

REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
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OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

Pastor's Corner



When it comes to the month of October stores throughout the U.S. well remind us that Halloween is the main focus of this month for the majority of society. But on the same day as Halloween, October 31, the Christian Church, especially Lutheran's, celebrate the day of the Reformation. Talk about a contrast between dark and light.

Halloween's origins date back to the ancient Celts who celebrated their new year on November 1st. This day marked the end of summer and the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter, a time of year that was often associated with human death. Celts believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred. On the night of October 31 they believed that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth. In addition to causing trouble and damaging crops, Celts thought that the presence of the otherworldly spirits made it easier for the Druids, or Celtic priests, to make predictions about the future. For a people entirely dependent on the volatile natural world instead of the God of Scripture, these prophecies were an important source of comfort during the long, dark winter. To commemorate the event, Druids built huge sacred bonfires, where the people gathered to burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic deities. During the celebration, the Celts wore costumes, typically consisting of animal heads and skins, and attempted to tell each other's fortunes. When the celebration was over, they re-lit their hearth fires, which they had extinguished earlier that evening, from the sacred bonfire to help protect them during the coming winter.

Thank the only true God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that He has given us His Word of Truth so that we don't have to rely on our sinful nature's false interpretation of our lives in this fallen world.

The Motto of the Reformation was:



VDMA stands for the Latin phrase: *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum* which means: The Word of the Lord Endures Forever. This motto of the Lutheran Reformation is a confident expression of the enduring power and authority of God's Word. The motto is based on 1 Peter 1:24–25 - "*All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever. And this word is the good news that was preached to you.*"

The Word of the Lord is the only foundation of the Lutheran Confessions which were published in the Book of Concord, in 1580. A group of Lutheran theologians asserted that what they were confessing was not merely their own private opinions, but were asserting publicly the truth of what the Word of the Lord teaches, and that they were willing to stake their very lives on this truth, here in this world, and more importantly, before the judgement seat of Almighty God.

This declaration ... is our faith, doctrine, and confession.

By God's grace, with intrepid hearts, we are willing to appear before the judgment seat of Christ with
this confession.

—Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, XII 40

Intrepid hearts indeed! What could possibly be so important that you would stake eternity on it? What gives a person such courage and conviction? Only one thing—the truth. This is what the Lutheran Reformation is all about, the truth of God's Word.

God's people have always spoken this way. For example, the psalmist wrote, "*I will speak of Your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame*" (Psalm 119:46). Peter confessed his faith when Jesus asked him what he believed, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*" (Matthew 16:16). Paul wrote, "*Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, 'I believed, and so I spoke,' we also believe, and so we also speak*" (2 Corinthians 4:13).

Lutherans have used the Confessions of faith contained in the Book of Concord for nearly five hundred years as their public witness and testimony of what the Bible teaches. These Confessions give clear, unambiguous, and certain witness to the Christian faith. They unite all those who bear the name Lutheran and wish to be—and remain—genuinely Lutheran. That is why this book uses the word Concordia as a title.

Concordia comes from two Latin words meaning "with" and "heart." It describes a commitment to the truth so strong and so deep, it is as if those who share it have a single heart beat. To many twenty-first-century minds, the claim that there is objective truth is regarded with deep suspicion. To suggest that there is one, and only one, absolute truth about God is regarded by many today as absurd, foolish, ridiculous, or the sign of an intolerant and weak mind. Sadly, even many modern Christians now view claims of truth and certainty with a good deal of suspicion.

But truth and falsehood are real. It is possible to know truth and it is necessary to reject all errors that contradict the truth. God reveals absolute truth in His Word, which is precisely what the documents in the Book of Concord assert, with complete and total conviction.

The Word of the Lord in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible is the rock-solid foundation for the documents in the Lutheran Confessions, which are contained in the Book of Concord. Christians who embrace the documents in this book as their teaching, their belief, and their confession also believe that it is possible for people to know and be certain about truth. They are convinced. They are certain. They are sure. Why? Because of the One who has called them to this conviction: the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "*If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free*" (John 8:31–32).

To embrace the freedom of truth means rejecting the slavery of error. That is why the Book of Concord uses two phrases to capture the essence of biblical confession: “we believe, teach, and confess” and “we reject and condemn.” One cannot believe, teach, and confess the truth without also rejecting and condemning everything that endangers or contradicts the truth. This spirit of “confessional Lutheranism” is what continues to animate people today who hold to this collection of affirmations, professions, and confessions of faith.

Not all churches that go by the name “Lutheran” still regard the Book of Concord as highly as they once did. Some prominent Lutheran Church bodies in the United States and around the world regard these statements of faith as “historically conditioned.” They say that the older confessions are not necessarily correct in what they teach about God’s Word. These churches have embraced various ecumenical agreements with non-Lutheran churches that contradict what Lutheranism has taught historically.

Confessional Lutheran churches regard these compromises not only as a compromise of historic Lutheranism, but also as an actual denial of the truth of God’s Word. (A most serious matter indeed!) It is important to keep in mind this distinction among churches that use the name “Lutheran.” This is all the more reason to make sure that these Confessions are not merely historical documents in congregations that are genuinely Lutheran. They must be well known by laypeople and church workers alike.

