



The Truth Will Set You Free

"If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples. You will also know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

—John 8:31,32

The 509th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation
East Valley Area Reformation Service
Emmanuel Ev. Lutheran Church
Tempe, Arizona
October 25, 2026



THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION

Today we celebrate the Festival of the Reformation of the Church. The heart of the gospel is the forgiveness of sins, purchased and won for us through the innocent death of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who was slain for the sin of the world. The teaching of the Christian Church is based on Scripture alone. Neither church traditions, the decrees of popes and councils, nor emotion or reason can replace the pure Word of God as the foundation of truth.

Jesus told the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, then you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” This was a core principle of the Lutheran Reformation. God’s Word is truth, and we want to hold onto the entire truth of God’s Word without departing from it.

In the 21st Century, the truth of God is trivialized, relativized, discarded, and disregarded. This fact is rampant in the secular world. Sadly, even in visible churches today the truth of God’s Word is brushed aside in favor of man-made teachings that are more palatable or more reasonable. People want to be scratched where they itch, and today there is no shortage of teachers who will tell people what they want to hear.

The quality of a visible church is not measured by the size of its attendance, the eloquence of its speakers, or the beauty of its buildings. Jesus says, “If you continue in my word, then you are really my disciples.” We want to teach and preach and believe *only* what is true, for in God’s true Word alone is life.

Today we gather to observe the 509th anniversary of the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation. We celebrate the grace of God who reformed his Church and brought back the pure, simple, beautiful truth of the gospel of free forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus our Savior.

Area Reformation service

October 25, 2026, 4:00 p.m.—The truth will set you free

For your convenience, please take note of the following:

- Restrooms are to the left as you exit the sanctuary.
- Nursery. There is a room where children may be quieted to the left down the hall across from the bathrooms as you exit the sanctuary.
- Hearing assistance. A hearing loop is available in the worship area for hearing aids equipped with a T-coil.



If there is any other way in which we can assist you, let us know.

DIVINE SERVICE

Pre-Service Music

Opening Hymn

Join the vocalists in singing the entire hymn.

877 Reformation Song

arr. Dan Kreider



Please stand.

Invocation

The grace of our Lord ✠ Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

*During our services,
the congregation
speaks the responses
in **bold**.*

Confession of Sins

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we gather today as the Church of God. We are his beloved saints, bought with his own blood,

Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

We are surrounded by enemies, who lead us into temptation, sin and shame and seek to destroy our hope in Jesus. The world calls to us with its seductions and empty promises. Satan, our ancient foe, tries to deceive us with his murderous lies.

Have mercy on us, O Lord! Do not let us fall into the hands of our enemies, who desire the eternal destruction of our immortal souls.

We fight against the enemy within. We each battle our own sinful nature, the Old Adam that we inherited from sinful parents and now lives in each of us.

I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do — this I keep on doing.

Let us confess our sins to God our Father — the sin we have fallen into because of temptations from outside us, and the sin we have indulged because of the sinful desires within us. Let us seek refuge in the infinite mercy of God:

O almighty God, merciful Father, I a poor, miserable sinner confess to you all my sins and iniquities, with which I have ever offended you. I have deserved your punishment, both now and in eternity. But I am heartily sorry for them, and I sincerely repent of them. I pray that of your boundless mercy, and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ: Be merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

Silence for meditation and reflection.

Absolution

*The sign of the cross
reminds us of our
Baptism, when we
were forgiven and
clothed with Christ.*

*At our Baptism the
pastor said, "Receive
the sign of the holy
cross, both upon the
head and upon the
heart, to mark you as
a redeemed child of
God."*

Christ has died! Christ has risen! Christ will come again! For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world through him.

Therefore upon this your confession, I by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of God's Word announce the grace of God to you: In the place and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The works of the Lord are great and glorious; his name is worthy of praise.

Glory to God in the Highest

Gloria

Tune: AURELIA

*In response to God's
gift of forgiveness in
Jesus, and in
thankfulness for all his
blessings, we praise
God with our lips and
with our lives.*

1 To God on high be glo - ry and peace to all the earth,
2 O Lamb of God ex - alt - ed, you take all sin a - way;

for God has shown his fa - vor in Je - sus' ho - ly birth!
ex - tend to us your mer - cy and hear us as we pray.

Al - might - y God and Fa - ther, our hum - ble thanks we bring;
With God the Ho - ly Spir - it, at God the Fa - ther's throne,

we wor - ship you, we bless you, Lord God, our heav'n - ly King.
you reign, O Christ, for - ev - er, for you are Lord a - lone!

Prayer of the Day

Lord Jesus, your Spirit calls and gathers the whole Church on earth and empowers it for service. Guide and preserve the work we do in our congregation and with other congregations in our synod. Keep us faithful to your Word, and give us courage to confess your truth boldly. Bestow upon our leaders pure hearts, clear vision, and patient faith. Raise up new generations of faithful witnesses who will join us to proclaim the gospel to every person.

Amen.

Be seated.

The Word

First Reading

Romans 3:9-12, 19-28

The Truth Will Set You Free: From the error of salvation by works

⁹ What then? Are we any better off? No, not at all! In fact, we have already made the charge that all (both Jews and Greeks) are under sin. ¹⁰ Just as it is written:

There is no one who is righteous, not even one.

¹¹ There is no one who understands. There is no one who searches for God.

¹² They all turned away; together they became useless.

There is no one who does what is good; there is not even one.

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says is addressed to those who are under the law, so that every mouth will be silenced and the whole world will be subject to God's judgment. ²⁰ For this reason, no one will be declared righteous in his sight by works of the law, for through the law we become aware of sin.

²¹ But now, completely apart from the law, a righteousness from God has been made known. The Law and the Prophets testify to it. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all and over all who believe.

In fact, there is no difference, ²³ because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God publicly displayed as the atonement seat through faith in his blood. God did this to demonstrate his justice, since, in his divine restraint, he had left the sins that were committed earlier unpunished. ²⁶ He did this to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so that he would be both just and the one who justifies the person who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ What happens to boasting then? It has been eliminated. By what principle — by the principle of works? No, but by the principle of faith. ²⁸ For we conclude that a person is justified by faith without the works of the law.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

We cannot keep the law! We need a righteousness outside ourselves to cover and clothe us.

Those who teach we can be saved by what we do to please God are pointing people away from Jesus and toward their own efforts.

Responsive Hymns

637 The Law of God is Good and Wise

1 The law of God is good and wise and sets his
5 The law is good, but since the fall its ho - li -

will be - fore our eyes, shows us the way of right - eous -
ness con - demns us all; it dooms us for our sin to

ness, and dooms to death when we trans - gress.
die and has no pow'r to jus - ti - fy.

650 From Depths of Woe, Lord God, I Cry

2 What we have done on our best day is flawed from
its be - gin - ning; on - ly your grace can clear a - way
the guilt of all our sin - ning. Be - fore you
pride must dis - ap - pear; each soul must live in
rev - 'rent fear, up - on your grace re - ly - ing.

558 Salvation Unto Us Has Come



1 Sal - va - tion un - to us has come by God's free grace and
10 All bless - ing, hon - or, thanks, and praise to Fa - ther, Son, and
fa - vor; good works can - not a - vert our doom, they help and
Spir - it, the God who saved us by his grace; all glo - ry
save us nev - er. Faith looks to Je - sus Christ a - lone, who
to his mer - it! O tri - une God in heav'n a - bove, you
did for all the world a - tone; he is our one Re - deem - er.
have re - vealed your sav - ing love; your bless - ed name be hal - lowed!

Second Reading

Ephesians 1:3-14

The Truth Will Set You Free: From the error of salvation by our own choice

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

⁴ He did this when he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, so that we would be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ. He did this in accordance with the good purpose of his will, ⁶ and for the praise of his glorious grace, which he has graciously given us in the one he loves.

⁷ In him we also have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in keeping with the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished on us in all wisdom and insight. ⁹ He made known to us the mystery of his will in keeping with his good purpose, which he planned in Christ. ¹⁰ This was to be carried out when the time had fully come, in order to bring all things together in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In him we have also obtained an inheritance, because we were predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in keeping with the purpose of his will. ¹² He did this so that his glory would be praised as a result of us, who were the first to hope in Christ.

¹³ In him, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and in him, when you also believed, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. ¹⁴ He is the down payment of our inheritance until the redemption of God's own possession, so that his glory would be praised.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

We were chosen in Christ before the creation of the world.

Those who teach we are saved because of our choice to accept Jesus or invite him into our heart turn people away from the work of the Holy Spirit and toward their own choice and free will.

Anthem

Saved By Grace

Shane Barnard

*Just a-singin' a gospel song today.
Get ready to send the years of guilt and shame away.
The years of failing, the years of nailing up yourself to a cross you can't bear,
That's why he's there.*

*What a beautiful day when he washed all our sins away.
What a beautiful day.*

*By grace you have been saved.
By grace through faith.*

*And in the faith I have to sing,
"Hallelujah to my King!"
It's freely given that I might not boast in myself but in him.*

*What a beautiful day when he washed all our sins away.
What a beautiful day.*

*By grace you have been saved.
By grace through faith.*

*Can't sing it enough,
Say it enough,
Play it enough.
When will I get it?
Oh, I can't earn it!
And no, I don't deserve it!
Can't say it enough!*

*By grace you have been saved.
By grace through faith.*

Please stand for the Gospel.

Gospel

John 8:31,32

The Truth Will Set You Free: From the error of spiritual apathy

Remaining in Jesus' word is the only way to discern truth from error and grow spiritually.

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples. ³² You will also know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

**The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to you, O Christ!**

Please be seated.

Anthem

Continue in My Word

Zebulon M. Highben

*"If you continue in my Word, you are truly my disciples;
And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."*

"For if the Son has made you free, you will be free indeed."

*Lord, keep us steadfast in your word;
Curb those who by deceit or sword
Would wrest the kingdom from your Son
And bring to naught all he has done.*

Be seated.

Hymn of the Day

The choir sings stanza 3.

863 A Mighty Fortress

arr. Michael Costello

Confession of Faith

The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Offering

Musical Offering

Join to sing the hymn while we gather the offering.

568 His Robes for Mine

The Nicene Creed is confessed by Christians around the world. 2026 marks the 1,701-year anniversary of this confession of faith.



Connection card

*During the offering
we ask that you
complete an online
connection card.*



Give online

*If you prefer
online giving, you
may scan this code.*

Personal Preparation for Holy Communion

As you prepare to receive the Sacrament today, you may use the Christian Questions on page 295 in your blue hymnal or Personal Preparation for Holy Communion on page 19 of this service folder.

Please stand.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

The Sacrament

The Proper Preface to the Sacrament has been part of the Christian liturgy since ancient times. Already in the first century Christians may have spoken these words, as they prepared for Holy Communion.

The Lord be with you.



C: And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts.



C: We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



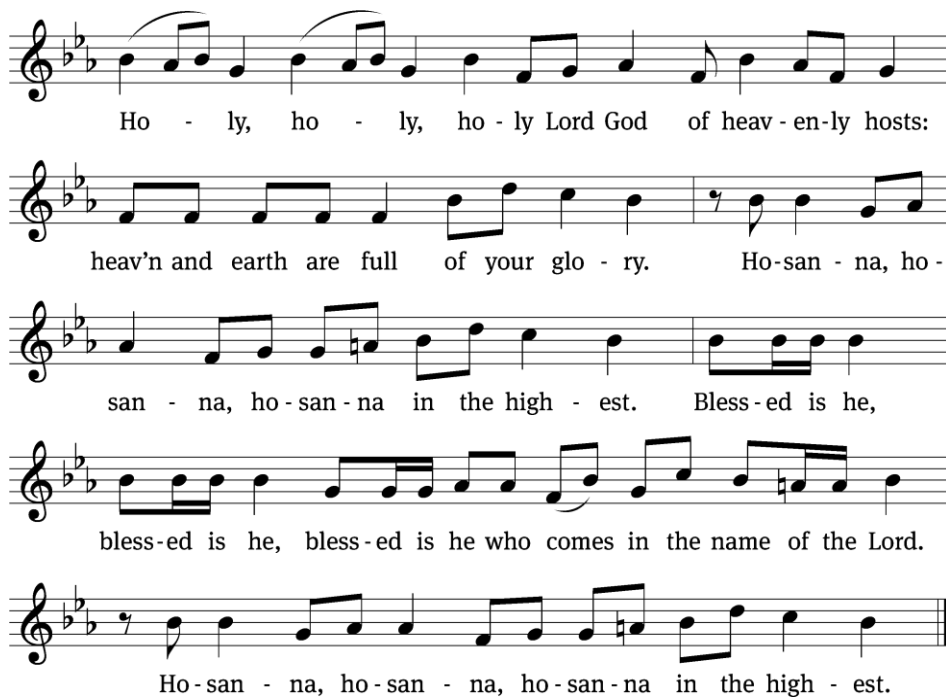
C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. By his saints and witnesses of the past he encourages us to run with perseverance the race marked out for us and to live in righteousness and peace.

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory for ever and ever:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Sanctus



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san - na, ho -
san - na, ho-san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he,
bless-ed is he, bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho-san - na, ho-san - na, ho-san-na in the high - est.

The Prophet Isaiah saw a vision of the Lord seated on his throne, praised and glorified by angels. We echo their song of praise, as we prepare to meet the Lord coming to us in Holy Communion.

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my ✠ body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my ✠ blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.



C: A - men.

In the Words of Institution, the words of Jesus are brought to the earthly elements, so that we have what they say: the true body and blood of Christ, together with the bread and wine.

O Christ, Lamb of God

Agnus Dei

John the Baptist pointed to Jesus and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." The forgiveness won for the world at the cross is given to us personally in the sacrament.

O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;
have mer-cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;
grant us your peace. A - men.

Be seated.

Distribution

Members and any guests who have spoken with a pastor prior to the service about receiving Communion may come forward at the direction of the ushers.

Holy Communion is served via continuous distribution. At the direction of the ushers, please come forward up the side aisles. As you pause to receive the host, turn to face the altar. The pastor will say, "The body of Christ, given for you." Move toward the center, and again pause and turn toward the altar. The pastor will say, "The blood of Christ poured out for you." You may choose to be served from the tray or the chalice. The low-gluten wafers are in a soufflé cup on the paten. The grape-colored cups in each tray are alcohol-removed wine. You may place your empty cup into the receptacle at the front of the pews before returning to your seat by the center aisle.

Distribution Anthem

Yet Not I but through Christ with Me

Jonny Robinson, Rich Thompson, Michael Farren

*What gift of grace is Jesus, my Redeemer
There is no more for Heaven now to give
He is my joy, my righteousness, and freedom
My steadfast love, my deep and boundless peace*

*To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus
For my life is wholly bound to His
Oh, how strange and divine, I can sing, "All is mine"
Yet not I, but through Christ in me*

*No fate I dread, I know I am forgiven
The future's sure, the price, it has been paid
For Jesus bled and suffered for my pardon
And He was raised to overthrow the grave*

*To this I hold, my sin has been defeated
Jesus, now and ever is my plea
Oh, the chains are released, I can sing, "I am free"
Yet not I, but through Christ in me*

Distribution Hymns

560 Your Works, Not Mine, O Christ

664 Wide Open Stand the Gates

Following the distribution, please stand.

Thanksgiving

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

His mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

We proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift.

We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The Blessing

Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.

Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

Please remain standing for the closing hymn.

Closing Hymn

God's Word Is Our Great Heritage

The closing hymn may be sung in four-part harmony.

God's Word is our great her - i - tage and shall be ours for - e - ver; to

spread its light from age to age shall be our chief en - deav - or. Through

life it guides our way, in death it is our stay. Lord, grant, while

worlds en - dure, we keep its teach - ings pure through -

out all gen - er - a - - - tions. A - - - men.

Please be seated following the closing hymn.

Post-Service Music

Serving at Worship

Preaching minister

Pastor Timothy P. Henning
Hope Lutheran Church, Chino Valley and Prescott, Arizona

Presiding minister

Pastor Jon D. Buchholz
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Tempe, Arizona

Communion assistance

Pastor Daniel Gensmer
Pastor Daniel Pautz
Pastor Gary Pufahl
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Tempe, Arizona

Organ

John Nolte

Acolyte

Carter

Sound

George Willis

Video streamer and slides

Chris Wempner, Jacob Pufahl

Video captions

Chris Wempner

Special Thanks

Choirs: Adult Choir (singers from the East Valley), Junior Choir (Emmanuel Lutheran and Grace Lutheran)

Brass: Norm Andrews, Nathan Crabtree, Ava Diaz, Kali Gonzalez, JJ Grams, Lucas Hahnke, Maddie Leppert, Sebastian Mihilli, Zoe Willis

Woodwinds: Barb Andrews, Michele Bayer, Isabel Bischoff, Autumn Bode, Leia Hahnke, Ella Krup, Kris Pufahl, Olivena Ruppel, Jacob Sallquist, Josh and Rachel Severeid

Strings: Kali Gonzalez, Tim Kriewall, Rachel Kulhanek, Michael Wilde, Heidi Zimmermann

Timpani: Alicia Benson, Josh Severeid

Vocalists: April Degner, Josh Severeid

Accompanists: Lisa Thiesfeldt, Heidi Zimmermann

Acknowledgments

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“Continue in My Word” Zebulon M. Highben, Birnamwood Publications, © 2015.

“A Mighty Fortress” arr. Michael Costello, Birnamwood Publications, © 2017.

“Yet Not I But Through Christ With Me” Jonny Robinson, Rich Thompson, Michael Farren, City Alight, © 2018.

Join us after the Reformation service

We hope that you all can join us for refreshments following the service. A fellowship meal will be served in Emmanuel’s Ministry and Education Center.

Ushers

4:00 p.m.

Eli Gruman, Benjamin Ruppel, Eric Sallquist

Communion

Thank you to Sandy Buchholz and Karen Henriksen for helping set up Communion for this weekend.

Flowers

Thank you to Randy and Rose Moore for beautifying our sanctuary with altar flowers in honor of their 46th wedding anniversary.

Notes and News

Family Fall Festival | Next Sunday (November 1)

Our annual Family Fall Festival is next Sunday, November 1, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. This is a fun, family-friendly event with Trunk-or-Treat, bounce houses and more. Visit our website (elctempe.org/fallfestival) or use the QR code for more information.

We are still in need of donations and volunteers. Donations needed include cans of soda, cases of water bottles, juice boxes, non-chocolate candy, fruit snacks, and snack size bags of: chips, pretzels, popcorn, and cookies.

In order to make this a successful event, we need people like you. If you're interested in volunteering, please visit our website by scanning the QR code. Volunteer opportunities may include: providing and decorating a trunk for Trunk-or-Treat, setting up, decorating, staffing an activity (such as bounce house, food table, etc.), clean-up and take-down ([full list of volunteer opportunities found here](#)).



*Family Fall Festival
- Information*

ASU campus ministry

Calling all Arizona State University students and college students in the Phoenix area! Light in the Valley is the WELS campus ministry that meets regularly during the school year. Our campus ministry group, led by Pastor Daniel Gensmer, meets regularly on Monday evenings at Emmanuel Lutheran Church from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. This semester, we are engaging in a Bible study based on the book "Christian, Who Are You?" If you are interested in joining, or know of a college student who would be interested, please contact Pastor Gensmer at dgensmer@elctempe.org or (615) 887-3816.

Kingdom Workers' Helping the Hurting training sessions | November 6-7

Kingdom Workers is a global, Christian nonprofit that partners with Christians to share Jesus' love while helping their neighbors. Their aim is physical and spiritual healing for the people they serve, which results in lasting change that glorifies God. One of Kingdom Workers' programs is RISE, a program that helps train advocates to support survivors of relationship abuse. They are hosting *Helping the Hurting* training sessions at Heritage Lutheran Church in Gilbert, Arizona, on Friday, November 6, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., and Saturday, November 7, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sign up for one or both sessions using [the sign-up form](#) or scan the QR code.



*Helping the Hurting
training*

Phoenix Area Lutheran Ministries (PALM)

Join your WELS (Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod) colleagues from valley churches on Saturday, November 14, at 9:00 a.m. for fellowship. The Phoenix Area Lutheran Ministries (PALM) is a group of area WELS members (men and women) gathering to share opportunities for faith and fellowship across valley WELS churches. Lamb of God will be hosting this event (599 E. Chandler Boulevard, Phoenix, Arizona 85048).

Grief Share



Grief Share

Christians grieve differently than the world around us because of the hope we have in Christ. But even though Christians grieve with hope, the loss of a loved one presents unexpected challenges as they learn to navigate a world without their loved one. The holiday season can be especially challenging. With this in mind, Emmanuel is excited to present our new Grief Share support group, which intends to provide a safe space to share our struggles, our experiences, and find comfort in God's word. If you or someone you know has struggled with grief, consider joining our Grief Share support group on either Sunday, November 22, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., or on Tuesday, December 8, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Learn more and register for either event using the QR code or visiting our website (elctempe.org/griefshare). Reach out to Pastor Gensmer with any questions.

Save the date: Advent by Candlelight | December 6

Ladies of Emmanuel (and friends and family) are invited to join us for Advent by Candlelight on Sunday, December 6, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. The event will be held in the Ministry and Education Center (MEC) at Emmanuel. This is an event put on by women, and for women. It is a time to reflect on the coming of the Savior and to help refocus our lives during the busy holiday season. It is a time of fellowship, devotion, and song.

We are currently looking for several women to host a table. That means you will have a table of up to eight ladies and be responsible for decorating your table and providing small finger foods and drinks for your table. A sign-up for hosts will be available in the coming days. Please reach out to Bethany Olson (abcolson14@gmail.com) or Alysha Bergsma (church@elctempe.org) if you would like more information.

Those of you who wish to attend but do not want to host a table, please be on the lookout for information in upcoming bulletins on how you can sign up as well.

Personal preparation for Holy Communion

The following questions for self-examination (adapted from various sources) may be helpful as you prepare to receive the Sacrament.

As we prepare to partake of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is appropriate that we diligently examine ourselves, as St Paul exhorts us. For this Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort and strengthening of those who humbly confess their sins and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But if we thus examine ourselves, we find nothing in ourselves but sin and death, from which we can in no way set ourselves free. Therefore our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy upon us and has taken upon himself our nature, so that he might fulfill the whole will and law of God and for us and for our deliverance suffer death and all that we by our sins have deserved. In order that we should more confidently believe this and be strengthened in faith and cheerful obedience to his holy will, he has instituted the holy Sacrament of his Supper, in which he feeds us with his body and gives us to drink of his blood.

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup firmly believing the words of Christ, lives in Christ and Christ in him, and has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of him, proclaiming his death — that he was delivered over for our sins and raised to life for our justification. Then with thankful hearts we commit ourselves again to take up our cross and follow him, keep his commandments, and love one another as he has loved us.

As you examine yourself, consider these questions before God, who searches the heart:

Q: Do you sincerely confess that you have sinned against God and deserved his wrath and punishment?

A: Truly you should confess, for Holy Scripture declares, “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

Q: Do you heartily repent of all your sins committed in thought, word, and action?

A: Truly you should repent, as did the penitent sinners: King David, who prayed for a contrite heart; Peter, who wept bitterly; the woman caught in adultery; the prodigal son; and others.

Q: Do you sincerely believe that God, by his grace, for Jesus’ sake, forgives you all your sins?

A: Truly you should believe, for Holy Scripture declares, “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

Q: Do you promise that with the help of the Holy Spirit you will from this time forward amend your sinful life?

A: Truly you should so promise, for Holy Scripture declares, “No one who lives in him keeps on sinning,” and Jesus himself declares, “If you love me, you will obey what I command.”

Personal prayer:

Lord Jesus, as a penitent sinner filled with joy and gratitude, I now come to your table to receive the precious food of your life-giving body and blood. May it strengthen me to remain in you as you remain in me, so that I bear much fruit in devoted service to you and in acts of love and kindness to others. Amen.

A person should examine himself before eating of the bread and drinking from the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment (1 Corinthians 11:28,29,31).



About Us

Emmanuel Lutheran Church shares the love of Jesus and the truth of his saving Word with the people in our church, our community and the world.

The objectives of our mission are:

- To **preach**, by proclaiming the Word of God, as we worship and praise God in a loving Christian atmosphere;
- To **teach**, by fostering an ongoing increase in knowledge and maturity in God's Word;
- To **reach**, by sharing the Gospel of God's Word with all people, and to do so;
- By **each** member actively participating in our ministry.

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Emmanuel Lutheran Church is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). We are united in faith and teaching with the other churches of the Wisconsin Synod as well as the churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).

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