



Reformation Lutheran Church

**“Come and See, Learn and Rejoice, Go and Tell!”
August 2024**

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” - John 6:51

We hear from the “Bread of Life Discourse” in our gospel readings in September. In the first week we hear about the physical needs that God provides for us to care for us, needs like food, water, clothing, etc. And while those things are good and important, they don’t ultimate provide us with salvation.

Jesus was teaching the crowd the difference between the earthly bread that God provides for us and the life-giving bread we receive in Jesus Christ.

Jesus gave us his flesh when he died on the cross. He gave himself up for us, destroying the power of the devil, death, and sin. Jesus gives us his flesh in the bread we receive at Holy Communion.

Martin Luther says, “Holy Communion is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, given to us Christians to eat and drink, as it was instituted by Christ himself.” Furthermore, Luther says, “the forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given to us in the Sacrament, for where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation.” Jesus Christ is the Bread of Life. He is the living bread, which we receive when we come to his table.

Jesus proclaims that whoever feeds on his flesh and drinks his blood will abide in him, and likewise, he will abide in them. (See v. 56). The same gift of life that is provided for us through Christ’s crucifixion is also provided to us through the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Those who believe in Christ crucified and risen from the dead have salvation and forgiveness of sin.

Jesus invites sinners to come to his table that he has set before us. As we hear the Words of Institution spoken and we eat the bread and drink the wine, we can leave our Lord’s table feeling the load of sin being lifted off of ourselves and placed onto Christ. We are free from the weight of sin. As we rejoice that we’re freed, we can invite others to receive the living bread.

Prayer: Gracious God, we give you thanks that you have given us the gift of your life-giving bread. Help us to receive it with grateful hearts, that we might share it with others. We ask this in Jesus’ name, Amen. Pr.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Reformation...the little church with the big heart. That’s us. Looking over the church page of the Harris County Journal, I don’t see a single church in the area, regardless of size, that does the things we do at Reformation. Sunday services at now two retirement facilities, our garage sale, and our Thrivent cards have us leading the way with outreach and serving as a champion for bringing the Word of God to this part of Georgia. What a great tribute.

Reach out to friends and neighbors...let’s grow Reformation!
Chuck Hunsaker, Council President

Trivia Question – Which Apostle Is Believed To Have Been Crucified Upside Down??

- Paul Peter James Andrew



7th – Amy Becker

7th – Bobbie Golden

8th – Gabi Owen

AUGUST CALENDAR

Sunday – August 4th – 9:15 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Service

Sunday – August 11th – 9:15 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Service

Sunday – August 18th – 9:15 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Service; Council after service

Tuesday – August 20th – 11:30 a.m. Lutheran Men’s Lunch at Pies and Thighs

Sunday – August 25th – 9:15 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Service

Saturday – August 31st – Clean-up Day – 9:00 a.m.

	August 4	August 11	August 18	August 25
Altar Guild	Amy	Tammy	Junior	Amy
Usher	Junior	Carolyn	Amy	Junior
Lector	Tammy	Dick	Gabi	Amy
Music	Amy	Teresa	Amy	Amy
Children Time	Pat	Pat	Pat	Pat
Sermon	Pastor	Pastor	Pastor	Wayne
Thrive	Gabi	Chuck	Gabi	Wayne

Mission and Ministry Outreach: Good news! Our project for the Humane Society of Harris County has been approved! Aside from using the card to buy supplies, I’m hoping to partner with our antique store neighbors and see if they will allow a donation box to be set up in their store. I’d like to check out the possibility of doing the same at Billy’s. If anyone has other ideas, please let me know! Chuck is working with the director of House of Heroes to see if there is an upcoming project we may help with. I’m still in touch with the activities director at Thrive to see if there is something we can assist with there. All ideas are welcome!

Property: Our August clean-up day will be Saturday, the 31st, 9:00 a.m. Helping hands are always welcome!

Fellowship: Other than our third quarter birthday celebration at the end of September, the only thing I see on the calendar right now is the Oktoberfest meal that Dick Donovan is heading up. That’s scheduled for Saturday, October 26th at 5:00 p.m. I think we are all looking forward to that! If anyone would like to have any other fellowship activity, please speak up!

Education: Please join us on Sundays, at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Our Bible Study classes covering the topic of Saint John's letters and Revelation continues.

Worship and Music: *Excerpt from "Music: The Expression of a Worshiping Heart," sermon from John MacArthur* Thinking about music, ... just a few thoughts from the Word of God. We have been saved for the ultimate goal of worship. That is our ultimate goal. We enjoy while we're here on earth other divine purposes, namely, to proclaim the gospel to an unbelieving world, preach the gospel to every creature, fulfill the Great Commission. But once that is finished and this human history is wrapped up at the return of Jesus Christ, and after His kingdom when the new heavens and the new earth are created and all the saints and angels are gathered into eternal glory, we will there in eternal glory basically fulfill the purpose of our redemption, and that will be to worship the Lord.

