

The Valley Evangel

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



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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

The financial relationship between our congregation and the Home Mission Board of our synod was concluded at the end of the 2009 calendar year. Since then, we have been “on our own” as far as the financing of our church’s ministry is concerned. And for the past four months, with a renewed commitment to the mission of Redeemer and Sun of Righteousness, we have, with God’s help, proven that we were indeed ready to be on our own in this way. Our offerings have been meeting – and even slightly exceeding! – the needs of our budget. Even though we do still have some debt that will someday need to be paid off, all our current bills have been taken care of.

And it’s not just the new financial independence of our congregation that serves as a sign of the health of our

church. In fact, that’s not even the most important thing. Easter Sunday this year saw the largest Sunday morning attendance in worship since the beginning of my ministry here. It was very encouraging to look out over a church full of people, celebrating together the victory of Jesus Christ over sin and death on our behalf. Our congregation has indeed come a long way over the past few years, in numerical growth, in the maturation of our faith, and in the building of relationships among the members. These have been great blessings from the Lord.

But even as most of us are excited and optimistic about our church’s future, there may be some among us who are weighed down and distracted by troubles of one kind or another, so that

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Editor:
Pastor David Jay Webber

Editorial Assistant -
Layout and Design:
Julie Martinez

Production Assistant -
Printing and Distribution:
Sarah Kissinger

WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY TIMES

Scottsdale:

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

Queen Creek:

Sunday Divine Service: 4:00 p.m.
Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 5:15 p.m.

Thursday Internet Study Group:

6:30 p.m. (see Pastor Webber for log-on information for this group, or attend in person at his residence)

Friday Bible Study:

10:00 a.m. at the Calvin residence



HOLY COMMUNION

The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

By Rev. Jon Buchholz, Sr. Pastor of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Tempe and the president of the WELS AZ-CA District.

Part Two - Preparation

Who, then, is properly prepared to receive this sacrament?

Fasting and other outward preparations may serve a good purpose, but he is properly prepared who believes these words: "Given" and "poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins." But whoever does not believe these words or doubts them is not prepared, because the words "for you" require nothing but hearts that believe. (Luther's Small Catechism, The Sacrament of Holy Communion, Part Four)

Suppose you were invited to dine with the President of the United States. How would you prepare to attend a state dinner at the White House?

You have a date to dine with the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He beckons you to his table and invites you to feast with him. How will you prepare for your date with Jesus?

Holy Communion isn't a black-tie affair, of course. God invites you to commune with him without regard for the cleanliness or quality of your clothes. Come barefoot and dressed in rags, if that's all you have, and your Savior will not turn you away.

But doesn't your Master and your King deserve your very best? Doesn't a date with your Savior warrant reflection and preparation, as you come to meet your Lord?

Scripture teaches us that we are to worship God with reverence and with awe (Hebrews 12:28,29). Dining at our Savior's banquet table is not a formalwear occasion, but it's certainly nothing casual or common, either.

Just like any special occasion, preparation for Holy Communion begins long before the meal itself. Preparation for Holy Communion begins as we reflect upon who we were by nature, who we are by

grace, and who it is who invites us to his table. "A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup" (1 Corinthians 11:28).

We are sinners who once were lost and separated from God. We've been brought near to God through the blood of Jesus. Holy Baptism sealed our place in God's family. The one who invites us to commune is none other than the author of our salvation, Jesus himself.

The invitation to commune with Christ in the sacrament is the highest calling a human being can receive. We are fed the very body and blood that purchased our salvation, and we are served by Jesus himself. There is no finer dining experience! It is elegant. It is awe-inspiring. It is a rich feast of love.

Before you commune, reflect upon what you are about to receive. That reflection calls for more than a last-minute arrival at church and realizing, "Oh, there's Communion today!"

Fasting before Communion is not required to commune worthily, but it's a fine custom with a long history in the Christian church that can help you reflect on the sacrament you will receive. In fasting, as we feel our hunger and our weakness, we sense also our mortality and our need for God's nourishment. On days such as Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Mon-

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Continued from page 1)

they are not experiencing the kind of joy that most of us are experiencing. As many of us are feeling very encouraged at this point in our congregation's history, some of our church friends may be feeling *discouraged* – not necessarily because of anything in the congregation that makes them unhappy, but because of other burdens or worries in life that may make it difficult for them to be fully “connected” emotionally to those things that others are finding to be so uplifting.

So, in Christian compassion and love, be on the lookout for people like this in our midst. We do not want to “leave them in the dust” as the congregation as a whole moves forward. We do not want them to feel that they are not a part of the good things that are happening in our church by God's grace. If you know of fellow church members or friends of the congregation who need some special attention, or some special encouragement, or some special help, be willing to give it to them! A kind word of assurance that you are praying for someone in a time of trial will go a long way in giving that person a needed “boost.” An offer to assist a church friend in solving a problem, or a willingness simply to lend him or her your ear, so that he or she can have someone to talk to, will mean more to that person than you might imagine.

And if you are someone who is presently going through a difficult time of one kind or another, please don't hesitate to tell me (your pastor) or another Christian friend about it. Don't close yourself off from the encouragement in Christ that fellow Christians are always eager to give, from a feeling of embarrassment or pride. No one will think ill of you, or judge you. We are one in Christ, walking the road of our Christian pilgrimage together as members of the same congregation. And that unites us to each other in a special way.

As we prayerfully think about all these things, and about all the members of our church, with all of their needs, let us remember the words of St. Paul: “Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2, ESV). “And we urge you, brothers: admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all” (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

-- Pastor Webber



HOLY COMMUNION: PREPARATION

(Continued from page 2)

days when Communion is served in the evening, a day of fasting may help you focus on the blessing you will receive from the Lord's hand. How will the rich experience of communing with the Lord be enhanced by a day spent contemplating God's infinite mercy?

Personal preparation calls for soul-searching and reflection. Are you conscious of your sins against God? If you are unaware of where you have offended God and how deep is your need for forgiveness, all you need to do is review the Ten Commandments; they'll convict you in a hurry. Are you holding on to pet sins? Are you rebelling against God's will and unwilling to submit to him? Do not presume to commune with God, for it will be a lie! An unrepentant heart stands squarely under God's judgment. Repent!

Are you overwhelmed with a burden of guilt? Do you grieve over your sins and sense acutely your unworthiness to meet your King? Then by all means commune! Heed your Savior's invitation to receive forgiveness and peace in his feast of love! Jesus said, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (Matthew 5:6).

This, finally, is the soul that is prepared and worthy to commune. It is the soul who comes humbly—yet eagerly and joyfully—to receive the precious gift of salvation. For the words, “Given and poured out for you,” require nothing but hearts that believe.

To be continued: Protocol

LIVING FOR CHRIST: IN LIGHT OF HIS RESURRECTION VICTORY OVER SIN DEATH AND THE DEVIL

We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him.
1 Thessalonians 4:14

You have an invitation to Heaven!!!! That is so awesome it's worth repeating, **You** have an invitation to heaven. When Jesus died on the cross He made sure that there would be a place just for "YOU!"

Our natural thoughts may be, "I'm not good enough." Or, "I have not been to church in years!" Or even, "What do we have to do to earn that place in heaven?" The simple answer to all these questions is: Jesus has already paid your way to heaven. We do not have to keep track of all the good things we do each day. We do not have to be a Pastor. We do not have to sing in the choir or teach Sunday school. Through faith in Jesus, we have a secured place in heaven. "Your **faith** has saved you." (Luke 7:50)

Jesus did all the work for us. He came to earth as a lowly infant. He lived His life much like we do from day-to-day. He faced trials and persecutions just like we do. He died just like we do. And He

rose to heaven just like we will. The difference is, Jesus did it all perfectly. He gives us the example for us to follow when we face our day-to-day experiences, our trials and persecutions. Jesus even died perfectly for each of us. When Jesus died, he was not only beaten, spat upon, swore at and nailed to the cross, He wiped away the sins of the world. He took away all the sins that had been done and all the sins that will be done. In the Old Testament Book of Isaiah, God says, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Isaiah 1:18



So now we can sit back and wait. Not so fast. It is out of our great gratitude, for the love Jesus showed us, on the cross, that we **want** to spread His Word, go to church, sing in the choir or even become Pastors or Teachers. When someone gives you a gift you want to thank that person. What better gift than an invitation to heaven! "I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:14

To God be the Glory.

Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sewing Day

The Ladies Guild will be having a "Sewing Day" on Saturday, May 22, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at the church. There will be a pizza luncheon following the day's sewing activities. We will be making head coverings for cancer patients and will also sew some other simple items. You do not have to be able to sew to participate. Sewing machines will be

provided. This will be a good opportunity to get together to have some fun – and help others at the same time. Everyone is welcome.

Software for Newsletter

A special thanks to Jim Bonnell for providing an updated version of the software we use to publish our newsletter!

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

MAY 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>2 Easter 5 Divine Service</p> <p>9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)</p>	3	4	5	6 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	7 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	1 8
<p>9 Easter 6 Service of the Word</p> <p>9:00am SW with spoken Communion (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm SW with spoken Communion (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)</p>	10	11 7:00pm Church Council (S)	12	13 7:00pm Ascension Day Divine Service (S) Internet Study Group cancelled	14 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	15
<p>16 Easter 7 Divine Service</p> <p>9:00am DS (S) Ladies Guild after the service (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)</p>	17	18	19	20 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	21 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	22 9:00am-noon Ladies Guild Sewing Day
<p>23 Day of Pentecost Service of the Word</p> <p>9:00am SW with spoken Communion (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) Elders meeting after the adult class (S) 4:00pm SW with spoken Communion (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)</p>	24	25	26	27 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	28 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	29
<p>30 Holy Trinity Divine Service</p> <p>9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)</p>	31	<p><i>...He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." Acts 1:9-10 NASB</i></p>				

Abbreviations:

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

(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

**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

Sun of Righteousness Church

Meeting in the "Multi-Purpose"
Room at Frances Brandon-
Pickett Elementary School
22076 E. Village Loop Road
South



First Class Mail

Return Service Requested

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 web-
sites 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 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.

