

Anniversary Readings from the Lutheran Confessions

Brief Descriptions of the Lutheran Confessions

The *Augsburg Confession*, presented to the secular government in 1530 (June 25), is the first great statement-of-faith of the Lutherans against the Medieval Church. It was written by Philip Melanchthon, Luther's friend and fellow professor at Wittenberg.

The *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* was presented in 1531. It was written by Philip Melanchthon (Luther's friend and fellow professor) to "defend" the original Augsburg Confession against criticism by further explaining its doctrine.

The *Smalcald Articles* were written by Luther himself in 1537. Luther was often ill and, being convinced he was approaching his end, he wrote these articles as a doctrinal "Last Will and Testament" to summarize the Bible's doctrine and unify the Lutherans around it.

The *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*, written in 1537 by Philip Melanchthon (Luther's friend and fellow professor), was written to specifically outline the Lutheran position on authority in the Medieval Church.

The *Small and Large Catechisms* (1529) were written by Luther to help teach the faith in a simple way for all ages. We still use Luther's Catechisms to teach the Christian faith today!

The *Formula of Concord* (1577) was written to unify all Lutherans under one banner. When Luther died there was a vacuum for leadership in the church and several "parties" formed within Lutheranism—some began to deny the Bible's doctrine, and others wanted to keep it pure. Martin Chemnitz was a leader of the pure Lutherans and the chief editor of the *Formula*, an extremely detailed document defending the doctrine of the Bible against the false teachings of other church bodies.