

Reformation: Then and Now

October 26 - November 5, 2026

Our Lutheran witness in the world is more vital than ever before. Join the New Jersey Synod on an 11-day pilgrimage to explore our Reformation roots in the land of Luther and to reflect on how our Lutheran heritage equips us for the church's mission today. We will remember our baptisms in Saints Peter and Paul Church in Eisleben, where Martin Luther himself was baptized. Rostered leaders can remember our ordination vows at the cathedral in Erfurt where Luther was ordained. Together we will give thanks for God's Word in our lives as we visit the Wartburg Castle, where Luther translated the New Testament from Greek into German so that ordinary people could read it. We'll spend Reformation Day in Wittenberg, where it all began with Luther's posting of the 95 Theses in 1517. We'll also visit Torgau, where Katie Luther is buried, and Leipzig, where Johann Sebastian Bach spent most of his career as a church musician. We will learn about the work of the ELCA Wittenberg Center, where a pastor of our Synod, the Rev. Bridget Gautieri, serves as Executive Director.

We'll be accompanied by the Rev. Dr. Kathryn "Kit" Kleinhans, who will help us think deeply about the implications of this history. The sixteenth century reformers stood up for their understanding of the Gospel in the face of both political and religious opposition. In the twentieth century, Lutherans in Germany faced the challenges of both the National Socialist party's efforts to control the church and the suppression of the church under postwar communism. Together we will ask that familiar question from Luther's Small Catechism - "What does this mean?" - as we consider how we are called to live our faith in an increasingly chaotic and divided world. The Rev. Dr. Kleinhans held the McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission at Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa, and recently retired as Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University, Columbus, Ohio. She has led over a dozen travel seminars to this region of the world.

I hope you will come along for this pilgrimage of learning, connection, and a renewed appreciation for the ways our Lutheran theological foundations shape our faith today.

The Rev. Christa M. Compton, PhD
Bishop



Contact:
Pastor Carol Lindsay
Synod Trip Coordinator

germanytrip@njsynod.org



New Jersey Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's Work. Our Hands.
1930 Hwy 33, Hamilton Square NJ 08690

Reformation: Then and Now

Eisenach - Erfurt - Buchenwald - Eisleben - Wittenberg - Leipzig - Berlin

Day 1: Monday, October 26, 2026: Leave the US

We leave the US individually for our overnight flight to Frankfurt, Germany.

Day 2: Tuesday, October 27, 2026: Arrive in Germany

Arrive in Frankfurt in the morning where we meet our bus and tour director. After everything is settled, we leave for Eisenach, where we check in at our hotel Thuringer Hof. Some free time in the afternoon to explore Eisenach on your own, relax and shake your jetlag. In the evening gather for a welcome dinner. D

Day 3: Wednesday, October 28, 2026: Eisenach

Join a city tour of Eisenach and take the beautiful trip up the mountain to the Wartburg Castle. After his excommunication Martin Luther was kidnapped by his prince and hid here for almost a year under the alias of "Junker Jorg." See the room where Luther lived and made his translation of the New Testament. Later visit the Bach House - experience what a typical home looked like in the 18th century, see an interesting collection of antique instruments and hear a demonstration on a variety of these pieces as well as the Lutherhouse. Return to our hotel for dinner and overnight. BD

Day 4: Thursday, October 29, 2026: Erfurt

Discover Erfurt this morning: Wealthy merchants founded Erfurt's university. When Luther studied here, the university was a center of humanist thought where church dogma was brought into question. We will visit St. Mary's Cathedral, where Luther was ordained. The stained glass windows, bronze candelabra, and Gloriosa bell were all here during Luther's time. We will enjoy a walk through the Augustinerkloster, where Luther celebrated his first mass and lived as a monk for six years. After lunch on your own, we travel to Buchenwald, the former concentration camp. A quarter of a million people were imprisoned here between 1937 and 1945. All of them suffered and 50,000 of them died. Among the prisoners were Lutheran pastors Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Paul Schneider, outspoken opponents of National Socialism. A private guided tour will allow us time for reflection and a service of reconciliation. Back to Eisenach for a free evening to discover the Thuringian cuisine on our own. No group dinner tonight. B

Day 5: Friday, October 30, 2026: Eisleben

This morning we drive to Eisleben. We have a guided tour of Eisleben: Luther's birth and death occurred here, his Bethlehem and Jerusalem. His home is typical of the Middle Ages. An exhibition interprets the spiritual environment of Luther's childhood. You can further understand the foundation of Luther's faith when you visit the Church of St. Peter and Paul, where Luther was baptized. The late medieval residence where Luther died is preserved nearby.



