



Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
10 Johnson Road, Chestnut Hill Estates
Newark, DE 19713
302-737-6176
www.ourredeemernewark.org
Rev. Dr. John Rickert, Pastor

OUR REDEEMER'S VOICE

JUNE 2018

Seasons

The summer season is upon us. It means longer and hotter days. For many, vacations. It is the season of growth, as farmers and gardeners know. In the Church Year, it is the season of Pentecost, which accents our lives as Christians. But, as we all know, after summer comes fall and then winter. The cold will come and, if everything goes like it did for my first two winters here, snow will cover the ground a few times. Summer will be but a distant memory. But spring will come again and so will another summer. Everything happens in its proper order (Genesis 1:14).

This cycle of nature is also found in our lives. Ecclesiastes 3:1 reminds us: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven". Solomon goes on to speak of a time for joy and sorrow, a time to be born and a time to die, and so forth. We can no more hold back these seasons of life than we can prevent winter from coming again. The wise man embraces his current season instead of constantly yearning for some other season. So a child of fifteen should embrace and make the most of being fifteen and not waste time wishing he was twenty-one. The woman who is sixty-five should embrace the joys and responsibilities of being sixty-five and not waste time yearning to be thirty again. Every age is a good gift from God and presents its own opportunities.

For the one who does this the reward is contentment.

This ties in with the ninth and tenth commandments. In each we are told to not covet. We are to be content with what the Lord has provided us. This does not mean that we cannot plan for our future, look for a better job or house, and so on. But we do not pin our hopes and dreams on such things. Go ahead and apply for that better job, but know that your life is in the Lord's hands whether or not you get the job. You may want to retire at fifty-five, only to discover that you can't. You may need to continue working until you are sixty-five, seventy, or older. Know that you are still in the Lord's hands; he is still watching over you and granting you all you need for life and salvation. Be content. Don't covet and say, "I'd be happy only if ..."

As mentioned above, the cycle of seasons also is present in the Liturgical Calendar. Just as summer is the season of growing things in nature, so in the Church Year summer (Pentecost season) is the season of growth, only it is growth in our walk as believers. That is why the color for the Pentecost season is green. We are fed with the Word and Sacraments, helping us to build strong souls, able to stand up to the challenges of life.



Sometimes people can become tired of the routine. I once heard a story about a man like that. When he stopped attending worship services, his pastor visited. He said, "Pastor, I've attended worship services for years and I've heard hundreds of sermons. I got to thinking, I only remember a handful. So, I figured, I didn't need to keep hearing such forgettable messages." The Pastor responded, "You know, I've eaten three meals a day for years. I must have eaten thousands of meals. Yet I only remember a few of them. Still, if I hadn't eaten all those forgotten meals, I'd have



died a long time ago." The man understood his pastor's point and was in the worship service that next Sunday, "dining" on the word of God.

Pentecost may not be the most exciting season of the Church Year. It doesn't have big holidays like Christmas, Easter, and so forth. But it is important to keep feeding our souls, to keep growing in our Christian Faith. Like a plant that grows steadily, if almost imperceptibly, so we grow each time we hear the Word or share the Sacrament. It may not be dramatic growth, but it is important growth nonetheless. In this season of growth, may we all dine regularly on God's good gifts.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor



Digging In The Nicene Creed First Article, Part 1

The original languages used for the Nicene Creed were Greek and Latin; Greek for the Eastern churches and Latin for the Western churches. Both languages are "inflected." That means that the function a word has in the sentence structure is based on how the word is spelled. We still have this reflected in English a bit. For example, "have" and "had" are basically the same verb, but one is present tense and the other is past tense. In both Greek and Latin, verb forms also reveal "person." "Person" is reflected in the "personal pronoun" in English, "I," "we," "us," "you," "them," etc. So, one word conveys a

lot of meaning in these languages.

I bring this up because of the first word in the Nicene Creed, "believe." In Greek it is *pisteuomen* [pis-tā-ō-men] and in Latin it is *credo*. The Greek is first person, plural, and translated "We believe" while the Latin is first person, singular, and translated "I believe."

This reflects an important truth. For a Christian, their faith concerning God is both deeply communal and deeply individual. What the individual Christian believes is the same thing that the Christian Church believes and what the Christian Church believes is the same thing that the individual Christian believes. Christians held to an objective body of teaching which expressed their faith.

