



**Our Redeemer Lutheran Church**  
10 Johnson Road, Chestnut Hill Estates  
Newark, DE 19713  
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[www.ourredeemernewark.org](http://www.ourredeemernewark.org)  
Rev. Dr. John Rickert, Pastor

## OUR REDEEMER'S VOICE

FEBRUARY 2018

### Lent Begins

It is a maxim in Lutheran circles that all scripture preaches Christ. This thought is based on the clear teaching of passages like:

<sup>39</sup>*You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,*  
<sup>40</sup>*yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.* John 5:39-40

<sup>26</sup>*Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"* <sup>27</sup>*And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.* Luke 24:26-27

<sup>35</sup>*Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus.* Acts 8:35

<sup>45</sup>*Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."* John 1:45

<sup>46</sup>*For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.* John 5:46

We see this idea plainly in passages like Isaiah 53 or Isaiah 7:14. We also see it in how the New Testament writers use events in the Old Testament like the Exodus (Hosea 11:1, Matthew 2:15) or the flood (1 Peter 3:18-22). Finally the Holy Spirit guides the writers of the New Testament to also see Old Testament individuals in this Christ-like light. So Melchizedek is seen as pointing to Jesus (Genesis 14; Hebrews 5-7). St. Paul uses Isaac and Ishmael to explain Law and Gospel in Galatians 4. We all remember how Jesus used Jonah's time "buried" in the great sea creature as a pointer to his resurrection from the grave (Matthew 12:40).

With such a wealth of New Testament applications of this truth to the Old Testament, we can certainly understand why Lutheran ministers often go to such places when teaching about the Christ-accent in the Old Testament. After all, the above references only scratch the surface of New Testament quotes and allusions to the Old Testament that a minister might use. One could do a whole sermon series based solely on direct quotes and allusions to the Old Testament found in the New.

However, this practice restricts our Old Testament canon, at least functionally. If the story or individual isn't referred to in the New Testament we, well, kind of skip it when considering Christ in the Old Testament. That is, in my opinion, a shame. It seems that the New Testament has gone to great lengths to teach us how to read the Old with a Christ-focused eye, even if those individuals or stories are not directly referred to, or alluded to, in the New.

This is the thought behind the messages we will hear in our Wednesday worship services this Lent. We will consider stories from the Old Testament that are not typically used by us today as pointers to Jesus. We will look under every rock for Jesus. We will squeeze the texts until they drip Jesus. We will put them under the microscope to find the Christ-DNA of Scripture. The scheduled is:

- February 14: The story of Joel
- February 21: The story of Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 24)
- February 28: The story of Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 37, 39-47)
- March 7: The story of the fall of Jericho (Judges 2, 6)
- March 14: The story of Sampson (Judges 13-16)
- March 21: The story of David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17)



Our Ash Wednesday service will be preceded by a soup and sandwich supper that begins at 5:45 PM. Our worship service will begin at 7:00 PM. On each subsequent Wednesday, our Lenten services will also be preceded by a meal. A sign-up sheet to help provide the meals will be posted in the narthex.

At our Ash Wednesday service we will have the traditional imposition of ashes. We will also celebrate the Lord's Supper, as is our custom here at Our Redeemer. There will be information about Holy Week (March 25 – April 1) in next month's newsletter.



As you can see, Ash Wednesday is also Valentine's Day. Why not take your sweetie on a special date and bring her to Our Redeemer to worship the Lord together? And the meals are free, both the soup supper and the Lord's Supper!

Blessings in Christ,  
Pastor

## Digging In The Nicene Creed Introduction, Part 4

In this introduction to the Nicene Creed we have, so far, given some background on the other two ecumenical creeds (Apostles & Athanasian), and some preliminary background leading up to the first Ecumenical Council, held in the city of Nicene in 325 AD. Part of that background was the establishment of the Christian Church as a legal religion, the rise of Arianism, and the decision of Constantine to summon a council of bishops to settle the Arian dispute, and other issues. This month we will continue to fill in the background.



Constantine decided to hold this ecumenical council in the city of Nicaea in Bithynia. This site had two real advantages. First, it was relatively easy to get to for the majority of bishops. Second, it had the facilities to handle large gatherings. So Constantine sent out invitations to all 1800 Bishops (1000 in the East and 800 in the West). Constantine promised to pay for all their traveling expenses as well as provide lodging, food, and whatever else was needed during the council. The bishops were also permitted to bring with them two priests and three deacons, again all expenses paid.

The traditional number of bishops that attended is 318. If each had five in their support staff, which is probable, the number at the council would have been around 1800! Representatives from all over the empire, except Britain, were present, but the largest number was from the eastern half of the empire. There were also at least three from outside the Roman Empire. We have the names of slightly over 200 of the Bishops, so it is possible that more from outside the Roman Empire attended. This was truly a "worldwide" council.

While the Pope didn't attend, he did send representatives, the most important probably being Hosius of Cordova, who apparently led the theological discussions. The other attendees read like a veritable who's who of Christian luminaries of the early fourth century. The patriarchs Alexander of Alexandria, Eustathius of Antioch, and Macarius of Jerusalem were there. Also present were Eusebius of Nicomedia, Eusebius of Caesarea (the first church historian), Nicholas of Myra (from whom the popular Santa Claus character would be derived), Aristakes of Armenia (son of Saint Gregory the Illuminator), Leontius of Caesarea, Jacob of Nisibis (a former hermit), Hypatius of Gangra, Protogenes of Sardica, Melitius of Sebastopolis, Achilleus of Larissa (considered the "Athanasius of Thessaly"), and Spyridion of Trimythous (who even while a bishop made his living as a shepherd). From the Latin church, aside from Hosius, there also attended Marcus of Calabria from Italia, Cecilian of Carthage from Africa Nicasius of Dijon from Gaul, and Domnus of Stridon from the province of the Danube. From foreign places came a Persian bishop John, a Gothic bishop Theophilus and Stratophilus, bishop of Pitiunt of Georgia.



Many of the assembled fathers—for instance, Paphnutius of Thebes, Potamon of Heraclea and Paul of Neocaesarea—had stood forth as confessors of the faith and came to the council with the marks of persecution on their faces. A "confessor" is one who underwent persecution for the Christian Faith, but was not killed. The bishops were very prone to listen to the words of these witnesses.

These were not wishy-washy men!

At the outset of the council the bishops that supported Arius numbered 17, and included Secundus of Ptolemais, Theonus of Marmarica, Zephyrius, and Dathes, all of whom hailed from the Libyan Pentapolis. Other supporters included Eusebius of Nicomedia, Eusebius of Caesarea, Paulinus of Tyrus, Actius of Lydda, Menophantus of Ephesus, and Theognus of Nicaea. By the end of the meetings, only two bishops (Theonas of Marmarica in Libya, and Secundus of Ptolemais) continued to support Arius.

There were three main factions. The Arians, of course, was one. The second was called the Homoousians, from the Greek

word translated "of the same substance (or essence)." The third group didn't like the word "homoousia." Their objections were two-fold. First, it isn't in the Bible. Second, it could be misunderstood, as Paul of Samostata had. Because of Paul of Samostata, the term had been condemned at the Council of Antioch in 264-268. This third group was the largest and was open to being shown by either the Homoousians or the Arians that their view was biblical and historical Christianity. Many of them, when they actually heard Arius, immediately recognized that he was teaching false and damning doctrines.

Wow, that is a lot on just who was present. I promise things will get more interesting as we go along. Still, I think it is important to realize that this was not a "fixed" council. Humanly speaking, it could have gone either way for Arius.

Next month we will finish our look at this council, along with the creed it endorsed. But that creed is not the same as the one we confess in our worship services. It would take another council to finish the Nicene Creed.

Until next month, may "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14). Amen.



## Some Thoughts From LW: St. Peter's Sharing Suggestion

In Peter's first letter to the church, he spends a great deal of time instructing and encouraging these believers in their conduct within the larger culture. These new believers were part of a pagan culture that was becoming more and more hostile toward followers of The Way. He provides instructions for wives and husbands, servants, and all those under human authority. He especially zeros in on their conduct as pilgrim citizens—living in the world but journeying toward their true home.

In chapter 3 verse 15, Peter sums up his thoughts by encouraging the believers to "revere Christ in your hearts as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who ask you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect." I am struck by the insight that the "you" is plural. We could translate the verse to read, "You all need to be prepared to give a reason for the hope you all have."

Why is that important? I believe Peter emphasizes that our call to witness is a team activity. As we conduct ourselves as followers of Jesus, people around us are bound to notice, and we need to be ready to answer their questions. Our actions and our words are important, because we do not only act on our own behalf nor do we speak only for ourselves. We do both together as the body of Christ.

Think of it this way: Over one million people each week hear the broadcast of The Lutheran Hour, on the radio or on their phone or computer or some other mobile device. The Word of God is shared, their heart may be touched, and you, yes, YOU, may be the one that is asked to give a reason for the hope that was expressed. Or, you may find a way to serve someone in Jesus' Name in a way that touches their heart and moves them to ask another believer, someone they know, why you would do such a thing. Now it becomes that believer's role to give a reason for the hope we have.

All around the world, every week, over 70 million people come into contact with words or actions that point them to Jesus Christ as their Savior and friend through the efforts of Lutheran Hour Ministries' Ministry Centers. Every week there are people all around the world that may be looking for someone who can help them to understand the hope we have in Christ. Your gentle words of hope may be shared in response to actions, or respectful words may be shared as an explanation for your acts of service. We are linked in this process of proclamation as we, working together, offer a reason for the hope we have in Jesus Christ.



Are you prepared? Are you ready to give a reason for the hope we share in Jesus? If you could use some help, support, or encouragement, then I urge you to consider the resources available for you and your congregation at the Lutheran Hour Ministries' website (lhm.org). Classes and witness tools, demographics and personal devotions, are only some of the resources designed to equip believers for this most important task of living out our calling as Jesus-followers.

All of us have received the hope we have as a gift through Christ. LHM has resources to help you share this wonderful gift. Find some like-minded friends. Form a team. Gather with a small group so you—all of you together—are prepared for every opportunity of Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church.

Arlen D. Besel – Ambassador



## Through The Worship Window

Our Church Year Moves to Lent:



Epiphany .ends as February begins and as Pastor told us we will be hearing Mark's Gospel. This begins with a number of the healing acts of the Lord. But we also divert to the transfiguration of the Lord when He is clearly shown as God's Son with a glorious nature.

The next event is Ash Wednesday that opens the Lenten devotions. We are given a view of Jesus' baptism in His effort to fulfill all the requirements of His mission. At this time He also begins calling His disciples and launching the overall ministry.

As we are led along with the Gospel messages the other lessons bring us additional preparation for Lent. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul describes his rights as an Apostle but also his clear responsibility to

share the good news of salvation that Jesus won for everyone. Paul deeply feels his obligation to reach out to everyone; Jew and Gentile.

In his second letter Paul points out that we are under a new covenant for Christ has won our place in God's family and given us access to the Father by His death and rising.

The Ash Wednesday lesson reveals the ministry of reconciliation we are assigned.

From James we are reminded that blessings follow any temptation we face. All our gifts come from the Father through the Holy Spirit.

The lessons wrap up with a reminder from Romans 5 that peace and joy are provided to us when we hold fast to the faith in Christ and the salvation He won for us.

