

# The Valley Evangel

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



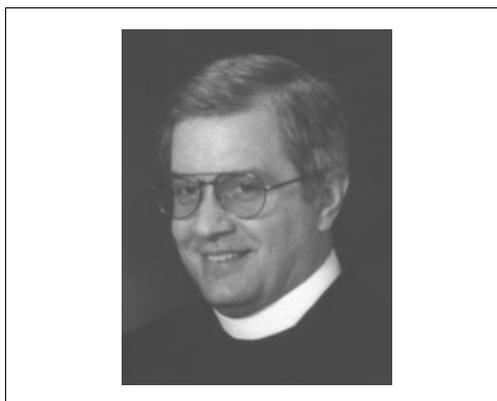
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## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

As we enter another new year, we are facing many uncertainties. We are wondering how events will unfold in world affairs, especially in the unstable Far East and in the tumultuous Middle East. We are wondering how events will unfold in our own country, with the political changes taking place in Washington in light of the recent Congressional elections. And we are wondering how events will unfold in our personal lives. We may have certain expectations of what is likely to happen in the coming year, based in part on what has happened in the past, but we are not really sure how everything will play out.

But there are two things of which we can be quite sure. The first certainty is that some things will occur in the



Pastor David Jay Webber

coming year that we do not at this time anticipate. It is inevitable that we are going to be surprised by something unexpected, which will effect us in one way or another. A stark illustration of the unpredictability of life in this world can be found in our Lord's parable of the rich fool, who stored up a great supply of grain and goods for a future of ease and luxury that he expected to

*(Continued on page 3)*

## WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY TIMES

**Scottsdale:**

Sunday Divine Service: 9:00 a.m.  
Refreshments after the Service  
Sunday School & Bible Class: 10:30 a.m.

**Queen Creek:**

Sunday Divine Service: 4:00pm  
Sunday School & Bible Class: 5:15pm

**Wednesday "Bible & Theology"**

**Study Group: 7:00 p.m.**

Loughran home in Scottsdale  
(call or e-mail for directions)

**Thursday Bible Study: 10:00 a.m.**

Calvin home in Scottsdale  
(Call or e-mail for directions)

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## Luke 3:15-22

Excerpts from a commentary by R.C.H. Lenski

**W**hen we remember that John's baptism, like its extension in Christian baptism, was pure gospel and in no sense law we see at once that by accepting baptism for himself Jesus is in no sense obeying a law, least of all a law that would be useless in his case. Yet he is also not accepting grace and pardon in this baptism although this was its gospel purpose for all others, for Jesus is sinless. What Jesus does by accepting baptism by John is to enter his Messianic office by means of this act. He, the sinless One, the very Son of God, in and by his baptism places himself alongside of all the sinful ones for whom this John was ordained. He thus connects himself with all John's baptisms, for it is his mediation that makes these baptisms truly efficacious for sinners. In thus by his own baptism joining himself to all these baptisms of John he signifies that he is now ready to take upon himself the load of all these sinners, i.e. to assume his redemptive office. No wonder that John presently calls him *the Lamb of God* (John 1:29, 36)...

It has often been asked why the Spirit chose the form of a dove. Luther thinks this was done because of its friendliness, because it is without wrath and bitterness, because the Spirit desires to show that he has no anger toward us but is ready to help us to become godly and to be saved. Others point to purity, innocence, and meekness as symbolized by the dove. It is easy to run into all kinds of fancies by picking up cues here and there regarding the term "dove." Gen. 1:3 is the only place in which an expression that is somewhat analogous occurs concerning the Spirit. We content ourselves by saying that the dove-like form intended to convey the idea of the graciousness of the Spirit.

The form was visible because, like the open heaven and like the voice, human senses were to perceive what was happening. He who was conceived "of the Spirit" now receives that Spirit as a permanent gift for the Messianic work he is now assuming. As his conception pertained to his human nature alone, so also does this bestowal of the Spirit. In his deity the Son was of the identical essence with both the Father and the Spirit, and thus no one person could be bestowed upon another. But in his human nature, which the Son had assumed in order by it to work out our redemption, he could receive the Spirit and did so when that work was now to begin. So great a task was this that all three persons are concerned in it, and the Spirit aids the human nature of Jesus in a special way...

