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

**Lindy, Nebraska**

**Pr. Thomas E. Jacobson: Email, tjacobson001@luthersem.edu; Home phone number in Menno, SD, 605-387-5196**

**The Rod and Staff**



**October 2017**

**A Series on the Lutheran Reformation: Luther’s Work of Reform**

We continue this month of October 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 we hear the word “Reformation,” it is important to understand it in the right way. Sometimes people question the use of the word “Reformation” to describe what Martin Luther and his colleagues did 500 years ago. In fact, Luther himself never used the word “Reformation” to describe his work. Nevertheless, later generations used that word to describe what happened, and if understood correctly, the word “Reformation” is a good way to think about what God did and continues to do among His people.

One of the metaphors that the Bible uses to describe God’s work among us is that of a potter molding clay. In Isaiah 64:8, we read: *But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand*. When a potter molds clay, he or she does not throw out the clay and start over; instead, the potter shapes it into what it is meant to be. The clay is *re-formed* into something else.

This is a good way of thinking about the way that Martin Luther and his colleagues approached the *re-formation* of the Church. They did not throw out every old tradition. Guided by the Scriptures, they *re-formed*, reshaped things they felt needed to be fixed in order for the message of the Gospel to be rightly heard.

At the time of the Reformation, Luther was not the only person who saw error and need for correction in the Church. There were people who pushed for a much more radical re-formation, throwing out all of the old clay and starting over. Some people felt that things had been ruined to a point where everything needed to be thrown out, such as church buildings, works of art, music, statues, and the like.

But this was not Luther’s approach. His goal was not to destroy the old traditions, but rather to bring the Church back to the Word of God, so that the ordinary person could hear and believe the promise of Christ. If traditions that had been inherited from former times served a good purpose, they should be retained and respected. If they did not, they should be corrected in light of the Scriptures. This is one of the reasons that Lutherans today share many things in common with the Roman Catholic Church of today. In fact, many people are shocked to learn that Lutherans have a great deal in common with modern-day Roman Catholics.

At the same time, Luther and his colleagues recognized certain errors in the church that needed to be *re-formed* in order to be faithful. In Luther’s lifetime and in the following years, Lutherans made a number of practical reforms in the life of the Church in order to keep church practices in accordance with the Gospel. Here are a few examples:

**The Liturgical Service:** Lutheran worship generally maintained the ancient order of worship that had been in place for centuries in the Western Christian Church, but the Lutherans changed the focus of the Mass (service of Holy Communion). It was common for people to view the Mass as a sacrifice made to God, but the Lutherans switched the direction around. In the Mass (Holy Communion), God is handing out his gifts to us, which is the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Lutherans also changed the language from Latin to German (and whatever other common language of the people) so that they could understand what was happening. Variation in worship according to local custom was recognized; there never was a single “Lutheran liturgy.”

**Holy Communion (Lord’s Supper):** Unlike some other Protestant reformers, Lutherans continued to believe that Christians receive the true body and blood of Christ in the Lord’s Supper. But they eliminated doctrines associated with it that were not biblical. They also insisted that people be able to receive both bread and wine rather than just the bread.

**Confession:** The declaration of forgiveness of sins was maintained as a central part of the Christian life, both corporately and privately. Some people believe that Lutherans got rid of the practice of private confession, which is not true. However, the requirement to remember and confess every sin was not necessary or even possible. As the Scripture says in Psalm 19:12, “Who can discern his errors.”

**Ministry of Clergy and Laity:** At the time of Luther, priests were not allowed to marry, but Luther and others believed that both clergy and laity should be able to be married, as there is nothing in the Bible that prohibits this. Lutherans believe that for the sake of good order, clergy should be educated and ordained to public service. But vows do not make one more holy in the eyes of God, nor does ordination grant a sacramental power that other Christians do not have. All Christian believers are “priests” (Revelation 1:6) in their own stations of life, called and authorized to speak the message of Christ to one another.

