

15 weeks before *Reformation Sunday*

REFORMATION HISTORY FACT

BOLD STEP RAPIDLY SPREADS

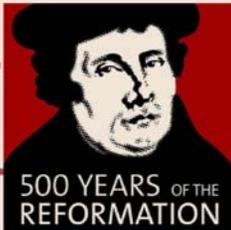
On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther took the bold step of proposing a debate of 95 statements and questions that focused primarily on the Pope authorizing the sale of indulgences, defined as a monetary gift to compensate for an individual's sins, to raise funds for the church.

How the 95 Theses were made public, however, remains a matter of inquiry. Was it as close friend Philip Melanchthon described: on the front door of Wittenberg Chapel, using a hammer and nails? That graphic telling created over time the iconic image. Most historians find little evidence to support that version.

They note more likely that it was Luther's letter written on the same day to the Archbishop of Mainz along with a copy of the theses which sparked what came next. Other scholars speculate that Luther contacted the Archbishop while simultaneously placing a copy of the theses on the chapel door.

Any of these versions could explain why, in the coming weeks, news of the 95 Theses rapidly spread throughout Germany and abroad. Whatever the actual scenario, this fact endures: on a fateful fall day in October, Martin Luther chose to act, and as a result the Protestant Reformation was launched.

REFORMATION
1517



ANNIVERSARY
2017



Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

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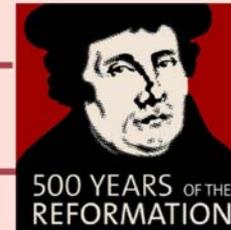
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Presented by the Johnsons,
St. Mark's Lutheran Church in
Springfield, Virginia and



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