

ANNIVERSARY RESOURCES FOR CONGREGATIONS
REFORMATION 500

SAMPLER



How do we observe the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation?

The first instinct for many will be to throw a big party. Give thanks! Celebrate! And there will be plenty of that as we near the year 2017, five hundred years since Martin Luther posted the Ninety-five Theses in Wittenberg, Germany.

But there is more to marking this milestone. Luther and a number of his reforming companions were teachers—of university students, of pastors and bishops, of laypeople. So education has a rightful place in our observance. They took part in conversations—with varying success—with Christians of various traditions. So ecumenical connections deserve to be included in our plans. It's also true that the events of the Reformation era resulted in divisions in the church that continue to this day. So an element of repentance will color our observance. Still, over these centuries the grace of God has abounded in the church and in ever-expanding ways throughout the world. So we return to thanksgiving and praise. These are just a few of the dynamics of this anniversary, which extend to the fields of worship and music, the sciences and cultural studies, social action and public witness, and many more.

The Lutheran church is diverse, and it is decentralized—meaning that no one will be giving congregations a blueprint for how they should observe this anniversary. Those choices will vary, depending on your context. Here is an invitation to begin thinking about the plans your congregation will make. Through several avenues, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Augsburg Fortress will be highlighting a wide range of ideas and possibilities from various sources. Some of those ideas and possibilities will be selected and published in the years ahead. This sampler gives you just a taste of what is to come.

By mid-2016, *Reformation 500 Sourcebook: Anniversary Resources for Congregations* will be available. See page 3 for more information about the Sourcebook. In addition, colorful studies about the Lutheran expression of Christianity—for adults and for children—are in preparation. You'll find a bit of information about those on page 13. Other ideas, resources, and opportunities, including Web sites related to this anniversary, are noted on page 15. We hope the information in this sampler whets your appetite to start planning today.

How will Lutherans observe this anniversary in ways that are forward-looking, outward-directed, and focused on the amazing mercy of God in Jesus Christ? Blessings to you and your congregation as you seek to answer that question in the places where you live and serve.

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REFORMATION 500 SOURCEBOOK

Anniversary Resources for Congregations

As congregations plan the ways they will mark the Reformation's five hundredth anniversary, this Sourcebook will be a useful guide. Gathered in this Sourcebook will be a variety of helps for worship, education, song, service, connection with other Christians, and more.

On the following pages of this sampler, you will find a teaser of a few of the contents that will be in the Sourcebook, including—

- A discussion starter about the ways worship has changed over the centuries and in recent years. Sometimes these changes were begun by Lutherans, but we have also inherited valuable insights from ecumenical cousins. Other essays on a variety of topics will be included. Some, such as a brief study of the Ninety-five Theses, will be accompanied by discussion guides and leader helps.
- An outline of an evening prayer service in English and Spanish from the Lutheran World Federation. Additional LWF Reformation resources, especially some being prepared for ecumenical use, will also be featured.
- A Lenten worship series outline based on Luther's Small Catechism. In addition to materials like this, the Sourcebook will provide prayers, litanies, hymn suggestions, preaching helps, and more to enrich observances of the Reformation within your congregation and in joint services.
- Some ideas for how to present a hymn festival that lifts up many themes from the Reformation. A gala hymn festival was presented at the July 2015 Worship Jubilee, but it was designed so it can be adaptable to many different contexts. The Sourcebook will have more specific helps, links, and files.
- A sample bulletin insert about the Augsburg Confession. A series of these inserts will be provided on a CD-ROM included with the Sourcebook, dealing with various aspects of the Reformation. This is just one example of reproducible and/or customizable files that will be included to help congregations make use of the Sourcebook contents and adapt as needed in their setting.
- Other Sourcebook contents not sampled here will include such elements as ideas for service learning activities, helps for engaging in ecumenical conversation, and media guides for communicating about this event in your congregation and community.
- *Reformation 500 Sourcebook* and related anniversary resources from Augsburg Fortress will coordinate with additional resources on the ELCA's Web site at elca500.org.

The Sourcebook will be published by mid-2016. See the back cover of this sampler for order information.

ONGOING REFORMATION

Worship in an Ecumenical Age

REFORMATION REFORMS

Worship is the primary gathering of the church. As we observe the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation, a logical starting place is to name a number of liturgical reforms that date back to that period:

- Mass (word and sacrament) in the vernacular
- Communion in both kinds (bread and wine)
- Centrality of scripture
- Emphasis on congregational singing
- Two sacraments (baptism and holy communion)
- Removal of sacrificial language in the canon of the mass (what we call the eucharistic prayer)
- Texts available to worshipers (advent of the printing press)
- Emphasis on preaching (law and gospel)
- The presence of Christ in the sacrament described as real presence, “in, with, and under,” rather than either transubstantiation or mere symbolic presence
- Worship as nourishment for laity living their baptismal vocation in the world

VATICAN II REFORMS

For over four centuries, worship in Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches would have looked significantly different. Yet the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) brought these reforms to Roman Catholic liturgy:

- Mass in the vernacular
- Communion in both kinds (in principle, though not always in practice)
- Scripture and preaching given new emphasis
- Emphasis on congregational song
- Liturgy defined as the full, active, and conscious participation of all worshipers
- Concelebration of the eucharist (by multiple priests) de-emphasized
- Increased use of “real presence” to describe the presence of Christ in the sacrament and in the assembled body of Christ
- The laity take on expanded roles in the liturgy

ECUMENICAL CONSENSUS

In a ripple effect, the reforms of Vatican II brought significant changes in Protestant worship. Beginning in the mid-1960s, the fruits of Vatican II not only affected Lutheran worship reforms, but also brought about a growing ecumenical consensus regarding the central movements, texts, actions, and theology of liturgy.

For Lutherans, the unity and continuity of the church through the ages is a guiding principle. The Lutheran Confessions set our liturgical life within the mainstream of Christian worship: “We do not abolish the Mass but religiously keep and defend it. . . . We keep traditional liturgical forms” (*Apology to the Augsburg Confession*, 24).

In the decades that followed Vatican II, an ecumenical approach to worship brought Christian denominations together. What many saw as innovative worship reforms—such as the greeting of peace shared by the congregation—were actually a restoration of practices from the early centuries of the church. In addition, common liturgical texts and a three-year lectionary—held in common with Roman Catholics—began appearing in the worship books of Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, and many others.

ECUMENICAL REFORMS SINCE VATICAN II

Consider also these reforms in the liturgy from the past several decades that have developed ecumenically in many churches:

- Vestments: albs and chasubles
- Centrality of baptism in faith and life
- Weekly service of word and table
- Recovery of Lent as a season for baptismal preparation and renewal
- Recovery of the Three Days, including the Vigil of Easter
- Free-standing table altar
- Ecumenical three-year lectionary
- Fuller use of sacramental signs (generous use of water; real bread for communion)
- Restoration of thanksgiving prayers in baptismal and eucharistic rites
- Anointing with oil (baptism, healing)
- Expanded use of processions (gospel and offering processions)

As we celebrate the Reformation in 2017 there is a striking resemblance in the rites of the major branches of Western Christianity—a reason to celebrate our oneness in baptism even as we long for greater unity at the Lord’s table.

This discussion guide has been abridged for this sampler. The complete guide will appear in the Sourcebook.

EVENING PRAYER

ORACIÓN DE LA TARDE

We may listen to drumming or other music.

We attend to the sound of a bell or gong.

We light a candle.

We sing an evening song.

We pray with words inspired by Psalm 121.

My help comes from you, O God,
you made heaven and earth.

You do not let my foot be moved,
you watch over me.

You are my keeper, my shade,
**the sun shall not strike me by day,
nor the moon by night.**

You preserve me from all evil,
you keep my life.

You watch over my going out
and my coming in,
**from evening until morning,
now and always. Amen.**

We listen to a short reading of scripture.

We meditate in silence.

God, our creator and protector,
you illumine the world and breathe life into us.
You heal the world with your outstretched arms.
You rescue creation and inspire your church.
We thank you for this day.

Podemos hacer oír el tambor u otra música.

Escuchamos el sonido de la campana o del gong.

Escendemos el cirio.

Cantamos un cántico vespertino.

Hacemos oración inspirada en el Salmo 121.

Mi socorro viene de ti, Oh Dios,
que has hecho el cielo y la tierra.

No dejas que mi pie se deslice,
tú velas sobre mí.

Tú eres mi guarda, mi sombra,
**el sol no me herirá de día,
ni la luna de noche.**

Tú me proteges de todo mal,
guardas mi vida.

Tú cuidas de mi salida
y de mi entrada,
**desde el atardecer hasta el amanecer,
ahora y siempre. Amén.**

Escuchamos una breve lectura bíblica.

Meditamos en silencio.

Dios, creador y protector,
tú iluminas el mundo e infundes vida en nosotros.
Sanas al mundo con tus brazos extendidos.
Rescatas la creación e inspiras a tu iglesia.
Te damos gracias por este día.

Let us remember your gifts and your promises
in our thoughts and actions,
in our communities and churches.
Amen.

On our hearts and on our houses,
the blessing of God.

In our coming and our going,
the peace of God.

In our life and our believing,
the love of God.

At our end and new beginning,
**the arms of God to welcome us
and bring us home. Amen.**

After the final bell or gong the candle is extinguished.

Haznos recordar tus dones y tus promesas
en nuestros pensamientos y acciones,
en nuestras comunidades e iglesias.
Amén.

En nuestros corazones y casas,
haya bendición de Dios.

En nuestro ir y venir,
haya paz de Dios.

En nuestra vida y en nuestro creer,
haya amor de Dios.

En nuestro final y en nuestro nuevo comienzo,
**estén los brazos de Dios para recibarnos
y llevarnos al hogar. Amén.**

*Después de sonido final de la campana o del gong,
se extingue el cirio.*

MIDWEEK LENTEN SERIES

Luther's Catechisms

OVERVIEW

Early in its history the Lenten season became a time of education in the basics of the Christian faith for new converts seeking baptism at the Easter Vigil. Martin Luther encouraged preaching on the catechisms, especially during Lent. Using the catechisms as a basis for midweek Lenten worship provides an opportunity to revisit some of the basic teachings of the Christian community. In addition to Luther's Small and Large Catechisms, worship leaders and preachers are encouraged to consider Luther's hymns, prayers, and sermons for insights into the series.

While Luther's catechetical hymns reinforce the teachings of the catechism, their absence from the most recent hymnals illustrates the difficult musical settings available. If worship planners want to share these hymns with the assembly, they might consider reading the text or printing it in the bulletin for worshipers to read.

The use of a repeated gathering hymn ("Lord, keep us steadfast in your word") and Luther's evening prayer near the end of each service are suggested to create continuity within the six-week series.

PATTERN FOR WORSHIP

Opening

- Gathering Hymn
- Dialogue

Word

- Readings
- Reflection
- Hymn of the Day

Prayers

- Prayers
- Luther's Evening Prayer (*ELW*, p. 1167 or Small Catechism)
- Lord's Prayer
- Blessing
- Sending Hymn

WEEK OF LENT 1: TEN COMMANDMENTS

The constraints of a midweek service do not permit detailed explanation of all the commandments.

A preacher would do well to focus on the first commandment and the call to have no other gods than the true God of ancient Israel. From this relationship flows our calling to serve God and to love our neighbor as ourselves. In this time of increased conversation with other denominations, preachers might alert listeners to the difficulty of referring to commandments merely by number, since not all denominations follow the same numbering system. In a time when we often hear talk about “gods” or “idols” to define the popularity of contemporary entertainers or sports heroes, perhaps a renewal of what these words really mean in the context of our faith is in order.

GATHERING

Lord, keep us steadfast in your word
ELW 517, LBW 230

DIALOGUE

Psalm 1:1-6

READINGS

Exodus 20:1-17

Large Catechism: “Conclusion of the Ten Commandments” (Book of Concord 429:324-325)

HYMN OF THE DAY

God’s word is our great heritage
ELW 509, LBW 239

SENDING

All praise to thee, my God, this night
ELW 565, LBW 278

WEEK OF LENT 2: APOSTLES’ CREED

The creed helps us know more about the God we serve, reminding us of the nature and work of God, the sending of Jesus to redeem us, and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the church and the believer. Consider the role of a creed in contemporary life and the specific role of this creed for Christians. We enter the church through a baptism grounded in this creedal statement and journey through life mindful of living in the presence of the holy Trinity. This service gives the preacher a chance to consider the trinitarian foundation of our Christian faith by reviewing the many ways we see this God at work in our world and in our lives.

GATHERING

Lord, keep us steadfast in your word
ELW 517, LBW 230

DIALOGUE

Profession of Faith (ELW, pp. 235, 237)

READINGS

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Large Catechism: “The Creed” (Book of Concord 431:5-8)

HYMN OF THE DAY

We all believe in one true God
ELW 411, LBW 374

SENDING

O Trinity, O blessed Light
ELW 571, LBW 275

THE CHURCH'S JOURNEY IN ART AND SONG

HOW TO ADAPT AND CONTEXTUALIZE A HYMN FESTIVAL FOR LOCAL USE DURING 2017 AND BEYOND

It is often said that the Lutheran church is a singing church. Singing by the gathered people of God, while not unique to Lutherans, is a hallmark of who we are. Lutherans have a rich tradition of the visual arts, as well. In a Lutheran understanding, both of these artistic forms can rightly be used to communicate the word of God and, therefore, when joined together, can be a rich way of commemorating the five hundredth anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. However, music and visual art did not begin in sixteenth century Germany, nor did they end there. These art forms are lively and ever-evolving. We do well, therefore, to integrate music and art from many times, places, and peoples moved by the same Spirit to fully observe this forthcoming anniversary.

Reformation 500 Sourcebook: Anniversary Resources for Congregations will include materials for congregations or synods to use in creating a festival of art and song that will lead participants on a journey—not a chronological or linear journey, but, rather, a journey exploring some of the themes of the Reformation: How do we gather as the church? For what do we give thanks and for what do we repent? Because of God's reconciling mercy, how do we rejoice? How is God calling us into the future?

Participants at the ELCA's 2015 Worship Jubilee, "Called to Be a Living Voice," gathered together at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church in Atlanta to experience one manifestation of this Journey. At that event, the songs were as diverse as the church itself, including:

- A Mighty Fortress; Now Thank We All Our God (German)
- Built on a Rock (Scandinavian)
- Gather Us In; Give Us Clean Hands; The Church; O Blessed Spring (Contemporary)
- Jesus, We Are Gathered; Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading (African)
- Mirad cuán Bueno; Tú diste a Israel (Latino)
- Taste and See; I Will Rejoice (African American)
- Come Now, O Prince of Peace (Asian)
- Ubi caritas et amor (Chant)
- Amazing Grace (English/American)

These songs were led by an equally diverse team of musicians, yet everyone gathered joined in singing as the church together. Visual artwork accompanying the singing was equally diverse. Four moments of reflection were interspersed, including excerpts of writings from throughout the centuries.

From the Atlanta event, the *Reformation 500 Sourcebook* will include:

- the complete order of songs with the stanzas sung;
- graphic (TIF) files for the songs not in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and for those songs for which selected stanzas will be sung;
- commentary on how musicians might lead the singing in ways suited to the musical style;
- a link to video recordings of the commentary read by four different voices;
- a link to the archive of the live-stream, which can be used to experience the various musical styles;
- a link to the electronic files containing the artwork that accompanied the singing;
- information on how to obtain copyright permission for these songs and artwork.

The community gathered in Atlanta for the first experience of this Journey was unique: together for only a few days, representing worshipping communities from across the whole church with all their different musical vocabularies, resources, histories, and pieties. Those who plan to recreate this Journey during the 2017 anniversary will have different communities. Some may decide to use the songs, art, and commentary used in Atlanta. Others may customize the program for their particular context. Perhaps some will add additional parts for choirs and brass. Others may simplify for use with more modest musical resources. Some may have the commentaries spoken by a live person, while others may use the video clips provided. Some may choose to substitute different hymns or songs from those sung in Atlanta. Some may use the artwork files as they are presented, even when substitute songs are sung. Some may choose to not use artwork at all or to use local art instead. Some may choose to enhance with additional arts, such as dance, drama, poetry, and photography. The possibilities are plentiful.

In addition to what is provided from the Atlanta event, *Reformation 500 Sourcebook* will provide:

- an extensive compilation of alternative hymns and songs that adhere closely to the themes of the original choices;
- the text of the commentaries, if it is desired to have these spoken live rather than using the video clips.
- source information for related instrumental parts, concertato or stanza settings, and so forth.

Whether local planners craft an event that is similar to the one presented during “Called to Be a Living Voice,” or use alternate songs, differing instrumentation, artwork, and commentary, these resources provide a foundation for commemorating the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation through assembly singing and visual art that is grounded in our tradition, expresses the church broadly, is honest, and is always looking forward.

WHO ARE WE LUTHERANS?

