



Reformation History #3: Gutenberg

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

This article continues the year-long series on Reformation history and theology, from November 2016—October 2017, in commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

Johannes Gutenberg was not a theologian, and he died before Martin Luther was even born, but he had a profound impact upon the reformation and the renaissance through the invention of the moveable type printing press. The Gutenberg press was such a revolution in technology that it has been described by some as the most important invention in the second millennium AD. Like the Internet today, it changed the world by creating an exponential increase in access to and flow of information. The availability of information closed the gap between the elite class and the poor, creating the middle class.

Before this invention, Bibles were hand copied, or block printed. Even though a printing block could produce multiple copies, every single page had to be carved independently, a long and tedious process. Most of the block-printed books were devotional literature. Gutenberg, a goldsmith by trade, created moveable type which

used metal letters and symbols that could be set up relatively quickly to print a page. He also had to create an oil base ink to make it print correctly. The first major project for the new Gutenberg Press was the Vulgate (Latin) Bible, known today as the "Gutenberg Bible". He printed 200 of these in the 1450s. Forty-nine of these still exist today, but only 21 are complete. Through the technology of the Gutenberg press the printed Bible was made available to the masses. Oddly enough, the Roman Catholic Church was the major censor of the printed Word, but the demand and availability finally prevailed over the Church's stringent objections.

Many of the indulgences sold by the Church were printed on a Gutenberg press, but the same technology allowed for rapid mass distribution of Luther's 95 theses and all his subsequent works. The powerful forces of Church and State which had prevented reform in the centuries before Luther, were

no longer able to control information in the 16th century. The masses were able to read Luther's clear articulation of the Gospel in his pamphlets and books. More importantly, they had access to the Bible itself, which Luther translated into German in 1534. The sheep were finally given the tools to be able to judge their shepherds and discern between truth and falsehood. Without the Gutenberg Press, the Reformation would never have been able to succeed.

Luther was considered a conservative reformer (as

(Continued on page 2)



A Gutenberg press replica in the Glencairn Museum in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

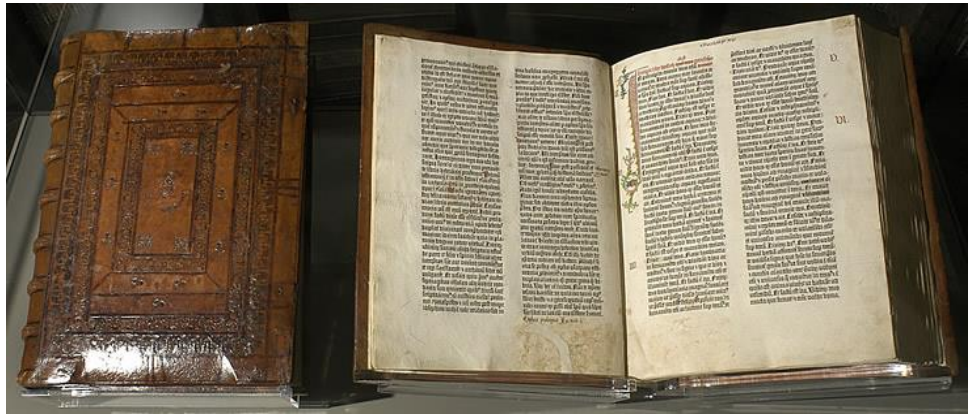
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That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. —John 20:31

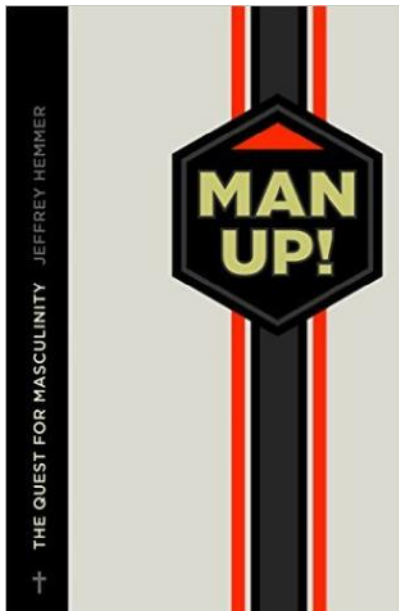
Reformation, cont..

opposed to the radical reformers of his day), but he was quick to make use of the advantages of technology when it served the preaching and teaching of the Gospel. Though Lutherans today have a reputation of being very private and introverted about the Gospel, Luther was definitely not a “keep it to ourselves” kind of guy. He not only put his real name on what he wrote, he published it widely. The first “Lutheran” was not ashamed of the Gospel. We might want to reflect a little on that during this 500 anniversary year.



