

The Valley Evangel

Serving the members and friends of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale, Arizona

June/July 2016

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Worship and Study

Sunday Divine Service
9 am; Refreshments after the service

Sunday School/Adult Bible Class: 10:30 am

Thursday Internet Study Group: 7 p.m. (ask Pr. Webber for login information)

Friday Bible Study: On hiatus until September 2

Newsletter Staff

Editor: Pastor David Jay Webber
Editorial Assistant/ Layout and Design: Erica Olson
Production Assistant/ Printing and Distribution: Sarah Kissinger

From the Pastor's Desk

The week after Fathers' Day will once again see the annual meeting of the convention of our church body, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota. I as pastor, and lay delegate Norman Hartigan, will represent our congregation at the convention. Both Norman and Jim Bonnell, another Redeemer member, are on the ballot respectively for two vacant laymen's seats on the Board of Trustees of the synod. We'll have to wait and see if one or both of them are elected.

There is no divine command that congregations organize themselves into synods or into some other kind of church body. But there is a divine command that Christians, and Christian congregations, cultivate a spirit of cooperation and unity among and between themselves. St. Paul writes:

"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call – one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:1-6, ESV)

And the early church put this into practice. The Book of Acts describes an occasion when congregations in one region offered material assistance to congregations in another region, because of an impending famine:

"Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). So the disciples determined, everyone according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul." (11:27-30, ESV)

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And when there was a need to establish clarity in doctrine and practice for the whole church, regarding whether and in what way to incorporate Gentiles into the church, a council was held in Jerusalem, involving local leaders as well as delegates from other places, to work through this issue. We read, again in the Book of Acts:

“But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, ‘Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.’ And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. ... When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them. But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up and said, ‘It is necessary to circumcise them and to order them to keep the law of Moses.’ The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter. And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, ‘Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.’ And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. After they finished speaking, James replied, ‘Brothers, listen to me. Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, “After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things known from of old.” Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood. For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues.’” (15:1-2, 4-21, ESV)

These kinds of activities were, in effect, the beginning of the concept of a synod of congregations and pastors, who meet together and work together in order to encourage one another in their common faith, and in order to carry out with one another their common mission. The unity of such a synod is based on the doctrinal unity that its congregations and pastors enjoy (or at least it is supposed to be based on that). In the affairs of a synod, just as in the affairs of a congregation, the Word of God is the final authority. Policies and practices that are mutually agreed to for the sake of good order, may not contradict the teachings of God’s Word.

We are blessed to be a part of an orthodox synod – that is, a right-teaching and right-worshiping synod. Even with the human imperfections and weaknesses that can be seen among its members, we are committed to each other in helping to bring about among us a better understanding of the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, and a more faithful and more consistent witness to the world of our faith in Christ as Savior and Lord. It is true, of course, that being a part of an orthodox synod is not as important as being a regular member of an orthodox congregation, where we receive the gospel in Word and Sacrament on a weekly basis. But being a part of an orthodox synod is not unimportant. Orthodox pastors come from

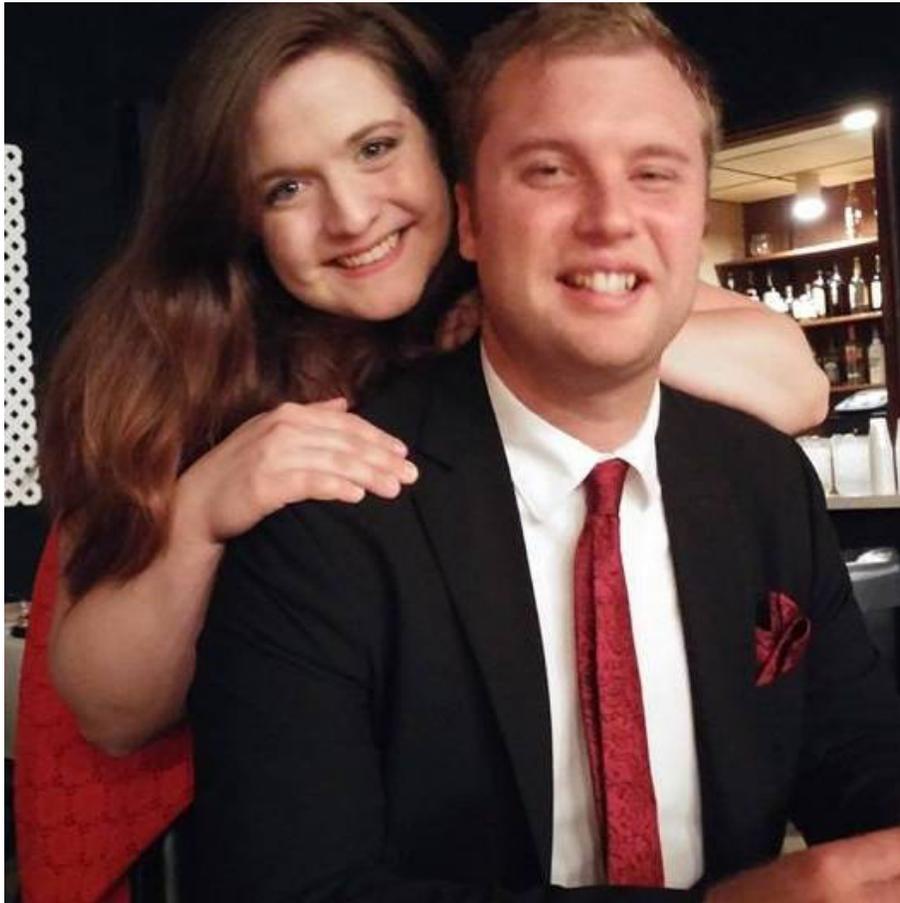
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orthodox seminaries, which are operated by orthodox synods. Support for orthodox mission work is offered to and through the mission programs of orthodox synods. And the encouragement that we receive in our own congregational life, from the relationships we have with like-minded sister congregations, is one of the blessings we have through membership in an orthodox synod.

“Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.” (Romans 16:16, ESV)

– Pastor Webber

Webber-Soule Wedding



Catharine Webber, a member of Redeemer, will be married on June 25 at the Bethany Lutheran College Chapel in Mankato, Minnesota, to Candidate of Theology Andrew Soule. (Andrew, a recent graduate of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, will be ordained to the Holy Ministry in Belview, Minnesota, on July 17.)

Found Bracelet

A bracelet has been in the “lost and found” at the church for the past few months, waiting to be reclaimed by its owner. If you lost a bracelet at the church, or if you think you might have lost a bracelet at the church, contact the Pastor and give him a description of your missing jewelry. If you describe it accurately, it will be returned to you.

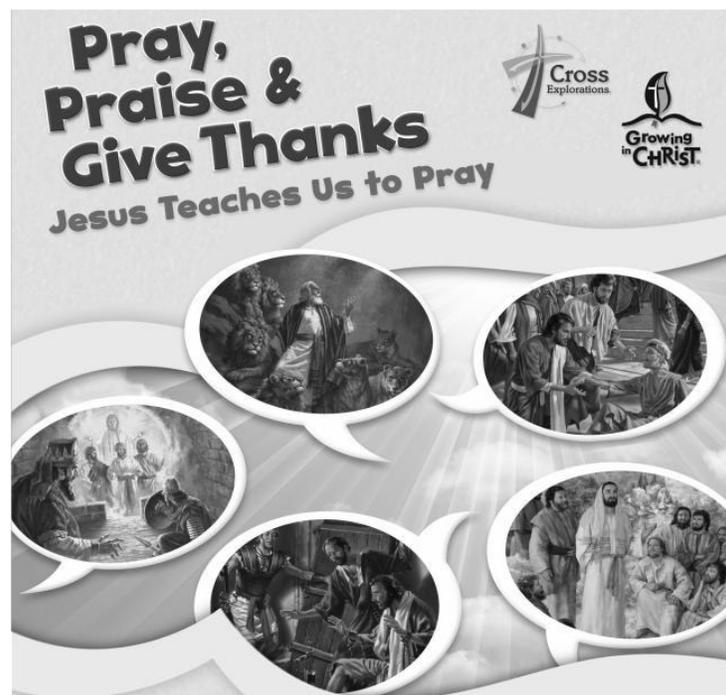
Summer Sunday School

Summer Sunday School begins on June 5. Our theme will be “Pray, Praise & Give Thanks – Jesus Teaches Us How to Pray.” In this through course of thirteen lessons we will study Old and New Testament stories which help us better understand prayer.

In many communities, a highlight of summer is attending the local county or state fair. Our curriculum will also explore this aspect of the summertime experience. Each week we will follow the adventures of a girl named Emily, as she and her family visit the fair. Crafts, puzzles, songs and catechism will round out our activities.

Parents are encouraged to note the “Take Home Point” and “Family Faith Talk” sections of the lesson leaflets. Please use these at home to review stories and main ideas during the rest of the week. Also check out the “Fair Facts” box, with fun fair trivia and websites to visit online. We welcome helpers in the classroom. Please feel free to sit in and assist with activities.

