

THE DESERT STREAM



—Isaiah 35.6

March, 2024

Redeemer Lutheran Church

redeemerscottsdale.org
7670 E. Jomax Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85262
Tel.: 480-585-7002

Sunday Worship... 9a

Sunday School... 10:30

Holy Communion

March 3, 17, 28, 31.

Virtual Bible Study

Thursdays, 7 PM on
Skype. (No Class 3/28)

Church Leadership

Tuesday, March 12th
6:30 PM at Muths

**St. Patrick's Day
Lunch**

March 17th

Ladies' Guild

Sunday, March 24th
after the Service.

All Ladies are Welcome!

*Seeking New Recruits for
Altar Guild!*

Also available to you,
Please Contact Pastor—

- **Private Confession**
- **Christianity 101**
- **Jr. Confirmation**

**The Congregation
Prays: A Guide to
Daily Devotions
In Sunday's Bulletin!**

Self-Denial, the Cross, & the Lord of Life

God made salmon to swim up-stream. They do it naturally. I don't imagine that they think about it. But it is hard for us to swim upstream, so to speak. We do think about it. We think about whether it's worth it, and if it really is the right thing to do.

The sentiment is everywhere around us: *Indulge yourself. Pamper yourself. Love yourself. Treat yourself.* That feels right. We tend to believe it. We ache to act on it. What does the Lord say? **Deny yourself**, Mark 8:34.

Why? What do you mean, Lord? *Indulge yourself*—that we never had to ask about: the meaning suggests itself to us, however we might be inclined. But this—how am I supposed to deny myself? *How much* am I supposed to deny myself? How often? In what way?

But the Lord says: **Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it**, Mark 8:35. That is all-the-way self denial. That is self-denial to the end. And I don't have it in me.

So the Lord says: **Deny yourself, take up your cross**, Mark 8:34. Otherwise I am surrounded by the suggestion to put down whatever burdens,

reject what might be the least bit uncomfortable, and walk away from whatever "*is not going to work for me.*"

The cross is uncomfortable. The cross is not self-chosen—it is chosen for you. And no one takes it up. No one. But God teaches self-denial in terms of repentance. God lays the cross on you in your callings in life. He chooses for you a humbling imposition of trouble. He makes it blessed and calls you to it. Why?

Because of the way the verse ends. The Lord Jesus says: **Deny yourself. Take up your cross. Follow me**. Mark 8:34. There He puts Himself before our eyes, not just as example, but as the sin-bearing sacrifice for all our guilt. His cross is the answer for our all our selfish self-indulgence, when we had no regard for God or our neighbor. His cross is the resolution of our desperate attempts to find our life and save it—by money and pleasure and self-love and self-service.

Follow me leads to Calvary. It leads to death. It rests in the grave. Then it rises in Indestructible Risen Life. There is More - There is Better - There is Real Life in Him and with Him.

Come and see.

Wednesdays in Lent— Midweek Devotions are on YouTube: *Redeemer Lutheran Church of Scottsdale.*

Special Services for Holy Week

Palm Sunday— 3/24 at 9 AM
Maundy Thursday—3/28 at 4 PM
Good Friday—3/29 at 4 PM

HOLY EASTER DAY—3/31

Divine Service at 9AM
Sunday School & Bible Class, 10:30
Egg Hunt, Easter Brunch to Follow

WELCOME!