

The Valley Evangel

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

March 2012

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<p>Worship and Study Times</p>		
<p>Sunday Divine Service: 9 a.m., Refreshments after the Service</p> <p>Sunday School/Adult Bible Class: 10:30 a.m.</p> <p>Thursday Internet Study Group: 7 p.m. (See Pastor Webber for log-on info for this group, or attend in person at his residence)</p> <p>Friday Morning Bible Study: 10 a.m. at the Muth residence (See Bill or Sue Muth for directions/gate access code.)</p>		
<p>Newsletter Staff</p>		
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 <p>Evangelical Lutheran Synod</p>	<p>(continued on Page 2)</p>	

Guest Pastoral Editorial: Why the Church Must Speak (Continued from P. 1)

beliefs and moral convictions.”

4. The root of this problem is the change in understanding of religious freedom so that it is limited to what we do as believers in our house of worship, not as we live out our faith in our vocations in the world.

[Portions of this letter were excerpted from our synod web site at <http://www.evangelicallutheransynod.org/synod-office/news/general/hhs>]

We conclude with two final notes. The first is the fact that according to the Bible, God considers us fully human at the time of our conception (Psalm 51:5 and others). For this reason, the faithful church has always opposed abortion and infanticide as the murder of human beings. When the Supreme Court made the unborn legally “non-persons” they did so according to a secular humanist ideology (or religion) that was bound to clash with historical Christianity eventually. This administration has further exacerbated the conflict by injecting government into more and more of life and at the same time rejecting freedom of conscience exceptions to the laws. The church has followed the same word of Scripture through all of this; it is our apostate society that has changed.

The second important note is to those who have been involved in abortion in one way or another. Some women have received an abortion, some men have encouraged it or paid for it, some have recommended it to others. In crisis it is easy to give into the temptation to take what appears to be the easy way out, only to repent afterward. Some carry the guilt of their actions throughout their lives. It is important for the church to continually proclaim the forgiveness of sins that we have in Christ Jesus to those whose heart is weighed down by grief over their actions. 1 John 1:9 (ESV): “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

As Christians we also recognize our duty to reach out to those who are in situations where they are tempted to take the life of a child. The church is active in many ways. Among them are efforts to

- preserve the institutions of marriage and the family intact.

- provide counseling to women facing a difficult pregnancy

- offer opportunities for adoption

- offer assistance to those who chose to keep and raise their child

- reach out with the gospel to all those who are struggling with the guilt of abortion, wrongful divorce, and all sins from which Christ redeemed us. Please remember to pray for all who are in danger of losing their life to abortion, for those who reach out to them with healing and support, and for those who are caught up in the sin of abortion.

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.” – Proverbs 31:8 (NIV84)

Sincerely, in Christ,
Pastor Edward Bryant and the Board of Elders,
St. Timothy Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELS)
Lombard, Illinois

Choir Rehearsals

Choir rehearsals will be held by the organ at 8:30 a.m. March 11, 18 and 25, in preparation for singing in the Holy Week and Easter services. Rehearsals will also be held in April. No rehearsal will be held on March 4. Singers in all voice parts are welcome. If possible, try to arrive at church prior to 8:30, so the rehearsals can begin on schedule.



Interview with New Members: Ron and Erica Olson

(conducted by Pastor Webber, Valley Evangel editor)



Pr. Webber: What is the basic story of your spiritual “journey”? By what pathways has God led you in faith, to this point in your life?

Ron: Pathway: The Doctrine of Means and The Doctrine of Vocation. I’m thankful to be a Lutheran. I hear the Law and the Gospel. I used to hear the Law-Gospel-Law. The LGL defeats and smothers the Gospel. It’s a vicious cycle.

Erica: I was “born into” the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, and had been a member my entire life, until Ron and I moved to the Valley. Although I’d been in the church my whole life, until my husband and I started seeing each other, I was more of a blind follower. Because Ron was a new Lutheran and was still studying the faith a lot, he shared what he was learning and reading with me, and I started to grow a lot spiritually, and really embrace my faith a lot more.

Pr. Webber: What brought you to the Phoenix area, and when did you arrive here?

Ron: The end of August 2010. Secular work brought us to The Valley of the Sun.

Erica: Ron had been working for an aerospace company in Wichita, and when a vote by the union there (which all, even non-union people, had to

endure the consequences of) made our benefits less than desirable, Ron started looking into jobs with another, more respected aerospace company. The Mesa plant looked good, so he applied. Little did we know that he would get the job and they would want us here in short order! We put our house in Wichita on the market, the new company sent movers to pack up our house, and on our way we were! His interview was July 5, 2010, and by the end of August, we were here!

