The Valley Evangel

Serving the Members and Friends of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale, Arizona

April 2013

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Worship and Study Times

Sunday Divine Service:

9 a.m., Refreshments after the Service

Sunday School/Adult Bible

Class: 10:30 a.m.

Thursday Internet Study

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

Friday Bible Study: 10 a.m. at the Nelson residence

Newsletter Staff

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From the Pastor's Desk

We are now entering the Easter season. The impact and power of Easter is too big to be contained in just one day! In fact, every Sunday is a little Easter. Christians gather on the first day of the week for worship, when they are able to do so, because this is the day of the week when Jesus broke the chains of death, and opened for us the way to everlasting life. And to state the truth fully, every moment of every day for a Christian, is an Easter moment, because it is a moment filled with the living Christ.

Nothing else that Jesus ever did or said would have really mattered in the end, if he had not been raised from the dead. And in the light of his resurrection, everything else that he did and said fits together and finds its true meaning. Everything he had promised to do and give, he can now do and give, because he is alive. A dead Savior would not be a Savior at all. Perhaps as a dead prophet or teacher, Jesus would have "lived on" in a certain sentimental sense for a couple generations, as a memory. But it would have been as a sad and ultimately meaningless memory. What the resurrection means, however, is that Jesus lives on in person, as the actually reigning King of the universe and Lord of his church! He lives on in the words of absolution that he speaks through his called servants, telling us, "I forgive you all your sins." He lives on in the consecrated bread and wine of his sacrament, telling us – again, through his servant – "This is my body... This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins." He lives on as the friend, companion, and protector who sticks closer to us than our own skin.

If Jesus were still dead, we would have to recognize that he died 2,000 years ago, and that that's as close as we get to him. There would be an immense historical distance between him and us. But since Jesus is alive, there is no such distance. He is alive *now!* And he alive *here* – wherever "here" is for us. This all really does make a difference for us, in time and in eternity. St. Paul writes: "We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:9-11, ESV). We "consider" this to be so, because Jesus makes it to be so. And it is not just the abstract and impersonal ideas of Jesus, as passed on by word of mouth through the generations, that causes us to be dead to sin and alive to God. It is Jesus himself – the living Christ – in the vibrant and powerful Word that he speaks into us; and in the tangible sacramental embrace he gives us in Baptism and Supper, who causes this, and makes this happen.

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

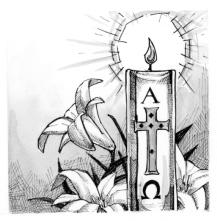
Pastor Webber

A New Paschal Candle

Jesus said: "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12, ESV). The symbol of light is often used to represent Christ, or to remind us of the presence of Christ. For many years now, Redeemer Lutheran Church has employed a white "Christ Candle" during the Christmas season – positioned at the center of our Advent wreath – to symbolize the incarnation and birth of Jesus. Now, because of a generous designated donation from some members of the congregation, we will also be able to employ a white "Paschal Candle" during the Easter season, to symbolize the living presence of the resurrected Christ among us, as the victor over sin and the darkness of death.

According to historic usage, the new Paschal Candle will also be lit for baptisms and funerals throughout the year. These are occasions when the truth of the resurrection impacts us in significant ways. One who is baptized into Christ is thereby united to Jesus' death and resurrection. St. Paul writes that "if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Romans 6:5, ESV). And when a child of God passes from this life, he or she does so in the hope of the resurrection. Those who mourn the passing of a beloved Christian, do so also in the hope of the resurrection. Again, St. Paul writes: "For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep" (1 Thessalonians 4:14, ESV).

We are grateful for the special gift of our new Paschal Candle, and look forward to many years of being reminded by it "that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him" (Romans 6:9, ESV).



The Death of a Member

Redeemer member Fern Henrie fell asleep in Christ on March 10, at the age of 91. A memorial service was held on March 15 at Heritage Lutheran Church (where Fern's daughter Joyce Schmidt is a member), at which Pastor Webber served as preacher. Fern, as an octogenarian, was confirmed as a Lutheran at a service of the former Queen Creek preaching station in 2008, after undergoing a course of instruction with Pastor Webber. During the past couple years she has resided in various rest homes.

At right: Ferne Henrie and Pastor Webber on the day of Fern's Confirmation, December 21, 2009



Member Interview: Donna Lee

(Conducted by Erica Olson, Editor Assistant)



Erica: Hi, Donna! Thank you for agreeing to let me interview you for this issue of the newsletter. How long have you been a member of Redeemer?

Donna: Well, I moved to Scottsdale from Naples, Florida, in 2007. I was offered a job as a care giver to Edgar Weichmann by his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Jean (Richard) Weichmann. She was on vacation and attended the Naples church [ELS]. I needed work and told her I was planning to move to Las Vegas because I thought I'd like the desert climate. "Would you consider Arizona?" she asked. Since it's nearly the same type of climate, I agreed. The position was something I'd never done before, but there was no specific nursing skill involved. How difficult could it be? Within a couple of days I got into my car and drove to Scottsdale. Edgar was in his mid 90's and lived for 7 months after I arrived. We got along great. I remember him fondly.