Historic, genuine Lutheranism holds that the Bible is actually the Word of the Living God. We believe that it is both incapable of error and free from error. We hold strongly to the Lutheran Confessions because we are absolutely convinced that these confessions of faith are a pure exposition and explanation of God’s Word. Lutherans agree with the apostle Peter, who said, “We cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20).

When God the Holy Spirit gives the gift of trust in Jesus Christ as the Savior, this gift of faith creates a desire to confess, to bear witness, to testify, to proclaim, and to speak this faith. That is what the documents in this book are all about. They are not musty, old relics from history. They are the living confession of God’s people, who have clung to the truths in these documents for over five hundred years. Today, we who hold to these Confessions make the Book of Concord our confession, our witness, our public testimony of what the Bible teaches. With Martin Luther, we say, “Here we stand. We cannot do otherwise. God help us. Amen.”

If you don’t have a copy of the Lutheran Confessions (which includes Luther’s Small and Large Catechism), see the Concordia Publishing House website: [cph.org]. You can buy a book called Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions-A Reader's Edition of the Book of Concord. It’s available in printed and electronic forms and ranges from \$20 to \$120. For more information on the Lutheran Reformation see the website: <https://lutheranreformation.org>

Reformation/New Member Dinner

Sunday, October 30th will be our Reformation/New Member recognition Service, with the Divine Service at 9:00am followed by the Reformation Dinner following the service.

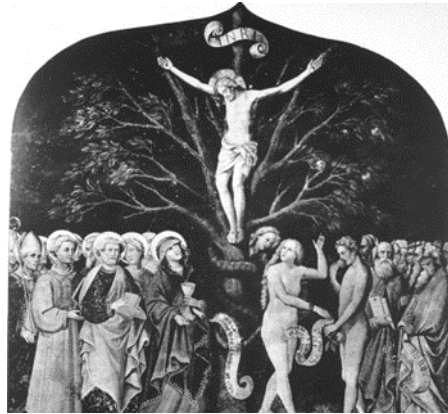
Members with Last Names beginning A - M are asked to bring side salads. Members with Last Names beginning N - Z are asked to bring fruit or dessert.

Our new members that we have received in the last year are: Karen Karp, Mel & Eileen Mertens, Gary & Pam Nickel, Amber Jordan, Tyler Jordan, Kenny Andasola, Gabriel Howell, Lloyd & Marilyn Liebetrau, Tom & Marguarite Wingfield, Linda (Snip) Jackson, Ed & Sue Morris, Juniper Kruger, Steve & Eileen Burnick, Kathy Kadlec, Karen Richardson, John & Char Vastag and Al & Michelle Buchman.

Kathy Kadlec, Karen Richardson, John & Char Vastag and Al & Michell Buchman.

HYMN OF THE MONTH

The Tree of Life #561



“Christ On the Tree of Life” by Giovanni da Modena

We have this hymn in both our hymnals, and one of the texts it’s based on is Revelation 22:1-3

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him.

In four stanzas, Starke masterfully distills the biblical narrative of sinful human rebellion and the resulting separation of humankind from full communion with God as described in Genesis 3:1–15, its remedy in the Gospel, and the eschatological vision of the tree of life as depicted by John in Revelation 22:1–2.

The first two stanzas of the hymn lay the ground work for the problem of sin. Stanza 1 summarizes Genesis 2 as God, having just finished his work of creating the universe and giving life to Adam, plants the Garden of Eden and places Adam in it to work and keep it. Shortly after, he brings Eve into existence to be Adam’s companion. We all know the story well — God gives Adam and Eve permission to eat of any tree in the garden except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the result of which would be death.

Stanza 1

The tree of life with ev’ry good
In Eden’s holy orchard stood,
And of its fruit so pure and sweet
God let the man and woman eat.
Yet in this garden also grew
Another tree, of which they knew;
Its lovely limbs with fruit adorned
Against whose eating God had warned.

Stanza 2 moves the narrative forward into Genesis 3 where the serpent first rears its ugly head and convinces Adam and Eve to disobey their creator. God keeps his promise, and death is realized in the mortality of the human race and their separation from full communion with God. Yet, while God kept his promise of judgment, he also offered one of reconciliation.

Stanza 2

The stillness of that sacred grove
Was broken, as the serpent strove
With tempting voice Eve to beguile
And Adam too by sin defile.
O day of sadness when the breath
Of fear and darkness, doubt and death,
Its awful poison first displayed
Within the world so newly made.

Stanza 3 echos the Protoevangelium (Genesis 3:15), the first promise of the Gospel. Here, Starke makes the connection between the seed of the woman and Jesus Christ, who was lifted up on another tree: the cross of shame. On this tree, Jesus would die for the sins of his people, drinking “the cup of scorn and dread,” and one day crush the serpent’s head.

