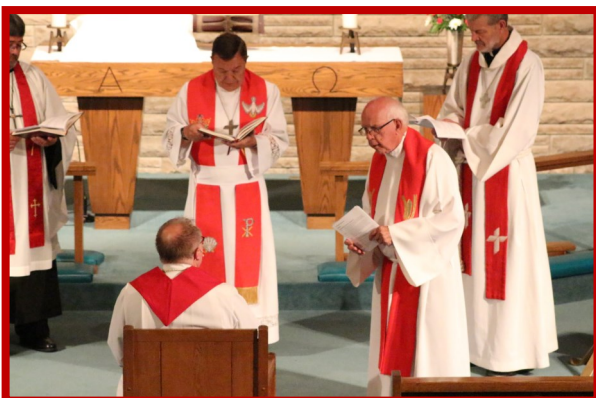


With grateful hearts, we say thank you and farewell to **Pastor Eric** as he follows God's call to serve at **Atonement Lutheran Church in Columbus, Ohio**. While it is not easy to say goodbye, we celebrate with him as he begins this new chapter in ministry.

Pastor Eric, we are sincerely thankful for your **seven years of faithful service** to Our Redeemer. Your Christ-centered leadership, your compassionate care, and your dedication to preaching and teaching God's Word have deeply blessed our congregation. You have walked with us through times of joy and sorrow, growth and challenge, always pointing us toward the hope we have in Christ.

We also want to express our heartfelt gratitude to **Linda**, whose quiet strength, support, and presence have been a blessing to so many. Whether through her kindness, hospitality, or encouragement behind the scenes, she has been a vital part of your ministry and our church family.

As you both step into this new season, please know you go with our prayers, our love, and our deepest gratitude. May God continue to guide and bless you richly as you serve His people in a new place.







# Holy Baptism

## Celebrating New Life in Christ Through Holy Baptism

June has been a month of great joy and spiritual blessing here at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, as we have welcomed several new sisters in Christ into God's family through the gift of Holy Baptism. We give thanks to our gracious Lord for His promises fulfilled in these sacred moments, in keeping with our Lutheran confession that Baptism is not just plain water, but water included in God's command and combined with His Word (cf. Small Catechism).



On **Sunday, June 8, 2025**, we rejoiced as **Sarah Ann Downs** received the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). Sarah is the daughter of Greg and Christy Downs and the great-granddaughter of Sharon Krick. We welcome Sarah as our sister in the faith and pray that she may continue to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.



On **June 22, 2025**, **Elena Mae Balaszek**, daughter of Carl and Tiffany Balaszek, was baptized into Christ. Elena is the granddaughter of Paul and Debbie Godines and the great-granddaughter of Guy Weber. We thank God for the faithful generations who continue to pass down the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3).

On **June 29, 2025**, we witnessed the Baptism of **Haylee Leona Wolf, and Kelsey Ray Wolf**, daughters of Travis Wolf and Erica Pick. We give thanks for their inclusion in the Body of Christ and pray for their parents and sponsors as they nurture them in the Christian faith and life.



We warmly welcome Sarah, Elena, Haylee, and Kelsey into the fellowship of all believers and rejoice that they have been united with Christ in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-5). May the Lord bless and keep them always in their baptismal grace.



# A Grateful Heart: Thank You to Our Faithful Volunteers

On June 11th 2025, a beautiful and powerful transformation took place on the outside of our church building—our Lutheran cross was re-painted in the new synod colors. Once again, it stands as a tall symbol of our faith and a visible reminder of Christ's love. This meaningful work was lovingly and prayerfully completed by the selfless efforts of our very own volunteers.

To each of you who gave your time, energy, and talents to this project: **thank you**. Your service is not only appreciated—it is a testimony of what it means to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this world. With each brushstroke, you gave more than paint; you gave witness to your faith and devotion.

Scripture reminds us in **1 Peter 4:10**: *"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."* That is exactly what you have done. You have taken what God has placed in your hands—whether that be creativity, craftsmanship, or simply a willing heart—and offered it back in love.

As we look upon the cross on our church building, may it not only reflect the beauty of your labor but also inspire us all to continue caring for the blessings God has entrusted to us. We are called to be good stewards—not only of our finances and time, but also of our church, our community, and every resource the Lord has given us.

Just as you have poured yourselves into this visible work, may we all be stirred to take responsibility for our shared spiritual home. Let us be faithful in maintaining and honoring what God has placed in our care. Whether it's cleaning, planting, serving, or encouraging, **every act of stewardship glorifies God**.

Once again, thank you to our dedicated volunteers. Your work has left a lasting mark—not just on the walls of the building, but on the hearts of this congregation. May God bless you abundantly for your faithfulness.

With gratitude and love,

**Your Church Leadership**



As you can see, the cross had begun to fade over time and no longer stood out as it once did. Its vibrant message was slowly being dimmed by the elements and the passing years. But now, thanks to the care and dedication of our volunteers, **our cross once again boldly stands out—bright, renewed, and proclaiming the hope and love of Christ to all who pass by**.



# FROM THE PASTOR

*June 25, 2025*

Dear Beloved Church Family,

As I sit down to write these words, my heart is full — of gratitude, of memories, and yes, of sadness too. As you know, I will be transitioning from my

role as your pastor to serve another congregation that has prayerfully called me to shepherd their community.

Serving as your pastor has been one of the greatest honors and joys of my life. Over the years, we have shared moments of joy and sorrow, growth and challenge. I have celebrated baptisms and weddings with you. I have stood with you in hospitals and in times of grief. I have laughed with you, wept with you, prayed with you, and grown with you. Thank you for letting me into your lives and for trusting me with your stories, your faith journeys, and your hearts.

This was not an easy decision. I love this church deeply. But I believe the Holy Spirit is leading me toward a new calling, and just as I followed God's call here years ago, I must follow it again now. My departure is not a goodbye forever, but a passing of the baton to whoever God will raise up to shepherd this congregation in the days ahead.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to the leaders, staff, and every member who has faithfully served alongside me. Your dedication to Christ and to one another is inspiring, and I have no doubt this church will continue to be a light in the community.


Though I will no longer be your pastor, I will always be your brother in Christ. I will carry with me the lessons learned here, the friendships formed, and the deep love I have for each of you. Please pray for me in this transition, as I will be praying for you.

Please pray for me and for Atonement Lutheran Church, where I will next be serving, just as I will continue to pray for you and the incredible work God is still doing here. I believe with all my heart that the best days of this church are ahead. God is faithful, and He is not finished writing the story here.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit continue to guide this church into a bright and faithful future.

With love and gratitude,

*Pastor Eric*



# Volunteer

## July/August Worship Service Volunteer Schedules

# Schedule

### PowerPoint

July 6th **NO SERVICE AT ORLC**

July 13th Sharon Krick

July 20th Sharon Krick

July 27th Harper Hazelton

August 3rd **NO SERVICE AT ORLC**

August 10th Diane Cruz

August 17th Sharon Krick

August 24th Jana Hazelton

August 27th Harper Hazelton

### Lector Schedule

July 6th **NO SERVICE AT ORLC**

July 13th Jana Hazelton

July 20th Diane Cruz

July 27th Meda Sullivan

Aug. 3rd **NO SERVICE AT ORLC**

Aug. 10th Mike Lord

Aug. 17th Kathy Dedloff

Aug. 24th Diane Cruz

Aug. 31st Dave Giesler

### Usher Schedule

July 6th **NO SERVICE AT ORLC**

July 13th Meda Sullivan, Jim Mick Vicki Mick, Brad Hazelton, and Harper Hazelton

July 20th Meda Sullivan, Dave Giesler, Josh Stacy, and Aleks Stacy

July 27th Meda Sullivan, Larry Mick, Miles Fraser, Jim Mick, and Vicki Mick

Aug. 3rd **NO SERVICE AT ORLC**

Aug. 10th Meda Sullivan, Bruce Zimmerman, Mel Lenig, and Linda Bachert

Aug. 17th Meda Sullivan, Keith Enger, Christy Enger, and Guy Weber

Aug. 24th Meda Sullivan, Renta Banta, Jim Watkins, and Linda Watkins

Aug. 31st Meda Sullivan, Paul Meyers, Phil Hamand, Mike Lord, and Sindi Lord

### Communion Assistant

July 13th Josh Stacy

July 27th Josh Stacy

Aug. 10th Denise Doig

Aug. 24th Jim Mick

We are deeply grateful to all of our faithful volunteers for your dedication and service each and every Sunday. Your willingness to give your time and talents is a true blessing to our church family. Because of you, our worship services run smoothly and our ministry continues to thrive. Thank you for serving with such joy and faithfulness—your efforts do not go unnoticed, and we thank God for each of you!





## Faith and Freedom: A Reflection for Independence Day

As we gather this July 4th to celebrate Independence Day, we do more than remember the birth of a nation—we reflect on the blessings of freedom, the responsibility it carries, and the hope we find in God's eternal kingdom.

Our nation's founders envisioned a land where liberty and justice would flourish. Today, we benefit from their courage and sacrifice. But as believers, we know that true freedom doesn't come solely from governments or laws—it is found in Christ.

**"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free."**

— *Galatians 5:1*

This verse reminds us that the greatest freedom is not political, but spiritual. Through Jesus, we are free from sin, fear, and condemnation. As we celebrate our country's freedom, let us not forget to rejoice in the ultimate freedom we have as children of God.

### Honoring with Gratitude

Independence Day is a time to give thanks:

- For those who have served and sacrificed to preserve our nation's freedoms.
- For the ability to worship freely and gather in fellowship without fear.
- For the blessings God has poured out on our communities, families, and churches.

As we wave flags and watch fireworks, let us also lift our hearts in prayer—asking God to guide our leaders, heal our land, and awaken hearts to His truth.

### Living Out Our Faith in Freedom

Freedom is a gift, but also a calling. The Apostle Peter reminds us:

**"Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's servants."**

— *1 Peter 2:16*

As Christians, our freedom should lead us to serve, love, and uplift others. Whether it's through community outreach, prayer, acts of kindness, or simply being a light in our workplace or neighborhood, we are called to use our liberty for God's glory.

### A Prayer for Our Nation

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the freedoms we enjoy and the country we call home. We ask for Your continued guidance, protection, and wisdom for our leaders. Heal our divisions and turn our hearts back to You. May Your church shine brightly as a beacon of hope, truth, and love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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This Independence Day, may we celebrate not only with cookouts and fireworks, but also with hearts full of gratitude and renewed commitment to live out our faith boldly and compassionately in the land of the free.

**Happy Independence Day, and may God bless America!**



July / August Newsletter Article  
From the Desk of the DCE

## Heroes of Faith Vacation Bible School Re-Cap...

A HUGE THANK YOU to ALL our volunteers for their efforts in hosting another wonderful week of Vacation Bible School. They are as follows:

Scenery & Props: Jerri Cole, Becky Wirebaugh, & Autumn Ferch

Registration / Daily Pictures / Daily Newsletters: Shannon Pitts

Openings & Closings: Diane Cruz, Hudson Hazelton as Brutus the Bear, and  
Gracie Krueger as Polly the Porcupine

Storytime: Pastor Eric Gawura

Crafts: Becky Wirebaugh, Elaine Browne, Denise Doig, Lincoln Waters

Games: Jerri Cole with Braxton McGinley & Gavin Michel

Music: Char Geisler with Linda Gawura on Sound System

Snacks: Margaret Koch, Kris & Mel Lenig, and Shirley Eichelberg

Group Leaders:

Preschool: Jana Hazelton with Layla Brammer

Kindergarten: Meda Sullivan with Ava Harkins

First Grade: Ava Brammer

Second & Third Grade: Autumn Ferch

Fourth & Fifth Grade: Deb Bell

In the 5 days we met, we averaged about 40 students. The children experienced the origin of Moses and the big plans God had for his life. They marched with Joshua in his mission around Jericho. They learned God's Word as they experienced Jesus combat the devil with the Word of God. And last, but not least, they saw the victory Gideon had through the Lord with just a few 300 men. The entire week showed the students how God can and does use the most unlikely people to fulfill HIS purpose







### Upcoming dates to mark on your calendar for 5<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Graders:

Sunday, July 13: Youth Event at Our Redeemer from Noon – 2 p.m.

Sunday, July 27: Youth Event at Our Redeemer from Noon – 2 p.m.

Sunday, August 10: Youth Event at Our Redeemer from Noon – 2 p.m.

Sunday, August 24: Youth Event at Our Redeemer from Noon – 2 p.m.

## LCMS Youth Gathering for High School Students:



July 19-23 is the big event!!! This gathering happens every 3 years and this year 5 of our congregational members, 3 youth and 2 adults, will be joining with at least 30,000 other LCMS members in New Orleans to grow in faith by exploring the theme “ENDURE.”

This theme will explore Hebrews 12:1-3 “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.”

Please keep our group (Ava Brammer, Harper Hazelton, Casey Vargo, Diane Cruz, & Jana Hazelton) in prayer as they prepare both physically and spiritually to embark upon this spiritual adventure! Our group will leave on Friday, July 18; flying from South Bend to New Orleans. They will return home the following Thursday, July 24.

## THANK YOU PASTOR ERIC...

for your leadership as our faithful pastor for the past seven years! Although we are very sad to see you go, we wish you God’s richest blessings as you follow His call to Atonement Lutheran Church in Columbus, OH.





