

The Valley Evangel

Serving the Members and Friends of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale and Sun of Righteousness Lutheran Church in Queen Creek

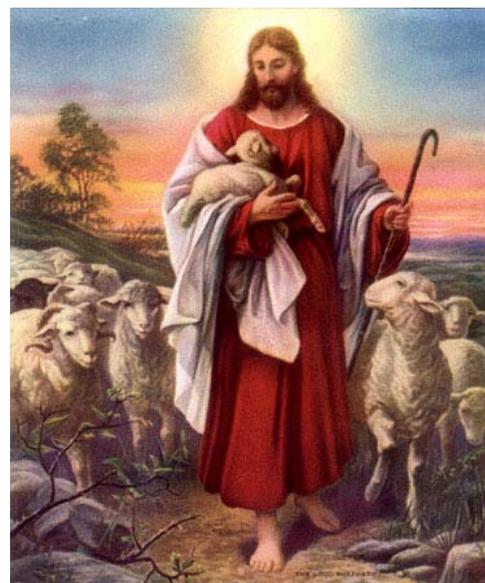


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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Jesus says: "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ...and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:14-15). We consider this image of a shepherd taking care of his sheep to be a comforting image. And it is one of the church's favorite ways to portray Jesus. But why do we find this to be a comforting and heart-warming image?



At one point in the movie "The Magnificent Seven," the leader of the gang of bandits who had been terrorizing and exploiting a small Mexican town confidently explained why he thought that he and his band of cutthroats were justified in treating those people in the way they did. "They are sheep," he declared. This was not a compliment. That line in the movie reminds us of the fact that sheep are weak and defenseless creatures.

They are easy marks for a predator. So, *people* who are weak and defenseless are "sheep." Whenever Jesus is portrayed as a shepherd, you as the members of his church are at the same time being

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WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY TIMES

Scottsdale:

Sunday Divine Service: 9:00 a.m.
Refreshments after the Service
Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 10:30 a.m.

Queen Creek:

Sunday Divine Service: 4:00 p.m.
Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 5:15 p.m.

Thursday Internet Study Group:

6:30 p.m. (see Pastor Webber for log-on information for this group, or attend in person at his residence)

Friday Bible Study:

10:00 a.m. at the Calvin residence

REPORT FROM CHILE

Dear friends,

After the powerful earthquake in Chile recently, communication was cut off for a frustrating period of time, during which our missionaries tried to tell their friends and loved ones about their situation, and we in the US tried to contact them. Missionary Tim and Ellen Erickson lost power at their home for three days. Missionary Oto Rodriquez left Chile shortly before the quake to visit family in US and Mexico, and was unable to return home immediately. His wife, Jackie, and their daughter drove from Linares, around the area of the epicenter of the quake, to stay with family in Santiago. We're grateful to God that their lives were spared and pray for a return to normal life in the future.

As you will see in the following note, our mission properties have suffered some damage. No doubt the homes of members are similarly affected. As time passes, more damage may be revealed. We are grateful to those who wish to assist with relief efforts through our Board for Christian Service and through the ELS in general. Special relief funds will help restore our property, assist our members – and perhaps enable our congregations to provide help for their own neighbors, exhibiting to their communities the compassion of the Christian faith. We pray for opportunities provide relief for the needy and to introduce people to Christ through acts of charity.

As you will also see from Tim's note, our Chilean members are committing themselves to working on their own church repair. Their faith has been strengthened through the adversity all around them.

If you are inclined to help with relief efforts, please contribute to:

Chile Relief
Board for Christian Service
Evangelical Lutheran Synod
6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

Thanks!

Steve Petersen
ELS Board for World Outreach



Chnaurch at La Cister

Steve,

I'm finally getting around to writing. Yesterday we had a day full of aftershocks. There were seven in one hour around noon, and all afternoon the shaking continued off and on. Today's afternoon has been similar. The biggest registered 7.2 on the Richter scale. It caused quite a scare. The streets of Santiago were full of people as they left buildings, and traffic all of a sudden increased as people tried to get home. There was damage, but no new casualties to report.