ONE, HOLY,
CATHOLIC
AND APOSTOLIC

This idea of a personally held universal faith, so that Christians all around the Roman Empire and even beyond its borders held the same faith, was new in the Ancient World. Gerald L. Bray, in his introductory material for *Ancient Christian Doctrine 1: We Believe in One God*, put it this way:

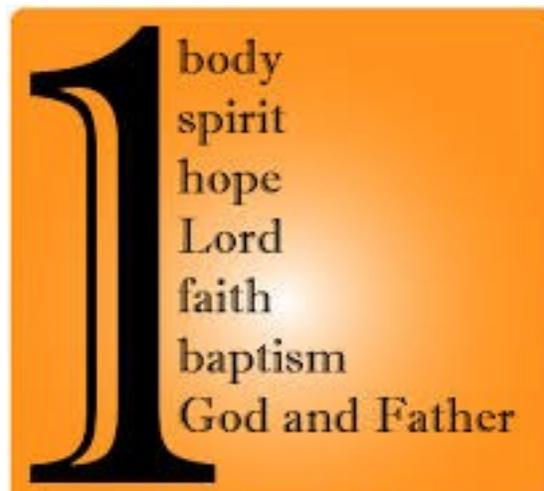
Neither Judaism nor any pagan religion or philosophy could claim to have a closely defined set of beliefs that everyone adhering to it was expected to profess publicly and defend against all comers. Jews were generally born into their faith, and the relatively few converts were obligated to submit not to a body of doctrine as such but to the prescriptions of the law. These could be very demanding, particularly when grown men were expected to undergo circumcision, and the requirement seems to have been quite a deterrent in many cases. Certainly there was a substantial number of Gentiles, known in the New Testament as "God-fearers," who adhered to Jewish synagogues but did not become full members of the community, presumably because the barriers were set too high for them. Paganism, by contrast, was notoriously receptive to almost any kind of belief, and one of the biggest problems pagans faced, even within the recognized philosophical schools, was to establish some sort of coherence in their world view. Eclecticism and syncretism were common among them, and the available evidence strongly suggests that this tendency was growing in the first Christian centuries as new syntheses of Greek and Eastern (Syrian, Egyptian and Persian) ideas continued to emerge in the late Roman world. [Bray (IVP Academic, Downers Grove, IL, 2009) xxix]

This idea of a commonly held faith was not invented by the Nicene Fathers. It is thoroughly biblical. In Galatians 2:1-7, Saint Paul reports concerning a time he went to Jerusalem and presented to them the Gospel he had been preaching. He received the "right hand of fellowship" and nothing was added to his message of the Gospel because it was the same Gospel the original Apostles were preaching. Ephesians 4:3-6 not only is a great passage concerning the Trinity, but is also a reference to the "one faith" which Christians everywhere accepted as true doctrine. Peter, in his second letter, tells us that the Christian Gospel is not some cleverly devised myth but rock solid fact. He goes on to say that "no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation," meaning that we are not to pick and choose what we think this or that passage of scripture means "to us" (2 Peter 1:16-21). Paul wrote to the Corinthians "For I

delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures ..." (1 Corinthians 15:3), again reflecting that there was a commonly held set of beliefs, or doctrines, to which all Christians subscribed. In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul instructs Timothy to be sure to select faithful men to pass on this common faith, this common set of beliefs. Matthew caps off his Gospel with these words:

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

This whole "Great Commission" would be meaningless if the teaching had no content. Certainly more passages could be heaped up to establish this point.



I should probably point out that this truth does not mean there were no differences among the Nicene Fathers or the Early Christians. What we are talking about are core beliefs, beliefs that define us as Christians. The Nicene Creed is a statement of such beliefs, drawn from the Bible, distilled into a short memorable form, and held to be true by all Christians.

Next month we will continue with the first article of the Nicene Creed and what it is we confess when we use this Creed. Until then, 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.



LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES **The Lutheran Hour Looks Back at Graham:**

World-renowned evangelist Dr. Billy Graham passed away Feb. 21 at the age of 99. The internationally renowned evangelist preached the Gospel to nearly 215 million people in more than 185 countries and territories, according to Graham's ministry, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association - through various evangelistic crusades and meetings, including Mission World and Global Mission. Hundreds of millions more have been reached through television, video, film, and webcasts.

"In a society that is moving steadily away from Christianity, Dr. Graham saw the importance of being present with a clear Gospel proclamation to reach nonbelievers with the love of Christ," says LHM President and CEO Kurt Buchholz. "The world has lost a great man, but those in heaven are surely rejoicing in the homecoming of this good and faithful servant."

Graham's career was intertwined in many ways with the work of the International Lutheran Laymen's League/Lutheran Hour Ministries. Many years ago, Graham was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), as was his long-time friend Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, Speaker of The Lutheran Hour from 1955 through 1988. Graham was very supportive not only of Hoffmann but also Dr. Walter A. Maier, The Lutheran Hour's founding Speaker. Graham was keenly aware of The Lutheran Hour through his association with NRB, which was founded by Dr. Eugene "Rudy" Bertermann, a former head of staff for the Int'l LLL and its Lutheran Hour Ministries and an individual deeply involved with Maier and the early years of The Lutheran Hour.



Graham even visited the LLL headquarters during the 1970s to speak to employees and encourage them to continue mightily with broadcasts of The Lutheran Hour (Dr. Graham is shown above meeting with Dr. Hoffmann during his visit).

More recently, when The Lutheran Hour began airing on the more than 100 stations of the Bott Radio Network in 2015, the weekly broadcast inherited the prime slots formerly used by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association on the network's broadcast coverage into 15 states. The Bott Radio Network saw The Lutheran Hour as a shining example of its goal to provide quality Bible teaching with Christian news and information delivered by some of the greatest Bible teachers of today.

"It's been a great privilege for us to be given the Sunday morning time slot that was home to Billy Graham's 'Hour of Decision' for more than 50 years," says Buchholz. "In many ways, the legacy of The Lutheran Hour came full circle. When Walter Maier died, Billy Graham rose to prominence on radio and television and a great respect was developed between him and Dr. Oswald Hoffmann. For the Bott Radio Network to think of us as a respected replacement for Dr. Graham's Sunday program has been a tremendous honor for our flagship broadcast."

Arlen D. Besel – Ambassador

Through The Worship Window



June Follows Trinity Sunday w/Pentecost:

Our Gospel readings start with the Jesus as the Lord of Sabbath, but the Jewish legalists wanted to link Him to Beelzebub which He quickly dismissed.

Jesus likens the kingdom of God with the growing of a seed that extends and provides fruit.

Our June sermons end with the nativity of John the Baptist from the Gospel of Luke.

The Epistle lessons for the period come from Second Corinthians. Paul reminds them that his message is all about Jesus Christ. His message includes words of encouragement in the resurrection.

As Paul continues to encourage them he tells them of their future Heavenly home. In this life we may have challenges and trials, but our future is very bright and sure.

The Old Testament lessons start with a look at the Commandment on the Sabbath. The next reference is to the sin of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from Eden.

In Ezekiel we read one of God's many calls to repentance to the people of Israel, but such calls are to us as well.

As we reflect on John the Baptist, Isaiah speaks of the comfort God will provide His people.

Arlen D. Besel – Worship

Our Neighborhood – iGo & We Go! – Part 2

And whatever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:17

Even though our Yard/Bake Sale got rained out on Saturday, 5/19, we still had some people out selling goods, giving out free water & engaging with our neighbors here in Chestnut Hill Estates. Thanks to all who participated!!

We have another exciting prospect in the works to help us engage & connect with our neighbors – a neighborhood garden. We are just in the beginning planning stage at this point, but we on the Board would like your input & help. If you are interested in helping with a vegetable garden here at ORLC, let one of the board members know; if you have any expertise with this sort of thing, that would be super! We are looking into the best way to develop this for the neighborhood: location, type/size of plot, work/weed/water scheduling, etc.

We discussed this at the last church council meeting & it was received with excitement & good ideas. We also pitched this idea at the last CHECA meeting & our neighbors received the possibility with enthusiasm, as they did our Saturday walks in the neighborhood on the last Saturday of each month.



Please come & be an active part of our iGo & We Go! focus. We want to have the opportunity to share the love of God in Christ Jesus with our neighbors, but we need for them to see that love in action so that they will even be interested in hearing us out.

