

# The Valley Evangel

*Serving the Members and Friends of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Scottsdale, Arizona*

May 2011

## Inside This Issue

*Convention Delegates. Page 2*  
*Web Site of the Month /*  
*Devotion: Still? No! He is*  
*Risen!..... Page 3*  
*Devotion Illustrations. Page 4*  
*Calendar ..... Page 5*  
*About Our Church .... Page 6*

## Worship and Study Times

### Sunday Divine Service:

9 a.m., Refreshments after the Service

**Sunday School/Adult Bible Class:** 10:30 a.m.

### Thursday Internet Study

**Group:** 6:30 p.m. (See Pastor Webber for log-on information, or attend in person at his residence)

**Friday Bible Study:** 10 a.m. at the church \*Note location change!

## Newsletter Staff

**Editor:** Pastor David Jay Webber

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## From the Pastor's Desk

In the past, during the months of June, July, and August, Sunday School and the Sunday Adult Class went on hiatus, until cooler weather returned in September. This year these classes will continue through the summer months. This comes as the result of several requests from members of the congregation, for a continuation of these classes. My call as pastor authorizes and obligates me to preach and teach the Word of God. So, when people ask me to teach God's Word to them, I will do so!

As is always the case throughout the year, attendance at these summer Bible classes is not "mandatory." But as is also always the case throughout the year, it is encouraged, for a whole host of reasons.

St. Paul writes that Christ, the loving Lord of his church, "gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-15, KJV). The various classes that are offered in

our parish, under God, are intended to serve the purposes of "the work of the ministry" among us that the apostle here lists.

When we together learn God's Word, and the truths of the Christian faith, we will be *joined* together in a deeper unity as God's people. The church's unity is not a unity based on human diplomacy and compromising negotiations. The "unity of the faith" is not based on a shared indifference to potentially controversial matters. Rather, our unity is a unity in what God teaches and reveals, and a unity in his grace and forgiveness. So, to grow into this unity more and more, is to grow into a deeper and fuller knowledge of the Son of God as he is revealed to all of us in the Gospel.

When we learn God's Word more fully and deeply than we may previously have understood it, we will also be preserved from being "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine" in this world that contradicts God's own *immovable* doctrine. These competing doctrines bombard us from all directions in our post-Christian society. There are countless alternatives to the Christian faith that are embraced by the lost souls all around us. In conversations with friends, in high school and university classrooms, in the magazines we read and in the TV shows we watch, we are exposed continuously to ways of explaining the ultimate meaning of things that contradict what *God* says about the ultimate meaning of things.

*(continued on Page 2)*

## *From the Pastor's Desk (continued from Page 1)*

If we don't *know* what God says, we might be "taken in" by these plausible deceptions. But if our minds and hearts have been formed and *informed* by the Scriptures, we will more easily discern the shortcomings of those ideas that are out of harmony with the worldview that God wants us to have.

And when God's truth is more deeply ingrained in us, for our own spiritual benefit, we also become more bold, and less timid, in our confession of the faith to *others*. As we "grow up" into Christ "in all things," we will be equipped and encouraged in our "speaking the truth in love" to an unbelieving humanity that more than ever needs to hear the Gospel. God sends his church to deliver the saving message of Christ to a world that desperately needs to know that God does indeed provide a clear and certain way to life out of death, to forgiveness out of guilt, and to reconciliation and peace out of the alienation and hostility toward God that our sin has

caused.

When you take advantage of the opportunities your Lord gives you in your congregation to learn more about your faith, and to grow in your faith, nothing but good can come from it. And the good that does come from it takes many different forms: to your own benefit, to the benefit of the congregation of which you are a part, and to the benefit of other people, to whom you can now speak of these things with greater clarity and confidence.

"But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:14-15, ESV).

– Pastor Webber

## *Convention Delegates*

The annual convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod will be held June 20-23, in Mankato, Minnesota. The budget that our congregation adopted for 2011 provides enough funds to cover the expenses of Pastor Webber's attendance. However, the Voters' Assembly has now decided that it would like our congregation to be represented also by two lay delegates. Wayne Anderson and Norman Hartigan were elected at the quarterly meeting on April 11 to represent us, if it will be financially possible for one or both of them to go.