Every glimpse of heaven you have in the Scripture, when you see the throne of God, gathered around that throne, whether it's angels or angels and saints collectively, they're always doing the same thing. Whether you see them in the fifth chapter of Revelation or the fourteenth chapter of Revelation or the fifteenth chapter of Revelation, whenever you get a glimpse of heaven it's always filled with praise. All the creatures who are there, whether they're angelic creatures or the redeemed saints, the church triumphant, are all engaged in the same great, glorious, transcendent purpose, and that is praise and worship to the triune God. We will spend forever doing that. Whatever the highest moment of your worship experience might be, when your soul has sung at its highest and best, when your heart has literally exploded with gratitude and joy to the Lord, multiply that by infinity and you'll have the sense of what worship in heaven will be like for you. It will be the most exhilarating, fulfilling, satisfying, joyful moment that never ends, as you will forever praise your Lord.

This is why we have been saved. In John 4, Jesus says, "The Father seeks true worshipers to worship Him in spirit and in truth." We are, by definition, those true worshipers, and we worship in spirit – that is, with our whole being and our emotion – but we also worship in truth. We worship, offering God praise from the heart with all of our human powers, and even our glorified human powers, but always in consistency with truth. First Peter 2 says we are, in fact, a holy priesthood, offering up to God spiritual sacrifices through Jesus Christ.

Father, we thank You for Your word, Your truth. Thank You for music. Thank You for enriching our lives with this ability to praise You in the loftiest way, to collectively speak to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs so as to stimulate one another to love and good works. And not only that, but more importantly than that, collectively to bring into Your presence praise that is fitting for You.

We come together for one reason, even listening to Your word, even hearing the word preached is to inform us, so that we know more clearly the truth, more extensively the truth, more sharply and precisely the truth, to inform our endless worship. Thank You for giving us this privilege. We trust that what we have offered You by way of songs of praise has been pleasing to You; that's our prayer. Amen.

WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH "Praising God in English: Lutherans and the Language Transition"

Upon their arrival in North America, European Lutheran emigrants immediately had to face the reality of the English language, spoken by most of the rest of the citizens of the United States and Canada. Like almost all other immigrants, Lutherans initially sought to establish religious institutions in their native languages, but soon had to face the divisive question of whether these institutions should transition to the use of English, and if so, how? Resistance to this language transition was fierce, and it divided homes, congregations, and denominations. However, the pressure to use English was unstoppable, and eventually all Lutheran groups came to the use of English.

The problem was that Lutherans had no models for how Lutheranism might actually be structured in English, and whether this could actually work. The story is told of the old immigrant who allowed that God might indeed be able to understand English, but, he sniffed, "God doesn't LIKE English." In a more serious vein, immigrant Lutherans had serious concerns that Lutheran theology and traditions might not be able to be translated into English with full expression and richness. Also, they had invested heavily in ethnic-language institutions and materials in North America in order to minister to the older generations and to recent immigrants, and they were worried that these valuable ministries might go by the wayside.

German, Swedish, and Dutch Lutherans came to North America during the colonial period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Like other ethnic immigrants, they founded congregations and parish schools in their native European languages and developed a rich ethnic culture. But the pressure to use English was inevitable, especially as new Americanized generations of Lutherans came along. Since there was only a small Swedish immigration and since it fell off quickly, the Swedes made the initial transition to English, and since there were no other English-speaking Lutherans around, these colonial Swedish congregations became Episcopalian. The Germans lasted longer, but by about 1820 the transition to English was well accomplished, though not without many bitter fights.

Beginning around 1840, and lasting until the First World War (1914-18), a second, massive wave of European emigration brought millions of new Lutherans to North America. The colonial Lutheran pattern of ethnic-language congregations and institutions was replicated on a much larger scale this time, and American Lutherans developed a rich culture in their ethnic languages, not just congregations and schools, but also hospitals and social service agencies, publishing houses and periodicals, among many others. As long as new immigrants kept coming (and it was hard to see then that they would not continue to come) the necessity of these ethnically-based ministries seemed irrefutable.

And yet the generational tide, and the need to be conversant in English, soon affected these immigrant groups, as well. New generations of younger Lutherans arose that spoke English primarily and understood the ethnic language only imperfectly. Immigrant parents well

understood that the route to success for their children was in English, and in many of the Lutheran schools and colleges the primary language of instruction became English by the late nineteenth century. Yet though the immigrants increasingly accommodated English in many areas of their lives, the ethnic languages were maintained in two bastions—the home and the congregation. The battle over the use of English was ferocious, pitting children against their elders. Many younger Lutherans got very little out of worship services and sermons in the immigrant languages: to the young, they might as well be listening to Latin or Greek

Up until the First World War (1914), the old immigrant languages reigned supreme, but in the next fifteen years they collapsed almost entirely in favor of English. Why this dramatic decline? Anti-German and anti-foreign sentiment during the war spurred many Lutherans to adopt English as a means of showing patriotism. During and after the war, anti-immigration sentiment ran high, causing Congress to dramatically curtail immigration. And finally, the generational tide came in, with second and third generation, English-speaking Lutherans taking control of Lutheran congregations and institutions. American Lutherans began the task of building a Lutheranism in the English language.

This same dynamic is now playing itself out among the ethnic congregations of Lutherans that have come to North America during the third great wave of immigration that began around 1965. Lutheran emigrants from Latin America, Africa, and Asia have formed ethnic-language congregations in North America, and they exhibit many patterns of language development as did the earlier two waves. They are already beginning to struggle with many similar language and cultural issues. If the patterns of the past hold true, they, too, will make the transition to English, and further enrich the mosaic of English-speaking Lutheranism in North America. **THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE.**