

Newsletter Article for July, 2017

One of the first things I noticed as I drove into the church parking lot was the church's sign. What struck me were those three letters at the end of the church's name "U.A.C." which mean "Unaltered Augsburg Confession". This year marks the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran reformation and June, 25 marks the anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession. Since this church is named *Luther Memorial Lutheran Church* it's fitting I write a bit about the Augsburg Confession. Why do we need to care about such an old document today? Why is it we have the *Unaltered* version?

The Augsburg Confession is comprised of twenty-eight articles. The ultimate aim of the Augsburg Confession was and is still to summarize the main teachings of the Bible. These twenty-eight articles confess what the church believes and teaches about topics such as God, Jesus, sin, the role of pastors, how we obey those in government, the Lord's Supper, and even about the final coming of Jesus Christ on the last day. These twenty-eight articles answer questions we've all asked ourselves! Please let me know if you need a copy of this. It is also easily found online so please read it when you can. We today confess the words of the Augsburg Confession in its *unaltered* form without any modern changes. This is why "U.A.C" is affixed to the end of our church's name. What the Lutheran Church believes about Jesus Christ has not changed!

The Augsburg Confession shows that the Lutheran faith is not only drawn *from* Scripture, but has been the basic teachings of the Christian Church throughout the ages. Although it is highly unlikely modern Christians will ever be called upon to give an account of their faith in quite the same manner as the reformers did at Augsburg, the presentation of the Augsburg Confession still serves as an important model to the Christian life of faith. Paul teaches us: "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9). For this reason, faith necessarily gives rise to a public confession of faith through words and actions. If we believe in Jesus and the salvation He offers, we should confess that faith publicly, knowing that whatever the negative social, political, or personal consequences, the forces of this world do not have the power to control our ultimate fate. Christ has already overcome the world (Jn. 16:33) and we need not fear confessing the Faith boldly. Let's hear it for the Unaltered Augsburg Confession!

In Christ,

Pastor Barkley