Our tour includes a stop at St. Andrews, where Luther gave his last four sermons. After lunch on our own, we continue to Wittenberg. A local guide will help us explore the city, where Martin Luther lived and taught for 36 years. The first part of the tour includes the City Church, where Luther preached thousands of times, and the Castle Church, where he posted his "95 Theses," thus sparking the Reformation. We check in at Colleg Wittenberg for the next four nights. In the evening, take part in the ELCA Reformation Day worship service in English. Dinner and overnight. BD

Day 6: Saturday, October 31, 2026: Reformation Day in Wittenberg

Wittenberg is alive with Renaissance spirit today as it celebrates more than 500 years of Lutheran heritage. Free day to choose among Reformation Day activities including the worship services in English, museum tours, food and activities typical of Luther's time. In the afternoon, meet Rev. Bridget Gautieri at a coffee and cake reception and a brief presentation of the ministry and programming of the center and her work. Option to attend a classical concert at the Town Church and dinner on own. Overnight in Wittenberg. B

Day 7: Sunday, November 1, 2026: All Saints Day Wittenberg

We join the City Church Congregation for Sunday Worship Service. Afterwards, meet for part two of our city tour. In 1883, the Prussian Crown Prince established the "Lutherhaus" as a museum, which archives more than 10,000 prints, 6,000 manuscripts, 2,000 coins and medals, and 14,000 illustrations. We explore the three-story museum, which displays only a fraction of its Reformation collection, the world's largest. The Reformer's living room, known as the "Lutherstube," is especially well preserved. In the afternoon, we visit Torgau. Take a tour of the city where, in 1544, the first palace and church were specifically built and consecrated under the auspices of a Protestant Prince. We will see this perfectly preserved Renaissance castle, its chapel and a special feat of engineering - the cantilevered spiral staircase. We continue to nearby St. Mary's Church, where Katharina von Bora, Luther's lively wife "Katie," is buried. Back to Wittenberg for some time to rest, dinner and overnight. BD

Day 8: Monday, November 2, 2026: Leipzig

In October 1989, the people of Leipzig first organized the demonstrations that brought hundreds of thousands into the streets for the "Peaceful Revolution." We will visit their rendezvous point at the Gothic (12th century) St. Nicholas Church and have a guided city walking tour which includes the 14th century St. Thomas Church, where Luther preached and where Bach served as cantor and choirmaster for 25 years. Afterwards free time for lunch on our own, meet with a local pastor who shares the story of how the Peaceful Revolution began. Tonight we will dine at the historic Auerbachs Keller, where, in a scene made famous by Goethe's Faust, Mephistopheles and Faust drank with the local students before flying away on a barrel. Return to Wittenberg. BD



Day 9: Tuesday, November 3, 2026: Berlin

We leave Wittenberg for Berlin. Our visit includes the bomb-damaged tower of Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, Brandenburg Gate, Reichstag and "Unter den Linden", the government district. At noon, stop at Berlin Cathedral for a short organ devotion. After check in at our hotel, we gather again for dinner. BD

Day 10, Wednesday, November 4 2026: Berlin

We continue our tour of Berlin for a visit of the German resistance museum and St. Matthews church, where Dietrich Bonhoeffer was vicar. Our final stop is at Bernauer Strasse and the Wall documentation center. Free time in the afternoon to explore Berlin on your own. In the evening we meet for closing dinner at a local restaurant. BD

Day 11, Thursday, November 5, 2026: Auf Wiedersehen!

It is time to say goodbye. A morning transfer will bring you to Berlin's airport for your homebound flight. B

Questions?**Pastor Carol Lindsay**

Synod Trip Coordinator

germanytrip@njsynod.org**Online registration issues?****Dawn Roberts**droberts@njsynod.org**Online payment issues?****Lois Parrett**lparrett@njsynod.org

Note: minor changes to the program are possible.

Accommodation confirmed:

Eisenach: Thüringer Hof (3 nights)

Wittenberg: Colleg Wittenberg (4 night)

Berlin: Hotel Maritim proArte (2 night)

Rates:

The net rates per paid participant for the land arrangement are based on double occupancy:

with a minimum of 20 participants

US\$ 2,670.00 per person

single room supplement US\$ 650.00

Included:

- Thoroughly experienced multilingual tour director from Frankfurt to Berlin Airport.
- Transportation in a 4- star European-styled motorcoach with climate control, reclining seats, restroom, sink, refrigerator, and coffee machine. Maximum 44 seats.
- Accommodations in typical German hotels, double occupancy en-suite.
- Taxes, parking and road fees.
- Local guides in Eisenach, Erfurt, Buchenwald, Eisleben, Wittenberg, Torgau, Leipzig and Berlin.
- Entrance fee to Wartburg castle, Lutherhaus and Bachhaus in Eisenach.
- Entrance fee to Augustinian Monastery in Erfurt.
- Entrance fee to both churches and Luther museums in Eisleben.
- Entrance fee for Castle church and Town Church, Luther House and Melanchthon House museums in Wittenberg.
- Entrance fees to both churches in Torgau.
- Presentation on Peaceful Revolution of 1989 incl. room rental.
- Coffee and cake reception ELCA Wittenberg Center incl. room rental.
- Sightseeing and excursions as cited in the program.
- 16 meals: 9 buffet breakfasts and 7 dinners (beverages are not included with lunch and dinners but with welcome and farewell dinners.)
- All necessary tips such as bellman, maid, doormen, dining room tips for meals specified in the itinerary and the customary gratuity to tour directors, drivers, step-on guides are included.
- Information folder for all participants including town and country brochures, country information and a detailed timed itinerary upon arrival in Frankfurt.

Not included:

Airfare, expenses for passports, visas, beverages, bar bills, telephone calls, laundry or items of a personal nature, baggage or trip insurance, meals other than those included in the itinerary, tips for beverages and drinks.

Terms and Conditions:

Any person reserving a Christian Tours Europe ("CTE") tour accepts the condition that CTE reserves the exclusive right to change tour itineraries, hotels, and other tour components whenever it is deemed necessary, although tours are planned and hotels are booked with all possible care. Published times in our itineraries are as accurate as possible and subject to change due to traffic, weather, mechanical and any other conditions that prevent CTE from operating under normal conditions. CTE cannot accept liability in the case of any passenger being denied boarding by any airline carrier due to carrier's over-booking of a flight, nor does it accept liability in the case of a cancelled or delayed flight. It shall be the passenger's responsibility solely to provide the means to join a missed tour that is already in progress. In the event that any dispute arises in which any party has a right to assert a claim, the exclusive jurisdiction for that claim shall be in a court of competent jurisdiction located in Wittenberg, Germany. The tour is operated exclusively under German law.

Responsibility:

Christian Tours Europe, Wittenberg, Germany acts only as an agent for all suppliers of service offered on this tour and does so upon the express condition and agreement that it shall not be liable for any injury, loss, damage, accident, delay, irregularity, or expense arising from strikes, war, weather, quarantines, sickness, government restrictions or regulations, from any act or omission of any individual, firm or corporation furnishing transportation, sightseeing, hotel accommodations, or any service in connection with such travel plan, or from any other cause whatsoever in connection therewith.

Baggage:

Transportation for one full-sized suitcase per person is included. For extra luggage, an additional \$30.00 per bag will be assessed. There is no charge for an additional carry-on bag, which must fit under your seat or in the overhead rack and for which you will be responsible. Although every effort is made to handle passengers' luggage as carefully as possible, Christian Tours Europe cannot be responsible, assume liability, or accept claims for loss or damage to luggage due to breakage, theft, or fair wear and tear through hotel and group carrier handling.

Travel requirements and insurance:

For U.S. citizens, a valid passport is all that is required. Participants are responsible for all visa, health and passport regulations. Please check your medical insurance for overseas coverage. It is strongly recommended that participants purchase trip insurance to cover health, trip cancellation, and loss of baggage.

Gratuities:

All necessary tips, such as maid, doorperson, and dining room tips for meals specified in the itinerary and the customary gratuity to escorts, drivers and step-on guides are included. Tips for beverages and drinks are not included; if you wish, additional appreciation may be extended on a voluntary and individual basis.

Physical activities:

There will be physical activities for you. **You should be in good health, able to climb stairs (sometimes many) without assistance, and to walk at a modest pace for more than two miles at a time.** Christian Tours Europe requires all handicapped or disabled clients requiring special assistance to be accompanied by a responsible paying adult and that Christian Tours Europe must be notified, in advance, of this special required assistance. It is also strongly encouraged to have your hearing and eyesight checked prior to the trip and purchase hearing assisted devices or eyeglasses as prescribed by your doctor.

REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete and sign. Return with deposit to:

Pay Link:

<https://www.njsynod.org/synod-donation>

Registrar: Dawn Roberts

NJ Synod ELCA

1930 State Highway 33

Hamilton Square, NJ 08690

609-586-6800 / germanytrip@njsynod.org

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Space is limited, and we encourage you to book early.

☐ Yes, I want to join the trip

\$ 2,670

PER PERSON

Gender on Passport (needed for hotel bookings)

☐ M

☐ F

☐ X

First Name

Last Name

Address

Date of Birth

Cell Phone

Passport No

Exp Date

Email Address

Accommodation desired:

☐ Single, Supplement \$650

☐ Double ☐ Twin(separate Beds)

☐ I request assistance in securing a roommate. If none is found by September 1, 2026, I will pay the single room supplement.

Roommate _____

I am vegetarian: ☐ yes ☐ no

I am allergic to:

Rates:

The net rates per paid participant for the land arrangement are based on double occupancy:

with a min. of 20 participants US\$ 2,670.00/person

single room supplement US\$ 650.00

Deposits, Acceptance, Cancellation and Payments:

I understand the per person cost covers land transportation, double occupancy accommodation, European standards, with supplement for single occupancy, and all attractions cited in the program. The tour cost includes only the land arrangement. Airfare is not included and must be arranged and paid for separately.

Initial deposit of US \$300 per person is due at time of registration. \$700.00 will be due additionally by June, 15, 2026. The full balance is due August 15, 2026. Dawn Roberts will serve as the registrar for this trip. She will accept deposits and arrange for bank transfers to Christian Tours Europe. Cancellations made prior to June 15, 2026 are refundable. Cancellations made between June 15, 2026 and August 14 2026 results in a cancellation fee of \$ 1,000 There will be no refunds for cancellations made after August 15, 2026 or no show.

☐ I will pay by check, payable to New Jersey Synod, and send it at my risk to Dawn Roberts, NJ Synod ELCA, 1930 State Highway 33, Hamilton Square, NJ 08690, 609-586-6800, to be received by the due dates.

☐ I will pay via pay link: <https://www.njsynod.org/synod-donation>

Participants are expected to "Cover Fees" for credit card use.

Airline Reservations:

To avoid airline cancellation penalties, you may wish to purchase your airline tickets after you have been notified that the required minimum of 20 participants have registered for the program. In order to join the group hotel transfer, you should plan to arrive at Frankfurt Airport no later than noon on October 27, 2026

My anticipated flight information (if known at this time) is:

Date: _____

Departure Airport: _____

Airline: _____ Flight number: _____

Arrival time: _____ at Frankfurt Airport

Homebound flight from Berlin:

Date: _____ Departure Time: _____

Airline: _____ Flight number: _____

Notice of Responsibility:

Please read carefully and sign below.

"I have read and understand this entire document and agree to the General Information, including the Terms and Conditions therein. I understand that the tour operator for this trip is Christian Tours Europe ("CTE"). Bishop Christa Compton, Dawn Roberts, Pastor Carol Lindsay and New Jersey Synod don't own or operate any of the firms or vendors that are expected to or will provide goods or services for this trip. Those firms include, but are not limited to, CTE; any hotels or other lodging establishments; sightseeing attractions; air, land or water transportation companies; and restaurants or other eating establishments. As a result, Bishop Christa Compton, Dawn Roberts, Pastor Carol Lindsay and New Jersey Synod aren't responsible for any death, injury of any sort, loss of property, delay or inconvenience occasioned by any negligent or willful act or omission of any such firm or vendor. In addition, Bishop Christa Compton, Dawn Roberts, Pastor Carol Lindsay and New Jersey Synod aren't responsible for any death, injury of any sort, loss of property, delay or inconvenience occasioned by force majeure or other acts of God, acts of government, acts of war, labor discord, criminal or terrorist conduct, or for any other act, action or inaction, whether negligent or otherwise, by any entity which it does not own or operate. I understand and accept that this trip is operated exclusively under German Law. I also understand and accept the conditions under which the trip will be conducted, particularly those which apply to flights, health, payments, refund policy, insurance, and participant's responsibilities.

I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the New Jersey Synod from costs and liabilities in connection with this tour with exceptions for gross negligence or willful misconduct by the synod."

The sale of this trip to you is specifically conditioned on your agreeing to these terms and conditions.

Date.

Signature