

The Valley Evangel

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

December 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: 7 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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Editorial Assistant/Layout and Design: Erica Olson
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From the Pastor's Desk

“[S]coffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, ‘Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.’” (2 Peter 3:3-4, ESV)

Christmas is coming. But, Christmas is not yet here. *Advent* is here. Advent is a season of expectancy, which precedes the Christmas season, and which has its own unique character and purpose.

Some have suggested that the receiving of gifts on Christmas can serve as a metaphor or image that reminds us of how the world received God's greatest gift in the birth of his Son. To the extent that this is a helpful analogy, then we could also say that the *expectation* of receiving gifts at Christmas can serve as a metaphor or image of *Advent*, and of the message of Advent.

Parents can use their children's discussions with them of their Christmas “wish list” as an opportunity to discuss with their children also the faith and hope of God's Old Testament people, that the Messiah would someday be given. The coming King and Lord would bring salvation from sin and death, not only to Israel, but also to the world.

In the same way as children are confident that their parents and grandparents will indeed give them gifts on Christmas, so too can all of us be reminded during the season of Advent that the people of Israel were confident that the Savior of the world would someday be given. God had promised this to Adam and Eve, to Moses, to David, and to many others, either explicitly or implicitly, throughout the Old Testament era. For the faithful people of old, the question was not *whether*, but *when*, God would keep his promise.

For us, too, who have not yet experienced everything that God has promised to his people, we can be confident that the things yet to come *will indeed* come. For us, too, it is not a question of *whether*, but *when*, the Lord Jesus will receive us into his loving embrace in heaven; the Lord Jesus will return visibly to judge all nations; the Lord Jesus will call us forth from our graves to live forever in the new heavens and the new earth.

Advent, as a season of expectancy, can help us to remain expectant in faith; and to learn that, just as God has always kept his promises, and has always given what he pledged to give, so too will he continue to be true to his word. What he says will come, will come. What he pledges to give, he will give. What he tells you will someday be yours, will someday be yours.

“But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” (2 Peter 3:8-9, ESV)

– Pastor Webber

Choir Rehearsals for Advent IV and Christmas

Choir rehearsals will be held near the organ before the Sunday morning services on December 1, 8, 15, and 22. We will prepare anthems to be sung on Sunday, December 22 (Advent IV), on Christmas Eve, and on Christmas Day. If possible, singers should arrive at the church for rehearsals by 8:15 a.m., so that rehearsals can promptly begin at 8:20 a.m. Please make an effort to be present for the entire rehearsal, even if your schedule will not allow you to sing at all three services. Thank you in advance for your efforts to beautify our Christmas services in song!

– Carol Webber, Choir Director

Ladies' Guild News

The Redeemer Ladies Guild supports various CrossStitch ELS Women's Mission Society projects, purchases cakes for special occasions, buys Communion wine, provides coffee for the fellowship time after serves, and expends its funds in service to the church in many other ways. There is a freewill offering container by the coffee pots in the fellowship hall for any who wish to contribute to the Ladies Guild, to help support all these needs.

We will once again be hosting soup suppers before the Advent vespers services. The dates are December 4, 11, and 18, serving from 6 to 6:30 p.m. Please plan to attend. It's a good time for a humble hot meal, all ready for you, and for fellowship.

Church decorating for Christmas had been scheduled for Saturday, December 14, beginning at 9 a.m. A sign-up sheet for donations to purchase poinsettias can be found in the fellowship hall.

– Angie Kohlgraf, Ladies Guild President

ALA Christmas Concert

The Arizona Lutheran Academy Christmas Concert will be held on Friday, December 6, at 7pm. ALA is located at 6036 South 27th Avenue in Phoenix.

Mortgage Payoff Plan

We are very pleased to be able to report that the Trustees of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod have decided to renew for another year the special payment plan that has been in effect for us during the past year, by which we have been able to reduce the principal of the mortgage that we have with the synod in a significant way. Because of this special arrangement, we were able to see "a light at the end of the tunnel," in regard to a debt that otherwise would have appeared insurmountable. This payment plan encouraged the kind of sacrificial giving and heightened generosity that we have now seen in the past year, among both members and friends of the congregation.