## "Pray Without Ceasing"

As our church is now faced with calling a new Pastor, we need to "pray without ceasing" for God's guidance to our call committee to issue a call to the man whom God has chosen for us. We need to put our trust in God to guide us to the right pastor.

Hopefully, the following Scriptures may help you increase your faith that God is listening to your prayers:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 – Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Proverbs 3:5 – 6 – Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, lean not on your own understanding, in all of your ways submit to Him and He will direct your paths.

Romans 12:11-12 – Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer.

We also need to pray for Pastor and Linda as they make the move to Atonement Lutheran Church in Columbus, Ohio. Pray for a smooth transition for them and their fur babies!

We also need to pray for each other as we go through the call process, recognizing that all of our wants may not be answered. Please be there for each other in Christian love.

**LET US LEARN TO BE A PRAYING CHURCH!!!!**

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As the Parish nurse, I have been the contact person for requests to the prayer warriors. This is a group of 33 people who have agreed to pray for the people who have made specific requests for God's intervention in issues they or friends are dealing with. These requests are sent out by me through individual text messages. Most are identified by name but some may be anonymous.

I have felt the need to add another contact person who can also be contacted for prayer requests to be sent out. Kathy Dedloft has graciously agreed to be the other contact person. You may text or call either one of us to make a request.

Our phone numbers are: Kathy Dedloft – 574-933-1063

Sharon Krick – 219-205-0033

All prayer requests are sent out regardless of connection with our church. We have, as prayer warriors, seen God's miracles in many of the requests over the years. GOD DOES ANSWER PRYERS ACCORDING TO HIS WILL

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# ACOLYTE SCHEDULE



## July

July 6th—**No worship service at ORLC**

July 13th— Miles Fraser

July 20th— Neva Balaszek

July 27th— Emma Brammer

## August

August—**No Worship service at ORCL**

August 10th— Layla Brammer

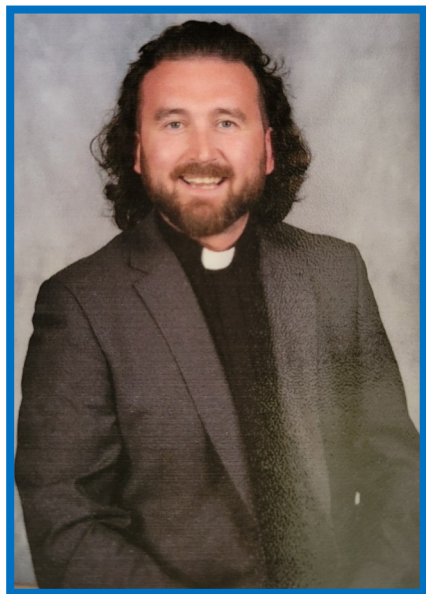
August 17th— Christian Norem

August 24th— Luci Hamand

August 31st— Miles Fraser

## Welcome Pastor Dan Speckhard

We want to say a heartfelt thank you and extend a warm welcome to Pastor Dan Speckhard, who will be serving Our Redeemer during this transitional time. Pastor Speckhard is our District's Circuit Visitor and has graciously agreed to assist us as we begin the call process to find a new permanent pastor.



We ask that you please keep our church and our congregation in your prayers during this important time, and especially lift up the call committee as they begin their work.

So, what does this mean for Our Redeemer as Pastor Speckhard leads us until an Interim Pastor can be found? One immediate change will be our service time: beginning July 13, 2025, our 9:00 a.m. service will move to 11:00 a.m. for the summer. We understand this change may not work for everyone, and we truly appreciate your patience and flexibility. Interim pastors are difficult to find at this time, and this schedule adjustment helps both Pastor Speckhard and our elders out, too.

Please note that the Drive-In service will continue as usual throughout the summer with no changes.

However, since Pastor Speckhard is still pastoring his own congregation, there will be **two Sundays this summer** when we will **not** have worship at Our Redeemer. On **Sunday, July 6th** and **Sunday, August 3rd**, we will **only worship at the Drive-In**. Please keep these dates in mind as you make your plans.

Thank you for your understanding and continued support during this time of transition.



Rose Ann Eichelberg	July 1	Mark and Joyce Anderson	July 13
Dennis Dean	July 9	Brad and Jana Hazelton	July 24
Sandra Dean	July 9	Carl Schaeffer	July 31
Lisa Boyle	July 12		
Linda Gawura	July 12		
Meda Sullivan	July 12		
Benjamin Franks	July 14		
Gregory Keehn	July 14		
William Scherf	July 22		
Shirley Eichelberg	July 24		
Emma Meyers	July 26		
Susan Stacy	July 26		
Neva Balaszek	July 27		
Autum Ferch	July 27		
Maggie Franks	July 28		
Gwendolyn Michel	July 31		

As the summer draws to a close and a new school year begins, let us lift up our children, teachers, and school staff in prayer. August 6, 2025, marks the start of another academic journey—a season filled with growth, learning, and new challenges.

