

# 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

**E**xercise and diet. We are told – rightly so! – that these are the keys to good health and long life. In a certain sense this is also true in regard to spiritual matters. Our diet of spiritual food for the nurturing of our faith, and our discipline of exercising our faith in prayer and song, have a great deal to do with how our faith will “hold up” in this world, and with how well our faith will prepare us for the next world.

Attendance at public worship, and devout participation in what goes on there, are, of course, of fundamental importance. But we need to pay attention to our spiritual discipline of “exercise,” and to our spiritual “diet,” also at home, Monday through Saturday. Do we – as the Small Catechism recommends – punctuate the turning points of each day with prayer and re-

flection on God’s Word? If not, we should. When you have a chance, take a look at the prayers for rising in the morning and for retiring at night which the Small Catechism provides in an appendix, and then consider whether your own spiritual life would be benefited if you “exercised” your faith with the use of these or similar prayers. Look, too, at the prayers for before and after meals that are provided in the Small Catechism. Another good resource to help us in our devotional life is the 2005 edition of the *Lutheran Book of Prayer* (Concordia Publishing House).

And as far as the “feeding” of your faith is concerned, please be aware of the fact that there are lots and lots of good and substantial books to be had

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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.

### 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

## WHY I AM A LUTHERAN

*One of the titles on Pastor Webber's list of recommended books (see his column in this issue) is **Why I Am a Lutheran** by Daniel Preus. As we prepare for the observance of the festival of the Reformation, this excerpt from pp. 194-96 of that book can help us to appreciate why this is something for us as Lutherans to celebrate. (It can also serve as an encouragement to us to get the book, and read the whole thing!)*

**W**hy am I a Christian? Because Jesus is at the center and it's all about Him. I am a Christian by grace, a simple yet profound work of the new creation in water and Word. I know Jesus loves me because "[His] Word gives life to water poured." Because of Jesus, I face no punishment for sin, nor do I face an eternal death. I am God's child, and He has given me His family of believers wherein He feeds me. God is so kind and gracious. Thus I live with faith in Him and hope that is born from His promises.

I am a Lutheran for the same reason I am a Christian. It is not by choice but by grace. The teachings of the Lutheran Church place Jesus at the center because the teachings of the Scriptures place Jesus at the center. No other confession demonstrates such fidelity to the truths of God's Word. No other confession so glorifies Christ by placing Him at the center of all it confesses and teaches. Being a Lutheran is truly all about Jesus.

- The entire sinful world is loved by Jesus.
- God saves us through the life, suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

- The Holy Spirit creates faith by showing us Jesus.
- In Baptism, we die and rise with Jesus.
- In the Lord's Supper, we receive our inheritance with the body and blood of Jesus.
- The pastor proclaims and distributes the merits of Jesus.
- All our prayers go to the Father through Jesus.
- All our good works flow out of hearts that trust in Jesus.
- In the bearing of all crosses in this veil of tears, our eyes are fixed on Jesus.
- We wait with joyous hope for the day when we will see the face of Jesus.

Thus the Christian faith is all about Jesus. Being a Lutheran is all about Jesus. St. Paul says, "No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11). St. Peter says, "There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). That's why we sing: "On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand." Christ the solid Rock remains always at the heart of our confession as Lutherans and as God's people. The mission of the church becomes clear when it flows from Jesus and His work. Faith is living and grows where it is confessed because Jesus enables it to live and grow. We lift high the cross because on that cross is Jesus, the Savior, the hope of the entire world. Him we proclaim until everyone throughout the world praises Him with us.

### OKTOBERFEST!



Please join us on Sunday morning, October 25, 2009, after the Sunday School and Adult Bible class in Scottsdale, for an Oktoberfest meal! This celebration is sponsored by the Ladies Guild!



*Rev. Daniel Preus is currently serving as the first full-time Executive Director of the Luther Academy.*

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Continued from page 1)

and used for the up-building and shaping of your spiritual life. What do you read now? What magazines or books are to be found on your coffee table or bed stand? Might you be able to redirect just a little bit of the time you take reading about your hobbies and earthly interests, toward the reading of good spiritual literature every week?

All the families of our parish receive the *Lutheran Sentinel*, published by our church body. It has worthwhile and easy-to-read articles in every issue. There are other magazines like this to which one might likewise subscribe.

Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) and Concordia Publishing House (CPH) – as well as some smaller Lutheran publishers – offer many books on a large number of topics that should be of interest to Lutheran Christians. Sometimes a book written by a non-Lutheran author can also be beneficial. New books can sometimes be very pricey, but I have personally found that a used copy of a certain book I may want is almost always available online through the amazon.com web site, for only a fraction of the cost of a new copy. That would be something for all of us to keep in mind, especially in these economically trying times.

I would like to suggest several good books, which are written in such a way as to be accessible to a lay readership, for your consideration:

- Arthur A. Just, *Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service* (CPH).
- John W. Kleinig, *Grace Upon Grace: Spirituality for Today* (CPH).
- Eugene F. A. Klug, *Lift High This Cross: The Theology of Martin Luther* (CPH).
- Robert Kolb, *The Christian Faith: A Lutheran Exposition* (CPH).
- Daniel Preus, *Why I Am a Lutheran: Jesus at the Center* (CPH).
- Herman A. Preus, *A Theology to Live By: The Practical Luther for the Practicing Christian* (CPH).
- Klemet I. Preus, *The Fire and the Staff: Lutheran Theology in Practice* (CPH).
- Robert D. Preus, *Getting Into the Theology of Concord: A Study of the Book of Concord* (CPH).
- Alvin J. Schmidt, *How Christianity Changed the World* (Zondervan).
- R. C. Sproul, *Reason To Believe: A Response to Common Objections to Christianity* (Zondervan).
- Dan Story, *Defending Your Faith: How to Answer the Tough Questions* (Nelson).
- Gene Edward Veith, *The Spirituality of the Cross: The Way of the First Evangelicals* (CPH).

And of course, these are the most important of all:

- The Lutheran Study Bible: English Standard Version* (CPH).
- Concordia, The Lutheran Confessions: A Reader's Edition of the Book of Concord* (CPH).

So, in peace let us pray to the Lord. And good reading!

-- Pastor Webber



## THE TRUTH THAT SETS YOU FREE

*“To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, “If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:31-32*

**T**he Lutheran Church is preparing to celebrate another Reformation Day, October 31<sup>st</sup>, the day in 1517 that Martin Luther took a public stand against the false teachings of the Church of his day.

The clear teachings of Jesus regarding our salvation that were being ignored or corrupted included: that we all are conceived and born with a sinful nature that makes us enemies of God, and because of that and our sinful deeds we are irreconcilable to God on our own.

They also ignored how God set about to take matters into His own hands regarding our reconciliation with Him. In love He sent His own dear Son Jesus – true God and true Man – to be our perfect righteousness before Him and our complete sacrifice for sins: **“God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become**

**the righteousness of God,”** Paul wrote (2 Corinthians 5:21). They ignored that in Christ we have the forgiveness before God we could never win on our own – a forgiveness full and free for all of our sins; and that in Christ we have the unconditional commitment of God Himself that He will never fail us in this life – no matter what the circumstances that we are facing may be; and that in Christ we have such a perfect salvation that it even opens the doors of heaven itself to us by amazing grace, welcoming us into the presence of God forever!

This was the truth Jesus proclaimed – **“the truth (that) will set you free.”** This was the truth Luther discovered, by God’s grace, as he studied the Scriptures – the truth he was even prepared to die for, if necessary.

Dear friends, this is the truth that the Lord Jesus bids us to **“come to and hold to.”** For it is still the only truth that will set people free! May Martin Luther’s commitment to the truth of Jesus be manifested in us as well!

*Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism*

## THE REFORMATION OF THE 16TH CENTURY

AN EXERPT FROM THE BOOK BY ROLAND H. BAINTON

*As we know from Martin Luther’s personal history, he struggled greatly, even as a monk, with the idea of the sinfulness of man, his own complete inability ever to please God by his own merits, his great fear of God’s wrath, and his subsequent inability to love God. This troubled him greatly, until his father confessor assigned him to teach God’s Word, the Bible. From the book:*

“Luther began to conduct classes on the Bible. He was thus forced to wrestle with the source book of Christianity. One may wonder why so agonizingly earnest a spirit should not have thought earlier of this expedient. The only answer can be that he was following a prescribed course. Now that the Bible was given to him he gave himself to the Bible, and read it of course as a Christian book from end to end because the Church had long held that the pre-existent Christ was speaking through the patriarchs, the prophets, and the psalmist....

“...Luther, as no one before him in more than a thousand years, sensed the import of the miracle of divine forgiveness. It is a miracle because there is no reason for it ac-

ording to man’s understanding...Forgiveness from the human point of view makes sense because man has need of forgiveness and ought for that reason to forgive. But God has no need of forgiveness. He is the all-holy and man having received from God naught but good has been ungrateful and rebellious. One would assume that God would consume man in his anger but it is not so, “and that is the incredible wonder of the God revealed in Christ. ...The God of majesty is the God of compassion. The Lord of the hurricane is the Father who pitieth His children. All this we must believe and accept. Credence and trust, these only are required, for by faith and only by faith are we saved.”

*And thus, with Luther’s profound understanding, began one of the most important events in Christianity, the Sixteenth Century (Lutheran) Reformation.*

*“The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century”, Roland H. Bainton, Beacon Press, Boston*

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH

OCTOBER 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, "If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32</i>				<b>1</b> 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	<b>2</b> 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	<b>3</b>
<b>4 Pentecost 18 Divine Service</b> 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	<b>9</b> Bible Study cancelled today	<b>10</b> Pastor in Escondido, CA for a conference
<b>11 Pentecost 19 Service of the Word</b> 9:00am SW with spoken Communion (S) 10:30am SS/Congregational Forum (S) 4:00pm SW with spoken Communion (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 7pm Voters' Meeting (S)	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	<b>16</b> 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	<b>17</b>
<b>18 Pentecost 20 Divine Service</b> 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	<b>23</b> 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	<b>24</b>
<b>25 Reformation Sunday Service of the Word</b> 9:00am SW with spoken Communion (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) Oktoberfest celebration after the Bible Class (S) 4:00pm SW with spoken Communion (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	<b>30</b> 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	<b>31</b>

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

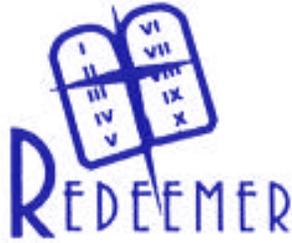
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Church**

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**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](http://redeemer.vze.com)  
[sunofrighteousness.vze.com](http://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](http://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.