As was the case last year, the interest rate on our loan for 2014 will be 3.25%. Redeemer will make an interest payment of \$1,000 each month. Anything above and beyond \$1,000 that is paid in any given month will immediately go toward paying down the loan principal. If the congregation is consistent in making its monthly \$1,000 interest payment, then at the end of the year the Trustees will re-designate half of those payments also toward the principal. So, if during the course of the coming year we pay \$12,000, the principal would then 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.

New Member Interview: Dave Morehouse *(Conducted by Erica Olson, Editor Assistant)*



Erica: Well, Dave, it's great that you've finally become a member! You've been visiting Redeemer for some time. Do you remember when it was that you first started visiting with the intent to join?

Dave: End of winter/start of spring this year.

Erica: Now, you're Dan Morehouse's brother, right?

Dave: No; Dan Morehouse is my brother.

Erica: Ah. Okay. Haha! It's been some time since I interviewed Dan and Lexie, so maybe you can tell us a little bit about your family.

Dave: Dan and Lexie have been married for about eight years and have been living in the Valley area since they met in their college days at Arizona State. They have three wonderful children: Ashlie (7), Aiden (nearly 4), and Ava (born this September). Jacob, the third Morehouse brother, is 26, lives in Chandler, and splits his professional life between the offices of Enterprise Rent-a-Car and as a First Lieutenant in the US Army. Like me, Jake is also unmarried. ...

Erica: ...I know your dad is a pastor in an LCMS church in Tucson, right?

Dave: Our father, who art in Catalina, is a pastor at Catalina Lutheran Church. "Pastor Morehouse" is his name. He and our mother live about one hundred yards from their congregation. They've been married for 35 years, but if anyone asks, they're both still 39 years old.

Erica: That's wonderful that they've been married so long! What a blessing! Besides Dan and Lexie already being members here, what convinced you that Redeemer was where you should be?

Dave: Our parents and churches had raised and catechized us to be confessional and well-rounded in our God-given faith. Throughout my early adulthood years, I know that "the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith" (Luther's Small Catechism).

When our family moved out west from the Midwestern states, we found there to be an unfortunately low number of Lutheran churches in the area that kept to the teachings of the Word in the Old and New Testaments. In an effort to simply increase their overall membership, they would often mold their churches' teachings around their individual perspectives and opinions rather than what God has already given all people through the Word. I often compare this practice to the old adage "quantity over quality."

Since I trust my father and older brother's referrals regarding matters of the Church, I visited Redeemer a couple times, including for my nephew Aiden's baptism a few years ago. It took a matter of one highly liturgical service of receiving God's grace and gifts through the sacraments – rather than the often-heard, cringe-worthy, "we go to church to worship and praise God" and other "I/me/us" and "What would Jesus Do?" [expressions,] over the "God/He/Him" and "What has Jesus done?" for us, without any merit or worthiness on our parts [expressions] – and a subsequent study of the Word led by Pastor Webber, for...

(continued on Page 4)

Member Interview (continued from Page 3)

me to realize that Redeemer was much more than just a diamond in the rough of confessional Lutheran churches.

Erica: From what I hear, Dan isn't the only singer in the family. Do you plan to be part of the choir? What voice part do you sing?

Dave: "This is most certainly true." I sing whichever part the ladies like most! Seriously though, I sing whichever voice part, from Bass to Baritone, that would be asked of me, in order to make my own joyful noise to the one Holy, Triune God.

Erica: You have a very interesting job, in my opinion. You work for Lutheran Social Services. What is it you do, exactly?

Dave: Thanks! My current job titles for Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest (LSS-SW) are for the Family SPOT ("Strong Parents with Opportunities in Teaching") Resource Centers: "Health and Wellness Educator", "Southeast Maricopa Mobile Team Outreach Coordinator"; and for the agency as a whole: "SNAP/AHCCCS Coordinator".

The first and second titles (since they can't seem to have just one) mean that I help coordinate and provide our program's early childhood and parent education outreach throughout the southern area of the county. There are the typical networking and internal program meetings; and then there is the "fun" component, wherein I get to host various parent-child, early childhood education research-based play groups throughout the Mesa, Gilbert, and Queen Creek communities.

The third title means I am responsible for the agency's reporting on our cumulative help for qualified Arizona citizens in need for minor assistance in state-provided food, health insurance, and/or childcare.

Erica: How long have you been doing this kind of work?

