

Trinity Tribune

Trinity Lutheran Church ✦ Paola, Kansas

 **December**
2017



Martin Luther— World's First Music Superstar!

In Schweinfurt, Germany in 1532 a congregation wanted to join the Reformation, but the priest opposed the move. So, one Sunday the churchgoers started lustily singing the most famous song by Reformation leader Martin Luther, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”—until the priest fled! In the days that followed, bands of youth roamed the streets belting out the song, and a short time later the Reformation was introduced to the town, and Schweinfurt became Lutheran.

In honor of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation, our Children’s Christmas Program this year, on December 24 at 7:00pm, is based on Martin Luther’s Christmas hymn, “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come.” Luther was not only an eloquent author of theological writings, he was also a songwriter and musician—really the world’s first music superstar!

While attending high school in Eisenach, Luther was a choirboy

and trained in music theory. At Erfurt University his studies included music, voice, and composition. He played the lute and German flute, wrote four-part compositions, and performed in an ensemble. This formal music training, combined with his later extensive musical experience as a monk, gave Luther the modern equivalent of a master’s degree in church music. He even thought about becoming a musician, but instead entered the monastery and earned his doctorate degree in theology—at age 28 the youngest person ever up to that time to earn a doctorate.

Had Luther decided his own personal vocation differently, the entire course of world history would have changed! For, as a theologian he launched a Reformation that not only transformed the Christian Church, but also led to social, cultural, and political

changes that ended the Dark Ages and ushered in the modern world in which we live. This included momentous changes in the world of music, and ironically Luther no doubt had a much greater impact on music history as a theologian than he would have if he had become a musician instead.

At first, leading the Reformation didn’t leave Luther much time for pursuing music. That changed in 1523, when two young monks in Brussels, Belgium, who followed his teachings, were burned alive as heretics. Luther was shocked and horrified, and to ease his pain he composed a ballad beautifully telling the story of their heroic faith and deaths, the first song of the Reformation.

Luther recounted his own conversion experience, and described how God has saved all humanity, in his second



Tradition says Martin Luther was the first person to put up a Christmas tree, after walking home one winter night and seeing the stars twinkling through snow-covered branches, as portrayed here in the Luther family home with Katie and their children. Whether or not that tradition is true, Luther certainly loved Christmastime, and wrote more hymns for Christmas than any other occasion.

song, “Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice” (*Lutheran Service Book*, 556). This was Luther’s first “hit,” printed on flyers and sung all over Europe, and it made him realize how powerful songs can be.

Motivated by this initial success, over the next 12 months Luther composed an astonishing 24 songs, translating existing Latin hymns and psalms from the Bible into German, and writing his own new songs expressing the theology of the Reformation. For many of these songs, he also used his musical expertise to compose new tunes.

Being not only a theologian but also a premier musician, Luther felt that not just the language but also the music was important when writing new songs, though he emphasized the music was meant to reinforce and support the text, and the purpose of both was to spread the Word of God.

Musical experts today conclude that Luther's hymns were so extremely popular because of the phenomenon called "earworms," catchy phrases and tunes that stick in your memory. These easy to memorize rhyming verses and catchy melodies were ideal at a time when most people were unable to read either words or music.

A major milestone in the history of Christian worship came in 1524, when Luther published the first ever hymnal in the history of Christianity, with 39 hymns, including all 24 of Luther's new songs. But, Luther intended his hymns to be only an example and inspiration for other poets and composers: *"I have the intention to create spiritual songs for the people, so that the Word of God will remain among the people also by means of music. That's why we are looking for poets everywhere."*

Luther saw the need to restore congregational singing in worship services, which had long been conducted

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only in the Latin language, that most people couldn't understand. He lamented that *"only a choir of clergymen and pupils sing and respond when the bishop blesses the bread and performs his service."*

When Luther published a German order of worship that included German songs, the congregation suddenly took on a whole new role. Instead of just passively observing they now played an active part in the divine service.

Luther had a childlike love for Christmastime, and wrote more hymns for Christmas than any other occasion.

Luther's own deep love for music turned the Reformation into a singing movement. From early on, singing became a trademark of the Lutherans, and the Lutheran Church became known as "the singing church."

Luther's songs were strong spiritual weapons, with a powerful propaganda effect. So much so, that in an attempt to stave off the Reformation in the Roman Catholic cathedral town of Hildesheim, the singing of Luther's songs was twice declared illegal there, in 1524 and 1531. But, the songs of the world's first music superstar were so popular, catchy, and memorable that they stayed constantly on people's lips, and the Reformation eventually came to Hildesheim in 1542.

Luther's restoration of congregational singing is one of the greatest legacies of the Lutheran Reformation. Our own *Lutheran Service Book* still contains 23 of his 37 known hymns.

During this holiday season worshippers will once again gather in churches around the world to sing with joy the beloved songs of the season. And it is because of Martin Luther, and the Reformation he launched 500 years ago, and his own talent and love for music, that Christians today of all denominations sing together in worship.

Pastor Kevin Vogts



Christmas Party & Talent Show December 3

Come enjoy our third annual Christmas Party & Talent Show, sponsored by the Fellowship Committee today at 3:00pm in our church basement. Everyone—individuals, groups, families—is invited to show off your talent! It's not too late to participate, just show up this afternoon and let Pastor Vogts know to add you to the program.

All types of performances are welcome and do not have to be Christmas related, and if Christmas related do not have to be strictly religious—"Jingle Bells" and Santa are welcome! The fun will also include a Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long.

Following the show, everyone is asked to bring your favorite Christmas treat to share on our "eat dessert first" bar—no meal, just dessert! Come enjoy the holiday fun and fellowship!



We will celebrate our Christmas Communion on Sunday, December 17 with a "Christmas Carol Communion Service" with favorite carols used in place of the various parts of the Liturgy.



Poinsettia Donations

Donating poinsettias to beautify our sanctuary is a great way to remember loved ones at Christmas!

Sign up on the counter in the Church Office to order plants from Price Chopper at a cost of \$7 each. Place your payment in the offering marked "Poinsettias." When signing up please indicate how many plants you wish to donate and for whom they are in memory or honor.

You are also welcome to bring your own poinsettias, which you purchase elsewhere or receive as gifts. Just drop them by the church sometime before Christmas Eve and leave them on the tables in the Overflow. Please still sign up on the sheet in the Church Office, indicating that you are providing your own plants, and for whom they are in memory or honor, so that this information may be included in the church newsletter.



Advent Devotions from Martin Luther

The new Church Year and season of Advent begins with the First Sunday in Advent on December 3. In honor of the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation being observed this year, Pastor Vogts compiled a booklet of daily devotions for Advent and Christmas excerpted from sermons and other writings of Martin Luther, available in the overflow in both regular and large print. Luther loved Christmastime, and wrote more sermons and hymns for Christmas than any other occasion.



Bring Your Family and Guests to Celebrate the Real "Reason for the Season"

Christmas Eve Service, Sunday, December 24, 7:00pm

Featuring the 2017 Children's Christmas Program

"From Heaven Above" with Your Favorite

Christmas Carols Including "Silent Night" by Candlelight

Christmas Day Service, Monday, December 25, 10:00am

"A Festival of Readings and Carols"

All Invited — Everyone Welcome!

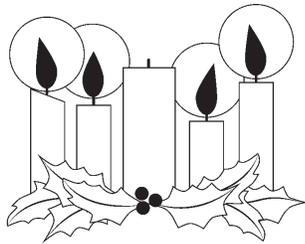
Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful!



Our records of birthdays and anniversaries may not complete. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the Church Office at 913-849-3344 or email Church Secretary Stacey Elkinton at trinitylutheranblock@gmail.com.

December 1 Kristie Gatlin
 December 1 Brianna Chapman
 December 5 Tyler Barnett
 December 6 Susan Schmitt
 December 6 Linda Oberheide
 December 8 Anita Koopman
 December 9 Marsha Windish
 December 10 Betty Crome
 December 10 Don Prothe

December 11 Pam Holtz
 December 11 Nancy Honn
 December 13 Justin Prothe
 December 13 Dillon Reyelts
 December 15 Chris Jones
 December 15 Linda Prothe
 December 16 Joyce Johns
 December 16 Jake Prothe
 December 19 Samantha Honn
 December 21 Carole Brandt
 December 21 Nancy Green
 December 22 Jack Smith
 December 25 Shawn Brandt
 December 25 April Bruce
 December 25 Darleen Medlin
 December 25 Harold Peckman
 December 26 Brandon Prothe
 December 28 Shemene Peckman
 December 28 Royal Prothe
 December 29 Dan Minden
 December 29 Brian Meyer
 Dec 2 Leland & Slina Prothe (62)
 Dec 3 Henry & JoAnn Vaughn (29)
 Dec 6 Darrell & Sandra Schultz (26)
 Dec 16 Mike & Trish Armstrong (22)
 Dec 17 .. Steve & Kristie McMullin (23)
 Dec 28 ... Richard & Mary Ann Green (42)
 Dec 29 ... Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts (27)



FOURTH SUNDAY
OF
Advent

**Two Services
December 24**

This year Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday evening, so we will have *two* services on December 24, our regular morning service at 10:00am, and the Christmas Eve Children's Program at 7:00pm.

At the 10:00am service we will observe the Fourth Sunday in Advent, and our order of worship will feature a series of Scripture readings followed by brief meditations on the names of Christ from Handel's *Messiah*: "Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

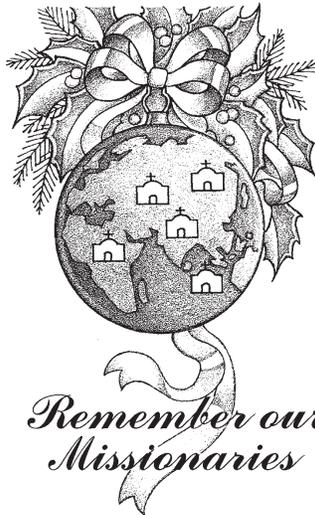
*Building
for the
Future*

At the Voters Assembly in October a revised plan was approved for our building project. A brochure explaining the changes in the revised plan, with new floor plans, is available in the overflow area.

The revised plan keeps the same features as the original proposal but moves the addition to the north of the existing building. Items added to the project since the original proposal

include new sheetrock ceiling, recessed lighting, and windows for the basement, and three new HVAC systems for all levels of the west part of the building.

Full architectural drawings and engineering plans are currently being prepared so that bids can be secured. Lord willing construction will begin this spring, with completion and dedication in the fall.



*Remember our
Missionaries*

Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services—and you are encouraged to remember in your personal prayers—specific missionaries around the world who are supported by our congregation through our mission offerings to our Synod.

December 3

Rev. Hans & Gretchen Trinklein
South Korea

December 10

Rev. Jeffrey & Michele Kuddes
Africa

December 17

Sean Harlow
Taiwan

December 24

*Rev. Cullen &
Deaconess Jacqueline Duke*
Peru

December 31

Molly Christensen
Togo



Christmas Eve
CANDLELIGHT
SERVICE

Bring your family and holiday guests to celebrate our Savior's birth with our Christmas Eve Children's Program and Candlelight Service on Sunday, December 24 at 7:00pm.

The theme of this year's service is "From Heaven Above," named after the Christmas hymn by Martin Luther and focusing on the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. Pastor Vogts' message will be "And His Name Shall Be Called: Savior, Christ, the Lord" based on Luke 2:11.

**O come let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!**

*Readings &
CAROLS*

**Festival Of Readings
& Carols December 25**

Our worship on Christmas Day, Monday, December 25 will be a "Festival of Readings and Carols." This special order of service includes a series of Scripture readings related to the Christmas story, each followed by a Christmas carol. Pastor Vogts' message will be "And His Name Shall Be Called: The Word Made Flesh" based on John 1:14.



DVD Study "A Man Named Martin"

During December we will conclude our current study in Adult Bible Class on "A Man Named Martin," using DVD presentations to look at the life, work, and teachings of Martin Luther, and the impact on the world of the Reformation he began when he posted his 95 Theses. Join in Sundays at 9:00am in the Overflow for "A Man Named Martin!"



GOD'S GRACE IN COLOSSIANS

New Colossians Bible Study Begins in January

On January 7 we will begin a new study for the New Year in Adult Bible Class, *God's Grace in Colossians*.

Though written nearly 2,000 years ago, this Biblical book still speaks to our lives today in a surprisingly fresh and relevant way. One of the Apostle Paul's shorter letters, Colossians is especially rich with descriptions of Christ, His work, and the blessings He bestows on us.

Join in Sundays at 9:00am in the Overflow beginning January 7 to learn more about *God's Grace in Colossians*.

New Funeral and Cemetery Guidelines

The Board of Elders approved guidelines for funerals and burials at Trinity that were presented to the Voters Assembly in October. This basically just puts in writing our existing customs and practices.



What is Christmas really all about? Why are we celebrating? What does Christmas mean for you? In Scripture hundreds of different names and titles are given to the Babe whose birth this holiday celebrates. Throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons this year we are exploring the "reason for the season" with a special sermon series on the meaning and significance for you of some of these names and titles of our Lord, under the theme, *And His Name Shall Be Called*. Come celebrate the real "reason for the season"!

December 3

"The Root and Branch of Jesse"
Isaiah 11:1-10

December 10

"The Lord Our Righteousness"
Jeremiah 33:14-16

December 17

"Immanuel"
Isaiah 7:10-14

December 24 (10:00am)

*"Wonderful, Counselor,
The Mighty God,
The Everlasting Father,
The Prince of Peace"*
Isaiah 9:6

December 24 (Christmas Eve)

"Savior, Christ, the Lord"
Luke 2:11

December 25 (Christmas Day)

"The Word Made Flesh"
John 1:1-14

December 31

"Jesus"
Matthew 1:21

January 1 (New Year's Day)

"The Alpha and Omega"
Revelation 1:8

January 7 (Epiphany Observed)

"King of Kings"
Matthew 2:1-12

Included is a Funeral Planning Worksheet to pre-plan certain aspects of your funeral service and burial with respect to Trinity. Pastor Vogts is happy to meet with you about this, or the worksheet can simply be submitted to him for placement in the church records.

