

Commemoration of the 500th Year of the Reformation at St. Peter Lutheran Church

"The churches among us do not dissent from the catholic church in any article of faith."

- The Augsburg Confession



Potluck Dinner and Discussion "The Contemporary Significance of the Augsburg Confession"

Friday, June 23, 2017
6 P.M.

St. Peter Lutheran Church
310 North Broadway St.
Joliet, Illinois

Speaker: Dr. Roland Ziegler

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What is the Augsburg Confession? It was the first statement of faith of the Protestant Reformation, read before the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V on June 25th, 1530. The first Lutheran laymen signed and read it to make their faith known to the world. They confessed that they believed and taught the catholic faith—the faith held by all Christians, always and everywhere. They bravely confessed this faith before the Emperor in the face of his edict at Worms (1521) that declared those who held it to be guilty of high treason.

After Luther and his followers had been turned out of the Roman Church, a German imperial law, the Edict of Worms in 1521, not only passed a sentence of death on the Reformer...but also directed the extirpation of Lutheran teaching. But this law proved to be unenforceable. The German people refused to give up Luther's teaching. "Sire," said Margrave George the Confessor, one of the signers of the Augsburg Confession, when Emperor Charles V demanded that the Protestant princes participate in the Corpus Christi procession at the Diet of Augsburg, *"I would rather kneel down on this spot and have my head chopped off than give up the Word of God."* (Hermann Sasse, *Here We Stand*, p. 18.)

The Augsburg Confession went on to influence other reformers across Christendom, such as John Calvin and Thomas Cranmer.

Yet today the Augsburg Confession, along with nearly all of the written confessions of the early Protestant Reformation, is largely forgotten history, even among Lutherans. Is that because the faith confessed in it has ceased to be relevant in the 21st century? Or do the confessors at

Augsburg have valuable things to teach the Church today in post-Christian America?



Our Speaker

The Rev. Dr. Roland Ziegler, is uniquely qualified to speak to us about the significance of the Augsburg Confession. Born and educated in a deeply secular Germany, he began studying for the ministry in the state Protestant church, the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD). The EKD is a union of the Lutheran and German Reformed Churches; it acknowledges the historical significance of the Augsburg Confession,

but no longer confesses it as its faith the way Luther and the Lutheran Church after him did. Prof. Ziegler eventually became a pastor in the independent Lutheran Church in Germany (SELK), for which the Augsburg Confession is a statement of its faith, binding on pastors and congregations. He can speak about the significance of the Augsburg Confession today not only as a scholar, but as a Christian who came to make this confession of faith his own.

Please join us on **Friday, June 23rd** for the dinner and the talk! Please be sure to R. S. V. P. by calling the church office at **(815) 722-3567 ext. 301** by Tuesday, June 20th, so that we are able to prepare a meal for you.