

# CYRIL & METHODIUS: SETTING UP THE FOUNDATION FOR SLOVAK LUTHERANISM

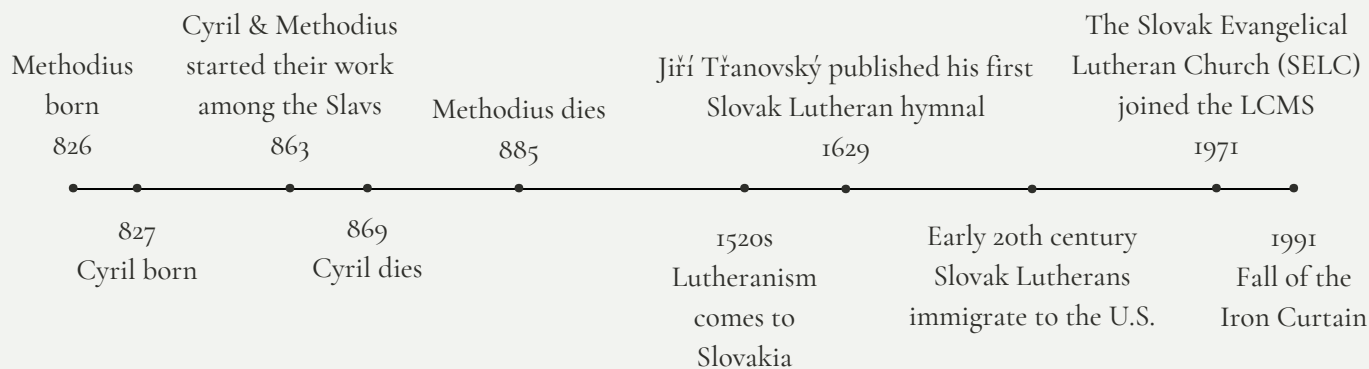


## History

Ss. Cyril and Methodius were two brothers born in Thessalonica who spent most of their lives evangelizing to the Slavs of Eastern Europe. Their work during the ninth century in this region led to the later creation of the Cyrillic alphabet and the translation of the Gospels and other parts of Scripture and liturgical manuscripts. The Church in Rome approved their work and ordained the two men, encouraging their work in this region. However, they faced much persecution for their work and refusal to use the Latin Mass exclusively. Yet they—and the Slavs—held strong to their particular interpretation of faith, believing in principles that Luther would later articulate in the Reformation.

When the Reformation came to Slovakia early in the sixteenth century, they quickly embraced it and made it their own with a unique heritage of hymns, liturgy, and culture. Famous Slovak theologians such as Jiří Třanovský helped to develop such customs. The later immigration of Slavs to the U.S. in the early twentieth century brought these traditions to America, as well, where they were well protected during the Cold War. The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Synod known as the SELC became part of the LCMS after the dissolution of the Synodical Conference and is now a non-geographical district within our church body. When the Iron Curtain fell in the 1990s, Lutheranism was re-established and built back up in many parts of Slovakia, where it has begun to flourish once again.

## Timeline



# Leading Characters



## CYRIL & METHODIUS

Cyril and Methodius were born in Thessalonica in 827 and 826, respectively. They greatly influenced the religious and cultural development of the Slovaks and were known as the "Apostles to the Slavs." In 863 they started their work among the Slavs, learned their vernacular, using it as a part of their churches' liturgy, and began translating the Gospels using an alphabet they created. Cyril died in Rome in 869 but Methodius continued to live among the Slavs until his death in 885.

## JIŘÍ TŘANOVSKÝ

Born April 8, 1592, Třanovský was a Lutheran priest and hymnwriter who served in Bohemia and Silesia. As a fervent advocate for the beauty of poetry and hymns and their use in teaching the faith, he published the first Slovak hymnal, the "Cithara Sanctorum," which has created a foundation for Slovak Lutheran culture. He also translated the Augsburg Confession. Třanovský died on May 29, 1637.



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## IMAGES:

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