

Word from Our Pastor



*“....speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and up builds itself in love.
(Ephesians 4:15f.)*

Semper reformanda....Always reforming ...

That’s how the life of the church has been characterized....always reforming....the growth of which the Apostle Paul writes to the Ephesians is about the change reform brings.

That makes the 500th anniversary of the posting of Luther’s 95 Thesis so critical for us today. What happened with Luther really is a big deal! Luther’s reformation is something that was / is so deep and powerful it is continuing to happen.

Saying that, we need to note that every century of the Church’s life beginning with the early Church described in the Book of Acts in the New Testament when for example, the Church had to reform its sense of outreach to include the Gentiles. That wasn’t an easy change....but it is one that remains with us today when the Church continues to reach out to all people of all nations and has had to adapt to almost every people and culture across the planet we share.

-reform was necessary when the Roman Empire came to an end;
-reform was required when the Western Church was left as the only organized successor of that empire;
-reform was vital when the Church faced the Moslem conquests and expansion;
-reform came when a variety of state institutions, laws and practices took over church assets. That reform about the year 1075 brought with things like the rule of celibacy with which the Church struggles today;
-Thomas Aquinas reformed church theology in his time and shaped that theology for the Middle Ages;
-the calls to reform by persons like John Wyciffe in England and John Hus in Bohemia and Girolamo Savonarola in Italy in the years before Luther have not gone unheard;

Not all the reform was positive. The Crusades were a type of reform confronting the

Moslem armies and their persecuting conquests while necessary in the time bear a certain stigma today. The Dominican order of monks (a teaching order) might be described as doing certain constructive thing but was also in some ways a misguided reform that included the Inquisition.

Some of the reforms have lasted to this day. You can still find Franciscan monks addressing social ills with poverty, chastity and obedience. Within our lifetime we have experienced the changes that have come with the Second Vatican Council, the ecumenical movements, the rise of secularism, etc.

All of the above may serve to highlight the reality of the Church always reforming and of why the Reformation of the 16th century is of such significance that we celebrate of such importance. Luther's reformation lasted. To say that we Lutherans who follow in his footsteps as a reform movement for the Western Church for the sake of the Gospel is well worth our observing.

God bless us all,
Pastor T.