



1974^{AD}

KEY DATES IN THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 Matthew 28:16-20 Luke 24:44-48 John 15:15-8

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For the past several weeks we have been studying **Historical theology**, the branch of Theology that sees how the Church has grown and the doctrines of the Church have been taught over the centuries.

- ✦ **Historical theology** teaches us -- and it shows us -- how **God the Father** has worked to all draw men to His Son, so that they will be raised to life on the Last Day.
- ✦ **Historical theology** teaches and shows us how **Jesus, the Lord of the Church**, is at work to expand His Kingdom by saving people from their sins.
- ✦ And, **Historical theology** teaches and shows us how **God the Holy Spirit** has worked through the Word and the Sacraments to make disciples of all nations.

Historical theology is looking back through history to see the **Holy Trinity** weaving all things together in preparation for the return of Christ on the Last Day.

Over the last several weeks, we have been looking at key dates of the **Lutheran Reformation**, events in the lives of our spiritual ancestors in the faith that affect us.

Today were going to look at one more date, a date that also affects all of us, **1974**. **What were you doing in 1974?** I was in fifth grade in Cedar Falls, Iowa! But out here in Litchfield Park Arizona, a group of 7 people were meeting to form **TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**¹.

KEY DATES IN THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION
1517^{AD} 95 Theses: the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation
1521^{AD} The Diet of Worms
1530^{AD} The Augsburg Confession
1546^{AD} † Martin Luther
1580^{AD} The Book of Concord
1847^{AD} The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
1974^{AD} Trinity Lutheran Church Litchfield Park, Arizona

¹ In 1974, seven families gathered together to establish a mission church in Litchfield Park, Arizona. Those seven families were Alex and Ada Bundschuh, Ernie and Ruth Mueller, Ted and Lucille Roschke, John and Ruth Huber, Lou Bauer, Lorenz (Mac) Nancy Mackunthen, and Ray Martens. It was first decided to name the new mission "Village Lutheran Church". The first service was held on May 19, 1974 at the Church of Litchfield Park. Rev. Myron Ista, of St. Paul Lutheran Church, officiated. In 1978, the name Trinity Lutheran Church was chosen. In June 1981, Trinity became part of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Our congregation, **TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH**, is a church plant from St. Paul's Lutheran Church on Indian School and 63rd. They began by organizing in people's homes, and then they rented space in area churches for worship. Finally, they were able to buy a 5 acre piece of land (1984) here on the corner of Indian School and Dysart in order to build a Church in 1985².

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH is part of the *One, Holy, Christian, and Apostolic Church* --> *all believers of all times and all places*. The Holy Spirit works here through His Word and Sacraments to create and nurture faith in Christ as Lord and Savior. We are also a *Visible Church*, a *local congregation* of believers gathered together around a common confession of faith. We are distinctively conservative Lutheran Christians gathered around the **Book of Concord of 1580**, the official confessions and teachings of the Lutheran Church³.

Jesus teaches us that *the reason we exist* as a congregation is to **make disciples**.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and **make disciples** of all nations, **baptizing** them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and **teaching** them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:18-20a

If you **abide in Me** and **My words abide in you**, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to My Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be **My disciples**. John 15:7-8

The Lutheran Church proclaims the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in order to **make disciples!** The most important thing that we do here at Trinity is to preach and teach that eternal salvation is found only in God's Son, Jesus, whose death and resurrection leads us to repentance and the forgiveness of sins. *Somehow, some way, everything we do here supports this mission of Gospel proclamation.* That's

² In 1984-1985, land was purchased and the Sanctuary was built. Five acres of land was purchased from Goodyear Farms for \$170,000 (1/2 market price.) Trinity had 113 members at the time.

³ The **Book of Concord** contains documents in which Christians from the 4th to the 16th century A.D. confessed as the truth of God's Holy Word. It contains: (1) a preface signed by 51 electors, bishops, princes, and nobles of the Holy Roman Empire and representatives of 35 free imperial cities; (2) the three ecumenical creeds (Apostolic, Nicene, and Athanasian); (3) the Unaltered Augsburg Confession (1530) and (4) its Apology (1531); (5) the Smalcald Articles (1536-37); (6) Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope (1537); (7) Martin Luther's Small and Large Catechisms (1529); (8) the Formula of Concord (1577); and (9) the Catalogue of Testimonies (1580), which is supporting citations from the writings of early Church Fathers.

what conservative and confessional Lutherans are all about: **it's all about Jesus!** *That's who we are and what we do here at Trinity Lutheran church.*

As you gather here in worship, make sure that you are hearing and believing the Gospel! Don't squander this opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus and believe in His work of salvation for you. You are so close; make sure that your heart and mind are not far away. Whenever the Gospel of the Lord Jesus is proclaimed be sure not to close your ears nor your heart to it! Don't get distracted! Hear and believe the Gospel!