On Wednesday I was in San Bernardo. Today we have services there, so will go again. We looked at the damage to the church. They are going to take part of the roof off to get a better look at the condition of the wood in the rafters. Some think that many boards are broken and weak because of termites. I thought they looked strong, although out of

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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portrayed as such sheep – that is, as people who are morally weak and spiritually defenseless. Is this really such a comforting image?

Another characteristic of sheep is their lack of intelligence. Sheep are among the stupidest of livestock. Pigs are relatively smart. So are horses. Sheep are dumb. Or, to use a gentler term, they are, shall we say, *undiscerning*. A flock of sheep will hurl itself over a cliff if it is herded in that direction. Sheep will often stand and stare at an approaching wolf, without trying to run or hide. More so than many other animals, sheep need to be taken care of, because they are not able to take care of themselves. Whenever Jesus is portrayed as a shepherd, you as the members of his church are at the same time being portrayed as such sheep – that is, as people who are religiously and ethically undiscerning and who are in constant need of being taught and guided by someone else. Again, is this really such a comforting image?

In truth, the image of a shepherd taking care of his sheep is a comforting image to us only when we are willing to admit that *we are sheep* – that we are, in ourselves, morally weak and spiritually defenseless; that we are, in ourselves, religiously and ethically undiscerning, and in constant need of being taught and

guided by someone else. Even if our human pride would resist this admission, that is what we are.

It could be worse. *Much* worse. We could be sheep *without a shepherd*. But that is not our problem. We have Jesus, the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep, to save them from the power of sin and death. As the resurrected Lord, he continually tends his flock by means of his law and Gospel. In his law he warns us of danger, and prods us to flee danger. In his Gospel he soothes and protects us when we have been injured or frightened, and teaches us the way of life. When we hear and believe his loving voice, we know that we are a part of his flock, and that he will continue to love us and take care of us. That truly is comforting!

Jesus also says: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:27-28).

-- Pastor Webber



REPORT FROM CHILE

(Continued from page 2)

place because of the earthquake, but it was hard to examine without seeing them up close and in the light. An estimate of damages was made to replace broken rafters at a cost of a little over \$700 for materials. The tin roofing could be put back on once the new rafters are in place. Adding labor costs, the budget for fixing the earthquake damage would be about \$1500.

The idea has arisen from the members to replace the front of the church as long as we are doing some roof work. They committed themselves to offerings of a

little over \$300 toward the replacing of the front of the church. I'll see this afternoon if anything new has developed.

We have kept our normal schedule of church services and Bible and Theological studies. The people all feel blessed by God and appreciate even more the Gospel.

Blessings to you, Tim



IN LIGHT OF HIS SUFFERING AND DEATH

Have you seen one of the latest trends in tattoo fashion? It's hard not to notice when the person in the checkout line has emblazoned their deceased family member's name across their shoulders. It's easy to be turned off by this fad – and not because you might find tattoos less than attractive. Obviously, the tattoo's there for a reason. Is its bearer hoping that strangers will make polite conversation about the departed person? Is the tattoo sentimental? Is it to show how much that person meant to them? Maybe they are trying to show that they are living for someone who had died.

Paul proposes something similar in his letter to the Galatians: *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."* Paul isn't saying that we should remember someone who died, but someone who died for us. Jesus' death wasn't just one of the many deaths that occur each day. His death was in payment for our sins. His suffering and death was **for us**.

Jesus had to die to pay for our sins. There was no other way for Him to be our Savior. If He didn't die, then we would die eternally. But His great love caused Him to lay down His life for us. It is His love that changes us so that we want to live for Christ.

Christ's suffering and death caused Paul to want to live for Him. Paul didn't need a tattoo on his

shoulder. He knew that Jesus' sacrifice could be made visible in his daily life. The Lord made Paul's life remarkable through things like shipwrecks, imprisonment, and execution! How does God want you to make Jesus visible?

We're usually so good at blending in. Christians don't wear a standard-issue team shirt. The only One who truly knows that we're Christians is in heaven above. His miraculous washing saved us from real death. His earthly life fulfilled the pitiful weaknesses of ours. And His death gives us the context for living. And still, even lifelong Christians find it easier to talk about a departed grandparent than our Brother Jesus, who died, but lives!

Will some people think you're strange when your daily life shows the Savior who suffered and died? You bet! Are you ready to show your neighbors that

He is alive in you? Are you willing to honor His death by getting into some awkward conversations? If you don't know where to start, read the Bible and learn some more about how our Lord directed Paul's adventurous life. Let the words of the Author of Life wash over you as He directs you, comforts you, and prepares you for a life in the context of our Brother's death. *"The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God."* Galatians 2:20. Keep those words near and dear to your heart as you live for the Son of God, whose death won true Life for us all!

Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Easter Brunch

As noted in our calendar, we will not be having services or classes in Queen Creek on Easter Sunday. Instead, we invite all our Sun of Righteousness

members to join with us in Scottsdale that morning for our Easter Divine Service, which will be followed immediately by our traditional Easter Brunch! We hope to see you there!



HOLY COMMUNION

The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

By Rev. Jon Buchholz, Sr. Pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Tempe and the president of the WELS AZ-CA District.

Part One

The Gospel

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ for us Christians to eat and to drink.¹

If someone were to ask you what the gospel is, you might say something like, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16, after all, is the “gospel in a nutshell.”

But it’s interesting that when Martin Luther described the gospel, he often went directly to the Words of Institution of Holy Communion. Luther wrote:

For if you ask: What is the gospel? you can give no better answer than these words of the New Testament, namely, that Christ gave his body and poured out his blood for us for the forgiveness of sins.²

In the first place, we have often said that the chief and foremost thing in the sacrament is the word of Christ, when he says: “*Take and eat, this is my body which is given for you.*” Likewise also, when he took the cup, he said: “*Take and drink of it, all of you, this is the cup of a new testament in my blood which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. As often as you do this, do it in remembrance of me.*”

Everything depends on these words. Every Christian should and must know them and hold them fast. . . Language cannot express how great and mighty these words are, for they are the sum and substance of the whole gospel.³

We often think of the gospel in terms of a *verbal* message that is preached and taught and heard and learned. Luther embraced the gospel in the *tangible* consecration, distribution and reception of Holy Communion. Holy Communion *is* the gospel!

On Maundy Thursday, as he ate the sacrificial Passover lamb with his disciples, Jesus prepared his disciples for the sacrifice of another lamb—the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The blood of the New Testament was spilled to remove sin and to reconcile sinners with God. As Jesus gave his disciples bread and wine in the supper, together with the earthly elements he gave them to eat and drink the very body that was given for them and the very blood that was spilled for them for their salvation.

What a wonderful mystery we receive in the Sacrament! All the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ is wrapped in those simple elements. The incarnation and humiliation of God; Jesus’ virgin birth; his suffering, death and atoning sacrifice; his conquest of Satan; the purchase of forgiveness—all of these truths are communicated and become ours most intimately and personally in this holy Supper. As the word of Christ is joined to earthly elements, the living Lord Jesus is really present in the sacrament to feed us with his living body and blood.

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HOLY COMMUNION PART I: THE GOSPEL

(Continued from page 5)

As Luther wrote:

But now the entire Gospel and the article of the Creed—I believe in . . . The holy Christian Church, . . . The forgiveness of sins, and so on—are embodied by the Word in this Sacrament and presented to us.⁴

God wants you to know beyond a shadow of a doubt the extent of his love for you. He washed you in his love in Baptism. He bestows his love upon you in Scripture whenever the word is read or preached. He announces his love to you when the pastor absolves you of your sins.

But in Holy Communion he draws even more intimately and personally near to you. Christ on the cross died for the sin of the world, but Christ in the Sacrament is for *you!* At Calvary Jesus atoned for the guilt of all sinners, but in Communion that forgiveness is given to one sinner in particular—to *you!*

Luther observed:

We treat of the forgiveness of sins in two ways. First, how it is achieved and won. Second, how it is distributed and given to us. Christ has achieved it on the cross, it is true. Be he has not distributed or given it on the cross. He has not won it in the supper or sacra-

ment. There he has distributed and given it through the Word, as also in the gospel, where it is preached. . .

If now I seek the forgiveness of sins, I do not run to the cross, for I will not find it given there . . . But I will find in the sacrament or gospel the word which distributes, presents, offers, and gives to me that forgiveness which was won on the cross. Therefore, Luther has rightly taught that whoever has a bad conscience from his sins should go to the sacrament

and obtain comfort . . . 5

Holy Communion *is* the gospel, for in Communion there can be no doubt that all the grace of salvation, all of God's love, all of Christ's merit are personally, intimately and completely given to *you!*

1 *Luther's Small Catechism*, The Sacrament of Holy Communion, Part One.

2 *Luther's Works, American Edition (AE)*, vol. 36, p.183.

3 *AE*, vol. 36, p. 277.

4 *Formula of Concord: Luther's Large Catechism*, Part V. The Sacrament of the Altar, ¶32.

5 *AE*, vol. 40, p. 213-214.

To be continued: Preparation

PASTOR WEBBER'S ESSAY AVAILABLE ONLINE

The essay on "Walking Together" that Pastor Webber delivered to the WELS pastoral conference in New Mexico in February is available in PDF online, through the "Our Pastor's Essays" section of the church web site, or directly at this URL:

www.angelfire.com/ny4/djw/WebberWalkingTogether2010.pdf

An LCMS pastor expressed these thoughts about the essay on his Facebook page: "It's a long paper, but well worth your time. The last twelve pages on worship should be required reading for all Lutheran pastors. Pastor Webber documents his sources carefully and does not pass up the opportunity to promote the proper use of ceremony in the Divine Service. Footnote 76 should not be missed."

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

APRIL 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><i>My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand (John 10:27-28).</i></p>				<p>1 7pm Maundy Thursday Divine Service</p>	<p>2 7pm Good Friday Tenabrae Service</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4 Easter Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) Easter Brunch after the service No services or classes at Queen Creek on Easter!</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 Pastor in Washington State for West Coast Pastoral Conference and Emmaus Conference April 7-12</p>	<p>8 Internet Study Group cancelled Pastor in Washington</p>	<p>9 Bible Study cancelled Pastor in Washington</p>	<p>10 Pastor in Washington</p>
<p>11 Easter 2 Service of the Word + 9:00am SW with spoken Communion (S) 10:30am Presentation and Congregational forum (S) 4:00pm SW with spoken Communion (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)</p>	<p>12 Pastor in Washington</p>	<p>13 7:00pm Voters Meeting (S)</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence</p>	<p>16 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence</p>	<p>17</p>
<p>18 Easter 3 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) Ladies Guild after the service (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence</p>	<p>23 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25 Good Shepherd Sunday Service of the Word 9:00am SW with spoken Communion (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) Elders Meeting after the Bible Class (S) 4:00pm SW with spoken Communion (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	

Abbreviations:

DS—Divine Service (SW) Service of the Word SS/AC = Sunday School / Adult Bible Class

(S) = Scottsdale (Refreshments in Scottsdale immediately follow the morning Service) (Q) = Queen Creek

Divine Service—Full Word and Sacrament Service with Communion on 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays

Service of the Word—a brief spoken order of Holy Communion follows the public service on the 2nd and 4th Sundays

+ Pastor Webber in Washington state April 7-12. Pastor Tony Pittenger will be filling in as worship leader. We will also have a presentation by Donald Westphal from the admissions department at Bethany College followed by a Congregational forum in Scottsdale, with the usual Bible Class and Sunday School in Queen Creek

**Redeemer Lutheran
Church**

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Scottsdale, AZ 85266

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Or: 480-621-7394
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Sun of Righteousness Church

Meeting in the "Multi-Purpose"
Room at Frances Brandon-
Pickett Elementary School
22076 E. Village Loop Road
South



First Class Mail

Return Service Requested

We're on the Internet!

redeemer.vze.com
sunofrighteousness.vze.com

Notice!

Audio recordings of
Pastor Webber's sermons are
posted on the Internet
weekly and are available
through both church web-
sites above, and
published courtesy of
lutheransource.net



**Evangelical
Lutheran Synod**

ABOUT REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our mission is to preach the Word of God, both Law and Gospel, faithfully in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church; correctly to administer the Holy Sacraments for the forgiveness of sins; and to reach out to those who have not yet come to faith in Christ Jesus.

