

## Looking ahead

On October 31, 2017, the world will mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. With his symbolic gesture of nailing the 95 *Theses* to the chapel door in Wittenberg, Martin Luther sparked a blaze of reform that would change Christian worship and teaching for centuries. In Luther's same spirit of inquiry and ecumenism, the NC Synod is affirming the theme "Looking Forward, Ever-Reforming" for its two-year commemoration of the Reformation anniversary.



Since 2014, the synod's Reformation 500 Task Force has worked to plan and offer events related to worship, education, service, and fellowship. Task force members include Eric Childers (chair), Carl and Miriam Fisher (honorary chairs), Virginia Stackel (honorary chair), Sarah Ingle, Mindy Makant (secretary), Christy Lohr-Sapp, Catherine Fink, Paul Weber, Andrew Weisner, and Bishop Tim Smith.

The two-year commemoration began officially in September 2015 with a collaborative worship service with the South Carolina Synod. Christ, Charlotte, hosted the event. A capstone worship service on September 23, 2017, also in partnership with the South Carolina Synod, will feature Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. All congregations of the North and South Carolina Synods are warmly invited and encouraged to participate in this special event.

Leading up to the capstone worship service is a diverse line-up of ministries made possible by the generous support of the Peeler-Casey Fund and the Hine Fund, and by collegial partnerships with various synodical groups. Consider participating in these Reformation 500 events:

- + **Study Tour of Germany with Dr. Monte Luker.** This nine-day study tour, "In the Footsteps of Martin Luther and the Reformation," begins October 12, 2016, and will include visits to Wittenberg, Erfurt, Wartburg Castle, and much more.
- + **Reformation Brew.** An event or special commemorative brew is on tap to celebrate Katie Luther, the great brewmistress.
- + **Lenoir-Rhyne Spring 2017 Choir Tour.** A special choir tour is in the works to mark Luther's contributions of sacred music and hymnody to the church.

One of the most significant Reformation 500 projects is a parish education resource that will be made available for all churches in the NC Synod at no charge. This cross-generational electronic resource, tentatively entitled *Forty Weeks of Lutheran Basics*, includes topics of Reformation history, Martin Luther, liturgics and worship, music, Lutheran theology, and contemporary church issues. The study, suitable for use by a variety of ages in congregations, will be written by a diverse group of authors, including pastors, professors, and lay people. The study will be available this summer for use this fall and winter.

For news and event details related to Reformation 500, please visit [our webpage](#), watch for news in the *Synod Servant E-News*, contact a member of the task force, or email [Eric Childers](#). *Reformation 500 in North Carolina—Looking Forward, Ever-Reforming*.

*Submitted by Pastor Eric Childers, NC Synod Reformation 500 Task Force chair.*