

The Chimes

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
APPLETON, WISCONSIN
OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2017

The Reformation 500 Years Later

“A Christian is never in a state of completion but always in a process of becoming.” Martin Luther

As we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, I want to share a bit about the history and theology of the Reformation as well as an overview of the events at Memorial Presbyterian to recognize that 500 years ago on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted his 95 theses, a moment in history regarded as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. (Spoiler alert: there were African priests writing letters to the Vatican addressing many of the same concerns that Luther had long before Luther posted his 95 theses. Don't tell your Lutheran friends!) I encourage you to read the 95 theses for yourself here at this website: <http://www.luther.de/en/95thesen.html>.

You may be asking yourself: why should I care about the Reformation? There are plenty of other things going on in the world. Why should I be studying the Reformation? The short answer is: learning about the Reformation helps us to better understand our “family history” as Protestants and the Reformed Tradition of which we are a part through our worship practices, how we govern ourselves, and how we understand God at work in the world. As we learn about our history, we will also explore how others have attempted to faithfully address challenges in their own day. For instance: Luther’s 95 Theses challenged the authority of the Pope, but it also challenged authority of monarchies. The Reformation and the tumult of religious conflict, the shifting geopolitics of Europe, gave rise to one of the greatest refugee crises in history. Did you know Calvin’s Geneva helped shelter thousands of refugees made homeless because they professed the Protestant faith? Just think – the Deacons in Geneva were basically the Red Cross.

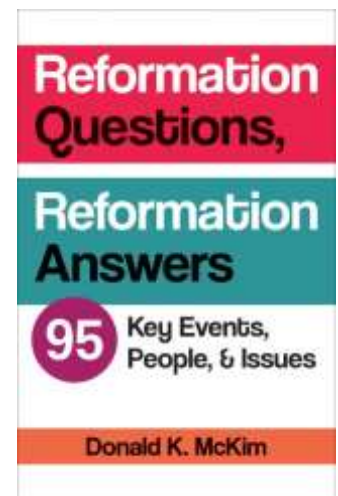
On the following pages you will find excerpts from *Reformation Questions, Reformation Answers: 95 Key Events, People, and Issues*, by Donald K. McKim, which help to dive into the movement and meaning of the Protestant Reformation and to encourage you to learn more through the worship services, classes, and special events coming up.

Soli Deo Gloria, To God Alone the Glory,

Pastor Mike

#1 What was the Reformation?

"The 'Protestant Reformation' was marked by a focus on Scripture as the primary theological authority for the church, rejecting the authority of the pope and the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. The church (and society) was to be reformed on the basis of Scripture. Additional theological emphases were developed by Protestant Reformers. Some prominent leaders were Martin Luther (1483–1546), Huldrych Zwingli (1484–1531), John Calvin (1509–1564), and Menno Simons (1496–1561). These theological convictions were far-reaching in their scope in critiquing traditional Roman Catholic theology, even as the Reformers differed on theological particulars among themselves....The impact and legacy of the Reformation are with us today in significant ways. Those who lived in Europe in this period were conscious of changes occurring. They also faced personal choices about their understanding of the Christian faith and how their faith was to be lived. The Protestant Reformation provided ways of understanding Scripture and understanding the church, which offered new directions for Christian people."



#4 What does "Protestant" mean?

