



Reformation Lutheran Church

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

June 2022

“But you, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.” -

Psalm 3:3

Psalm 3 depicts David crying out to God as an ever-growing multitude of enemies besiege and taunt him declaring that not even God can save him (see verses 1-2). However, in the midst of these terrifying circumstances David confidently declares, “But you, O LORD, are a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.”

In David’s day in the Near East, the shield served as the standard military means of defense to protect from oncoming swords and spears. The shield referenced in this psalm probably refers to the more common hand-held shield that protected the chest and arm.

But David looks not to the military or to their weaponry or paraphernalia for defense, but to a far greater shield who will not only completely protect him from every side (“a shield about me”), but who will also give David dignity and honor in the midst of the enemies’ taunts (“my glory, and the lifter of my head”). Clearly, David knows from whom his true salvation comes (see verse 8).

In fact, David places such trust in God that, even in the face of great danger, he declares, “I will not be afraid of many thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around” (verse 6). He then lays down to sleep and awakens in safety because “the LORD sustained me” (see verse 5).

This psalm so beautifully depicts the faithfulness of God in the midst of difficulties and suffering that come our way. We may be besieged on every side from within and/or from without, and without any apparent solution, but God remains faithful and near in the midst of our pain.

When we cry out to him as David did (see verse 4), God hears and enfolds us on every side in his protective arms. Yes, we may still suffer and die, but God will not allow the enemy to harm our souls. And when we experience the taunts of the enemy that cast doubt on God’s salvation of us or the worth, dignity, and honor ascribed to us by God, we can turn to God knowing he is our shield, glory, the lifter of our head, and our sustainer in the midst of every trial no matter how small or great.

Pr.

******For*
I am the LORD your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you. Isaiah 41:13

I wanted to say something blithe and happy about summer. Days off. Sunshine. Travel. Rest. Relaxation. But it’s hard. I just can’t get past the recent tragedy in Texas. My teacher friends and I are heart-broken for these innocent lives so cruelly taken. For all of us though, it’s so easy to get consumed with fear, anxiety, and stress with all the craziness going on in the world or maybe even close to home. It can seem never-ending. But you know what absolutely is never-ending? God’s love and care for us. His peace that He is constantly willing to shower us with. His constant presence and promise to be with us ALWAYS. That’s the news we should focus on and share! May you feel HIS peace and presence in your life today.

Peace be with you, Gabi

Treasurer's Report: I understand that this is quite an ask, but I still challenge each of us to increase our monthly contribution by 10%. As previously mentioned, it is short of the 15% increase needed to cover the minimum monthly expenses to keep the doors open. This has resulted in the necessity to transfer money from savings to checking to cover our recent expenses.

We had some discussions about great outreach ideas to provide the means necessary to continue spreading the word of our Lord and Savior. I did some research and spoke with people from both the Harris County Health Department and Community Development (building/zoning) Departments. We do not have to have a health inspection to do any food prep/sales from our kitchen. We can have a food truck in our parking lot to do business with us and do not have to have any licenses or permits to do so. So, let's start doing outreach and fundraising!!!

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: Junior talked to Donny about the insulation and he's going to call to set a time to install it. Our June clean-up day will be Saturday, the 25th, 9:00 a.m.

Education: On June 15th we are planning to begin a new ZOOM Bible Study, Wednesday evenings, at 7:00 p.m. We will be taking a look at different religions. Please contact Pastor if you are interested in participating. Looking forward to seeing there!

Worship and Music: June 5 is Pentecost Sunday, June 12 is Holy Trinity Sunday and then we begin the long season of Trinity, so June is a special month.

Pentecost celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples. It opened their eyes and hearts and truly enabled them to understand what Jesus had been teaching them over the last three years. The Holy Spirit also comes to us and sanctifies us in the true faith and by faith He works a renewal of our whole life so that we can strive to overcome sin. The Holy Spirit freely gives to all Christians the most precious gifts of faith in Christ, forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Trinity Sunday 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. Reformation is a special family, and we would love to see you on Sunday mornings...come and bring a friend or neighbor!

Mission and Ministry: Sigh. No projects in the works yet. All ideas are welcome! I am waiting to hear back from our HOPE Center contact. Please keep La Chandra in your prayers as she recovers from surgery.



June 8th – Carolyn Ramming
June 21st – Lynne Rowe
June 23rd – Judy Grigsby

JUNE CALENDAR

Sunday – June 12th – Council

Sunday – June 19th – Father’s Day

Saturday – June 25th – Clean-Up Day 9:00 a.m.

	June 5	June 12	June 19	June 26
Altar Guild	Junior	Judy	Junior	Judy
Usher	Judy	Junior	Judy	Junior
Lector	Karen	Lynne	Junior	Gabi
Sermon	Chuck	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor
Thrive	Gabi	Pastor	Gabi	Pastor
Oaks		Chuck		Chuck

WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “Samuel Simon Schmucker and the General Synod”

He was, if nothing else, an ambitious young man, with a vision of truly American Lutheranism. At the time of his birth in 1799, the new American republic was growing and expanding, with a sense of incurable optimism, vibrant energy, and unlimited horizons. Samuel Simon Schmucker (1799-1873) embodied this new American spirit in his untiring work for the consolidation and expansion of Lutheranism in North America.

From a very young age, Schmucker played a prominent role, not only in American Lutheranism, but also in the wider world of Anglo-American Protestantism. No stranger to controversy, he was admired by many and detested by others, but he left an indelible mark on his church and his age.

A third-generation American Lutheran, Schmucker was born in 1799 into an extended Lutheran clerical family. Intelligent and precocious, he studied theology first with his father, then at Princeton Theological Seminary (there being no Lutheran seminary at the time). He was ordained at age twenty-one and began serving Lutheran congregations in Virginia. Concerned for Lutheran ministerial education, the (very) young Schmucker set up a proto-seminary in his parsonage, personally training a number of clergy candidates, among all his other duties.

Although by the early 1820s the geographical expansion of American Lutheranism had resulted in the formation of six regional synods, there was no national organization to coordinate their efforts or expand Lutheranism further. In 1820 the attempt was made

to form a General Synod to meet this need, but in 1823 opposition and infighting among American Lutherans imperiled this fledgling institution. Though he was dealing with the painful loss of his own young wife, Schmucker swung into action and through dozens of letters and personal contacts, along with coordinating his family's efforts, he managed to save the nascent General Synod from collapse. For the next fifty years, Schmucker would be its leading figure.

In 1826 the General Synod was able to form the first permanent Lutheran seminary, at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Schmucker was, of course, instrumental in the formation of this seminary and was elected the first (and only) professor of this institution; he was twenty-six. For the next thirty-eight years he would put his personal stamp on the institution and on North American Lutheranism, though his education and preparation of some 400 Lutheran pastors and through the publication of over 40 books, including an influential theological textbook, a handbook for synodical and congregation organization, and a number of polemical works.

This period of time was both formative and divisive for American Lutheran theology. Many Lutherans were drawn to the dominant Reformed or Revivalistic Protestantism, some leaned toward Deism, while still others, reacting against these trends, pushed for strict Lutheran confessionalism. Schmucker tried to forge a centrist pathway for American Lutherans in the midst of these diverging tendencies.

Against the strict and separatist Lutherans, Schmucker insisted that Lutheran confessionalism ought to be open enough to allow contacts and influences from the wider Protestant world.

In the 1850s, as a part of this vision of an expansive and ecumenical Lutheranism, Schmucker and others offered, anonymously at first, a new American revision of the Lutheran theological standard, the Augsburg Confession. Convinced that the only way to "save" this confessional document for American Lutherans was to modify it theologically at several places where it did not fit current American Lutheran practice, they did so. Schmucker and his allies believed that Augsburg's maintenance of doctrines such as baptismal regeneration and the real presence was a medieval Catholic holdover, ideas that American Lutherans no longer held (which, in the majority, they probably did not). The only way to maintain the authority of the Augsburg Confession (which Schmucker did believe in) was to bring it into conformity with contemporary American Lutheran sensitivities.

However well intentioned, this attempt was a failure, and it cost the unity of his beloved General Synod. Conservative Lutherans outside the General Synod went ballistic over Schmucker's attempt to modify the Augsburg Confession and saw in it the proof that the General Synod had completely forfeited its Lutheran heritage. More ominously, Schmucker's proposed American edition also created unrest within important sections of the General Synod itself and among some of Schmucker's former students, a number of whom were now important theological leaders. The ensuing controversy over Schmucker's American Lutheranism resulted eventually in a split in the General Synod; the withdrawal of several constituent synods and the eventual formation, in 1867, of a rival national organization of Lutheran synods, the General Council.

Schmucker's legacy in American Lutheranism is complicated and contested. Some Lutherans see him as a symbol of all the things in American Lutheranism that they do not like. Others see in him a vision of ecumenical Christian openness that they admire. Regardless, his influence is rooted deeply in a Lutheranism in America that he was instrumental in forming. **“THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE”**