

# The Valley Evangel

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



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## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

It has been decided, with regret, that Redeemer Lutheran Church is no longer able to sponsor the Queen Creek mission. Services there will be discontinued as of the end of July. Beginning in August, those who have worshiped with us at Sun of Righteousness are invited to attend Redeemer ([redeemer.vze.com](http://redeemer.vze.com)), or to attend a sister church in a neighboring community: Heritage Lutheran in Gilbert ([heritageluthgilbertaz.com](http://heritageluthgilbertaz.com)), King of Kings Lutheran in Apache Junction ([www.koklc.net](http://www.koklc.net)), Pilgrim Lutheran in Mesa ([www.pilgrimmesa.com](http://www.pilgrimmesa.com)), or Calvary Lutheran in Chandler ([calvarychandler.net](http://calvarychandler.net)).

Those who have been involved with the Queen Creek mission are saddened by these circumstances. But this decision has been made thoughtfully, in consideration of our need to be responsible stewards of our time and resources, and

in view of the fact that the current number of attendees is not able to sustain the expense of continuing the mission. Perhaps one practical lesson we have learned is that the unusual time of day at which we needed to hold services (Sundays at 4 p.m.) was more of a drawback to potential visitors than we had initially thought it would be. And since I am not able to conduct a worship service and teach a Bible class in both Scottsdale and Queen Creek on a Sunday morning, this is an obstacle that we are not at present able to overcome.

But even in the midst of the disappointment that many of us feel at this time, there is one fact of which I am quite certain: Sun of Righteousness Lutheran Church was not a failure! The Queen Creek mission was never more than an outpost of God's kingdom anyway – as is the case with *any* congregation, of *any* size or level of

## WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY TIMES

Editor:  
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**Sunday Divine Service:** 9:00 a.m.  
Refreshments after the Service  
Sunday School/Adult Bible Class on hiatus for the summer.

**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:**  
On hiatus for the summer



## HOLY COMMUNION

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

### Part Four of Four - Closed Communion

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)

Communion is not for everyone. Simply put, there are some people who should not take Communion. This isn't a difficult concept to grasp, but it can be a difficult concept to swallow. We live in a world where people imagine they can have whatever they want, whenever they want it. We have rights. We have entitlements.

The idea that we might have to refuse Communion to someone makes us look bad in the eyes of others. We might look snobbish or elitist. People suppose that we think we're better than them. Our church can come across as being exclusive and holier-than-thou. Well, nobody ever said that following the Bible would be popular!

The practice of reserving Holy Communion only for those who are prepared to receive it is called *closed Communion*. It has been the practice of the Christian church going back to the days of Jesus and the apostles. Regardless of its popularity today, it is a practice deeply rooted in Scripture.

Communion is powerful. It is no mere snack. When we commune, we receive the holy body and blood of Christ in, with and under the bread and the wine. We'd better understand what we're doing when we commune, for the same sacrament that is powerful to forgive is also powerful to bring God's frightful judgment upon the unworthy communicant. Communion is serious business!

First of all, *unbelievers* may not commune. A person who rejects Christ or is ignorant of Christ has no business partaking of Christ.

The *impenitent* fall into the same category, for impenitence is the same as unbelief. A person who refuses to acknowledge and repent of his sin is still separated from Christ and enslaved by Satan. "Unless you repent, you too will all perish," warned Jesus (Luke 13:3).

Those who are *uninstructed* and don't know what the Lord's Supper is must be kept from Communion. "For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you," the Apostle Paul wrote (1 Corinthians 11:23). In the early church new adult Christians were baptized with only limited instruc-

tion, but they were admitted to Communion only after a period of extensive instruction.

The *unforgiving* heart has no place seeking forgiveness at the Lord's altar. Jesus taught, "If you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins" (Matthew 6:15)

Those who *cannot examine themselves* are not to receive Communion. Preparation for the sacrament calls for self-examination, as the apostle instructs us (51 Corinthians 11:28). If a Christian is unable to reflect upon his sins and anticipate the sacrament of God's grace, he should not commune. Included in this group are infants and small children, along with people whose mental faculties are diminished or have deteriorated to the point where they are unable to grasp the significance of Communion.

Those who *persist in false doctrine* are not to commune. Scripture tells us we are to stay away from false teachers (Romans 16:17) and not join with those influenced by them (2 Corinthians 6:17,18). If a person wrongly comes to Communion who doesn't believe it's the true body of Christ, he will still receive the body of Christ at our Communion table – only to his judgment. A person who approaches our altar with false beliefs is outwardly proclaiming that he believes as we do, but in his heart he believes differently. This is hypocrisy.

Communion is a celebration of our oneness in faith. "Because there is one bread, we, who are many, are one body" (1 Corinthians 10:17, tr. alt.). We stand before the Lord's altar to commune *together*. We receive the Lord's forgiveness and strength *together*, as members of one body. We cherish our connection with Christ, and the perfect unity in Spirit with one another.

When you commune at the altar, it's more than a one-on-one with God. Think of those who commune with you, and cherish your unity in Christ.

Rev. Jon Buchholz, Senior Pastor, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Tempe, AZ; President, Arizona-California District, WELS

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

*(Continued from page 1)*

organization. And God's kingdom definitely survives, and is thriving! In fact, through the ministry of the Queen Creek mission, which God so richly blessed, this eternal kingdom has grown and expanded into the lives of several people. Three adult baptisms and one adult confirmation were performed at Queen Creek, and the four people who were blessed by the Lord in those specific ways are still active worshipers in other sister congregations. The faithful preaching of the Gospel and the faithful administration of the sacraments of Christ are never a sign of failure. And those means of grace were reverently administered in Queen Creek, unto the edification of the Lord's church, for over four years.

May the name of our Savior Jesus Christ, the "Sun of Righteousness" who ever shines on his saints, be blessed always – in whatever places he gathers with his people through his Word to forgive their sins, to strengthen them in faith, and to knit them together in the fellowship of his family!

-- Pastor Webber



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### WEDDING BELLS

Paul Webber, a member of Redeemer and a second-year student at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary in Mankato, Minnesota, was married to Ruth Gullixson in Mankato on June 18.

Pastor Webber, the bridegroom's pastor (and father), officiated. The bride's father, Pastor Theodore Gullixson, who preached at the ceremony, is well-known to us by reputation if not in person, since he is the editor of our synod's monthly magazine, the *Lutheran Sentinel*.



### NEW MEMBER

Mrs. Marcia Brekken was received into communicant membership in Redeemer Lutheran Church by profession of faith on July 25. "Marcy" was a member many years ago of Christ the Cornerstone Lutheran Church – the direct predecessor congregation of Redeemer. Welcome home, Marcy!

### SERVING OUR COUNTRY

Please continue to remember in your prayers the members of our congregation who are serving in the armed forces of our nation. Andrew Kissinger, who grew up in Redeemer, is at basic training for the United States Marine Corps in San Diego, California. First Lieutenant Daniel Morehouse is still serving with his Arizona Army National Guard unit in Afghanistan.

## LIVING FOR CHRIST: IN LIGHT OF THE BLESSINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

How much is a good babysitter worth? For parents, babysitters can be invaluable. A sitter gives the parents the freedom to take care of other important needs and concerns. Mom and Dad can leave the house confident that the children will be safe. They will be guided and watched, loved and comforted in their parents' absence. Sometimes, with a particularly good babysitter, the children will be excited to have the parents leave. This is a picture of Jesus, the Holy Spirit and believers. Jesus has not left His children alone, but has sent the Holy Spirit to watch over us.

Jesus spoke to His disciples concerning this shortly before His betrayal and crucifixion. He said, "However, when He, the Spirit of Truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come." (John 16:13 NKJ). In His words of warning and comfort to His disciples, Jesus spoke to them of how He must leave them. Knowing pending His departure filled His their with sorrow, Jesus wanted to comfort them. He assured them that He was not going to leave them alone to fend for themselves. On the contrary, He would send the Holy Spirit to guide them in all truth.

The disciples had spent nearly three years with Jesus, but they still didn't get it. They didn't fully grasp the truth concern why

He came to earth and must suffer and die on the cross. We might wonder, "How could they still not get it?" They needed a richer measure of the Holy Spirit and Jesus' provided it at Pentecost. It is the Spirit that guides us in all truth. That is one of the blessings that that only He gives.

At times, our faith is tested and we have doubts. We can be weak in our understanding just like the disciples. In those times, we wish we could hear Jesus' voice, physically be with Him and share our concerns with Him. We might think, "If only I were with Jesus, my faith would be stronger." The same Spirit that Jesus promised would strengthen and comfort His disciples, the same Spirit that they received at Pentecost, is the Spirit that entered your heart at your baptisms. The Holy Spirit is not a temporary babysitter that will watch us for just a few hours. He has been sent to see us safely into heaven through faith in Jesus. The Spirit watches over you. He will bless you and guide in all truth. You are not alone.

We are not alone. The Holy Spirit is not a temporary babysitter that will watch us for just a few hours. He has been sent to see us safely into heaven through faith in Jesus. He will guide into all truth. You are not alone.

*Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism*

## SOME EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE INTERNET STUDY GROUP

Beginning on July 29, the Internet Study Group sponsored by our congregation will begin (or began – depending on when you are reading this) a special series of classes based on the newly-published book *Here We Stand: A Confessional Christian Study of Worldviews*. (Information about this book, and about how to obtain a copy, was included in the June/July issue of the *Valley Evangel*.) The chapters in this book were written by different authors. Each author has been invited to be online with us during the session of the Internet Study Group when his particular chapter will be discussed. The participants will each be asked to obtain their own copy of the book, and to read the assigned chapter in advance of the class hour when that chapter will be reviewed.

If you would like to become a part of the Internet Study Group for this special series, you would be most welcome. The study group meets from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. (Arizona time). You can come in person to the pastor's residence, or you can be logged-on through the web by means of the free Skype conferencing program. All you need is a computer with a fairly decent Internet connection, a set of speakers or earphones, and a microphone. And of course, for this

particular series of classes, you will need a copy of the book. Please contact the Pastor if you want more information.

So far, we are expecting Pastor David Thompson to be with us for the discussion of his lengthy Introduction to the book on July 29; we are expecting our own Pastor Webber to be with us (as usual!) for the discussion of his three chapters on "The Confessional and Biblical Worldview" on August 5, 19, and 26; we are expecting Col. John Eidsmoe to be with us for the discussion of his chapter on "A Look at Law Through Lutheran Lenses" on September 2; we are expecting Dr. Angus Menuge to be with us for the discussion of his chapter on "The Vocation of Scientist" on September 23; and we are expecting Dr. Alvin Schmidt to be with us for the discussions of his chapters on "Islam's Threats to Christianity and the West" and "Cultural Erosions of Christianity's Contributions" on October 28 and November 4. As of the newsletter deadline, we were still waiting to hear from the other authors, as to whether or not they will be able to join us when their chapters are reviewed.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

AUGUST 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> <b>Pentecost 10 Divine Service</b> 9:00am DS	2	3	4	<b>5</b> 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	6	7
<b>8</b> <b>Pentecost 11 Service of the Word</b> 9:00am SW with spoken Communion	9	<b>10</b> 7:00pm Church Council  Pastor in Mankato for Doctrine Committee meeting Aug. 10-13	<b>11</b>  Pastor in Mankato for Doctrine Committee meeting Aug. 10-13	<b>12</b> Internet Study Group canceled Pastor in Mankato for Doctrine Committee meeting Aug. 10-13	<b>13</b>  Pastor in Mankato for Doctrine Committee meeting Aug. 10-13	14
<b>15</b> <b>Pentecost 12 Divine Service</b> 9:00am DS Ladies Guild after refreshments	16	17	18	<b>19</b> 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	20	21
<b>22</b> <b>Pentecost 13 Service of the Word</b> 9:00am SW with spoken Communion Elders meeting after refreshments	23	<b>24</b> Primary election held at Redeemer	25	<b>26</b> 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	27	28
<b>29</b> <b>Pentecost 14 Divine Service</b> 9:00am DS	30	31				

Abbreviations:

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

**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

Refreshments are served after the Sunday morning services

**Redeemer Lutheran  
Church**

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We're on the Internet!  
[redeemer.vze.com](http://redeemer.vze.com)

**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](http://lutheransource.net)



## 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.

