

The Valley Evangel

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

December 2012

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Worship and Study Times		
<p>Sunday Divine Service: 9 a.m., Refreshments after the Service</p> <p>Sunday School/Adult Bible Class: 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Wednesday Internet Study Group: 6:30 p.m. (ask Pastor Webber for log-on information, or attend in person at his residence)</p> <p>Friday Bible Study: 10 a.m. (location to be announced)</p>	<p>All of this reminds us of the weakness of our mortal nature – in particular, of our lack of knowledge of what the future holds. People generally do have a great curiosity about the future. Sometimes they even cross the lines that God has drawn for us in his Law, by consulting astrologers and fortune-tellers, in order to satisfy that curiosity. Especially when we reflect on the things of the past that we did <i>not</i> see coming, but which we wish we <i>had</i> seen coming, we become more eager than ever to gain a reliable understanding of what is yet to come. Human pride comes into play, too. We think, “If I <i>know</i> the future, I will have <i>control over</i> the future.”</p>	<p>What you need to know about your future, is that Jesus will be a part of your future. During the past year, in times of sadness and in times of joy, Jesus was a part of what was going on. At the deepest level, Jesus was <i>in charge of</i> what was going on, making all things work together for your good and the good of others, according to his infinitely good yet mysterious will. And Jesus will be in charge of your future.</p> <p>Some things in 2013 will surprise us and shock us. Nothing will surprise and shock him. We may not know how to deal with unexpected tragedy, or with unexpected success. He will. And he will guide us and help us every step of the way – like he always has – as we humbly trust in him and abide in his Word, as his disciples. This is not a Stoic resignation to fate. This is an active confidence in a Savior who knows more than we do; who is more powerful than we are; and who has demonstrated a love for us that is much stronger than our feeble love for him.</p>
Newsletter Staff		
<p>Editor: Pastor David Jay Webber Editorial Assistant/Layout and Design: Erica Olson Production Assistant/Printing and Distribution: Sarah Kissinger</p>	<p>But the only part of the future that we really <i>can</i> know, with certainty,</p>	<p>“Let not your heart envy sinners, but continue in the fear of the Lord all the day. Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off”...</p>



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Church Loan

As a result of negotiations between the leadership of our congregation and the Board of Trustees of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the terms of our paying down of the mortgage that we have with the synod have been modified, to make it easier for us to meet that obligation and to work toward a time when the loan will be paid off. Beginning immediately, the interest rate will be dropped to 3.25%. Also beginning immediately, Redeemer will make an interest payment of \$1,000 each month. Anything above and beyond \$1,000 that is received in any given month will go toward paying down the loan principal. If the congregation is consistent in making that monthly \$1,000 payment, then at the end of one year (November 2013) the Trustees will re-designate half of those payments toward the principal.

If during the course of a year we pay \$12,000, the principal will be reduced by \$6,000. And because any extra money that is sent in will go directly toward the principal, if we were to pay, say, \$20,000 in the course of a year, the principal would be reduced by \$14,000.

It was a primary goal of our church leaders, in their dialogue with the synod Trustees, to find a way to reduce the amount of loan principal. The Trustees

have now offered this formula in achieving that goal. The Trustees will review this arrangement at their November 2013 meeting.

Through a combination of concerted internal efforts to raise funds for the loan payments (by means of the special matching challenges with which we have been blessed), and these revised loan terms with the synod, we are hopeful that we will now be able to see “a light at the end of the tunnel,” as we move forward, with a definite plan, toward debt freedom. The members and friends of the congregation, as they are able, are encouraged to support the congregation in this special effort, in addition to the support that is already given toward the ongoing needs of our regular local ministry. Now – for the next twelve months – is a time when donations designated toward debt retirement will really count.

God in his grace has allowed us to remain together, and to grow, as a congregation. In his grace he has allowed us to have the beautiful sanctuary that we do have, for public worship and other activities. May he continue to bless us by the power of his gospel, in strengthening our faith, and in drawing more people to join us in our life together as his children.

Another Financial Topic

Since we are talking about a responsible use of finances in supporting the work of the Lord’s church, now might also be a good time for people to consider more long-term ways of supporting their congregation (or other Christian ministries). It is common for people to include their congregations or church bodies in their will, so that after they depart from this world, the institutions they care about will be benefitted. In the following article, Redeemer member Randy Hoffman brings to our attention another option for this kind of deferred giving. If you already have a life insurance agent, he or she would be able to answer any additional questions you may have, and help you set up something like this, if this seems like something you might want to consider.

The gift of life insurance... Did you know?

Most people already understand the value that life insurance provides for loved ones. Among many other benefits, it can wipe out financial problems that may occur in a family due to a family member’s death. But many people are not aware of another effective way to use life insurance, namely for gifting a charity. Most people have strong loyalties to a variety of worthy causes, such as their church, medical research foundations, or organizations like the Humane Society. The beauty of life insurance is that it turns “pennies into dollars” at a time when the dollars are most needed. To use this tool for charitable giving, you simply take out a new policy and make the charity not only the *beneficiary*, but

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Devotion: 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.

From the ELS Board for Home Outreach

Another Financial Topic

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also the *owner*. When it is set up in this way, the donor can take a 100% tax deduction on premiums paid. (Always consult your CPA or tax attorney to verify current allowable tax deductions. In addition, the issuance of a life insurance policy is subject to medical underwriting.) A good life insurance agent will find you an affordable way to “contribute” a policy and its future pay-off, in order to leave a lasting legacy to your charity of choice.

From the Pastor's Desk

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(Proverbs 23:17-18, ESV).

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for wholeness and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11, ESV).

– Pastor Webber

Lingenfelder Colloquy



At the request of the Pastor, Elders, and Voters of the congregation, Redeemer member Fred Lingenfelder was granted a pastoral colloquy on November 15 with representatives of the Evangelical

Lutheran Synod, to determine his fitness to serve on occasion as a pastoral substitute in our congregation or elsewhere within our ecclesiastical fellowship. Fred received a theological education at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana (the same seminary that Pastor Webber attended), and previously served for four years as a pastor in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. The colloquy was successful, so that Fred will now be added to the clergy roster of the synod, pending final approval at the next synod convention.

Merry Christmas!



*Redeemer Lutheran Church
December 2012*

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
						1
2 Advent 1 8:30 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m DS (with baptism of Eron Olson) 10:30 a.m. SS/Congregational Forum	3	4 4:30 p.m. Catechism Class	5 6-6:30 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Advent Vespers	6	7 10 a.m. Bible Study (location to be announced) 7 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	8
9 Advent 2 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion (Guest Pastor: Rev. Fred Lingenfeldter) 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	10 7 p.m. Church Council at church	11 Catechism Class Canceled	12 6-6:30 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Advent Vespers	13	14 10 a.m. Bible Study (location to be announced) 7 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	15
16 Advent 3 8:30 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. DS Ladies' Guild after the service 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	17	18 4:30 p.m. Catechism Class	19 10 a.m. Bible Study at ALRC 6-6:30 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Advent Vespers	20	21 10 a.m. Bible Study (location to be announced) 7 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	22
23 Advent 4 8:30 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS Elders' Meeting after AC	24 Christmas Eve 7 p.m. Candlelight Vespers	25 Christmas 9 a.m. DS Catechism Class Canceled	26 Internet Study Group canceled	27	28 Bible Study canceled	29
30 Christmas 1 9 a.m. DS 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	31					

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

Redeemer Lutheran Church

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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



**Evangelical
Lutheran Synod**

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.

