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Holy Cross Lutheran Church
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HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Words from the Cross

***"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:
'The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David,
who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.
I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door,
which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power,
and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.'"***

Revelation 3:7-8

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the text above our Lord Jesus Christ tells us how the true church is to be recognized: the true church keeps Christ's Word and confesses His name. However, to the world and in the world the true church seems powerless and insignificant.

As we look at the Lutheran church, we can see that it bears these marks. The outward form of our church is as the prophet wrote: "Oh afflicted one, storm-tossed and not comforted" (Isaiah 54:11). Nevertheless, we have remained steadfast in God's Word, boldly confessing the name of Christ as did our forbearer, Martin Luther, who boldly confessed before the most powerful man of his day, Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor: "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, or by patent clear and cogent reasons and arguments, and because the passages cited and quoted by me have convinced and grounded my conscience in God's Word, therefore I cannot and will not recant. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. God help me! Amen."

Our church is established on the same principle, and we believe that same thing. If asked what a Lutheran is, we can offer no better answer than this: A Lutheran is a Christian who strictly adheres to the letter of the Scriptures. And just as we keep to Christ's Word, so we keep to Him and to His name. Anyone who has read Luther knows that he continually confessed Jesus Christ. No other theologian since the time of the Apostles has so clearly and powerfully explained the doctrine of justification through faith in Christ. Unlike any other church body, our church body from its beginning has preached that a person is declared righteous because of the work of Christ on the cross, apart from works of the Law. This is the golden foundation of the Christian faith and what separates us from all false religions.

As we celebrate the Reformation at the end of this month, may God grant that we continue to keep his Word and confess the name of Christ, our Savior, before a world that desperately needs to hear it.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Skelton