Gutenberg Bible from the Harry Ransom Center, UT Austin.

Man Up! With Rev. Jeffery Hemmer



January 28th

**Messiah Lutheran Church,
Keller, TX**

9am-Noon

\$25 suggested donation

Pr. Hemmer promises not to call you effeminate, shame you with his perfect manliness, or kick you in the pants. But he'll tell you about Jesus, who may well do all three of those things.

Are you tired of a culture that wants to ignore the differences between men and women? Do you think being a real man is little more than having the biggest muscles, guns, and truck and knowing how to get your woman to submit to you? Are you fed up with singing syrupy-sweet love songs to Jesus in church? Does your wife think this conference could teach you a thing or two about being a real man? Are you just looking for something to do on a Saturday morning?

Come hear what a Real Man is and does. Genuine masculinity is not a matter of taking back your rights or standing up for yourself. It's about seeing yourself as a means for the good of others, about learning to live in your calling to be a husband, father, man, son, hero, hearer, and more for the benefit of those God has given you to serve. In

Jesus, you have both the perfect icon of masculinity and also the source of courage and hope when you fail in these manly endeavors.

Rev. Jeff Hemmer is the author of Man UP: The Quest for Masculinity (Coming from CPH in March). He is the husband of (in his opinion) the most wonderful woman in the world, the father to the five most delightful children he's ever met, the pastor of Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church in Fairview Heights, Illinois, a wannabe farmer, maker of some things, fixer of some other things, grower of beards, and general curmudgeon. His big truck is probably a sign of his insecurity



Reaching Out to the.... Absent? — by Pastor Tom Chryst

Rev. David Petersen writes in a recent LCMS online article:

"Pastors have taken vows to care for souls, yet all of us have let souls slip through the cracks. When people quit coming to church for long enough, we forget about them. Reaching out to delinquent members is mostly unrewarding work. So most of us don't do much about it, and every pastor I know feels guilty about it."

"Pastors should repent. Jesus doesn't forget about the people who made vows at His altar. We shouldn't either. We should make new efforts to make contact with them, to warn them and to invite them again back into the fold."

"The pastor, however, is not the only Christian in the congregation who is called upon to be his brothers' keeper. The guilt can be shared among the whole congregation. We can all repent and consider anew how we might reach out again to those who have neglected the gifts of Christ. We can pray for them by name. We can make an effort to get to know them. We can also work at making our congregations more welcoming and more supportive by becoming more attentive to the needs of one another and by speaking positively of our congregations and our ministers around each other and in the community."

I think these are good thoughts. I'll add a few of my own:

At Messiah, like many congregations, our "first line of defense" in caring for those who have been absent from worship is often the Board of Elders. And while it can be helpful to get an "official" call from a pastor or elder, encouraging more faithful attendance, it's my observation that the best and most effective scenario is when another "regular" member reaches out.

Not everything in the Christian church is rocket science. Not everything calls for a board or committee or program. A simple exercise of Christian love and consideration can honestly go a long way.

A simple phone call, or even text or email, might be enough to let someone know you are missing them. And the advantage is that if it doesn't come from a pastor or elder, it seems less like an accusation or an exercise of "shame on you", and more a considerate Christian friend just looking out for another's well-being. Also, by every member participating, our efforts are multiplied, and Christian love in the congregation grows and expands.

Imagine:

"Hey, I haven't seen you in church in a few weeks, is everything all right?"

"Yeah, sorry, I know we've been busy, my dad's been sick and we've been taking care of him..."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that, is there any way we can help?"

Sometimes, there's a hurt or offense that is keeping a person from coming back to church. And sadly, people often won't let the church know they're hurting – they'll just quietly absent themselves. Sometimes, people do become distracted by the "worries and cares of life", and a little encouragement can help get them back on course and in the Lord's house where they belong. Sometimes there are struggles and concerns, like the one above, in which we can offer a word of encouragement or perhaps even more.

But Rev. Petersen also notes:

"We should know, however, that some of the guilt that we feel in this regard is false. The pastor can't save anyone, and he can't make people come to church. He might exacerbate the problem by being boring or being a sinner. The other members can also fail. We should be willing to take a honest look at ourselves and repent, but at the same time we should not give too much credence to the excuses made by those who despise Christ's gifts."

Like the Gospel itself, ultimately, in which none of us has the final say on who does or doesn't believe, likewise, despite all of our best efforts and intentions, some may choose to forsake the church, neglect the sacraments, and walk away from the good gifts that God offers in the local congregation. Even Jesus saw large crowds forsake him when his teaching didn't meet their expectations. His own little phrase "He who has ears to hear" reminds us that not everyone has ears to hear, and that some ears will never hear.

