



# VOICE OF GRACE

Grace Lutheran Church, Atlanta

September/October 2017

## LUTHERANS AND THE REFORMATION

By: Pastor Adam Ellsworth

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*"Luther himself has no desire to be Lutheran except insofar as he teaches the Holy Scriptures in purity."*  
- Martin Luther

This year we mark the quincentennial of the distribution of the "Disruption on the Power of Indulgences," or to say it plainly, the 500th anniversary of the posting of the 95 Theses by Martin Luther. If there is any one single issue that sets Confessing Lutheran Christians apart from the rest of Christendom it is this—the unflinching confession of the authority of scriptures.

It was the plain word of scriptures that drove an Augustinian monk and University academic to stand against the nearly uncountable power of the Roman Church. It was the clear teaching of scriptures that drove many to support Luther in the clear confession that our salvation is won by the merit of Christ alone, that this merit is granted to us freely because of God's love and mercy, and that our works, though they might be ever so good, gain us nothing in the merit and favor of God.

It is this understanding, that the words of the prophets and apostles are trustworthy because they testify to Christ and his Kingdom by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that has brought people together in confessing Lutheran churches for 500 years now.

While there are many who call themselves Lutheran who have abandoned scriptures, we continue to go by this first pejorative name of "Lutheran." I could think of a thousand names I would rather be called than "Lutheran," if I am honest. Maybe we could call ourselves the "Church of Concord" because we all confess the exposition of scriptures found in the Book of Concord. There are other titles available—maybe they would be helpful and maybe they would just further confuse. What does it even mean to be called a "Lutheran" anyway?

If to be called a Lutheran means that we lift Luther up above other men, then we should abandon this name. If being called Lutheran is only a term of historical interest, then this name means nothing. If to be a Lutheran means that we confess the same Lordship of Christ and the grace of the Father revealed to the world in the life, death, resurrection, ascension, and promise to return, that has always been confessed from the days of the apostles to this very day, then we are in good company. If it means that we look to no other besides Jesus Christ and his cross for our hope and salvation, then let us continue to be called Lutheran. If this is what it means to be Lutheran, then the whole of the Church of Jesus Christ is the "Lutheran" church.

So whatever we are called, let us continue to do one thing; let us continue to have faith in Christ. Let us continue to trust the testimony of the Holy Spirit as written by the prophets and apostles as they bear witness to the love of God found in Jesus Christ. Let us continue to share with the world the lavish forgiveness of sins given freely for the sake of the Son of God and his promise that all those who look to him will be raised to everlasting life and salvation on the day of his return.

To God be the Glory. Amen.



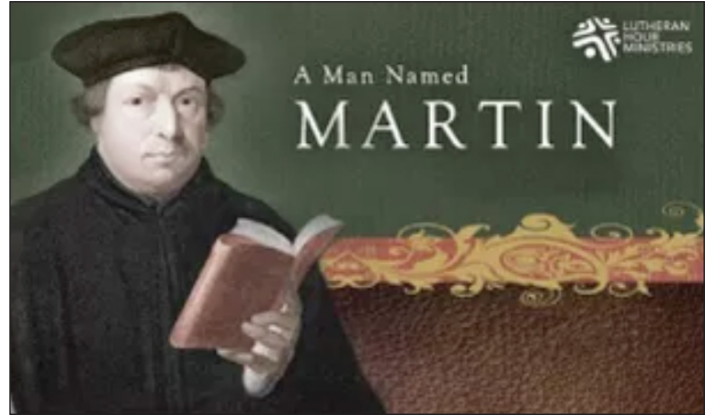
**REFORMATION**  
**2017** It's *Still* All About  
**Jesus**

## CONFIRMATIONS

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, August 6, was a day of celebration at Grace, as two young people were confirmed into their Christian faith during worship by Pastor Adam. Confirmands Cassie Howells and Sechan Tak each gave a short speech during the service before the Rite of Confirmation and First Communion. The two were guests of honor at a cake reception hosted by the Elders.



## WEDNESDAY NIGHTS



On August 30, we re-started our Wednesday night supper and Bible Study. Join us at Grace from 6-8pm each Wednesday until October 4 as we watch *A Man Named Martin*.

This documentary examines the life and teachings of Martin Luther, and also gives important historical background and explains the key doctrines expounded by Luther.

Please bring a dish for everyone to share!

## UPCOMING RETREAT

Grace is planning a family-style retreat for members and friends! The event is geared toward everyone, including married couples, singles, and children.

Exact details are to be determined, but the retreat will be scheduled sometime this fall or early winter. Please contact Jose Beaton if you're interested in attending, and let him know your availability.

## NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Jordan Boeck** is joining us as a transfer member from Faith Lutheran Church in Marietta, GA. She works as the Catering Sales Manager at the Glenn Hotel & SkyLounge in downtown Atlanta. Jordan transferred to Grace because it feels like a home and she loves the family environment. She currently lives in the Ponce district and loves being so close to church!

**David D. Anwanwan** was born and raised in Oklahoma City, where he attended Messiah Lutheran Church. After graduating from Oklahoma University, he moved here to Atlanta, successfully obtaining his Masters. David is currently a medical student at Morehouse School of Medicine. He enjoys watching sports, especially basketball, going to the gym and working out, and lastly, loves food! He adds, "I've seen Grace Lutheran as a loving and caring community; that's why I chose to become a member."

**Melody Schimmel** is from rural Texas and is currently attending Emory University, where she is a Linguistics major and a Media minor.

# THE PASTOR'S CORNER

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In the past week, Hurricane Harvey devastated the shoreline of Texas. Speaking with pastors and friends in the area has left the impression that the devastation has left the region feeling more like a war zone than a home. They describe a situation to me that will take not just weeks and months to address but even years.

However, in the midst of this disaster, LCMS churches have already begun the work of providing care in the form of money, manpower, and items that are needed. This reminds me in some ways of how the early church addressed the needs of many during a famine that swept the region of Jerusalem. In 2nd Corinthians 8 and 9, St. Paul boasts in the generosity of the saints gathered in Macedonia and spurs on the saints gathered in Corinth to emulate their actions. Though the Macedonian church was poor, they gave greatly, even beyond their capacity.



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**In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us.**

## **2 Corinthians 8:2-5**

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It has always been the way of the church to support those who are in need, especially those of our brothers and sisters in Christ as they work to share the Gospel of God's love in Jesus in word and deed. It has always been the way of Christ and his church to live a cruciform life, to live sacrificially for the other.

In light of this, it is my prayer and hope that we at Grace will answer the needs of the saints in Houston by supporting localized LCMS efforts with our time, talents, and treasures. In the days ahead, let us be mindful to the fellowship we share in the love of Christ and the ways our love for neighbors expresses itself in action and prayer. Speak with me if you are willing to travel, give generously as you have the ability, and remember the needs of others in your prayers.

**Your Servant in Christ,  
Pastor Adam Ellsworth**

## ADVENT

During Advent this year, we will serve communion every Sunday. We will also have Wednesday evening services, led by the Elders of Grace. Look for more details about this, along with an Advent service schedule, in the next edition of *Voice of Grace*!

## IN OUR PRAYERS

- » **Our homebound member:** Marjorie Hunecke
- » **Continued healing:** Arlene Kateen and Jan Ellison
- » **For our mission partners:** Rev. Joseph Song, Stepping Stone, and Lutheran Services of Georgia

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Women's Group: September 10

All ladies are invited to join together after the service for lunch and fellowship. The group will meet somewhere within close walking distance of the church, where they will discuss the week's reading.

For this meeting, the group will be wrapping up their discussion of *LadyLike: Living Biblically*, a book by Rebekah Curtis and Rose Adle.

### Virginia-Highland Civic Association Meeting: September 11, 6:30pm

### Elders Meeting: September 11, 7pm

### Low Country Shrimp Boil: September 16, 5pm

Come to this feast and dig into this messy, yummy fare featuring shrimp, sausage, corn, and potatoes. Grilled hot dogs for non-seafood eaters will be provided, as well as drinks. Adults, BYOB if you wish.

Please bring a salad, vegetable, or dessert to share. Dress is casual. Family and friends are also invited to join us!

### Council Meeting: September 19, 7pm

### Women's Group: September 24

The group will begin a new book. More details to come.

### Piety by the Pint: September 28, 7pm

More details to come.

### Women's Group: October 8

### Virginia-Highland Civic Association Meeting: October 9, 6:30pm

### Women's Group: October 22

### Piety by the Pint: October 26, 7pm

More details to come.

### Reformation Day of Service: October 28, 8am-1pm

Join us as we gather at Hurt Park in downtown Atlanta to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation as we serve Atlanta the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed!

### Joint Reformation Service LCMS North Atlanta Circuit: October 29, 4-7:30pm

Join us at Faith Lutheran Church in Marietta for a Reformation service at 4pm, followed by a German Fest dinner from 5:30-7:30pm.

## SERVICE ASSISTANTS

- » **9/3:** Jeff Raymond (Worship Assistant), John and Arlene Kateen (Altar Care)
- » **9/10:** Jose Beaton (Reader)
- » **9/17:** Lucien Lane (Worship Assistant), James and Karleen Smith (Altar Care)
- » **9/24:** Bob Chambers (Reader)
- » **10/1:** Don Collins (Worship Assistant), Sarah Hocut and Sheila Schutt (Altar Care)
- » **10/8:** Patrick Kane (Reader)
- » **10/15:** Jose Beaton (Worship Assistant), Kelley Wiedenmann and Blaire Wilson (Altar Care)
- » **10/22:** Mary Chambers (Reader)
- » **10/29:** Jeff Raymond (Worship Assistant), James and Karleen Smith (Altar Care)

## WEEK AT GRACE

- » **Mondays: Nicotine Anonymous, 7pm**
- » **Tuesdays: Yoga Exercise Class, 6pm**
- » **Wednesdays: Supper and Bible Study, 6pm**
- » **Thursdays: Alcoholics Anonymous, 7pm**
- » **Saturdays: Yoga Exercise Class, 10am**

## WEEKLY WORSHIP

- » **Children's Sunday School, Sundays 9:45am**
- » **Adult Bible Study, Sundays 9:45am**
- » **Young Adult Class, Sundays 9:45am**
- » **Worship Service, Sundays 11am**

## CONTACT US

www.gracemidtown.org | 404-875-5411  
1155 N. Highland Ave., Atlanta, GA 30306

@GraceLutheranATL 