

REFORMATION

All presenters at *Called to Be a Living Voice* were asked to submit some thoughts, ideas, or quotes about reformation, perhaps, about what happened in 1517, the 2017 anniversary, the ongoing reform of the Church, church life in general or anything else they wanted to share. ***These submissions are unofficial and unedited.*** They are intended to foster your own thinking and spark your own imagination. As you proceed through these days together and take what you experienced home to your own congregation you will, most certainly, add your own thoughts and ideas to this list. They are presented here in no particular order.

- To both musicians and pastors: it will always be better together. Release your human need for hierarchy and talk to each other, plan together, ponder together. And don't do it all by email—look one another in the face, have lunch, pray together. You never know what you might contribute to worship in that environment.
- All of us is smarter than any of us is.
- Remember the South African concept of *Ubuntu* – "I am because you are."
- Research and celebrate the story of how Martin Luther King got his name. Hint: his father traveled to Germany in 1934 and returned home with a commitment to change his name from Michael to Martin.
- The reason we study our past is to get a running start on the future. (*Fredrica Harris Thompsett, "We Are Theologians."*)
- Keep a Wittenberg door in the church or community. This would allow people to express the things they love about their church, their frustrations with their church, etc. and spray paint them or write them on the door. They would provide a bunch of "grist for the mill" for communities of faith.
- Sponsor a Luther Hymn Festival
 - an examination of Luther's own vast collection of hymns
 - interspersed with readings from Luther's writing
 - join with other Lutheran congregations in your area
 - precede the event with adult education on Luther's hymnody
- During 2017, feature one Luther hymn per month to more fully acquaint the congregation with Luther's vast treasury of hymnody. Carefully select these hymns to coordinate with the lectionary texts for that month.
- Explore the vast treasury of hymnody that Lutheran composers have contributed over the centuries since Luther.
- Explore the music from Lutherans in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and include it as a regular part of your worship life.
- Make sure any commemoration of the Reformation is just as forward-looking as it is looking to the past.
- At certain points (festivals?) during the centennial year, use Luther's settings of liturgical music; e.g., *Isaiah in a Vision Did of Old* in place of *Holy, holy, holy Lord...* Make the Biblical and historical connections in margin notes in the bulletin.
- Invite your parish musician, or a local musical leader (college, University), to lead a series in adult education on the connections between Luther and Bach, tracing the historic developments between the two men's lives and using musical examples to punctuate the points.
- Sponsor a fun workshop in which participants are challenged to take a familiar, present-day culturally familiar tune and pair it with a Biblical text to create a new vehicle by which Scripture can be transmitted.
- Sponsor an adult forum in which the participants become familiar with the contents of the Book of Concord.
- Sponsor an adult forum in which participants are exposed to the rich Biblical and liturgical heritage of Lutheran worship by using the index provided in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, pages 1154, ff.

- **From the Vatican and the Lutheran World Federation, *From Conflict to Communion*.**

The beginnings of the Reformation will be rightly remembered when Lutherans and Catholics hear together the gospel of Jesus Christ and allow themselves to be called anew into community with the Lord.

Because they believe that they belong to the one body of Christ, Lutherans emphasize that either church did not originate with the Reformation or come into existence only 500 years ago. Rather, they are convinced that the Lutheran churches have their origin in the Pentecost event and the proclamation of the apostles. Their churches obtained their particular form, however, through the teaching and efforts of the reformers. The reformers had no desire to found a new church, and according to their own understanding, they did not do so. They wanted to reform the church, and they managed to do so within their field of influence, albeit with errors and missteps.

As members of one body, Catholics and Lutheran remember together the events of the Reformation that led to the reality that thereafter they lived in divided communities even though they still belonged to one body. That is an impossible possibility and the source of great pain. Because they belong to one body, Catholics and Lutherans struggle in the face of their division toward the full catholicity of the church. This struggle has two sides: the recognition of what is common and joins them together, and the recognition of what divides. The first is reason for gratitude and joy; the second is reason for pain and lament.