Dave: From the Counseling, Human Resources, and Aging and Disabilities divisions, I have been with LSS-SW for over four years. I have only been with the Family SPOT Resource Centers program/division since February. I have been studying and working with children of all ages, parent education, and marriage and family therapy since my first year in college.

Erica: You have a degree in, what is it, early childhood education? Where did you go to school?

Dave: I went to the University of Arizona. Although I have more than the necessary college credits for graduation, I am just shy of and have yet to complete my Bachelor of Science degree in Family Studies and Human Development (FSHD). Much of this delay is due to spending two years each in Music Education and Economics and Finance (which are listed as my declared minors) before finally deciding that I wanted to get my degree in FSHD. Unfortunately, my options for financial aid became exhausted after so many years in school.

Erica: Well, that's too bad. Since you started attending here, you've been helping to teach Sunday School, too. I'm sure you enjoy that, and the kids probably love having you as a teacher. Do you have a favorite age group that you like to teach?

Dave: I do enjoy it! I prefer teaching the middle group (about ages six to nine), but that may only be ...

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Open House

There will be a Christmas Season Open House at the home of Pastor & Carol Webber on Sunday, December 29, from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. All are welcome to come, to have a bite of something to eat and a splash of something to drink; and to join in the cheer of the season!

Advent Vespers

Vespers services will be held at 7 p.m. on the Wednesdays during Advent – December 4, 11, and 18. Each service will be preceded by a Soup Supper, hosted by the Redeemer Ladies Guild, serving from 6 to 6:30 p.m. Following each Vespers service, the Lord's Supper will also be made available, in a brief spoken service, for those communicants who would like to receive the Sacrament that evening.

New Member Interview (continued from Page 4)

because I spend so much of my energy for the week working with infants through five-year-olds.

Erica: Well, that's understandable. Where in the Valley do you live? How long does it take you to get to church?

Dave: I live in Mesa. It takes me about 40 minutes in light traffic to get to church.

Erica: Does the distance bother you at all?

Dave: It becomes difficult, but I also understand that so many other members have to travel a great distance. Furthermore, it is certainly worth the long trip (see previous answers regarding Redeemer above!).

Erica: How long have you lived in the Valley?

Dave: My family moved to Tucson in 1998, and I lived there until the start of this year. Before that, I was born in Ohio, and spent about 13 years there and all over the Midwest.

Erica: What kinds of things do you like to do for fun?

Dave: When I have the time and resources, I prefer most to be around friends and family. The activities don't matter much to me, but I always love the company.

Erica: Is there anything else you'd like the members and friends of Redeemer to know about you that we haven't already discussed?

Dave: I like to joke and keep it light most of the time. I also believe it's very important to stay – and keep others – positive. Finally, I have too many interests to discuss here, so please just come talk to me!

Nativity Creche

An anonymous donor has given to the church a Nativity crèche, comprised of an olivewood stable, and figurines hand carved from olivewood by Khaled Hannoona, of Beit Sahour, near Bethlehem, in the Holy Land. This crèche will be displayed at Redeemer during the Christmas and Epiphany seasons.



December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Vespers at 7 p.m.

December 25: Christmas Day Divine Service at 9 a.m.

Please come! And invite a friend to come with you!

*Redeemer Lutheran Church
December 2013*

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
1 Advent 1 8:20 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. DS 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	2	3	4 6-6:30 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Advent Vespers Pr. Kirby Spivacek as guest preacher and worship leader	5 Internet Study Group canceled	6 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Nelson residence	7
8 Advent 2 8:20 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	9	10	11 6-6:30 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Advent Vespers	12 7 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	13 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Nelson residence	14 9 a.m. Christmas decorating at church
15 Advent 3 8:20 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. DS Ladies Guild meeting after the service 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	16 7 p.m. Church Council (rescheduled from Dec. 9)	17	18 6-6:30 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Advent Vespers	19 7 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	20 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Nelson residence	21
22 Advent 4 8:20 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS Elders' Meeting after the AC	23	24 Christmas Eve 7 p.m. Candlelight Vespers	25 Christmas Day 9 a.m. DS	26 Internet Study Group canceled	27 Bible Study canceled	28
29 Christmas 1 9 a.m. DS 10:30 a.m. AC/SS 11:45 a.m.-2 p.m. Open House at Pastor's home	30	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.

