

The Valley Evangel

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



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Inside This Issue

<i>Making Plans for Time and Eternity</i>	2
<i>Announcements</i>	3
<i>Devotion: The New Promise</i>	4
<i>Engagement Announced</i>	4
<i>Stem Cell Research</i>	5
<i>Quotes on the Reformation</i>	6
<i>Calendar of Events</i>	7
<i>About Our Church</i>	8

Once again, with Confessional Lutherans from all around the globe, we are making our preparations to celebrate the festival of the Reformation. On October 31, 1517, a troubled pastor, theologian, and Augustinian monk by the name of Martin Luther nailed Ninety-Five Theses of protest to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Saxony. I am quite certain that he had no idea what the repercussions of that modest act would be.

He was not motivated by any desire to become famous, or to make a name for himself in church history. Rather, he was motivated in the fear of God by his vocation as a preacher and professor. His duties as a doctor in the university and as a teacher of God's Word required him to speak out against abuses that were threaten-



Pastor David Jay Webber

ing the souls of those for whom God had made him responsible.

His people were being told by false teachers that spiritual comfort was to be found in the purchase of an indulgence. To alleviate their fear of death, and of what the other side of death might hold for them, Luther's parishioners and students were being directed to the pope's pronouncement of liberation from pur-

(Continued on page 3)

WORSHIP AND BIBLE STUDY TIMES

Editor:

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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.

Wednesday "Bible & Theology"

Study Group: 7:00 p.m. at the Loughran residence

Thursday Internet Study Group:

6:30 p.m. (see Pastor Webber for logon information for this group)

Friday Bible Study: 10:00 a.m. at the Calvin residence

Making Plans for Time and Eternity

I recently visited a gentleman I'd known for some 30+ years. He soon asked about my work as a giving counselor and when the topic of leaving a gift to the church came up he replied, "We've wanted to do something for years but we never got around to it." We agreed then and there that if he were able to recover and return home we would sit down for some serious planning.

Unfortunately, before our visit, this gentleman, a dear faithful Christian and church leader, had seen things change fast in his life. He and his wife had been in a serious car accident. She was killed. He was seriously injured. To top it off his health was failing and at the time of my visit he was in the nursing home. The message came only a few weeks later. He passed away at the age of 75. Even with the best intention, not one dollar from his estate was left to sustain the church upon his passing. The church - the church he had supported so heartily most of his life in a community with over 20,000 people - closed.

No one likes painting a picture of what can and does happen all too often in our day. But this is real. The urgency of the need to support the ministries of our churches is real. We are in a spiritual battle in a struggle to keep the doors of our churches open so that the means of grace may continue to be administered to the joy and edifying of God's people. Also we're seeing an alarming trend. More and more of our churches can't afford to pay their pastors to minister to them on a full time basis. There are numerous churches that once were thriving congregations who are now considering closing their doors.

But know that you can make a difference. How can you make a difference? You can do it by purposefully planning your estate in order to support the work of the Gospel. Please take the opportunity to do so and don't hesitate to ask for assistance. That is why I'm here, to serve you as your Synod's Giving Counselor.



The Pastor and leaders of Redeemer, Scottsdale, and Sun of Righteousness, Queen Creek, have graciously allowed me the privilege of sharing God's saving Word from your pulpits on November 2, 2008. I plan to be in the Scottsdale/Phoenix area from Friday, October 31, 2008 (Reformation Day), through Sunday evening, and I plan to have a few additional days of being available while in your area. I would love to hear from you. I would love to meet with you and discuss the joy we share in our Lord Jesus Christ. I also would dearly love to share with you the wonderful opportunities and ways we have available to us in supporting the ministry of the Gospel. Please know that your planned as well as your current gifts to support the Gospel ministry are vital. So let's work together to find ways to support the continuation of the Gospel ministry in your midst and to also carry that Gospel to all the world through our missions.

I would like to thank you in advance for planning to make a difference for time and eternity as you carefully and boldly make your estate plans.

Please don't hesitate to contact me to make an appointment or to receive information on estate planning by calling me at 507-344-7311. Your information will be kept confidential according to your wishes. Office hours generally are from 7 AM to 4 PM Pacific Time during the week. Or you can reach me at anytime at 507-469-9656. Email: danbasel@blc.edu.

Your Servant in Christ,
Pastor Dan Basel
Estate Planning Office
6 Browns Ct.
Mankato, MN 56001

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart." Jeremiah 29:11-12 KJV

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Continued from page 1)

gatory, as written in the indulgence document, rather than to the promise of Christ himself that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. In his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul had also assured all Christians: "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

For the sake of the Gospel and God's honor, Luther could not stand by silently when things like this were being done and said in the name of Christ's church. He had to do something. And when he did, hundreds of faithful Christian pastors and teachers, from all around Europe, rallied to his side. Overnight the obscure monk-professor from Wittenberg became the spokesman for many leaders from all corners of the church, who, like him, knew that the Gospel of God's free gift of salvation for the sake of Christ could not be bartered, sold, or frittered away. The Reformation

spread and took root in this way, not because of the mesmerizing personality of Luther, but because of the truth of what he was saying. Faithful shepherds and teachers in many nations recognized this truth, and in their consciences were compelled by their own vocations from God to join Luther in confessing it.

This is what we celebrate when we celebrate the Reformation. We do not exalt Martin Luther as a person, but we acknowledge the calling that he had received from God, and that with God's help and strength he carried out for the sake of his flock. We do not heap praises on Luther for his heroic deeds, but we praise God for the gift of his Son, and for the enduring comfort of the Gospel, which contains within itself the power to save all who embrace it in faith.

– Pastor Webber

Announcements

Choir Rehearsals Resume at Redeemer

Choir rehearsals to prepare an anthem for Reformation Sunday (October 26) have begun, but we welcome additional new voices. We rehearse on Sunday mornings before the service. If you wish to sing, please arrive early so that you are in the sanctuary and ready to sing at 8:30 a.m.



Reformation Sunday Oktoberfest

On Reformation Sunday (October 26) at 11:30 a.m., following the Sunday School and Adult Bible Class, the Redeemer Ladies' Guild will host an "Oktoberfest" luncheon in the fellowship room at Redeemer. The folks at Sun of Righteousness in Queen Creek, and any other guests, are invited to join them that day for worship and Bible Class, and for the Oktoberfest! (Services will still be held at Queen Creek as usual at 4 p.m., for those who cannot travel to Scottsdale that day.)

An encouraging email received from a man in Europe, regarding the posting of the Pastor's sermons on the church web site...

"Dear Pastor Webber, I read your sermons most weeks. Thank you. May God continue to richly bless your proclamation of His gospel. Be aware that your labours are fruitful, yes even halfway across the world."

The New Promise

“The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31).

Jesus says clearly that He is the only way of salvation (John 14:6). But people often imagine a second way; *being a good person*. At some funerals people go on and on about the dead person’s good life, but ignore sin and the Redeemer. For argument’s sake, Jesus told a couple of self-righteous men that they must keep the commandments in order to be saved (Luke 10:25; 18:18). It is as if he were saying, “You prefer to be saved by keeping the Law? Fine. Here’s how that’ll work: You will present yourself before God on Judgment Day in complete perfection. You will have a spotless record with nothing whatsoever to speak against your flawless life.”



because of wickedness and idolatry that people are incapable of keeping a covenant with God. Sinners needed a *new covenant*.

Christ is the mediator of that *new covenant*. The writer to the Hebrews says so (9:15). Jesus Himself says so when He presents to His disciples the cup of wine joined with His blood for them to receive for forgiveness and salvation. “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.” Paul says that it is a covenant not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (2 Cor. 3:6).

The Law put forward as a means of salvation for people can only be a false notion; something put forward for argument’s sake. A *new covenant* is needed – a new covenant in the blood of the One Who meets all requirements. That new covenant is in Christ. It relies not on what a person

must *do* to inherit eternal life, but entirely on what Christ has done.

The prophet Jeremiah spoke to God’s people, saying, *“The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah (Jeremiah 31:31).* In no circumstance could it have been clearer than with God’s people exiled from their homeland

Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism

Engagement Announced

We extend our best wishes to Paul Beil and Charlene Hussey on the occasion of their engagement. Paul, who is a member of our parish at Queen Creek, and Charlene, who attends there regularly, will be united in Holy Matrimony at Redeemer in Scottsdale on January 31, 2009.

Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him’ (Genesis 2:18, ESV).



Embryonic Stem Cell Research

By Paul Beil

Embryonic stem cell research has been heralded as a new breakthrough in science. Proponents of this research have promised to cure anything from Michael J. Fox's Parkinson's Disease to the late Christopher Reeve's paralysis. In the belief that embryonic stem cells may provide a cure-all, many people are demanding that the government provide the funding for research. This would mean tax dollars going towards experimentation on human embryos. Federal Law currently bans public funds being used for stem cell research on embryos conceived (or made) after August 2001. There are no federal laws specifically banning this research but some states do have laws against it. Therefore, a private company (depending on where it is located) is able to use embryos for the purpose of extracting their stem cells.

Why is this important to us as Christians?

Let's start with the basics. What exactly is embryonic stem cell research? Stem cells, or "precursor cells", occur throughout the human body, and guide the development of subsequent cells to become what they were designed to be. Some become eyes, some become kidneys, and so forth. Some of these stem cells have a property called "pluripotency" which means that they can develop into any type of tissue. Embryonic stem cells are all thought to have this pluripotency. The hope is that embryonic stem cells might be used for growing an arm, a leg, a liver or even brain cells. The idea of stem cell research is not controversial in itself, but the controversy comes when stem cells are obtained from a human embryo, which causes the death of that human embryo one hundred percent of the time.

Advocates of this research will make the argument that an embryo is not a human person. Yet, embryologists Robert P. George and Christopher Tollefson, in their book *Embryo*, tell us that the embryo contains within it the capacity to grow into the next stage of human development. It contains the DNA necessary to determine sex, hair and eye color. From the time of conception the human embryo is its own unique individual! But not only does science say the embryo is a human person: So does God!

As Christians we know that life begins at conception. King David writes in Psalm 139:13 "*For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's*

womb." (ESV) David is here describing himself, when he was an embryo. The embryo in this Psalm did not *become* David. The embryo *was* David. And God had every detail of David's life carefully planned out. David writes further in Psalm 139:15-16 "*My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.*" This is also the case with every human being. God has a special plan for the embryo – that is, for the person who is that embryo. It is not man's place to decide if the human embryo lives or dies. Indeed, it is a violation of the 5th commandment, "Thou shall not commit murder."

The good news is that a human embryo does not need to be killed in order for stem cell research to take place. As reported in the April 2006 *National Geographic*, scientists have discovered that umbilical cord stem cells are also pluripotent – that is, they have the ability to form into any type of tissue. Using umbilical cord stem cells, scientists were able to regenerate damaged neurons in the brains of laboratory rats. Someday this type of treatment could be used on humans. Umbilical cord stem cells are also being used to treat numerous blood diseases with some success prolonging life. In addition, bone marrow stem cells have long been used, quite successfully, to treat Leukemia. The prospects for adult stem cells are very hopeful.

There are some in the field of medical research who do acknowledge the humanity of an embryo, but who believe that "the end justifies the means," so to speak, and are prepared to let these embryos die for the good of others. As Christians, we know that every individual is valuable in God's sight, regardless of sex, age, size or race. Jesus Christ went to the cross for every person, including the small and undesirable. "*For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.*" I Timothy 4:10 (ESV)

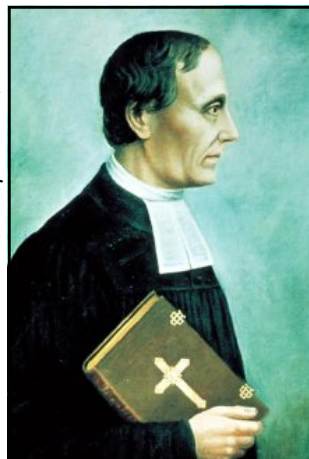
Therefore, we must recognize that embryos are unborn human beings, who cannot speak for themselves. Yet Christ died for them too! We, as Christians, should therefore defend them, and oppose any stem cell research that threatens an embryo's life. When we have the chance, we should also attempt to educate our friends and neighbors in the larger society about the alternatives available in the field of medical research, as well as on the value of these precious lives.

Quotes on the Reformation

We do not call ourselves Lutherans, but are so styled by our enemies, and we permit it as a token of our consent with the pure teaching of the Word which Luther set forth. We suffer ourselves to bear his name, not as of one who has invented a new faith, but of one who has restored the old, and purified the Church. (Johann Gerhard, Loci XI; quoted in Charles Porterfield Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology* [Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1871], p. 118)

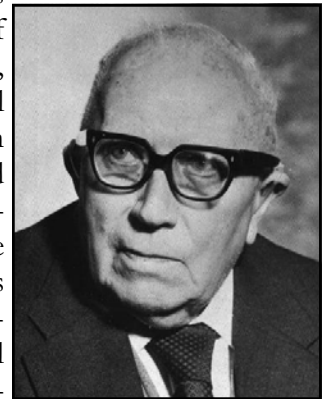


The Evangelical Catholic is a glorious Church; it holds and conforms itself chiefly to the Sacraments. The Evangelical Reformed is a glorious Church; it holds and conforms itself chiefly to the Word of God. More glorious than both is the Evangelical Lutheran Church; it holds and conforms itself both to the Sacraments and the Word of God. Into this Lutheran Church both the others are developing, even without the intentional aid of men. But the way of the ungodly shall perish, says David (Ps. 1:6). (Claus Harms, Theses 92-95 of "Theses of Claus Harms," *Lutheran Encyclopedia* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899], p. 514)



Lutheran theology differs from Reformed theology in that it lays great emphasis on the fact that the evangelical church is none other than the medieval Catholic Church purged of certain heresies and abuses. The Lutheran theologian acknowledges that he belongs to the same visible church to which Thomas Aquinas and Bernard of Clairvaux, Augustine and Tertullian, Athanasius and Irenaeus once belonged. The orthodox evangelical church is the legitimate continuation of the medieval Catholic Church, not the church of the Council of Trent and the [First] Vatican Council which renounced evangelical truth when it rejected the Reformation. For the orthodox evangelical church is really identical with the orthodox Catholic Church of all times. And just as the very nature of the Reformed Church emphasizes its strong opposition to the medieval church, so the very nature of the Lutheran Church requires it to go to the farthest possible limit in its insistence on its solidarity and identity with the Catholic Church. It was no mere ecclesiastico-political diplomacy which dictated the emphatic assertion in the Augsburg Confession that the teachings of the Evangelicals were identical with those of the orthodox Catholic Church of all ages, and no more was it romanticism or false conservatism which made our church anxious to retain as much of the old canonical law as possible, and to cling tenaciously to the old forms of worship. (Hermann Sasse, *Here We Stand* [New

York: Harper and Brothers, 1938], pp. 110-11)



REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

OCTOBER 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Pastor in New York to speak at conference (Sept. 30- Oct. 4)	2 Pastor in New York to speak at conference (Sept. 30- Oct. 4)	3 Pastor in New York to speak at conference (Sept. 30- Oct. 4)	4 Pastor in New York to speak at conference (Sept. 30- Oct. 4)
5 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	6 Pastor in Minnesota for ELS Pastors' Conference (Oct. 6- 9)	7 Pastor in Minnesota for ELS Pastors' Conference (Oct. 6- 9)	8 Pastor in Minnesota for ELS Pastors' Conference (Oct. 6- 9)	9 Pastor in Minnesota for ELS Pastors' Conference (Oct. 6- 9)	10 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	11
12 Service of the Word 9:00am SW (S) Ladies Guild after the Service (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm SW (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	13	14 7pm Voters' Meeting	15 7:00pm "Bible and Theology" Study Group at the Loughran residence (S)	16 6:30 pm Internet Study Group	17 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	18
19 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) Elders Meeting after Bible Class (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	20	21	22 7:00pm "Bible and Theology" Study Group at the Loughran residence (S)	23 6:30 pm Internet Study Group	24 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	25
26 Service of the Word 9:00am SW (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) Oktoberfest after Bible Class (S) 4:00pm SW (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	27	28	29 7:00pm "Bible and Theology" Study Group at the Loughran residence (S)	30 6:30 pm Internet Study Group	31 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	

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

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Sun of Righteousness Church

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



First Class Mail
Return Service Requested

We're on the
Internet!redeemer.vze.com
sumofrighteousness.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.

