



Reformation Lutheran Church

**“Come and See, Learn and Rejoice, Go and Tell!”
February 2025**

“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak.” - Jeremiah 1:7

The prophet Jeremiah was not sure he was the right man for the job of bringing God’s word to his wayward people. He was young and inexperienced, and not sure he wanted the job of bringing a call to repentance, a word of judgment, upon his own people. And who can blame him? If you’ve ever pointed out to someone that they are doing something wrong, you know that’s not something people love to hear. We do not receive correction well. And Jeremiah was a young man. Why would anyone listen to what he had to say anyway? But Jeremiah wasn’t being sent out to offer his opinions to God’s people. He wasn’t being sent out to make some suggestions on how they might live a happier, more productive life. He was being sent to deliver God’s word, not his own. He was being sent as a spokesman for the Living God. It would not be his power or his persuasiveness or his credibility that gave his words authority. Their authority would come from God himself, who would be with Jeremiah in his preaching.

Jeremiah had a particular call to be a prophet among God’s people during a time of crisis. But all Christians share in the calling of delivering God’s word to the world. We all share in the calling of being bearers of the Good News of Jesus Christ. That calling does not depend on our age, our education, our economic status, our intelligence, or anything else we can imagine to stop us from speaking.

That calling is yours. You are God’s messenger to your friends, your family, your neighbors, maybe to a congregation, maybe to people in far off lands. You have a Word to speak. And God has promised to be present with those he sends out to proclaim. He has promised to send his Holy Spirit through the proclamation of the Gospel, so that the Word you speak becomes God’s own Word.

Fear not. This calling to share God’s Word is nothing to run from. It is nothing to be ashamed of or fearful about. Chosen ones of God, God’s words are in your mouth. Don’t be afraid to speak to them when you have the opportunity. God will be there to take your fumbling words and make them the Word of eternal life for those who hear.

Pr.

Mission and Ministry Outreach: We're starting the year in grand fashion! Begin Again Farms received our donation for hay last week. There was a write up in the paper about it. Thank you to Amy and Chuck for making that happen! Chuck is researching another horse farm that works with veterans. We'll get info on that soon. I'm going to be posting a list of places we have helped in the past, along with potential project ideas. We will be collecting food in February as part of our "Souper" Bowl Sunday fellowship. As usual, all ideas are welcome!

Education: Please join us on Sundays, at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall as we continue our Bible Study classes covering the Epistles and Revelation.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday – Feb. 2nd – 9:15 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Service

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

Tuesday – Feb. 11th – 11:30 a.m. Lutheran Men’s Lunch – Cataula Creek

Sunday – Feb. 16th – 9:15 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Service

Wednesday – Feb. 19th – AARP Safe Drivers Class - 9:00 - 4:00 (see details below)

Saturday – Feb. 22nd – Clean-up Day – 9:00 a.m.

Sunday – Feb. 23rd – 9:15 a.m. Bible Study; 10:30 a.m. Service

AARP Safe Driver's Class, Wednesday, February 19th, 9:00 - 4:00 - with a break for lunch. Location: Reformation Lutheran Church, 1045 US Hwy 27 - Cataula Center

\$20 for AARP members - - \$25 for non-members - pay at the class - cash please

Call Kryz at 706-887-7747 to reserve your spot. You do not have to be over 55 to take this class. All materials will be provided and there is no test. You will receive a certificate of completion that may save you quite a bit on your insurance!

	Feb. 2	Feb. 9	Feb. 16	Feb. 23
Altar Guild	Amy	Tammy	Junior	Caroline
Usher/Greeter	Junior	Caroline	Amy	Junior
Lector	Dick	Tammy	Gabi	Chuck
Music	Amy	Amy	Amy	Amy
Children Time	Pat	Pat	Pat	Pat
Sermon	Pastor	Chuck	Pastor	Pastor
Thrive	Wayne	Gabi	Wayne	Gabi
Oaks	Pastor	Chuck	Pastor	Chuck
Bible Study	Amy	Pastor	Tammy	Pastor

Property: Our February clean-up day will be Saturday, February 22nd, 9:00 a.m. Helping hands are always welcome!

Fellowship: Sunday, February 9th, is Super Bowl Sunday. Let's have snacks! Bring your favorite tailgate food to share along with non-perishable foods to be donated to FOCUS.

Valentine's Day falls on a Friday this year. We might be able to muster up a few sweet treats on the 16th. I think we'll do fine with just a few cookies, cupcakes, or donuts. We can discuss and go from there.

Looking ahead: Ash Wednesday is March 5th. In the past, we had a pancake supper put on by our gentlemen that same evening. Gentlemen? It's up to you. 😊 There will be at least five Wednesday night Lenten meals following that. A sign-up sheet will be put out in a few weeks.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We are well into the season of Epiphany. The color in the church is green and is the appointed color for all but a few of the Sundays during this season. Epiphany's message of Christ's revelation to the Gentiles along with the season's traditional emphasis on extending Christ's kingdom through missions, calls for the use of green-the color symbolic of growth.

Epiphany means "appearance or manifestation." Many countries refer to it as "Three Kings Day." Gentiles were represented when The Magi visited the child Jesus and showed how God's gift of the Good News is for everyone.

So this is a season emphasizing growth. That is personal growth, but it is also growth of the church. Do you know someone who is unchurched? Why not reach out and invite them to Reformation? There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Chuck Hunsaker
Council President

WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH "The last Voyage of the Zam Zam"

It has never been easy to be a missionary-to move from one's home and go into a new (and often very different) culture, to have to learn new languages and eat new foods. Many missionaries have struggled with their health in regions with unfamiliar diseases, uncertain sanitation, and limited medical facilities. Especially in the nineteenth century, more than a few missionaries to Africa and Asia (and members of their families) died while on the mission fields. To these regular risks were added further dangers from war, insurrections, political instability, and other societal ills. However, few stories are as dramatic as the story of a group of missionaries (including some American Lutherans) who survived the sinking of the ship Zam Zam in the south Atlantic during World War II, on April 17, 1941.

The events of the two world wars brought havoc to Christian missions in Africa and Asia. Since many of the countries in these two continents were under European colonial rule, the conflicts between the European countries rippled out in waves. Caught up in the war, missionaries from one side were interned by the colonial powers of the other side, while missionaries from neutral countries were cut off from the support of their homelands. The missionary efforts of all suffered, and in some places churches, schools, and hospitals run by the missionaries had to be abandoned. Christians in America often had to step in and support these so-called "orphaned missions," since America was less often directly affected by the events in Europe.

When World War II broke out in 1939, there were 172 German Lutheran missionaries in the British colony of Tanganyika (now Tanzania) who were interned in camps, and their institutions were abandoned. The Swedish-American Augustana Synod, who already had a few missionaries in the country, stepped forward to provide missionary personnel for these orphaned missions. After a mad scramble to recruit new missionaries, the Augustana Synod's Board of Foreign Missions faced a difficult issue: How, in the midst of a world war, could they transport eight adults and nineteen children to Africa? A neutral ship, the Zam Zam of Egyptian registry, left America in March 1941 with 144 American missionaries on board, including those from the Augustana Synod. The ship's route took it down past Brazil and around the southern tip of Africa, although it never made it that far. Mistaking it for a British troopship, the German raider Atlantis intercepted the Zam Zam in the South Atlantic on April 21, 1941, and sank the ship. By some miracle none of the passengers or crew of the Zam Zam were killed, though several were badly injured. The survivors were taken aboard another German vessel, the Dresden .

Conditions aboard the prison ship were very bad: The ship was severely overcrowded, the men were separated from their families, and there was very little food. The Germans were not sure what to do with all these prisoners, and the ship wandered around the Atlantic Ocean for a month. Finally the German captain took a bold move; he risked the British blockade and landed safely in occupied France on May 19, 1941. Ironically, that same day the (erroneous) news was broadcast that the Zam Zam had been sunk, and all passengers were assumed to be lost. It was not until the next day that the survival of the passengers and crew was confirmed.

The ordeal was not over for the passengers of the Zam Zam. Since the United States was still at this point neutral, the American citizens were eventually transported through Spain to Portugal, and from there to the United States. There were also a significant number of Canadian citizens on board, and as enemy non-combatants they were interned in Germany until the end of the war, often in very difficult conditions. After the Americans returned home, some of the survivors volunteered to try to reach Africa again, and they did in 1942.

Other American Lutheran missionaries also later made it to Africa unharmed, even though wartime conditions remained very dangerous. The Lutheran efforts in Tanganyika were continued, and on this base the autonomous Lutheran church in independent post-war Tanzania was born, which now numbers over 5.3 million members.

Though the voyage of the Zam Zam was a dramatic moment in the history of American Lutheran mission work, it was only one example of the dangers that missionaries faced. Many others faced similar dangers during World War II, including American Lutherans who were interned in terrible conditions by the Japanese forces in Asia. But they faced these traumas with a steadfast faith that the God who had called them to service would keep them safe. They risked all to share the good news of Jesus Christ to others around the world.

THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE