**The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**Lindy, Nebraska**

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**The Rod and Staff**



**November 2017**

**A Series on the Lutheran Reformation: Luther’s Later Life**

We continue this month of November with our series on the Lutheran Reformation. When Martin Luther wrote the *Ninety-Five Theses* in 1517, that event came to represent for later generations the beginning of the era of the Reformation, which saw the rise of Lutheran and other types of Protestant churches. That is why this year of 2017 is significant; it is the 500th anniversary of that event.

When most people think about Martin Luther, they think of him as a younger man. But when the *Ninety-Five Theses* appeared in 1517, Luther was already thirty-four years old. That might not seem old to us as we live in the year 2017, but back then, before modern medicine and vaccines, thirty-four years old was by no means considered young! Most people of that time did not expect to live very long, as danger in the form of illness lurked around every corner.

Yet even as Luther was “getting up there” in years by the time that 1517 rolled around, his life continued for quite some time after that. Much of Luther’s enduring legacy comes from these later years of his life.

One unexpected thing to cross his path in this time was the issue of marriage and family. When he became an Augustinian monk years earlier, he had taken a vow that he would never be married. But he came to believe that it was a wrong vow that should not necessarily be kept. Even so, marriage was not something he sought out. At the time of the Reformation, many monks and nuns were fleeing their monasteries and convents in order to get married. In 1523, a group of nuns from the nearby town of Torgau fled to Wittenberg, hoping to meet the famed Martin Luther. The legend says that the nuns were smuggled into Wittenberg in pickle barrels. Luther managed to find husbands for all of the nuns except for one: Katharina von Bora. When Luther asked her who she would like to marry, she responded that she would prefer either the mayor of Wittenberg or Luther himself! Martin Luther married Katharina von Bora on June 13, 1525, and the date of their wedding is commemorated as a festival in Wittenberg to this day.

The couple lived in what was called the Black Cloister, which was the former residence of the Augustinian order in Wittenberg. Their house is today a museum that can be visited. Their relationship was characterized by mutual respect and humor, and their love for each other grew over time. Katharina has been credited with managing the household finances and therefore playing an important role in Luther’s work. The couple also had a total of six children, two of which died by the age of fourteen. Luther often referred to his wife as “My Katie,” and he clearly held her in high esteem.

Being a husband and father gave Luther new insight into the importance of parents in the faith-formation of their children. In 1529, Luther wrote two of his most enduring documents: the *Small Catechism* and the *Large Catechism*. These books were meant to help parents and pastors teach the basics of the Christian faith. We still use the *Small Catechism* in confirmation class, something that we can and should continue to use all throughout our lives.

Just as the earlier years of Luther’s life were filled with controversy as he challenged the authority of the Roman church, his later years were also tumultuous for different reasons. Over time, people began to look to Luther not only for spiritual guidance but also for his political insights. This did not always end well. In 1524 and 1525, peasants all over Germany began to revolt against their nobles, feeling that these nobles were treating them unjustly. Luther had also been critical of such injustices in the past, and many peasants were inspired by Luther’s example of standing up to unjust authority. But when violence began to break out all over Germany, Luther condemned the violence committed by the peasants and encouraged the nobility to crush the rebellion. Even with injustices, Luther believed in the importance of law and order. Sadly, tens of thousands of peasants across Germany were killed in the revolt.

As Luther grew older, he began to “pass the torch” to his younger colleagues, people like Philipp Melanchthon. Luther was often sick in his later years, suffering from kidney problems, likely kidney stones. Because of his poor health, Luther’s influence came largely from his writings, and he is said to have been one of the most prolific writers in history. It has been said that if you average out all of the letters, treatises, books, and doctrinal statements written by Luther over his life, Luther wrote on average two documents a week!

Coincidentally, Luther died in the same town in which he was born, in 1546. Apparently having suffered a heart attack at the age of 62, he came to the town of Eisleben where he would breathe his last. The manner in which he punished his body in his younger years as a monk and his unhealthy habit of overexerting himself with little sleep came to take their toll. The last thing he ever wrote was found in his pocket, a piece of paper with the words, “We are beggars. That’s the truth.” He referred to our status as beggars before God, who can only receive God’s salvation as a gift.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Special Announcements**

* There will be **no Sunday School** on Sunday **November 5**. **Daylight savings time ends** also on Sunday November 5. Be sure to set your clocks back an hour the night before.
* **Many thanks** to everyone who contributed to the donation drive for the River City Domestic Violence Center in Yankton. Those supplies have now been delivered and are appreciated.
* **Many thanks also** to everyone who helped with the soup and pie in Bloomfield. In particular, the women of the congregation would like to thank the youth, whose help was tremendously important!
* The money from the **ice cream social** has been donated to Randy Eckmann’s medical treatment as well as to the family of Kristi Olson, who died on June 1 of this year.
* There will be a **Reformation celebration** at Good Shepherd on **Sunday November 12 at 7:00 PM** in honor of the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther’s 95 Theses of 1517. We will have a Reformation hymn sing and presentation led by Pr. Tom and Joan Hoppe followed by dessert. Everyone welcome!
* **Thanksgiving Eve worship** will be held on Wednesday November 22 at 7:00 PM. No confirmation class that evening.
* The **annual meeting** will be held after worship on November 19.

**Commemoration of the Saints**

Lutherans do not venerate (pray to) special people called “saints.” Our Lutheran confessional documents speak against that practice. However, those same documents that prohibit the veneration of saints encourage Christian people to look to the lives of significant Christians of the past as a source of encouragement for our lives in the present.



For November of 2017, we remember Martin of Tours. He is commemorated on November 11.

Throughout this last year, we have heard a lot about the man named Martin Luther, who lived around five hundred years ago. But in November we have a chance to familiarize ourselves with the man for whom Martin Luther is named: Martin of Tours.

Back in the time of Martin Luther, infant mortality rates were high. Parents wanted to make sure that their children had the opportunity to be baptized shortly after they were born. They did not wait until family and friends could gather for the event. Luther was born on November 10 of 1483. His parents took him to the local church in Eisleben the very next day, November 11. That day was set aside to commemorate the man named Martin of Tours, and so the Luthers named their son Martin.

Martin of Tours died in 397 AD. He was a member of the Roman army stationed in what is now France. He began the process of learning about the Christian faith in preparation for baptism. One day, he approached the city of Tours, and a blind and naked beggar sat beside the gate. Martin took his cloak and cut it in half, giving one half to the beggar. Later that night, Martin had a dream in which he saw Jesus wearing the half of the cloak that he had given the beggar. Martin was baptized shortly thereafter, and he entered a monastery. Eventually he was elected the bishop of Tours.

The life of Martin of Tours served as an inspiration for many. A book about his life became widely read during the Middle Ages, and through this book Martin set an example for others of what true leadership in the church is about: being a servant and caring for “the least of these.”

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Worship Schedule**

**November 5:** All Saints’ Sunday with Holy Communion at altar rail (White)

**November 12:** Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

**November 19:** Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion continuous line (Green)

**November 22:** Thanksgiving Eve worship, 7:00 PM (Green)

**November 26:** Christ the King Sunday (White)

**Featured Hymn for November 2017:**

***Shall We Gather at the River***

*Lutheran Hymnal for Church and Home, 275*

* *Shall we gather at the river, Where bright angel feet have trod, With its crystal tide forever Flowing by the throne of God?*
	+ *Refrain: Yes, we’ll gather at the river, The beautiful, the beautiful river; Gather with the saints at the river That flows by the throne of God.*
* *On the margin of the river, Washing up its silver spray, We will talk and worship ever, All the happy golden day.*
* *Ere we reach the shining river, Lay we every burden down; Grace our spirits will deliver, And provide a robe and crown.*
* *Soon we’ll reach the shining river, Soon our pilgrimage will cease; Soon our happy hearts will quiver With the melody of peace.*

Text and Tune: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899;

*Note: Written in 1864 during an epidemic in New York when survivors asked Lowry whether they would ever see their loved ones again, this tune is considered to be one of the greatest of American gospel songs.*

**Monthly Watchword for November 2017**

God speaks, “My dwelling place shall be with them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people”

* Ezekiel 37:27 ESV

**Ushers for November:**

* Head Ushers:
	+ Keith and Donna Nielsen
* Ushers:
	+ Les and Amy Johnson
	+ Randy and Karen Hanson
	+ Jim and Sarah Petersen
	+ David and Diane Kumm

**For Further Information on LCMC and the NALC:** You can download and read the newsletters of both organizations at the following addresses:

* **http://www.lcmc.net/newsletters**
* **http://thenalc.org/newsletter/**

**Website:** The web address is as follows:

* **www.gselclindy.weebly.com**

**Some Quotes from Martin Luther:**

“It is pleasing to God whenever you rejoice or laugh from the bottom of your heart.”

“It is characteristic of a Christian to have the greatest strength in the greatest weakness and the greatest wisdom in the greatest foolishness.”

“If I should neglect prayer but a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith.”

“Nothing is easier than sinning.”

**From Martin Luther’s Small Catechism:**

**The Ten Commandments**

**The Fifth Commandment**

**The Fifth Commandment:** You shall not kill.

**What does this mean?** We should fear and love God so that we do our neighbors no bodily harm nor cause them any suffering, but help and befriend them in every need.

**November 2017**

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| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|  |  |   |  1Pr. Tom in Lindy Confirmation class, 5:00-6:30 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5**No Sunday School**; Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion at altar rail(All Saints’ Sunday)White | 6 | 7 | 8Pr. Tom in LindyConfirmation class, 5:00-6:30Church council meeting, 7:00 PM | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12Sunday School, 9:30; Worship, 10:30Reformation celebration, hymn sing and dessert, 7:00 PMGreen | 13 | 14 | 15Pr. Tom in LindyWomen’s meeting, 10:00 AMConfirmation class, 5:00-6:30 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19Sunday School,9:30; Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion,continuous lineGreen | 20 | 21 | 22Pr. Tom in LindyThanksgiving Eve worship, 7:00 PM | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26Worship, 10:30(Christ the King Sunday)White | 27 | 28 | 29 30  |
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Good Shepherd Evangelical

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