



# Reformation Lutheran Church

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

October 2022

*“For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation.” - Psalm 62:1 –*

In Psalm 62, David, likening himself to a “leaning wall, a tottering fence” (v. 3) under attack, battered, slandered, and cursed by an enemy (see vv. 3 and 4), proclaims his confidence in God as his “rock,” “salvation,” “hope,” “fortress,” “glory,” and “refuge” (see vv. 2, 5-7).

We don’t know the details of the circumstances this psalm describes, but when David speaks of himself “like a leaning wall” (v. 3) he seems to refer to some sort of significant debility he suffers. David knew that a leaning wall indicated a weak wall that made those who relied on it for protection vulnerable to attack. Yet, in this state of vulnerability and weakness, while under enemy attack, David remains confident. Why? Because David knows the true source of his salvation: “Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him” (v. 1, NIV).

The Hebrew word *dûmîyâ*, translated “waits in silence” (ESV) and “rests” (NIV), carries a sense of “repose,” “still waiting,” “quiet,” and “trust,” according to Strong’s Concordance. How amazing that David assumes this position in light of what appears to be otherwise bleak circumstances.

David confidently professes, “For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him” (v. 5). David knows his hope comes from nothing less than God. Neither his own personal weaknesses nor the might or tactics of the enemy can diminish his confident hope as he trusts in God.

So, he quietly waits on God, finding rest and repose in him who alone – God plus nothing – is his “rock,” “salvation,” and “fortress.” So confident is David in this that he announces, “I shall not be shaken” (v. 6) and encourages his listeners to “Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us” (v. 8).

How reassuring to know we, too, can trust God at all times. We may be weak and surrounded by threats, but we can choose to pour out our heart to God and repose in him, choosing to trust Him.

As Jesus said, “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world” (Jn. 16:33).

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*To gather with God's people in united adoration of the Father is as necessary to the Christian life as prayer. - Martin Luther*

I thought this appropriate as October is the month we celebrate the Protestant Reformation. Webster's defines “reformation” as the act of reforming. Synonyms for “reformation” include: dramatic change, drastic change, and radical alteration. Living life in God’s word and allowing Him to be the guide of our life, guarantees radical change! Change for the better! But, we need to be IN THE WORD for this to happen. Luther spoke directly about this, “God’s word cannot be without God’s people, and conversely, God’s people cannot be without God’s word.” If you’ve been in church recently, you’ve noticed that we’re pretty sparse at times. Where is everyone? If you/they are not in church, where do you/they

hear God's word? Where do you/they get the nourishment for the soul that only Christ can give? Where do you/they praise and worship Him who provides all blessings to us? Where do you/they partake of the holy sacrament of communion where we share in Christ's body and blood? Jesus himself said, "This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me." So, where is everyone?

Our little church needs YOU! We truly desire to grow and share God's word, His love, grace, and mercy with others. The work to do so starts YOU.

Peace be with you,

Gabi

**Prayer for the Church:** Heavenly Father, we know you have plans for your church – specifically for Reformation Lutheran Church – that are for your glory. The Bible says the church is your house, you dwell in the midst of your people. We ask your wisdom and support as we seek to honor your purposes for us. May Christ dwell in our hearts through faith so that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may have the strength to know and share the love of Christ that surpasses all understanding. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**Fellowship:** Finally, a potluck! We will celebrate Reformation Sunday with a potluck after service. That always turns into a good time! Looking forward to seeing EVERYONE.

**Property:** Our September clean-up day will be Saturday, the 29<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. At long last, the insulation has been installed. Thankfully, there are no other problems at this time.

**Education:** Initially, a ZOOM Bible Study was planned to begin on Wednesday evenings to learn about different religions. However, that is still on hold. Keep watch for upcoming dates and information.

**Worship and Music:** We have just a few more Sundays in the season of Trinity. On the last Sunday of October, we will celebrate Reformation Sunday which as you all know is a very special Sunday in the Lutheran Church. Get ready to shake the wall of Reformation with "A Mighty Fortress"!!!

Our services at Thrive and the Oaks continue with good attendance at both locations...in fact, they have more attendance than Reformation. We can change that by bringing a friend or neighbor to Sunday services.

The new Portals of Prayer have arrived and will be on the table at the back of the church. Be sure to pick one up.

**Mission and Ministry:** We're applying for two Thrivent cards to help out the Focus Food Bank which is running very low on supplies and seeing an increasing number of people. As of this writing, we are also looking at ways to help those affected by hurricane Ian in Florida. As always, all ideas are welcome.

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**October 16<sup>th</sup> – Ingrid Hanson**

**October 23<sup>rd</sup> – Pat Hunsaker**

**OCTOBER CALENDAR**

**Sunday – October 9<sup>th</sup> – Council**

**Saturday – October 29<sup>th</sup> – Clean-Up Day 9:00 a.m.**

**Sunday – October 30<sup>th</sup> – Reformation Sunday–Potluck following service**

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	<b>Oct. 2</b>	<b>Oct. 9</b>	<b>Oct. 16</b>	<b>Oct. 23</b>	<b>Oct. 30</b>
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Junior	Tammy	Tammy	Junior	Tammy
<b>Usher</b>	Junior	Carolyn	Junior	Carolyn	Junior
<b>Lector</b>	Karen	Tammy	Lynne	Junior	Chuck
<b>Sermon</b>	Chuck	Pastor	Pastor	Gabi	Pastor
<b>Thrive</b>	Gabi	Pastor	Gabi	Gabi	Pastor
<b>Oaks</b>	Chuck		Pastor		Chuck

**WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “Father Adam Keffer and Early Canadian Lutheranism”**

How far would you go to get a pastor? Would you walk 500 miles (round trip) in blustery spring weather, and do it not only once, but twice? This sounds like an impossible undertaking, but it really happened in 1849 and 1850, when Adam Keffer, a lay leader of some Lutherans near Toronto, walked twice to Pennsylvania in order to find a Lutheran pastor for his congregation. On top of it all, "Father" Keffer was over sixty years old!

German Lutherans started coming to Canada in the eighteenth century. There were Lutheran congregations started in Nova Scotia in the 1750s, which were reinforced by "Loyalist" American Lutherans who went north during the Revolutionary War. In 1793, a group of 350 German Lutherans, who had originally settled in New York, crossed the Great Lakes and founded settlements in Ontario, outside of Toronto. They had been unable to find land in New York and accepted a generous offer from the governor in Ontario for 64,000 acres.

This area was wilderness; the group had great trouble reaching the area and further trouble in settling there. But they persevered and founded a number of small Lutheran congregations. These Lutherans had brought a pastor along with them, but he remained with them for only a few years, then returned to Germany. After this, the fledgling congregations were occasionally served by regular Lutheran pastors, but there were long periods of vacancy in between.

In early North America, there were never enough pastors to go around, and this was especially true on the frontier. In desperation, congregations often had to resort to whatever kinds of pastors they could find, and there were many imposters running around claiming to be pastors when they really were not. Carl Cronmiller, an historian of Canadian Lutheranism, wrote, "These men may be described as clerical tramps, some of who were discharged Army officers or schoolteachers, imposters who pretended to be ordained clergy men." These early Canadian Lutherans suffered from abuse at the hands of several such irregular pastors, who almost destroyed their congregations. In desperation, some Lutheran congregations were lured away and joined the Anglican church.

In 1849, some of the remaining members of Zion Lutheran Church, Maple, Ontario, sent one of their elders, Adam Keffer, to the United States to find a pastor for them. Keffer was the son of one of the original founders of the congregation, and at the time he was over sixty years old. Keffer set out walking for Pennsylvania and, tradition has it, carried his shoes most of the way (to save them from getting worn out). Eventually Keffer was directed to a meeting of a new Lutheran organization, the Pittsburgh Synod, which was meeting in the spring of 1849 in Klecknerville, Pennsylvania. One of the members of the synod, the Rev. William Passavant, discovered Father Keffer walking barefoot in a garden at the edge of the village and invited to the synodical meeting. Once at the meeting, Keffer gave an impassioned appeal to the group for a pastor and for financial assistance.

The young Pittsburgh Synod (only four years old) sent one of its pastors to Ontario that summer to survey the field, but there was no immediate aid for the Canadian Lutherans beyond this. The next year, in the spring of 1850, the Pittsburgh Synod met in Pittsburgh, and, to the astonishment of all, Adam Keffer showed up again, having walked over 250 miles to reach the meeting. He delivered the same impassioned pleas as the year before and this time got results. As the synodical newspaper, *The Missionary*, records it: "The interviews of this aged patriarch with the Synod, and his agonizing entreaties for someone to come over and help them, went to the heart of everyone, and awakened an interest for the mission cause never before felt."

This time Father Keffer's prayers were answered, and a series of Lutheran pastors from the Pittsburgh Synod began long and successful ministries in Ontario. In the next decade, several dozen congregations were reactivated or formed. By 1853 these congregations in Ontario were organized into the Canada Conference of the Pittsburgh Synod, an event which marks the first Lutheran synodical organization in Canada itself and the oldest forerunner of the current Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

All this was possible because one old man would not stand by and see his congregation die for lack of a good pastor. In current language you could say that he "walked the walk" as well as "talked the talk."

*There is a great lesson here for Reformation. We have a pastor...we have a church building...but we need members. One person can make a difference. In the above article, one man would not stand by and see his congregation die. We are approaching the most important Sunday for Lutherans...Reformation Sunday. One man...Martin Luther...built an entire denomination...a world-wide church. We just need to build one congregation in Cataula, GA. What can you do to make a difference?*

**“THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE”**