

LIFE Talk • October 14, 2026

“...THAT THEY MAY BE ONE.” JOHN 17:21



THEME • Church History: The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

LIFE TALK • The Reformation

The Reformation changed Christianity—and the world. Continuing our journey through Church history, we'll explore the dramatic events, personalities, conflicts, and theological questions surrounding the Reformation from 1350 to 1700 AD. Discover how this pivotal era shaped the Lutheran tradition and the many expressions of Christianity we know.

PRESENTER • Dr. Jennifer Wojciechowski



Dr. Jennifer Wojciechowski is an associate professor of Church History at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN, and she has been teaching at Luther since 2019. Prior to this, she taught in the religion department at Augsburg University. She's the associate editor of the journal Word & World. She is the author of *Women and the Christian Story: A Global History* (2022), *Tending the Garden: A History of Christian Mysticism* (2025), and co-author of the upcoming *A World History of Christianity* (Baker Academic, forthcoming).

Watch replay videos or access online LIFEU brochure at saintandrews.org/lifeu

Email Sue Lennartson to learn about or join a LIFE Group at slennartson@saintandrews.org

LIFE Group Sheet

"...THAT THEY MAY BE ONE." JOHN 17:21



GETTING STARTED

Share in a spiritual practice, discuss an igniter question, and/or begin with prayer.

Creator God, thank you for the opportunity to gather with each person here, to grow in faith and knowledge together, and for the gift of your Holy Spirit. Bless our time, our conversation, and how we care for one another. Amen.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Briefly share (in pairs or 3s) your initial reaction to what you heard in the LIFE Talk. What stood out to you? What is stirring inside of you? What are you thinking, feeling, or wondering about?

DIGGING DEEPER

- What historical events led up to the Reformation? Do you think that it was a historical inevitability that someone would challenge the authority of the Catholic Church during this period? Why or why not?
- Can you relate to Luther's struggles with sin and forgiveness? How do you think his understanding of justification by faith alone changed how someone related to God and society in the sixteenth century?
- The Reformation in Germany was largely a "bottom-up" event. In other words, it was a popular movement. How does this compare to other places? Why do you think the Reformation started to fragment so quickly?

CLOSING PRAYER

Offer a prayer to draw your time to a close, using one of your own or the one below.

God of wisdom and beauty, thank you for this time together. Help us as we live out our faith this week and share what we have learned. Make us instruments of your peace and healing love, as we grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus. In Christ's holy name we pray, Amen.

900 Stillwater Road • Mahtomedi, MN 55115

saintandrews.org

651.426.3261



Week 2 Handout

Dr. Jennifer Wojciechowski

Early Modern Christianity/Reformation

Historical Eras Covered:

Late Medieval: 1350–1500

Early Modern: 1500–1750ish

*Though the bulk of this talk will be focused on the sixteenth century

Reformation Timeline:

1517: Martin Luther posts the 95 Theses

1519: Charles V becomes Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire

1521: Diet of Worms (“Here I stand...”)

1522: Zwingli begins Zurich reforms

1524/25: Peasants’ War

1530: Diet of Augsburg

1531: Zwingli dies at Kappel; Virgin of Guadalupe in the Americas

1534: England breaks with Rome

1535: Fall of Münster

1536: Calvin publishes his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

1540: Order of Jesuits approved by the Pope

1545: Council of Trent (first phase)

1546: Luther dies at Eisleben

Further reading list:

1. Carlos Eire, *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450-1650* (Yale University Press, 2014).
2. Hans J. Hillerbrand, *The Division of Christendom: Christianity in the Sixteenth Century* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2007).
3. Volker Leppin, *Martin Luther: A Late Medieval Life* (Baker Academic, 2017).
4. Carter Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford/Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1996).
5. Donald McKim, ed. *Martin Luther Today* (Fortress Press, 2026).
6. Steven Ozmet, *The Age of Reform 1250–1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (Yale University Press, 1980).
7. Kirsi I. Stjerna, *Women Reformers of Early Modern Europe: Profiles, Texts, and Contexts* (Fortress Press, 2022).
8. Merry Wiesner-Hanks, *Women and the Reformations* (Yale University Press, 2014).