– Carol Webber, Sunday School Coordinator



Devotion: The Good News



The Christian Church has three High Feasts (think Big Holidays) in the year. Can you name them?

Now maybe we haven't thought about it much. But first comes Christmas. Most of us will probably think of that one. Then comes Easter. We'll likely get that one too. But then... There's another one? Is it the one with the Magi from the East? Well, no, but... close!

You see, the Good News of Christmas is that God the Father so loved the world that He gave us His one and only Son. So the Lord Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary at Bethlehem. Angels announced His birth to shepherds, and they came to see Him.

The Good News of Easter is that God the Son, the Word now made Flesh, who suffered and died in payment for all our sins, has overcome sin and death for us. The Lord Jesus is Risen, and He lives and reigns forever! Angels announced His resurrection to His friends. He Himself appeared to His disciples for a period of forty days before He ascended into heaven.

Yet, even after all this that God has done for us, still: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to Him. As St. Paul says, in I Corinthians 2:14, the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him. He also says in Romans 10:14, how will they call on him in whom they have not believed?

But the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel! That great work of God, of calling, gathering, enlightening and making us holy, began happening at Pentecost. That's the third High Feast of the Christian Church. This year it fell on May 15th. Pentecost was the fiftieth day after Easter. On that day the Lord Jesus, seated at the Right Hand of the Father, sent us the Holy Spirit.

His great work goes on when He brings sinners like us to baptism, where He washes our sins away through the Blood of Jesus who died for us. It goes on in the Scriptures and through preaching as He gives us His words of Life, and truth, and grace: Jesus has taken all our sins away! He forgives us and gives us credit for all of Jesus' good work. Then, like the Magi, who were foreigners and strangers, we're being drawn to Christ, gathered to Him, sanctified and kept in the one true faith.

Blessed Holy Pentecost!

From the ELS Board for Home Outreach

<i>Redeemer Lutheran Church</i>			<i>June 2016</i>			
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2 7 p.m. Internet Study Group	3 Bible Study on hiatus until September 2	4
5 Pentecost 3 9 a.m. DS 10:30 a.m. SS/AC	6	7	8	9 7 p.m. Internet Study Group	10	11
12 Pentecost 4 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. SS/AC	13 7 p.m. Church Council at the Muth residence	14	15	16 7 p.m. Internet Study Group	17	18
19 Pentecost 5 9 a.m. DS Ladies' Guild meeting 10:30 a.m. SS/AC	20 ELS Convention in Mankato, Minnesota	21 ELS Convention in Mankato, Minnesota	22 ELS Convention in Mankato, Minnesota	23 7 p.m. Internet Study Group	24	25 Webber- Soule wedding (in Mankato)
26 Pentecost 6 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. SS/AC Guest Pastor Theodore Bodjanac	27	28 7 p.m. Elders Meeting	29	30 7 p.m. Internet Study Group		

Abbreviations:

DS—Divine Service; SW—Service of the Word; SS/AC—Sunday School/Adult Bible Class

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

<i>Redeemer Lutheran Church</i>				<i>July 2016</i>		
Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
					1 Bible Study on hiatus until September 2	2
3 Pentecost 7 9 a.m. DS 10:30 a.m. SS/AC	4	5	6	7 7 p.m. Internet Study Group	8	9
10 Pentecost 8 9 a.m. SW w/Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. SS/Congregational Forum	11 7 p.m. Voters Meeting at church	12	13	14 7 p.m. Internet Study Group	15	16
17 Pentecost 9 9 a.m. SW w/Spoken Communion Ladies Guild after the service 10:30 a.m. SS/AC Guest Pastor Allen Schroeder	18	19	20	21 7 p.m. Internet Study Group	22	23
24 Pentecost 10 9 a.m. SW w/Spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. SS/AC	25	26 7 p.m. Elders Meeting	27	28 7 p.m. Internet Study Group	29	30
31 Pentecost 11 9 a.m. DS 10:30 a.m. SS/AC						

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Service of the Word—A brief spoken order of Holy Communion follows the public service, usually on the 2nd and 4th Sundays

Refreshments are served after the Sunday morning Services

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The Valley Evangel
Redeemer Lutheran Church
7670 East Jomax Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85266

Pastor David Jay Webber
Phone: 480-585-7002
Or: 480-621-7394
Email: jaywebber@yahoo.com

First Class Mail

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.



We're on the Internet!
redeemerscottsdale.org

Audio recordings of Pastor Webber's sermons, and of entire services, are posted each week on the church website.