

# OCTOBER 2025

## ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN CHURCH – Calgary AB

*112 years proclaiming Christ in Bridgeland!*

By Rev. Markus Zeuch

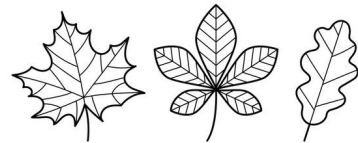


Dear friends of St. Matthew

October reminds us of various different things: cooler weather, maybe some kind of white precipitation, pumpkins and all things possible made of pumpkin flavour, Thanksgiving, turkey, family getting together, coziness, home decorations and flower arrangements mainly in orange, red, and yellow colours, the fields are harvested....the birds start flying south...it is time to shut down the garden hose, to store bicycles and motorcycles in the garage (bummer). October also invites for a hot soup, a good cup of tea or hot chocolate, for some a glass of wine, reading a book by the fireplace etc. The Danish would call it "Hygge".

"Hygge" (pronounced HUE-guh) is a Danish and Norwegian word that describes a mood of coziness, contentedness, and conviviality, often achieved through practices like sharing a meal or spending quality time with friends and family in a warm, comfortable atmosphere. While it embodies a feeling of well-being and positivity, it's a concept that is difficult to translate directly into other languages and is most commonly associated with Danish culture. The Germans call it "Gemuetlichkeit" which is basically a very similar concept.

Ah yes, and October also reminds us of Halloween and trick-or-treating! To wrap it up, yes, we also remember the Protestant Reformation! You thought I would leave that one out, eh? Reformation is an event in human history that didn't only cause a huge impact in the Church, but it influenced highly other fields in the Middle Ages such as the culture, the language, the education, the arts and especially music among others. We don't commemorate Martin Luther but we thank God for him as an instrument to bring Christians back to the roots of biblical faith that we are saved by grace alone (sola gratia) through faith alone (sola fide) in Christ alone (solus Christus) found in Scripture alone (sola scriptura). He pointed to Christ always and Reformation, ultimately is - you guessed it - all about our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This year we will observe Reformation Sunday on October 26 - always the last Sunday of the month.



But, before that, let's first concentrate on Thanksgiving and thank God for the innumerable blessings He has so graciously showered on us. October also reminds us of our anniversary: we thank God for the 112 years of our existence. I hope you will enjoy reading this new edition of our Agape I'm putting together. May God bless our life together in fellowship at St. Matthew Lutheran Church.

In His service, Pastor Z.



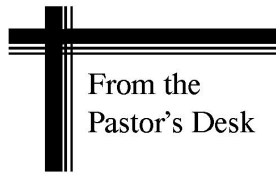
## LCC – CALGARY CIRCUIT NEWS

- **CONFERENCE:** Our Calgary Circuit hosted the Regional Church Workers Conference from September 29 to October 2 at Foothills Lutheran. Here's a photo of the pastors and church workers that attended:

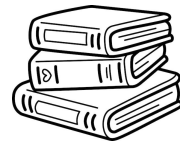


- **NEW PRESIDENT FOR CONCORDIA LUTHERAN SEMINARY:** Rev. Jonathan Kraemer to be installed as President of Concordia Lutheran Seminary at All Saints (Edmonton, AB) at 4 p.m. All are welcome to attend. Light meal to follow. Livestream on the [CLS YouTube Channel](#).
- **LCC 13<sup>th</sup> SYNODICAL CONVENTION:** Will take place on June 12 to 15, 2026 in Winnipeg, MB. Every single congregation of LCC should be present with a pastor and

a lay delegate. At our next voters meeting, on November 9<sup>th</sup> we will appoint a lay delegate to represent our congregation at the convention. At our congregational meeting we will also vote for the different positions available in the synod. Here are a few important deadlines: **Feb 12, 2026:** Deadline for congregations to return to the synod office the nomination forms for President, Vice-President, Regional Pastor, and Circuit Counsellor. **March 14, 2026:** Deadline for congregations to return to the synod office the appointment form for Pastor and Lay Delegate from the congregation.



**LIBRARY:** The PPC has decided to reorganize our parish library in preparation for adding new books. If you would like to assist in this project, please speak to Thomas Weitz.



**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** We offer Sunday school for children every Sunday at 11 a.m. ages 5 to 10. Bring your kids or grandchildren, so they can learn more about Jesus.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OCTOBER?

**Oct 1 (Wed):** Pastor attending the West Region Church Workers' Conference

**Oct 2 (Thurs):** Last day of Conference

**Oct 5 (Sun):** Reading services – German @ 9:30 English @ 11 a.m. Sunday school at 11 a.m. Confirmation class at 11 a.m.

**Oct 7 (Tues):** Bible Study cancelled!

**Oct 9 (Thurs):** Board of Elders' online Meeting @ 7 p.m.

**Oct 11 (Sat):** Men's Breakfast cancelled!

**Oct 12 (Sun):** Worship services – German @ 9:30 English @ 11 a.m. Sunday school at 11 a.m. Confirmation class at 11 a.m. No communion.

**Oct 13 (Mon):** Thanksgiving Day. "Give thanks in all circumstances." 1 Thess. 5:18

**Oct 14 (Tues):** Online Bible Study @ 7 p.m.

**Oct 16 (Thurs):** Funeral Service for Helen Pilz @ Fosters Garden Chapel 2 p.m.

**Oct 16 (Thurs):** Tannenbaum Lighting Festival meeting @ 7 p.m.

**Oct 18 (Sat):** Celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Lutheran Hospital Ministries South Alberta. Worship service at 10 a.m. followed by a festive lunch.

**Oct 19 (Sun):** Worship services – German @ 9:30 English @ 11 a.m. Sunday school at 11 a.m. Confirmation class at 11 a.m.

**Oct 21 (Tues):** Online Bible Study @ 7 p.m.

**Oct 23 (Thurs):** Online PPC meeting 7 p.m.

**Oct 26 (Sun): Reformation Sunday** Worship services – German @ 9:30 English @ 11 a.m. Sunday school at 11 a.m. Confirmation class at 11 a.m.

**Oct 26 (Sun):** Online Bible study in Portuguese 5 p.m.

**Oct 28 (Tues):** Online Bible Study @ 7 p.m.

**Oct 31 (Fri):** Reformation Day (Halloween)



### QUIPS & QUOTES:

#### Exercise daily – WALK with God.

From "Quips & Quotes for Church Bulletins" by E.C. McKenzie (Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1993 p. 45



### A LITTLE HUMOUR:

A Sunday school teacher was discussing the Ten Commandments with her five and six-year-olds. After explaining the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment to 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' she asked, "Is there a commandment that teaches us how to treat our brothers and sisters?"

Without missing a beat, one little boy answered, "Thou shall not kill."



## Blest Halloween!

*It was no coincidence that Martin Luther chose Oct. 31 as the day to nail his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg.*

*by Rev. Mark Loest*

For most people, October means cooler weather, raking leaves, and, at the end of the month, celebrating Halloween. For Lutherans, October includes the commemoration of Reformation Day—the day Martin Luther is said to have nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany.

It may seem strange that a day so preoccupied with the devil and death is also Reformation Day. But Luther chose this date with a purpose. His theses (academic statements for discussion and debate) were on the topic of indulgences, and Luther chose the eve of All Saints Day—when the church commemorates the faithful departed—as the date to make them public.

## Penance and Indulgences



By the time they are confirmed, Lutherans know that the public outcry that fueled the Reformation of the church started with Luther's posting of the 95 Theses. They also know that Luther's theses had to do with the selling of indulgences. However, today's Lutherans do not always understand exactly what indulgences are and why Luther protested their sale.

Indulgences have to do with the Roman Catholic Church's practice surrounding the Sacrament of Penance that developed during the Middle Ages. Penance is the fourth of the seven Roman Catholic sacraments.

Basically, sinners, fallen from the grace they originally received in Baptism, may, by God's moving and by certain acts (contrition, confession, and satisfaction), recover the lost grace. Sinners are absolved only after displaying sorrow through prescribed acts of penance, such as praying, taking a pilgrimage, or giving alms. In other words, doing works, as well as having faith in the mercy of God, are necessary for full forgiveness.

But what especially alarmed Luther were the outright payments in connection with indulgences.

For money (and sometimes even goods like fowl and dairy products), a person could buy an indulgence that claimed to offer the merits of the saints—and even of Christ—on behalf of the owner, and, in that way, sins were forgiven and a place was secured in heaven.

Defined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, an indulgence is "the remissions before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven."

According to the Catholic teaching, indulgences offer forgiveness for the penalties that come with sin, even though Christ paid for those sins. A Christian can acquire an indulgence in a number of ways through the Church, which has authority over the "treasury" of Christ and the saints. In other words, indulgences either transfer or reduce penitential acts and punishment for sin. An indulgence is considered partial if it removes part of the temporal punishment due to sin and plenary if it removes all punishment.

Indulgences have been around for about one thousand years. In 1096, Pope Urban II offered plenary (meaning complete) indulgences in connection with the first crusade.

The great medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas (c. 1224-74) fully developed indulgence theory, allowing for the possibility of indulgences to be applied to souls in purgatory. For the sinner who does not make complete satisfaction in this life, there is purgatory—an intermediate state between heaven and hell. The soul that departs this life and is not immediately judged to heaven or hell is purified for a time in purgatory until released to heaven.

