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## Re-Membering for a Common Future: Lutherans and Catholics Commemorate the Reformation, 2017

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### Abstract

precis:

This essay examines the significance of the joint commemoration of the Reformation by Lutherans and Catholics in 2017 as an opportunity for a healing of collective memories. It argues that the common re-reading of history proposed by the Lutheran-Catholic International Commission on Unity in *From Conflict to Communion* provides a corrective vision with consequences for identity-constituting memory and is key to a common future. The reception text of the U.S. Lutheran-Catholic working group, *Declaration on the Way*, takes

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### P R E C I S

*This essay examines the significance of the joint commemoration of the Reformation by Lutherans and Catholics in 2017 as an opportunity for a healing of collective memories. It argues that the common re-reading of history proposed by the Lutheran-Catholic International Commission on Unity in From Conflict to Communion provides a corrective vision with consequences for identity-constituting memory and is key to a common future. The reception text of the U.S. Lutheran-Catholic working group, Declaration on the Way, takes stock of the cumulative effects of fifty years of dialogue, rightly arguing for a move toward a more generous mutual ecclesial recognition.*



Dutch poet Corrie ten Boom wrote, “Memories are key—not to the past, but to the future.” Corrie and her family were imprisoned in a Nazi concentration camp during the Second World War for their efforts to protect Jewish families from deportation. They knew first-hand the power of memory, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Her words suggest that memories are powerful and formative. However we choose to live by them, memories are constitutive; that is to say, they shape us, with our personal and collective identities. If memories are indeed the key to the future, then the way we choose to remember the past will largely determine the way we enter into tomorrow.

As we prepare to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Reforma-



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