

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

On the Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost (August 31), we will pray the following Collect:

“Almighty God, Your Son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption. Grant us courage to take up our cross daily and follow Him wherever He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.”

This prayer reminds us of the centrality of the cross in the life and ministry of Jesus. Without the cross, and without the suffering that Jesus endured on the cross as our Redeemer, we would not be saved. How thankful we are, therefore, that God became a man in the person of Christ, not to gloat over our sinfulness, but to do



Pastor David Jay Webber

something about it. What he did was to put himself in the place of sinful humanity; to take humanity's sin upon himself; and to suffer and die for all of our sins. In this way he deflected away from us, and onto himself, the just judgment of his own law against us, and earned for us the forgiveness in which we now live.

But the cross of Christ is not only central to the Savior's life and ministry. It is also central to our lives as his followers. It is

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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.

Wednesday “Bible & Theology” Study Group: 7:00 p.m.

Friday Bible Study: 10:00 a.m.

Notice: Adult Bible Class and Sunday School, the Friday Bible Study, and the Wednesday study will not be held during the summer months. All classes will resume again in September.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE BOOK OF CONCORD

Third of a three-part series

What is an “unconditional subscription” to the Confessions? Confessional Lutheran pastors are required to “subscribe,” that is, to pledge their agreement unconditionally with the Lutheran Confessions precisely because they are a pure exposition of the Word of God. This is the way our pastors, and all laypeople who confess belief in the Small Catechism, are able with great joy and without reservation or qualification to say what it is that they believe to be the truth of God’s Word.

Why is an unconditional subscription to the Lutheran Confessions so important? Authentically Lutheran churches insist on a subscription to the Confessions because they agree with the Bible, not merely in so far as they agree with Scripture. Otherwise, there would no objective way to make sure that there is faithful teaching and preaching of God’s Word. Everything would depend on each pastor’s private opinions, subjective interpretations, and personal feelings, rather than on objective truth as set forth in the Lutheran Confessions.

Do all Lutheran churches have the same view of the Book of Concord? No. Many Lutheran churches in the world today have been thoroughly influenced by the liberal theology that has taken over most so-called “mainline” Protestant denominations in North America and the large Protestant state churches in Europe, Scandinavia, and elsewhere. The foundation of much of modern theology is the view that the words of the Bible are not actually God’s words but merely human opinions and reflections of the personal feelings of those who wrote the words. Consequently, confessions that claim to be true explanations of God’s Word are now regarded more as historically conditioned human opinions, rather than as objective statements of truth. This would explain why some Lutheran churches enter into fellowship arrangements with non-Lutheran churches teaching things in direct conflict with the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

Do other churches have confessions like the Lutheran Church? Yes, they do. Most other churches have confessions

scattered throughout various books. The Book of Concord is unique among all churches in the world, since it gathers together the Lutheran Church’s most normative expressions of the Christian faith into a single book that has been used for nearly five hundred years as a fixed point of reference for the Lutheran Church. Other churches have various catechisms and confessions they can point to, but few have as complete a collection of confessions that has received as much widespread use and support, for so long a time, as the Lutheran Confessions contained in the Book of Concord of 1580.

Summing things up...

To be a Lutheran is to be one who honors the Word of God. That Word makes it clear that it is God’s desire for His Church to be in agreement about doctrine and to be of one mind, living at peace with one another (1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 13:11). It is for that reason that we so treasure the precious confession of Christian truth that we have in the Book of Concord. For confessional Lutherans, there is no other collection of documents, statements, or books that so clearly, accurately, and comfortingly presents the truths of God’s Word and reveals the biblical Gospel as does our Book of Concord.

Hand in hand with our commitment to pure teaching and confession of the faith is, and always must be, an equally strong commitment to reaching out boldly with the Gospel and speaking God’s truth to the world. That is what confession of the faith is all about, in the final analysis. Indeed, “Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, ‘I believed, and so I spoke,’ we also believe, and so we also speak” (2 Corinthians 4:13). This is what it means to be, and to remain, a genuine confessional Lutheran.

by Rev. Paul T. McCain
May 3, 2008

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Continued from page 1)

the image that follows us throughout our life of faith, and that principally shapes that life of faith. Jesus says: "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24). The suffering of the cross is not something we try to escape, or from which we try to get as much distance as possible. In this world, we embrace the cross as our only hope. We preach the cross. And, when our own cross of persecution or suffering is laid upon us because of our Christian faith and testimony, we take up that cross in the name and strength of Christ, and follow him.

Every Sunday, when the worshipers at Redeemer in Scottsdale enter the church from the patio, the very first thing they see is the large crucifix on the wall of the corridor. This is a reminder, not merely of a past event, but of a present reality. It is a reminder of why they are entering this building today, and of why they would even dare to approach God in worship and prayer. Because Christ died for us, we live, and will live forever. Because he endured



the agony of the cross in our place, we in faith are set free from the fear of judgment. Because of the cross, we do not dread our encounters with God, but rejoice to know the peace of his forgiveness, which he brings to us in his Word and Sacrament.