The result was that by the time of Luther, Christians cared more about avoiding purgatory than living and dying a Christian life and death. And indulgence claims were inflated beyond the original idea of release simply from temporal punishment imposed by a priest.

In 1530, the Augsburg Confession rejected the medieval errors concerning penance by declaring: "Rejected ... are those who teach that forgiveness of sin is not obtained through faith but through the satisfaction made by man" (Augsburg Confession, Article XII).

## 95 Theses

Martin Luther (born Nov. 10, 1483), was the son of Hans Luder a mine and foundry owner in Mansfeld, Germany. He originally began his studies to become a lawyer, but in July 1505, everything changed when during a terrible thunderstorm—and fearing for his life—he promised St. Anna that if she would spare his life he would become a monk.



Luther survived the storm and kept his promise, promptly quitting his university studies and joining the Augustinians in Erfurt. Taking his vows seriously, he soon experienced great spiritual conflicts over the forgiveness-of-sins-through-good-works system of monastery, which he came to realize was a completely inadequate way to be forgiven. In order to save the young monk from spiritual ruin, his superior, Johann Staupitz, directed Brother Martin to Scripture.

Luther began his studies again—only this time in biblical theology. By 1508, he was lecturing. In 1512, he earned his doctorate. Upon completing a trip to Rome (from the fall of 1510 until the spring of 1511), Luther may well have begun to question the medieval penitential system, especially in light of what he saw in the "holy" city, but he said nothing publicly at the moment. More would happen to shape his insights.

At the same time, Luther was transferred permanently to Wittenberg, to eventually take the place of Father Staupitz as professor of biblical theology. It was in Scripture that he was to find the answers that troubled his soul.

Luther describes what happened at Wittenberg: "At last, by the mercy of God, meditating day and night, I gave heed to the context of the words, namely, 'In it the righteousness of God is revealed, as it is written, "He who through faith is righteous shall live."'"

"There I began to understand that the righteousness of God is revealed by the Gospel, namely, the passive righteousness with which merciful God justifies us by faith, as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live.' Here I felt that I was altogether born again and had entered paradise itself through open gates" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 34, page 337—Concordia Publishing House).

It was as a preacher, rather than professor, that Luther encountered the abuses of indulgences. Against the wishes of Luther's prince, Frederick the Wise of electoral Saxony, indulgences were hawked to the people of his land, albeit in neighboring ducal Saxony. They needed only to cross the border to purchase them. To make matters worse, the indulgence-salesman and friar John Tetzel told Luther's parishioners they could even purchase indulgences from him for sins they had not yet committed.

**It was no coincidence that Martin Luther chose what we know as Halloween** as the day to put forth is 95 Theses, mailing them to the archbishop in charge so something might be done, and, as the story goes, nailing them to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. In Wittenberg, Luther's own prince offered the pious the opportunity of indulgence through his enormous collection of relics in the Castle Church on the Day of All Saints, Nov. 1.

Luther took advantage of the occasion. Luther himself never told the story, but after his death, co-worker Philipp Melancthon described the scene.

On the Eve of All Saints, Oct. 31, 1517, Luther posted on the door of the Castle Church (in a manner customary at the university) the 95 Theses, which called into question and for discussion the abuses associated with indulgences.

The posting of the theses became the spark that ignited the Reformation.

A poem written long ago to commemorate the Reformation praises Halloween with the words:

*Blest Halloween that struck the hour  
When Luther's hammer rose and fell  
At Wittenberg in heaven-born power  
And rang dark popery's funeral-knell,  
When long and cruel night was gone  
And smiling rose the promised dawn!*

*Rev. Mark A. Loest is pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Frankentrost, Saginaw, Mich. This story appeared originally in the October 2001 Lutheran Witness. LCMS congregations may reprint this article for parish use. All other rights reserved. Text copyright © 2001 by Mark A. Loest.*



## **WIR SINGEN: DANKE!**

Danke für diesen guten Morgen,  
Danke für jeden neuen Tag.  
Danke, dass ich all meine Sorgen auf dich werfen mag.

Danke für alle guten Freunde,  
Danke, oh Herr, für jedermann.  
Danke, wenn auch dem größten Feinde ich verzeihen kann.

Danke für meine Arbeitsstelle,  
Danke für jedes kleine Glück.  
Danke für alles Schöne, Helle und für die Musik.

Danke für manche Traurigkeiten,  
Danke für jedes gute Wort.  
Danke, dass deine Hand mich leiten will an jedem Ort.

Danke, dein Heil kennt keine Schranken,  
Danke, ich halt mich fest daran.  
Danke, ach Herr, ich will dir danken, dass ich danken kann.  
Text und Melodie: Martin Gotthard Schneider (1930-2017)  
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Thank you for your support and prayers.

In **His** service,

Pastor Zeuch

Calgary, September 2, 2025 A.D.