There are two important reasons why the voters made this decision. The first is because there will be an important discussion at this year's convention concerning some proposals for a significant restructuring of the synod, which would hopefully reorient the synod toward a more nationwide identity and focus, in terms of the synod's mission and ministry, than has perhaps been the case up until now. Wayne, who is a member of the ELS Board of Trustees, has been an advocate of these positive changes, and could serve our congregation well if he were able to be present as a delegate, during the deliberations of these proposals.

The second reason for the voters' decision is because Norman has been nominated for a position

on the Board for Lutheran Schools of America. Our congregation was the original advocate for the new "classical" approach toward Christian education that is embodied in the principles of LSA, and it remains deeply invested in this project. If Norman is present at the convention in person, it could make it more likely that he will be elected to this board. And if he is elected, he will be able to use his influence to help in carrying forward the unique mission of LSA, to which our congregation is strongly committed.

However, the problem is that our adopted budget does not make provision for the expenses that would be involved in sending Wayne and Norman as delegates. The voters are asking, therefore, that the members of the church would consider giving a special one-time offering, above and beyond what would otherwise be given for budgetary expenses, designated for these extra-budgetary lay delegate convention expenses. If enough extra funds come in, one or both of the elected lay delegates will be sent to Mankato. If not, then we will be represented only by Pastor Webber. In the last analysis it will be up to our church's contributors, whether one, two, or three men will go to the convention from Scottsdale. The voters do thank all the other members of the congregation for their prayerful consideration of this request.

## *Web Site of the Month*

In this era of the Internet, a new regular feature of the *Valley Evangel* newsletter will be a monthly recommended website. A recommendation for a website does not mean that everything on that website is endorsed. As with the Internet in general, discernment will need to be used. But a recommendation does mean that, in the pastor's judgment, the material on the website – considered *as a whole* – will be of interest to you, and will be of help to you, in your overall knowledge of the Christian faith, and in your understanding of the world from the perspective of the Christian faith. This month's recommendation is "A Muslim Journey to Hope":

[www.muslimjourneytohope.com](http://www.muslimjourneytohope.com)

There are some fascinating accounts of conversions to Christianity from Islam on this website. There are video recordings of over 70 people

telling their stories of faith. Some of them suffered greatly, and their lives were threatened and put at risk, because of their faith in Jesus. Be inspired and encouraged by these stories. And be renewed in your own commitment to Christ, for which, by God's grace, you have not had to suffer in the way that many of these people have.

Do be aware of the fact that many of these converts are now members of "evangelical" churches. We would therefore not agree with all the theological interpretations that they place on their faith experience. But we can rejoice that they do now believe in Jesus, and have been set free from the deceptions that previously held them captive. This website is not recommended for the specific theology that is taught on it, but for the inspiring personal accounts of faith, hope, and joy in Christ that it provides.

## *Devotion: Still? No! Jesus is Risen!*

Maybe you've seen those freaky horror movies with little demon-dolls. They're evil and foreboding. No matter what their victims do, they keep reappearing. Finally, the movie ends; it's over. Or is it? There seems to always be a sequel.

That's cinema. But real life brings demons of terror, which are not products of imagination. This real horror doesn't disappear with the words, "The End." In fact, those only add another facet of horror - life's termination. Death!

Maybe people watch movies to escape from fear. Perhaps themes of blood and terror appeal because they are left behind when we exit the theater. But we can't avoid death. It'll creep up on all of us no matter the diets or secrets to longevity we follow. It is only delaying the inevitable. The Grim Reaper will eventually cut us down. It sends shivers up and down our spine!

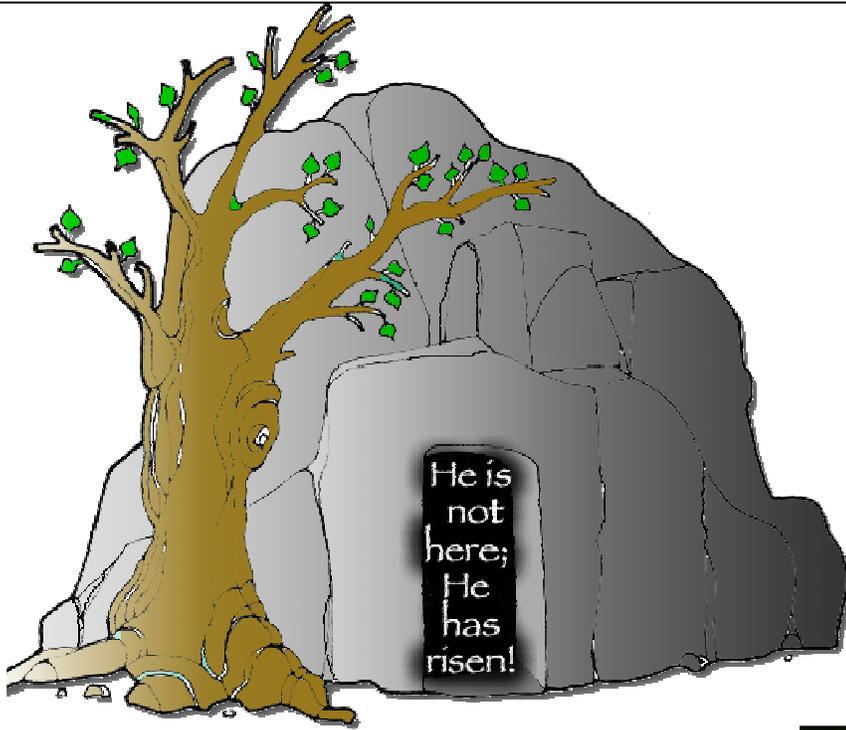
Death would never be haunting us, if not for another culprit, sin. Everyone has sinned, done evil, thought the lurid, hateful, greedy thoughts; the list of sins is endless, as is the punishment from our God that we deserve! Just when we think we've overcome one sin, there's a sequel. And don't forget how we can't forget...guilt!

Jesus Christ, true God, came to our cemetery-packed world, for us. He never gave into temptation. Sinless, He

should not have died, but He did on the cross. Those spotless thirty-three years were lived for us; six hours of hellish death were suffered for us. But that was not "The End."

Jesus rose from the dead, alive, just three days later. What good news for us, who are so "creeped" out by sin, guilt, and death! With Jesus' holiness credited to us and with His death paying our sentence in full, we are forgiven! The Bible tells us why: "*And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins, 1 Corinthians 15:17.* Jesus' resurrection declares that we are NOT still in our sins. Why? Because if there is no need for a grave, that means there is no death anymore. And if there is no death anymore, that means there is no sin (the cause of death). So Jesus rescued us from the victimizing, terrorizing power of our sin, guilt, and mortality! Forgiveness ends the fear. This we believe. God's Word declares it. We are not STILL in our sins. Jesus is risen! We are not STILL mortified by death and its source, sin. Jesus is risen! Should we be bothered by the guilt-sequels? No, Jesus is risen! Can we be comforted and secure in forgiveness and certain of eternal life in heaven? Yes, Jesus is risen!

*Devotion: Still? No! Jesus is Risen! (illustrations)*



*Redeemer Lutheran Church  
May 2011*

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
1 <b>Easter 2</b> 9 a.m. DS with new member reception 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	2	3 Pr. Webber in Washington State for ELS West Coast Pastor's Conference	4 & Emmaus Free Conference until May 6	5 Pr. Webber in Washington State  Internet Study Group Cancelled	6 Pr. Webber in Washington State  Bible Study Cancelled	7
8 <b>Easter 3</b> 9 a.m. SW with spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	9 Church Council meeting at Pastor's house 7 p.m.	10	11	12 6:30 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	13 10 a.m. Bible study at the church *Note: This change in location is until further notice	14
15 <b>Easter 4</b> 9 a.m. DS Ladies' Guild after the service 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	16	17	18 Bible Study for ALRC residents at 10 a.m.	19 6:30 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	20 10 a.m. Bible study at the church	21
22 <b>Easter 5</b> 9 a.m. SW with spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS Elders' Meeting after AC	23	24	25	26 Internet Study Group cancelled  Pr. Webber on vacation in Michigan	27 Bible Study cancelled  Pr. Webber on vacation in Michigan	28 Pr. Webber on vacation in Michigan
29 <b>Easter 6</b> 9 a.m. SW with Spoken Communion Rev. Paul Siegler , guest preacher & worship leader 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	30	31				

Abbreviations:

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

**Divine Service** – Full Word and Sacrament Service with Communion, on 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays

**Service of the Word** – a brief spoken order of Holy Communion follows the public service on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays

Refreshments are served after the Sunday morning Services

**Redeemer Lutheran Church**

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**First Class Mail**

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

**Notice!**

Audio recordings of Pastor Webber's sermons are posted on the Internet weekly and are linked through the church website.

They are published courtesy of  
[lutheransource.net](http://lutheransource.net)



**Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod**

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## *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.