**Remembrance of the Saints:** Lutherans believe that faithful Christians from the past are to be recognized and honored as examples of faith and devotion, yet all people are “saints” by virtue of their faith in Christ. These famous “saints” from the past can serve as examples, but they are not to be prayed to as sources of help. Christ himself is our sole mediator before God (1 Timothy 2:5).

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Special Announcements**

* There will be **no Sunday School on October 8 and November 5**.
* The annual soup and pie lunch and dinner will be held at the Bloomfield Community Center on Wednesday, October 4. There will be **no confirmation class that evening**, and the confirmation students instead will be expected to help with the dinner that evening.
* During the month of October, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church will be collecting donation items for the River City Domestic Violence Center in Yankton. Boxes will be set in the entryway of the church, and a “wish list” is provided on a later page.

**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 October of 2017, we remember **St. Simon and St. Jude, apostles**. They are commemorated on October 28.

In the lists of Jesus’ twelve apostles in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the book of Acts in the New Testament, the tenth and eleventh places are occupied by these two men. Simon was called “the Zealot,” meaning that it is possible that he was, at the time that Jesus called him, a part of a radical Jewish nationalistic group that sought to drive out the Roman Empire. Jude (his name appears in the text as “Judas,” but is often shortened to “Jude” in order to distinguish him from the other apostle named Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus) is also listed by the name “Thaddeus.”

According to John 14:22, Jude spoke to Jesus during the last supper, before Jesus was betrayed. Other than this, there is no further record in the Bible of these two followers of Jesus. An old tradition says that Simon and Jude traveled to Persia and preached there after Jesus’ ascension, but there is no way to verify this claim.

Simon and Jude did not become famous like Peter or Paul, but I have come to believe that the lives of Simon and Jude are just as important to remember. The work that God calls us to does not always make us look famous or “important.” Sometimes, the work God has for us is ordinary and goes unnoticed. But this “ordinary” work is essential for the world. All of us who feel that our lives aren’t important because we aren’t famous need to remember Simon and Jude. I can imagine them serving churches in out-of-the-way locations, going unnoticed by their fellow apostles. But the word that they preached mattered tremendously to those they served. Wherever we are, even if it seems insignificant, God calls us to faith and diligent service.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Worship Schedule**

**October 1:** Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion at altar rail (Green)

**October 8:** Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

**October 15:** Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion continuous line (Green)

**October 22:** Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

**October 29:** Reformation Sunday/Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost (Red)

**Featured Hymn for October 2017:**

***A Mighty Fortress Is Our God***

*Lutheran Hymnal for Church and Home, 169*

1. *A mighty fortress is our God, a sword and shield victorious; he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod and wins salvation glorious. The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dreadful might he arms himself to fight. On earth he has no equal.*
2. *No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, rejected. But now a champion comes to fight, whom God himself elected. You ask who this may be? The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Jesus, mighty Lord, God's only Son, adored. He holds the field victorious.*
3. *Though hordes of devils fill the land all threat'ning to devour us, we tremble not, unmoved we stand; they cannot over-pow'r us. Let this world's tyrant rage; in battle we'll engage! His might is doomed to fail; God's judgment must prevail! One little word subdues him.*
4. *God's Word forever shall abide, no thanks to foes, who fear it; for God himself fight by our side with weapons of the Spirit. Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day. The kingdom's ours forever!*

Text and Tune: Martin Luther, 1483-1546; Translated: Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878

*Note: A paraphrase of Psalm 46, this hymn by Martin Luther, his most famous, became known as “The Battle Hymn of the Reformation.” It is not clear why or when Luther wrote it, but it did appear sometime after 1529.*

**Monthly Watchword for October 2017**

Jesus says, “Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

* Luke 15:10 ESV

**Ushers for October:**

* Head Ushers:
  + Lacey Barger
* Ushers:
  + Dennis and Dixie Stewart
  + Nolan Poppe
  + Regg Eckmann
  + Teri Edwards

**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:**

“Faith is the ‘yes’ of the heart, a conviction on which one stakes one’s life.”

“When by the Spirit of God, I understood these words, ‘the just shall live by faith,’ I felt born again like a new man. I entered through the open doors into the very paradise of God!”

“It is astounding that I should believe him to be the Son of God who is suspended on the cross, whom I have never seen, with whom I have never become acquainted.”

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

**The Ten Commandments**

**The Fourth Commandment**

**The Fourth Commandment:** Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

**What does this mean?** We should fear and love God so that we do not show contempt for our parents and others in authority, nor provoke them to anger, but respect, obey, serve, love, and honor them.

**Donations for River City Domestic Violence Center**

As with last year, the council decided to seek during the months of September and October donations for a women’s shelter. We have one of those near us in Yankton, SD. The following is a wish list from their website. There will be boxes labeled for this purpose in the entryway of the church. Thank you for your generosity!

**Wish List:**

toilet paper, paper towels

tuna

individually packaged snack crackers, saltine crackers

ketchup, mustard

instant potatoes

hamburger/tuna helper, home style bakes (boxed meals)

suddenly salad, mac 'n cheese

canned veggies: mixed, green beans, corn

garbage bags

canned fruit: mixed, pears, peaches

individual packaged fruit cups

large freezer bags (gallon size)

shells 'n cheese

soups: chicken, veggie, beef

pasta sides

spaghetti noodles, spaghetti sauce

ramen noodles: beef, chicken

peanut butter

pancakes, syrup

muffins, granola bars

small box cereal (travel size)​

juice boxes, fruit snacks

oatmeal

Diapers (sixe 5 and 6), laundry soap (must be HE), sports bras (size M, L, XL)

**Copies of Martin Luther’s Small Catechism Available**

Throughout the generations, Lutheran young people have learned about and memorized Martin Luther’s *Small Catechism*. We continue that practice today at Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lindy.

The *Small Catechism* was written by Luther in the year 1529 after he spent the previous year traveling to churches in order to assess the spiritual state of affairs.

Upon his return, Luther was appalled. He wrote, “What misery I beheld.” Luther discovered that most people in congregations and even the pastors themselves knew little to nothing about the faith. Many of them were accustomed simply to the ritual practice of the faith without an understanding of the content of the faith.

Luther sought to remedy this. He encouraged pastors to write catechisms for the members of their congregations, but eventually they pressured Luther to write his own. The *Small Catechism* is the result, and it has been used by generations of Lutherans ever since.

Luther intended the catechism to be used by people of all ages, not just young people. Moreover, he intended it to be used by families, where the head of a household would teach the entire family.

In that spirit and in commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, the women of the congregation decided to purchase a stock of Small Catechisms for the whole congregation. They are available on the table in the fellowship hall just outside of the sanctuary, right next to the other devotional books. Everyone please feel free to take one for personal use. Re-familiarize yourself (or familiarize yourself for the first time) with this small piece that has endured for centuries and helped people learn about their faith.

**Good Shepherd Altar Painting Is Now Hung**

As mentioned last month, the old altar painting of Jesus the Good Shepherd from St. Peter Lutheran Church of rural Madison, South Dakota has now been hung in our fellowship hall above the kitchen. St. Peter Lutheran Church closed as a congregation earlier this year, and they are grateful that this part of their history will live on among us. Most importantly, people will see this painting as soon as they walk in to the church, which will always remind them of Jesus the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:11).



**October 2017**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| 1  Sunday School, 9:30; Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion (altar rail)  Green | 2 | 3 | 4  Soup and pie in Bloomfield  No confirmation class | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8  **No Sunday School**; Worship, 10:30  Green | 9 | 10 | 11  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:00-6:30  Church council meeting, 7:00 PM | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15  Sunday School, 9:30; Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion (continuous line)  Green | 16 | 17 | 18  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Women’s meeting, 10:00 AM  Confirmation class, 5:00-6:30 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22  Sunday School,  9:30; Worship, 10:30  Green | 23 | 24 | 25  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:00-6:30 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29  Worship, 10:30  Reformation Sunday  Reformation celebration in afternoon and evening  Red | 30 | 31 |  | | | |
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Good Shepherd Evangelical

Lutheran Church of Lindy

89039 539 Ave.

Bloomfield, Nebraska 68718



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