

AS WE GATHER: During the age of the Reformation from which our church traces its history, people like Martin Luther took a strong stand on three basic tenets of theology, namely that it is by grace alone that we are saved, it is from Scripture alone that the church receives its doctrine, and that it is by faith alone in God's grace, not by good works, that we are justified before God. Grace alone, Scripture alone, and faith alone became watch words for the Reformation, and from these three themes our worship today is drawn.



SHARING OF PEACE: We greet one another with the peace of Christ.

OPENING HYMN: Salvation Unto Us Has Come #555v.1,2

- 1 Salvation unto us has come
 By God's free grace and favor;
 Good works cannot avert our doom,
 They help and save us never.
 Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
 Who did for all the world atone;
 He is our one Redeemer.

- 2 What God did in His Law demand
 And none to Him could render
 Caused wrath and woe on ev'ry hand
 For man, the vile offender.
 Our flesh has not those pure desires
 The spirit of the Law requires,
 And lost is our condition.

INVOCATION:

P: It is by grace alone that God calls us by His name.

C: It is by grace alone that we are able to worship Him.

P: It is in celebration of this grace that we worship today.

C: In the name of the Father and of the †Son and of the Holy Spirit.

P: In the name given us in baptism

C: We offer our sacrifice of praise.

HYMN: Salvation Unto Us Has Come #555v.9,10

9 Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
For faith alone can justify;
Works serve our neighbor and supply
The proof that faith is living.

10 All blessing, honor, thanks, and praise
To Father, Son, and Spirit,
The God who saved us by His grace;
All glory to His merit.
O triune God in heav'n above,
You have revealed Your saving love;
Your blessèd name we hallow.

Public domain

PSALMODY: Psalm 46 (Spoken responsively, as indicated)

All: The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

P: God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble.

Men: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way

Women: and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

P: though its water roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

All: The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Women: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,

Men: the holy place where the Most High dwells.

P: God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

All: The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

P: Come and see the works of the Lord, the desolations He has brought on the earth.

Women: He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth;

Men: He breaks the bow and shatters the spear, He burns the shield with fire.

All: The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

P: Be still, and know that I am God;

Men: I will be exalted among the nations,

Women: I will be exalted in the earth.

All: The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

Men: as it was in the beginning,

Women: is now, and will be forever. Amen.

All: The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

WE CONFESS OUR SIN AND HEAR GOD'S WORD OF GRACE

P: It is by grace alone that we are saved. How glad we are that this is true! For today we come in confession, realizing that we are indeed totally unworthy of God's forgiveness and love. Yet we confess our sin honestly to God, because we know of His grace.

Desiring to lay ourselves bare before Him, that we might then turn in repentance and hear His gracious word of forgiveness, we then make confession of our sin.

(We make our confession. We reflect in silence on our sinfulness.)

C: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves. We justly deserve your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen

P: God has heard your cry of confession. For His mercy's sake, on account of the merits of Jesus Christ, God forgives you all your sin. Rejoice now in His grace, empowered to serve the Lord and sing His praise!

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Almighty God, gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on all Your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and comfort them in all temptations, defend them against all enemies of Your Word, and bestow on the Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever.

C: Amen.

As we turn to God's Word for this day, we remember how important the Scriptures were for the reformers. On Scripture alone they took their stand against the powerful but misguided institutions of church and state; Scripture was given to the common people to read; Scripture was the basis for their hymns. As we hear the readings today, let us not take for granted the precious Word.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Revelation 14:6-7

The Messages of the Three Angels

⁶ Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷ And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE LESSON: Romans 3:19-28

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For by works of the law no human being^[a] will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

The Righteousness of God Through Faith

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. ²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON: John 8:31-36



The Truth Will Set You Free

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” ³³ They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free?’” ³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH: *Luther's explanation of the Second Article*

C: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

SERMON HYMN: A Mighty Fortress Is Our God #657

1 A mighty fortress is our God,
 A sword and shield victorious;

He breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
And wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
Has sworn to work us woe.
With craft and dreadful might
He arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.

2 No strength of ours can match his might.
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
Whom God Himself elected.
You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is He,
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,
God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.

3 Though hordes of devils fill the land
All threat'ning to devour us,
We tremble not, unmoved we stand;
They cannot overpower us.
Let this world's tyrant rage;
In battle we'll engage.
His might is doomed to fail;
God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.

4 God's Word forever shall abide,
No thanks to foes, who fear it;
For God Himself fights by our side
With weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
Goods, honor, child, or spouse,
Though life be wrenched away,
They cannot win the day.
The Kingdom's ours forever!

SERMON: Reformation and Renewal – Hebrews 13:7-9a

OFFERING HYMN: Lord, Keep Us Steadfast In Your Word,
#655

1 Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word;
Curb those who by deceit or sword
Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son
And bring to naught all He has done.

2 Lord Jesus Christ, Your pow'r make known,
For You are Lord of lords alone;
Defend Your holy Church that we
May sing Your praise eternally.

3 O Comforter of priceless worth,
Send peace and unity on earth;
Support us in our final strife
And lead us out of death to life.

Public domain

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: Confident of the Lord's mercy, by which we are bold to stand before our Great High Priest, let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. For the Holy Christian Church scattered throughout the world, that God's Word may be taught among us in its truth and purity, and that the children of God may lead holy lives according to it, let us pray to the Lord:

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For all people outside the Church, that we may diligently proclaim the Gospel of Christ to them, so that by God's grace the Holy Spirit might bring them to repentance and faith, let us pray to the Lord:

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For faithfulness to the end, that through continued use of the means of grace God would increase our devotion to Jesus and lead us to trust in Him to deliver us from every evil of body and soul, let us pray to the Lord:

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For the preservation of God's creation, that He would continue to rule His kingdom of power for the benefit of His people, and for wisdom to be good stewards, that we may use every good gift for God's glory and for the welfare of all mankind, let us pray to the Lord:

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For those who are burdened by illness, those who suffer due to Covid-19, the injury, for injustice, and adversity (especially _____), that they might remember God's gracious promises, receive assistance from God's people, and live in the joy of Christ's salvation, let us pray to the Lord:

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For those who celebrate God's goodness, especially those who enjoy the fruits of the harvest and the fruits of their labours, that they may always remember their present blessing from God and face the uncertainties of the future in gratitude and faith, let us pray to the Lord:

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: For those who are beneficiaries of the New Testament signed in Jesus' blood, that according to God's promise He would pardon their iniquities in this Holy Supper and remember their sins no more, let us pray to the Lord:

C: Lord, have mercy.

(Other petitions may be added here)

P: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: Amen

PRAYER BEFORE COMMUNION

P: Remembering, O Lord, the sacrifice of our Saviour and cherishing the legacy of truth left for us through the ages, we gather now in Christ's name to receive His true body and blood. By your Spirit, renew our faith by this Sacrament and sanctify us in Your truth that with angels and archangels and the whole company of saints in light we may praise and glorify Your name here in these moments and at last in heaven.

C: Hosanna! Hosanna in the highest!

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be Thy name; Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

P: O Lord, we give you thanks and praise for all your goodness to us. Especially we thank you for the forgiveness and strength you have given us in this Sacrament. Now, by your grace, send us out into the world with boldness, having been renewed and transformed once more by your Gospel.

C: Amen.

BENEDICTION

P: Remembering God's grace to us, and having heard His Word in the Holy Scriptures, we now move forward in faith with God's blessing. May the Lord therefore bless you and keep you. May the Lord make His face to shine upon you. May the Lord look upon you with favour and give you peace.

C: Amen

CLOSING HYMN: God, Who Made the Earth and Heaven #877

- 1 God, who made the earth and heaven,
 Darkness and light:
 You the day for work have given,
 For rest the night.
 May Your angel guards defend us,
 Slumber sweet Your mercy send us,
 Holy dreams and hopes attend us
 All through the night.
- 2 And when morn again shall call us
 To run life's way,
 May we still, whate'er befall us,
 Your will obey.
 From the pow'r of evil hide us,
 In the narrow pathway guide us,
 Never be Your smile denied us
 All through the day.
- 3 Guard us waking, guard us sleeping,
 And when we die,
 May we in Your mighty keeping
 All peaceful lie.
 When the last dread call shall wake us,
 Then, O Lord, do not forsake us,
 But to reign in glory take us
 With You on high.
- 4 Holy Father, throned in heaven,
 All-holy Son,
 Holy Spirit, freely given,
 Blest Three in One:
 Grant us grace, we now implore You,
 Till we lay our crowns before You
 And in worthier strains adore You
 While ages run.