



WITH FULL HEARTS FROM JOSHUA, SUZY & GRAHAM BRAKHAGE

2 Founders Way, Unit A † St. Louis, MO 63105 † joshua411@gmail.com † (918) 706-1632

With all the celebrating we're doing this month, our family wanted to take the opportunity to celebrate you for your faithful support. Thank you for the sacrifices you make for our family and for the greater mission of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If you wish, drop us a note and let us know how specifically we can be praying for you. We can't wait to see what the next 500 years bring. *Soli Deo gloria.* To God alone be the glory!

What an exciting month to be writing to you. The celebration we've waited 500 years for is finally here. We get to sing the praises of a figure from history who revolutionized culture and left an indelible imprint on the world.

We recognize a man who believed all people should have access to the Word of God. We celebrate the reformer who taught salvation is God's free gift, not a result of earning heavenly favor with your good behavior. We spotlight a humble teacher whose message was so radical, the most powerful religious authorities conspired to have him silenced, even by assassination. We honor the one who was made an outlaw, as religious elites teamed up with governmental powers to get rid of him and his radical teaching. We look to the man who trusted his Father's provision, even under the looming specter of death. We hold up the man whose boldness,

faithfulness and uncompromising stand for the Gospel remains the bedrock of our church. On this 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we celebrate the man, Jesus Christ.

I'm sorry if you were expecting someone else. This Reformation anniversary is not about a German monk with a funny haircut; it's about the Savior of humanity who comes with salvation for all who believe. It's about freedom from sin, death, and from the twisted doctrines of the church that attempted to put Jesus in the shadows. It's about the Gospel that says Jesus paid the full price for your sinfulness, no penance or indulgences necessary. It's about the democratization of the Word, putting the Scriptures and worship back into the hands and lips of all believers. It's about a fundamental reimagining of faith as what God does for you instead of what you do for God.

These core Reformation principles don't point to a rabble-rouser who hammered some grievances to a door; they point to the One who kicked down the door of hell and set open the door to life and salvation. The Reformation doesn't point to a professor of theology who said, "Here I stand," but to the King of creation who said, "it is finished." The hero of the Reformation isn't a man, Martin Luther, but the Son of God who became man, Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection. The theme the LCMS has chosen for this landmark 500th Reformation anniversary is: "It's Still All About Jesus." I think Luther would've wanted it that way. As we talk to others about this Reformation anniversary, let's see how much we're talking about Luther and how much we're talking about the Savior Luther loved and sought to restore to His rightful place as the focal point of faith and the only source of salvation.



October has seen us logging quite a few miles on the car. First, we traveled back to Tulsa, Oklahoma where Joshua preached his first-ever sermon at his home congregation for Stewardship Sunday. Then, Suzy and Graham visited grandparents, cousins and friends in the Kansas City area. Finally, we used part of our Fall Break to travel to see Suzy's twin sister's family in Ohio. It's always great to see family — both our biological and church families!



READ WITH US

Exodus 20 — You remember the Ten Commandments, right? You could probably find them really easily in your Catechism. But when's the last time you read them in the Bible? One of Joshua's exegetical courses opened his eyes to how much grace there is in the Ten Commandments. We think of them as a list of "thou shall nots", but look at them again and notice all the ways God is reminding His people how much He loves and cares for them.

SING WITH US

We think of "A Mighty Fortress" as the battle hymn of the Reformation, but that Luther hymn didn't gain popularity until Lutherans started marking the anniversary of the 95 theses, 10 years after the Reformation began. Instead, another Luther hymn was the true rallying cry of those supporting the Reformation's push to return to Scripture alone as a rule and norm of the Christian faith.

*Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word.
Curb those who by deceit or sword
Would wrest Your Kingdom from Your Son
And bring to naught all He has done.*

PRAY WITH US

Rejoice with Suzy as the Lord has provided her the perfect part-time position that allows her to continue caring for Graham and still regularly use her gifts as a speech pathologist.

Thank Him for this historic Reformation anniversary and the opportunity to remind the world "it's still all about Jesus."

Ask that the Lord would protect Joshua from stress as he works to manage a challenging course load, and responsibilities at work, church and home.