

The Valley Evangel, July 2007
Serving the Members and Friends of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale and
Sun of Righteousness Lutheran Mission in Queen Creek

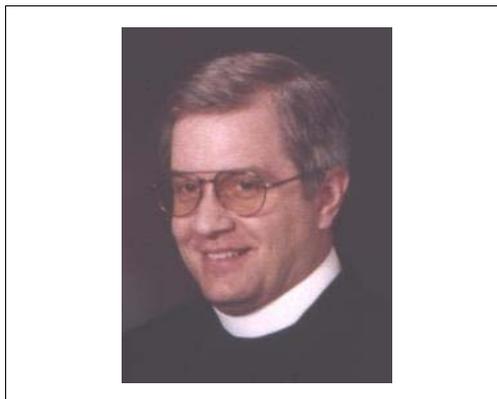


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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

I write these words on the day after my return from the synod convention, which was held in Mankato, Minnesota, from June 18 through 21. Before the convention – on Sunday, June 17 – I also enjoyed the opportunity to preach and make a presentation about our work in Queen Creek at Bethany Lutheran Church in Princeton, Minnesota.



Pastor David Jay Webber

My time in Princeton was a real delight. The Pastor there is the Rev. Jerome Gernander. He has been a friend of mine for many years, but I was glad to be able to get better acquainted with his wife Sue, and to meet their two charming daughters, aged six and four. The congregation there has taken an interest in our work in Queen Creek. They have already sent a generous donation toward the development of Sun of

Righteousness Lutheran Mission, and the day I preached there another special offering was received for the mission.

One of the main things that prompted our brothers and sisters in Princeton to partner with us in this effort is our commitment to conducting a ministry in Queen Creek that is genuinely Bibli-

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SUMMER CHANGES TO NOTE

The Sunday School and Sunday Adult Class and Mid-Week classes are on hiatus for the summer. The time of their resumption in the autumn will be announced.

Editor:
Pastor David Jay Webber

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Julie Martinez

WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY TIMES

Scottsdale:
Sunday Divine Service: 9:00 a.m.
Refreshments after the Service

Wednesday "Bible & Theology" Study Group: 7:00 p.m.
(On hiatus for the summer)

Queen Creek:
Sunday Divine Service: 4:00 p.m.

Thursday Bible Study: 10:00 a.m.
Calvin home in Scottsdale
(On hiatus for the summer)

MARTIN LUTHER ON GALATIANS 5:18

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

Paul cannot forget about his doctrine of faith; but he keeps on repeating and emphasizing it, even when he is dealing with good works. Here someone may raise the objection: "How can it be that we are not under the Law? After all, Paul, you yourself teach that we have a flesh whose desires are against the Spirit, a flesh that opposes, vexes, and enslaves us. And we are really conscious of our sin; nor can we be set free in the sense in which we would most like to be free. This is surely what it means to be under the Law. Then why do you say, Paul, that we are not under the Law?" "Do not let this bother you," he says. "Only concentrate on this, that you be led by the Spirit, that is, that you obey the will which is opposed to the flesh and that you refuse to gratify the desires of the flesh; for this is what it means to be led and drawn by the Spirit. And then you will not be under the Law." Thus Paul speaks of himself in Rom. 7:25: "I serve the Law of God with my mind; that is, in the Spirit I am not guilty of any sin. But with my flesh I serve the law of sin." And so the godly are not under the Law, namely, by the Spirit; for the Law is unable to accuse them and to carry out its sentence of death against them, even though they are conscious of their sin and confess that they are sinners. Through Christ, "who was born under the Law to redeem those who were under the Law" (4:4-5), the Law has been deprived of its legal hold on them. In the godly, therefore, the Law does not dare accuse as sin that which truly is a sin against the Law.

Therefore the dominion of the Spirit is so powerful that the Law cannot accuse that which is truly sin. For Christ, our Righteousness, whom we grasp by faith, is beyond reproach; therefore He cannot be accused by the Law. As long as we cling to Him, we are led by the Spirit and are free from the Law. Thus even when the apostle is teaching good works, he does not forget about his discussion of justification but continually points out that it is impossible for us to be justified by works of the Law. The remnants of sin cling to our flesh, which, as long as it lives, does not stop having desires against the Spirit. Yet this does not endanger us at all; for we are free of the Law, provided that we walk by the Spirit.

With the words "If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law" you can give powerful comfort to yourself and to others who are experiencing severe trials. It often happens that a man is so fiercely attacked by anger, hatred, impatience, sexual desire, mental depression, or some other desire of the flesh that he simply cannot get rid of it, no matter how much he wants to. What is he to do?

Should he despair on this account? No, but he should say: "My flesh is battling and raging against the Spirit. Let it rage as long as it pleases! But you do not give in to it. Walk by the Spirit, and be led by Him, so that you do not gratify its desires. If you do this, you are free of the Law. Of course, it will accuse and frighten you; but it will do so in vain." In such a battle of the flesh against the Spirit, therefore, there is nothing better than to have the Word in view and to draw from it the comfort of the Spirit.

Nor should a person in the midst of trial be affected by the devil's great ability to exaggerate our sin, which causes one to think that he will completely collapse under attack, so that he is conscious of nothing except the wrath of God and despair. Here he must not at any cost follow his own consciousness; he must follow only the word of Paul: "If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law." If he clings to this with firm faith, he will have a mighty defense with which he can quench all the flaming darts that the evil one aims at him (Eph. 6:16). No matter how much the flesh may seethe and rave, none of its agitation or fury can harm or condemn him; for as one who walks by the Spirit and who is led by Him, he refuses to give in to the flesh or to gratify its desires. When the flesh is agitated and raging, therefore, the only remedy is that we take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Eph. 6:17), and do battle against it. Then we shall undoubtedly emerge as the victors, even though we may think the exact opposite during the battle. But if we lose sight of the Word, we have no aid or counsel left. I am saying this on the basis of my own experience. I have suffered many trials of all sorts, and the most severe ones at that. But as soon as I took hold of some statement of Scripture as my holy anchor, I found security, and my trials subsided; without the Word it would have been impossible for me to endure them even for a short time, much less to overcome them.

In this discussion of the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, Paul teaches, in summary, that the reconciled or the saints cannot accomplish what the spirit wishes. For the spirit would want to be completely pure, but the flesh that is attached to it will not permit this. Yet they are saved; this happens through the forgiveness of sins, which is in Christ. Moreover, because they walk by the Spirit and are led by Him, they are not under the Law. That is, the Law cannot accuse and terrify them; and even if it tries to do so, it cannot bring them to the point of despair.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Continued from page 1)

cal and Lutheran in both form and content. In American Christendom there is an increasing tendency on the part of mission congregations of various denominations – even some Lutherans – to imitate the techniques of a pep rally, or of a late-night variety and talk show, in the way they conduct their services.

In their outreach to the unchurched, these groups perceive that those who have little if any experience in church also have very little appreciation for the church's way of worship. And they are right! It should not surprise us that unbelievers do not like the Liturgy and hymns of the church. Our Order of Service and treasured hymns are about God, and his holiness and love, from beginning to end. But in regard to the true God, unbelievers are "alienated and hostile in mind" (Col. 1:21, ESV). So, it doesn't surprise us when unchurched visitors are initially put off by our "strange" way of doing things. According to their old unregenerated nature, they may even *hate* our services!

But when the Word of God works its miracle of creating faith in their hearts (Romans 10:16), it will also begin to teach them how God wants to be worshiped. Those whose minds are transformed by the Spirit of Christ will begin to learn the meaning of these words of the apostle Paul: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth" (Col. 3:1-2). And they will also begin to appreciate what the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches: "Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom

that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:28-29).

We should not in any way be embarrassed by our mission congregation in Queen Creek, small though it may be. Our friends at Princeton are certainly not embarrassed to be helping us in whatever way they can. They know, as we also know, that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). The restless heart of sinful man is very fickle, and is always itching after something new, but the Savior does not change. He is the same in his love for us all. He is the same in his desire to rescue us from the mire of sin and selfishness, and to lift us up into the heavenly joy of eternal life by the Gospel of his forgiving grace. He is the same in his desire to give us a new nature that loves God and the things of God.

May our parish – Redeemer in Scottsdale and Sun of Righteousness in Queen Creek – always remain firmly dedicated to this faith. May the Lord keep us steadfast in our calling as his people, so that we are not overcome by the world and its false hope, but are preserved instead in our sacred mission to be "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14).

— Pastor Webber

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REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
JULY 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Divine Service 9:00am Service (S) 4:00pm Service (Q)	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Service of the Word 9:00am Service (S) Ladies Guild meets after the service during fellowship time 4:00pm Service (Q)	9	10 7:00pm Voter's Meeting	11	12	13	14
15 Divine Service 9:00am Service (S) 4:00pm Service (Q)	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 Service of the Word 9:00am Service (S) 4:00pm Service (Q) Elder's Meeting (S) after refreshment time	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Divine Service 9:00am Service (S) 4:00pm Service (Q)	30	31	<i>Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:28-29).</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

Jesus Calms Our Fears

If you've watched the news at all over the last year or so, you couldn't help but notice the devastation caused by natural disasters.

Living through a natural disaster is quite different than hearing about one though. Whether you've waited to hear from loved ones or had to walk about the devastation taking inventory of what's left, it can be very frightening. There is a feeling of a loss of control.

As much as we delude ourselves into thinking that we are in control of our situations and life, there isn't any way to lie to ourselves as we face disaster. We feel helpless because we are.

Jesus' disciples were in that kind of predicament. They were caught in a terrible storm in the middle of a lake. The waves were crashing. The boat was sinking. As fast as they would pitch water out, it would come right back on board. When they saw Jesus walking to them on the water, they thought that their lives were over. They thought He was an angel com-



ing to get them. How comforting was it for them to hear these words, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." (Matthew 14:27) Jesus doesn't just wish us well, He does something about it. For His disciples, He calmed the storm. For us, He gives us His promise that He will never leave nor forsake us. He asks us to: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble. I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." He takes away our greatest trouble – sin. Jesus died on the cross to forgive every sin that we have ever committed. Through faith in Jesus the fear of death and Judgment are removed and replaced with the assurance of life and salvation!

Jesus does more than the miracle of walking on water and quelling the storm. He calms the storm of panic and fear in us. Today He calls to you, tells you to be of good cheer as well, because your Lord and Savior has everything under control.

**"Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid!"
(Matthew 14:27)**

Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism

Announcements

Online Bible Study Ideas

There has been a suggestion that our parish sponsor an online weekly Bible study, led by the Pastor, and utilizing a computer conferencing or communication program of some kind. Anyone who has an adequate Internet connection (DSL or High Speed), and who has a microphone (and preferably also a web cam) hooked up to his or her computer, would be able to participate. The members and friends of our parish who live at a distance could in this way be benefited, but also those closer to home who would like an additional opportunity each week to grow in their faith. We would set it up in such a way that strangers could not log on on their own initiative and hear what we say, or see us, but non-members who contact us in advance and whom we invite into the class would be welcome

to join us. The Pastor is familiar with a free Internet program called Skype, with which several people can be talking to each other at the same time through the computer and, if they have web cams, also be seeing each other on their computer screens. Perhaps this program could be utilized for the purpose of hosting an online Bible study. If you are interested in this idea, or if you have any practical suggestions concerning how it could best be implemented, please contact the Pastor.

Zip Code Change Effective July 1, 2007

The Zip Code for Redeemer Lutheran Church at 7670 E. Jomax Rd. in Scottsdale will change on July 1 from 85262 to **85266**. Please note this in future correspondence with the church. Thanks!

Redeemer Lutheran Church

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Scottsdale, AZ 85266

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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
sunofrighteousness.vze.com

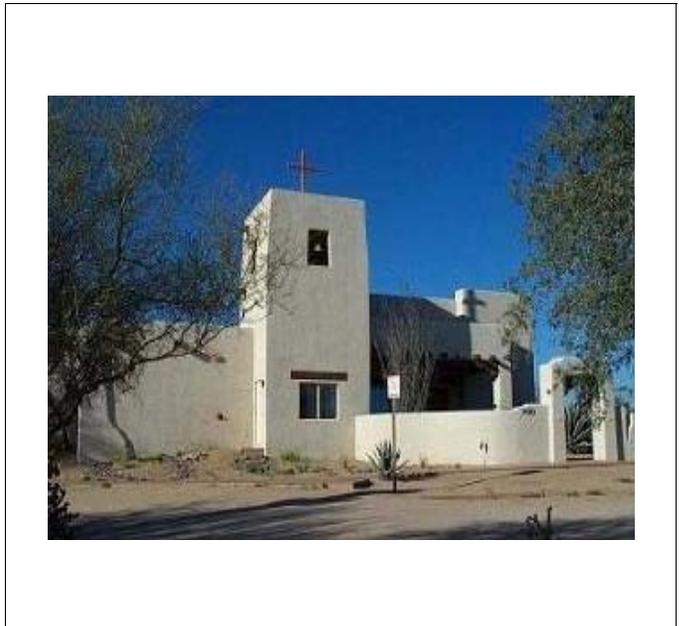
Notice!

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



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