

Pastor Janneke's Page

Faith Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

September 30 & October 1, 2017

An Abbreviation You Should Know



Abbreviations abound: LWML (The Lutheran Women's Missionary League, which we're recognizing this weekend), LCMS (The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, of which we are members), CLC (Faith's gym or "Christian Life Center"), and SFLS & LHSSF (Sioux Falls Lutheran School and Lutheran High School of Sioux Falls, both of our Lutheran schools of which we are an association congregation).

I'm going to add another abbreviation to the mix: VDMA. Ever

heard of it? Any guesses about this one? VDMA is tricky because it's an abbreviation of a Latin phrase: *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum* – "The Word of the Lord endures forever."

"VDMA" is a motto that dates back 500 years to the beginnings of the Lutheran Reformation, but it originally comes from the Lord's Word in Isaiah 40:8 and 1 Peter 1:23-25: "*You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for '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.*"

Can you see why *Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum* became such a rallying cry in the Reformation? "VDMA" was printed in the preface to the original Book of Concord, the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. Here is a little more background from the most recent edition of the Book of Concord: "*Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum* is the motto of the Lutheran Reformation, a confident expression of the enduring power and authority of God's Word ... It first appeared in the court of Frederick the Wise in 1522. He had it sewn onto the right sleeve of the court's official clothing, which was worn by prince and servant alike. It was used by Frederick's successors ... It became the official motto of the Smalcaldic League and was used on flags, banners, swords, and uniforms as a symbol of the unity of the Lutheran laity who struggled to defend their beliefs, communities, families, and lives against those who were intent on destroying them." (*Concordia* p. 2)

Lutheran laypeople in the 16th and 17th centuries literally fought to protect their families and communities from the armies of the Holy Roman

Empire which violently opposed the Reformation. Their motto reminded them that they were ultimately not bound to the human words of the Pope or Emperor but to the Lord's Word, which Luther and other reformers had begun to restore to its proper place in the life of the church.

"The Word of the Lord endures forever" is just as fitting of a motto for Christian laypeople and pastors today as it was centuries ago! Though much has changed in those 500 years, and certainly in the past several thousand years since the Lord's Word was recorded for us, God's scriptural promises have *not* changed. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Your Lord Jesus is just as faithful to you today as He was to His people in ages past and you can count on Him and His Word, even when everything else fails you!

The enduring Word from the Lord is especially His *Gospel* Word for you. We hear this in the 1 Peter passage referenced earlier: "You have been born again ... through the living and abiding word of God ... and this word is the good news that was preached to you." God's good word of grace is the final word, the word that overcomes even sin and death. God's final word declares that you *are* His baptized child, born again, born "from above" by Christ's saving work on your behalf. God's Gospel Word has also powerfully worked in your heart to create and sustain saving faith in Christ within you. The Lord and His Gospel Word rightly deserve all the credit and glory for doing *everything* for us and our salvation!

The celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation is just a month away (Oct 31). As we enter into this celebratory month, please keep the following opportunities in mind:

We have made two **devotional booklets** available at the Welcome counter in our entryway. *The Word at Work: History, Scripture and Reflections on the Reformation* is intended for adults and includes in-depth background about our Reformation heritage with applications for today. *Growing in Jesus: 500 Years of Faith for Families* is intended for families with younger children.

Throughout the fall, our **Sunday Bible study** (likely beginning Oct 8) will be a combination of video, Scripture and history related to Luther and others who proclaimed the Lord's enduring Word.

On Sunday, October 29 at 5:00 p.m., the LCMS Sioux Falls Circuit will host a combined **Reformation Service** at the Brandon Valley Performing Arts Center. Please make plans to attend this historic service! We hope to have 500 Lutherans together celebrating our Faith! The guest preacher will be Rev. Wally Schulz, former Speaker of The Lutheran Hour. A German meal will follow. Tickets for the meal are available at our Welcome Center or from the church office.

On Tuesday, October 31 at 6:30 p.m., our Circuit will host a showing of the new movie, ***Martin Luther: The Idea that Changed the World***, at Memorial Lutheran. Please consider gathering with fellow Lutherans on the actual Reformation Anniversary to view this great film.

Praise God! ***Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum!***

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Kory Janneke