God sent Jesus to do the work of salvation for you! Because of His death and resurrection, your sins are forgiven, you have peace with God, you are reconciled with God the Father, you are given eternal life, you have the hope of resurrection of the body on the Last Day, and the Holy Spirit leads you to live a holy and godly life. *Today hear and believe the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ!* This is why we are gathered here; this is the message of the Holy Christian Church!

The Gospel of the Lord Jesus goes out and creates and nurtures faith and disciples are made. The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God and the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion to create and strengthen your faith; to make disciples. *A disciple is someone who is baptized, believes in Jesus, and is learning His word.* A disciple is a follower of Jesus and His teachings; a disciple is someone who abides in Christ and His word.

The way that we talk about *discipleship* here at Trinity is that we want to come alongside of you and help you to be ever more *biblically literate, doctrinally sound, mission minded, and passionately engaged* in the Kingdom of God. All four of these things are created and motivated by the Gospel.

The good news about Jesus creates a *hunger and thirst* within you to be **biblically literate**. The Holy Spirit creates a *desire* within you to learn more about the stories of Holy Scripture, the people of the Bible, and the truths of Jesus. When you are biblically literate, you understand more about Holy Scripture, you are comfortable with it, you know your way around your Bible.

The gospel also creates *conviction* in the teachings and doctrines of the Kingdom of God. Being **doctrinally sound** is how you protect yourself from false teachers - who are everywhere. When you learn the doctrines of Holy Scripture, you are *deepening your understanding* in things like the Law of God, the Person and Work of

Christ, Justification by Faith, the Holy Trinity, Holy Baptism, and the Lord Supper. These truths of God's Word are the things that Christ has commanded you to learn. The Holy Spirit works through the Word of God to deepen your conviction and to widen your understanding of Christ, His Word, and His Kingdom⁴.

The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ also gives you a deep concern for the lost. You care that people right now are living without Christ; and that if they die in their sins there will be no hope for them. And so we support the Church with our tithes and offerings --> so that the gospel can be proclaimed in our midst. We support and encourage missionaries in their worldwide efforts to bring Christ to the nations. Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ are **mission minded** because Jesus, the Savior of the world, is mission minded.

The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ also creates a **zeal** within you to be engaged in loving, serving, and helping your neighbor. The Holy Spirit works within you so that you have a **passion** for the things of God. And so you volunteer here at church; you come alongside hurting people; you help others as you can; you pray for others; you are faithful in your vocations; you are patient, kind, and compassionate to your neighbor. The gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ creates a passion within you; a zeal to be involved in the work of God.

The timeline of the Lutheran Reformation is still being written; **1974** is a part of that timeline! Our own congregation came into existence in order to continue proclaiming the message of the Lutheran Reformation: *that salvation is by Christ alone, through faith alone, by God's grace alone!*

Now it is our turn to **remain faithful** to the Lord and His Word, like the Apostles and Reformers before us. It's our turn to study the Word, to support the mission of the Church, to reach out to the lost, and to get involved in the work God has given us to do! **1974** very quickly leads to **TODAY, 2022**, and your part in Trinity Lutheran Church in Litchfield Park, Arizona!

Amen!

⁴ We put a heavy emphasis on Biblical literacy and Doctrinal soundness here at Trinity. This comes by abiding in the Word of Christ as you hear, learn, understand, and meditate on it. We have many Bible study opportunities for you in our congregation, and you are invited to any and all of them! If you need a Bible, I will give you one for free. There are many Bible studies and sermons under the "info center" tab on our website www.trinitylcs.org. If this is new to you, a good place to start is Martin Luther's Small Catechism, which if you need one, I can get you one today for \$15. *Why not make Biblical literacy and Doctrinal soundness lifelong goals?*

Lord Jesus Christ, we know and believe that you are the Lord of the church. As we thank you for the Lutheran Reformers in the 1500s, we also thank you for those who formed our local congregation so that we and our families now have a place to hear the Gospel and learn your Word. Send your Holy Spirit, so that we now may be faithful in our support and work here at Trinity, so that this congregation may continue in the true teachings of your Holy Word. Today, and for decades to come, we pray that you make disciples through this congregation. Amen!

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." 20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. 22 Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. 26 Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. 28 He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things--and the things that are not--to nullify the things that are, 29 so that no one may boast before him. 30 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God--that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. 31 Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Luke 24:44-48

Jesus said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” 45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 46 He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things.

John 15:15-8

Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.