REDEEMER UNITED, MARION

By Pr. Jennifer Gold, adapted by Caitlin Graver

GETTING TO KNOW...REDEEMER UNITED, MARION

Picture cows grazing across the rolling Texas plains, and you'll find the small country township of Zuehl (pronounced "zeal"). The community is made up of just six buildings: the historic Zuehl Tavern, two German nine-pin bowling alleys, a shooting range, an old schoolhouse, and Redeemer United Church. Out here, it feels like you've stepped right into an old Western movie. This is Redeemer's mission field, and it is growing!

Redeemer's Journey to LCMC

Redeemer's roots run deep, with Lutheran ties dating back before the 1900s. Formerly a United Church of Christ congregation, Redeemer voted to leave the UCC in March 2022. After another year of prayerful discernment, the congregation voted to join LCMC in May 2023 and was received as a member congregation that July.

It was a challenging season, but God used it to bring tremendous spiritual transformation and numerical growth, and the move to LCMC has been a true blessing for the congregation. We are so glad to call Redeemer part of our LCMC family!

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125+ YEARS OF FAITH

Redeemer celebrated its 125th anniversary throughout 2025 and closed out the year with two grand finale events in October an extra special worship service and their annual Harvest Festival.

Held each year at the bowling alley and social hall, the Harvest Festival features worship with live German music, a turkey dinner serving 900 plates, a country store, silent and live auctions, and baked goods. Proceeds support local charities and major church projects.

This year's festival carries extra meaning. Redeemer recently purchased the historic Clemens schoolhouse across the street, a building with deep ties to the many community members who attended school there. The church plans to preserve it and develop it into a ministry and mission center for Redeemer and a gathering place for the whole community, all for the glory of God. Local families and businesses have rallied behind the effort, and in just a couple of months, pledges have reached 90 percent of the goal to pay off the loan within three years.

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A Friendly & Hospitable Church

Redeemer is known throughout the surrounding communities for its warm, welcoming hospitality. Each month, about 100 people from area churches and the community gather for the Senior Dominoes Luncheon to enjoy games and a home-cooked meal. Every year, Redeemer joins local churches for a Community Thanksgiving Worship service followed by an appetizer and pie social. This past year, the congregation also hosted its very first Women's Retreat, welcoming 43 women from the church and community.

Mission Near & Far

Around the World. Inspired by Jesus' call to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19), Redeemer partners with two missionary families in northern Guatemala who serve the Q'eqchi, a least-reached Mayan people group. Mission teams traveled there in 2022, 2024, and 2026. They built two schools and a pastor's house, led children's outreach, made home visits, and sponsored children. Most importantly, they built relationships in the villages alongside the missionaries who live and serve there. This year, fellow LCMC congregation Bethlehem, Quihi joined the trip, for a team of 17 serving in the poorest region of Guatemala.

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Close to home. Redeemer also serves its neighbors through hands-on outreach. The congregation supports a nearby foster home whose children attend school alongside Redeemer's own kids. Each year, members provide Christmas gifts through an Angel Tree and host craft tables at the foster home's Christmas event. Volunteers also join multi-church Habitat for Humanity home builds and send monthly teams to help with flood disaster relief across South Texas, repairing homes and fences.

A Pilgrimage Ahead

Pastor Jennifer Gold has a heart for international missions and spiritual growth, and in June 2027 she will lead 16 "pilgrims" on a 70-mile walk of the Camino de Santiago in Spain. The historic 500-mile route traces the places where St. James the apostle did missionary work after Jesus' ascension, ending at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, believed to be built on his burial site. The pilgrimage is an invitation to spiritual growth and transformation for all who walk it.

Looking Forward

Redeemer's passion and purpose has been to make disciples in the church, in the community, and around the world. Redeemer led opening worship at this summer's LCMC Texas District gathering in New Braunfels, and it was such a joy to worship with them. Pastor Jennifer and three members were also able to attend their first National LCMC Annual Gathering in Iowa.

Reedemer United looks forward to serving alongside the Texas District to make disciples of Christ!