

# Freed & RENEWED in Christ 500

YEARS OF GOD'S  
GRACE IN ACTION

Oct. 31, 2017, will mark the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, which is an opportunity for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to bear witness to the hope and joy we have through Jesus Christ. Many people will be asking about the significance of what happened 500 years ago when Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses. This action started a dialogue that changed the way we receive and share the gospel which continues today. This anniversary is an opportunity to communicate the Lutheran Reformation's significance for faith and life in the 21st Century and the freedom we have in Christ that liberates us to joyfully serve our neighbors.

Leading up to 2017, all ELCA members are encouraged to plan and participate in activities that prepare for this milestone anniversary. These activities will allow us to give thanks for the word's power to free, renew and unite all creation in Christ. At the same time it will provide an opportunity to emphasize the continuing work of reconciliation in the Christian church with our ecumenical partners.

## FEATURED EVENTS

The 2015 Worship Jubilee and 2016 Grace Gathering will include information, resources and inspiration for congregational leaders planning for the 500th anniversary.

### **2015 Worship Jubilee** – “Called to Be a Living Voice: Vocation, Reformation and Mission”

A collaborative national conference for the ELCA and the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians to come together and host leading voices, practical workshops and diverse worship expressions.

- Atlanta, Ga. | July 19-23, 2015 | [LivingVoice2015.org](http://LivingVoice2015.org)

**2016 Grace Gathering** – an event held in conjunction with the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to inspire and equip leaders for local Reformation anniversary observances.

- New Orleans, La. | Aug. 10-13, 2016 | [ELCA500.org/grace-gathering](http://ELCA500.org/grace-gathering)

## ONLINE INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE

[ELCA500.org](http://ELCA500.org) is a dedicated website for the 500th anniversary that hosts a growing collection of resources, event announcements and information on Reformation anniversary observances. This website provides building blocks and connections for you to plan activities within your congregation, community and synod. We welcome your ideas and the resources you create to share with others.

## BEYOND 2017

The Lutheran witness of Jesus Christ won't stop on Nov. 1, 2017. Together we can carry the Lutheran witness forward in church and society into the 21st Century, shining light on the writings by which we have been shaped, such as Luther's Small and Large catechisms. All are welcomed and encouraged to join in this work leading up to 2017 and beyond.

For details and updates on this event, please visit [www.ELCA500.org](http://www.ELCA500.org) or the ELCA Reformation 500 Facebook page.



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

### Support for congregational observances

- The 2015 Worship Jubilee and the 2016 Grace Gathering will provide information, resources and inspiration for leaders planning local 500th anniversary observances.
- The “Reformation 500 Sourcebook: Anniversary Resources for Congregations” will provide supportive Reformation material and observance planning content for congregational planners. A short sampler will be available at the Worship Jubilee; the full resource will be available to order in spring 2016.
- “Baptized Servants” is a new resource offered for use on “God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday. This resource provides group discussion starters to connect the day of service with an evangelical understanding of vocation.

### Resources for conversation with other faith traditions

All resources noted below are available through [ELCA500.org](http://ELCA500.org).

- **“From Conflict to Communion”** – a resource for dialogue between Lutherans and Roman Catholics in common commemoration of the Reformation | Lutheran-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity of the Lutheran World Federation.
  - The **“From Conflict to Communion Study Guide,”** Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod (ELCA) and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh.
    - \*A printed version including “From Conflict to Communion” and the study guide will be available to order in 2016.
- **“Why Follow Luther Past 2017?”** – a contemporary Lutheran approach to interreligious relations | ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Jewish Relations.
- **“One Hope: Re-membering the Body of Christ”** – a new resource for Christian unity as Lutheran and Roman Catholic communities approach the Reformation anniversary | Augsburg Fortress and The Liturgical Press.

### Other resources and activities

Please visit [ELCA500.org](http://ELCA500.org) for updates to this listing.

- **The Luther Reading Challenge** has been launched to make connections globally and discuss Luther’s writings.
- Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., is hosting its annual Reformation Day festival “Singing the Faith,” October 25, 2015.
- Two independently produced documentary films on the Reformation are intended to be broadcast between 2016 and 2017: A production by Rick Steves and Tim Frakes, and another by Steve Boettcher and Mike Trinklein.

## OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES

### Website: [ELCA500.org](http://ELCA500.org)

This website will act as the resource hub and connection point for a variety of information including:

- A clearinghouse for regional and local activities and events sponsored by ELCA colleges and seminaries, synods, congregations and other institutions or groups.
- Articles and publications, orderable items, links to assist planning of different types of observances.
- Connections to different partners and networks.
- A place to share your resources and events with others.

### Social media

Join other ELCA members and the larger community to receive and share information about activities and events. These platforms also provide a space to participate in discussion about topics, readings and experiences related to the 500th anniversary.

- Facebook page: ELCA Reformation 500 shares news, events, quotes and resources.
- Facebook group: ELCA Reformation 500 encourages conversations about observance planning.
- Hashtags: #ELCA500 #Reformation2017.

### Email: [500@elca.org](mailto:500@elca.org)

For more information or to share ideas or feedback, please feel free to contact the ELCA churchwide team at this email address.