



Reformation Lutheran Church

“Come and See, Learn and Rejoice, Go and Tell!”

September 2021

I believe, help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24) When Jesus asked what the disciples and scribes were arguing about, the answer came from the father of a spirit-possessed child. “I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able,” he says. Jesus responds in frustration at the “faithless generation.”

We see unbelief in the father of the boy. He brought his child to the disciples with hope they could help, but they did not. Perhaps the father is thinking, “these disciples have met their match and could not do anything about this “kind” of spirit. If the disciples couldn’t cast out the spirit, then perhaps Jesus can’t either.” The father is struggling and cries out to Jesus, “If you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” Jesus repeats the father’s words, almost mockingly, “If you can!” The father is uncertain of Jesus’ power because of the disciples’ failure. Regardless of how much God’s people may fail, God never fails.

Jesus is troubled by the persistent unbelief of the crowd, expressed by the simple words the boy’s father utters. After all the miracles Jesus has done, maybe there is a limit as to just how powerful Jesus is. Perhaps there is something that he cannot do. In verse 24 the father responds to Jesus by crying out,

“I believe; help my unbelief.” This is a beautiful expression of faith, full of doubt and full of hope, and it should give those of us who want to follow Jesus much encouragement. It is an honest expression of the difficulty of faith. Perhaps you may have said the same thing and you are looking for “proof” that you have faith. Maybe, knowing you doubt at times, proves that you have faith. For who doubts what they don’t believe?

As this story concludes we find Jesus in a private conversation with his disciples. They ask, “Why could we not cast the spirit out?” The unbelief of the disciples is exposed. The disciples had failed in the same way the father had.

If this troubles you, take heart! Sometimes faith is not easy, even for the first disciples. But remember, God is pursuing you and wants to give you faith! Faith is not a human power but rather a divine power, the work of the Holy Spirit. God gives us faith through the Word, the Gospel, the sacraments, and the words of a preacher. Amen.

Pr.

Malachi 3:6 *“For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.”*

Stability. Isn’t that something that we all long for? With so much uncertainty and chaos in the world at the moment, stability and sureness are things we crave – especially if the uncertainty hits close to home. Malachi reminds us that the Lord is always the same. His love and care for us is constant. His grace and mercy are never-ending. The Lord himself says that we will not be consumed. The uncertainty and chaos will not defeat us when we put our hope and trust in Him. As we head into Fall, take heart and take delight in the changing of the seasons that will prayerfully bring a slower pace and more peaceful times, both abroad, and at home.

Peace be with you, Gabi

Treasurer's Report: Thank you to those who are keeping up with their tithes. It really helps our budget stay fairly stable. We've been holding our own overall. Blessing to you, Judy

Fellowship: On September 26th, we will have the German Deli food truck come to RLC from 12:00 – 2:00. The menu will include Bratwurst, a Schnitzel sandwich, potato salad, red cabbage, and a pretzel. Prices will be decided shortly. We will need to sell tickets ahead of time. Please invite all your family and friends! This will be a great time of fellowship and a great time to show off our church!

Property: We are in the process of getting the leaking roof repaired. Our September clean-up day will be Saturday, the 25th, 9:00 a.m.

Education: We're holding Bible Study through ZOOM on Wednesdays, at 7:00 p.m. Pastor will email the ZOOM link right before our meeting time.

Portals of Prayer for July – September are on the table at the back of the church.

Worship and Music: Just as we thought we were back to normal the Delta variant struck. Unfortunately, some members are still reluctant to attend services in person. From all of the information that has been made available on the virus, the vast majority of people impacted by the Delta variant are those who have not received the vaccine. In one report 99% of those hospitalized had not received the vaccine. The Ledger just reported that only 37% of Harris County residents have been fully vaccinated, and Columbus is in that same general area. It has not been made mandatory, but those are some telling statistics.

To date, we haven't changed anything at our Sunday morning service, but we did decide to move from in person to Zoom for our Wednesday Bible Study. If you haven't been involved in the Bible study, you are missing a very interesting and informative class. It is based on the book, Being Lutheran. If you would like to begin taking part in it, just contact Pastor Jon.

We did have a bit of bad news this week when we were told we couldn't have our Sunday service at the Oaks. One of their residents was positive, so we are on hold until further notice.

We have begun an in-depth review of the Lord's Prayer as part of our Monday devotion. Hopefully, you are finding that informative.

Mission and Ministry: AARP has announced that all in-person driver's safety classes are cancelled until January 2022. On-line classes are still available. Contact your AARP representative for more information. The Thrivent Grant cards are finally approved and on their way! We'll get that project moving along as soon as the cards arrive. Please be thinking of other projects we might do next. All ideas are welcome!



September 18th – Donna Maness

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Sunday – September 5th – Executive Council

Wednesdays – September 8th, September 15th, September 22nd and September 29th – ZOOM Bible Study “Being Lutheran” at 7:00 p.m. -- (An access link to be shared.)

Sunday – September 12th – Council

Saturday – September 25th – Clean-up day beginning around 9:00 a.m.

Sunday – September 26th – German Deli food truck – 12:00 – 2:00

	<u>Sept. 5</u>	<u>Sept. 12</u>	<u>Sept. 19</u>	<u>Sept. 26</u>
Altar Guild	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy
Usher	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior
Lector	Karen	Lynne	Junior	Chuck
Sermon	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor
Thrive	Pastor	Gabi	Pastor	Gabi
Oaks		Pastor		Chuck

WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “Colonial Lutheran Pastoral Care”

The life of a Lutheran pastor in colonial America was difficult. Without much of anything in the way of material support, pastors struggled just to survive, let alone care for their poor and scattered flocks. They had be prepared to meet many different kinds of situations never envisioned in their European ministerial training. Yet a number of them gave devoted and heroic service in the new American colonies, proclaiming the gospel and guiding their people as best they could. The following entries from the notebooks of colonial Lutheran leader Henry Melchior Muhlenberg illustrate their lives and ministries. These selections are culled from just one month, November 1763 (note: these entries are much condensed).

November 1: In the forenoon I had all sorts of running in and out and troublesome interruptions. Visit from the late Pastor Steiner's widow, who had many laments to make.

November 5: Saturday. Visit from josua Pawling, of Providence, who said I must again take over the Providence church and congregation, otherwise everything would go to ruin.

November 6: I went to church with Mr. Brycelius, baptized three children, and preached to a crowded auditorium. As soon as church was over, I was taken to Germantown to bury Mr. Jacob Cansle. About five-thirty in the evening I drove away and arrived home in the dark near eight o'clock.

November 9: I felt unwell, but I had to carry out my promise to go to Mr. [George] Whitefield. He received us very cordially. I received a courteous letter inviting me to visit Chief judge Coleman and furnish a testimonial to the deceased wife of a certain Lutheran man. I also visited the silversmith, Mr. Carben; had a refreshing visit with the family.

November 13: Sunday. Early in the morning Mr. Jacob Graef took me to Germantown. At eleven o'clock we went to church [and] I preached on the Gospel. My companion drove me back to Philadelphia, but we had to drive very fast to be able to hold the [funeral] service at the right time. After the service I baptized Gr---'s sick child. In the evening I married a couple, then went to the home of Mr. Graef where [found a fine group of awakened members of the congregation [and] had an edifying and inspirational conversation with them from seven to nine o'clock.

November 16: Learned that the church council had rejected the petitions I had submitted to them. This bewildering and miserable affair is hastening my death and is almost rendering me unfit for my office.

November 17: Today we had the first deep snow and unhealthy, wet weather. Had a visit. ... The rest of the time I meditated and wrote. Otherwise, I was distressed and depressed over the intricate dispute in this poor congregation ... my health is suffering from it.

November 21: Visit from the poor widow of a Reformed preacher. She was in great straits and besought me to be surety for her, but I was unable to do so. Today I borrowed £50 currency at interest in order to meet my needs. At home I had many visitors, among them a young blacksmith some year ago had married an old widow [who now] refused to live with him.

The said blacksmith asked me whether he might now marry someone else. Reply: No. November 22: More and more murders and burnings are occurring on the frontiers, and almost daily there are robberies in and around the city. The city itself is swarming with unruly mobs. I visited a godly family which had retained much of last Sunday's sermon and gained consolation from it.

November 25: Last night I was unable to sleep because of worry and concern of soul about the coming church council meeting and the fact that old quarrels are to be brought up again. I took refuge in quiet prayer to Almighty God [after a long meeting it was noted]. The entire church council and the complainants have settled all points of controversy and made peace. Henceforth there shall be no further discussion or mention of the old controversy.

November 29: Tuesday. Early in the morning I journeyed to Germantown. At home I heard that immediately after my departure on Saturday several dissatisfied persons had come into my house and blustered against me and the church council. At 1 pm I married

Daniel Sorg and Margretha Heidel. In the evening we had a heavy rainstorm. Refreshing visit from Mr. Kressler.

November 30: A visit from [Swedish pastor] Wangel, with whom I conferred on various matters and strengthened myself. In the evening I read the History of the Martyrs to my family for edification.

“THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE”