



# Reformation Lutheran Church

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

April 2022

*“You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” - Psalm 16:11*

These words reflect David’s deep faith and intimacy with God. They reflect his treasuring of God and his bliss and contentment when spending time in his presence. They reflect his fervent trust that God will deliver him from his enemies and, thus, give him victory over death. David’s experience prefigured Christ and his relationship with the Father. Like David, Jesus maintained deep faith and intimacy with God, and he experienced great joy in his presence. He also knew that if he followed his Father’s will, he would triumph over every enemy of God, humanity, and creation, and gain victory over death, not only for himself, but for all who would believe and follow him. So, Jesus followed his Father’s will all the way to the cross, but that was not the end of the story. Yes, Christ is risen, he is risen indeed! And now we, like David and Jesus may also sing these words of praise, “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” Now we, too, can enjoy the pleasures of communing with God and living in his continual presence. Because Christ is risen, we can begin to experience a taste of eternal life even now: “And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent” (Jn. 17:3). We may “know” the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit (see Jn. 15:26 and Matt. 28:20). And this knowing goes far beyond a mere intellectual knowing about God; it’s an experiential knowledge of him that involves trust, faith, and intimate personal relationship with him. And it involves receiving his guidance and obeying his will that “makes known the path of life.” Jesus is the path of life. He said it this way, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (Jn. 14:6a). “My sheep know my voice, I know them, they know me and follow my voice” (see Jn. 10:3-5, 14). And he promises, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them” (Jn. 14:23, NIV).

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*“Spring shows what God can do with a drab and dirty world.” - Virgil A. Kraft*

Spring! Don’t you just love it?! (Aside from all the pollen, that is!) Azaleas are in full bloom. Our Oak trees go from bare to fully leafed out in a matter of two weeks. The hummingbirds are back! So many sights and sounds of God’s creation to enjoy as new life is emerging from the dead cold of winter. Easter is right around the corner. Christ’s resurrection from the dead means new life for all of us who live in faith. Our old, drab, dirty, sinful self is made new in Him. Rejoice and be glad!

Peace be with you,  
Gabi

**Treasurer’s Report:** I challenge each of us to increase our monthly contributions by 10%. I understand that this is quite an ask. However, it is still short of the 15% increase needed just to cover the minimum monthly expenses to keep the doors open.

We are a small family, but a strong one. I am confident that we will be able to succeed in implementing some of the great ideas suggested at the meeting that will provide the means necessary to continue spreading the word of our Lord and Savior. Thank you for your continued support!

**Fellowship:** Thank you to all those who have contributed to our weekly Lenten meals! It is much appreciated! Let's discuss having breakfast before service on Easter Sunday.

**Property:** The bathroom ceiling has been repaired. The insulation still needs to be replaced. Our April clean-up day will be Saturday, the 26<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m.

**Education:** Reading the Bible for Faith! Want to learn how to take Bible study to a deeper, more engaging level? Ever wonder why people have different interpretations of the Bible? Want to understand how and why people arrive at different interpretations of the same passage? Do you sometimes find yourself confused or mystified about the meaning when reading the Bible? Want to learn a way to make sense of the Bible for the sake of faith? If your answer to any or all of these questions is yes, then this course is for you!

The 5-session course is taught by Bud Thompson, of the St Paul Lutheran Seminary faculty. Pastor Thompson is a retired Lutheran pastor who has 35 years of experience as a parish pastor, 20 years of experience teaching the Bible to university students, and for many years has written on the Bible and Catechism for Connections magazine. Beginning on Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup> at 6PM Central, we will meet online for approximately 90 minutes each session for 5 weeks. The sessions will be recorded should someone miss a live session. Hope you will join us!

**Worship and Music:** It hardly seems possible, but we are nearing the end of Lent and Easter Sunday is right around the corner.

We are continuing our services at 7:00 each Wednesday evening beginning at 7:00 for the remainder of Lent...and don't forget we have a delicious supper each Wednesday at 6:00...come and enjoy.

We are still 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.

The new edition of Portals of Prayer is now on the table at the back of the church. These are a great way to begin the day. Please take one home, and why not take one for a friend!

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:** At the moment, we don't have any projects in the works. We're looking into several options, though. All ideas are welcome!

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**No April Birthdays known of for RLC members.**

<b>APRIL CALENDAR</b>
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**Wednesday – April 6th – Lenten meal – 6:00; Service – 7:00**

**Sunday – April 10th – Palm Sunday – Executive Council following service \***

**Friday – April 15th – Good Friday Service – 7:00**

**Sunday – April 17th – Easter Sunday! Potluck Breakfast starting at 9:30**

**Sunday – April 24th – Council meeting following service \***

**Saturday – April 30th – Clean-up Day beginning around 9:00**

**\* Meeting dates may change pending group discussion/plans etc.**

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	April 3	April 6	April 10	April 15	April 17	April 24
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Junior	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior
<b>Usher</b>	Judy	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy
<b>Lector</b>	Tammy		Karen		Lynn	Junior
<b>Sermon</b>	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Chuck
<b>Thrive</b>	Pastor		Gabi		Pastor	Gai
<b>Oaks</b>			Chuck			Chuck

**WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “William A. Passavant: Gospel Ranger”**

William A. Passavant's life (1821-94) provides a wide window into nineteenth-century American Lutheranism. In those years Lutherans were adapting themselves and their churches to the landscape of American Protestant Christianity. They debated about theology and religious practices. They reconsidered their alliances and reorganized church governance. They devised ways to meet their members' needs and serve their neighbors. Passavant had his hands on all of this.

He was born to German immigrants in Zeleinople, Pennsylvania. He lived in Pennsylvania most of his life, serving as pastor of Christ Lutheran in Baden for twenty-one years. However, his work and travels took him from Maryland to Minnesota. He ministered to the Americanized grandchildren of colonial German immigrants, to newly arrived Scandinavians, and to African-Americans. His ministry included preaching, teaching, publishing, and founding educational and charitable institutions.

In his twenties, Passavant left Gettysburg Seminary for Baltimore.

Immediately he began editorial and pastoral work, a combination he continued elsewhere. Along with his responsibilities at the Lutheran Observer, he conducted neighborhood evangelistic meetings and organized Sunday schools. He not only gathered scattered Lutherans, but also preached to new audiences. Each day he read German to improve his ability to reach immigrants. The loud, extravagant response he received from African-Americans required him to adjust his style.

Founding congregations was the next step. After six busy months he was invited to stay permanently.

The young pastor, however, had other ambitions, which he expressed in a letter to his mother:

... the idea of sitting down in one spot and becoming as other ministers, having the same round of duties from week to week and year to year, is to me now as it always has been very melancholy. You may think me foolish on these subjects, and perhaps I am, but my feelings are unchanged on these matters. I have always longed to be a gospel ranger, to go from place to place assisting my companions in labor, or laying a foundation on which others might build.

His feelings on these matters remained unchanged for five decades during which he left his mark in many places.

In his youth he was influenced by the so-called American Lutheranism at Gettysburg Seminary. He admired John Wesley and was eager for revival. By mid-century his views aligned with the moderate Confessionalists who established a seminary in Philadelphia and founded the General Council. When the Definite Synodical Platform (with its call for corrections to the Augsburg Confession) ignited heated conflict, Passavant took sides even as he tried to calm the flames. He was persuaded to expand his magazine, *The Missionary*, to a weekly that provided an English outlet for the moderates.

Passavant used *The Missionary* to promote mission work in the western territories and abroad. He raised funds for specific efforts and appealed for workers. Nonetheless, joining his publication with *The Lutheran* in 1861 freed him for his other activities, particularly mission and mercy. These two he regarded as the central work of the church. He advocated for city missions and also traveled to rural settlements. Passavant encouraged and modeled collaboration between English-speaking Lutherans and new immigrants. He was a friend and trusted advisor to pastors, such as the Swedish leader Eric Norelius in Minnesota.

In 1846 Passavant represented the Pittsburgh Synod at the Christian Alliance convention in London. He also visited Germany. In Kaiserswerth, Theodore Fliedner introduced him to the deaconess institute and its associated programs. Back in the United States, Passavant set about replicating several of them. The Pittsburgh Infirmary (later Passavant Hospital) opened in 1849. It was the first Protestant hospital in the nation. Four deaconesses sent from Germany were on its staff. Passavant also helped found hospitals in Chicago and Jacksonville, Illinois, and in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as well as several orphanages. This work continues, both through local institutions and in Lutheran Social Service organizations.

From his student days, Passavant was involved in education as an extension of faith and for the preparation of leaders. Thiel College (now in Greenville, Pennsylvania) counts him among its founders.

He supported the seminary in Philadelphia and was involved in starting another in Chicago to serve the church as it expanded westward.

When the General Council took up this proposal in the late 1860s the delegates expressed their hope - and Passavant's - that the school would educate pastoral candidates for all the churches.

The seminary opened in 1891, Its charter stipulated that the school would: "Educate Together, men of a pure faith, of a holy life and of the requisite gifts and education, so that by all necessary learning and practical skill, they may be fitted for the ministry of the gospel, especially in connection with the Evangelical Lutheran Church." In other words, its goal was to raise up leaders to build on the foundations Passavant laid.

**“THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE”**