



Reformation Lutheran Church

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

December 2021

“Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look (wait?) for another?” (Luke 7:19)

Advent is a time of waiting. Perhaps then these Sundays of Advent are “training” in how to “wait.” Waiting and patience is very hard. If you are expecting a baby, you have to wait. If we are expecting God, we wait for what seems to be a long time. We are waiting for God and many times we wait impatiently. Unfortunately, we cannot “have” as much of God as we desire; God must come to us in God’s own good time.

Some of us can relate to having impatience. The early Christians had to wait. The Hebrews were waiting for their Messiah. The disciples of John were waiting. Mary was waiting for the birth of her baby. The shepherds waited in the fields. Joseph and Mary waited in Nazareth. And now, we wait.

Though God does come to us, it’s not on our schedule. There is revelation and knowing, but it is not always when we think we need it. God is God, independent, free, and uncontrollable, therefore God is free to show up among us and free to not show up. To be impatient with God may be part of a deeper relationship with God. Impatience suggests a “hungering and thirsting for righteousness” that Jesus talked about in his Sermon on the Mount. It is a way God deepens our trust in him, like Luther’s “anfechtung.”

It’s hard to wait for Christmas. How much more difficult it is to wait for the cancer to be healed, for the prodigal child to come to their senses, or for a prayer to be answered. Impatience shows a burning desire for God, it shows a dissatisfaction with cheap substitutes that many try to use to fill the God shaped hole in their heart.

Most of us get what we want when we want it, at the click of a mouse and a credit card, instantly, without effort. But if what we want most, what we most need is God, the living, true God, then we must be patient.

Patience is derived from our faith in what God is doing in us, to us, and for us, and for all the world. We believe that we are not God, that our lives are not our own, and that ultimately the outcome of our lives is not a matter of our actions but God’s grace, mercy, love, and forgiveness for each and every one of us. Amen. (Listening for the Promise, Weekly Devotional)

Pr.

Merry Christmas my friends! We have another year coming to a close. In spite of all the dilemmas that went on in the world this past year, our little church has much to be proud of. We had several Thrivent projects that benefitted the community, we continue to share God’s word with our friends at Thrive and The Oaks. We’ve had fellowship time, Bible study, and regular, in-person worship. It’s been a pretty good year! I want to thank everyone for their part in making things happen at RLC! Special thanks to those on council for their support and hard work. It’s a team effort for sure!

May this blessed season bring you and yours hope, love, and happiness.

“God bless us, every one!”

Gabi

Treasurer’s Report: Thank you to those who are keeping up with their tithes. Blessings, Judy

Fellowship: Please join us for Advent services (7:00 p.m.) and suppers (6:00 p.m.) up through Wednesday, December 18th. Thank you to those who are contributing to our Advent meals. It's much appreciated!

Property: We are still waiting for the property owner to repair the leak in our roof. Several follow-up calls have been made to keep on top of the situation. Our December clean-up day will be Saturday, the 18th, 9:00 a.m.

Education: Bible study will be scheduled after the holidays. We are considering a study of the different faiths of the world.

Worship and Music: The new church year has begun...HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Advent, the first season of the church year is underway. We have our Advent dinners on Wednesday beginning at 6:00 with services following. Advent is a period of preparation for the coming of Jesus, so please plan to join us on Wednesday and on Sunday.

The January-March, Portals of Prayer have arrived and are located on the table at the back of the church. Please feel free to take one. It contains a day-by-day devotion and makes a great way to begin each day...take one for a friend as well.

Mission and Ministry: On November 5th we completed our food contribution project to The Hope Center. The staff were overwhelmed and most thankful for our large donation. We're currently wrapping up another project that will benefit a needy child at a local school. What will be next? All ideas are welcome!



December 10th – Chuck Hunsaker
December 11th – Jarrod Ervin

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Wednesday – December 1st – 6:00 p.m. Supper & 7:00 p.m. Advent Service

Sunday – December 5th – 10:30 a.m. Service

Wednesday – December 8th – 6:00 p.m. Supper & 7:00 p.m. Advent Service

Sunday – December 12th – Annual Meeting and Council Elections/Budget Approval

Wednesday – December 15th – 6:00 p.m. Supper & 7:00 p.m. Advent Service

Saturday – December 18th – Clean-up Day beginning around 9:00 a.m. (Due to Christmas weekend.)

Sunday – December 19th – 10:30 a.m. Service

Friday – December 24th – 7:00 p.m. Candlelight Christmas Eve Service

Sunday – December 26th – 10:30 a.m. Service with the Baptism of Eva Pauline Jensen, Pastor's granddaughter.

	Dec. 1	Dec. 5	Dec. 8	Dec. 12	Dec. 15	Dec.19	Dec. 24	Dec. 26
Altar Guild	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy
Usher	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior
Lector		Gabi		Tammy		Karen	Lynne	Chuck
Sermon	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Chuck	Pastor	Pastor
Thrive		Gabi		Pastor		Gabi		Chuck
Oaks		Pastor				Chuck		

WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “Lohe: The Man Who Wouldn’t Take No for an Answer”

Try to imagine this. You arrive at Christmas Eve worship at your local Lutheran congregation and hear the gospel story about shepherds arriving at the manger. But on the basis of that text, the pastor preaches about the care and feeding of animals!

That was the sort of thing that occurred during what church historians call the Age of Rationalism. That was the kind of world, in 1808, into which Johann Konrad Wilhelm Lohe was born. An out-growth of the secular Age of Enlightenment in Europe, rationalism seemed to take the churches captive. The idea was, if you can't prove it, don't believe it. Miracles were out of favor, as well as any thought of the super-natural. In that climate, it's not difficult to understand why young Pastor Lohe came to embrace and become a cheerleader for the Lutheran Confessions. "Confessionals" had no use for rationalism.

The spirit of the times in the German Lutheran Church of the 1800s was such that Lohe's superiors didn't like the young upstart pastor/theologian very much. They thought he was hopelessly old-fashioned and decided to deny him a position in a prestigious congregation anywhere in his native Bavaria. (Such coveted parishes would have included historic St. Sebald Church or equally desirable St. Lorenz, both in old city Nuremberg.)

Instead Lohe was consigned to a hamlet (a mudhole, some would have said) with a nearly unspellable and almost unpronounceable name-Neuendettelsau. The Lutheran congregation there was marginal, and its members largely uneducated.

Clearly his superiors believed they had successfully taught Lohe a lesson by sending him to the Bavarian boondocks. What they were really saying to him was, "Wilhelm, you're not pastoral material. You don't belong on the clergy roster."

But Lohe wouldn't take no for an answer.

During his long ministry in Neuendettelsau, this brilliant, thoughtful, passionate, frequently stubborn churchman worked a miracle-in an age when miracles were out of

fashion! Empowered by the Holy Spirit, he grew the small parish church into a thriving ministry center. But that wasn't all. Under Lohe's leadership, the community and the congregation founded agencies of mercy-a Lutheran deaconess motherhouse, an orphanage, an improved local school system, and a Lutheran Society for Inner Mission.

And Lohe's vision extended far beyond Neuendettelsau. He had a heart for people in lands where Christianity had not yet reached. Under his direction a Lutheran mission field was planted in faraway New Guinea, an island north of Australia.

Lohe became aware that German Lutherans were immigrating to the American frontier. He recruited and sent to North America an impressive number of clergy-all committed to the confessions of the Lutheran church. He also identified revenue sources to provide salaries for the overseas clergy and to help fund new schools on the other side of the Atlantic.

Named for the Franconian region of Bavaria, a series of Lohe-sponsored settlements sprang up in Michigan, in the region east of present-day Saginaw. They had names like Frankentrost, Frankenlust, and Frankenmuth. The latter community is the home of St. Lorenz Lutheran Church, one of the five founding congregations of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS).

In Saginaw, some of the "Lohe men" founded a school to train pastors and teachers. This fledgling institution, begun in 1852, would, after several starts and stumbles, give rise to what eventually became Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, and Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque. But there was soon a falling out between the school's founders and pastors loyal to the LCMS. It quickly became clear there was to be no reconciliation, so the Lohe contingent packed up their school-teachers, books, and students-and moved to Iowa.

With this stormy and uncertain beginning, the Joint Synod of Iowa and Other States came into being. Until his death in 1872, Lohe, who never came to North America, sent pastors and money to the German Lutherans in Iowa.

The Iowa Synod grew into a sizeable church body. A pair of gifted theologians, Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel, taught for generations at its seminary in Dubuque. During their tenure theological conflict with the Missouri Synod became intense. At stake was the interpretation of Scripture. The Iowa Synod theologians made a lasting contribution to American Lutheran church life with their contention that Holy Scripture does not definitively settle everything where faith and life are concerned. There are, they maintained, "open questions."

In 1930 the Iowa Synod merged with the Ohio and Buffalo Synods to create the American Lutheran Church (a German body). Thirty years later, this denomination combined with Norwegian and Danish Lutherans to become the (new) American Lutheran Church. Twenty-eight years later, they became part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

“THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE”