

The Valley Evangel

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

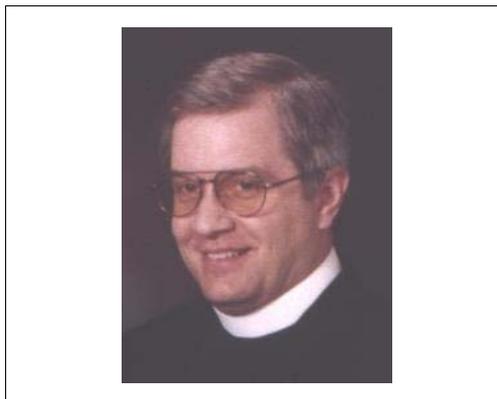


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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

In his recounting of the institution of the Lord's Supper, St. Paul tells us that "the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me'" (1 Cor. 11:23-25, ESV). The phrase "in remembrance of me" is strongly emphasized by our friends in those Protestant and Evangelical churches that deny the Real Presence of the Lord's body and blood in the bread and wine of the Sacrament. They tell us that the Lord's Supper is a "memorial meal" and not a supernatural participation in the actual body and blood of the Savior.



Pastor David Jay Webber

Of course, we would not deny that the Lord's Supper is, among other things, a "memorial meal." Jesus says "do this in remembrance of me," and for this reason "remembrance" is certainly a part of it. But having acknowledged that point, let's also think a bit more about the meaning of this sacramental "remembrance." In the original Greek, St. Paul uses the word "eis," with the

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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.

**Wednesday "Bible & Theology"
Study Group: 7:00 p.m.**

(Classes will resume after Easter)

Queen Creek:

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

Thursday Bible Study: 10:00 a.m.

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

Editor:
Pastor David Jay Webber

Editorial Assistant - Layout
and Design:
Julie Martinez

Isaiah 12:1-2

From Martin Luther's "Lectures on Isaiah"

You will say in that day: I will confess to Thee, O Lord, because Thou wast angry with me.

HERE the prophet depicts the true and lawful worship and sacrifice of the New Testament and sets up, as it were, a certain hidden antithesis over against the Old Testament and its sacrifices, which were many and varied. But in the New Testament there was a single sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Thus the Lord's Supper is called Eucharist, that we may gather around it and give thanks to God. However, the best thanksgiving is that public confession before the world, where Christians who confess walk in danger. The prophet foresaw this future preaching and confession of the Gospel, which did not take place in the Old Testament. In the voice of the Gospel God is glorified and preached in Christ. *You will say*, namely, in the church: *I will confess*. This is what will take place in preaching. Nor shall anything else be heard in the church but the voice of praise and proclamation of God's blessings which we have received. This song is in conflict with all human wisdom and righteousness, which are our works and in which we seek our own glory rather than give thanks to God. Hence, to be pleasing to God is simply to acknowledge that we are the recipients of His blessings, not the donors. A Christian confesses that he was condemned and lost and that he has received from Christ everything that belongs to salvation and righteousness; all his own merits he considers worth nothing. This is the fullest and most perfect sacrifice, and it embraces everything in the Old Testament. There animals and cattle were slaughtered; here our own wisdom and righteousness, our endeavors and works.



Martin Luther-portrait by Cranach

Because Thou wast angry with me.

The church gives thanks not for wrath that is present, but for wrath that has been taken away; for when the yoke of sin and death has been removed, then it will help to remember the evils. Paul says in Rom. 1:18 and 4:15 that "the Law brings wrath," and from this wrath the Gospel frees when it is believed.

Thou didst comfort me,

that is, Thou didst restore to me the voice of rejoicing. Luke 7:48: "Your sins are forgiven." John 1:29: "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." Rom. 5:1 ff.: For without the forgiveness of sins there is no peace, but the opposite. He is therefore speaking of public, not private, consolation through the Gospel.

Behold, God is my Salvation.

This is a description of the peace that comes after the forgiveness of sins has been received. Thus the heart stands firm, and this is proclaimed. Now I have someone on whom I may rely and in whom I may trust, to whom I may look, namely, God, who no longer is angry and punishes but saves from every danger and evil. Christians are surrounded by countless evils and varieties of death; many are their enemies and detractors, but God provides wings so that they may fly away. Christ is with them and preserves them and does not destroy them.

I will trust.

This is the peace and safety of the conscience when it knows God as reconciled and Christ as Savior and Protector. But if it is still afraid of something, this is a temptation of the devil or a residue of the old man.

From: Luther's Works, Vol. 16, *Lectures on Isaiah*, Chapters 1-39, Concordia Publishing House

Isaiah 12:1-6 (ESV)

You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O LORD, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.

² "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation."

³ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

⁴ And you will say in that day: "Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵ "Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth.

⁶ Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel."

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Continued from page 1)

literal meaning of “into” or “toward,” in this phrase. So, a more exact rendering of what Jesus was quoted to be saying would be something like “do this into the remembrance of me,” or “do this for the remembrance of me.”

We partake of the Lord's Supper in order to be renewed in our remembrance of Christ. This “remembrance” is not something that we bring to the Lord's Supper, but it is something we *receive* there, and take with us for our spiritual benefit. Our memory of Christ is not at the center of the Sacrament. Christ himself is at the center, and when he gives us his true body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins, he thereby gives us a renewed remembrance of him, and of everything that he has accomplished for our salvation. He also gives us a remembrance of the peace and comfort that come with each worthy reception of the Sacrament. Every time we partake of the Lord's Supper in repentance and faith, we are given a new “remembrance” of how wonderful it is to be reconciled with God, by the grace of Christ alone, to inspire and strengthen us.

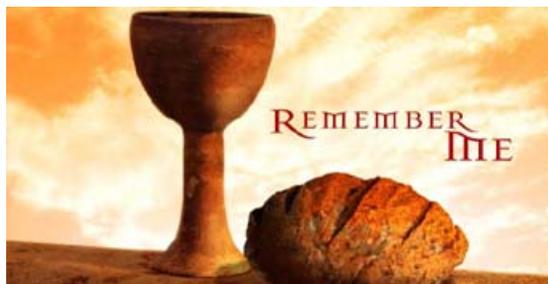
The season of Lent is a particularly appropriate time to be renewed in this “remembrance” of Christ. We remem-

ber his suffering for our sins. We remember his death on the cross for our redemption. We remember everything that he did and allowed to be done so that we can be saved. But our remembrance of these things is not something that we bring to the season of Lent, in order to make it meaningful. Rather, our remembrance of these things is *brought to us* by the season of Lent - or more precisely, by the hymns, the Scripture readings, the sermons, and especially the celebrations of the Lord's Supper that are made available to us during this special time of the year. Lent is meaningful because of the ministry of Word and Sacrament that takes place for our benefit in and through this holy season. And we “remember” Christ during Lent, because the ministry of Word and Sacrament that is brought to us during Lent gives us this remembrance.

And so, let us remember Christ in this season. Let us look forward with hopeful expectancy to the Wednesday and Sunday services that are available to us each week. Let us believe his Gospel, and in faith receive his Holy Supper, for the “remembrance” of our Savior!

– Pastor Webber

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Why I am a Confessional Lutheran

By Julie Martinez

In my article last month, I described my impression of Christianity prior to my conversion to the faith as “an ethical faith built upon the law and the prophets of Judaism, with some different teachings by it’s founder, a first century rabbi with some radical ideas, Yeshua Ben-Yoseph (aka Jesus).” I liked some of Jesus’ teachings, as well as some of the teachings of the ancient Rabbinic sages, as well as the teachings of the Dalai Lama. I was Jewish, and identified myself as a Jew, yet I was very willing to give ear to others who claimed to have other paths to God.



Julie Martinez

This attitude was based in large part on my exposure to the ubiquitous post-modern mindset of our western culture, which teaches us that there is no such thing as absolute truth, but that all the things we believe to be true are only true in the context of our own individual perception and reason. Therefore, what is true for you is not necessarily true for me, and vice versa. This mindset is so prevalent in our culture that we are constantly bombarded with the axiom that all paths to God, by whatever names you call Him, no matter how diverse, are equally valid. After all, if truth is based on perception, how can we say that someone else’s perception is wrong while ours is right? To do so is most certainly seen as arrogant and intolerant by the post-modern world in which we live! Indeed, “diversity” is celebrated in our culture, while those who have the audacity to state that there is one, absolute truth, and that that truth can be found in the Word of God, the Scriptures, are vilified.

However, as I wrote in my first article, after I returned from my first trip to Israel, I began to study God’s Word and related theological works in earnest. This included a study of the Hebrew language as well as commentary and insight written by ancient

and living Hebrew sages and scholars. I quickly discovered that this “post-modern” worldview is not universal. In fact, Orthodox Judaism, which I was studying, does not hold to that view at all. There is a serious tradition of questioning the texts, in an attempt to understand God’s Word and to reconcile tensions found therein. Yet there is no question that the texts are inspired by God. There is a distinct belief in an “absolute truth” and a distinct rejection of “pluralism”.

In a recent article in *Biblical Archaeology Review*, four scholars (one Orthodox Jew and three Christians) were asked how their scholarship had affected their faith. Sadly, the three Christians in the group stated that they had lost their faith, while the Orthodox Jew claimed that his faith had been strengthened by his scholarly research. He wrote,

I don’t believe in pluralism. I believe in toleration and mutual respect. But I do believe that certain things are ultimately true or untrue.(1)

This ancient teaching became the framework upon which my own studies were based. My studies raised more questions than they answered; yet there was some comfort in knowing that there was an objective, absolute truth that was to be found in God’s Word. The fact that these questions, or tensions, existed in my studies wasn’t overly concerning. As I said, the Jewish tradition is not concerned with seeming contradictions, and in fact, almost glorifies them, to the point that study, discussion, and argumentation becomes almost a form of worship in itself.

Interestingly enough, the three Christian scholars in the article stated that their scholarship caused them to either lose

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Why I am a Confessional Lutheran

(Continued from page 4)

their faith completely, or, in one case, to become very much a “liberal Protestant” (his words). This one man, who does still claim to be a Christian, stated in the article that his faith is based upon his own “experiences” with God, and that the actual texts of God’s Word were never an important part of his faith. He writes, when questioned about the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

I don't believe that, but yeah, I believe in something that means that Christ is alive, and our explanation of that is that there was a resurrection. I think I'm more or less untouched by th(at) sort of literalist interpretation; resurrection is sort of a metaphor. (2)

A very post-modern comment! And from a man who claims to be a believing Christian! In fact, my original impression of Christianity was that this was basically what most, if not all, Christians believed about their God.

During my talks with Pastor Bolland, I was quite pleasantly surprised to find that not all Christians believe this way. In fact, Confessional Christians (Lutherans) believe much as Orthodox Jews in that matter. In talking with Pastor Bolland, it was very obvious that he truly believed what the Bible said. He believed that it was the inspired Word of God. He believed that Jesus really did come as God and as man, live a perfect life, die on a Roman cross for the atonement of our sins, and then rise from the dead, not metaphorically, but in actual fact. This was intriguing to me. It was a facet of Christianity I had not previously seen.

When he then invited me to attend a service at his church, I did not know what to expect. I had, of course, gotten glimpses of television evangelism shows, and was fearful that it would be like those, filled with hellfire and brimstone, or some simple message about how we all can be better people through ethical living. Again, I

was surprised, almost shocked, when I recognized the liturgical nature of the service. This was not expected! While the liturgy was different than the one I was used to in the Synagogue, it was a lot more similar than I ever would have believed possible. I instantly felt at home. But if the liturgy was similar, then the difference was in the message. There was no “hellfire”, and there was also no talk about how to become a better person through religion. There was instead the alarming message of our continual failure to live up to God’s requirements, and God’s sweet answer to the harshness of that reality, in the death and suffering of Jesus Christ for our sins, and His resurrection from the dead in order to give us His great gift of forgiveness and salvation.

I had much more to learn about Christianity at this point, but I knew even then that I wanted to know more, and the focus of my studies changed, although their intensity did not. I continually dropped in on Pastor Bolland with questions, and we discussed them in much the same ways that Jews have done for millennia! As you now know, the Holy Spirit did work through those discussions, and brought me to faith in Jesus Christ, the one spoken of in the Scriptures, the one who had indeed risen from the dead!

I am a Confessional Christian. I confess the faith that God has given me in Christ, faith that was given to me by God, through the Word of God, as I studied it from an Orthodox Jewish perspective, and later from a very similar Christian perspective as it was proclaimed to me in the Old and New Testaments. Post-modernism is a lie. There is absolute truth, and there is also absolute error. Our sacred texts, the Bible, are truly God’s Word, and as such, are that absolute truth. We can be assured then that what we believe is true, and not merely a metaphor. How comforting that is!

(1) Lawrence H. Schiffman, quoted in Biblical Archaeological Review, “Losing Faith, How Scholarship Affects Scholars, March/April 2007, pg56.

(2) James F. Strange, same article, pg 53

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REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
MARCH 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p><i>(T)hat is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:19-21</i></p>				1 10:00am Bible Study Calvin Home	2	3
4 Divine Service 9:00am Service (S) 10:30am Sunday School/ Presentation (S)* 4:00pm Service (Q) 5:15pm Bible Class (Q)	5 4:30pm Confirmation Class at Pastor's Residence	6	7 6:00pm Soup Supper by the Ladies Guild (S) 7:00pm Lenten Vespers Service (S)	8 10:00am Bible Study Calvin Home 4:30pm Confirmation Class at Pastor's Residence	9	10
11 Service of the Word 8:30 Choir Practice 9:00am Service (S) 10:10am Ladies Guild 10:30am Sunday School/Adult Bible Class (S) 4:00pm Service (Q) 5:15pm Bible Class (Q)	12 4:30pm Confirmation Class at Pastor's Residence	13 7:00pm Church Council	14 6:00pm Soup Supper by the Ladies Guild (S) 7:00pm Lenten Vespers Service (S) Choir Practice after Vespers Service	15 10:00am Bible Study Calvin Home 4:30pm Confirmation Class at Pastor's Residence	16	17
18 Divine Service 8:30 Choir Practice 9:00am Service (S) 10:30am Sunday School/Adult Bible Class (S) 4:00pm Service (Q) 5:15pm Bible Class (Q)	19 Pastor Out of Town for ELS Doctrine Committee Meeting No Confirmation Class	20 Pastor Out of Town for ELS Doctrine Committee Meeting	21 6:00pm Soup Supper by the Ladies Guild (S) 7:00pm Lenten Vespers Service (S)	22 10:00am Bible Study Calvin Home 4:30pm Confirmation Class at Pastor's Residence	23	24
25 Service of the Word 8:30 Choir Practice 9:00am Service (S) 10:30am Sunday School/Adult Bible Class (S) 11:30am Elders Meeting 4:00pm Service (Q) 5:15pm Bible Class (Q)	26 4:30pm Confirmation Class at Pastor's Residence	27	28 6:00pm Soup Supper by the Ladies Guild (S) 7:00pm Lenten Vespers Service (S)	29 4:30pm Confirmation Class at Pastor's Residence	30	31

(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

* On March 4, there will be a presentation by Dr. Dan Bruss on Bethany Lutheran College instead of the Adult Bible Class

Lent is about Dealing with Sin

For many people, this is the worst time of year to go to church. Not because it's so cold on Sunday mornings, or for outside factors. It is because this is the time of year that we deal with sin so seriously. We call this season of the church year Lent, and focus on the suffering that Jesus Christ had to do because he paid the punishment for sin.

Dealing with sin isn't fun. In fact, it can be downright depressing. Many churches have even come up with the idea of not talking about sin because they are more interested in high attendance numbers. It is an easy temptation for all of us not to have to deal with sin.

Jesus once told a parable about dealing with sin. In the parable, a young man asked his father for his inheritance so he could lead a life of partying and pleasure. He desired to leave the hard working lifestyle behind and go have some fun. In fact, there were many people that quickly became his friends, more than willing to help him spend his money on wild living.

After the money ran out, so did his friends. It became so bad for the young man that the only job he was able to find was feeding the pigs. He was so hungry that he craved the slop that the pigs were eating. Finally, he decided to go back to his father's house and was going to ask him to be a worker there.

When the father saw the boy coming home, he ran up to his son and threw his arms around him and held a huge banquet. He spoke these words, "For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." (Luke 15: 24)

Dealing with sin for this young man was not fun. He had to swallow his pride. He planned to go and ask his father to act like a servant in the household. Instead, the father rejoiced that his child had seen the error of his ways and that his son was alive again to him.

SIN

For us this message is the same. We too have sinned and done things that we regret. On our own, we often face problems that we cannot solve. But there is hope. It comes from Jesus. He wants to take our sins away, throw his arms around us, and celebrate the life that only he can give us in faith. Jesus took away your sins in his passion and death on Good Friday. On Easter Sunday his resurrection shows you that you also are alive again through faith in him!

That is the message of Lent! Putting it in that perspective, church doesn't sound that bad!

"For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

Produced by the ELS Board of Evangelism

A Reading From The Lectionary

2 Corinthians 5:16-21 (ESV)

¹⁶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer.

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;

¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Redeemer Lutheran Church

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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