It is most noteworthy that all three persons are revealed at Jesus' baptism so that we here have one of the clearest proofs for the Holy Trinity. When we see from John 1:29-34 with what clarity the Baptist spoke of what his eyes, too, saw here beside the Jordan, it is unwarranted to deny that the Old Testament revealed the Trinity to the Jews, or revealed the Trinity only dimly and imperfectly. All the Baptist's hearers understood him. Later the Jews object only to the fact that the man Jesus should call himself God's Son; they never raise the issue that God is only one person and cannot have a Son. It is specious to raise the question as to how fully the Baptist and the Jews grasped the reality and relation of the three divine persons and then to rate their knowledge as low as possible. To this day, and since the New as been added to the Old Testament, the Holy Trinity remains and ineffable mystery and yet a revealed reality.

The Interpretation of St. Luke's Gospel, by R.C.H. Lenski, copyright 1946, The Wartburg Press, pages 208-213

### Luke 3:15-22 (ESV)

<sup>15</sup> *As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ,*

<sup>16</sup> *John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."*

<sup>17</sup> *His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."*

<sup>18</sup> *So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people.*

<sup>19</sup> *But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done,*

<sup>20</sup> *added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.*

<sup>21</sup> *Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened,*

<sup>22</sup> *and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."*

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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enjoy, but which he ended up not having. "...God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?'" (Luke 12:20, ESV)

The second certainty for the coming year is this: Whatever happens – whether it is good or bad, a reward or a trial, an exciting new beginning or the sad end of something that has been meaningful to us – the Lord will remain with us. With the sustaining power of his Word he will give us the faith that we need to face whatever comes, in a manner pleasing to him and beneficial for us. Our Savior promises: "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). The Lord also declares: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). These are pledges from God himself, around which we can wrap the arms of our faith and

cling tightly, no matter what happens to us, or around us, in the coming year. "Always" means always! "Never" means never!

In the coming year, therefore, with all of its uncertainties, we can at least know that these things are certain. And so, with the confidence that God's Spirit gives us, at the dawn of a new year, we believe the words of hope that he speaks to his people: "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. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. You will seek me and find me. When you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you, declares the Lord..." (Jer. 29:11-14)

*Pastor Webber*

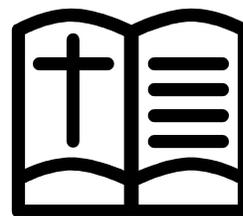
*Whatever happens – whether it is good or bad, a reward or a trial, an exciting new beginning or the sad end of something that has been meaningful to us – the Lord will remain with us.*

### Mark Your Calendar!

The annual Arizona-California Circuit "**Cross-Stitch**" **mission rally** will be held on Saturday, February 10, at Family of God Lutheran Church in Ft. Mohave, Arizona.

Members of the Ladies' Guild of Redeemer Lutheran Church, and other interested women from Redeemer and the Sun of Righteousness mission, are encouraged to participate. Details can be found on the ELS web site shown below.

On the following day, Sunday, February 11, the guest preacher at Redeemer and Sun of Righteousness will be the Rev. Steven P. Petersen, the Mission Counselor for our synod, who serves under the auspices of the ELS boards for home and world missions. After each service Pastor Petersen will also be meeting with the members and friends of each congregation, to discuss our present and future ministries, and possible ways in which the synod might be able to be of assistance or encouragement to us.



<http://www.evangelicallutheransynod.org/Members/swentzlaff/azrally>

## “Growing in Christ” in Sunday School

By Carol Webber

In September, our Sunday School classes in Scottsdale and Queen Creek began using the new “Growing in Christ” curriculum from Concordia Publishing House. Like other Lutheran Sunday School programs, it endeavors to help children grow in their Christian faith through study of Bible lessons taught with colorful and engaging materials. But “Growing in Christ” has some additional features which make it unique among Sunday School options.

The first is its objective of helping children feel at home in church, and become more active participants in worship. In an era when, sadly, many congregations seem eager to shuttle children off to nursery rooms or “junior church,” the pastors and Christian educators who developed this curriculum are promoting a different vision. For example, in several lessons earlier this fall, the younger children learned the meaning of the term “Invocation,” and were encouraged to listen for the Invocation at the beginning of the worship service. Other lesson plans guided teachers to call to their pupils’ attention the visual symbols of the sanctuary – pulpit, font, altar, and changes in seasonal colors of paraments. A song about the Advent wreath borrowed the melody of the familiar Advent hymn, “Hark, the Glad Sound,” connecting the children’s focus back in yet another way to the sensory experiences of corporate worship.

“Growing in Christ” also attempts to introduce aspects of catechetical instruction at an early age. Members at Scottsdale may remember how the girls’ choir sang “Luther’s Morning

Prayer” set to music during the worship service on Reformation Sunday. The curriculum developers have wisely recognized what a powerful memorization tool melody can be, and are harnessing it to help children learn portions of the Catechism even before Confirmation classes begin. The younger classes went on to learn the text of the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed and Luther’s Explanation, also set to music. Their learning was further reinforced by coloring pages, which were then stapled together with a cover to form a keepsake book. These musical selections and others are included both on the Teacher’s CD and also a pupil CD, sent home after the first lesson of every quarter, so that children are able listen to it during the week. Often by the time my class would reach a lesson where a Bible memory verse was set to music, the children would already know it, because they had been singing the verse-song on their home CD. Lutherans of every generation know that memorization can be a stressful part of the Confirmation experience. Beginning that process years earlier, as this curriculum does, and using means that are creative and enjoyable, should help children more easily learn and retain what they will be asked to know as Confirmands.

Another worthwhile component is the beautiful new artwork which was commissioned for “Growing in Christ.” Each lesson features a realistically painted representation of that Bible story, which appears on the lesson leaflet, or on posters included in the teacher packet. The previous CPH curriculum employed a style of illustra-

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## “Growing in Christ” in Sunday School

*(Continued from page 4)*

tions more cartoon-like in nature. But field testing in Sunday School classrooms showed that non-realistic images mistakenly convey the notion that Bible stories are fictional. Life-like images better reinforce the truth and historicity of Bible events. Curriculum developers even sensed the mission potential of this new artwork series. Sets of posters have been specially printed with the story text in several major world languages printed on the back. CPH invites congregations to pay for additional sets which

are then shipped overseas for use on mission fields.

Please stop by our classrooms, or ask the young people to show you their Sunday School papers and crafts, so that you can see for yourself the creative new ways that Law and Gospel are being presented. Concordia Publishing House is to be commended for producing these quality materials.

Carol Webber  
Sunday School Teacher  
Redeemer Lutheran Church, Scottsdale

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## Baptism Day—December 17, 2006



On December 17, at the Sun of Righteousness Lutheran Mission in Queen Creek, Estreia Roth and Angela Carlile were baptized and received as communicants. Thirty-five people were in attendance for this joyous event. Following the service the celebration continued with a pot-luck supper at the Cheryl Roth home in Queen Creek. Pictured here, left to right, are Randy Roth (Estreia’s husband), Estreia Roth, Pastor Jay Webber, Angela Carlile, and Jerome Carlile (Angela’s husband).

**REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH  
JANUARY 2007**

<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>SATURDAY</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 7:00pm Bible and Theology Study group Loughran home (call or email for direc- tions)	<b>4</b> 10:00am Bible Study Calvin Home (call or email for direc- tions)	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7 Divine Service</b> 9:00am Service (S) 10:30am Sunday School/ Congregational Forum (S) 4:00pm Service (Q) 5:15pm Bible Class (Q)		<b>9</b> 7pm Voter's Meeting (S)	<b>10</b> 7:00pm Bible and Theology Study group Loughran home	<b>11</b> 10:00am Bible Study Calvin Home 6:00pm City of Scottsdale Public Meeting at Redemer (regarding a new fire station)	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14 Service of the Word</b> 9:00am Service (S) 10:00am Ladies Guild 10:30am Sunday School/ Adult Bible Class(S) 4:00pm Service (Q) 5:15pm Bible Class (Q)	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:00pm Bible and Theology Study group Loughran home	<b>18</b> 10:00am Bible Study Calvin Home	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21 Divine Service</b> 9:00am Service (S) 10:30am Sunday School/ Adult Bible Class (S) 4:00pm Service (Q) 5:15pm Bible Class (Q)	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 7:00pm Bible and Theology Study group Loughran home	<b>25</b> 10:00am Bible Study Calvin Home	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28 Service of the Word</b> 9:00am Service (S) 10:30am Sunday School/ Adult Bible Class (S) 4:00pm Service (Q) 5:15pm Bible Class (Q)	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 7:00pm Bible and Theology Study group Loughran home	<i>When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. Isaiah 43:2-3a</i>		

(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

## THE GUIDING STAR TO THE WORLD'S SAVIOR

**S**tars. They sparkle above us on clear nights. Some people look to the stars as gods, believing they hold the answers to life. Sailors once depended on stars to steer their ships home. It is God who created the stars.

God once created a special star for a glorious purpose. Its purpose was to be a guide to someone important – the most important person in all the history of the world. Jesus Christ, Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, the world's only Savior. God wanted everyone to know about Jesus.

We know the story of the wise men being led by this star to Bethlehem. While they were not Jews – God's Old Testament people – God still wanted them to know Jesus as their Savior. Being led by that star, they came a long way to worship Jesus – the King of the Jews, the world's Savior. They laid before him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

God still wants everyone know Jesus, as He always has. He does this by means of a greater star, the written word of the Bible. The Bible is God's Word, lead-

ing us to Jesus like the star led the wise men. The Bible reveals Jesus to us by faith and teaches us all we need to know about Him. How we need Him! Our sins against God are many. For instance, who of us ever reads, knows and loves the Bible as we should? We sinners resist everything that comes from God.



Jesus did what no one else could to save us. As the Innocent One, He shed his human, yet divine blood to wash away our sins! Yes, the power of His blood has cleansed the whole world! We are saved through faith in Him, faith born of God's Bible word! We thank

God for the Bible, our guiding star to the world's one Savior! It will never steer us wrong.

**"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.'"**

**Matthew 2:1-2**

*Produced by the ELS Board of Evangelism*

### A Reading From The Lectionary Isaiah 43:1-7 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup>But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. <sup>2</sup>When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. <sup>3</sup>For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

<sup>4</sup>Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you, I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life. <sup>5</sup>Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you. <sup>6</sup>I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, <sup>7</sup>everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

**Redeemer Lutheran Church**

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Or: 602-388-4980  
Email: jaywebber@yahoo.com

**Sun of Righteousness Mission**  
Meeting in the "Multi-Purpose"  
Room at Frances Brandon-Pickett  
Elementary School  
22076 E. Village Loop Road South  
Queen Creek, AZ



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

**Notice!**

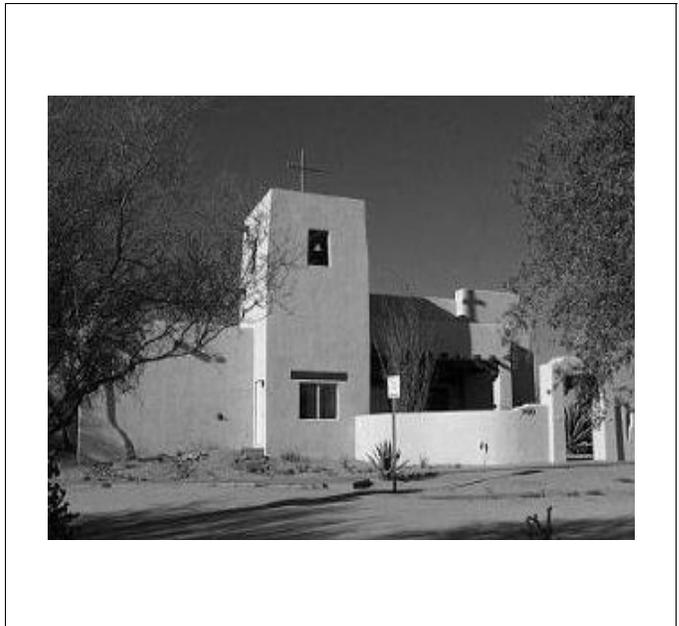
Audio recordings of  
Pastor Webber's sermons  
are posted on the internet  
weekly and are available  
through both church  
websites above, and  
published courtesy of  
[lutheransource.net](http://lutheransource.net)



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## 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 Lu-  
theran Church; cor-  
rectly 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.*



**Redeemer Lutheran Church**