

# The Valley Evangel

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



## Inside This Issue

<i>The Trees of the Lord are Ever Green, By Jessica Hartigan</i>	2
<i>News and Announcements</i>	2
<i>Devotion: There is Hope</i>	4
<i>Calendar</i>	5
<i>About Our Church</i>	6

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

**A**s this column goes to the layout editor, the 2009 national convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is set to begin in just a few days. (By the time you read this, however, it will already have happened.) Because of the similarity in names, this church body is sometimes confused with ours – the Evangelical Lutheran *Synod*. But the contrast between these two bodies is much more significant than a mere difference between the words “Church” and “Synod.”

For many decades now, the ELCA, and its predecessor bodies, have been thoroughly infected by a “historical-critical” approach toward Sacred Scripture. It is impossible to find a seminary professor in the ELCA who believes and teaches that the Scriptures are supernaturally inspired by God in such a way that they are completely true and accurate in everything they say. This loss of faith in Biblical authority has had predictable results. Women are ordained as pastors, contrary to 1 Timothy

Church fellowship has been established with liberal Reformed churches and other non-Lutheran bodies, contrary to Romans 16:17 (and other pertinent passages). At this year’s convention, the most controversial matter that will be debated is the ELCA’s policy regarding the moral standards for its clergy, specifically whether men and women who are living in homosexual relationships will be considered to be fit for a call to the pastoral ministry. The official policy of the ELCA currently forbids this, but to an increasing extent this policy is being ignored by ELCA bishops. A measure will be placed before the convention in a few days that, if adopted, would remove the hypocrisy, and put the ELCA officially on record as being in favor of allowing practicing homosexuals and lesbians to serve as pastors.

Regardless of how this vote goes, it is very likely that the discussions and actions of the ELCA convention will be widely reported by

*(Continued on page 3)*

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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

## THE TREES OF THE LORD ARE EVER GREEN

BY JESSICA HARTIGAN

What is better than to go to a place full of people who share your faith, a place where your faith is fed and nourished, and a place you experience some of the beautiful and unique gifts God gives to us. I went to a place called Camp Berachah for the Lutheran Youth Association Convention. I do feel that my faith was strengthened.

Thursday, July 22, was the beginning of a wonderful convention. Old friendships were renewed and room assignments were given. We had orientation and devotions later that night. Then we went back to our dorms, and I am pretty sure everyone stayed up all night.

Friday started off amazingly, with waffles for breakfast and morning devotions. Before leaving to go to Seattle, we had two Bible classes. My first Bible class was led by Pastor Alex Ring, who discussed the question, "Do bad things happen because God is punishing us, either individually or as a group?" This is false. We don't always know why God allows bad things to happen to us or to others. What we do know is God always acts (or directs the course of this world) in the best interest of His People. My second lesson was led by Pastor Bernt Tweit, who discussed God's providence. God has promised to take care of us.

After that we boarded buses for Seattle. Once we arrived, we broke off into groups and explored the city. My group went to Pike's Place, and went up to the top of the space needle. At eight o'clock we started boarding the Argosy cruise with the rest of the groups. This was one of my favorite parts of the convention. The sunset was beautiful, and when the sun went down the party started. We danced on two of the three levels of the boat. We had our devotion later that night on the bottom level with all 300 kids packed in. We saw the city with all the beautiful lights, the mountains and hills dressed with trees and bushes, and we saw the numerous stars above us. We all were sad when the party ended, but the memories will stay with us.

We finally got back to Camp Berachah around 1 o'clock a.m., and for a second night didn't sleep more than an hour. Saturday morning we

had pancakes and our regular morning devotion. We then got into our groups and went to our final Bible class, led by Pastor Mathew Brooks. He discussed "helping" with God's providence. We then grabbed our bag lunches and loaded the buses to go to Mt. Rainier. We left at 11 o'clock and didn't get there till 1:45. It was beautiful scenery. We hiked up the mountain – at 6,000 ft. – till we hit a patch of snow and had a huge snow ball fight in shorts and a T-shirt! Unfortunately someone from our bus got sick and had to go the hospital for an ear infection. We did not get back to Camp Berachah until 8 o'clock.

We had our chapel and our "song time" Saturday night, where we sang some popular songs. These songs included "Pharaoh, Pharaoh," "Waltzing with Bears," "Can I be your Llama," and the Common Doxology (sung in rounds). For the last night there was swimming and the gym available; however, many people decided to go back to the lodge where we were staying, and hang out and talk with friends there. When it was time for lights out, and guys went upstairs and girls went down, we were all sad that this was our last night there together.

The next morning some people were already leaving to catch their flight. Many people already started crying because it was the last day they would see everyone until next year. We all were packed and our room keys were turned in. We loaded the buses to head to Bethany Lutheran Church in Port Orchard for Sunday worship. When the 11 o'clock services ended we had a group photo. I said my last good-byes and left to catch my flight.

LYA is always the highlight of my summer. The friends one meets there share the same faith, and are very easy to connect with. The participants' faith grows with every devotion, every study, and every song. The feeling that comes with staying up all night to talk with people, and then waking up early to go to devotions with friends you know you could have forever, is amazing. It is the best experience someone can have, and I am very happy I was able to experience that feeling. I am already planning on going next year to LYA 2010, in Virginia Beach!

## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor and Carol have moved. Their new home is at:

4837 East Melinda Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85054. Their telephone number remains the same.

On August 9 the Ladies of Redeemer Lutheran Church hosted a surprise anniversary celebration for Pastor and Carol Webber after the service, to mark their silver wedding anniversary. A good time was had by all. The Webbers greatly appreciate this kindness, and they reciprocate the fond affection that it represented!



## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

*(Continued from page 1)*

the news media. Friends who are not familiar with the "alphabet soup" of Lutheran synods in America, and who know that we are "Lutherans" of some kind, may think that these news reports pertain to the church body to which we belong. We should therefore be ready to respond, in a three-fold manner.

First, be prepared to explain that our church body, the ELS, is not the same as the ELCA, and also that our church body is not in fellowship with the ELCA, because of the serious differences in doctrine and practice that exist between us. On the issue of homosexuality, the public teaching of the ELS is as follows:

We confess that Scripture condemns homosexuality and extra-marital relations (fornication and adultery) as sin. Nevertheless, when an individual caught up in such sins truly repents, the forgiveness of the Gospel is to be fully applied. We confess that the divine institution of marriage is to be heterosexual, in which, according to God's design, a man and a woman may enjoy a life-long companionship in mutual love. We teach on the basis of Holy Scripture that marriage is the only proper context for the expression of sexual intimacy and for the procreation of children. See Rom. 1:26-27, 1 Cor. 6:9, 18 and 7:2-9, John 4:17-18, 1 John 1:9, Gen. 1:27-28 and 2:18-24, Matt. 19:4-6.

Second, if you are approached by ELCA friends who are fed up and offended by what their church body is now teaching in regard to these matters, and who are ready to depart from their church because of this, assure them that they would be able to find a spiritual home at Redeemer or Sun of Righteousness, where their traditional Lutheran be-

liefs and values are still honored. Invite them to get in touch with me if they want to find out more about our congregation and synod.

And third, also make sure that people know that individuals who may struggle with temptations toward same-sex attraction, but who know in their conscience that this kind of attraction is wrong and contrary to God's will, are likewise welcome in our midst. As Christians who admit that we are all sinners, and who struggle with a wide array of inner weaknesses, we will welcome as our companions on the journey of repentance and faith those who may struggle also with this sort of problem. Jesus established his church as a community of healing and a beacon of hope for lost humanity. With the Lord's help we will not take the easy way out, and get ourselves "off the hook" from our calling to be the body of Christ in a fallen and hostile world, by approving what God condemns, or by ignoring the inner trials of those who need our help in their difficult walk of faith. We will, in keeping with our official ELS statement, fully apply the Gospel to all those who repent of their sins – sins of thought, word, and deed – even as we rejoice to know that the Gospel of our Savior is continuously applied to us when we repent of our transgressions.

I was raised in a predecessor body of the ELCA. It gives me no pleasure at all to take note of the serious theological and moral problems that are inwardly destroying that church body. But in the midst of this sadness, we can all be thankful that God has preserved for us a congregation where his unchanging law is still acknowledged, and is preached to us in such a way as to call us to repentance when we violate God's will. And we can also be profoundly thankful that God has preserved for us a congregation where his unchanging Gospel is still acknowledged, and is applied to us in sermon and Sacrament in such a way as to lift us up into the joy of eternal fellowship with our loving Savior Jesus Christ.

-- Pastor Webber



Sunday School begins September 6, 2009!

*Your family is welcome!  
Classes for children and adults.*

We use the CPH "Growing in Christ" curriculum, featuring colorful Bible story lesson papers, crafts, stickers, and a take-home CD so kids can keep singing at home or in the car.



## THERE IS HOPE

*“But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.”*

Joshua 24:15

**H**ave you ever had terrible service at a restaurant? If so, you were probably frustrated at the slow service, poor food or watching a waiter chat with co-workers while you sat hungry. Perhaps you thought to yourself, “Does this guy still think he deserves a tip?” or “He doesn’t have any idea of what good service is.”

Many of us pride ourselves in thinking that we live lives of service to God. But what does God think of our service? What if God has a higher standard than we do? What if God doesn’t excuse the times when we slack off or perform bad service?

The truth is that God demands of us perfect service to Him and He does not tolerate any slacking or wrong on our part. You and I often put ourselves before God and don’t serve Him first.



God cannot allow into heaven anyone who does not serve Him perfectly. Based on the record of our service, our eternal outlook doesn’t look good.

*But there is hope for us!* There is salvation and it comes from God. God sent someone to serve us! Jesus said of Himself, “The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:28) Jesus gave His life to serve you by forgiving all of your slacking, all of your bad service, in fact, all of your sins! Jesus was the perfect servant. God the Father accepted His Son’s service and now all who believe in Jesus are righteous before God.

You are forgiven! Through faith in Jesus you can serve God. Now you can serve God knowing that He sees in you His perfect Son Jesus, and on Jesus’ account you are righteous before Him. **Heaven is open to you!**

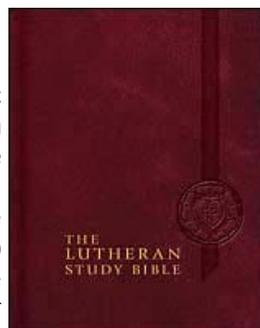
*Produced by the ELS Board for Evangelism*

## THE LUTHERAN STUDY BIBLE

**T**he Lutheran Study Bible, a major publishing project of Concordia Publishing House, will be available in October of this year. Conservative Lutheran Biblical scholars from the LCMS, ELS, and WELS, and from Lutheran churches in several other countries, have collaborated in the preparation of what promises to be the best study Bible that will be available in the English language. The translation used is the English Standard Version. This is our parish’s liturgical Bible, from which we read in our worship services, and it is also the translation on which our Sunday School curriculum is based. Samples of the notes, introductory materials, and other kinds of information that will be included in this Study Bible can be examined online at this web site:

[cph.org/lutheranbible](http://cph.org/lutheranbible)

The prepublication price for the basic hardcover edition is \$34.99, which represents a savings of \$20 off the regular price. In addition to this savings, when the Bibles are ordered by the case (10 books per case), there is no shipping charge. In our parish we have already received enough requests for



these Bibles to be able to order one case. We are now working on a second case of Bibles. If you have not yet put in your request for one of these Bibles – or for more than one, to use as gifts to those you love – please consider doing so this month. There are few investments you can ever make that would be more beneficial to your life of faith, or that would contribute more toward the spiritual growth of your children, grandchildren, or anyone else to whom you might give one of these Bibles.

If you would like to order one (or more than one) at the prepublication price, through the church, please make out a check for \$34.99 for each Bible to “Redeemer Lutheran Church” – with the phrase “Study Bible” written on the memo line – and give the check to the Pastor. Your request will then be put toward the next case of ten that we hope to be able to order before the publication of the Bibles in October.

By the way, the church receives no financial benefit from the promotion of these Bibles. We are encouraging all of you to get one simply because it will be such a great resource for studying and understanding God’s Word!

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SEPTEMBER 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	4	5
<b>6 Pentecost 14 Divine Service</b> 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	7	8 7 pm Church Council (S)	9	10 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	11 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	12
<b>13 Pentecost 15 Service of the Word</b> 9:00am SW with spoken Communion (S) Ladies Guild after the Service (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm SW with spoken Communion (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	14	15	16	17 6:30 pm Internet Study Group at Pastor's residence	18 10:00 am Bible Study at the Calvin residence	19
<b>20 Pentecost 16 Divine Service</b> 9:00am DS (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm DS (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	21	22	23	24 Internet Study canceled	25 Bible Study canceled Pastor in Milwaukee	26
<b>27 Pentecost 17 Service of the Word</b> 9:00am SW with spoken Communion (S) Elders Meeting after the service (S) 10:30am SS/AC (S) 4:00pm SW with spoken Communion (Q) 5:15pm SS/AC (Q)	28	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

Pastor will be in Milwaukee for joint meeting of ELS Doctrine Committee and WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations September 25

**Redeemer Lutheran 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  
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**



**Evangelical  
Lutheran Synod**

## 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.

