

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO: The Religion Editor of the Press-Enterprise
FROM: Providence Orthodox Presbyterian Church
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October 31st - Reformation Day?

For many, October 31st brings to mind images of jack-o-lanterns, costumed children and bags overflowing with candy. But All Hallow's Eve, more commonly known as Halloween, is not the only significant event celebrated on that day. For one church in the Temecula Valley, Providence Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the last day in October is a day to commemorate the Reformation of the Christian Church.

On October 31, 1517, a 33-year-old Augustinian monk, parish priest and professor of theology nailed "95 Theses" to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, opposing the Roman Catholic Church's sale of indulgences to finance the restoration of St. Peter's Basilica. That monk, Martin Luther, gave birth to the Protestant Reformation. Many Protestant Christians all over the world have commemorated that date, October 31st, ever since as "Reformation Day."

"In the scope of history, and the history of the Christian Church, October 31st, 1517 is monumentally significant" says Ben Wikner, pastor of Providence Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Temecula. "It was the proverbial straw that broke the back of the theological Dark Age," Rev. Wikner continued. "Luther and the Reformers brought Christendom back to the teachings of the Bible, encouraging as they did the universal reading of the Scriptures."

So while many will be dressing up as ghosts and goblins and stuffing themselves with candy, the members of Providence Church plan to dress as peasants and Protestants while eating hearty Medieval fare. The afternoon of events includes games, a puppet show, as well as historical presentations.

"The kids love it," says Sheryl M----, a member of Providence. "And they learn something as well, while having fun."

The public is invited to come to the Reformation Day celebration, set this year for Saturday October 27 from 1-5 pm, at the Watkins Ranch in Aguanga. The cost is free to the public. Providence Church is a mission work of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and meets for worship on Sundays at Temecula Valley High School at 10 am. For more information, call the Church Office at (909) 600-0600.

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