Stanza 3

What mercy God showed to our race,
A plan of rescue by His grace:
In sending One from woman’s seed,
The One to fill our greatest need —
For on a tree uplifted high
His only Son for sin would die,
Would drink the cup of scorn and dread
To crush the ancient serpent’s head!

Stanza 4 depicts the reality of God’s promise of reconciliation in the Gospel of Jesus Christ: that whoever believes in him will receive “eternal life in His name” (John 3:16). Through this Gospel, full communion with God is restored, and through the tree of the cross — the tree of life — we feast on the living fruit of salvation as we journey through this pilgrim land.

Stanza 4

Now from that tree of Jesus’ shame
Flows life eternal in His name;
For all who trust and will believe,
Salvation’s living fruit receive.
And of this fruit so pure and sweet
The Lord invites the world to eat,
To find within this cross of wood
The tree of life with ev’ry good.



Life Thoughts in the Church Year

October 2 – Pentecost XVII (Proper 22) – Abortion, assisted suicide, and other deals with death bless with their mouths – as Psalm 62 warns us – by promising freedom and control. But inwardly these measures curse by delivering guilt and grief. Power over life and death belongs to God alone (Psalm 62:11), and His steadfast love provides salvation even amid surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis. The Gospel of Jesus Christ always brings life and immortality to light (2 Timothy 1:10).

October 9 – Pentecost XVIII (Proper 23) – Naomi insisted Ruth abandon her because of her age and infirmity (Ruth 1:11-12). But Ruth instead trusted in the God who shares in suffering (2 Timothy 2:3). Likewise, the ten lepers were left for dead, but Jesus reaches even into our severest afflictions with presence and compassion. And He invites and encourages us also to accompany and assist rather than settling for physician-assisted suicide.

October 16 – Pentecost XIX (Proper 24) – Jacob wrestled blessing out of his competitor (Genesis 1:26). Timothy exhorted itching ears in season and out of season (2 Timothy 4:2-3). And the Savior's persistent widow wouldn't stop pleading to the authorities for justice (Luke 18:3). Our Lord will not let our advocating prevail any less when we speak the truth in love about the sanctity of every human life to leaders and neighbors.

October 23 – Pentecost XX (Proper 25)/St. James of Jerusalem, Brother of Jesus and Martyr – The earliest Christian congregation in Jerusalem recognized the lives of despised Gentiles as precious as their own (Acts 15:17-18). Along with James, they each understood the dignity Jesus bestowed by making human beings God's own brothers and sisters, even though the public took offense at it (Matthew 13:55-57). Let us not let this Gospel they gave us with their lives fall silent!

October 30 – Pentecost XXI (Proper 26) – Many who have participated in the abortion of their own children believe they have committed an unforgivable sin. When we fail even to speak its name and extend God's atoning grace to it directly, we become as guilty as them. What relief is theirs—and ours—in acknowledging our Lord's forgiveness: No sin stains so deeply that Jesus cannot cleanse us (Isaiah 1:18).

SCHOOL NEWS

RLS parent/teacher conferences were held the last week of September. The students are working hard and growing in all areas. When God is included in the partnership of home and school, great things happen!

The church van is being used daily to transport RLS and Tiny Treasures students to and from school. Thanks to Sandy Holden for her donation of a tankful of gas! Parents are charged a fee if their children ride the van, and donations of fuel help keep those fees to a minimum. Thanks to Lisa and Michael Althaus for supplying 40 pounds of ground beef for hot lunches through the Thrivent Action Teams program. The cost of our weekly hot lunches is funded by the parents, with the help of donations of food and money by generous donors.

We are very blessed by the many people who are sharing their talents and supporting our school through a variety of ways. We praise and thank God that He continues to provide! "Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Birthdays

Audrey Kruger—October 4
 Sandy Holden—October 7
 Jacob Oberheu—October 17
 Zach Weber—October 17
 Phillip Dwyer—October 19
 Eveli Strassle—October 23
 Nancy Seeley—October 26
 Marguerite Wingfield—October 28
 Alisha Clubb—October 30

Baptismal Birthdays

Mary Miller—October 3
 Lucy Orros—October 12
 Jan Polzin—October 13
 John Moseman—October 18
 Amber Jordan—October 23
 Doreen Dwyer—October 25
 Devona Henderson—October 25
 Amanda Bizer—October 27
 Stephanie Nesbit—October 27
 Carl Nesbit—October 27
 Jacob Oberheu—October 31

Wedding Anniversaries

Pastor & Andrea Van Fossan—October 6
 John & Brenda Moseman—October 8th
 Doug & Michelle Scarbrough—October 15

THE LORD'S MINISTRY

Redeemer Lutherans attendance figures and financial blessings that were given for the month of September to further maintain the Lord's ministry.

Date	Attendance	Communicants	Offerings Received Gen./Designated Funds	Needed Operating Budget
9-4 -2022	87	67	\$4,317.00/\$218.00	\$4,455.06
9-11 -2022	87	74	\$8,936.75/\$10,307.71	\$4,455.06
9-18 - 2022	104	94	\$6,190.00/\$211.00	\$4,455.06