



Reformation Lutheran Church

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

July 2022

“But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary.” -Luke 10:41-42b

Martha isn't your typical sinner we find throughout the Gospels. She's not a tax collector that steals money from others. She doesn't lie, as far as we are aware. She's not a murderer or adulterer. She's a worrier. Who doesn't worry about something? Why is that so bad? Well, when we worry, it demonstrates a lack of trust in God. Jesus commands us not to worry: “I tell you, do not be anxious about your life” (Matt. 6:25). So if God tells us not to do something, and we do it anyway, we're disobedient to God. This form of sin is easily brushed under a rug. We try to downplay the significance of it. But as is often the case with sin, one sin leads to another. Martha isn't just worried. She's worried and anxious about many things, like getting housework done and being a good hostess. In addition, she despises God's Word in this account. That might seem harsh, but it is true. Martha is upset with Mary because Mary is listening to Jesus. Our brokenness would expect Jesus to pat Mary on the back, encouraging her, thanking her for her service. But he admonishes her instead! And he says that Mary is the one doing what's most important.

Martin Luther's Small Catechism addresses the Third Commandment: “Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.” Luther goes on to explain, “We should fear and love God so that we do not despise his Word and the preaching of it, but acknowledge it as holy, and gladly hear and learn it.” Mary takes a break from work, and we all need to. Otherwise, overworking can lead to burnout. But Sabbath is more than just taking a break.” Sabbath is resting in God's Word. So Mary sits at her Lord's feet and listens.

But Martha works and worries. Not only that, she complains to Jesus about her sister (see Lk. 10:40b). Martha is upset that Mary is listening to God's Word. Jesus responds, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary” (Lk. 10:41-42). One thing is necessary. We are all guilty of being like Martha. We work too hard, worry too much, and yes, at times, we despise God's Word. May we acknowledge God's Word has holy, and gladly hear it and learn it. When we do, we find that God gives us strength to endure another week of work and worry.

Pr.

******For “Summer is the time when one sheds one's tensions with one's clothes, and the right kind of day is jeweled balm for the battered spirit. A few of those days and you can become drunk with the belief that all's right with the world.” - Ada Louise Huxtable*

In the sweet summertime, summertime.....I love to get up and have my coffee out on the porch and sit with the cat and just listen to the world wake up. It's so nice to not have to rush off to work or jump on chores right away. I'm probably whiling away more time than I should, but that's okay. I pray that you too have some leisurely time to relax, reflect, spend time in God's word, and just feel for a bit that yes, all is right with the world

Peace be with you,

Gabi

Treasurer's Report: What is a tithe? From Old English a tithe is one tenth of something. One tenth of a crop, one tenth of livestock, or one tenth of wine and oil. Are we obligated by biblical law to pay a tithe? No! In the Old Testament the Israelites were required by Mosaic Law to give 10% of everything they earned to the tabernacle/temple. Numbers 18:21: "I give to the Levites all the tithes in Israel as their inheritance in return for the work they do while serving at the tent of meeting."

Good, so we are off the hook! No, not so fast. Proverbs 3:9: "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops." and 1 Corinthians 16:1-2: "Now about the collection for the Lord's people: do what I told the Galatian churches to do. On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made."

These are some pretty old writings with varied translations and interpretations. A more recent writing says: support the work of this congregation through contributions of time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards. This was written in 2010, accepted, and adopted as Article 9 Section 3.c of RLC's Constitution!

What does a tithe do? Unfortunately, the mere utterance of the word often times invokes anxiety in most people, especially when mentioned by a treasurer. What tithes should do, however, is provide complete support for a church in their operations, ministries, and missions. Part of our mission as set forth in our Constitution is to respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.

We have been a mighty congregation of God's people despite our small numbers. Some of the great things we have done include buying equipment for a fire department, supporting Hope's Closet, volunteering at a woman's shelter, packing boxes for Operation Christmas Child, giving bible sticks to soldiers, and donating relief money to disaster victims.

We want to continue doing these wonderful things and many, many more. However, we are struggling to keep up with our monthly bills in order to keep the doors open. There has been a lot of talk lately about our finances and the future of our congregation. This is where our 'tithes' are most needed.

After reading all that I am going to shock you all by saying: I am NOT asking for anyone to give more money! What I am going to ask for is your tithe of time. By giving your time to hold fundraisers I believe we can raise the funds we need to easily meet our financial obligations AND get back to our mission of helping those in need. Holding consistent dinners or events will keep our mighty congregation in the forefront of peoples minds. The success we will have as a result will be evident on our faces and people will want to be a part of it. For tithing our time we will receive tithings of growth!

Fellowship: We don't have anything planned yet, but let's discuss doing something for the summer – maybe a cookout at the church? Ice cream sundaes and game night? All ideas are welcome!

Property: Our July clean-up day will be Saturday, the 30th, 9:00 a.m.

Education: Initially, we had planned a ZOOM Bible Study to begin June 15th on Wednesday evenings to learn about different religions. However, that has been postponed until a few of RLC members have returned from vacation. Keep watch for upcoming dates and information. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

Worship and Music: We are now in the season of Trinity. It is the longest season of the church year. The Trinity season extends from Pentecost to Advent. The color green is used to picture the Church as it matures and bears the fruits of the Spirit.

Trinity celebrates the triune God...Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Bible clearly teaches that there is one true God, the Creator and Redeemer of humanity. But this one God exists in three persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

We continue our services on Sunday morning at Reformation, Thrive and the Oaks. We are having very good attendance at Thrive and the Oaks. Unfortunately, the attendance at these two locations is generally better than attendance at Reformation. Reformation is a special family, and we would love to see you on Sunday mornings...come and bring a friend or neighbor!

Don't forget...Portals of Prayer for July-September is available on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

Mission and Ministry: RLC will be having a fundraiser Spaghetti Dinner on Wednesday, July 27th from 4:30 – 7:00. The meal can be dine-in or carry out. Plates will be \$10 and money will go toward mission and outreach activities. Please spread the word! Matthew will have tickets available for anyone willing to sell them. If you are willing to help with serving, clean up, providing desserts to sell, etc. It will be appreciated.



July 2nd – Tammy Jensen
July 10th – Stephanie Stephens
July 11th – Keith Owen
July 12th – Jon Jensen
July 23rd – Wayne Ramming

JULY CALENDAR

Monday – July 4th – Independence Day

Sunday – July 10th – Council

Saturday – July 23rd – AARP Safe Driver's Course 9:00 – 4:00

Saturday – July 30th – Clean-Up Day 9:00 a.m.

	July 3	July 10	July 17	July 24	July 31
Altar Guild	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior
Usher	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy
Lector	Tammy	Karen	Lynne	Junior	Chuck
Sermon	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor
Thrive	Gabi	Pastor	Gabi	Pastor	Gabi
Oaks		Chuck		Chuck	

WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “African-American Lutherans”

On Palm Sunday 1669 a Lutheran pastor in Albany, New York, baptized into his congregation an African-American man who was given the name Emmanuel. In subsequent years other African-Americans, enslaved or free, became members of Lutheran congregations in New York and New Jersey. Thus, there have been African-American Lutherans in this country for over 350 years, longer than many of the other groups of European immigrants we generally think of as being Lutheran.

African-Americans became Lutherans in many places in the colonial period; besides New York they were found in the Carolinas and Georgia, on the Danish Virgin Islands, and in British and Dutch Guiana in South America.

Though not always, they often were slaves of Lutheran masters. Initially, Lutherans were against slavery, but some quickly adapted to it in this country. By the time of the Civil War, there were several thousand African-American Lutheran members in the South, and many more (probably 8,000-10,000) who had been baptized Lutheran. In 1832 an African-American Lutheran preacher named Jehu Jones formed St. Paul's Colored Lutheran Church in Philadelphia, which survived until 1849. Another African-American, Daniel Payne, graduated from Gettysburg Seminary in 1837. After some years as a Lutheran pastor, he became a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

After the Civil War, most of the African-American Lutherans in the South left the white congregations, where they generally had been second-class citizens. In response, various southern Lutheran synods began sporadic efforts to evangelize the newly-freed African-Americans and to build separate Lutheran congregations. Starting in 1868, the Lutheran synods in Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia licensed African-

American preachers to preach the gospel and gather congregations. These efforts were poorly funded at best, and in 1889 (out of desperation) the African-American preachers in the North Carolina Synod formed the Alpha Synod, the first African-American American Lutheran church organization. This little synod, and the other African-American Lutheran congregations in the South, struggled for survival through the end of the nineteenth century.

As national Lutheran denominations formed in the nineteenth century, they began to do mission work outside their own ethnic boundaries. Many times, this meant foreign missions, but it also meant to some evangelism among minority groups in the United States. In 1877 the Synodical Conference (dominated by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) began mission work among African-Americans, first in Little Rock and then more successfully in New Orleans. Subsequently, the Synodical Conference also incorporated the preachers and congregations of the Alpha Synod, and they began a very successful mission work among African-Americans in Alabama (where they were joined by the Joint Synod of Ohio). In the South these African-American Lutherans opened schools, academies, and teacher-training institutions, one of which grew into Concordia College, Selma, Alabama, the only historically-black Lutheran college in the country.

Beginning around World War I, the "Great Migration" of African Americans to the cities of the North and West brought new African-American Lutheran congregations in these cities, thirty-eight of them founded between 1923 and 1950. Some of these congregations were formed by migrants from the American south, while others were composed of immigrants from the Virgin Islands and from South America. By 1950, there were nearly 11,000 African-American Lutherans, mostly in urban areas.

With the Civil Rights movement, beginning in the 1950s, the old era of African-American Lutheranism began to change. Prior to this most Lutheran congregations were segregated, but beginning in the 1960s the three American Lutheran denominations began to push for integrated congregations and increased outreach to African Americans. In the Lutheran Church in America, the number of African-American members jumped from 5,000 in 1962 to 49,000 in 1989 (with 111 African-American pastors), when the LCA became a part of the ELCA. In all the American Lutheran bodies in 1991, there were 132,000 African American Lutherans (about two percent of all Lutherans). In the last twenty years, new Lutheran immigrants from Africa have formed a number of congregations around the country.

How should these numbers be seen? They are, in part, a success story, but they also indicate that had white Lutherans been more consistently supportive of African-American Lutherans, these numbers could have been much higher. African-American Lutherans have often heroically struggled to build and maintain their congregations, only occasionally assisted by white Lutherans. Their accomplishments must be honored and their 350-year legacy lifted up.

“THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE”