

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

The Christian Church everywhere celebrates this good news.

A recent (April 22, 2017) gathering at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Casper commemorated the good news of Easter in a very particular way. An almost-full church, with a procession of nearly a dozen robed and rostered leaders was led in Word and Prayer by The Very Rev. Gary J. Ruzicka, Dean of the Casper Deanery, Diocese of Cheyenne, and The Rev. James W. Gonia, Bishop, Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA. It was a privilege for this pastor to participate!

2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation when a dedicated Catholic monk named Martin Luther protested the church leadership of his time. The world has never been the same.

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of official Lutheran and Catholic dialogue. Church leaders try to catch up with what many households around our globe have been doing for years: living as faithful Catholics and Lutherans together. **As saints and sinners, we mark our imperfect way of seeking to follow our perfect Lord.**

Part of the commemorative service included these statements from documents prepared to mark the anniversary:

“As the commemoration in 2017 brings joy and gratitude to expression, so must it also allow room for both Lutherans and Catholics to experience the pain over failures and trespasses, guilt and sin in the persons and events that are being remembered.” “In the sixteenth century, Catholics and Lutherans frequently not only misunderstood but also exaggerated and caricatured their opponents in order to make them look ridiculous. They repeatedly violated the eighth commandment, which prohibits bearing false witness against one's neighbor.”

“Lutherans and Catholics often focused on what separated them from each other rather than looking for what united them. They accepted that the Gospel was mixed with the political and economic interests of those in power. Their failures resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. Families were torn apart, people imprisoned and tortured, wars fought and religion and faith misused. Human beings suffered and the credibility of the Gospel was undermined with consequences that still impact us today. We deeply regret the evil things that Catholics and Lutherans have mutually done to each other.”