The Augsburg Confession

The Augsburg Confession, written in the midst of the Reformation tumult, is the core statement of what Lutherans believe. It was produced in 1530, thirteen years after young professor Martin Luther posted the Ninety-five Theses in Wittenberg. A lot had happened in those thirteen years. Thanks to Luther's creative exploration of the gospel and its implications, his colorful personality (opponents had other adjectives) and the availability of the printing press, his views on religious matters as well as the politics of the day had been widely distributed. In many parts of central Europe, people were responding favorably, to the consternation of the Church of Rome, which had been accustomed to being the single expression of the Christian church in that region.

In the sixteenth century there was no nation called Germany. Rather, the various duchies and electorates made up a key part of the Holy Roman Empire, a remnant of the European territory once governed by ancient Rome. For much of Reformation times, Charles V governed as Holy Roman Emperor. He had watched his empire become increasingly fractured by divisions among princes favorable to Luther and other reformers, and those who kept their loyalty to Rome and the pope. The emperor needed the princes to be unified, not least because a Turkish invasion of Europe had reached the gates of Vienna. And so, in January 1530, the emperor called for a diet, or general assembly, in the German city of Augsburg. He asked the German princes and imperial cities to explain their religious convictions.



Presentation of Augsburg Confession



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LEARNING ABOUT THE REFORMATION in Today's World

LEARNING FOR ADULTS

The *Reformation 500 Sourcebook* will provide many resources to assist congregations in observing the five hundredth anniversary of the Reformation. In our increasingly diverse world, though, many people who attend Lutheran congregations are seeking to know more about the teachings, the faith practices, and the story of this church.

- What was the Reformation, and how has it affected Christians of all labels?
- What do we mean by “the word of God”? How does it help us deal with everyday life? How do Lutherans read the Bible?
- What are Lutheran perspectives on worship and the arts, on education and the sciences?
- How does God’s good news lead us so strongly into our everyday vocations, into serving others, into proclaiming that gospel in word and deed?

These are just a few of the questions that will be addressed in a compelling, colorful study book available by mid-2016. Congregations will find it suitable for group study not only in connection with this anniversary but as an ongoing resource for introducing people to the Lutheran church, with an accompanying leader guide. Individuals and families will also find it attractive as something to help remember this major anniversary.

LEARNING FOR CHILDREN

Children, too, benefit from learning about our Lutheran roots, and so a lively and colorful resource for middle-elementary learners is in preparation. Accompanied by a leader guide, it will open up a basic understanding of the way God’s good news frees us to live, and how Martin Luther and his friends lifted up that good news for us all.



PLANNING CHECKLIST

Congregations that observe their own anniversaries know that it takes time to plan. They often start a year or more ahead of time. Although the anniversary date itself falls in October 2017, it's not too early to begin planning how you will bring life to this observance in ways suitable to your context.

- Identify a group of leaders to carry this task forward. What areas of congregational life will be included?
- Who will make up this group? Consider including people of a variety of ages and especially young people, who will carry the gifts of the Reformation into the next five hundred years. Think not only of “cradle Lutherans” but also those who are new to the Lutheran church.
- Once your group is assembled, identify the goals and hoped-for outcomes for this anniversary in your setting. Be realistic and mindful of how it will best enhance your ongoing mission and ministry.
- Identify the time frame for your observance. Will it be the church year beginning with Advent 2016? One year from Reformation 2016 to Reformation 2017? Only the fall of 2017?
- Discuss possible events and activities using questions and ideas such as the following.
- Will Reformation emphases be woven into regular Sunday worship throughout the time frame of your observance? Or will you plan mainly for a given month or day?
- How will music enliven your observance? Will you learn hymns and songs, whether new or from the heritage? What might challenge and delight your choirs or other ensembles?
- Will you join voices with other Christians in an event designed for ecumenical participation?
- Begin to collect information about learning resources to explore for use with adults and youth.
- Consider approaches designed for conversation with people from other Christian traditions.
- How are young people preparing for affirmation of baptism encountering the Reformation? How might people of all ages engage with Luther's catechisms during this time?
- How will your children learn the story of God's love also through the Reformation story?
- How will your congregation observe the ELCA's “God's work. Our hands.” Sunday in 2016 and 2017?
- What activities can extend the work Lutherans do to serve our neighbors, to care for creation, and to seek justice and peace throughout the earth?
- How can you prepare to communicate effectively to people in your community during a year when there will be media interest in the question, “Who are the Lutherans?”
- Hospitality, including festive food and fellowship, often accompanies events and activities such as those described above. Planning a gracious welcome for visitors and ecumenical guests may take on special importance.
- Hospitality plans can certainly include an aspect of fun associated with local or cultural traditions. Consider also how to lift up the Lutheran emphasis of the wide welcome of God's grace and mercy that transcends narrow cultural characteristics in order to embrace the whole world and its peoples.

MORE RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

In addition to the Reformation 500 resources in preparation that are described in this sampler, here are some other resources to explore.

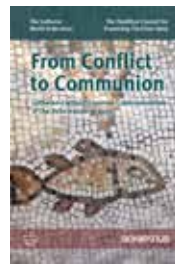
One Hope: Re-Membering the Body of Christ



available at augsburgfortress.org

Here is a rich ecumenical resource for congregations, especially Roman Catholic and Lutheran communities. By gathering together to reflect on its contents, Christians will foster the church's unity on a grassroots level and grow in their awareness of the ways that unity already exists.

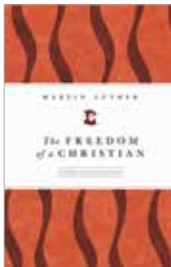
From Conflict to Communion



available at elca500.org

The Lutheran–Roman Catholic Commission on Unity invites all Christians to study its report and to walk along the path toward the full, visible unity of the church. Free, downloadable document and study guide available.

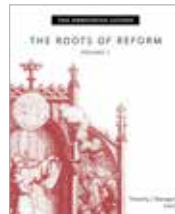
The Freedom of a Christian



available at augsburgfortress.org

This new translation of Luther's treatise brings alive the revolutionary zeal and theological boldness of the Reformation era.

The Annotated Luther Series



available at fortresspress.com

Volume 1 contains writings that defined the roots of reform set in motion by Martin Luther, beginning with the Ninety-five Theses (1517). Six volumes are planned for release over the next several years.

<http://www.elca500.org/>



This site lifts up the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Reformation observances and facilitates connections among ELCA partners, networks, and expressions. Find news and resources, explore upcoming events, and share your own ideas and activities.

<https://2017.lutheranworld.org/>



Connect with Lutherans around the globe at the Lutheran World Federation's Reformation anniversary site under the theme "Liberated by God's Grace."



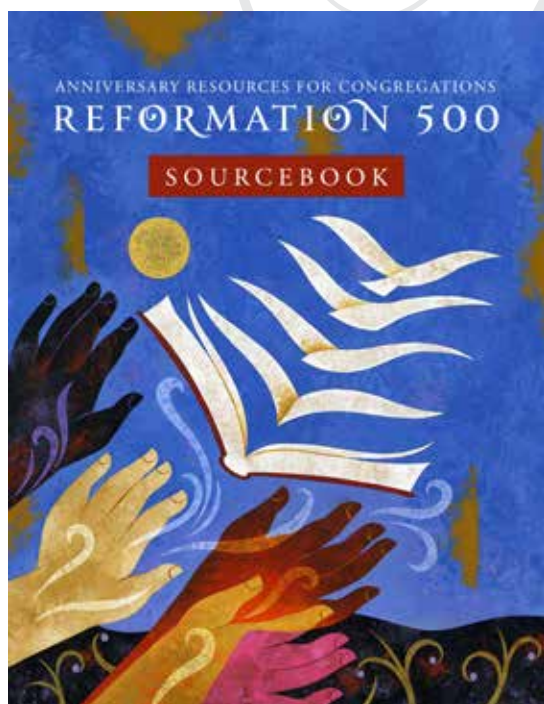
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Look inside this sampler for a content overview of the forthcoming *Reformation 500 Sourcebook*, including sample materials, an overview of other planned resources for children and adults, and a planning checklist—the perfect place to get started!

Reformation 500 Sourcebook: Anniversary Resources for Congregations

As congregations plan the ways they will observe the Reformation's five hundredth anniversary, this Sourcebook will be an essential guide. Gathered in this Sourcebook will be a variety of ideas for planning worship services, education events, music festivals, service projects, and connections with other Christians. A CD-ROM of reproducible, customizable content is also included. Available June 2016.

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Visit augsburgfortress.org/ref500sourcebook to pre-order today.