"The term 'Protestant' emerged in relation to the second Diet of Speyer (1529) when a group of princes issued a 'protest' (Lat. protestatio) against the decision of the diet. A diet (governmental deliberative assembly) had met at Speyer, Germany, in 1526. The Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, could not attend. But several princes from northern Germany who were followers of Martin Luther (Lutherans or 'evangelicals') were present. The decision of this diet was that each estate in the empire would be allowed to choose between Roman Catholicism and the emerging Lutheran movement. While this would not be a final answer to the future of religion in Germany, further decisions would be made later. In 1529, King Charles V, desiring to pursue his religious agenda, insisted the diet reconvene, which it did from March 15 through April 22. In the last several years, a number of states had sought to end religious innovations and return to the pre-1517 status on religious matters. Charles demanded the diet revoke the 1526 decision and take steps against the Lutheran movement. This was to prohibit Luther's teachings and put a permanent end to the Reformation. Most German estates supported the king and complied. But on April 19, 1529, five territories and fourteen south German cities entered an oral Protestation (put in writing as an Appellation on April 25). This asserted that these parties found the entire transaction of this second Diet of Speyer was null and void and rejected the result. Their Protestation was a formal protest or opposition to a decision. But the Latin meaning of the term protestatio is from the verb protestari, which means 'to profess,' 'to bear witness,' or 'to declare formally.' This is the meaning applicable to the Protestation by the princes at Speyer. Here evangelicals who supported Luther made their public witness to support the expression of Christian faith in which they believed and which had claimed their consciences. Their 'protest' was their 'witness' to this faith. So they came to be called 'Protestants.'"

#58 What were the solas of the Reformation?

"Sometimes the Protestant Reformation is described by its distinctive emphases, using the Latin term sola (solus, soli), meaning 'alone.' These highlight what Protestants found as core theological convictions. Sola gratia (grace alone). God's grace is the unmerited favor God gives. It is God's free act of salvation and forgiveness given to sinful humans in Jesus Christ. It is not earned or deserved. As Paul put it, 'For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast' (Eph. 2:8–9). Sola fide (faith alone). Sinners receive God's grace by faith. Faith is belief, trust, and obedience to God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

(continued on page 3)

#58 What were the solas of the Reformation? *(continued from page 2)*

Faith is the means by which we know Jesus Christ and receive the gift of salvation by believing in him (John 6:40); 'the one who is righteous will live by faith' (Gal. 3:11). Sola Christo (Christ alone). Jesus Christ is the only one through whom salvation can be received. Christ is fully human and fully God and the 'one mediator between God and humankind' (1 Tim. 2:5). Christ's death on the cross brings forgiveness of sin and his resurrection secure eternal life for all who believe in him (John 3:16). Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone). God has revealed God's self through Scripture, the Word of God. Scripture is the authority for Christian belief and Christian living. The Protestant Reformers rejected the Roman Catholic view that authority for the church comes through Scripture plus the traditions and teachings of the Roman church. The Bible is the means through which Jesus Christ is revealed and becomes known to us. Soli Deo gloria (To the glory of God alone). The Reformers emphasized that all Christian life and activity is to be carried out not to bring glory to one's self, but to bring glory to God. Paul's command directs: 'Whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God' (1 Cor. 10:31)."

#95 What does the Reformation mean for us today?

"From the perspective of five hundred years after the Protestant Reformation, we wonder why it is important and if it remains so? Various answers are given to these questions. For some, the Reformation era is an interesting historical period, when people got 'excited' about religion and set in motion ideas and practices that have 'had their day' and now can safely be relegated to the dustbins of history. But for others, the motivating issues of the Protestant Reformation continue to have significance. Biblical and theological insights from Reformers are found to be helpful in providing ongoing understandings for Christian faith. They provide guidance for Christians living in church contexts, and they nourish those who seek to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ in the world. Churches that emerged from the Reformation period maintain a central place in the Christian understanding and experience of millions of people of faith.

For these people, the Reformation has meaning today. Its teachings are a guide to ways of being Christian persons, even in environments and cultures vastly different from five hundred years ago. We can see a number of limitations of the Reformers, recognizing mistakes and blinders. But we can also gratefully build on their theological perceptions and visions as aids for our own Christian faith. Those in Reformation church traditions appropriate values of the traditions. They go on to develop the traditions through their own lives and witness as Christian persons. So the Reformation means a continuing deepening of faith."

Other Links:

A number of people at Memorial Presbyterian have connections to the Catholic Church. Check out these interesting articles that highlight the commonalities that Catholics and Protestants have found in recent years and what keeps us apart:

<http://religionnews.com/2017/08/31/us-catholics-and-protestants-agree-500-years-after-reformation-they-have-more-in-common-than-not/>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/09/13/do-you-know-what-separates-protestants-and-catholics-many-protestants-seem-not-to/?tid=sm_fb&utm_term=.bbb9486fa7d8



October Events Commemorating the Reformation

The Reformations

Presentation by Dr. Ken Sawyer, McCormick Theological Seminary Scholar

Saturday, October 28, 7:00 p.m., MPC Sanctuary

With Reformation Hymn Sing at 6:30 p.m.

Memorial Presbyterian is pleased to welcome Dr. Ken Sawyer, Professor of Church History at McCormick Theological Seminary as we commemorate the 500th Anniversary of Luther's 95 Theses. Dr. Sawyer will bring the many streams of reformation into conversation with Luther's reformation project presenting: *The Reformations: Past and Present*. The community is invited to join in a Reformation Hymn Sing at 6:30 p.m. with presentation to follow at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning Adult Education Courses, 8:45 a.m.

- September 24: *The Protestant Reformations: Reformation Background and Luther*, led by Greg Braatz.
- October 8: *The Protestant Reformations: Reformation and Calvin*, led by Greg Braatz.
- October 15: *The Protestant Reformations: Reformation Today*, led by Greg Braatz.
- October 22: *Sunday Times*. We'll use some of what we've learned about the Reformation and discuss current events through the lens of the Reformed faith.
- October 29: *The Church Reformed always being reformed by the Word of God*. Dr. Ken Sawyer will share about the Presbyterian Reformation, building upon his community presentation on Saturday evening,

Sunday Morning Worship Services, 10:00 a.m.

- October 1: World Communion Sunday, with Pastor Mike preaching on *Sola Gratia: Connected by Grace*
- October 8: CROP Walk Commissioning, with Greg Braatz preaching on *Sola Fide: Inspired by Faith*
- October 15: Congregational Meeting, with Pastor Mike preaching on *Solus Christus: Serving Christ*
- October 22: Baptism of Jonathan McElrath with Pastor Mike preaching on *Sola Scriptura: Inspired by Scripture*
- October 29: Reformation Sunday, with Dr. Ken Sawyer and Pastor Mike preaching a sermon in dialogue—*Soli Deo Gloria: The Continuing Reformation*

Bach's Reformation Cantata

Caritas Collegium

Sunday, October 29, 3:00 p.m., MPC Sanctuary

Caritas Collegium, a chamber choir in residence at Memorial Presbyterian Church, will present Bach's Reformation Cantata (BWV 80), a work based on what is probably Martin Luther's most famous hymn – *Ein Feste Burg – A Mighty Fortress is Our God*. The dizzyingly powerful opening chorus is followed by recitatives and arias which reflect the full breadth of Bach's art of word painting and emotion. This is considered to be one of Bach's most magnificent cantatas, one of the greatest works in the history of music. This event is open to the public; a freewill offering will be taken.

A Message from LU Spiritual & Religious Life

by Linda Morgan-Clement, Lawrence University Dean of Spiritual and Religious Life

Dear Memorial Presbyterian Church Friends,

I am so grateful for the growing partnership between the ministry at Lawrence and your congregation! As we are getting ready to start up again, this time with the Center for Spiritual and Religious Life fully functional, I wanted to share a bit of an update and some invitations for you to join some of our efforts.

First, the newly emerging Progressive Christian outreach has been a conversation this summer among leaders at Memorial (thank you, Greg and Kathy), All Saints, First Congregational, Neenah First Presbyterian and ESTHER. Together we have decided to promote a select group of activities from each congregation to our students in the hopes that we will develop relationships with a group of progressive Christian students. We are going to promote them as "E.R.C." opportunities – (Engage/Relate/Connect). Watch for more information – or check out our website or follow us on Facebook at LU Spirit Space.

Secondly, we will be offering Taize Worship on a regular basis this year. Once a month at All Saints on Sunday evening and once a month in the Center for Spiritual and Religious Life, we hope to gather an intergenerational community for song, silence, and prayer. The dates for this fall are: September 24, October 12 and 29, and November 9. Services will be at 7:30 pm. and you are invited to let me know if you would like to be added to list of possible musicians or please simply come worship.

I look forward to seeing what God will be doing with our lives this fall.

Linda Morgan-Clement

Who's Calling?

It was just one year ago that MPC celebrated the 50th Jubilee anniversary in our "new" building on the corner of College and Meade. The cover article in the Fall 2016 issue of *The Chimes* detailed the many and varied reasons for the move from the outdated building on the corner of College and Drew.

One of our favorite stories about the old church came from Carol Loker, a longtime member who worked as Church Secretary and Christian Education Director for many years. With a picture-perfect memory and a wonderful sense of humor, she loved to tell the story of the church's inefficient telephone system. The office of the pastor, Rev. Cliff Pierson, was located just above the church office, and while each office had a telephone, there was no way to transfer calls. When an incoming caller wanted to speak with the pastor, Carol would use a broom handle to bang on the ceiling, alerting him to pick up the phone. If the pastor happened to answer the telephone and the caller wanted to speak with Carol, he stomped on the floor, letting her know that she was to pick up the call. One day, the pastor was meeting with a couple who were interested in church membership. The telephone rang, the pastor answered the call, stomped on the floor, and hung up the phone. It happened several times throughout the meeting with these potential members, and Rev. Pierson never thought to explain to his visitors why he kept stomping on the floor. Carol recalled with a laugh, "Cliff commented later that those people never did join the church!" ~ *Paula Stevenson Hoglund*



Carol kept telling stories throughout her long life. She lived to the age of 102, and her 100th birthday was celebrated at MPC in August 2009.

Generosity for Every Season



Taken from “Generosity for Every Season” brochure, written by Olanda Carr, Ministry Relations Officer, Presbyterian Foundation

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is deeply rooted in a tradition of generosity. Gifts of time, talent, and treasures have sustained the mission and ministry of our denomination for generations. With continued support of these four church-wide Special Offerings, this rich legacy will continue well into the future. Giving to the **One Great Hour of Sharing**, **Pentecost**, **Peace & Global Witness**, and **Christmas Joy** offerings provides the opportunity for us to participate in the ministry of Jesus Christ, as each offering connects with a specific mission of the greater church. Collectively, these offerings address social and global issues like hunger, disaster, oppression and injustice, peacemaking and reconciliation, racial ethnic education and leadership development, and church worker assistance.

One Great Hour of Sharing – Season of Lent (March 1 – April 16, 2017)

To alleviate the effects of poverty, injustice, and disaster.

- 32% Rebuilding hope (Presbyterian Disaster Assistance) - Working alongside communities as they recover and find hope after natural or human-caused disasters.
- 36% Growing food security (Presbyterian Hunger Program) - Supporting initiatives that create sustainable food systems and alleviate root causes of poverty so that all may be fed.
- 32% Partnering in progress (Self-Development of People) - Providing resources and education to oppressed and disadvantaged communities working to overcome poverty and injustice through initiatives they own and directly benefit from.

Pentecost - Season of Pentecost (April 17 – June 4, 2017)

To connect with ministries that address the needs of at-risk children and encourage, grow, and support the church’s greatest resource—our young people.

- 40% Supporting youth in our own church - This portion of the Offering is used to invest in local and church programs focused on developing youth and serving at-risk children in your community.
- 25% Serving communities (young adult volunteers) - Bringing young adults together in fellowship, worship, and service by volunteering in communities around the world.
- 25% Guiding youth (youth ministries) - Supporting ministries that inspire and guide youth as they grow and walk with Christ.
- 10% Advocating for children-at-risk - Providing advocacy that protects and education that nurtures our children and youth.