Nonetheless, we could all do better. So take this piece as a gentle reminder and encouragement to help your pastors (shepherds) in tending to the wandering sheep. For their own sake, and in Christian love, don't be afraid to reach out to those you haven't seen in a while. Imagine how much you'd appreciate such a contact. And don't be discouraged if your efforts are in vain. God has called us to be faithful, not "successful".

"The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost" Luke 19:10. Each of us is a lost and wandering sheep that God has brought into the fold through the service of other faithful Christians. Ought we not return the favor, and do unto others as we would have them do for us?





Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Academy Office: (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Thomas Chryst, Associate Pastor

www.messiahkeller.org

We are pleased, and thankful, to announce that our library has received a \$4000.00 grant from **The Roy D. and Ingaborg G. Randolph Memorial Endowment Fund**. The funds were awarded for the specific purpose of purchasing additional shelving and other necessities, and select volumes of the Concordia Commentary series for the library.

Help our Library!

Order from schwans.com and use campaign # **29877**



Thank you to everyone who helped raise book money for our library through our Schwan's fund raiser. We raised \$223.00. The main part of the fund raiser closed on December 21, but **Schwans will continue to give back 5% of all orders using code 29877 at check-out through March 21!** Please remember our library if you order from Schwan's.

HELP WANTED! We have several ongoing ministries at Messiah that need committed volunteers. These jobs do not have to take a lot of time, and some can be done at home:

- **LIBRARY:** Help is needed to cover books and prepare them for

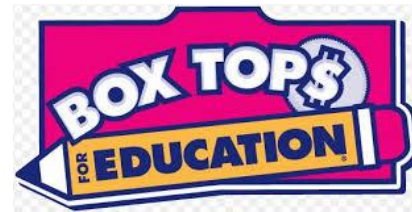
Miscellany (/ˈmɪsəˌlənē/) noun. —a mixture or collection of different things

cataloging, to shelve books that have been left out or returned, and to "shelf read," or make sure the books are in the right spot. Please contact Marcia Huebel, marcia.huebel@messiahkeller.org.

- **SWADDLING CLOTHES:** The store is open on the second Saturday of each month, from 9am—noon. We need volunteers at this time to help our customers check in and out, carry larger items to their cars, etc. We also need people to sort and hang clothes during this time. There are tasks that need doing the rest of the month as well: washing donated clothes, repacking diapers and wipes, sorting clothes by size and storing out or season items, sanitizing car seats and walkers, etc. Contact Karen Dana to help, kdanacowtown@yahoo.com.

- **BRaille CENTER:** Our Braille Center, under the auspices of Lutheran Braille Workers, prints books of the Bible and other Christian materials in Braille for shipment around the world. Even some countries that normally will not allow Bibles in, will allow these Braille Bibles, because Braille is in short supply. You can join an existing group (watch the bulletin or times) or get your own small group together. This can be a great activity for families, for student groups, friends from work... etc. Contact Barbara Pinero, bpinero@1scom.net

- **BAG MAT-TERS:** This group turns plastic shopping bags into sleeping mats for the homeless. The meet occasionally on a Saturday morning to cut, roll, and crochet. Watch the bulletin for dates and times. The simplest way to help is to collect your clean plastic bags for them to use. Volunteers are needed for cutting bags to make "plarn" [plastic bag 'yarn'], rolling the plarn into balls, and in crocheting [single crochet stitch only] Contact Vicki Main at 940-391-8593 [texting is fine] or email vickinotes@msn.com



Box Tops and Labels: Before disposing of your soup cans and cereal boxes, check the labels.—**especially if you shop at Wal-Mart.** From now until March 1, 2017, every Wal-Mart exclusive Box Tops Certificate we clip and collect earns our school a chance to be one of 20 winners of 50,000 Bonus Box Tops—that's \$5,000 for our classrooms! Please spread the word, and recruit your friends and family to help!

Amazon Smile: If you shop on amazon.com, you can donate to our church or school every time you shop. Go to smile.amazon.com, and choose Messiah Lutheran Church or Messiah Lutheran Classical Academy as the charity you would like to support. Then shop as you normally would. Your charity designation is saved, so you do not have to repeat that step each time. The dollars add up, but if we all did this, it could be significant fund-raiser, without anyone spending any extra money!

Priority re-enrollment as begun for our current MLCA families, and will continue through January. Enrollment for the general public begins on February 1. For more information, see our website, www.mlcatexas.org.



In order to provide a more secure yet user friendly Wi-Fi environment, we now require a password when logging into the MLCA Guest network.

The password, which will change every month, is located in both the church and the school office.