

The One Thing Needful

This year your congregational council has been focusing its devotions on the same Bible passage every month: Luke 10:1–12, in which Jesus is sending seventy disciples “in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go” (Luke 10:1 NRSV). Amazingly, we continue to find new insights from the text even now. Also, having spent so much time with one scripture passage, I’m finding that I’m seeing new connections between it and other passages of scripture.

Let me share with you an example I shared with them recently. One astonishing thing your council has noted in its devotions is how things the disciples might think they need turn out to be optional in Jesus' instructions: “Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals” (Luke 10:4 NRSV). I’ve been wondering if there’s a connection between this startling command near the beginning of Luke 10 and what Jesus says to busy Martha: “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:41–42 NRSV). Despite all of Martha’s work on behalf of her guest Jesus, somehow it is Mary who has found the one thing that is, as the old King James Bible puts it, “needful.”

As we try to discern the Holy Spirit’s call for our congregation, it’s easy to get swept up in well-meaning Martha-ism. There are many things we “need” to do for “them” so that “they” will “want” to come our church, etc. “They” are typically people we have never met, let alone talked to, let alone learned much about. But if we just keep trying things, maybe something will stick.

But what if Mary wasn’t lazy, or oblivious, or lacking commitment, or anything Martha in her exasperation might have thought about her? What if, instead, she was sitting at the feet of Jesus to figure out what he really *needed*? In that case, what looked nothing like hospitality to Martha would actually be the “one thing needful” for true hospitality.

Our culture needs true hospitality. Literally billions of dollars are spent trying to predict and manipulate what people *want* in more and more sophisticated ways, so that companies big and small can get the foot traffic, clicks, “likes,” and ultimately dollars that they (or their shareholders) *want*. But who has the time or desire to form the human connections in which our deepest *needs* come to light?

Jesus does. He responds to the cries of those in need of healing and acceptance. And he takes up the cross his disciples don’t *want* him to carry but which he insists again and again is “necessary” for our salvation, “necessary” to free us from Martha-ism, to free us to sit at the feet of our neighbor and meeting them, hearing them, letting the truth of what they need come through in our new relationship.

I saw a glimpse of that when our June 28 summer concert was twice interrupted by emergency sirens. The entertainment “they wanted” was replaced by the shelter *all of us needed*—in the basement and the back hallway. And when your sisters and brothers in Christ brought with them cookies and water to share, it became less about guests getting the goodies and more like guests and hosts alike “bearing one another’s burdens” (Gal. 6:2). In other words, it was a little bit like church.

† IN OUR PRAYERS †



Intercessions: Nevagay Abel, Neva & Don Abel, Kelsey Hernandez, Stu Hoffman, family of Lois Johnson, Lisa Jones, Doris Kampfe, Kevin Persaud, Carline Talmadge, Ruby Watson, Ron Hunt, Alice Kundo, Annette Aken, Helen Swanson, Doris Dohlen, David Johnson (nephew of Dyvone Freburg), Phil Armato (Patte Lund's father), Mildred Anderson (mother of Cheryl Erdmann), Lyle Solko, Don Johnson (friend of Lyle & Phyllis Nelson), Carol Triplett (friend of the Smalley and Wacker families), LeAnn Dahl (daughter of Carol Dahl), Huxley (Carol Dahl's niece's grandson), Charlotte (mother of Kay Brindle), Sally and Marcie Ramsey (friends of Helen Swanson), Pastor Jane McChesney, Nancy Brandt (sister of Kay Brindle), Bill Wolf (father of John Wolf), Don Stinson (friend of Don & Neva Abel), Lois and Mike Virtue (friends of Scott & Sue Francis), Christine Hallman (daughter of Karl Anderson), Lynette Vitale (cousin of Dana Rogers), and the Stubbs family (missionaries in Tanzania).

(Please review this list and let either Pastor Scott or the church office know when a name can be removed).

Join Us

Want to be a member of the body of Christ here at Shepherd of the Valley? Please speak with Pastor Scott after worship if you would like to be received into our community of faith on All Saints Sunday, November 5.

First Communion

Want to join in the fellowship of the Lord's Supper? Please speak with Pastor Scott after worship if you or your child would like to receive First Communion on All Saints Sunday, November 5.

Labor Day. The church office will be closed Monday, September 4 in observance of Labor Day. Includes image of crossed flags.

Rescue Mission Needs Our Help! Social Ministry. The Rockford Rescue Mission is asking for donations of bathroom tissue and men's deodorant for their clients. Includes butterfly illustration.

Library News. Where are our readers? There are lots of great books in our library waiting to be checked out. See us today. Includes stack of books illustration.

Important Notice. Please let the church office or Pastor Scott know if there are items you would like to see in the newsletter. Includes sticky note illustration.

Keeping Shepherd of the Valley up-to-date. Please be sure to let the office of Shepherd of the Valley know when you have a change in address, phone number or e-mail.

Senior News. Reserve September 26 for a salad luncheon. Includes floral graphic.

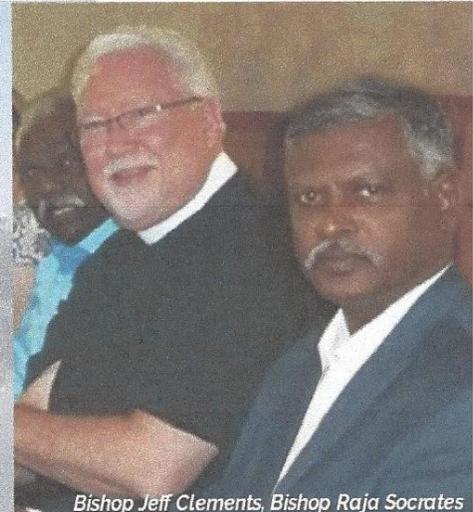


Northern Illinois Synod of the ELCA

Companion Synod Trip to India, 12 Days, February 5-17, 2018

Optional extension to Taj Mahal, Agra: February 16-18

with Bishop Jeff Clements, Deaconess Cheryl Erdmann, John and Esther Prabhakar



Bishop Jeff Clements, Bishop Raja Socrates

Tour Cost Summary

Approximately \$ 2299 (single supplement \$299)
Extension \$ 599 (single supplement \$99)

Participants should also plan on \$500 - \$1000 in cash for expenses during time spent with the Arcot Church in addition to the above costs.

For more information/ questions

815 964 9934

Deaconess Cheryl Erdmann
at the NI Synod office or

Dr. John & Esther Prabhakar 815 757 0406

Please Pray, consult with your family and once you decide to go, please call Deaconess Cheryl or e-mail her at CErdmann@nisynod.org and reserve your spot. Places are limited to maximum of 25, with a minimum of 20.

More information on the kiosk.

What's Included?

Round-trip economy class airfare from Chicago, accommodations *shared occupancy*, meals as shown, transfers and transportation, extensive sightseeing, entrance fees, portage, local guides, gratuities for drivers and guides, and airport/foreign departure taxes (currently \$99 per person).

Not Included: Indian entry visa is required for U.S. citizens (currently \$60 per person for the online e-visa) *GTD will provide information*, fuel surcharges and/or tax increases levied since the pricing of this tour, beverages other than coffee/tea at breakfast, any meal or sightseeing item not listed in the itinerary, items of a personal nature, optional travel protection (Cost of this optional GTD Travel Protection is \$169 per person. Additional coverage provided as needed; the full cost of your tour must be covered. Travel protection is non-refundable fourteen days after you purchase a plan), passport fees (a passport valid six months beyond date of reentry to the U.S.)

Optional Extension: One-way airfare and tax from Chennai to Delhi, accommodations *shared occupancy*, meals as shown, transfers and transportation, extensive sightseeing, entrance fees, portage, local guides, and gratuities for drivers and guides.

Mark your Calendars

October 29, Reformation Sunday. Plan to attend the Northern Illinois Synod Reformation 500 Worship and Ordination Service at St. John's Lutheran Church in Mendota.



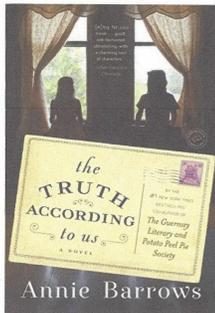
**Sunday
September 10**



Katie's Choice Book Club

Thursday
September 14
10 am

The Truth According to Us
By Annie Barrows



In the summer of 1938, Layla Beck's father, a United States senator, cuts off her allowance and demands that she find employment on the Federal Writers' Project, a New Deal jobs program. Within days, Layla finds herself far from her accustomed social whirl, assigned to cover the history of the remote mill town of Macedonia, West Virginia. Once in the home of the unconventional Romeyn family, she is drawn into their complex world and soon discovers that the truth of the town is entangled in the thorny past of the Romeyn dynasty. At the Romeyn house, twelve-year-old Willa is desperate to learn everything in her quest to acquire her favorite virtues of ferocity and devotion—a search that leads her into a thicket of mysteries, including the questionable business that occupies her charismatic father and the reason her adored aunt Jottie remains unmarried. Layla's arrival strikes a match to the family veneer, bringing to light buried secrets that will tell a new tale about the Romeyns.

"[A] heartwarming coming-of-age novel [that] sparkles with folksy depictions of a tight-knit family and life in a small town . . . full of richly drawn, memorable characters."
The Seattle Times

"*The Truth According to Us* has all the characteristics of a great summer read. A plot that makes you want to keep turning the pages; a setting that makes you feel like you're inhabiting another time and place; and characters who become people you're sad to leave behind—and thus who always stay with you."
Miami Herald

Katie's Cup coffeebar

Corner of 4th Avenue and 7th Street

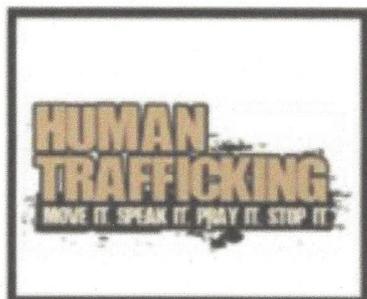
No reservations necessary.

All are invited as we engage in conversations about books of interest to you! Books available for purchase at Katie's Cup or bring your own copy.

Next: *Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng • Thursday, October 12, 10 am

21st Annual Ecumenical Benefit Brunch
Saturday, October 7, 2017
9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church
200 North 1st Street / Rockford, IL



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING.

2018 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

JUNE 27-JULY 1 + HOUSTON, TX
GATHERING@ELCA.ORG + 888-411-3522 + ELCA.ORG/GATHERING

FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED THROUGH FAITH, AND THIS IS NOT YOUR OWN DOING; IT IS THE GIFT OF GOD. - EPHESIANS 2:8

#ELCAYG2018

PRE-GATHERING EVENTS + JUNE 24-27

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MULTICULTURAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP EVENT OF THE ELCA AN ELCA GATHERING OF YOUTH WITH DISABILITIES

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
29th Annual Northern Illinois Synod Convention

Lifting the Least

"So in everything, do to others as you would have them do to you." ~Matthew 7:12

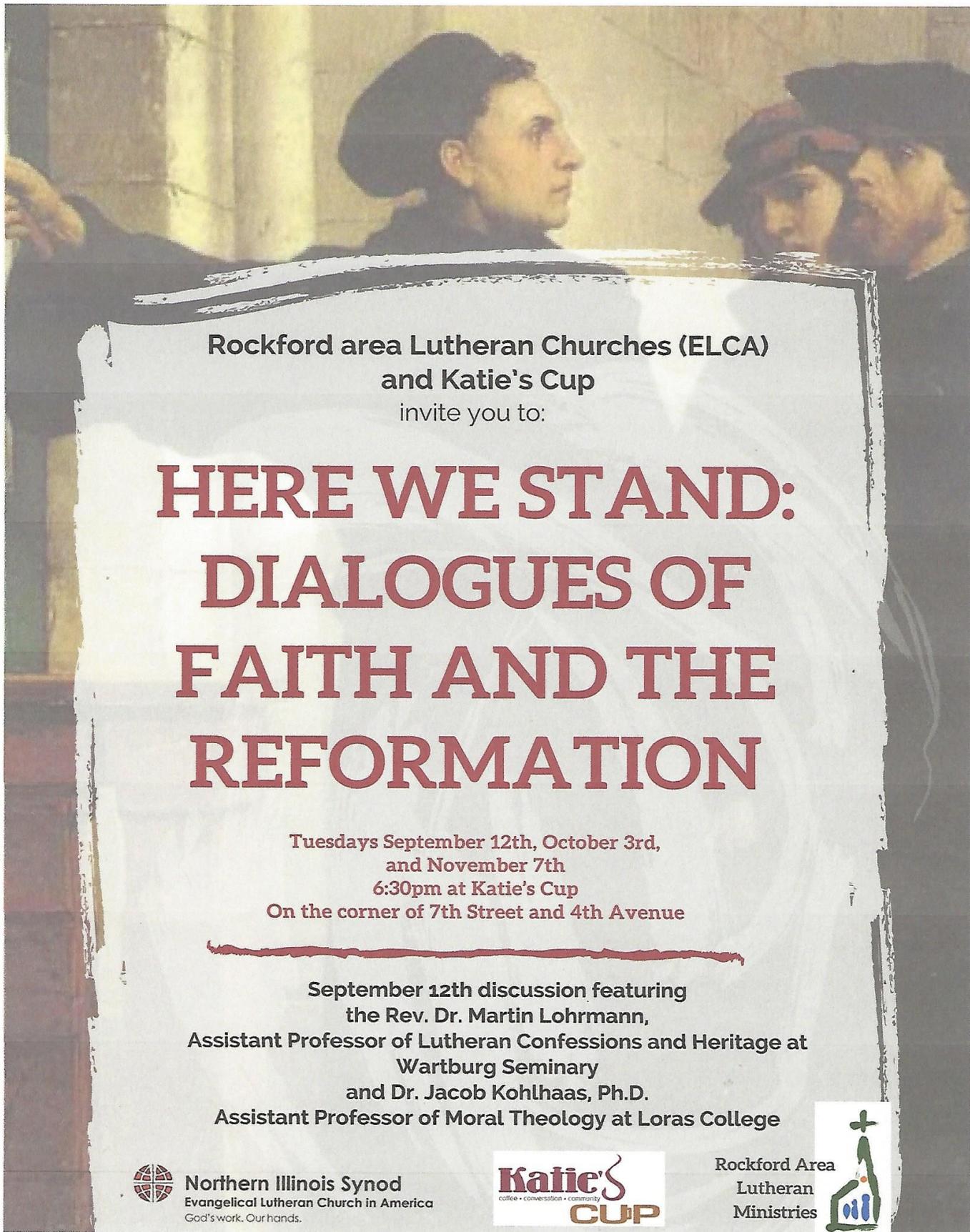
"Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." ~Matthew 25:40

Saturday, September 16, 2017
9:00 am
Immanuel, Dixon

Register online and find out more at nissynod.org/women

Morning message by Bishop Jeffrey Clements





Rockford area Lutheran Churches (ELCA)
and Katie's Cup
invite you to:

HERE WE STAND: DIALOGUES OF FAITH AND THE REFORMATION

Tuesdays September 12th, October 3rd,
and November 7th
6:30pm at Katie's Cup
On the corner of 7th Street and 4th Avenue

September 12th discussion featuring
the Rev. Dr. Martin Lohrmann,
Assistant Professor of Lutheran Confessions and Heritage at
Wartburg Seminary
and Dr. Jacob Kohlhaas, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Moral Theology at Loras College



Northern Illinois Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Rockford Area
Lutheran
Ministries



As we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, *Living Lutheran* is exploring 500 of its unique aspects. This series continues this month with 15 more facts.

11 The legacy of Luther's ideas about education can be seen today in the Lutheran church's concern for Christian education, early childhood education and schools, colleges and universities, lay schools for ministry and seminaries.

12 An emphasis on the involvement of laypeople during worship revolutionized the way space inside the parish church was used during the Reformation. Many of the physical barriers between priest and congregation were removed. Consequently, the interiors of local churches took on the appearance that many still have today.

13 Whether or not to use pipe organs and other musical instruments during worship became a hotly debated issue for many churches involved in the Reformation movement. Some went as far as banning the use of organs and instruments.

14 Prior to the Reformation, congregational singing—and even talking—during church services wasn't standard practice in Germany.

15 Luther composed more than 40 hymns in his lifetime, and in 1529 wrote and composed the tune for what became known as "The Battle Hymn of the Reformation"—today called "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

16 Luther desired hymns to be modest and text-driven—derived from Scripture, expressing Christian values, illuminating faith and the gospel message and lending themselves to congregational singing.

17 The area of Germany where Luther's story unfolded is now referred to as "LutherCountry." This region of Reformation sites and history was part of East Germany for 40 years until the Berlin Wall fell in 1989.

18 The Peace of Augsburg was signed in 1555, despite its dissenters and many loopholes. This settlement represented a victory for state princes and granted recognition to both Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism in Germany, allowing each ruler to decide the religion to be practiced within his state, and permitting residents to migrate to a territory where their denomination was recognized.

19 The first European colonists who came to North America were attempting to escape post-Reformation conflicts and persecution. They were 98 percent Protestant and a diverse mix of denominations, but their newfound freedom wasn't without intense conflict and intolerance between denominations and religions.

20 In the late 1800s, some North American religious leaders voiced concern over what they feared was hero-worship of Reformation leaders. They encouraged refocusing on theological issues and teachings, the accomplishments and failings of reformers like Luther and Huldrych Zwingli, and contributions of reformers prior to the 16th century.

21 However, Luther did say this at the Diet (parliament) held in the imperial city of Worms: "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason ... I am bound by the Scriptures that 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."

22 Luther's translation of the New Testament (which he completed in just a few weeks while in hiding at Wartburg Castle) was not the first printed German translation. All previous translations were based upon the Latin "Vulgate"; Luther was the first to use the original Greek text.

23 Although his superior had released him from his vows as an Augustinian friar, Luther maintained a monastic lifestyle until shortly before his marriage in 1525, thinking of himself as "a Daniel in the lion's den" of monastic practices.

24 Although Luther did not always mind that people called his followers "Lutherans," he preferred to think of all believers as "Christians." In German-speaking areas, the usual designation is "evangelisch"—that is, people oriented toward the gospel.

25 Although Luther had deep respect for the role of government in keeping good order and just laws in a society, he also thought that a Christian prince "would be a rare bird in heaven."

(Reprint information was granted by *Living Lutheran* magazine for this article as it first appeared in the June 2017 issue of *Living Lutheran*.)



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September 4



September 10