May we ask God to guide and protect our students as they walk back into classrooms, and to bless the teachers who dedicate themselves to shaping young hearts and minds. Let's take time in the coming weeks to encourage, support, and cover them all in prayer as they step into this new chapter.

## A Prayer of Protection for Children Returning to School

**Heavenly Father,**

As our children return to school, we place them in Your loving care.

Cover them with Your protection—body, mind, and spirit.

Guide their steps through hallways and classrooms, and keep them safe from harm, illness, and fear.

Grant them wisdom and discernment to choose what is right. Surround them with kind friends, caring teachers, and a nurturing environment.

Calm any anxiety and fill their hearts with confidence, curiosity, and peace.

Strengthen them to be bold in kindness, gentle in spirit, and secure in who they are.

May they shine as lights in their schools—bringing hope, joy, and respect to those around them.

Watch over them when we cannot, and remind them they are never alone.

We entrust them to You, Lord, and trust in Your grace.

**In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.**

# BACK TO SCHOOL



## Back-to-School Prayer for Teachers

**Gracious God,**

As this new school year begins, we lift up every teacher with thanks for their courage, compassion, and commitment.

Grant them wisdom, patience, and renewed strength each day.

May their words build confidence, their actions show kindness, and their presence be a steady light.

Surround them with support, protect their health, and bring peace to their minds.

Bless their classrooms with joy, safety, and a spirit of discovery.

May this year be full of meaningful connections, deep learning, and Your grace.

**In Your name we pray, Amen.**



# Honoring the Sacrifice: A Reflection for Purple Heart Day

On August 7th, our nation observes **Purple Heart Day**, a solemn time to honor and remember the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces who were wounded or killed in combat. The Purple Heart is one of the oldest military decorations still awarded today, symbolizing courage, sacrifice, and the cost of freedom.

As a church family, we take this moment to reflect—not just with patriotic pride, but with deep gratitude and prayerful remembrance. These heroes remind us of Jesus' words:

**“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”**  
— *John 15:13*

The bravery shown by those who bear the Purple Heart echoes this profound truth. They stood in the gap, willing to face danger so that others might live in peace and safety. That kind of love—sacrificial and selfless—is something we are called to honor, remember, and emulate in our own lives.

## A Time to Pray

On this Purple Heart Day, we encourage our church community to:

- **Pray for our wounded warriors**—those who carry physical and emotional scars.
- **Lift up the families** of the fallen—who gave not only a loved one, but a part of themselves.
- **Thank God for the freedoms we enjoy**—and for those who paid a high price to protect them.

Let us also pray for healing—physical, emotional, and spiritual—for all who have served and suffered. And may we, as the body of Christ, continue to be a place of peace, support, and honor for our veterans and their families.

## Living with Grateful Hearts

We may never be able to fully repay the debt owed to our nation’s wounded and fallen heroes—but we can live in a way that honors their sacrifice. As believers, we do that by living faithfully, serving others, and pursuing peace in our homes, churches, and communities.

Let this Purple Heart Day remind us not only of those who fought for earthly freedom, but also of Christ, who secured our eternal freedom through His own sacrifice.

**With honor and gratitude, we remember.**





Dave Geisler	Aug. 1	Michael and Jessica Wakefield	Aug. 3
Vicki Mick	Aug. 1	Carl and Tiffany Balaszek	Aug. 5
Carl Shaeffer	Aug. 4	Larry and Terre Mick	Aug. 13
Shandee Michel	Aug. 9	David and Tammy VanVolkenburg	Aug. 13
Debra Bell	Aug. 10	Michael and Shelley McGinley	Aug. 18
Elise Kayser	Aug. 12		
Kris Lenig	Aug. 13		
Bruce Zimmerman	Aug. 13		
Phillip Hamand	Aug. 15		
Me Lenig	Aug. 15		
Amanda Elston	Aug. 20		
Gavin Michel	Aug. 23		
Lorene Scholz	Aug. 24		
Walter Fritz	Aug. 25		
Madelyn McGinley	Aug. 25		
Casey Vargo	Aug. 29		
Bill Cole	Aug. 31		
Ralph Deitrich Jr.	Aug. 31		
Paul Meyers	Aug. 31		



**Our Redeemer Lutheran Church**

**1600 S. Heaton St.**

**Knox, IN 46534**

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