



500 Years of Faith

A Children's Sermon
to Accompany the Distribution
of the RFL Magnet

500 hundred years is a long time, isn't it, boys and girls? But we are celebrating something called the Reformation that happened 500 years ago. You might wonder to yourself, "Who cares what happened 500 years ago? What does something from that far in the past have to do with my life today?" Well, let me tell you, what happened in the Reformation 500 years ago has a lot to do with your life of faith today.

The year was 1517 and a young monk named Martin Luther was worried about something that was happening in the Church. The Church at the time sold papers called indulgences and told people that when they bought these indulgences, their sins were forgiven. Martin Luther knew from the Bible that forgiveness comes only through Jesus. So he posted sentences, called the 95 Theses (or points of discussion), about this on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany, which was the community bulletin board at the time.

Word about Luther's message, that we are forgiven and saved only by grace through faith in Jesus, spread throughout Germany and then throughout the world because of the invention of the printing press. Copies of Luther's writings landed in the hands of thousands of people who came to know that we are saved by grace through faith alone.

The Church leaders at the time said that Luther should recant (which means "take back") what he wrote. But Luther could not. He said, "Here I stand. I can do no other." Luther then went on to translate the Bible into German so that everyone in his country could read the Gospel message for themselves. New churches that followed the teachings of the Bible rediscovered by Luther began forming and continued to grow. This period became known as the Reformation.

Our church today is here because we follow the teachings of the Reformation. We read the Bible and sing hymns in our own language in church today because of the Reformation. We focus on the fact that it is Jesus that forgives us. What wonderful reasons to celebrate the 500th anniversary of this event! Continue to live in the grace and love of Jesus every day. (Hand out RFL magnets.)