

# Mid-Week Devotions

## **ABOUT THE THEOLOGICAL DECLARATION OF BARMEN:**

In November 1934, Dr. Reinhold Krause led a rally claiming "the German Reformation begun by Luther would be completed in the Third Reich" by forming a new nationalist church, the first step of which was to eliminate the Old Testament from German Bibles because of its "Jewish morality", along with the writings of the Apostle Paul. The New German church also centralized an idea all Jewish people held a "blood libel" as punishment for killing Jesus.

In response, Martin Niemöller established the "Pastor's Emergency League", a group of Lutheran ministers united around a written commitment to one another "their preaching will be bound only by Holy Scripture and the Confessions, and to the best of their ability help those brethren who in doing so have to suffer.", eventually producing the Theological Declaration of Barmen as their common statement of belief.

## **REFLECTION QUESTIONS:**

- Why do you think the Emergency League considered the Old Testament so central to their preaching?
- How did the German state use the church to accomplish its goals? Do you think the Emergency League responded correctly?