The guidelines and worksheet are available in the large literature rack in the overflow, and on the worship page of our web site, www.trinitylcms.org/worship.

German Christmas Service

Everyone is invited to celebrate the season the *really* old-fashioned way at a *Weihnachtsgottesdienst in Deutscher Sprache* (Christmas Divine Service in the German Language), a German Christmas Service of Lessons & Carols, on Monday, December 11 at 7:00pm at Trinity Lutheran Church, 5601 West 62nd Street in Mission (Shawnee Mission Parkway at Nall Avenue).



Thank you to all those providing snacks for Coffee Hour after worship!

December 3
Sharon & Gladys Prothe

December 10
Janet & Ray England

December 17
Meyer Family

December 24
Need Volunteers

December 25
Ruth Gaffney



Rev. Sam Yeung of The Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod holds a copy of Volume IV of the Chinese Edition of Luther's Works.

Bringing Luther's Legacy to China

Around the world approximately 1.2 billion people speak Chinese, yet very few of Martin Luther's writings

have been translated for them. In the mid-1990s, a group of Chinese Lutherans undertook that monumental task.

The idea came from Dr. Won Yong Ji, a Lutheran missionary from South Korea who translated many works of Martin Luther into Korean. At his prompting a committee was formed to translate Luther's Works into Chinese as well, and distribute them within China—very difficult in such a restrictive country!

Another challenge was the need to translate each book into two different sets of Chinese characters, because in the 1950s and 60s the Chinese government created a simplified alphabet, used in mainland China but not other Chinese-speaking locales such as Hong Kong and Taiwan. Creating two separate volumes for each work requires enormous extra effort and resources.

Rev. Sam Yeung, Director of the Literature Department of the Lutheran Church—Hong Kong Synod and Pastor of Proclaiming Grace Lutheran Church in Hong Kong, recruits and manages the editors and translators. He explained the process of converting traditional to simplified characters requires much more than just pushing a button. Significant variations occur in the use of and number of characters for a given word, and even the forms of speech.

The complexity of the process caused setbacks and delays, but the committee persevered and completed Volumes I and II in both traditional and simplified characters. So far, more than 1,000 copies have been sold of each volume in each language, and the simplified versions are already being reprinted in mainland China.

Volumes III and IV in traditional characters also have been published, and some 300 copies of each have been sold. The simplified versions are currently being reviewed and should be published in 2018. In addition, they expect to publish Volume V in both traditional and simplified characters at the same time.

But this does not complete the work. The committee's ambitious plan includes publishing a total of 15 volumes, which will encompass almost 25 volumes of the American Edition of Luther's Works.

Arranged by subject, Volumes 1-2 cover Luther's career as a reformer and include texts such as the 95 Theses. Volumes 3-5 contain works related to the church and society, while the remaining volumes (6-15) will feature Bible commentaries, sermons, and writings on liturgy, worship, and the Sacraments.

Yeung said the texts are being used mostly by church leaders, pastors, seminaries, university professors and students, and both Christian and non-Christian historians and other scholars.

However, Rev. Carl Hanson, LCMS missionary and Director of Mission Operations for Asia, noted they heard the texts are being used a bit farther afield: "We did hear interestingly that when Volumes III and IV came out, there were Chinese-speaking communities in Malaysia using the books as part of their theological studies."

Though the effort is monumental, the value is incalculable. Because, Chinese law restricts access to Bibles only to churches. However, as academic and historical works, the writings of Martin Luther are widely and freely available in bookstores and libraries.

Students, professors, and other scholars in China's atheistic state schools can now read and hear Luther's teaching on the Word of God, the justification of the sinner, the role of the Christian in society, and much more. Since Luther had a huge impact on world history in so many ways, Chinese students are eager to learn about him and read his writings.

Luther's adamant insistence on placing Christ at the center of all his writings ensures that anyone who reads him will undoubtedly encounter the Good News of God's work for humanity in Jesus Christ. So, this ambitious project is not only serving Chinese Lutherans and Luther scholars, but also providing a "back door" for Chinese, both Christians and non-Christians, to hear the Gospel through Luther.

Yeung sees this as a central piece of this project. "Luther's legacy belongs not only to the Western world, to Germans or to Americans, but it also belongs to the Chinese," he said.