In 2017, when Lutheran Christians celebrate the anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation, they are not thereby celebrating the division of the Western church. No one who is theologically responsible can celebrate the division of Christians from one another.

...and much more in *From Conflict to Communion*.

(Please see ELCA500.org for links to free digital copies. See the From Conflict to Communion Study Guide, too!)

- Have the children's choir (or a child!) learn the second stanza of *Lord Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word* to sing in alternation with the congregation.
- Include a liturgically appropriate Luther quote at the beginning of the worship folder or screen for each Sunday during 2015.
- Accompany youth to address (in whatever form/method/media is most fitting) assembly about three things:
 - what of their heritage they are inspired by
 - what about their congregation makes them feel connected
 - how they hope the church may change in the future
- Bring in a local artist to teach about altar pieces or a Cranach painting or other Reformation era artist/artwork and then lead a multi session group in creating an altarpiece or each person their own painting based on a piece of art from that time period.
- Commission a musically gifted person in your community to write a new liturgy. This would preferably be someone who has their finger on the pulse of your community (and the Holy Spirit). For example, we created a hip hop liturgy a while back that was in the spirit of Lutheran worship but with a much more contemporary feel. Find out what the language is of your community and create a liturgy that speaks to that.
- "5 church songs I can't stand" This would be an open dialogue in a community where people would be allowed to talk about the songs (either contemporary or "traditional") that they dislike and why. This would allow people to dive in theologically and think critically about why we sing what we sing and could also be a healing way to transcend the worship wars by removing the harsh judgments of people.
- Organize a study tour of the US Virgin Islands with time to worship and interact with the Lutheran communities there that originated in the 17th century. There are active ELCA congregations on St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. John, as well as other historic churches that grew out of the mission activities of Moravian, Anglican, Methodist, and Reformed churches.
- DON'T dress someone up like Luther with a hammer

- DON'T try to do a liturgy that is an attempt to resemble what you think liturgy would have been like in Wittenberg in the early 16th century.
- DO celebrate a communion service using the ELW, in the fullest way possible—with lots of diverse music, a beautiful Thanksgiving at the Table, and a full complement of assisting ministers— but done in such a way that Word and Sacrament are clearly the center of the event.
- Doxology around Word, font, and table is what propels the church to proclaim the gospel and work for justice and peace.
- According to Scripture, human beings form one body with many members, who serve one another (1 Cor 12). But according to the logic and practice of advanced capitalism, we are driven by competition. According to Luther, we are created, sustained, and empowered to work with God and others for the sake of justice and peace in the economy, in the political order, and in the church (*On the Bondage of the Will*). Thesis 10, 94 Theses, Halle, 2014.
- The Christian gospel is indeed about reconciliation between God and humanity, and about reconciliation between human beings. But if “gospel” does not succeed in reconciling the whole of creation, it is not the gospel (2 Co 5:18). Thesis 33 from 94 Theses, Halle, 2014
- Have your church host a Reformation themed movie festival ("Luther" from 2003 or "Martin Luther" from 1953 or "The Protestant Reformation" from 2008). Include a Q&A or panel discussion after the film.
- Use the historical Reformation as a framework for your individual congregation's reformation. How has the congregation changed (community, property, socio-economic, ministry, etc.)? How has the congregation stayed the same? Create a video documentary or slideshow (using personal testimonies) to bring attention to the ever-changing nature of the church.
- Offer a Reformation themed musical concert or worship event. Use *The Church's Journey* event as a guide.
- Our celebration of the reformation should be in conversation with Roman Catholic brothers and sisters.
- The Festival of the Reformation is ... a day of humble recollection of the revolutionary and cleansing word of God, which is continually reforming and renewing God's church.... Renewal and reform is not a once-for-all event, nor even an occasional eruption, but rather a continuing condition of the church. (*Pfatteicher*)
- On this Reformation Day, we recall that Martin Luther's ministry was at the heart of a long and arduous reform movement that continues yet today. The Gospels "call diverse assemblies to reform. They propose that at the heart of this reform must be the encounter with the crucified risen one." (*Gordon Lathrop, The Four Gospels on Sunday*)
- Schmemmann liked to quote Nietzsche, the son of a Lutheran parsonage: “You Christians lost the world when you lost your joy.” If the 500th anniversary of the Reformation is worth celebrating (and I believe it truly is), then it must be the occasion to rediscover and recover joy in our congregations and in our own hearts. The joy of forgiveness bigger than all the world's sin. The joy of life stronger than the entire world's death. The joy of a new age that is coming at Christ's glorious appearing where Love will reign over all. The great hymn of the Reformation in my book is not “A Mighty Fortress” but “Dear Christians, one and all rejoice!” Let's do it!
- Reformation Day is often treated as a sort of “Lutheran heritage” day, a time for singing chorales and remembering the theological reforms of the sixteenth century that gave birth to Lutheranism. In other parishes, a greater focus is placed on the church's need for continual reform; the church's history is secondary to an emphasis on the issues and needs of the church today. Both of these approaches have much to commend them. But the true center of the Reformation is found in the lessons appointed for the occasion: Christ makes us free. His covenant is written on our hearts. We are neither bound to the past nor slaves to anxieties of the present. Particularly as we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we do well to remember the gospel that is central to our observance.
- One of the first things children will notice about the worship space on Reformation Day is its color (red), since this is probably the first time since Holy Trinity Sunday that the paraments have not been green. Use this opportunity to talk about the meaning of color in the church's liturgical life. Red is the color associated with the

Holy Spirit; it is used on Pentecost and for the remembrance of martyrs. Why would red be the color of the Reformation? Use the Calendar on pages 14-17 of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* as an aid. Show the children how to use the calendar to determine what color a given Sunday should be.

- Visit the site <www.lutheranonline.com/lutheranonline/music/index.html> or obtain a copy of Thrivent's CD compilation, *Celebrating the Musical Heritage of the Lutheran Church*. These resources contain a wealth of content related to the rich tradition of Lutheran worship and music, from the sixteenth through the twentieth century. Key remarks from church scholars, numerous recordings, and information about "outside influences" which affected the church are included for each century. Consider how you might employ some of this music in worship or other aspects of your congregation's life as the Reformation anniversary approaches.
- Use Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* to enrich your worship on Reformation Day. For example: Break the Apostles' Creed into its three articles, as we do in the baptismal rite. After the assembly speaks each article together, have a member of the congregation ask "What does this mean?" and then read Luther's explanation of the article (or, alternatively, invite the assembly to speak it together).
- Martin Luther wrote, "This is the reason why the prophets did not make use of any art except music...they held theology and music most tightly connected, and proclaimed truth through Psalms and songs." Music's proclamatory function has always been an important part of Lutheran theology and worship. The entire assembly – not just the pastor or the cantor – preaches the gospel through its singing and confessing. As we celebrate the Reformation, we remember the role that both music and the assembly play in preaching the faith of the church. [This Martin Luther quote is found in Carl Schalk's *Luther on Music: Paradigms of Praise* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1988).

KARIN RUNOW

Made by dust, carried by the Earth

A reformation for our environment in the internal and external sense
- with focus on sustainable and credible lifestyle.

The relationship between Christian faith and the sustainable
development needs to be reformed in the direction of a sustainable
and credible way of life.

Sustainable in relation to scientific boundary conditions and credible
in relation to the Christian faith and values.

Luther's Reformation meant that the Bible became available to the
people in indigenous languages.

The serious environmental situation in our contemporary,
challenges us to a new reformation in Christianity, where we
develop the art of reading the Bible with its value-bearing texts in
combination with natural science-scientific facts - This is for the
benefit of humans on Earth, our home.