



Reformation Lutheran Church

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

“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.” 5“Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. 6Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.” - Isaiah 12:2, 5-6

About 2700 years ago, the Assyrian Empire was the dominant power. It was known for its powerful military, making it a formidable force, especially for the land and people of Judah. The Assyrian Empire posed a major threat to Judah. Judah faced the possibility of foreign invaders, political instability, and crises of one kind or another. But despite all of that, Isaiah encourages the people of Judah to trust God because God will protect them. The world in which the people of Judah lived was one full of chaos and unknown.

“I will trust, and will not be afraid” (Is. 12:2b). Trust and fear find themselves at opposite ends of the spectrum. If we have more fear, we have less trust, and vice versa. Fear is a human emotion that comes easily to most. Most likely, we fear something every day. We might fear the loss of a job, the loss of a loved one due to tragedy or illness, wars, natural disasters, or relationships dissolving. These are just a few that can take up room in our hearts.

But to not be afraid, well, that’s easier said than done! How is it done? How do we overcome fear? It’s not a secret. The answer is to know God and trust in him. As we read through the Scriptures of the Old Testament, we notice how time and again God has been faithful to his people. God cared for them tremendously. He provided food, water, and clothing as his people left Egypt to wander the wilderness for 40 years. And as we read through the New Testament, we once again bear witness to how God takes care of the spiritual needs of all people by sacrificing his son Jesus for the sins of the world. Throughout the entire Bible, we read how God promises to love and protect us in every way.

If we look at our own lives, we take notice of the many ways God cares for us. He has brought us to faith in Jesus Christ. He has blessed us richly in, not only our spiritual needs, but in our earthly and physical needs as well.

As we read through these stories in the Bible and we hear and witness how God has loved and cared for his people from the beginning, then the more we are able to put our trust in him as well. And the more we trust God, the less likely we will be afraid of the unknown around us. We, too, can join with Isaiah in proclaiming: I will trust, and will not be afraid.

Pr.

Mission and Ministry Outreach: We have a project in the works! We will be providing feed and/or other needed supplies for Warrior Outreach Ranch. Let’s keep the ball rolling! All ideas are welcome!

Education: Mark your calendars to join us on Sunday, April 27th at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall when we continue covering the Epistles and Revelation.

APRIL CALENDAR

Wednesday – April 2nd – 6:00 p.m. Lenten Supper; 7:00 Service

Sunday – April 6th – 10:30 a.m. Service

Wednesday – April 9th – 6:00 p.m. Lenten Supper; 7:00 Service

Palm Sunday – April 13th – 10:30 a.m. Service; Council after service

Tuesday – April 15th – 11:30 a.m. Lutheran Men’s Lunch – Cataula Creek

Good Friday – April 18th – 7:00 p.m. Service

Easter Sunday – April 20th – 10:30 a.m. Service with Easter Potluck following.

Saturday – April 26th – Clean-up Day – 9:00 a.m.

Sunday – April 27th – 9:15 a.m. Bible Study resumes; 10:30 a.m. Service

	April 6	April 13	April 20	April 27
Altar Guild	Amy	Tammy	Junior	Carolyn
Usher/Greeter	Carolyn	Junior	Carolyn	Amy
Lector	Amy	Wayne	Dick	Tammy
Music	Amy		Amy	Amy
Children Time	Pat	Pat	Pat	Pat
Sermon	Pastor	Gabi	Pastor	Pastor
Thrive	Wayne	Gabi	Wayne	Gabi
Oaks	Chuck	Pastor	Chuck	Pastor

Property: Our April clean-up day will be Saturday, April 26th 9:00 a.m. Helping hands are always welcome!

Fellowship: Thanks to everyone who provides food for our Wednesday night meals. We're enjoying every bite!

For Easter Sunday, we will have a potluck lunch after service. Easter Sunday is such a joyful Sunday already. Add in fellowship and food, and we'll have quite the celebration!

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S CORNER

We are well into the season of Lent. All are enjoying the wonderful food and fellowship each Wednesday evening as well as the services that are preparing us for the great celebration of Easter.

The 40 days of Lent are a time of personal reflection to prepare our hearts and minds for Good Friday and that most special festival of Easter. Without Easter, there would be no church today. And why not bring a friend or neighbor to enjoy this special time with you.

Chuck Hunsaker
Council President

WE CONTINUE OUR STUDY OF LUTHERAN HISTORY WITH “Courageous Journeys: Lutheran Immigration and refugee Service”

Courage defines the migrants and refugees Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) is privileged to walk alongside. And defining the moment over seventy-five years ago that inspired LIRS's ministry of mercy and justice was courage as much as faithfulness. U.S. Lutherans concerned about displaced Lutherans in Europe could not sit by idly as conflict leading to World War II swept the European continent. Ralph Long, president of the National Lutheran Council, declared in his 1938 annual report that the displacement of Lutherans in Europe was "a tragic thing to which we dare not close our eyes or remain indifferent." The concern of U.S. Lutherans, said Long, "must be translated into constructive and cooperative assistance."

And so, in the spirit of cooperative and constructive assistance, efforts to resettle displaced Lutherans began as the National Lutheran Council launched Lutheran Resettlement Service in 1939. Who better, after all, to accompany newcomers setting down roots than members of a church made up mainly of immigrants? In the agency's first year of operation, 522 people were resettled by Lutheran congregations and volunteers.

Refugees arriving in New York by ship were greeted with enthusiastic welcome and details about next steps in their journey. The volunteers also brought sandwiches for the journey, a small but touching detail recounted fondly by former refugees. New arrivals then headed by bus for Pennsylvania or Minnesota or other states where Lutheran congregations were waiting to help them rebuild their lives.

By the late 1950s, the displaced persons and refugees from WWII were mostly settled. Lutheran Refugee Service could have said a prayer of thanks and closed its doors. But in this world fraught with persecution and strife, wars and rumors of wars, sadly there were more tragic things to which Lutherans dared not close their eyes. And after twenty years of serving courageous newcomers, the agency had developed expertise that could help other refugee populations. Networks of ministries to care for people had been created, and strong partnership was forged with the federal government, which provided major financial support.

What began as help for the Lutheran family in a time of crisis actually equipped the young ministry for a much broader mission of mercy and justice for sojourners in peril. In 1960 Lutheran Refugee Service officially began resettling refugees of all nationalities. For at least the last half-century, it also has been helping uprooted people who come to the U.S. directly for protection. Experiencing similar circumstances as refugees, they apply for protection through other immigration statuses like asylum or special visas such as those for victims of trafficking. And so "Immigration" was added to the agency's name, becoming Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS). LIRS in the mid-1970s began working with migrant children who were separated from family by placing them in specialized foster care. Less than ten years later, LIRS observed children seeking safety from conflict in Central

America, and it developed efforts to care for them. Also during the 1980s, LIRS became increasingly concerned about torture survivors and other vulnerable people in immigration detention.

Today, LIRS also has a strong network of legal service partners and visitation ministry volunteers working with persons who are in immigration detention for documentation and protection issues, and it advocates boldly for alternatives to detention.

Central to all the care provided by LIRS and its partners is the core belief that migrants and refugees are courageous change agents in their own lives. LIRS walks alongside with practical support when the journey is rough. It encourages and equips people to become not only self-sufficient but also connected and contributing members of their adopted communities. Strangers welcomed in Christ's name become neighbors, friends, and leaders helping communities prosper.

Also integral to LIRS's approach is the spirit of collaboration. It takes a range of connections to walk alongside migrants and refugees. The partnership of Lutheran church bodies has remained steadfast. These church bodies collaborate on vital projects that extend mercy and speak out for justice. Leaders and lay persons from all three churches volunteer in ways that faithfully show God's love for their new neighbors-through policy advocacy, mentoring, visiting immigrants in detention, becoming foster parents for migrant and refugee children, and financial support.

Collaboration with the federal government is a critical part of LIRS's mission. The U.S. president determines how many refugees will be admitted each year. The administration plus Congress are responsible for funding and for laws governing immigration as a form of humanitarian relief. LIRS implements several State Department-funded programs that protect and integrate vulnerable newcomers.

LIRS celebrated seventy-five years of service in 2014-not simply the anniversary of an institution but rather a commemoration of faithful work by the wider Lutheran community to care for the uprooted in Christ's name. In those years, the LIRS network of social ministries, congregations, families, and countless individuals helped more than 500,000 vulnerable sojourners rebuild their lives in freedom, safety, and dignity.

THIS IS MOST CERTAINLY TRUE.