

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
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 Rev. Dr. John Rickert, Pastor

MARCH 2022

LENT

Christ in the Old Testament... When I was in Jr. Catechism class, I learned that Jesus was the "scarlet thread" that bound the entire Bible together. This was my pastor's way of saying that Jesus is the main theme of the entire Bible, both Old and New Testaments. This is quite obvious in the New Testament, but maybe not so obvious in the Old.

In the Old Testament we have the story about God creating the heavens and the earth, but the name "Jesus" does not appear. In the Old Testament we read about the animal sacrifices the people were to make, but again the name "Jesus" doesn't appear. In the Old Testament a great deal of space is given to the Ark of the Covenant, the Tabernacle and the Temple, but again we have a hard time finding the name "Jesus" in these passages. Was my dear pastor wrong?

Of course, you know I'm going to say he was right. But that poses the question, "Where is Jesus in all those passages and stories where we don't find the name 'Jesus'?" That is the question we will be exploring this Lent during our Wednesday services.

We will be skipping the super-obvious passages, like Isaiah 53 and the other "suffering servant" passages. We will also not have time to look at how the stories of Noah, Abraham, King David, and so on, all point us to Jesus. We will not have time.

The first Wednesday (March 2) we will be using the assigned lessons for Ash Wednesday. These readings accent that we find forgiveness from our God. We will see how the forgiving God is Christ our Lord, so when you read about forgiveness in the Old Testament our minds should automatically go to Jesus. (By-the-way, at our Ash Wednesday service, we will have the rite of the Imposition of Ashes as well as celebrate the Lord's Supper.)

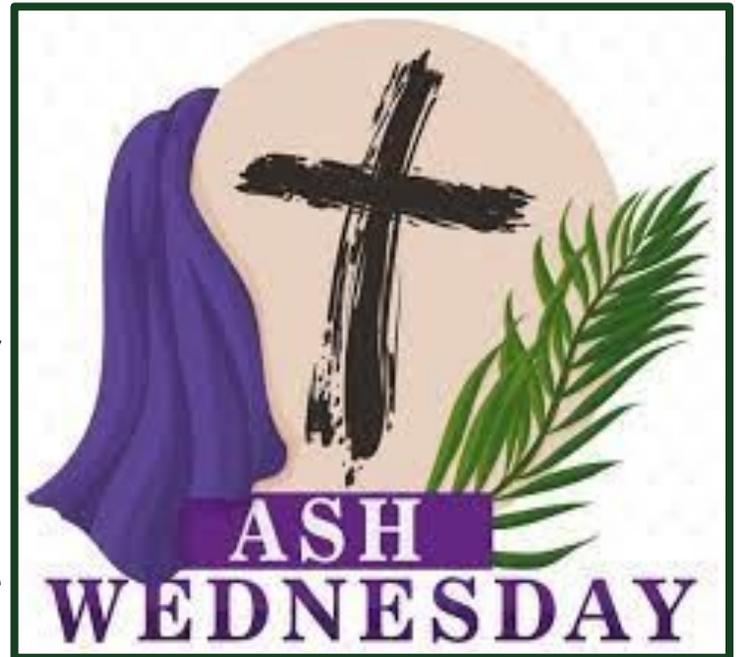
On the second Wednesday (March 9) we will find Jesus active in Creation. We will look at the sacrificial system as a picture of Jesus during our third service (March 16). For the fourth Wednesday (March 23), we will look at how the Old Testament often calls Jesus a rock. On the fifth Wednesday (March 30) we will think about how the Ark of the Covenant points us to Jesus. Finally, on Wednesday, April 6, we will look at how the Tabernacle and Temple preach Jesus to us.

There are lots of other ways the Old Testament directs us to Jesus but there are only so many Wednesdays in Lent. I will be hoping that these messages will help us find our Lord Jesus in the Old Testament, just as the Apostolic Church did.

Our Wednesday Lenten services will begin at 7:00 PM. We will not have a meal this year with our Wednesday services (COVID protocols). We will, however, have light refreshments following the service for those who wish to hang-out for a bit.

May our Lord Jesus bless you this Lententide

Pastor





DIGGING IN The Nicene Creed Third Article, Part 1

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Last month we concluded our look at the second article of the Nicene Creed. This month we turn our attention to the third article, which begins with the statement that we believe in the Holy Spirit.

If you remember back to when I began this series, then you might remember that the first council at Nicaea was held in 325 to examine the claims of a false teacher named Arius. Arius' main flaws dealt with Jesus. The Holy Spirit was not a controversial topic, so the actual original text of the third article for the Nicene Creed was simply, "I/We believe in the Holy Spirit."

As time went on, this short statement was felt to be inadequate. A second ecumenical council was convened in 381, this time in Constantinople. Among other things, they expanded the third article. The only future modification of the Creed comes with the expanding of the "proceeding" section, which we will cover when we get to that part of the Creed.

When we confess faith in the Holy Spirit, we are confessing him as a "person," the third person of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit is a being that has his own individual and complete identity. Therefore, while the Spirit is God, the Spirit is distinct from the Father and the Son.

We find the Spirit present at creation, where he is called the "Spirit of Elohim" (*Elohim* is typically translated "God." It is a plural noun.)

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. (Genesis 1:2)

In similar manner, the Holy Spirit is called the "Spirit of Yahweh" (Yahweh typically is translated as "LORD," spelled with capital letters. It is the name God uses for himself when speaking to Moses at the burning bush. It means something like "I Am who I Am")

The Spirit of the LORD was upon him [Othniel], and he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand. And his hand prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim. (Judges 3:10)

He is also called "Holy" in the Old Testament.

Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. (Psalm 51:11)

Sometimes he is simply called the "Spirit."

So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him." (Numbers 27:18)

There are some less common names/titles given the Holy Spirit. For example, in Nehemiah 9:20, he is called a "Good Spirit." In Job 33:4, he is called he is called the "Breath of the Almighty." In Isaiah 11 we have a whole list of names for the Holy Spirit.



And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him [Jesus],
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and might,
the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. (Isaiah 11:2)

All these passages that identify the Holy Spirit as distinct from the Father and the Son, are taken from the Old Testament. Old Testament believers believed in the Holy Spirit, as well as the Father and the Son. Of course we learn a lot about the Spirit from the New Testament. In

Ancient Christian Doctrine 4 (IVP Academic, Downers Grove, IL 1) Joel Elowsky wrote:

The recorded history of the Gospels and the letters of Paul and Peter paint the picture of a personal Spirit

who can be lied to [Acts 5:3] and resisted [Acts 7:51]. The Spirit is called God [Acts 5:4, 9]. He is referred to as a witness to Christ alongside the apostles [Acts 5:32], and also as collaborating in decisions such as those at the council of Jerusalem [Acts 15:28]. He fills the faithful [Acts 6:5-6; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24; 13:52]. He is given by grace and received by faith [Acts 8:15-18; 19:1-6]. Etc.

When Jesus gave us the baptismal formula in Matthew 28, he was not teaching anything new about God. To believe in the One true **God is to believe in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One simple application of this truth is that those who speak of "the God of the Old Testament" as being somehow different from "the God of the New Testament" don't know the Bible nor the power of God. As all true believers before us, we worship the "Trinity in Unity and the Unity in Trinity"** (Athanasian Creed)

Next month we will continue exploring what we are confessing in the Third Article of the Nicene Creed. Until next month, "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). Amem

March—Lent

March begins with Ash Wednesday observance. Luke's Gospel leads with the temptation of Jesus and then reminds us of His sorrow over the lack of faith in Israel. He reminds them that if they fail to repent they will perish. Later Jesus tells the parables of the lost sheep and the lost son.

Also in Joel we are urged to focus our heart on Jesus and place our faith in Him. The message from Deuteronomy speaks of first fruits and tithes. When Jeremiah warns the people to repent he is threatened with death. Ezekiel is called to be a watchman for the house of Israel and is given a message for the people. In a change of pace, provides the people with songs of praise which he offers the people to sing to the Lord.

Our Lenten services also include and appeal in Romans for our confession of faith that assures our salvation. And in Philipians is a reminder to live a life acceptable to the Lord.

The Corinthians message is to note the errors of Israel so that we do not follow them.

Then there is the reminder that we are new creations in Christ and should reflect that in our lives since we are redeemed from sin and assured salvation by our faith in Christ's resurrection.

Arlen D. Besel—Worship

The Only Good Thing

Advent Devotions were written by Dr. Kari Vo.

Genesis 45:3-8a, 9-10a, 11a, 15a - And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his presence. So Joseph said to his brothers, "Come near to me, please." And they came near. And he said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are yet five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here,

but God. ... Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; do not tarry. You shall dwell in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me ... There I will provide for you...' And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them.

The story of Joseph is a story of great evil. It's the story of a spoiled young man whose brothers sell him into slavery and tell their father he is dead. Joseph ends up in Egypt far away, where he sinks even lower, winding up in jail for years. And there, in the jail, he does a kindness to a government official—only to have him forget all about Joseph's plea for freedom.

Surely if anybody had reason to lose his faith in God, Joseph did. He had lost everything not just once but three

THROUGH THE WORSHIP WINDOW



times over. What good could possibly come out of this evil?

Joseph didn't know, but he clung to God—possibly out of sheer desperation.

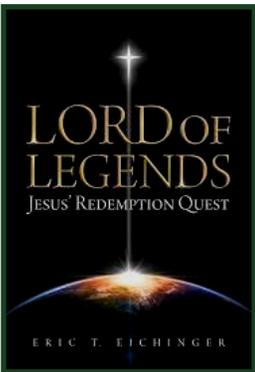
You may have never been a slave, but I'm guessing you know that place—the place where you have nothing left to cling to but God Himself. The point where you know in your gut that your faith is no credit to you, because you have no other options. The point where Jesus becomes your life and hope and comfort, because you can no longer run away to other false gods—your life has taken them all away.

Joseph is looking back at that when he talks to his brothers. They are still caught in the web of fear and hatred and guilt and pain, but Joseph is not. He has come out of the crucible with the only thing worthwhile—with God Himself. Strangely enough, he can even see God's hand in the evil that happened to him. Terrible as it was, God has brought good out of it. The evil was real, yes—but so is God's redemption.

You might be able to look back at your life already and say, "Yes, God brought good out of that great evil I lived through." Or you might still be in the suffering, clinging to Jesus with all your heart. Either way you know what Joseph did—that Jesus is all in all to you, your only Savior, the One who holds on to you. And because you know that, sooner or later He can make you a channel of His help and comfort to others as well

Arlen D. Besel – Ambassador

Book Review



Lord of Legends: Jesus' Redemption Quest
Publisher: Concordia Publishing House
Author: Eric T. Eichinger
146 pages, paperback © 2022

"Let me tell you a story. It begins far outside our solar system. A father, under perilous circumstances, sends his only son to earth. The infant is taken in by a kind and unsuspecting couple. The child possesses talents well beyond the abilities of mortals. He grows up and becomes the champion for truth and justice. The world has never seen someone quite like him before and marvels at his power. Some love him, others hate him.

"Intriguingly, he has a dual identity. He is entirely human in appearance and at heart, raised and cultured by human parents. He appreciates and cares for all the same values and concerns. Yet at the same time, he is also greater than human, almost godlike in stature. He is truly a mysterious hero—a savior from beyond the stars—come from the heavens to rescue the planet. He carries the weight of the world on his shoulders. He is even willing to sacrifice all of himself for the sake of humanity. During one notable incident, he surrenders himself to death for a sad season, only to return triumphant and victorious over the villain, to the astonishment of all.

"Who is this super man, might you ask?

"If you said, "Superman," you are both correct and incorrect at the same time. While this origin story is explicitly about Superman, it is also strikingly recognizable on a deeper, more profound level. When comic book creators Joe Shuster (artist) and Jerry Siegel (writer) brought this character to life in the pages of Action Comics #1 (1938), there was also an unintentional yet undeniable underlying parallel story. The readily obvious root source of this story is none other than Jesus Christ."

Thus, Eric Eichinger begins his new book Lord of Legends. The story of Superman is not the only epic hero's story with parallels to our Lord Jesus. Eichinger maintains that this reaches back to the myths of the ancient world and forward to such classics like the Lord of the Rings and the Wizard of Oz. He gives compelling reasons to believe Jesus is the ultimate pattern for the standard hero story arc.

The chapters of the book basically follow the story of Jesus, starting with his birth and moving towards the Second Coming (the hope that your favorite book will have a sequel). In the books of fiction, we can find John the Baptist, the Apostles, the enemies of Jesus, and more. Eichinger maintains that these parallels are often unacknowledged.

I enjoyed the book. It gives us a wonderful way to rethink many of our favorite stories. It might also open to us ways to communicate the Gospel to friends. Imagine that you and a friend have just watched the latest Spiderman movie. As you leave the theater you comment, "You know that part where Spiderman did ...? It kind of reminded me of when Jesus ..."

Good reading

Pastor

NEWS & NOTES



Reminder—Pastor's Email Has Changed

Please update your files with Pastor's new email address as follows: pastor-oricde@outlook.com In preparation for retirement, Pastor Rickert will no longer be using personal email. This change will allow the new pastor to have a working email in place from the start.

Offering Envelopes

If you have not yet done so, please pick up your 2022 offering envelopes from the overflow room located off the sanctuary. There are still a few waiting for pickup.

Build -A-Bag— Marybeth Cooley

With the blessing of recently donated comforters, warm blankets, and two actual sleeping bags, we were able to quickly make 5 sleeping bags and repair one used bag. Plus, Dennis Boon donated a "like new" sleeping bag. By February 15 we donated 7 more sleeping bags to the Newark Empowerment Center. I saw Josh our contact at the center when I dropped off the 4 bags in the picture. He told me about one client that recently came in and was offered a sleeping bag. The client had a choice of a new sleeping bag, or our handmade bags, they chose our bag because the materials looked warmer. I pray that they read our enclosed note and their heart was opened to receive the Lord's salvation and grace. I ask you to pray for God's presence and guidance of all people who are without the basic physical needs for food and shelter.

The note below is put in each sleeping bag that is donated to the Newark Empowerment Center:

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ!
Please accept this gift with our sincere Christian love and our desire that this bag provide you some comfort. We pray that the God of all grace and mercy would open doors for you that you would experience relief, stability, and tranquility. We offer this bag to you in solidarity for we are Christians who have known hardship, loss, sickness, grief, and despair. We are also people who rely upon the Lord for our provision and protection. Above all, we rely upon the Lord for our salvation. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of His Holy Spirit be and abide with you always. Amen.



Spring Cleaning Time! Once again we have been blessed with an abundance of toiletry items and are planning to share these items by filling cosmetic bags to donate to a women's shelter. We need clean, new or gently used, cosmetic bags (or small zippered bags) and any free samples from store cosmetic counters (or your Avon lady) that could provide a little something extra beyond the basics. Sample size facial moisturizer, makeup, lipstick, lip balm, eye makeup and colognes will be accepted. A collection box will be put on the counter in the narthex and by the church office. Please keep us in mind when cleaning out your closets and drawers this spring. We will meet March 15, 22 & 29 at 10 a.m. Join us in serving the Lord and our community. On the job training provided. Contact MaryBeth at 410-398-1452.

Congregational Life: Lenten Fellowship—Lina Bedsteter

Fellowship hour will follow the 7 pm. Lenten Services beginning March 3 with Ash Wednesday and continue on March 9, 16, 23, 30, through April 6. Everyone is welcome to attend. COVID procedures will continue to be followed. Our future church activities will resume by "God's grace" when the outcome of the virus is determined. We pray that we can all meet together again for worship in the Lord's House. God's blessings to all!

Little Lending Library—Julie Hockersmith

As most of you know ORLC has installed a Lending Library near our community garden. We are trying to restock the library at least once a month with both children's books of all ages and some adult novels and history books.

The neighborhood seems to be enjoying the library. We have received positive comments. The library is good example of communication and staying in touch with the neighborhood. In that light, we again need your help. We need books, especially children's books and young adult novels. We have heard from other Lending Libraries that adult books tend to be returned more frequently than children's books That appears to be happening in our library.

If you have any books that you would consider donating to us, we would appreciate it very much. If you have no books, but would like to help, the Elkton Salvation Army has children's books on sale for \$.50. On Wednesdays everything in the store is on sale for, I believe, 30% off.

If you need someone to pick up books at your house, I would be happy to do that. Thank you for any help you can give us.

Evangelism—Mike Cannatelli

The Evangelism Committee has been exploring how to buy ads on Facebook tagging the 19713 zip code area. This is an effort to reach thousands of folks within the 2 mile area of the church and let them know ORLC is here in their neighborhood, ready and able to offer them a solid time of worship during the Lent/Easter Season



Kathy O'Malley has been the lead person on this project and did the digging to find out how FB ads work, the format needed, costs, how to pay for the ads, etc. She put together a nice looking cover ad where the folks can click and see more details. She has provided a Google map showing where we are plus the dates and times of our Wednesday evening Lenten services beginning with Ash Wednesday. She also included Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Kathy provided the church website and link to the YouTube online worship, as well as promoting the FM 88.3 for those who might prefer to do "Drive In" style church, etc. She also mentions that masks are required.

Kathy will set things up so that our ad launches on Monday February 28, and runs for 15 days until March 14. It will start up again on April 2 and run another 15 days through April 16th. The ads Kathy has set with the Facebook will cost \$5 a day for 30 days for a total of \$150. This is far less expensive than the Christmas post cards we sent out in December at a cost of \$295 and only covered 444 homes in Chestnut Hill Estates. The Newark Weekly Post charges \$79 for a small ad that runs one time. Hopefully we will see some new faces in church, in the parking lot doing "Drive In" style church, or online.

Social Ministry—Ruth Hewlett

Orphan Grain Train continues to prepare for another shipment in March. Support has been sent to New Orleans and is being prepared for Kentucky. OGT is in need of someone to help do minor repairs of donated clothing, hems, seams etc. Please contact me if you are willing to help.

The Food Bank is grateful for all donations received in November. Our Sleeping Bag mission continues. We have delivered 20 sleeping bags to Newark Empowerment Center along with toiletries and other supplies to a women's shelter in Elkton.

Stream Team Reaches 2,420 Views

Sending out ripples of messages...Three cheers for the Stream Team! You are making a difference. Since streaming began in 2020, Our Redeemer has garnered 2,420 viewers. In 2020 when streaming began mid-year, 562 viewers followed Our Redeemer online. During 2021, 1,505 individuals watched services via YouTube. So far in 2022, we have had 353 views. This averages out to 27 views per week. Thank you!

Thank You—Julie Hockersmith

Thank you to all the members of ORLC for the lovely Christmas gift card you gave to me. In the past I have written a thank you note and put it on the bulletin board. As I was writing this year's card, I happened to think of the many of you who are not able to come to the church because of the COVID virus. So I am writing a thank you this way in the monthly newsletter to thank you for your support all these years. You are a wonderful and thoughtful congregation. I am so lucky to be a part of all of you.

God Bless You
Julie Hockersmith



12th Scott Kruelle
13th Carl Kruelle



March 2022

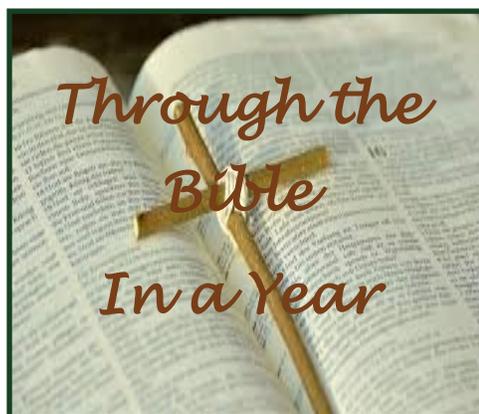
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
SERVING: Pastor—Rev. Dr. John Rickert Organists—Julie Hockersmith David Rash Ushers—Arten Besel Dennis Boon Jim Rose	SERVING: Lectors— 3/06—Julie Hockersmith 3/13—Gary Weaver 3/20—Kitty Rickert 3/27—Mike Cannatelli	SERVING: Stream Team 3/06—DiBenedettos 3/13— 3/20— 3/27—	Ash Wednesday Service 7pm	Winkle Junior Confirmation 5 pm		
Worship Service—Divine 1, 10 am Communion 			Lenten Service 7 pm	Junior Confirmation 5 pm		
Worship Service—Divine 1, 10 am Daylight Savings Time Begins	CHECA 7 p.m.	Build-A-Bag 10 am	Lenten Service 7 pm	Junior Confirmation 5 pm		
Worship Service—Divine 10 am Communion Council 12 p.m./ Zoom Newsletter Info Due 		Build-A-Bag 10 am	Lenten Service 7 pm	Junior Confirmation 5 pm		
Worship Service—Divine 1, 10 am		Build-A-Bag 10 am	Lenten Service 7 pm	Junior Confirmation 5 pm		

MARCH BIBLE READINGS

- 1** Isaiah 64:1-9
Numbers 16-18
- 2** Psalm 85
Numbers 19-21
- 3** Psalm 86
Numbers 22-24
- 4** Psalm 87
Numbers 25-27
- 5** Psalm 88
Numbers 28-30
- 6** Psalm 89
Numbers 31-33
- 7** Psalm 90
Numbers 34-36
- 8** Psalm 91
Deuteronomy 1-3
- 9** Psalm 92
Deuteronomy 4-6
- 10** Psalm 93
Deuteronomy 7-9
- 11** Psalm 94
Deuteronomy 10-12
- 12** Psalm 95
Deuteronomy 13-15
- 13** Psalm 96
Deuteronomy 16-18
- 14** Psalm 97
Deuteronomy 19-21
- 15** Psalm 98
Deuteronomy 22-24
- 16** Psalm 99
Deuteronomy 25-27



- 17** Psalm 100
Deuteronomy 28-30
 - 18** Psalm 101
Deuteronomy 31-34
 - 19** Psalm 102
Luke 1
 - 20** Psalm 103
Luke 2-3
 - 21** Psalm 104
Luke 4-5
 - 22** Psalm 105
Luke 6-7
 - 23** Psalm 106
Luke 8-9
 - 24** Psalm 107
Luke 10-11
 - 25** Psalm 108
Luke 12-13
 - 26** Psalm 109
Luke 14-15
 - 27** Psalm 110
Luke 16-17
 - 28** Psalm 111
Luke 18-19
 - 29** Psalm 112
Luke 20-21
 - 30** Psalm 113
Luke 22
 - 31** Isaiah 64:1-9
Luke 23-24
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