Kitty Rickert, Evangelism Chair

SED Convention—Lay Delegate Report

I will only touch on some of the highlights of the convention pastor & I attended in Hickory, NC. The theme was "Let's Go Fishing":

- ◆ We, as Christians, are all "caught" by the gospel & "released" into Christ's service so that the "population" (those redeemed by God) is strengthened and increases
- ◆ We fish on the "other side" of the boat—wherever there are unsaved people
- ◆ We fish on the "right side" of the boat—remembering why we are fishing; to save the lost, not just to have a good time in the boat on the trip & fishing where the fish are, not where we think they *should* be or where we *wish* they are. We fish with different equipment—using whatever means to bring the saving gospel message to all we can
- ◆ We fish as "us" - because God is an "us" God; He joins us together in this task of sharing his love because sometimes the work is long & hard & unpleasant & He Himself is always with us
- ◆ In the LCMS, 35% of us were converted to Christianity as adults; also, 35% of all LCMS losses occur during the time between confirmation & adulthood, regardless of generation—we have been losing this group consistently across generations.



38th Convention of the Southeastern District LCMS

It was a privilege to serve as your lay delegate!
Kitty Rickert



Attention Married Couples:

Marriage is a journey! A Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend can help you enrich your marriage and add some pizzazz to your journey. Sign up TODAY to be sure to get the Weekend of your choice.

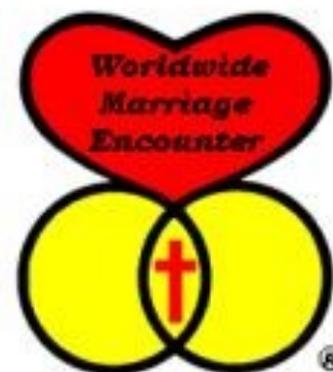
Weekends scheduled this fall in Northeast US are:

* September 14-16, 2018 at Spruce Lake Retreat in Canadensis, PA. A lovely hotel-style retreat center with many acres of woodlands in the heart of the Poconos, an hour north of Allentown, PA .

* October 19-21, 2018 at Olmsted Retreat Center. A stunning, hotel-style retreat center adjacent to the Olmsted Mansion in the Allegheny National Forest, 2 hours north of Pittsburgh.

* November 9-11, 2018 at Hampton Inn Berkshires in Lenox, Massachusetts. Situated on the edge of a nature preserve in the heart of the Berkshires, an hour northwest of Springfield MA.

Two nights lodging, 5 meals for each of you, and all supplies are included with your 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. For further information or to sign up, go to: www.GodLovesMarriage.org and pay the \$100 registration fee with your credit card, or mark the option to mail a check. For questions, or if you would like a brochure, contact Northeast US Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred & Julie Schamber, at 724-325-3166 or fjschamber@comcast.net.





Pastor on Vacation

Pastor and Kitty will be going on a two week vacation to San Diego, California. They will leaving Wednesday, May 30, and be back home Thursday, June 14. That means that the church office will be closed. Kitty's step-mother is moving from her large home into a retirement community, which means significant downsizing. Pastor and Kitty are going to help her out. Of course, there are other family and friends in the area that they are hoping to see.

Bulletin & Newsletter Information Dates

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!

Would you like to experience a Sight & Sound show? Now playing is "Jesus" and it runs till the end of the year. If you are interested in going as a group sometime between now and December, please speak with Ruth Hewlett.

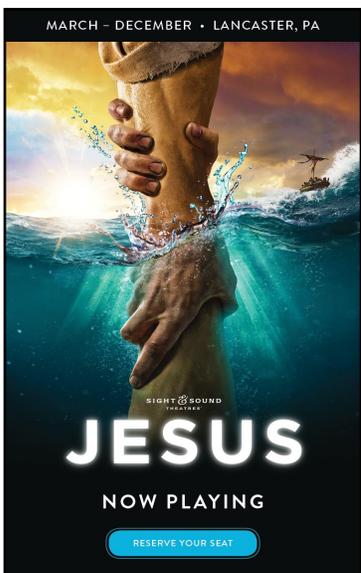


BIRTHDAYS

- 25 Clara Streets
- 28 Curtis Gerzevske
- 29 Charlu Schilling
- 30 Meghan Gerzevske

ANNIVERSARIES

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



Come Walk With Us!

Who: You, your kids, grandkids, dogs, neighbors...

What: Neighborhood Walk

Where: ORLC, 10 Johnson Rd.

When: Last Saturday of every month, 9 a.m.

Why: To get to know our neighbors, get outdoors, etc.

