

A Tricentennial and a Quincentennial: The Legacy of the Reformation

2017 is a year with two anniversaries important to our congregation: the 300th anniversary of the founding of our church here in Basking Ridge and the 500th anniversary of the start of the Reformation, traditionally dated as October 31, 1517, on which Martin Luther reputedly nailed his Ninety-five Theses on the door of All Saints' Church in Wittenberg, Germany. In this discussion series, we will review the history of Protestantism since the Reformation, beginning in Europe and then continuing into America. We will focus especially on some key theological concepts that have supported the development of Protestantism over these centuries and will review Bible passages that illustrate or were used as sources for these concepts.

- Sept. 24** Introduction to the Reformation and Our Common Roman Catholic Heritage
An introduction to the Reformation along with an examination of our pre-Reformation Roman Catholic heritage and common beliefs embodied in the ecumenical Nicene and Apostles' Creeds
- Oct. 1** Martin Luther, the Authority of Scripture, and Justification by Faith Alone
The history of the Reformation in the early 16th Century, with particular emphasis on Luther and his stress on the authority of the Bible and the key doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone
- Oct. 15** John Calvin, the Reformed Tradition, and the Sovereignty of God
Continuing the history of the Reformation from the late 16th to the middle of the 17th Century, a period of intense religious conflict but also when the Reformed Tradition became the dominant form of Protestantism in Europe and flourished in the new English colonies in America
- Oct. 22** John Wesley and Striving for Sanctification
An examination of the Protestantism after the religious conflicts of the 17th Century and into the 18th Century when new movements began to place renewed emphasis on the reformation of the individual through Sanctification
- Oct. 29** Divided Houses: Saints or Sinners?
A review of the divisions within the American Protestant denominations during the 19th Century resulting from the conflicts over slavery and a look at how Americans have dealt with differences among people
- Nov. 12** Seeking Reconciliation in an Age of Conflict
An examination of the effects on American Protestantism from such 20th century conflicts as two world wars, a cold war, and fights over civil rights and equality
- Nov. 19** The Future of the Reformation's Legacy in an Increasingly Diverse World
A discussion of the future of American Protestantism in a world with increasing religious and ethnic diversity

There will be no sessions on Oct. 8 and Nov. 5.