Peace & Global Witness - Season of Peace (September 3 – October 1, 2017)

To unite with congregations and presbyteries in sharing the Peace of Christ and promoting reconciliation and peacemaking within cultures of violence and conflict—including our own.

- 25% Responding to conflict in our community - This portion of the Offering is used to invest in local responses to violence and injustice, and to connect with the global witness of Christ’s peace.
- 25% Connecting mid-councils for peace work - Linking congregations in ministries of peace and reconciliation throughout presbyteries and synods.
- 50% Advocating for Christ’s peace & justice - Calling for peace and justice in cultures of violence, including our own, through collaborative initiatives of education and Christian witness.

Christmas Joy - Season of Advent (December 3-24, 2017)

To assist our past and present church workers in their time of need, and to provide for the education and leadership development of our church’s future racial ethnic leaders.

- 50% Providing opportunities for future leaders (racial ethnic leadership development) - Providing assistance for students to attend Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges to pursue their professional and leadership goals.
- 50% Giving back to those who give their all (Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions) - Offering financial assistance for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.

Memorial Recognized as a Certified PC(USA) Hunger Action Congregation

“Memorial Presbyterian Church has demonstrated a commitment to follow Christ’s Example in helping to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes.”

In September, MPC received recognition for our hunger ministry commitment by the Presbyterian Hunger Program. Congregations certified as Hunger Action Congregations demonstrate action in all six areas of hunger response set out by the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and all will be publically recognized on World Food Day, October 16. The letter informing us of the recognition begins:

“Congratulations and thank you for responding to the biblical call to alleviate hunger and for your work toward ending its causes!

You have joined the faithful ranks of churches around the country that respond with compassionate action to end hunger in a country and world that have the potential to feed everyone.”



Certificate awarded to MPC by the Presbyterian Hunger Program, for our hunger ministry commitment.

The six areas of hunger response, and MPC’s actions within each area, are:

1. **Hunger Alleviation**

Community Garden support for St. Joseph’s Food Program, Empty-to-Full pans, Salvation Army food collection, hot meals at Salvation Army, CROP Walk, and Adopt-a-Family

2. **Development Assistance**

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, hot meals and financial contributions for Homeless Connections and the Warming Shelter (with hospitality volunteers), Help for the Homeless collections, and Heifer Project support.

3. **Hunger Education**

Completion of the 10-session Just Food study, small group studies of Between the World and Me, by T. Coates and Evicted by M. Desmond, Session study of Waking Up White by D. Irving, and annual hunger and poverty focus Adult Education sessions

4. **Lifestyle Integrity**

Use and sales of Presbyterian Coffee Project fair trade coffee, SERRV fair trade gifts sale, use of pitchers of drinking water instead of bottled water, recycling

5. **Corporate and Public Policy Witness**

Holding annual Offering of Letters, being a Bread for the World Covenant Church, visits and calls to members of Congress, prayers to end hunger

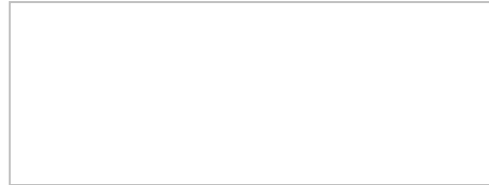
6. **Worship**

Incorporating prayer, education, and preaching about ending hunger and its causes into worship

Many thanks go to all the members of MPC who have contributed to this Hunger Action certification, through your time and treasure in these six areas. ~ Beth Lepinski

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



The Chimes quarterly newsletter of Memorial Presbyterian Church is published in January, April, July and October. Article submission deadline is the 1st of the month preceding publication. The weekly newsletter, "The Memo from Memorial," is published every Thursday. To receive these publications via email or through the postal service, contact the church office.

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