



Reformation Lutheran Church

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

February 2022

Some thoughts and questions for you this Epiphany season:

Psalm 71:1-6

¹In you, O Lord, have I taken refuge;

let me never be ashamed.

²In your righteousness, deliver me and set me free;

incline your ear to me and save me.

³Be my strong rock, a castle to keep me safe;

you are my crag and my stronghold.

⁴Deliver me, my God, from the hand of the wicked,

from the clutches of the evildoer and the oppressor.

⁵For you are my hope, O Lord God,

my confidence since I was young.

⁶I have been sustained by you ever since I was born;

from my mother’s womb you have been my strength; my praise shall be always of you.

We use the word “hope” frequently in our daily conversations. We hope for good weather, for enough rain to feed the crops in the spring and summer, for our children to be safe and healthy. We hope for jobs or opportunities to come to fruition, and we hope that things will go well. But in verse 5, the psalmist says: “You are my hope, O Lord God.” • How is placing our hope in God different from placing our hope in a particular result or outcome? • How is hope in God (in a biblical sense) different from mere wishful thinking or optimism? The Hebrew word for “hope” here is tiq-wah. In a literal sense, this word refers to strands of rope or other stringlike materials that are woven together (it is the same word used in Joshua 2:18 when Rahab was instructed to let down a red “cord” for the Israelite spies). • In what sense is hope in the Lord like being held by a strong cord? How does God give us something to which we can cling as we yearn for safety, security, and salvation? • In what sense is hope the “future tense” of faith? (See Hebrews 11.)

(Taken in part from the Sola Worship Resources website).

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May the Lord bless you when Valentine’s Day is here

May he keep you in his loving care every day throughout the year

And may he grant you happiness in everything you do

For in everything you seek and share His love is there with you.

Peace be with you,
Gabi

Treasurer's Report: Thank you to those who are keeping up with their tithes. Blessings!

Fellowship: We don't have anything planned...yet. Lenten soup meals will start in March (already?!?!). Maybe we could consider a Super Bowl snack food fellowship on February 13th? That's Super Bowl Sunday. Share your ideas folks!

Property: They repaired the bathroom ceiling but still need to come back and paint it. Our February clean-up day will be Saturday, the 26th, 9:00 a.m.

Education: We're in the middle of the Thursday study with Rev. Brad Hales from Virginia on "Reviving the Local Church". We meet on Zoom for two hours starting 7PM through February 17th.

Worship and Music: The new church year has begun, and we are well into the season of Epiphany. Epiphany will continue through January and into February.

Hopefully, you are enjoying our Daily Devotion from the Lutheran Hour, and our current look at the Concordia. The Concordia is one of the cornerstone documents of the Lutheran Church, so it is a great opportunity to review and understand what we believe as Lutherans. Check out our website (www.rlcoc.org) We now include a daily video series from a sister congregation in North Carolina and the Rev. Dr. Mark Ryman. These are short videos...generally 4 to 5 minutes where Pastor Ryman reads a section of the Bible and then reviews Luther's comments on the section. These are interesting, enjoyable and educational.

We continue our outreach to assisted living centers and have services each Sunday morning at Thrive and two Sundays each month at the Oaks. Unfortunately, we have had to curtail our services at the Oaks because of an outbreak of Covid among the staff. We hope to be able to start services again soon.

Our Bible class is ongoing each Thursday evening. We are currently having a series on "Renewing the Church." The series is a video series that you can view on-line. If you are not currently watching the series and would like to, please contact Pastor Jon. Following this video series, we will begin a new series on Comparative Christianity where we will look at how beliefs and practices of other Christian churches compare with Lutherans.

We are working on the possibility of putting a video recording of Pastor Jon's sermon on our website each week. Anyone who is not able to attend Sunday services will be able to watch and listen to the sermon from Sunday morning. We are presently working on the logistics of recording and loading it onto the website. More on this will follow.

If you haven't been coming to Reformation on Sunday mornings, we would love to see you. If you have been coming, bring a friend or neighbor!

Mission and Ministry: We have a whole year of fresh possibilities with our Thrivent cards! Our first venture may be to do a Valentine's bag for our friends at Thrive and Oaks. All ideas are welcome!



February 17th – Seth Armstrong
February 26th – Karen Washington

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday – February 13th – Council

Saturday – January 26th – Clean-up Day beginning around 9:00 a.m.

	Feb. 6	Feb. 13	Feb. 20	Feb. 27
Altar Guild	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior
Usher	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy
Lector	Tammy	Karen	Gabi	Junior
Sermon	Pastor	Gabi	Pastor	Pastor
Thrive	Pastor	Gabi	Pastor	Gabi
Oaks		Chuck		Chuck

WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “C.F.W. Walther: Founder of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod”

Historians sometime debate which is more important: the great and powerful mass movements rolling like tidal waves through history (like the French Revolution) or the great and powerful individuals who stand in the midst of these forces and transform them (like Napoleon).

When considering American Lutheran history, one can name any number of great and influential leaders, but the leader who put the most definitive stamp on this

denomination would be clear; that man is C. F. W. Walther, the founding father of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Even after 200 years, Walther's legacy can clearly be seen, both in the denomination he founded and within the larger realm of American Lutheranism.

Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther was born October 25, 1811, in the German state of Saxony, the eighth of twelve children. His family included a number of prominent pastors going back several generations, and so he entered the University of Leipzig to study for the ministry, graduating in 1833. He was ordained in the Lutheran ministry in 1837. This was a time of considerable turmoil for Lutheranism; new intellectual and theological currents were pushing through Germany, as well as a conservative confessional reaction to them. After some personal turmoil, Walther found assurance of faith from a dynamic Lutheran pastor in Dresden, Martin Stephan. Stephan was in direct conflict with the government in Saxony over the religious direction of the state church (a concern that Walther shared), and when Stephan led a party of 665 emigrants to leave Germany in 1838, Walther was among them. This group arrived near St. Louis in 1839.

Walther was initially assigned as pastor to two small Lutheran congregations, but the whole colony was thrown into an uproar in May 1839 when Stephan was accused and then convicted of personal malfeasance, and was exiled from the colony. During the next two years Walther struggled to find his theological bearings within the turmoil from the Stephan affair, but by 1841 he had emerged as one of the leading theological voices within the colony and took a position as pastor of the first Lutheran congregation in St. Louis. From this base, Walther began to reach out to a wider Lutheran audience through a new publication, *Der Lutheraner*, founded in 1844, and through the establishment in 1847 of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States (now the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod).

Though Walther only served as president of the new synod from 1847 to 1850 and later from 1864 to 1878, his personal influence on this group was strong, especially as editor of its newspaper, and on its theological journal, *Lehre und Wehre*, begun in 1855. But his primary platform was as professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, where he taught from 1850 to the end of his life. From this position, Walther sought to influence the whole of American Lutheranism, and it was from here that he put his personal stamp on hundreds of young pastors who became the core of the newly-organized Missouri Synod, which rapidly grew to become one of the largest Lutheran denominations in the United States.

Walther clearly represented and defined a form of deeply confessional Lutheranism that stood in opposition to many contemporary religious movements—against the theological liberalism found in Germany, against other forms of Protestantism found in North America, and against any form of American Lutheranism that seemed to him to have compromised with these other movements. Standing on a firm adherence to the Lutheran confessional documents found in the *Book of Concord*, 1580, Walther defined a strict, uncompromising Lutheranism, with a position that any cooperation between Lutheran groups must be founded on complete theological agreement.

He strongly urged the formation of local parochial schools in Missouri Synod congregations as a means of maintaining and extending pure Lutheranism in America. He wrote a number of important theological works, but none more influential than *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, published in 1897, after his death.

Walther was a strong leader and a strong personality. He attracted many pastors and congregations to join the Missouri Synod, but he also made enemies from within the leaders of other conservative Lutheran denominations, especially the leaders of the Ohio and Iowa Synods. In 1877, as a reaction against Walther's criticism of another Lutheran theologian's position on predestination, a bitter theological controversy erupted with Walther's own theological position at the center of the controversy. As a result, a number of these other Lutheran denominations pushed away from Missouri, which was left relatively isolated, though this did not stop Missouri's own internal growth. Walther died on May 7, 1887, acknowledged as the premier leader of the Missouri Synod and one of the most important figures in American Lutheran history.

“THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE”