

Martin Luther (der 10. November 1483—der 2. Februar 1546)

## Finding Luther: On the Reformer's Trail

# Wittenberg—Finding Luther

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Recent archaeological finds from Martin Luther's Mansfeld and Wittenberg homes, shed more light on the private life of the man who changed the course of human history when he nailed his 95 Theses to the door of the Wittenberg's Castle Church.

An exhibition featuring a treasure trove of recent archaeological finds draws new interest to "the great reformer" – Martin Luther.

"LUTHER IS COMING!" is the cry echoing from Wittenberg, Germany, between now and 2017 when the five hundredth year anniversary of the nailing of the 95 Theses on the Castle Church is celebrated, especially in Saxony-Anhalt, where Martin Luther was born, lived much of his life, and died.

Luther's Reformation journey began in 1505 when he was on his way home from a visit to his parents and a violent thunderstorm near Erfurt convinced him to become a monk. Entering the Order of the Augustinian Hermits, in 1508 he was sent to Wittenberg, the seat of Frederick the Wise, a young and intelligent prince, who aided Luther during his many ordeals.

On October 31, 1517, Luther outlined his beliefs against indulgences in a long paper, which he nailed to the door of Wittenberg's Castle Church, and these theses were destined to shake the medieval world order to its very foundations.

Martin Luther (1483 to 1546) not only started the Reformation, which changed the world and was his most important legacy, but he also left behind telling evidence of his pri-

ate life and family in Mansfeld and Wittenberg, much of which only now has come to light.

Between October 31, 2008, and April 26, 2009, the State Museum of Pre-History in Halle on the Saale River will sponsor a large, special exhibit showing the newly-discovered archaeological findings of Martin Luther and his family. Together with other planned events, the exhibition marks the beginning of a decade of celebration of the Reformation in Saxony-Anhalt and the Reformation's far-reaching effects.

The centerpiece of the four thousand-square-foot State exhibit, to be located on the first and second floors, are the numerous artifacts that have been excavated at Luther's parental house in Mansfeld and at his study in Luther House in Wittenberg on Collegienstrasse. Also displayed will be items from Luther's birth house on the road formerly called Lange Gasse in Eisleben, as well as a range of artifacts that the museum has gathered from other museums throughout the world such as valuable Luther goblets and beakers. In all, the Museum will have sixty lending partners in the Luther exhibit.

And in a surprise move, the Pre-History Museum, which has just undergone a \$4.4 million renovation, will exhibit some Luther finds no one will know about until the opening of the exhibit in October. The new Luther exhibit is under the sponsorship of Minister-President Dr. Wolfgang Bohmer and Regional Bishop Axel Noack, along with the support of the Luther Memorials Foundation of Saxony-Anhalt in Wittenberg.

"Innumerable publications have been dedicated to the life of Martin Luther, and depending on the time of the publication and the author's intentions, historical truth and legend are almost inseparably intermingled with each other," says Dr. Michael Schefzik, curator of the Museum.

Thus, it was significant to have made a discovery in 2003 of some walls of a former building situated between the Luther House and the Honigmann'sches House within the Luther family complex in Mansfeld. The Luthers moved from Eisleben to Mansfeld in 1484, a short time after Luther was born.

Dr. Bjorn Schlenker, lead archaeologist on the Luther project, says there was a restoration program un-