



# Reformation Lutheran Church

**“Come and See, Learn and Rejoice, Go and Tell!”  
February 2023**

*“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.” - 1 Corinthians 3:6-7*

It won't be long and farmers will be back in the fields planting seeds with the hope of a ripe harvest in the fall. I have had the blessing of living and serving in rural ranching and farming communities. Spending time in those communities has taught me much about God's Word and how he works.

This past summer was one of the driest summers much of our country has seen for some time. Wild fires burned out in the west. The plains saw their crops drying up by mid-July. Droughts are hard on farmers and anyone who intends to plant seeds and produce fruit of various kinds: crops, gardens, orchards, etc. For the gardener and farmer, they know they must rely on God to provide the rain waters to nourish the seed in the ground. They must rely on God to bring forth the warmth of the sun to allow the seeds to sprout and grow.

In the same way, Christians need nourishment. Unfortunately, the Christian can experience times of drought. We get caught up in the busyness of life that we push our faith to the back burner. Church is no longer a priority but sports and activities are. After some time, we might notice that begin to wilt. We need to be nourished regularly by God's Word.

Martin Luther reminds us, “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.” As Lutherans, we believe that sabbath is based first and foremost on the hearing and preaching of God's Word. When we take time for that each week, we are blessed with nourishment and recharge. We can rest and relax all we want, but if we don't have God's Word, we will never grow. “Only God gives the growth” (1 Cor. 3:7b). Are you going through a time of drought? Is God calling you to return to sabbath, to rest in His Word?

Prayer: Gracious and Merciful Father, we give you thanks that you have blessed us with your Holy Word. May we eagerly hear it and gladly learn it. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

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*“Keep your faith in beautiful things; in the sun when it is hidden, in the Spring when it is gone.” Roy R. Gibson*

Keep your faith. All of us have gone through life experiences where our faith is tested, shaky, tough to hang on to. Trying to keep it is so much easier said than done. But listen again....Keep your faith in beautiful things.....like what? I love the reference the author made, “...in the sun when it is hidden....” How about we turn that into, “...the SON when he feels hidden....” Our Lord is ALWAYS with us. We get so distracted by whatever worries have our attention, that we forget that. We have so many beautiful things going for us at RLC. God's word spoken and rejoiced over every Sunday. The Lord's Supper. Forgiveness. The love and care we show each other. The help we provide as God's hands in the community. Keep your faith my friends. The future is unknown, but God is already there. Keep your faith. Peace be with you, Gabi

**Your Council for 2023 - President:** Gabi Owen; **Vice President:** Wayne Ramming; **Secretary:** Tammy Jensen; **Co-Treasurers:** Cheryle Wadsworth/Pat Hunsaker; **Worship and Music:** Chuck Hunsaker; **Property:** Junior Erickson **Outreach:** EVERYONE, headed up by Pastor Jon and Tammy; **Fellowship:** EVERYONE; **Education:** Pastor Jon

**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:** What fun it was to celebrate Wayne and Carolyn’s 50th anniversary! Let’s continue the theme of “Love” with a snack fellowship after church on February 12th. It’s the day of our Annual Meeting. We can meet and snack at the same time.

Looking ahead, our Lenten Soup Suppers will begin on Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. with Service following at 7:00 p.m.

**Property:** Our February clean-up day will be Saturday, the 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m. Helping hands are welcome!

**Education:** It’s Bible Study time! Starting Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup> at 9:30. The study will cover different religions around the world. Please make efforts to attend. It’s going to be very interesting!

**Worship and Music:** We are well into the new year and the season of Epiphany. As we transition into the month, we will have Ash Wednesday on February 22 and the first Sunday in Lent on February 26. And don’t forget, each Wednesday during Lent will be a soup supper and a service. There is a lot to look forward to.

Also, some good news. On January 29, we started up a Sunday morning Bible class. It begins at 9:30. The focus of the class is on comparative Christianity. We will look at the major denominations and see how they are alike and how they are different. I think you will fully enjoy the class.

Come...bring a friend or neighbor.

**Mission and Ministry:** Chuck has been in touch with a youth group at Ft. Benning. Prayerfully, there will be opportunities for us to work together on some projects. Aside from that, let’s see if we can find an opportunity soon to use a Thrivent card for something in the community. All ideas are welcome!

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**February 26<sup>th</sup> – Karen Washington**

<b>FEBRUARY CALENDAR</b>
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**Sunday – February 5th – Bible Study – 9:30 a.m.; Service – 10:30 a.m.**

**Sunday – February 12th – Bible Study – 9:30 a.m.; Service – 10:30 a.m.**

**Annual General Meeting following service Snack Fellowship following service**

**Sunday – February 19th – Bible Study – 9:30 a.m.; Service – 10:30 a.m.**

**Wednesday – February 22nd – Ash Wednesday Service – 7:00 p.m.**

**Saturday – February 25th – Clean-up day – 9:00 a.m.**

**Sunday – February 26th – Bible Study – 9:30 a.m.; Service – 10:30 a.m.**

	Feb. 5	Feb. 12	Feb. 19	Feb. 26
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Wayne	Junior	Carolyn	Tammy
<b>Usher</b>	Junior	Wayne	Junior	Carolyn
<b>Lector</b>	Lynne	Junior	Tammy	Karen
<b>Sermon</b>	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Wayne
<b>Thrive</b>	Gabi	Pastor	Wayne	Gabi
<b>Oaks</b>		Chuck		Chuck

**WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “American Lutherans and the Civil War”**

The American Civil War (1861-1865), a bloody and destructive conflict, represents a crucial turning point in American history and one that affected all aspects of our society. American Lutherans were profoundly influenced by the war, and in some sections of the country Lutheranism was severely affected by its events. Sorrow and suffering were strangers to few homes during this time, and the nation mourned even as it fought.

Though many other issues may have contributed to the war, the chief dispute was slavery, especially its expansion into the new western territories. Though few Lutherans in the North were radical abolitionists (the Franckean Synod being an exception), most northern Lutherans tended to oppose slavery and its extension. Most southern Lutherans had eventually come to support the system of slavery, and the question of slavery had complicated their relations with their northern counterparts. While some American Lutherans supported the mediating policy of the Democrats, increasingly the northern Lutherans (especially the new immigrants) were drawn to the newly organized Republican party.

With the election of Lincoln in 1860, the long-Simmering national tensions erupted into divisions and conflict, as the southern states withdrew from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. Following many other southern religious groups, southern Lutherans withdrew from their northern counterparts and in 1863 formed a new organization, eventually known as the General Synod, South. Lutherans in border states, such as Missouri and Tennessee, watched cautiously as the conflict erupted into warfare in the spring of 1861. It would be the southern Lutherans (mainly in Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina) and Lutherans in the border states who would bear the direct effects of the war that stretched out for the next four years.

On both sides of the conflicts, American Lutherans rushed to support their governments, and many Lutherans enlisted in their respective armies. There were numbers of regiments in the Union army made up of young German and Scandinavian immigrants, often Lutherans, and Lutheran pastors volunteered to accompany these regiments as chaplains (notably Claus Clausen, William Passavant, and John H. W. Stuckenberg). Various Lutheran groups, North and South, organized to support their soldiers in the field, sending supplies and religious materials to the armies when possible. Support for the two respective governments was strong though some Lutherans, worried about possible transgression of the line separating church and state, and held back. The war came home directly to northern Lutherans in the summer of 1863, when Confederate troops pushed into southern Pennsylvania and fought a climatic battle with Union forces at the little town of Gettysburg. This town just also happened to contain the oldest Lutheran seminary in the United States, and much of the battle turned upon the possession of the Seminary Ridge, the geographical feature on which the Lutheran seminary itself stood. The destruction of the battle itself caused a great deal of damage to the Gettysburg seminary, and the students and faculty were displaced for an extended period of time. Tensions in Missouri in the early months of the war also threatened Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, and students there briefly formed a company to defend the campus.

But it was in the South, especially in Virginia and the Carolinas, where Lutherans were most directly affected, especially in 1864 and 1865, as Union troops pushed into the South. By this time the war had become a bloody, destructive conflict from which civilian property and institutions were not exempt. Already the northern blockade and the demands of war had seriously impoverished many southern Lutherans, but direct warfare added further miseries, especially during Sherman's march to the sea. Some Lutheran congregations were damaged or destroyed by the war and its effects. Southern Lutheran institutions, such as Roanoke College, Newberry College, and Southern Seminary, collapsed from lack of students and funding. The armies of both sides confiscated properties and goods for use in the war effort, and few places were left unscathed.

With the end of this war in April 1865, the direct conflicts ceased, though the effects of war would continue to be sharp for many years, especially in the South. The eastern Lutherans would continue to be divided North and South for the next fifty years; they would eventually come to be formally reunited in 1918.

**“THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE”**