When I moved to Phoenix, many friends encouraged me to attend the WELS churches they belonged to. I *did* try them, but Redeemer was always my first choice. I like the inside of the sanctuary. I like the people who are members there (several are from my Chicago church and Bethany college days – nice surprise). But, especially the content of the sermons and Bible studies are superior. Pastor Webber and his wife, Carol, have been more than generous to me in my times of need.

Erica: I think you've been a member of the ELS longer than anyone I've ever met. How long have you been in the ELS? Were you ever a member of another church body?

Donna: I've been in the ELS since before high school, about 1959 or '60. I grew up in inner city Chicago, and one day my dad pulled out the yellow pages and looked up the nearest Lutheran church to our house. It was St. Paul's (ELS) on North Ave. The minister at the time was Julian Anderson. The church was very old and very gorgeous; lots of dark wood, lots of red velvet fabric, huge pipe organ and a large, breathtaking painting of the Ascension behind the altar. The neighborhood was changing and the older members were passing away, so it soon became a Mission Church. That's when a young Ted Kuster came. Pastor Kuster made confirmation classes such fun, we'd never miss them. He was also responsible for nearly *all* the young people to attend at least one semester at Bethany Lutheran Jr. College in Mankato, Minnesota.

Erica: Is there anything about Redeemer that you would change?

Donna: Changes? I wish we had more regular members and I wish I could live closer. The drive is a half-hour and that makes three services in a row a rather tough task (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter).

Erica: You were recently given the position of Secretary of the Ladies' Guild (replacing me when my son was born). How do you like that position?

Donna: I volunteered for the secretary position. I've already missed one meeting. Ask me in a year!

Erica: You provide good commentary during the adult Bible class, and ask Pr. Webber some good questions. What do you think has been your favorite topical study?

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Member Interview: Donna Lee (continued from Page 3)

Donna: My favorite topic of study? I honestly dislike missing *any* of the Bible studies, because Pastor Webber makes most of them come alive. His interest in history and doctrines open up areas of discussion and thought that are fresh and new.

Erica: When I called you, I noticed that you have a phone number with a Mankato, Minnesota, area code. Is that where you're from?

Donna: Yes, my family lives in Mankato (and Winona, Minnesota). I lived there for many years and am still very attached, not only to family but to Mt. Olive [Lutheran Church] and Bethany College and many friends there. There was a time I was jumping around, trying to figure out where I wanted to live. So as not to confuse everyone too much, I kept the same Mankato cell phone number.

Erica: Tell me a little bit about your family.

Donna: My son, Erik and his family live in Winona. He teaches English on the college level. His wife, Tessy, is a native Brazilian, who is a care giver. They have two *beautiful* little girls (of course). Agnes is 4 and Melina is 1. Caroline, my daughter, lives in Mankato and is a professional nanny for two autistic little boys. She has become very close to this family. My former husband, Sigurd Lee, who taught at Bethany for many blessed years (English, Humanities and Theatre Production) also lives in Mankato. The divorce that happened many years ago, much to our regret today, has been taken to God in prayer, and we are now reconciled and have a close, caring friendship.

Erica: Do you still work or have you retired?

Donna: Yes, I'm officially retired and living in the ALRC (Arizona Lutheran Retirement Center). This is an old motel that was purchased by Pastor Bein, meant to be a retirement apartment for Wisconsin Synod pastors. I love living there! In my professional years I was a sales rep for many papers and magazines, and even a furniture store in Sioux Falls at one time! I took a Dale Carnegie Public Speaking class and it turned everything around for me. I *still* love to get up and speak to a group.

Erica: What kinds of things do you do for fun and leisure?

Donna: I love to read, I love to knit, and I love creating art.

Erica: I've really enjoyed getting to know you, since you attend almost every Sunday at Redeemer. There are a lot of new people there now who may not have been able to meet or talk to you much, though. What would you like them and others who may not know you to know about you that we haven't discussed?

Donna: I make friends easily, and no one should ever be hesitant to approach me to talk. I find that everyone has a good story and I love to talk to people.

Erica: Thank you so much for your time! It's been nice getting to know you better.

Another Matching Challenge

A \$5,000 matching challenge, for special designated offerings toward debt retirement, has once again been offered to the members and friends of Redeemer. Such offerings received between now and June 14 will be matched, up to \$5,000, by an anonymous donor. The match will not encompass regular offerings for ordinary home purposes, but only offerings designated for paying down our mortgage with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

According to the arrangement that we have with the Trustees of the synod, everything above \$6,000 that we submit to the synod during the year 2013 will go toward the direct reduction of the loan principal. What we are able to do in 2013 in this respect will therefore affect the amount of our revised mortgage with the synod for the next 30 years. So, for those who want their contribution toward debt retirement to do the most good, 2013 is definitely the year to make such a contribution. And making such a contribution during the time of the matching challenge will effectively double it.

Communion Frequency

The Sunday Adult Class multi-part study of Communion Frequency, which has been held during the season of Lent, will continue for a few weeks into the Easter season. The printed material that has been serving as the basis of the study is available online, in PDF, through the church website. On the home page, scroll down to the internal link for "Our Pastor's Essays." Click on that link, and then scroll down to "Communion Frequency in the Lutheran Confessions and in the Lutheran Church." This is a public document, which can be shared with anyone you know who might be interested in the topic. The same is true also of the other essays that are available through the church web site.

Recordings of the Service

Remember that an audio recording of each Sunday's service – in its entirety – is made available through the church website on a weekly basis. So, if you missed church on a particular Sunday, you can listen to the service at home later that day or sometime during the week that follows. And if you have friends who would benefit from listening to these recordings, please let them know that they are available. Click the internal link on the church home page marked "Recordings of the Service." Each recording remains posted for approximately one or two months.

Redeemer Library News

The Redeemer library (the corner bookshelves in the fellowship room) has been cataloged. Our library catalogue is available through the website www.librarything.com To view the Redeemer collection, log in with the name "Redeemer1," and type the password "Jomax." Then, to see the list of books, click on the tab marked "Your books."

Books may be added to the library by donation. Ask Sue Muth for information.

Redeemer Library Book of the Month

Pontius Pilate by Paul L. Maier (Donated by the Schmeissings)

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Redeemer Library News (continued from Page 4)

Maier's *Pontius Pilate* is a well-researched historical novel, beginning in 26 A.D., when Pilate became Prefect of Judaea. The known material includes Pilate's confrontation with the Jews (early during his governorship) concerning the Roman soldiers' icons (of Tiberius Caesar), Pilate's improvements to Jerusalem's waterways, and the crucifixion of Jesus as described by various writers including Josephus. Included in the narrative are references to Bible events: a mysterious star "about 30 years ago" and the late King Herod's actions; the scandalous marriage of Herod Antipas to his brother Philip's wife Herodias (who was also Antipas's niece), and the rise of John the Baptist.

Devotion: "Living the Victory!"

When you read history, or visit a museum, and see the long list of credits some receive for their lives -- the first, the best, the longest, the most at whatever they achieved, you might find yourself thinking: "So what.

They're long dead. What good is it to them now?"

Such is the futility of life in a world conquered --or so it would seem-by death. But not so for the Christian, because, in

Jesus, we have VICTORY over death!

Yes, we know that sin brings death. Death strikes all, because all have sinned and fall short of God's perfection, demanded for heaven. "But," as Jesus proclaims in John's Gospel, "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son [to live a perfect life in our place and then suffer and die on the cross, in our place, to pay for our sins] that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16) Since Jesus died and rose again for us, we, by God's gracious gift of faith, receive the total forgiveness of Gospel, "God so



loved the world that He gave His one and only Son [to live a perfect life in our place and then suffer and die on the cross, in our place, to pay for our sins] that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16) Since Jesus died and rose again for us, we, by God's gracious gift of faith, receive the total forgiveness of our sins, a brand new life to be lived each day, and

the sure and certain hope of life that lasts forever In God's heaven!

So, how does all of this affect the purpose of your life? It makes it clear that our earthly life is a really a journey...a journey to the heavenly realms. --And thank God for His many blessings all along the way!

Hold to His Word and receive His Spirit through the Gospel, in Word and Sacrament, and He will keep you in your Christian faith and move you to live for the things that really matter --knowing His love and sharing His love, until you know His love perfectly in His heaven!

From the ELS Board for Home Outreach

Redeemer Lutheran Church April 2013

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---------|--------------------------------------|---|---|----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 6:30 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence | 5 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Nelson residence | 6 |
| 7 Easter 2 9 a.m. DS 10:30 a.m. SS/Congregational Forum | 8 7 p.m. Voters' Meeting at the church | 9 | 10 | 11 Internet Study Group canceled | 12 Bible Study canceled | 13 |
| 14 Easter 3 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS | 15 | 16 | 17 10 a.m. Bible Study at ALRC | 18 6:30 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence | 19 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Nelson residence | 20 |
| 21 Easter 4 9 a.m. DS Ladies' Guild meeting after the service 10:30 a.m. AC/SS | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 6:30 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence | 26 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Nelson residence | 27 |
| 28 Easter 5 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS Elders' Meeting after AC | 29 | 30 | | | | |

Abbreviations:

DS – Divine Service; SW – Service of the Word; AC/SS – Adult Bible Class/Sunday School

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

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

Refreshments are served after the Sunday morning Services

The Valley Evangel, April 2013

Redeemer Lutheran Church

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Email: jaywebber@yahoo.com



First Class Mail

We're on the Internet! redeemerscottsdale.org

Notice!

Audio recordings of Pastor Webber's sermons are posted on the Internet weekly and are linked through the church website.

They are published courtesy of **lutheransource.net**



About Redeemer Lutheran Church

Our mission is faithfully to preach the Word of God, both Law and Gospel, 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.