Pr. Webber: What brought you to Redeemer, and what made you stay?

Ron: [Our pastor in] Kansas recommended Redeemer Lutheran because he could not in good conscience recommend any LCMS church in The Valley of the Sun.

Erica: ... He did an online search for us once we told him we were moving, so he could help us find a new church home. He told us that although it would mean leaving the LCMS, Redeemer was going to be the best church we could attend, and Pastor Webber was a great pastor. The service is almost identical to the ones we had in Kansas, right down to the hymnal. We love the liturgy, the Word being properly preached and the Body and Blood being offered every week. The Bible classes are some of the best we’ve ever been part of. We have learned a lot, and we love it! As a side note, our first visit was on my birthday. That was a *wonderful* birthday gift!

Pr. Webber: What is the one thing that you like most about Redeemer?

Ron: The means of grace, that is, The Word, The Water, and The Mass, that grants the forgiveness of sins - and that they are faithfully executed.

Erica: I love that we are able to be part of a confessional Lutheran church and among others who love and value it as much as we do. I also really enjoy being part of a choir, even though we don’t sing all the time. It’s something I missed at our

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Interview with New Members (continued from Page 3)

church in Kansas, because that church was extremely small and we didn't have enough voices. Had we formed a choir, half of the congregation would have been in it!

Pr. Webber: What is one thing about Redeemer that you would not mind seeing changed, if possible?

Ron: Lose the Three Year Lectionary, and "all in!" on the One Year Lectionary.

Erica: Other than moving the flags out of the chancel, I wouldn't change a thing.

Pr. Webber: What activities have you gotten involved with at church?

Ron: I drink coffee. I drink beer. I try to sing.

Erica: Aside from singing in the choir, I'm also very active in the Ladies' Guild as one who helps set up and clean up communion, and currently (and most recently) as the secretary. Shortly after Ron and I started attending Redeemer, Pastor gave me the task of putting together the monthly newsletters, even before we were officially received as members. I put together the newsletter that announced our being received into membership!

Pr. Webber: What do you do for your jobs?

Ron: I conquer the universe using physics and mathematics to kill terrorists indirectly.

Erica: My background is in journalism, which is why I enjoy working on the newsletter so much. But after about eight years in journalism, I decided to try something new. For the last five years, I have worked for a company called *Our365 Newborn Photography*. I get to take studio-quality pictures of newborn babies and their families in the hospitals before mothers and babies are released to go home. In September of last year, I got promoted to be a trainer, which means that I also get to train some of the new photographers who are hired. It's the best and most fun job I have ever had!

Pr. Webber: What do you do for fun and relaxation?

Ron: I love reading - mostly mathematics, physics, aviation, chess and theology. Oh, and *Star Wars* - the bad guys only.

Erica: I have a really close friend who lives in Gilbert, and she and I like to get together now and then for coffee and - once in a while - shopping. It helps both of us unwind and have fun. Ron and I also love to spend our free time together.

Pr. Webber: Do you have any closing thoughts for the members and friends of the congregation?

Ron: Get rid of the flags in front of the chancel. Support Father (and Mrs.) Webber or I will use the Dark Side of the Force and my choice Bounty Hunter - Boba Fett - to hunt you down.

Erica: Ron and I have been together since October 2000. He and I met at the University Lutheran Center at Wichita State University, where we were both attending. I earned my bachelor's degree there. Our first date was at a Reformation Banquet, an annual event. But I didn't know it was supposed to be a date. Ron had been responsible for organizing Bible studies and outings for those of us who attended the Bible studies at the ULC, so when he called to ask me to go with him to the banquet, I thought he was calling everyone... until he arrived with flowers and a box of chocolates. I was hooked on him from that date forward. We had a wonderful time! He proposed to me on the day of the next Reformation Banquet in October 2001. We got married in August 2002. We've always wanted to have kids, but haven't been given that blessing yet. Maybe God still has plans for us in that department. All we can do is pray that His will is done.

Devotion: "The Old Rugged Cross"

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2

If you see someone walking around with a smudged cross on their forehead, you will know that Lent has begun. The season of Lent, the forty days before Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday and then concludes with the remembrance of Jesus' death. It is a time set aside as a time for soul-searching; a time to take stock and repent for our sins. It is a time to contemplate the meaning of Jesus' death on the cross. For many, the cross stands as a symbol of shame as the popular hymn, "The Old Rugged Cross," states.

*On a hill far away
stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of
suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross
where the dearest and best
For a world of lost
sinners was slain.*



**"He Himself bore
our sins" in His
body on the cross,
so that we might
die to sins and live
for righteousness;
"by His wounds
you have been
healed."
1 Peter 2:24**

Jesus "endured that cross." When we look at the crucifixion scene, we may be overwhelmed with thoughts of physical pain. But, Jesus endured far more pain when He was nailed to that cross. He was suffering not only physically but spiritually as well. He was paying for our sins and the sins of the whole world. He endured the punishment of hell in our place so that we don't have to endure it.

Through His suffering and death on that cross, Jesus has won for us eternal life. This is the meaning and purpose of Jesus' death. Our sins are forgiven!

Repent and believe
the Good News!

Because God's children have been blessed with this great gift of forgiveness, we no longer look upon that old rugged cross as just a symbol of suffering and shame. It is for us the symbol of

salvation.

May it be for you also.

Our Church is Indebted to the Synod...

Our church is indebted to the Synod for more than \$385,000. This indebtedness is continuing to grow because of interest on the loans that we have with the synod. Our congregation has already resolved, for the coming year, to begin the process of paying down this debt. To help encourage this, an anonymous donor has pledged to match up to \$5,000 of any special designated contributions toward debt retirement that are given during the months of March and April, above and beyond regular offerings for local budgetary expenses. This means that if the members and friends of the

congregation give \$5,000 in special contributions toward debt retirement over the next two months, that money will be doubled, and \$10,000 will be forwarded to the synod to pay down the loans we have with them. So, in light of this generous offer, this is a time to consider very carefully what we are each able to do toward fulfilling our financial obligation to the synod. The synod helped us during a time when our congregation was struggling financially. Now is the time for us to do as much as we can to pay this money back, so that the synod can use it for mission work and other important needs.

Welcome to Our Newest Member



A new member was added to the rolls on February 7, when Pastor Webber baptized his grandson, John Wilde Webber, son of Seminarian Paul Webber (a member of Redeemer) and his wife Ruth. John was intentionally delivered prematurely, and is now a patient at the neonatal ICU at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, Minnesota. He was baptized at the hospital soon after his birth. The reason for his early delivery is because his

mother was diagnosed with advanced gastric cancer during her sixth month of pregnancy. As this newsletter goes to press, Ruth is receiving chemotherapy, also at St. Mary's Hospital. Paul set up a Facebook group for those who want to stay informed regarding Ruth and John's progress: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/prayforruth/> Several videos and photographs are also posted here.

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT GAYLIN R. SCHMELING, BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

“The seminary has established a special offering for Ruth and Paul Webber and their child. Those who wish to contribute may send their offering to: Webber Family Offering, Bethany Seminary, 6 Browns Ct., Mankato MN 56001, or online at https://secure.blc.edu/transactions/index.asp?tt=donation_contribution&pt=blts

(Please list ‘Webber family’ in the memorial box to ensure the correct processing of your gift.)”

It is also possible to contribute toward this fund via the congregation. Any gifts to Redeemer that are designated for the “Webber Family” will be forwarded to the seminary.

*Redeemer Lutheran Church
March 2012*

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
				1 7 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	2 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Muth residence	3
4 Lent 2 9 a.m. DS 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	5	6	7 6-6:30 p.m. Lenten Soup Supper 7 p.m. Vespers Service	8 7 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	9 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Muth residence	10
11 Lent 3 8:30 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. SW with spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	12 7 p.m. Church Council meeting at the church	13	14 6-6:30 p.m. Lenten Soup Supper 7 p.m. Vespers Service	15 6:30 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence (note time change)	16 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Muth residence	17
18 Lent 4 8:30 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. DS Ladies' Guild meeting after the service 10:30 a.m. AC/SS	19 Pastor Webber in Mankato, MN, for ELS Doctrine Committee	20 Pastor Webber in Mankato, MN, for ELS Doctrine Committee	21 6-6:30 p.m. Lenten Soup Supper 7 p.m. Vespers Service	22 Internet Study Group canceled	23 Bible Study cancelled	24
25 Lent 5 8:30 a.m. Choir rehearsal 9 a.m. SW with spoken Communion 10:30 a.m. AC/SS Elders' meeting after the AC	26	27	28 6-6:30 p.m. Lenten Soup Supper 7 p.m. Vespers Service	29 6:30 p.m. Internet Study Group at/from Pastor's residence	30 10 a.m. Bible Study at the Muth residence	

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 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

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

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
luthersource.net



**Evangelical
Lutheran Synod**

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.

