

NEWS FROM ABIDING SAVIOR

October 2026



SERMON - September 20th

SERMON - September 27th

BIBLE STUDY

is held on Wednesdays:

At noon (in-person & on-line) and
at 7:00 pm (on - line only).

We are looking at the major
themes in the Gospel of St. Luke

<https://abiding-savior-lutheran.org/>

CLICK HERE TO GIVE YOUR OFFERING



PRAYER ROCKS-

PLEASE PRAY WITH US AND FOR US

If you didn't already get one, take a rock from the Narthex. Let it serve as a gentle reminder to lift this congregation in prayer—for vibrant ministry, its members, its leaders and its path forward in Christ. May the prayers be a blessing and bring strength, guidance, hope, and grace to all who are part of this faith community.

"The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective."

—James 5:16

31 THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE KNOWN ABOUT MARTIN LUTHER

Members and Friends,

You are invited to read about Luther a day at a time for the month of October.

WORD ALONE -- FAITH ALONE - GRACE ALONE: *The Foundation of Being a Lutheran*

Pastor Carroll

1. Martin Luther did not think of himself as a reformer of the church. He felt that that job belonged only to Jesus Christ; Luther was merely a John the Baptist, pointing to the Lamb of God.
2. Luther was not exactly from peasant stock. His father—whose father was a farmer—ended up a well-to-do mine owner, and his mother's family, the Lindemanns, included a mayor of Eisenach, Thuringia, in Germany.
3. The 95 Theses may or may not have been posted on the University of Wittenberg's "bulletin board" (the Castle Church door) on October 31, 1517—but they were posted in the mail to the Archbishop of Mainz, Albrecht von Brandenburg.
4. Luther's chief complaint in the 95 Theses was bad preaching and how it undermined the listeners' faith in God.
5. In the 16th century, Luther would've posted a university notice like the 95 Theses with wax or paste, not hammer and nails. The depiction of Luther hammering the Theses first appeared in 1717.
6. During Luther's lifetime, the 95 Theses were only available in three Latin printings. Only with the publication of the German Sermon on Indulgences and Grace did Luther become the world's first living best-selling author.
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12. With the phrase "faith alone," Luther excluded all human preconditions for receiving God's mercy, so that faith itself can never be a "work" we do for God but a relationship God establishes with us through word and sacrament. That is why his explanation of the third article of the Creed in the Small Catechism begins, "I believe that ... I cannot believe."
13. In 1520, Luther became convinced that the word in the Greek New Testament translated as "grace" (charis) did not designate a power dwelling in us but God's undeserved mercy.
14. Despite some movie depictions to the contrary, Luther never met privately with his prince and protector, Elector Frederick the Wise.
15. Luther was not a monk but a friar. Friars (Dominicans, Franciscans and Augustinians) lived in community in cities and often had responsibilities as university professors of theology or preachers. Monks often lived in isolated areas and focused their lives on work and prayer.

31 THINGS YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE KNOWN ABOUT MARTIN LUTHER - CONTINUED

16. Luther's "theology of the cross" was not a theory about only the cross but the belief that God always reveals himself in the last place human beings would reasonably look: with the Israelites not the Egyptians; in a manger; on the cross; among mortal sinners in the church.
17. When Luther and other reformers distinguished between "law" and "gospel," they were not differentiating between the Old and New Testaments but between two ways that God's word works: to reveal sin and mortify the "old creature" (law), and to reveal God's mercy and make the new creature of faith alive.
18. Although John Eck numbered among Luther's most formidable opponents, prior to the Reformation, Luther had hoped to become friends with him.
19. Philip Melanchthon, Luther's associate at the University of Wittenberg and one of Europe's foremost Greek scholars, was less than five feet tall, prompting Luther to nickname him "our little Greek."
20. Although he began preaching at Wittenberg's city church in 1514, Luther was never its head pastor, but always an assistant. From the early 1520s Wittenberg's chief pastor and preacher was Johannes Bugenhagen.
21. Luther understood the common priesthood believers share with Christ through baptism not as a way to divide the clergy and laity but as a way to unite them in the single body of Christ. He felt that within that body, or common priesthood, different members have different "offices," but all are spiritually equal in God's grace.
22. Luther probably never said "Here I stand" when appearing at his trial before Emperor Charles V in the city of Worms. Instead he or a compatriot wrote it (in German) in a Latin description of the events of 1521 to emphasize his refusal to recant what he had written.
23. However, Luther did say this at the Diet (parliament) held in the imperial city of Worms: "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason ... I am bound by the Scriptures that I have quoted, and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience."
24. Luther's translation of the New Testament (which he completed in just a few weeks while in hiding at Wartburg Castle) was not the first printed German translation. All previous translations were based upon the Latin "Vulgate"; Luther was the first to use the original Greek text.
25. Although his superior had released him from his vows as an Augustinian friar, Luther maintained a monastic lifestyle until shortly before his marriage in 1525, thinking of himself as "a Daniel in the lion's den" of monastic practices. Although Luther did not always mind that people called his followers "Lutherans," he preferred to think of all believers as "Christians." In German-speaking areas, the usual designation is "evangelisch"—that is, people oriented toward the gospel.
26. Although Luther had deep respect for the role of government in keeping good order and just laws in a society, he also thought that a Christian prince "would be a rare bird in heaven."
27. Luther's chief concern for the church was how bad the preaching was. Not only did he publish "sermon helps" (postil in German) for the epistle and gospel readings appointed for the church year, but his 1520 tract, Freedom of a Christian, outlined the content of true evangelical preaching.
28. By defining "church" as the assembly of believers where the gospel is proclaimed and the sacraments rightly administered, Luther (sometimes) included Anabaptist preachers among those sharing the gospel, and Roman Catholics as also having the markings of the true church.
29. The Peasants' War (1524-1525) ravaged central Europe. Luther and several other important leaders of the Reformation wrote against the uprising—not only as a breach of fealty by those in revolt but also as a misuse of God's word for selfish ends. Luther was one of the few who, at least initially, also blamed the rulers for exploiting their subjects.
30. Katharina von Bora, Luther's wife, was 16 years younger than Luther. She bore six children (and suffered at least one miscarriage), ran the household—which included not only immediate family members and servants but also students, refugees and other relatives—purchased land for growing crops to provide for them and brewed her own beer.
31. Luther often showed his emotions. He wept when his infant daughter, Elizabeth, died in 1528 and when his 13-year-old daughter, Magdalena, died in his arms.

WEAR RED ON 10/25!

ABOUT REFORMATION

On this day we celebrate the heart of our faith: the Gospel of Christ, the Good News, that makes us free! We have the assurance that humans may reach salvation by their faith and not by their deeds. Martin Luther posted his “Ninety-Five Theses” in Wittenberg on Oct. 31, 1517, and the resulting debate about Christian teaching and practice led to changes that have shaped the course of Western Christianity. At the heart of these wide-reaching changes was a deep conviction that God’s mercy or grace in Jesus is given freely to all. When Luther and others learned to trust God’s mercy with “a living, daring confidence,” they discovered in that faith, the freedom to give themselves generously and lovingly in all of life’s undertakings with everyone they met. The changes began with a critical look at confession and forgiveness, preaching and the sacraments — what Luther called the “means of grace.” The sale of indulgences, the practice of penance, the content of preaching, the administration of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper — all the restrictions that impeded the message of God’s mercy from being heard and received fully for all.

WHY WEAR RED ON REFORMATION

Many ELCA congregations invite members to wear **red** clothing to worship on Reformation Sunday. **RED** serves as a visual expression of unity, a celebration of the Gospel's freedom, and a reminder that the Holy Spirit continues to renew and reform the Church today. It symbolizes the fire of the Holy Spirit, the courage of the reformers, and the ongoing renewal of the Church:

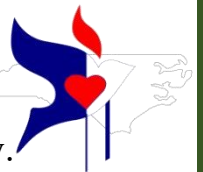
- Just as **red** represents the "tongues of fire" at Pentecost, it is used on Reformation Sunday to signify that the 16th-century Reformation was driven by the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit rather than just human effort.
- **Red** reflects the zeal, passion, and bold witness of Martin Luther and other reformers who stood firm under pressure to proclaim justification by grace through faith
- **Red** also historically honors the blood of Christian martyrs and those who suffered or died for the sake of the Gospel throughout church history

WELCA and MEN'S GROUP NOVEMBER MEETING



Abiding Savior's Women of the ELCA (WELCA) and Men's Group will both gather for their November bi-monthly meetings on Saturday, November 14th. Meetings begin with breakfast and provide an opportunity for fellowship, sharing ideas and planning ministry projects. All are encouraged to attend and help shape an exciting and meaningful year of ministry.

**NORTH CAROLINA
LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION**



AFRICAN DESCENT LUTHERAN ASSOCIATION

Please consider joining the North Carolina chapter of the African Descent Lutheran Association (NC-ADLA) [Link to join.](#)

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

The fall, 2026 semi-annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, November 22, 2026, following the worship service. At that time, the 2027 spending plan will be presented. The finance committee will work with the congregation council to prepare the spending plan which will be shared prior to the meeting. Please add the date to your calendar.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETINGS

The monthly meeting of the congregation council is normally held on the third Sunday of each month. After approval, the minutes of monthly meetings are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway of narthex.

THRIVENT OPPORTUNITIES - GRANTS AND CHOICE DOLLARS!

Members with Thrivent Financial products can recommend where some of Thrivent Financial's charitable outreach funds go by directing Choice Dollars. If you are a member, please consider directing your Choice Dollars to Abiding Savior. These Dollars accumulate in your account and are not automatically allocated. Your Choice Dollars can be designated online. Members may also apply for community Action Grants to address needs in the community. These grants can help to fund congregational projects (examples: school supplies and 5th Sunday Meals at the Shelter). Each Thrivent member is eligible to receive up to two \$250 Thrivent Action Team Grants per year.

NOVEMBER DINNER AT THE SHELTER



Many thanks to all who regularly volunteer for our ministry at the shelter. Many hands were needed to provide the meal including planning, purchasing ingredients, cooking and serving. November has 5 Sundays, so again Abiding Savior will provide dinner for our brothers and sisters at Urban Ministries. more shelter. Please mark your calendar for November 29th , the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Again this year, we are making plans to join several other congregations in a Durham Community Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service. Look forward to receiving more information with details.



Dear friends,

Your voice matters in the North Carolina Synod!

Since I assumed the role of bishop a year ago, I have frequently been asked, "What's your vision for the synod?" It's a great question, and I do have a broad vision: "Let's collaborate more so that the message of the gospel can be amplified through our shared gifts and joint work!" In the spirit of collaboration, however, I'm not forming this vision on my own. For this reason, the NC Synod has contracted with an ELCA-adjacent organization, LEAD, and gathered a Strategic Planning Team to create a new strategic plan.

We're in the midst of a 10-12 month process of careful listening across the synod to align our work with our mission, vision, and core values.

After listening to 37 focus groups across the synod, the planning team continues the LEAD listening process with a synod-wide survey. With your help, we are discerning how the Holy Spirit is calling us into the future and what it will take to follow that call.

Please share your thoughts with the NC Synod Strategic Planning Team by taking 5-10 minutes to complete this survey. The survey will close at end-of-day on Sunday, September 27.

I am so grateful for the passion that you have for our ministry together. Thank you for being a part of this holy work!

Together in Christ

Emily K. Hartner

NC Synod Bishop

Presiding Bishop Curry issues his fifth in a series of monthly messages that continue through the end of this year, titled "All Together in One Place." Each message will share a pastoral word, rooted in Scripture, that witnesses to God's presence today, our rich theological tradition and the social teaching that connects us.

ALL TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE

Celebrating Our Diversity

September 28, 2026

Celebrating Our Diversity

Dear beloved children of God,

As a church, we collectively continue to celebrate the diversity with which God has created the world. Scripture tells us that, from the very beginning, we were made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). In the book of Acts, many were gathered in one place when the Holy Spirit came upon them. Each was given the power to witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:32-33). In 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, the human body serves as a metaphor, demonstrating that a healthy Christian community relies on the many distinct gifts and qualities of each unique member — emphasizing unity through continuing to be a connected church.

I am thankful to serve this church in the office of presiding bishop. I am also grateful for my experience as an activist and leader in communities and congregations that are at the margins. Whatever our role and wherever our place in the church, God calls us to develop trusting relationships with our neighbors. In the service of Affirmation of Baptism, the presiding minister asks, “Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism ... to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 236). Striving for justice involves learning about underlying causes of division and inequity. It is a commitment our church makes because of baptism.

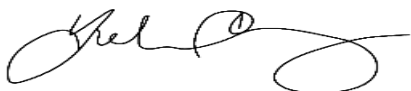
Celebrating diversity and striving for equity, inclusion and accessibility for all reflect this baptismal call. The words “diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility” and the initialism “DEIA” mean different things to different people. For the ELCA, as church together, these terms reflect our “delight in the fact that the people called, gathered, and enlightened” by God represent such a wide array of identities, backgrounds and life stories (ELCA social statement Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture, 1993, p. 3). The terms remind us of the gospel vision of community, in which all are truly welcome. They are terms this church has chosen to include in its teachings and constitutions as reflections of our faith in God, who creates, redeems and sustains all people.

ALL TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE-cont.

Everyone matters in this church. I have celebrated with synods and congregations as they build communities that reflect the people and neighborhoods around them. I have worshiped in places where many languages are spoken and people from different backgrounds feel welcome. Together we have expanded our understanding of what it means to be church through relationships with companion churches around the world and through relationships between congregations in rural, urban and suburban settings here in the United States. We are joined together through holy baptism, through which God calls us to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. “Diversity,” “equity,” “inclusion” and “accessibility” are reflections of justice when it is fulfilled. Like many saints before us have said, justice is the form love takes in society.

The road is long, but we go forth in faith, trusting in the risen Christ and inspired by one another for the work ahead. Let us continue in the covenant God has made with us, to serve all people in love.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yehiel Curry', with a stylized flourish at the end.

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America