

The Valley Evangel

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



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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Notice:

The Wednesday evening Bible and Theology class will not be held in December, and it will resume in January

**Oh, come, oh, come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**



During the season of Advent we, together with millions of other Christians, will sing the well-known hymn “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel.” This hymn, based on an ancient Latin chant, is one of the most common Advent hymns in the Christian Church. It is sung during that four-week period before Christmas when the Church prepares for the “advent,” or coming, of Christ our Lord. The season of Advent is a time when Christians are encouraged to focus and concentrate on mankind’s need for a Savior from sin, and

on God’s Old Testament promise that this Savior would come. The Advent season is a season of self-examination, individual reflection, and personal repentance.

In the face of increasing commercialization, we are often reminded to “keep Christ in Christmas.” In a similar vein, we might also need to be reminded to “keep repentance in Advent.” In the

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WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY TIMES

Editor:
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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.

Wednesday “Bible & Theology” Study Group: 7:00 p.m. at the Loughran residence

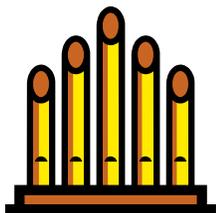
Thursday Internet Study Group: 7:00 p.m. (see Pastor Webber for log-on information for this group)

Friday Bible Study: 10:00 a.m. at the Calvin residence

Announcements

CHOIR REHEARSALS

Choir rehearsal will be held on the first three Sundays of December – December 7, 14, and 21 – in preparation for the Christmas Eve service. We welcome new singers in all voice parts. Please consider joining us for this important effort to beautify our celebration of the Lord’s birth!



Please consider friends and neighbors whom you might invite. We want to use this special observance not only to increase our own appreciation of the contributions of a famous son of our church, but also as an outreach to others, who might be interested in Mendelssohn as a composer and historical figure, but who may not be aware of the faith that inspired him in his work.

A SLIGHT CHANGE IN HOW THE LORD’S SUPPER WILL BE OFFERED

MENDELSSOHN CELEBRATION ON JANUARY 4

Please mark your calendars for the special observance of the 200th anniversary of Felix Mendelssohn’s birth that will be held in our parish on January 4. Mendelssohn was arguably the Lutheran Church’s most influential musician and composer in the nineteenth century. His personal history – his upbringing in a prominent Jewish family; his sincere conversion to the Christian faith; his happy marriage (to a pastor’s daughter); and his tragic death at the age of 38 – is also a compelling story that should be remembered.



In the Apology of the Augsburg Confession (one of the official creedal statements of the Lutheran Church), we solemnly declare that “we do not abolish the Mass [i.e. the Divine Service of Word and Sacrament] but religiously retain and defend it. Among us the Mass is celebrated every Lord’s day and on other festivals, when the sacrament is made available to those who wish to partake of it, after they have been examined and absolved.” In keeping with this conviction, the Lord’s Supper is available at Redeemer and Sun of Righteousness each Sunday, for any communicants who are properly prepared and who wish to partake of it.



Some of Mendelssohn’s sacred compositions will be featured during the worship service. After the service, an hour-long mini-seminar will be held, with presentations by Pastor David Jay Webber and Redeemer member Julie Martinez. Pastor Webber will share information about Mendelssohn’s faith and character, and his place in the larger picture of ecclesiastical and cultural history. Julie will share some personal and historical reflections on what it is like to be a Jewish Christian in the Lutheran Church. These aspects of our special Mendelssohn program will be held at both Redeemer and Sun of Righteousness. In addition, after the mini-seminar at Redeemer, a short concert featuring some of Mendelssohn’s organ, piano, and vocal music will also be held.

Usually, on the first, third, and fifth Sundays of the month, the sacrament is made available as a part of the main public service. And usually, on the second and fourth Sundays of the month, it is made available in a brief, spoken service, following the main public service. In the future, however, there will be a slight change in this schedule on certain occasions when a guest pastor is serving us.

Vocal and organ students from Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota, will lend their talents to the music offerings of this day. Members of our parish will also participate as singers and instrumental performers.

Admitting communicants to the Lord’s Supper is an important component of the spiritual care that a local pastor offers to the members of his flock, whose life circumstances are usually known to him, but not necessarily to a visiting pastor. Also, the local liturgical customs of our parish might be unfamiliar to a visiting pastor, so that there could be a certain amount of awkwardness or uncertainty in how he conducts the full Communion service in our midst. For these reasons the Elders have adopted a policy of not asking a visiting pastor to officiate at a full public Communion service if such a

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Continued from page 1)

midst of all the external preparations we make for the celebration of Christmas, are we remembering to prepare ourselves *internally*? As we empty our bank accounts to pay for food and presents, are we emptying our *hearts* of the pride, hypocrisy, and selfishness which would separate us from God? As we look forward to the Christmas banquet we will enjoy with family and friends, are we also looking forward to hearing the Christmas Gospel with its message of peace, and to receiving the life-giving Sacrament of our incarnate Lord, who sacrificed his own body and shed his own blood for our forgiveness?

During the season of Advent Christians are called upon to be honest about their sins. They are called upon to admit that in thought, word, and deed they have often disobeyed God and brought pain and injury to others. They are called upon to "mourn" the fact that they are in many ways still in the "lonely exile" of sin, and that they would be lost forever without the grace and forgiveness of "Emmanuel" – the virgin-born Savior who is "God with us." And, they are

called upon to prepare themselves to hear with thanksgiving God's Christmas message to penitent sinners: "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

**Oh, come, Thou key of David, come
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

-- Pastor Webber



Announcements

(Continued from page 2)

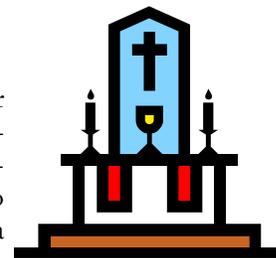
visiting Pastor is with us on a Sunday when such a service would ordinarily be celebrated. On those occasions the Lord's Supper will still be offered in a brief, spoken service, following the main public service, for any communicants who may wish to receive it. But the main public service on such Sundays will now not include the celebration of the sacrament.

The first instance in which this policy will take effect will be December 7, when Pastor Timothy Hartwig will be serving us in Pastor Webber's absence. Again, the Lord's Supper will still be available on that day – just as it is on all Sundays. The difference is that it will be available in a brief, spoken service following the main public service, and not as a part of the main public service, as would ordinarily be the case. So, if you wish to commune on December 7, mention this in advance to Pastor Hartwig, and then at the conclusion of the public service that day,

make your way to the front of the nave (at Redeemer) or to the altar area (at Sun of Righteousness).

ALTAR APPOINTMENTS AND COMMUNION WARE AT QUEEN CREEK

Many thanks to our friends at Bethany Lutheran Church (ELS) in Port Orchard, Washington, for giving to the Queen Creek congregation a brass altar cross and matching candleholders, a set of offering plates, some seasonal paraments, and some Communion ware. These items were formerly used by an ELS mission congregation in Gig Harbor, Washington. When that congregation folded several years ago, these items were brought to Port Orchard, where most of the remaining Gig Harbor worshipers had transferred their membership. They were in storage there until now.



Jesus is the Highway of Rest

“A voice of one calling: In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it.” —Isaiah 40: 3, 5

Christmas time is upon us again! Is there anyone who sees it as a restful time? With the holiday program at our child’s school, the company Christmas party, the decorating and cooking, and of course, the shopping for the perfect gift, our pace is hectic. By the time Christmas Day arrives we are breathless. That’s ironic, since Christmas is the way to rest, perfect rest, as God purposed it.



A long time ago God sent a special messenger to remind the people of Israel that Christmas is the way to perfect rest. The messenger’s name was John the Baptist. He lived in the Judean desert, dined on odd holiday fare (locusts and wild honey), and spent his time preaching about Christmas rest. The Bible describes him, **“A voice of one calling: In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it.”**

Considering that we run ourselves breathless, going this way and that, and making little headway in this wilderness, John’s preaching is timely. He preached about the way that brings rest, which he called **“a highway for our God.”** He said that this way would be revealed for all mankind to see, and it was this: God’s eternal Son was born into the world from the

Virgin Mary as the sinless man Jesus Christ. Jesus had come to save all people from their sins, and by doing so, provide the way of perfect rest. John also preached that to catch one’s breath on the “Jesus highway” one needed to prepare.

But don’t worry! This preparation is not another task to be crammed into an already hectic schedule. He was talking about the inner preparation of the heart. John preached about confessing our sinfulness to God (repent) and trusting in Jesus. He also preached how this happens, and it is not through our personal willpower to reprioritize. Rather he said that God gives these gifts to our heart through Scripture and baptism for salvation.

Since God promises to work in our heart through these means, it reminds us of something essential. Before we begin each new week’s rat race, we need to pull off at God’s rest stop, the church. We will hear during Christmas and throughout the year that Jesus is the highway to heaven, and that this is not a hectic expressway of personal achievements, but a way of perfect rest. He came into the world to do for us what we could not do for ourselves: he lived a life of perfect devotion to his heavenly Father and then at 33 years old, he gave his holy life over to hell and death at the cross to forgive all sin. This forgiveness is God’s perfect rest for our conscience that is disturbed about all the times we rushed right past him. Best of all, it promises at the finish of our earthly race the eternal rest stop called heaven.

Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism

Welcome to our New Communicant!



Congratulations to Joshua Dobson, who was confirmed and received his First Communion at Redeemer in Scottsdale on November 16.

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
DECEMBER 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
** The Wednesday evening Bible and Theology class will not be held in December. It will resume again in January	1	2	3 7:00pm Advent Vespers (S)	4 7:00 pm Internet Study Group	5 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	6 Pastor in Mankato Dec. 6-9 for ELS Doctrine Committee
7 Service of the Word + See note 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	8 Pastor in Mankato Dec. 6-9 for ELS Doctrine Committee	9 7pm Church Council (S) Pastor in Mankato Dec. 6-9 for ELS Doctrine Committee	10 7:00pm Advent Vespers (S)	11 7:00 pm Internet Study Group	12 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	13
14 Service of the Word 9:00am SW (S) Ladies Guild after the Service (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm SW (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	15	16	17 7:00pm Advent Vespers (S)	18 7:00 pm Internet Study Group	19 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	20
21 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	22	23	24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (S)	25 9:00am Christmas Day Divine Service (S)	26 Bible Class canceled today	27
28 Service of the Word 9:00am SW (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) Elders Meeting after Bible Class (S) 4:00pm SW (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	29	30	31 Bible and Theology class canceled today			

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

+ On December 7, the Rev. Timothy Hartwig will preach and teach the Adult Bible Class in Scottsdale and Queen Creek while Pastor Webber is in Mankato.

Redeemer Lutheran Church

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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



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.

