

ANNOUNCEMENTS
WEEK OF APRIL 18, 2021

IN OUR PRAYERS: Ashlyn; Jim Lambert; the family of Chuck Kellogg; Jim Cleveland; Aiden Snyder; Emily Slone; Jack; Wayne Sembach; the family of Alan Kuehnert

ALTAR FLOWERS are given today by Kenny & Jeanette Klaehn in celebration of their 29th wedding anniversary. Happy anniversary!

MEN AND BOYS: we are going to begin scheduling ushers and acolytes to serve during Sunday and Wednesday services. Please see Pr. Mullet for more information and to put your name on the list! Thank you.

THE DOOR LOCKS will be changed soon. Please speak with Pr. Mullet or Linda LeFever for more information.

VICARAGE & CANDIDATE PLACEMENT SERVICES will be live-streamed on 4/26 and 4/27, both at 7pm. Watch on 4/26 to meet our new vicar and 4/27 to see where Sem. Marks will serve as pastor!

TIN CAPS! We have reserved tickets for Sunday, July 11. \$10 each includes an all-you-can-eat picnic lunch at the ballpark beginning at 12 noon, followed by the baseball game at 1:05pm. Mark your calendars! We should have tickets available to purchase soon.

CALENDAR

Sun. Apr. 18 (Easter 3 - Misericordias)	8:00 & 10:00am Holy Communion 9:00am Sunday School 9:00am Bible Study
Wed. Apr. 21	11:00am Holy Communion (mask req'd.) 7:00pm Holy Communion
Thu. Apr. 22	7:00pm Bible Study
Sun. Apr. 25 (Easter 4 - Jubilate)	8:00 & 10:00am Worship 9:00am Sunday School 9:00am Bible Study 6:00pm Mighty Fortress

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It could have all ended the evening of April 18, 1521. The sun was setting on the city of Worms. In a packed room of the bishop's palace, the emperor, electors, and German princes all waited with anticipation to hear the answer Martin Luther would bring. Would Luther recant? Would he retract what he had written and said against abuses in the church and against papal tyranny? Most of all, would he give up on the Gospel he had preached and taught, giving comfort and certainty to consciences in Christ?

If Luther were to recant and admit that he was wrong, all would be well with the emperor and the Roman Catholic Church. If he did not recant, his own life would be at risk. He could be burned as a heretic. This was it: recant or stand firm. Luther responded:

“Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and I will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise, here I stand, may God help me, Amen.”

At this bold confession, the room erupted in noise. Some rejoiced; some demanded fire! Yet, in the midst of such commotion, the truth of Jesus Christ rang forth. The gates of Hades had not prevailed over the confession of the Gospel. The proclamation of justification by grace through faith on account of Christ's work *alone* did not bend to spiritual tyranny.

Today, we stand in the footsteps of Martin Luther 500 years later. We stand boldly, proclaiming the One who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. We stand boldly, renouncing the devil and all his works and all his ways. We stand, by the grace of God, steadfast and ready to suffer all rather than fall away. We do not stand on Luther, but we will gladly stand with him, firm on the testimony of the Holy Scriptures to confess the saving Gospel of Christ, our Good Shepherd, who died and rose, in whose name is forgiveness of sins for all people. Here we stand; we can do no other. God help us. Amen.