



Martin Luther was already declared an outlaw, heretic and was excommunicated and sentenced to death in April of 1521. The Reformation continued to spread; while the emperor would ask the pope to call for a General Council of the Church. Very little would change in the Holy Roman Empire from the years 1526-1529 as Northern Germany became Lutheran. In 1529 many princes loyal to Rome changed their position while those loyal to the Lutheran Reformation protested in a forceful manner. A decision was issued for a formal “protest” and the reformers were thereafter labeled with the term “Protestants.” Emperor Charles ordered all rulers within the Empire to attend Augsburg for the Imperial Meeting to settle the issue once and for all. Charles wanted the Church to be “one” in Germany, one reason being so there would be complete unity in Germany to face the many threats from the Turkish Empire.

Lutheranism was only allowed in areas where the Empire was unable to stop it by force. In areas of Germany that were not loyal to the Roman Church, the Lutherans had little military protection if any at all. On April 4, 1530, Luther and others left Torgau, arriving at Coburg Castle 10 days later. Philip Melancthon was given the responsibility of leading the Lutherans at The Diet (meeting) of Augsburg.

The meeting at Augsburg revealed the Lutheran layman were sure of their confession, based on God's Word, and would not give in concerning Scripture. Emperor Charles arrived later and met with the Lutheran Princes and commanded there be no preaching of Lutheran sermons during the meeting of Augsburg. George Margrave of Brandenburg, “spoke for the Lutherans refusing to abide by Charles demands, saying 'Before I let anyone take from me the Word of God and ask me to deny my God, I will kneel and let them strike off my head.'” Emperor, Charles was clearly taken aback by George's statement, and speaking in broken German said; “Not cut off head, dear prince. Not cut off head.” (*Quotes from Introduction to the Book of Concord: Readers Edition, CPH. St. Louis, 2006, pages 23-27*).

At the Meeting of Augsburg, John Eck (Roman Catholic debater) presented a book, written by himself, attacking Luther, his followers and all Lutheran theology. The book titled “*Four Hundred and Four Articles for the Diet in Augsburg*” was filled with inaccurate quotes and claims about Luther's teaching as drawn from Scripture. Eck's purpose was to identify Lutheran teaching as false doctrine. The Lutherans drew up a new document for presentation at the Augsburg meeting (diet) to clearly state their confession of faith drawn from God's Word. The Augsburg Confession was written by Philip Melancthon to present a peaceful response to the Emperor while speaking the truth of their confession drawn from Scripture. On June 25, 1530, the Lutheran layman confessed their faith before the Emperor and the Roman Church of what they believe as taught in God's Word; the Holy Scriptures. They quoted Psalm 119:46 “I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame.” The Augsburg Confession was presented as their confession of the Biblical truth; God's Word, and a call for unity in the Christian Church. This is our confession to this day in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

At St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Beach, we finished studying the Augsburg Confession and most recently finished going through The Apology (defense) of The Augsburg Confession. These Confessions, found in the Book of Concord, along with The Smalcald Articles; The Power and Primacy of The Pope; The Small and Large Catechisms of Luther; The Formula of Concord, (Epitome) and The Formula of Concord: Solid Declaration) are found in The Book of Concord as well. The Book of Concord: The Confessions of The Lutheran Church are well worth continued study as they draw directly from God's Word to continue in a steadfast and faithful confession of what we believe as taught by God's Word alone.

Faith alone; Grace alone; Scripture alone; of the Reformation point to Christ alone, that we are saved by Grace alone through faith given by God's grace in Christ revealed in Scripture alone pointing to Christ and Christ alone our Redeemer, our Savior.

June 25 in the Church year commemorates the delivering of the Augsburg Confession which has not changed, nor will change because it is drawn from God's Word in all of its truth and purity. With grateful and thankful hearts for God's gracious gift of His Son Jesus Christ, we praise Him for the blessings of the cross, the death of Christ and His Resurrection, giving us forgiveness, life and salvation through the merits, works, sacrifice and death and resurrection of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

To God alone be all the Glory!
In The Name of Jesus!
In Christ, Pastor Ahrendt