

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

The Psalmist prays: "Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long" (Psalm 25:4-5, ESV). This is, or should be, also our prayer. We should always have the desire to be taught by the Lord, so that we can grow in our understanding of His Word and ways, and be strengthened in our Christian faith. And fortunately, for the members and friends of our parish, this desire can now be met in so many different ways.

The Wednesday evening "Bible & Theology" Study Group will begin a study of the Book of Daniel when it resumes on September 3, at the Loughran residence in Scottsdale. The Thursday evening Internet Study



Pastor David Jay Webber

Group, which began meeting by means of an online conference-call program during the summer, will be continuing its weekly discussion of the Small Catechism. The Friday morning Bible Study will resume its study of the Book of Acts on September 5, at the Calvin residence in Scottsdale. Sunday School for children, and the Sunday Adult Class, following worship both in Scottsdale and in Queen Creek, will resume on Sept. 7.

(Continued on page 3)

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. 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

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Joseph and His Brothers

From Martin Luther's Commentary on Genesis 50:15-21

When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said: It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil which we did to him. Gen. 50:15

In the first place you see here what a horrible evil and what an almost incurable wound sin and an evil conscience are. The sons of Jacob had heard the blessings of their father, and although harsh enough punishments had been announced for those two, Simeon and Levi, yet their iniquity had been forgiven, since their father had given them the blessing that they would grow and be multiplied. But all the rest of the tribes, especially Judah, were bountifully blessed and enriched; and while Jacob was still alive, they lived with Joseph in Egypt for 17 years, received many great blessings from him, and experienced grace and mercy without intermission, as though he were their father. They had seen and felt his *φιλαδελφία* (*phyladelphia* = brotherly love) in the fact that he loved his brothers and cherished them most affectionately. Thus he had not only addressed them with very winning words but had also let them go, in order that they might return to their father after being laden with very great gifts.

Therefore is sin not a horrible thing? To be sure, it is easily perpetrated, especially when there are no trials and people sin without fear and with the greatest freedom and smugness. Then they think that there is nothing to worry about. But when sin is revealed, and the bite and sting of conscience follow, then no remission or consolation suffices to check and curb this bite and sting. Therefore the pope, together with his confederates, must be cursed as if he were the devil himself; for he has filled the world with countless sins and has taught men to despair of the mercy and grace of Christ. For it is not without great difficulty that the heart longs for the kindness and pardon of God, from whom it flees and turns away by nature when it feels that He has been offended by many great and enormous sins. Then it is hard to grant admittance to consolation, and it is difficult for remission to cling to the heart, no matter with how many promises and with how many signs of God's goodwill it has been confirmed. From this one can gather what a sharp poison sin is in man's nature.

But one is not aware of this all of a sudden when only the Law pure and simple is set forth, unless sin gathers its strength and begins to come to life again. In that case the hideousness of the poisonous and hellish evil is detected, so that even the death and the blood of the Son of God can barely cover and abolish sin sufficiently.

See what Peter and the rest of the disciples do, and how hard, unbelieving, and irrational their hearts are with respect to the resurrection of Christ. Thus sin clings most pertinaciously to these brothers, so that up to now it has not been possible for it to be lulled to sleep or removed by such great blessings, by such a kind and pleasant address, by the instructions given to their father—instructions filled to overflowing with kindness and goodwill—in short, by a most peaceful association for so many years. For now that their father is dead, they, conscious of their guilt, tremble and are afraid that Joseph may hate them, avenge the wrong that has been done, and render evil for evil (1 Peter 3:9). Who thinks or says this except the very poison of the sin that has been revived through the Law? This they cannot curb or heal, now that it has been palliated and mitigated for 17 years.

Moreover, in this passage Scripture testifies how easily and how lightly Simeon and Levi and the rest of the brothers sinned, but with what difficulty they are healed. This is why many who do not hear the Word of grace are driven to despair and either throw themselves into rivers or hang themselves. For they are not able to bear the power of sin when it has been revealed and is alive. When it is “couching at the door” (Gen. 4:7), as is stated to Cain, it is neglected and is forthwith increased by other, more atrocious sins. One falls into one sin after another. But when it is aroused and brought to life, then the blood of the Son of God must be applied to remove it.

Medicine and help as powerful as this are required, namely, the Godhead become incarnate and the very blood of the Son of God.

..For this reason let us learn that sin is a horrible evil, not when it is committed—for then it gives pleasure and satisfaction in a strange way—but that when it has been revived through the Law, it is hell itself and far more powerful than heaven and earth, with the result that grace cannot be apprehended without great toil, and the heart, overwhelmed by the Law and sin, concludes: “Although I have sinned, God nevertheless sent His Son into the world, not to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him” (cf. John 3:17). If this consolation is not present, there is no other remedy or help against sin and its goad.

Luther, M. (1999, c1966). *Vol. 8: Luther's works, vol. 8 : Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 45-50* (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald & H. T. Lehmann, Ed.). Luther's Works (8:325-326). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

(Continued from page 1)

As you can see, then, our parish offers opportunities for Christian education on more than half of the days of each week. This gives just about everyone a chance to get something extra for the journey, above and beyond the provisions which the Lord gives us in the Sunday Divine Service. Even those with a busy schedule can probably find time at some point during the week to “connect” with the Lord of life, and with his Word of life, in order to be better equipped for the challenges of life.

Classes like these – especially the weekday classes – also provide us with a great opportunity to introduce our friends to the fellowship and ministry of the congregation, and most especially to the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Even though they shouldn't feel that way, people who do not have a lot of experience going to church are often intimidated by the idea of entering a church building. So, the fact that two of our classes meet in people's homes can alleviate that anxiety.



ety. Try to think of someone you can invite to come with you to those gatherings!

And the least intimidating class of all is the one that meets over the Internet. Those who might be shy about going to church, or even about going to other people's homes, can join us for this study from their own home! Invite a friend to log on with you!

There's no better way to pass an hour or so during the week that to spend it in the study of God's Word. And there's nothing more important that you could do for a friend who doesn't know Christ, than to invite that friend to join you in this study. May it be possible for this prayer to the Lord also to be ours: “Your hands have made and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn your commandments. Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice, because I have hoped in your word” (Psalm 119:73-74, ESV).

– Pastor Webber

Hymns Galore!

While ago our friends at Grace Lutheran Church in Akron, Ohio (LCMS), through their pastor, sent us several boxes of gently-used copies of *The Lutheran Hymnal*. This is the hymnal that is used at Redeemer Lutheran Church. Our friends in Akron had decided to purchase the new hymnal of their church body, and therefore no longer needed the books they generously sent to us. Many of the hymnals that we had in the pews were showing their age. They have now been replaced. And there are plenty more where they came from, in storage. We are grateful for the generosity of Grace Lutheran Church!

In the meantime, our mission congregation in Queen Creek, which started out using *The Lutheran Hymnal*, had come to a decision that they would prefer to get a more recently-published hymnal for their worship services. *The Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*, issued by our Evangelical Lutheran Synod in 1996, was finally settled on as the best option. But there were not enough funds available to purchase the thirty or so copies of this hymnal that would be needed.

It was at this point that Pastor Webber received an unexpected email from a member of St. Mark's Lutheran

Church in Hudson, New York (LCMS, formerly independent), with a very interesting query. Even though St. Mark's was not affiliated with the ELS, it had been using the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* for the past several years. The pastor's friend informed him that this congregation had now decided to switch to another hymnal, and he asked the pastor if he knew of anyone who would like to have the copies of the ELS hymnal that St. Mark's would now no longer need. To save space, we don't need to tell you what transpired after that! On August 17, Sun of Righteousness Lutheran Church in Queen Creek made use of its newly-acquired copies of the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* for the first time!

The Queen Creek congregation is thankful to its friends in Hudson not only for the hymnals, but also for the generosity of St. Mark's in paying for the shipping expenses! St. Mark's has a long history of support for mission work, and their actions here demonstrate that this attitude has not changed. Through their generosity Queen Creek was able to get all the hymnals they needed – and then some! – at absolutely no cost.

“[The Lord] put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord” (Psalm 40:3, ESV).

We Belong to the Lord

Romans 4:7-8 "For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord."

Any parent rightly introduces their son or daughter as, "my child." For example, if we are meeting another family for the first time we might say, "Let me introduce you to my daughter Savannah."

As a child, we might properly recognize that our parents have or have had the responsibility of watching over us and providing for us, and so we might say to a friend, "I have to go help my parents."

However, the passage for our devotion today encourages us to think of ourselves as first and foremost belonging to the Lord. While in one sense it's proper to refer to members of the family as "ours," we should recognize that above all, as children of God, we especially belong to Him.

This truth became very clear to a certain Christian couple whose infant son was born with a rare heart defect. The illness that he was born with could not be controlled by the child's parents or by his doctors. His illness was only



the Lord's to control, and whether he lived or died was in the Lord's hands. This taught his parents that their son really didn't belong to them, he belonged to the Lord.

Because of sin, we often forget that God is truly the owner of all. We can start to think that certain things belong to us when really they do not. Psalm 24 says: "The earth (and everyone and everything in it) is the Lord's."

This passage from Romans chapter four is for our comfort. We should not view it as an attack on our freedom that we belong to the Lord, and we are not to view it as a hindrance that God is our owner.

Rather, our loving God is a wonderful and all-powerful Caretaker, who always has our ultimate good in mind. Belonging to Him reminds us how much He loves us! He is with us every step of our lives. In eternity He engineered a marvelous plan to make us His very own. When the time was right, He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to live a perfect life for us and to die on the cross, to save us from all of our sins.

What a great blessing that we belong to Him!

Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism

A San Antonio Adventure

The Redeemer Youth Group, accompanied by Carol Webber as chaperone, was in San Antonio, Texas, for the annual Lutheran Youth Association Convention, July 24-27. This year's convention theme was "Friends Forever." The Bible studies used Scripture to teach us about making good friends, being a good friend, and even what to look for in that one special friend we might be marrying someday. Chapel was held every morning and every night. Bible classes were held after morning chapel before we left on our destination for the day.



On Friday we went to Sea World, and on Saturday, with all participants wearing their convention shirts, we were taken to downtown San Antonio, to see the Alamo and to shop along the Riverwalk. In the evenings, after chapel, everyone was invited to the gyms to play sports, and to the pool to swim. Sunday morning, after the worship service, we ate

lunch with our far-away friends for the last time, and then said our good-byes as they loaded onto their buses.

Since the Scottsdale group's flight left at night, we had a little more time in Texas than the other groups did. Our chaperone drove us over to see the Natural Bridge Caverns. After a three-quarters-of-a-mile underground hike, we went to the mall to grab a bite to eat and to burn off the extra time we had before our flight would depart.

The Redeemer Youth Group would like to thank everyone who helped make this trip possible through their generous donations – in conjunction with the car wash or otherwise. We are now looking forward to attending next year's convention in Washington State.

– Catharine Webber

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
SEPTEMBER 2008

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3 7:00pm "Bible and Theology" Study Group at the Loughran residence (S)	4 6:30 pm Internet Study Group	5 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	6
7 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	8	9 7pm Church Council	10 7:00pm "Bible and Theology" Study Group at the Loughran residence (S)	11 6:30 pm Internet Study Group	12 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	13
14 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)	15	16	17 7:00pm "Bible and Theology" Study Group at the Loughran residence (S)	18 6:30 pm Internet Study Group	19 10:00am Bible Study at the Calvin residence (S)	20
21 Divine Service 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	22	23	24 7:00pm "Bible and Theology" Study Group at the Loughran residence (S)	25 Pastor in Milwaukee for joint meeting of ELS DC and WELS CICR	26 Pastor in Milwaukee for joint meeting of ELS DC and WELS CICR	27 Pastor in The Dalles, OR as speaker for the ELS Women's Mission Rally
28 Service of the Word 9:00am SW (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) Elders Meeting after Bible Class (S) 4:00pm SW (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	29	30				

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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redeemer.vze.com
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Notice!

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Pastor Webber's sermons
are posted on the Internet
weekly and are available
through both church
websites above, and
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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.