And, the crucifix that hangs on that corridor wall reminds us also of what we can expect to experience in this world as Christians. A world that hated Christ will also hate us who bear his name. If we are faithful toward him, the world will be spiteful toward us. We may even be called upon to lay down our lives for our faith. But in the strength and love of Christ, this we will accept.

On my heart imprint Thine image,
Blessed Jesus, King of Grace,
That life's riches, cares, and pleasures
Have no power Thee to efface.
This the superscription be: Jesus, cruci-
fied for me,
Is my life, my hope's Foundation, And
my Glory and Salvation.

– Pastor Webber

Sunday School Resumes

Sunday School & Sunday Bible classes will resume on September 7. In Queen Creek, a new preschool class is planned in addition to the existing class for early elementary age children. The Scottsdale congregation will offer classes for younger children and teens.

We will continue using the Concordia Publishing House "Growing in Christ" curriculum. Please consider prayerfully how you may invite and encourage any friends and neighbors not already attending church to join us at either congregation. Our pastor is happy to answer any questions your friends may have about our church.



You are Invited to the Lord's Banquet

A young man who had served in the Navy passed along this story. During his training, he was invited to a formal banquet. He and his buddies arrived at the banquet hall, nervous and unsure, they followed others into the line for menu choice and seating assignments. He heard the other sailors order their meals: "Prime Rib", "Roast Chicken", and "Possum (?)." He thought about it for a minute—he was in Tennessee, the deep south, and all the sailors in front of him with their heavy southern accents seemed to be ordering the Possum (would the Navy do me wrong?). So when his turn came he boldly stepped up and said, "I'll have the possum!" You could have heard a pin drop, it seemed to him as if the whole world had heard his order. He quickly looked down at the menu on the table and saw his mistake. It was Pasta, not Possum! To his untrained ear "Pasta" said with a southern drawl, sounded like "Possum". He entered the banquet hall red faced and embarrassed.



God, our Father, has invited us to a heavenly banquet, but there is a world of difference between earthly banquets such as the one the young sailor attended and God's. Only select people are invited to earthly banquets but God has invited every human. He desires no one to be excluded. There will be no need to be nervous, unsure or embarrassed at God's banquet, everything will be perfect. The stain of sin has been washed away in the blood of Jesus Christ. He lived a perfect life and died a painful death, suffering for our sins. It is only through faith in Him that we will realize this wonderful invitation.

Jesus reminds us, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* (John 14:6)

Once we have been given our seating assignment through faith in Jesus, we have the wonderful opportunity to help others find their way to Jesus, so they too can sit at the eternal banquet in heaven.

Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism

News from the Ladies Guild

Ice Cream Social



The women of the church invite everyone to a free "Ice Cream Social" which will be held Saturday, August 9 at 3:00 p.m. in the Redeemer Lutheran fellowship hall. We hope that members of both the Scottsdale and Queen Creek congregations will attend, and will bring friends and neighbors. Those who find it difficult to drive may call the pastor, who will try to set up rides with other members.

The social will take place only a few weeks ahead of the beginning of the new Sunday School year, so this is also an excellent opportunity to introduce those without a church home to our congregation and its members. A display of the "Growing in Christ" curriculum used by our Sunday School is planned, and samples of the material will be available for visitors. In addition to enjoying sundaes, afternoon activities will also include a "Songs of Yesteryear" sing-along and a Power-Point presentation by members of the Kissinger family of their recent summer vacation to Brazil.

Treats for our Troops

The ladies also invite your participation in collecting items to be shipped to members of the armed forces deployed overseas. Donations may be left in the Ladies' Guild room at Redeemer. Once a month, the Phoenix area "Military Support Group" packages these morale-boosting gifts for shipment. A few suggestions are listed below. Travel sizes of health & hygiene items are recommended. A more complete list can be viewed on the bulletin board in the Ladies' Guild room.

- Board games
- DVDs or CDs (new or used)
- Calling cards (for international use)
- Stationary
- Crossword or Sudoku puzzle books
- Foot powder
- Lip balm
- Sunscreen
- Microwave popcorn
- Beef jerky



REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
AUGUST 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) 4:00pm DS (Q)	4	5	6	7	8	9 3pm Ice Cream Social with Sing-Along and Brazil Trip Powerpoint Show (S)
10 Service of the Word 9:00am SW (S) Ladies Guild after Service (S) 4:00pm SW (Q) Congregational Mission Potluck after the Queen Creek Service - see notes below	11	12 7pm Church Council	13	14	15	16
17 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) 4:00pm DS (Q)	18 Pastor away at ELS Doctrine Committee Meeting in Mankato, MN	19 Pastor away at ELS Doctrine Committee Meeting in Mankato, MN	20	21	22	23
24 Service of the Word 9:00am SW (S) 4:00pm SW (Q)	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) 4:00pm DS (Q)						

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

August 10, Congregational Potluck and Mission Strategy Session after the Queen Creek Service will be held at the Schaar residence - 3062 W. Yellow Peak Dr., Queen Creek, AZ 85242

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Sun of Righteousness Mission
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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



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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.

