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November 2021 Newsletter

Two or Three Holidays . . .

We've been walking through the Church year for some time now. We're really close to the end, so let's try to do it right.

This year, Reformation Day, October 31, happens to come on a Sunday. It was a true joy to have a member of the congregation say she sure hoped we received communion on the Lord's Day on Reformation Day. Yes, we will. It is central to the Reformation to realize that this is truly the body of Christ broken for you and the blood of Christ shed for you. It is not just for some remote "everyone" but "for you."

I do want to make this clear. The pattern of early Christianity was to receive communion every Lord's Day. This was a pattern that generally held true until two things happened. First, in European Christianity in the Medieval period, communion became more frequent, and was celebrated daily. Second, when Lutherans came to North America, because there were too few pastors, communion was not celebrated as frequently since the congregations needed a pastor to do the consecration. My candid desire is to offer communion to as many as wish to receive it on every Lord's Day, but also to make allowance for the local practice which may differ from my desire. The congregations I know which have restored weekly communion have always been very glad of their decision.

What is Reformation Day? On October 31 of 1517, Martin Luther posted 95 topics for debate on the church door in Wittenberg. This was the typical way to suggest a discussion, and it was typical to have such discussions and debates as part of the community entertainment on November 1, All Saints' Day, which was a holiday. The posting of the debate topics, called "theses," didn't spark much debate the next day, but did eventually spark the Reformation. In this move, Luther and his supporters wanted to find more historic ways for the Church to practice its witness in the community. Sadly, the effort failed to gain consensus, and the Roman Church eventually drove the Evangelicals (later called Lutherans) out of their fellowship.

As heirs of the Reformation, we celebrate October 31 as a day of commitment to biblical principles and practice of Christianity in accord with the pattern found in the apostolic teachings and the practices of the early Christian Fathers.

A day later comes All Saints' Day. Because we normally set Sunday apart for the day of worship, we recognize this holiday a week after Reformation Day. This year, rather than

celebrating it on November 1, we will recognize it on November 7. This is a time which has historically been set aside to remember those Christians who have died in the faith before us. In particular, we will adopt the practice of naming each member of the local congregation who has died in Christ in the past year. We also recognize that those who have died in Christ before us have received their heavenly reward, no matter the circumstances of their death.

There's a third holiday, which isn't as much a matter of universal Christian practice, but which fits Christianity in our country. That is a day of Thanksgiving. It has been common throughout the ages to have a celebration around a time of harvest. This practice dates back at least to the Jewish feast of Pentecost, which is a celebration of the firstfruits of the annual harvest. At Thanksgiving, we recognize the fact that God has given us a harvest, thus providing for our needs. We thank him because he has given us our daily bread.

We'll be recognizing all three of these occasions from October 31 through the end of November, before we start the new Church year with the beginning of Advent.

In all we do, we bring thanks, honor, and glory to God who has made us his people and who has purchased our salvation and provided for all our needs.

Wittenberg Door Financial Update

Thank you for the great response, not just in the past month, but over the past several years, as we have let everyone know about our ministry finances. Some ministries have very large support networks and big budgets. Wittenberg Door doesn't. We would like to enlarge the supporter base. Frankly, there are plenty of ways we would like to bring Christ and his answers and care to our community, but we are not always able to pay for it. Over the next few years it will be necessary to increase our budget radically so as to be ready to call a full-time pastor when this pastor decides it's time to retire. Health care expenses are an increasing part of the budget. Many other budget areas are going to need to be increased, and, if you have been following Wittenberg Door for a while, you know that the ministry has not yet been in the position to pay an actual salary. However, the Lord has always provided for our needs and we have gotten by all right. As part of stewardship for the future, we would like to be able to reach the point of offering our next pastor a full time salary, as the laborer is worthy of his keep.

Your contributions to Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry mean we can continue providing face to face pastoral ministry on the college campuses in Columbia Missouri. Your monthly support of \$30-\$50 can make an eternal difference in the lives of our collegiate communities. Please continue to invite your friends and associates to consider supporting this work.

Though I'm serving a local church on a part time basis, I do have the ability to make a visit to a congregation that is thinking of providing support for this ministry. We can and will work out a visit so your congregation can hear how to be partners with us in providing the face to face pastoral care on campus that is our hallmark.

Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Checks mailed to us are deposited with no commission paid to any intermediary. Most of our contributions are actually received this way, but we can receive funds sent through Paypal or Google Pay as well. Giving is easy!

Simply visit our website at www.wittenbergcomo.com and click on “about” and “support us.”

Upcoming Activities:

Mondays at 12:30 pm – Lunch and Learn Bible discussion at the MU Student Center

Mondays – Recommit! Bible study at Beta Sigma Psi after Chapter Meeting

Wednesdays - Heidelberg Discussions – *The Spirituality of the Cross* (Second edition) 5:30 pm at The Heidelberg Restaurant on 9th Street. If you can't find us, ask the bartender where the pastor went.

Sundays - Adult Bible Class 9:00 am, Divine Service 10:00 am, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Centralia MO

Friday, November 12 - Hayride and Bonfire at the Sydow Farm, Sturgeon, MO 5-8 pm

Friday, November 19 or 26 (to be determined) Thanksgiving Dinner at the Spotts' home for all our ministry friends.

Friday, December 10 7-10 pm Christmas party at the Spotts' home!

Watch the calendar at www.wittenbergcomo.com, follow our Facebook page, and friend WDCM Chaplain on Facebook to see times and places where Pastor Spotts can be found around campuses in coffee shops or restaurants!

We always have something new at the website, the blog, and the activities calendar. Please be a friend on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. If you're in Columbia, let's get together on or near campus. Go to <https://www.wittenbergcomo.com/support-us.html> to provide financial support. The Wittenberg Door 300 needs you!