

# The EVANGEL

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## Letter From the Editor

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and happy 500th anniversary of the Reformation!

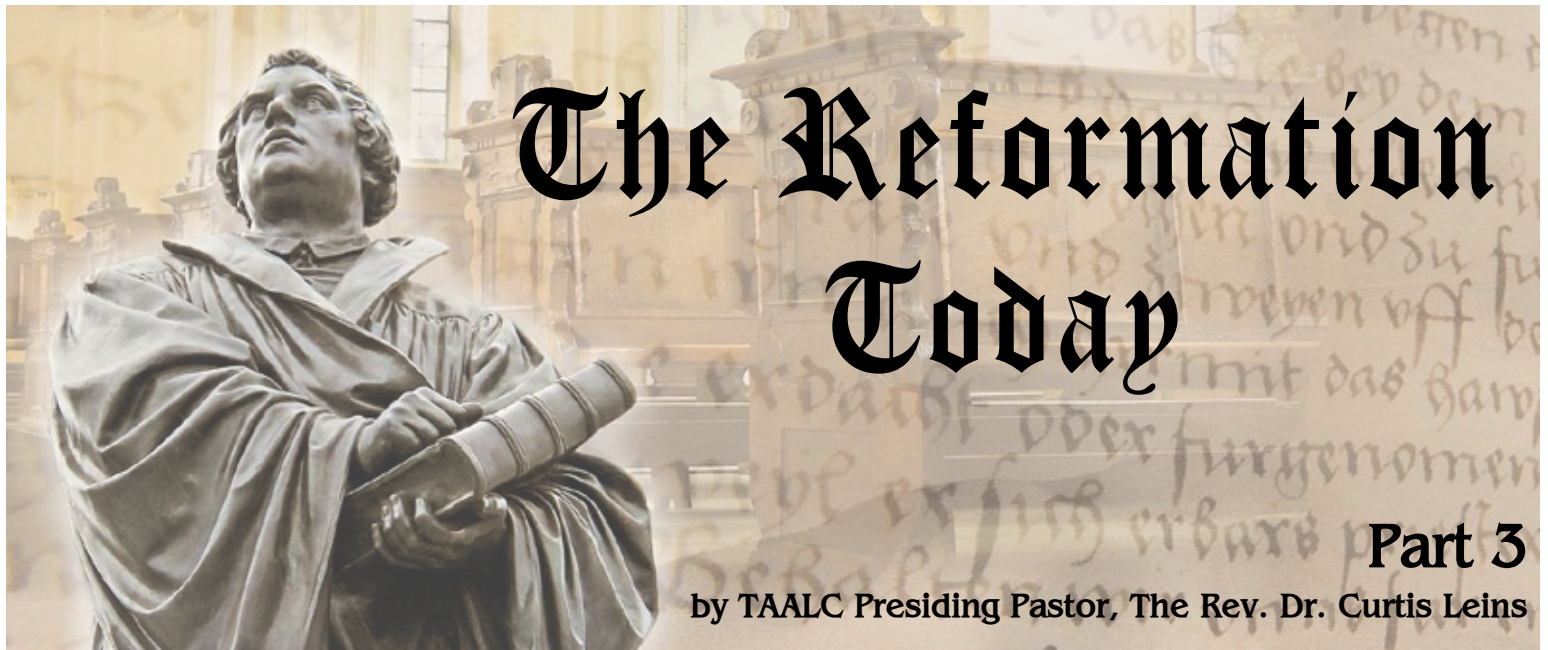
There are many exciting things about this edition of The Evangel. You will see that we have again focused on The Reformation. Our Presiding Pastor, The Rev. Dr. Leins, has provided for us with a third part to his series on “The Reformation today,” while the Rev. President Shields delves into Luther’s emphasis on Christian education. We also have a third part to the series on “People of the Reformation,” giving us insight into the generation that continued reformational efforts after Luther’s death. All of these articles help show us that the Reformation was not only necessary in the church at the time of Luther, but it is also important today. It transformed all areas of life, and paved the way for reforms not only in the church but also in the state, Christian education, and in families. You will also see that along with the last edition, we continue an effort to pray for all of the pastors and church workers who are associated with The AALC on our prayer bookmark. This will take a few editions, so please join us in praying for those who continue to faithfully fulfill the work that God has laid out for them to do. I would also like to take this time to thank Gigi Morley for her continued faithfulness in providing us with a prayer bookmark.

I am also thrilled to see all of the articles that have been submitted about church events in our association from this summer. Our TAALC congregations have been busy reaching out to their communities, and providing opportunities to share the good news of Jesus Christ to others. We even have an article concerning the National Youth Gathering, giving us a view into what our youth have been up to in Colorado. It is a great thing to be able to thank God for how He is working in and through our churches across the country, so please continue to keep us all informed by submitting articles.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our Reformation celebration coming up at the end of October! I will be accepting articles concerning the presentations, the worship services, and any other aspect of our celebration directly following it, so please contact me if you are willing and able to write.

In Christ,  
Lisa Cooper

To submit articles for upcoming editions of The Evangel, please email them to me at [theevangel@taalc.org](mailto:theevangel@taalc.org), or mail them to 425 E Lincoln Ave. Watseka, IL, 60970. Please include the author’s name and photo credit, along with a way to contact you (either a phone number or email address).



# The Reformation Today

## Part 3

by TAALC Presiding Pastor, The Rev. Dr. Curtis Leins

### The Spiritual Elite

We live in a strange moment in human history. This is the time of the Superstar. We have superstars in television and movies, superstars in music and sports, superstars in politics, and, yes, even superstars in religion. Recently, Brent M. Farias wrote an article for *CharismaNews* titled "Beware of Superstar, Self-Appointed Church Personalities" (10.9.14). Farias called attention to the contemporary Christian fascination with superstar personalities. He denounced the excitement displayed by thousands who flock to see the special, superstar speaker, and the absence of enthusiasm given to their local, "no-name" pastor. Similarly, an article by John UpChurch on *Crosswalk.com* (10.10.14) asked the question: "Are 'Superstar' personalities hurting the church?" In it, he referenced the "pomp and grandeur, expensive clothes, and pleas for money" that characterize the contemporary Christian elite. Both of these writers decry the influence of "larger-than-life" Christian personalities. By implication, both writers cause the contemporary Christian to wonder if there has developed a new hierarchy in the faith: the Christian nobility vs. the Christian commoner,

the spiritual superstar vs. the spiritually ordinary. Are the mega-church, big box church, and TV preachers in a class by themselves? Are the super-teacher, über-apostle, and mega-miracle Christian celebrities more anointed of God and more beloved of humanity than the rest of us?

You may think that the issue of spiritual hierarchy has arisen because of the media explosion of our time. Though the world-wide web and instantaneous news surely play a part, this problem has faced Christianity from its beginning. See St. Paul's admonition to humility and unity in his Epistle to the Romans:

*For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. (Romans 12:3-5)*

### The Power of Baptism

Nor should it surprise us that Dr. Martin Luther faced this same issue at the beginning of the 16th century, the time of the great Reformation

of the Church. In Luther's day, all clergy were deemed to be part of the "spiritual estate," while all laity were supposedly confined to the "temporal estate." Luther spoke and wrote powerfully against such a spiritual hierarchy in a 1520 treatise titled *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation*:

*Let us begin by attacking the first wall. It is pure invention that pope, bishop, priests, and monks are called the spiritual estate while princes, lords, artisans, and farmers are called the temporal estate...[A]ll Christians are truly of the spiritual estate, and there is no difference among them except that of office. Paul says in I Corinthians 12 [:12-13] that we are all one body, yet every member has its own work by which it serves the others. This is because we all have one baptism, one gospel, one faith, and are all Christians; for baptism, gospel, and faith alone make us spiritual and a Christian people. (LW, vol. 44, p. 127)*

Luther explains, it is wrong to say that laity do not offer God sacrifices in the spiritual realm. No. All Christians, clergy and laity alike, offer spiritual sacrifices to God, and all do so through vocations that serve and please God. In fact, all Christians are equally acceptable to God on account of their baptism into Christ. Therefore, all Christians are priests before God, offering Him their spiritual sacrifices, regardless of vocation:

*As far as that goes, we are all consecrated priests through baptism as St. Peter says in I Peter 2 [:9], "You are a royal priesthood and a priestly realm." (Ibid)*

We are holy and acceptable before God on account of our Baptism, not our vocation. The vocation of every Christian is equally acceptable before God. Every Christian offers a priest's sacrifice of faith and life, a priesthood of all believers.

In the same year, 1520, Luther wrote another treatise, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. In it, Luther directly addressed I Peter 2:9:

*If they were forced to grant that all of us that have been baptized are equally priests, as indeed we are, and that only the ministry was committed to them, yet with our common consent, they would then know that they have no right to rule over us except insofar as we freely concede it. For thus it is written in I Pet. 2 [:9]: "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a priestly royalty." Therefore we are all priests, as many of us as are Christians. But the priests, as we call them, are ministers chosen from among us. (LW, vol. 36, p. 112-113)*

Through Holy Baptism, Luther establishes a unified priesthood, and a common acceptance of all Christians and all vocations. Every Christian is a priest with access directly to God. Not one is higher than another or has greater access than another. Every Christian vocation offers life and service that is equally acceptable to God. Not one vocation is more righteousness or more God-pleasing.

## **A Kingdom of Priests**

In Exodus 19, God told Moses that He wanted to establish a covenant with His people:

*"Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the people for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel. (Exodus 19:5-6)*

But, Israel did not obey God's voice and did not keep His covenant. God's desire for a holy nation did not end. God had determined another way through which he would establish



for Himself a holy people, namely, by grace through faith in the atoning sacrifice of His own Son, Jesus Christ.

*[Y]ou also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ...But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Peter 2: 5, 9-10)*

Through Jesus Christ, God has established a new race, not dependent upon human descent, but upon spiritual condition. All human differences are eliminated. God has created a kingdom of priests, a holy nation of His own people. Every Christian man, woman, and child may approach the throne of God, with full rights and authority to speak directly to the Almighty. Every one of His priests may offer sacrifices that are acceptable to Him, with no man in between and with no position higher or more holy. God has created a whole race of people, possessed by God, bought and paid for by the blood of His own Son (1 Cor. 6:20).

Now every royal priest may proclaim his or her glorious citizenship and authority. Every believer: the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker, is a priest and proclaimer. The laity declare their faith in Christ at home and in personal conversations. The clergy declare the faith of all believers in Word and in Sacrament in the public arena. There is no conflict or competition because all are equally acceptable, all are one, and all are little-Christ. As Luther taught, all are *larvae dei*, masks of God

Because of our sin, God cannot reveal Himself directly to us. We cannot see God and live (Ex. 33:20). So, God reveals Himself to us through various masks, *larvae dei*. His masks include His Word, the Incarnation, and the Sacraments. Unexpectedly, God even uses human beings as His masks. He inspires our hearts and uses our hands and voices. In this way, we become His instruments, carrying out His divine will in the world. This is never to earn His love, but because His love has filled our hearts and transformed our lives. Now, we are little-Christ, masks of God. As Luther writes in a third treatise of 1520: *The Freedom of a Christian*:

Hence, as our heavenly Father has in Christ freely come to our aid, we also ought freely to help our neighbor through our body and its works, and each one should become as it were a Christ to the other that we may be Christ's to one another and Christ may be the same in all, that is, that we may be truly Christians. (LW, vol. 31, pp. 367-368)

We live in a strange moment in human history. This is the time of the Superstar. But, the truth is that not one of us is a superstar. There is no spiritual hierarchy. There is no spiritual nobility. There is no spiritual superiority or inferiority. There is only Christ. What Luther taught 500 years ago is still teaching us today. Whether clergy or laity, great or small, we are all just sinners who have been saved by grace through faith in Christ. For that reason, though we are not superstars, perhaps we are something even more glorious: we are little-Christ, the masks of God. God is hiding Himself in us. God inspires our hearts and uses our hands and voices to do His work in the world. We are a priesthood of all believers!

# “Christians are to be Always Taught”

By *The Rev. President Shields*

**2017** marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The Reformation affected not just the Church but the larger world in Europe, spreading to the civic, cultural, and political realms. For the Church, Martin Luther proclaimed “justification by grace (alone) through faith (alone) in Christ (alone) based on Scripture (alone)” as the center and foundation of the Christian faith.

Martin Luther wrote these words in his 95 Theses of 1517: “*docendi sunt christiani*” (“Christians are to be always taught”). Unfortunately these words are often overlooked in examining the significance of the Reformation and Luther’s role in teaching the faith. These words guided him as he published his catechisms 12 years later, putting into practice his declaration about educating Christians.

For Luther, reform was not simply a matter of changing the Church, though he certainly sought to do that. He realized that reform of the structure was but one part of true reform. He was concerned with teaching the faith to everyone: adults and children. He realized that the content of teaching had to reflect biblical truths, and he came to understand that reform of the church was ultimately connected to the reform of education.

Thus for Luther, the reform depended on teaching solid Biblical doctrine and changing the structure and method of teaching. Both were essential; both required new ways of thinking. Luther realized that educational methods required the support of the hierarchy of the church and of the civil leaders, while engaging the individual Christian in accepting and supporting education.

Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms were written to educate Christians about the central truths of the Christian faith. Luther intended the Small Catechism for heads of the household to teach the faith to the entire family. He intended the Large Catechism to be preached by the pastors to publicly teach all, including the heads of the family.

Sadly over the last 100 years the focus of the two Catechisms shifted so that pastors/congregation leaders—not heads of the family—became responsible for teaching the Small Catechism. The Large Catechism became the domain of pastors only as study material for them to teach the Small Catechism.

## What Does This Mean?

### For the Congregation and Members

“What does this mean?”—the iconic catechism question is appropriate as we examine education in the Church in the 21st century. Within families, we can encourage the heads of family to teach the Small Catechism within the family, regardless of how that family exists. We can support that effort in the congregation as well. Over my years as pastor I have included portions of the Catechism in the bulletin and we recite together for memory work. This allows the children to be part of the larger community as we learn and review the essential teachings. Such a practice encourages parents to continue to teach in the home.

A sermon series on the Catechism can reinforce the teaching within the home. The Large Catechism provides the material to accomplish this. Banners with the six chief parts can be hung during the series. Many other innovative resources have been developed over the years that can supplement the home and church teaching.

### For the Seminary and The AALC

The American Lutheran Theological Seminary fulfills one major role in this motto, namely by training pastors and other church workers. Over the past decade we have expanded from an on-campus school to two components of theological education: on-campus and online. Technology opened ways for us to accomplish this. We are expanding our theological education to nations around the world as well.

Beyond that, we are looking to establish a Lay Academy within ALTS. The teaching would present some of the major topics in seminary but designed for lay leaders in congregations. This would supplement what the pastor provides in the congregation. In other words, this partnership between pastor and ALTS reinforces the importance of raising up future pastors and future leaders within the congregation. Watch for future developments.

At ALTS, we take seriously Luther’s words: “Christians are to be always taught.” I invite all of you to join us on the journey of faith and teaching the faith.

# National Night Out Block Party

*Our Savior Lutheran Church, Piqua, Ohio*

Story by Kim Stephan • Photos by Harley Stephan

The congregation of Our Savior Lutheran Church, Piqua, Ohio recently hosted a block party for National Night Out, in order to reach out to our neighborhood. The event was sponsored by the Piqua Police Department and our party was one of sixteen held throughout the community of Piqua. We invited several community service organizations, as well as a local Hope Over Heroin group, United Marriage Encounter, and Thrivent, to set up tables in our parking lot with information that may be helpful to our neighbors. Our guests offered information about services that included assistance for food, clothing, utilities, medical, dental, and mental health services. With the help of a Community Gift Card and a Thrivent Action Team, we were able to provide a light supper of hot dogs, chips, cookies, and drinks for free. Entertainment included visits from our local police, fire, tactical response team, and sheriff's departments and the children loved getting to meet the First Responders and get an up-close look at the emergency vehicles! We also had games available for the children and all received prizes to take home. Our hope is that this activity let our neighbors know that we care about their well-being, that we are a viable part of the neighborhood, and it brought neighbors together for a fun evening to get to know each other. It was a wonderful evening to sit outside and we hope this event will lead to more opportunities to reach out to the neighborhood.



Thanks to Thrivent for funding our Action Team and providing t-shirts and materials!



Our local service agencies shared information with our neighbors.



The kids loved meeting the police officers and seeing the car!



Everyone enjoyed hotdogs, chips, cookies, water, lemonade, and tea courtesy of Thrivent and the Piqua Police Dept.





# The AALC Youth Gathering

Article & Photos by Kris Johnson

**G**reetings in the name of our Lord Jesus the Christ. Sometimes in life there are no words that can express how much something touches your soul. Often during the 2017 American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC) Youth Conference in Estes Park, Colorado there were no words. The AALC continued its commitment to educating, developing, uplifting and empowering today's youth through the word of God and fellowship with other Christian believers. This year marked the 30th anniversary of the bi-annual conference, which drew over 175 registered youth, and over 45 adult sponsors and chaperones to the YMCA of the Rockies. The theme for this year's conference "ONE," centered on John 17:21, which was both appropriate, and demonstrated throughout the week.

From the first strum of the guitar, brothers Swen and Dean held the crowd engaged and entertained. Swen and Dean teamed up to provide an entertaining and electric venue for everyone to come together to openly praise God. Song after song, the energy level increased, and even by week's end, when others were running on fumes, Swen and Dean were still going strong. For Swen and Dean this makes conference number 20+, and they have become a staple for the event.

Select members of *Two Steps Down*, led by Brad Longstreth, aided immensely in the conference's music ministry. The band led the youth in singing popular contemporary Christian music. Even our Presiding Pastor, the Rev. Curtis Leins added his talent on the guitar all week during musical worship. During this contemporary Christian praise, not a seat was filled. With each song, all rose to their feet and surrounded the stage. With arms interlocked and eyes fixed on high, these young people opened their hearts up to God and to each other.

Beyond the music, were the educational workshops led by various pastors and group leaders. These workshops quickly drilled down to the heart of the matter, providing the attendees invaluable information and insight on topics such as premarital sex, apologetics, the Devil and demons and working with at-risk youth. One would imagine with young people being the targeted audience that these workshops would be one-way, but the youth were engaged. Their discussions were lengthy, and often revealed wisdom that exceeded their years. Bill Yonker, a six-time advocate of the Youth Conference, conducted





a series of evening lectures focused on character building, developing patience, weighing life decisions and centering our lives on Christ Jesus. The lectures were powerful and personable, and served as spiritual punctuations to the end of each day.

Truthfully, I simply volunteered to fill a vacant position for the Eastern Region of the AALC and to help plan this longstanding event. In return, I was thrust outside of my military comfort zone and into a world of like-minded Christian crazies. I had the pleasure of meeting and praying with and for some great young people. Our young people are faced with serious and heavy life situations. They carry these mentally draining issues with them daily. As we carried on in the week and the continuous prayers were prayed individually and collectively, I saw guards soften, hearts lifted, minds eased, and lives renewed. The last night of evening sessions, we prayed earnestly to God for a revelation in their lives. We prayed for restoration of families, reconciliation for relationships, personal courage and strength and mutual love and affection. I am looking forward to 2019, where we can reveal to the world that God is still on the throne and he answers prayers.





# Mandan Zoo Day

By The Rev. Dean R. Johansen  
American Lutheran Church, Mandan, ND

**“Then God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”** Gen 1:26 reveals to us God’s power, vitality, and creativity. Gen 1:26 reveals the first explicit revelation that God is one, and though one essence, three persons. “Let us”, is plural; for God is our heavenly Father, the Word from eternity who became Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Christians celebrate God’s sixth day of creation. The various creatures that God made which crawl upon the earth, included in the past dinosaurs, such as huge predatory lizards which preyed on smaller animals; capturing our imagination and inspiring the Jurassic Park movies.

While in school, the life sciences were my favorite subject. I am not concerned about the theory of evolution, nor the fossil record; for God created all. I am concerned about our present age in which we live. We enjoy the lion and the elephant. We celebrate the birth of a giraffe and that of the fox. We enjoy God’s creative power. How poor our world would be without the sixth day of creation. Human beings would not have been wonderfully made. The complexity and variety of the land species would be gone. We, the pinnacle of God’s heterosexual creation, for humans are made in God’s image, have greatly benefited. We rejoice. Certainly, animals enjoy life. Perhaps they do so better than humans. Today, view a sunrise/sunset, or thunderstorm, or watch a flock of geese. We easily spend so much time with the urgent, with accomplishments, and mere doing; that we despise God’s creative power.

American Lutheran Church, Mandan, with assistance from the Commission on American Missions, sponsored tickets for a day at the zoo last June 10th. It was windy, no rain, with temps in the mid 80’s. Approximately 60 people came that do not attend our church. It was a time for treats, soap bubbles, and stuffed animals given to the children. Mostly, we enjoyed the incredibly variety and vitality of animal life. Does God’s creation, and our fallen stewardship have its problems? Certainly, and it is easy to fall into the trap of focusing solely on the problems and issues; investing little time praising God for our blessings. Psalm 145:5,6 **“On the glorious splendor of Your majesty, and on Your wondrous works, I will meditate. They shall speak of the might of Your awesome deeds, and I will declare Your greatness.” AMEN**







# In Jesus the Victory is Won

by Lisa Cooper

This year's Vacation Bible School put out by Concordia Publishing House, like most other Lutheran things this year, focused on Martin Luther and the Reformation. Faith Lutheran Church (AALC) partnered again with Calvary Lutheran Church (LCMS), both of Watseka Illinois, this year to orchestrate a very successful Vacation Bible School from July 10-13th. Each night a dinner was prepared by church volunteers and offered to all parents, workers, and children free of charge. Following the dinner, students participated in crafts, music, story time, and other activities.

Over the course of the week, 99 different kids attended our VBS, with every night averaging between 81 and 87 kids. We also offered two night classes for parents during the kids' activities: one on the Reformation, and one on a Christian approach to relationships. This allowed parents to stick around and learn as well. The following Sunday, people from both churches gathered together at a local park for a church service. Before the service, the kids performed many of the songs that they learned during the week. After the service, there was a brunch offered to all in attendance, followed by a chance to swim at the local pool together.

Overall, the VBS was excellent. By emphasizing the Reformation, scripture was at the forefront—after all, that was the entire basis for the Reformation in the first place. Each night the kids learned more about how Jesus defeated sin, death, and the devil on the cross, and they committed to memory Bible verses and stories to support those lessons. As Luther wrote in his Small Catechism, explaining the second article of the creed:

*I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won [delivered] me from all sins, from death, and from the power of*

*the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, in order that I may be [wholly] His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true. (SC II 2)*

These ideas were stressed throughout our Vacation Bible School week through the stories and the music. It is such a joy to see young people singing the words of Scripture: "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (1 Cor 15:57). Truly the Lord has blessed us in sharing this message.



# People of the Reformation

By The Rev. Jordan Cooper

In the past two issues, we have discussed the lives and influence of some of the most significant figures of the Lutheran Reformation. First, we looked at three reformers whose theological influence led to the formation of the Lutheran church: Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, and Johannes Bugenhagen. In the last issue, we explored three individuals who had a profound impact upon Luther's own life, without whom the Reformation may not have been a success: Johann Staupitz, Katharina von Bora, and Prince Frederick the Wise. In this edition of our People of the Reformation series, we will be examining those individuals who continued the Reformation after Luther's death. While one might be tempted to think that the Reformation simply refers to those events which transpired at the beginning of the sixteenth century surrounding Martin Luther, the message that surrounded this revolution is one that needs to be continually defended and proclaimed. In that way, the work of the Reformation continues even today. In what follows are three figures who continued the work of reform after the death of Martin Luther: Martin Chemnitz, Jacob Andrae, and Johann Gerhard.

## Martin Chemnitz

Though not as well-known as his predecessor, Martin Chemnitz was a voice perhaps just as significant as that of Luther in the success of the Reformation. Sometimes described as the "second Martin," Chemnitz was the most important theologian of the later sixteenth-century. Chemnitz was born at the height of controversy between Luther and the Roman church in 1522. Initially involved in his family profession as a weaver, Chemnitz went on to study at the University of Wittenberg, where he studies under Luther during the final years of the reformer's life. He also became acquainted with Philip Melanchthon, who became a close friend and mentor. After studying the Bible in its original languages, Chemnitz was asked by Melanchthon to teach at the University, where he began lectures on theology in 1554.



There are two aspects of Chemnitz' career which stand out as the most significant for the success of the Reformation. First is his contribution to the Book of Concord, and second is

his writing in opposition to Roman Catholic theology. While Luther was alive, those who adhered to the Reformation were unified in purpose and thought, largely due to the leadership that Luther offered. This changed following his death in 1546, when disagreements began over the proper direction of the Reformation. Though Melanchthon was the heir-apparent of Luther, he was not able to unite the church as his predecessor had. Divisions began both over theology and practice, and it seemed as if the Reformation would tear itself apart into small factions. Chemnitz was a unifying figure, as he had both the boldness of Luther and the scholarly acumen of Melanchthon. He led efforts to make doctrinal decisions on behalf of the Lutheran church which led to the writing of the Formula of Concord, and the publication of the Book of Concord in 1580. Due to his efforts, the Reformation survived.

Along with his contributions to the Lutheran confessions, Chemnitz spent a significant amount of time and energy defending Luther's reform. The Roman Catholic Council of Trent met from 1545 to 1563 to prepare an answer to the Reformation. This led to several condemnations of Luther's ideas as damnable heresies. In response to the Council, Martin Chemnitz wrote a four-volume point by point refutation of Trent, with responses from both Scripture and the church fathers. This work is often said to have remained unanswered by Roman Catholic thinkers, as Chemnitz gave definitive answers to many theological questions which would be used for generations to come. The second Martin demonstrated that the truths Luther taught were indeed those of Holy Scripture.

Though he is often under-appreciated, Martin Chemnitz is perhaps the most important thinker after Luther in the Protestant church. His works continue to be read by pastors and theologians today, and his contributions to the Lutheran confessions remain part of the doctrinal standards of the Lutheran church.

## Jacob Andrae

A contemporary of Martin Chemnitz, Jacob Andrae was another important figure in the era following the death of Martin Luther. He entered the university in 1541, and became a professor of theology in 1562 at the University of Tübingen, where he taught and defended the theology of Luther and Melanchthon. Like Chemnitz, Andrae made





conscious attempts throughout his life to defend and promote the theology of the reformers. He did this in two ways. First, along with Chemnitz, he helped to establish the confessional standards of the Lutheran church. Second, he debated against Calvinism, and helped secure the Lutheran church against Reformed theology.

In the midst of a variety of theological debates among Lutherans, Andrae sought to discuss the important differences and establish commonality between the different parties. With this in mind, Andrae preached a number of sermons on debated theological topics, and excerpts from these sermons became part of the Formula of Concord. Andrae worked alongside of Chemnitz in order to create the Formula of Concord, and the subsequent Book of Concord which settled the debated issues among Lutherans. Andrae also engaged in a debate with John Calvin's successor Theodore Beza over a number of issues, including Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper and predestination. Andrae helped to defend the Lutheran church against some of the errors taught on these issues. Alongside of Chemnitz, Andrae is a theologian who is to be thanked for helping form the Lutheran church as it is known today.

## Johann Gerhard

The previous two theologians were part of the second generation of the Reformation, which is generally seen to have been completed with the publication of the Book of Concord in 1580. The confessions had now been written, and the beliefs and practices of the Lutheran church had been firmly established. However, theological battles did not suddenly cease. In the period following the Reformation, Roman Catholics and Calvinists wrote against Lutheran doctrines, and several men devoted their lives to defining and defending the truths contained in the Lutheran Confessions. The most well-known of these is Johann Gerhard.



It has been said that Martin Luther, Martin Chemnitz and Johann Gerhard are three in a group of Lutheran theologians of whom there is no fourth. These three figures stand above the rest in their depth and influence on the Lutheran church. Gerhard was born just after the publication of the Book of Concord in Quedlinburg, Germany in 1582. Like many of the other important Lutheran thinkers, Gerhard was trained in theology at the University of Wittenberg where Luther had taught. He served in both church-work as an ecclesiastical supervisor, and as a professor at Jena. Throughout his life, Gerhard wrote a large library of books, including doctrinal texts as well as devotional works. In these books, he defended the Lutheran tradition in an irenic manner, pointing to Scripture and the teachings of the church fathers.

Gerhard is a prime example of one who was devoted both to the rigorous study of theology, as well as to a life of personal piety and devotion. While an intellectual figure, Gerhard understood that theology only mattered if it was applied, and that theology is always done with a practical aim for the church. His writings are currently being translated into English and are available for the first time to English-speaking Lutherans.

# Prayer Bookmark

## October

1. Dss. Brigitte Gassman
2. Dss. Kathy Awtrey
3. Dss. Susan Scott
4. Rev. Oliver Urdahl
5. Rev. Bruce Ritter
6. Rev. Carl Bengtson
7. Rev. Carl Groh
8. Rev. Christopher Raiford
9. Rev. Daniel Cloeter
10. Rev. David F. Johnson
11. Rev. David M. Johnson
12. Rev. Dean Johansen
13. Rev. Dr. James L. Hoefler
14. Rev. Dr. Thomas Stover
15. Rev. Edwin Doepel
16. Rev. Loyd Ginn
17. Rev. Michael D. Holsten
18. Rev. Paul J. Johansen
19. Rev. William P. Moberly
20. Rev. Darrel Deuel
21. Rev. John Hallock
22. Rev. Martins A. Irbe
23. Rev. Phil Meadows
24. Rev. Richard Sunderlage
25. Rev. Scott Yount
26. Rev. Stephen Unger
27. Rev. Thomas Jahr
28. Rev. Valeri A. Tchijik
29. Rev. Arne C. Bjelland
30. Rev. Bernt Larson
31. Rev. William Dreikorn

# Prayer Bookmark

## November

1. Rev. Charles Knappenberger
2. Rev. Chris Rodger Meyer
3. Rev. Dale Zastrow
4. Rev. David Swarthout Sr.
5. Rev. Don F. Ginkel
6. Rev. Dr. Duane R. Lindberg
7. Rev. Dr. Fred P. Hall
8. Rev. Dr. Johannes Orville Mosbo
9. Rev. Edwin Sandvig
10. Rev. Ernest L. Swenson
11. Rev. Harold E. Petersen
12. Rev. James G. Kloster
13. Rev. Jay Eberth
14. Rev. John A. Anderson
15. Rev. Larry Juergensen
16. Rev. Leon L. Knitt
17. Rev. LeRoy Holmes
18. Rev. Morris M. Kirchhof
19. Rev. Norman D. Olson
20. Rev. Orlando K. Hash
21. Rev. Paul H. Hansen
22. Rev. Rich A. Eddy
23. Rev. Richard G. Hueter
24. Rev. Richard T. Day
25. Rev. Robert M. Dennis
26. Rev. Robert Ross
27. Rev. Robert Salge
28. Rev. Thomas Baumgarten
29. Rev. Wayne E. Bohling
30. Rev. Wayne Wilken

## Servant Unique Family Ministries' Humanitarian Aid Trailer to be at 500th Anniversary Reformation Celebration

Servant Unique Family Ministries (SUFM) is planning on having their humanitarian aid trailer at The AALC's Reformation Celebration October 31-November 1, 2017, to receive items for the Latin American Lutheran Mission (LALM) and its work with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mexico (ELCM). We are looking for donations of quilts and blankets, school kits, health kits, layettes, clothes for all ages especially children, and shoes. Since some of the people we minister to live in the mountains, winter coats are also needed for them to stay warm. Special quilts for the LALM to give out as wedding gifts to those whom they know and minister are welcomed as a special gift. Musical interments are always needed for their worship services and other gatherings, especially guitars, rhythm instruments, drums both regular and electric, etc. or money to buy these items. Job training material for girls and women to learn a trade to make some money would also be welcomed. These kits would include things like portable sewing machines and other related items.

For the LALM Border Station, donations of new energy efficient air conditioners, both large and small, would be a cost saver since utilities are some of the biggest expenses that LALM face on this side of the border. Most of the air conditioners LALM is currently using have been donated by people in the north who have either gotten central air conditioning or bought more efficient units. That is why I am asking for this for the Border Station. It could be a life-saver for their budget if we could update all the air conditioners and change everything over to LED lighting. It is a hope and prayer of mine that we might be a tool to help this happen for them so more of their money can go directly into purchasing materials for ministry.

Most of all, pray. Pray for the work of LALM with the ELCM and the people of Mexico in addition to those along the border to whom they are ministering. Pray too for our ministry as we try to assist in any way we can to help them reach out with the Gospel to our Mexican brothers and sisters, and that the Holy Spirit might prepare the hearts of those people.

God's Blessings, Peace, Wisdom, and His Unfailing Love Keep You and Your Loved Ones Now and Always!!

Sincerely In His Service,  
Brian M. Smith, President/Director  
Servant Unique Family Ministries



# The Gospel of Brevity

By The Rev. Joe Christina

**C**hristus Victor Lutheran Church (CVLC) recently implemented an alternative worship service on Wednesday evenings here in Fayetteville, NC. It includes liturgy, Scripture readings, prayer, and even a four minute sermon—You read that right.

#15MC stands for “Fifteen Minute Church.” And that is exactly what the new worship opportunity is here at CVLC: fifteen minutes long. The idea was conceived with outreach in mind. We wanted to offer an opportunity for visitors to hear the Gospel who wouldn’t normally walk through our doors on a Sunday morning. We also understand the hectic nature of many people’s schedules and wanted to offer something that didn’t take up too much of their already taxed time. For this reason we have scheduled it at 6:00 pm to try to coincide with the commute here in Fayetteville. #15MC is also an alternative for the membership here, many of whom travel extensively for work and are often forced to miss Sunday worship.

Because of the outreach/seeker nature of #15MC, we do not offer the Sacrament as part of the worship. However, CVLC communes weekly and we encourage visitors to speak with the pastor if they wish to learn more. As time goes by, and depending on what manner our Lord blesses #15MC, we may alter the liturgy and consider the inclusion of the Lord’s Supper depending on what our overall attendance dynamic looks like.

Since it’s still early, we really can’t offer a full report on how effective #15MC has been. We have seen visitors attend as well as members who have either missed Sundays or just want a midweek recharge. We will be “upping” our advertising via roadside signage and Facebook blasts as summer winds down and we approach another school year. At any rate, the flock here at CVLC has fully intended that goal behind #15MC is NOT to grow but to sow. God’s people here in Cumberland County are determined that more and more hear the precious news that Christ died for sinners. God-willing, #15MC will continue to be a way in which we are able to convey that wonderful truth. We invite and are honored by your prayers for this Gospel outreach endeavor here.




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## Meet The Rev. John Hallock, TAALC Chaplain

**C**haplain Hallock is a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, where he served as Security Police Officer. He is married with four children ages 10-16. Feeling a strong call to federal chaplaincy, he joined the Federal Bureau of Prisons as a correctional officer at the Federal Correctional Institution in Sheridan, Oregon in 2001 and began working on requirements to become a chaplain. Upon finishing requirements to become a Federal Prison Chaplain, he was subsequently promoted as the Supervisory Chaplain at the Federal Correctional Institution in Safford, Arizona in 2006. In 2007, Chaplain Hallock transferred to the United States Penitentiary in McCreary County, Kentucky. There he was responsible for three full-time staff and the pastoral care of over 1,900 staff and inmates.

Chaplain Hallock currently serves as the Supervisory Chaplain at the Federal Medical Center (For Federal Inmates) in Lexington, Kentucky. Where he oversees three full-time staff and the pastoral care of over 2,000 staff and inmates, including 300 female inmates.

Chaplain Hallock has enjoyed a fruitful ministry where he proclaims the forgiveness of sins through faith in Jesus Christ to the least, last and lost of society. He has seen the Holy Spirit create faith in the hearts of countless inmates through the preached word of Jesus Christ!



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