Arlen D. Besel – Worship

## Loving = Serving

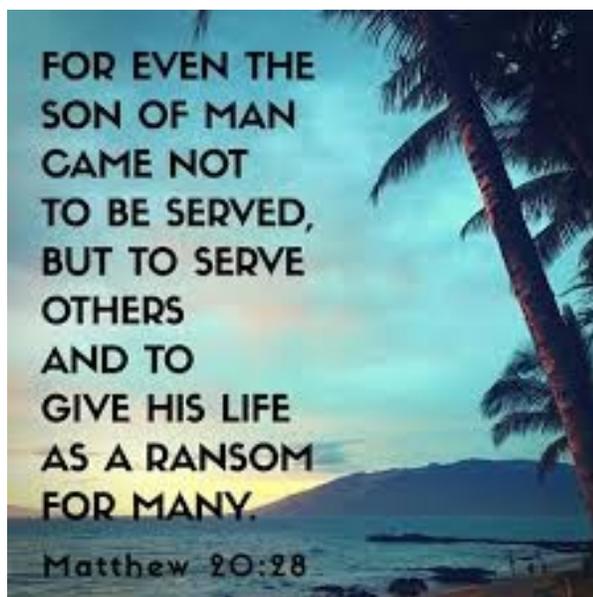
*Jesus... said, "You know that the rulers of nations have absolute power over people and their officials have absolute authority over people. But that's not the way it's going to be among you. Whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant. Whoever wants to be most important among you will be your slave. It's the same way with the Son of Man. He didn't come so that others could serve him. He came to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people."*

Matthew 20:25-28 (God's Word Translation)

Lent is a time of reflection and repentance; seeing the depth of our own sin and the price Jesus paid to rid us of it. One of the chief sins is self-centeredness. Everything is about me, #1; what I want, what I need, what I desire. This is completely contrary to the teaching of God in Scripture. Jesus tells us that, if we want to be top dog, we must get in the dirt and serve everyone else as their slave! This even includes people who hate us! How backward is that!? Being "other-centered" does not come naturally to sinful humankind. The disciples had this same problem (as have all people since Adam and Eve fell into sin); they were focused on what rewards they could reap from God rather than focusing on what they could give to a world in need of God's Good News.

God does promise rewards to His children in heaven, but that is not now, nor ever has been, the reason we love God and our neighbor. We love, and serve, because God loved us first, and loves us forever! We love, and serve, people by telling them about the peace Jesus gives, because we know it and want others to know it, too. We love, and serve, each other because Christ's love flows out of us, enriching and encouraging our brothers and sisters in Christ. To love is to serve; Christ is our example: God of God and King of Kings, yet born a peasant and hunted by leaders; Ruler of All and Ever-living God, yet owning nothing and dying on a cross as a criminal. God calls us to a life of faithful serving after serving us by giving His all for us. He equips us with everything we need to love by serving, providing from His eternal storehouses the love, forgiveness, abilities, and time to serve well.

The disciples had it wrong that day when they were asking Jesus for glorious rewards in heaven; their focus was on themselves and what they could gain by knowing Jesus. We are wrong today, too, when we focus on self-interest. That is not what Jesus says life is about. Loving and serving God and our neighbor is what life is about. This is what people need; this is what people see and

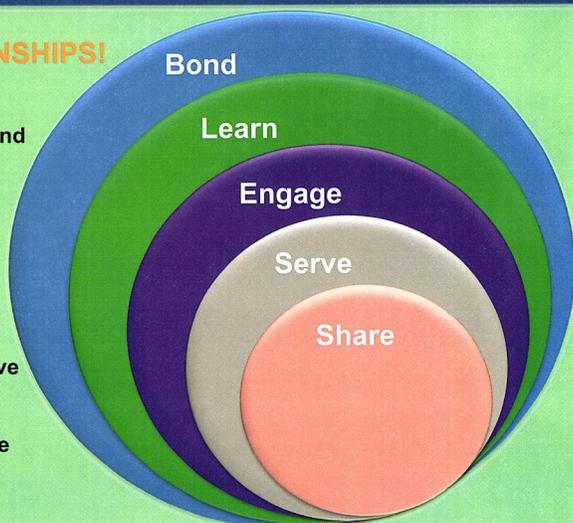


remember – our loving service to each other and all in need. Serving God and our neighbor is what often gives us the opportunity to share His love for them, a love they cannot live without, whether they know it or not.

## B-L-E-S-S

It's about **RELATIONSHIPS!**

- ☞ Common interests – bond
- ☞ Listen, observe – learn
- ☞ Go deeper – engage
- ☞ Put love in action – serve
- ☞ My Gospel story – share



This year, your Evangelism Board is asking everyone to join in the iNeighborhood initiative in this way: **BLESS**ing our neighbors—**B**onding, **L**earning, **E**ngaging, **S**erving and **S**haring. The congregation voted to make Our Redeemer a Covenant Congregation, meaning that we hope to, over the next three years, 1) Pray for our neighbors (which we have been doing for over a year), 2) Be personally involved in sharing the Good News of Jesus in three different zip codes, and 3) Publicly praising God for what He is doing through our efforts at being faithful servants.

We are on this earth for a short season. We are here because God uses His children to bring the lost and erring into His kingdom. So, we move forward with the promise of God that His Word will go out and be fruitful unto salvation. We pray that we are good and faithful slaves of Christ, loving God by serving our neighbor. This Lenten season, let us confess the sins of self-absorption, self-aggrandizement and self-promotion, and seek to serve God and neighbor fully, knowing God forgives, restores, and leads us forward.

NOTE: Our next Evangelism Board meeting will be Sunday, March 4, following worship. We will be planning for the full calendar year (including Easter, VBS, UDel, CHECA, etc.) and doing a 3-5-year plan for outreach (building on the iNeighborhood ideas we learned last year). Please make every effort to be at this meeting if you are interested in ORLC's future.

Kitty Rickert, Evangelism Chair



### 2018 Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekends Announced

Your marriage relationship is one of the things in life that provides the greatest potential for happiness. Is yours living up to this potential? Please make 2018 the year you resolve to attend a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend to learn how to maximize the joy and intimacy that God intends for your marriage. The following Weekends have been scheduled with one more to be added in Massachusetts in the fall.

- March 16-18, 2018 at Heritage Hotel Lancaster in Lancaster, PA. A newly-renovated hotel, home of the unique treehouse-inspired restaurant, "Loxley's."
- April 6-8, 2018 at Toftrees Golf Resort in State College PA. A peaceful resort surrounded by a golf course and nestled in the woods in the center of PA.
- September 14-16, 2018 at Spruce Lake Retreat in Canadensis, PA. A lovely hotel-style facility in a wooded area of the Poconos, an hour north of Allentown.
- October 19-21, 2018 at Olmsted Retreat Center. A stunning, hotel-style retreat next to Olmsted Mansion in Allegheny National Forest, 2 hours north of Pittsburgh.

Two nights lodging, 5 meals for each of you, and all supplies are included with your \$100 per couple registration fee, plus toward the end of the weekend you will be given an opportunity to make a confidential contribution of whatever amount you wish toward the continuation of the program. To be sure to get the Weekend of your choice, sign up at your earliest convenience by going to the website: [www.GodLovesMarriage.org](http://www.GodLovesMarriage.org) and paying the registration fee with your credit card, or marking the option to mail a check. For questions, or if you would like a brochure with registration form mailed to you, contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or [fjschamber@comcast.net](mailto:fjschamber@comcast.net).

### Remember!

In November, many in the congregation filled out pledge forms, promising before God how you would support this congregation with your time, talents and treasures. Please remember to honor those pledges. Do you remember what you promised? If not, did you fill out a reminder card? The leadership of this congregation is here to help you fulfill your pledges, so let them know how you will serve in this place this year. Didn't pledge? That's okay; you can still let our board chairs and office holders know that you are willing to meet the needs of this congregation by serving with them. Bob Johnston, Arlen Besel, Laurel Pearson, Julie Hockersmith, Robin Billy, Lina Besteder, Pastor and Kitty Rickert are all eager to help you serve here; just let one of them know you want to do so!

Stewardship Board

## Congregational Life

Ash Wednesday and Midweek Soup Suppers starting on February 7, 2018 (5:45 PM) before the church service at 7:00PM

Everyone is welcome to attend our Midweek Lenten Soup Suppers. If you would like to participate and share your favorite recipe a sign-up sheet will be available for each Midweek service. If you have any questions please contact me.

Lina Besteder (302) 737-3234

e-mail [wbesteder@aol.com](mailto:wbesteder@aol.com)



## BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

<b>Sundays</b>	<b>8:45 a.m.</b>	<b>"Be filled with the Spirit"</b>
<b>Tuesdays</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Book of Revelation</b>
<b>Thursdays</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Hymn Study: context, theology &amp; history</b>

## Bulletin & Newsletter Information Date

Please have all information for the bulletin into the office no later than Tuesday of each week. Newsletter info is due no later than the 20th of each month to ensure its inclusion. Thanks!

## Build-A-Bag With Us!

In the winter, it is especially important to help the homeless stay warm. We at Our Redeemer Lutheran do this by building sleeping bags to give to local charities. We recycle bedding and create warm, cozy bags and fill them with toiletries, hats, socks & prayers.

Come, join us each Thursday at noon and each Saturday at 10 a.m. Bring a friend, bring your lunch, and help make winter more bearable for the homeless in our midst. NOTE: B-A-B will not meet on the following dates in February: Thursday, Feb 1 & Saturday, Feb 3.



## BIRTHDAYS

3 Paul Billy



## ANNIVERSARIES

If your birthday or anniversary is missing from this list, please email your information to me at: [secretary.orlcde@outlook.com](mailto:secretary.orlcde@outlook.com).

# Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

February 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Serving: Each Sunday – Pastor: Rev. Dr. John Rickert Bible Class: Arlen Besel Sunday School: Robin Billy & Rebekah Tedla	2/4 – Organist: Comm. Assist: Bob John- ston Ushers: Guitom & Noah Tedla Lector: Bob Johnston Greeter: Len Schott Acolyte: Rebekah Tedla Altar: Carla Fiske Flowers: Robin Billy	2/11 – Organist: Ushers: Milt & Mizzi Steltz Lector: Bob Cooley Greeters: Dennis Boon & Jim Rose Flowers: 2/14 – Organist: Comm. Assist: Bob Johnston Altar: Bonnie Johnston	2/18 – Organist: Comm. Assist: Arlen Besel Ushers: Paul Hockersmith & Bob Johnston Lector: Arlen Besel Greeters: Greg & Carla Fiske Acolyte: Noah Tedla Altar: Flowers: Gary & June weaver	Winkler, all day	2	3
4  Bible Class 8:45 a.m. Communion Service 10:00 a.m.	5	6 Revelation Study 10 a.m.	7 Hymn Study 10 a.m. Build-A-Bag, Noon	8 Hymn Study 10 a.m. Build-A-Bag, Noon	9	10 Build-A-Bag 10 a.m. Mutual Ministry 10 a.m.
11 Bible Class 8:45 a.m. Worship Service 10:00 a.m.	12	13 Revelation Study 10 a.m.	Ash Wed 14 Lent 1 Worship Communion Soup Supper 5:45 p.m.  Service, 7:00 p.m.	15	16	17 Build-A-Bag 10 a.m.
18  Bible Class 8:45 a.m. Communion Service 10:00 a.m. Church Council Mtg	19	20 Revelation Study 10 a.m.	Lent 2 21 Soup Supper 5:45 p.m. Worship Service 7:00 p.m.	22	23	24 Build-A-Bag 10 a.m.
25 Bible Class 8:45 a.m. Worship Service 10:00 a.m. Congregational Mtg	26	27 Revelation Study 10 a.m.	Lent 3 28 Soup Supper 5:45 p.m. Worship Service 7:00 p.m.	Serving: 2/25 – Organist: Ushers: Arno Kis- sell & Loren Kline	Serving: Lector: Kevin Gersevke Greeter: Ruth Hewlett	Serving: Flowers: