

**Reformation Sunday**  
**October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**Introduction to the Day**

Rooted in the past and growing into the future, the church must always be reformed in order to live out the love of Christ in an ever-changing world. We celebrate the good news of God's grace, that Jesus Christ sets us free every day to do this life-transforming work. Trusting in the freedom given to us in baptism, we pray for the church, that Christians will unite more fully in worship and mission.

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who is eager to forgive  
and who loves us beyond our days.

**Amen.**

Dear friends, together let us acknowledge  
our failure to love this world as Jesus does.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of mercy and forgiveness,  
**we confess that sin still has a hold on us.**  
**We have harmed your good creation.**  
**We have failed to do justice,**  
**love kindness,**  
**and walk humbly with you.**

**Turn us in a new direction.**

**Show us the path that leads to life.**

**Be our refuge and strength on the journey,  
through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.**

**Amen.**

Beloved of God:

your sins are forgiven † and you are made whole.  
God points the way to new life in Christ,  
who meets us on the road.

Journey now in God's abiding love  
through the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Gathering Hymn**    **“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”**

**#504 vs. 1,2,4**

**Greeting**

The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.  
**And also with you.**

**Prayer of the Day**

Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

**Reading: Romans 3:19-28**

<sup>19</sup>Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. <sup>20</sup>For “no human being will be justified in his sight” by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

<sup>21</sup>But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, <sup>22</sup>the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, <sup>23</sup>since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; <sup>24</sup>they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, <sup>25</sup>whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; <sup>26</sup>it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

<sup>27</sup>Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. <sup>28</sup>For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Children's Message**

**Gospel: John 8:31-36**

<sup>31</sup>Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; <sup>32</sup>and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." <sup>33</sup>They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?"

<sup>34</sup>Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup>The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. <sup>36</sup>So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ**

**Sermon**

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Jesus spoke to those who thought they completed their Faith Formation instruction and had arrived at their church graduation day to affirm the promises that were made for them in their baptism, and said to them, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples."

Okay, he wasn't speaking to our 3 students who will celebrate their confirmation on Sunday, but the message is the same.

We ask the question that Martin Luther famously asked himself when articulating his thoughts amid the Protestant Reformation some 500+ years ago.

What does this mean?

This is the question that Luther would ask himself when examining the different statements and prayers that we make as people of faith, and it is a question that ought to continue to ask ourselves as church as we are continually experiencing the reformation in our lives today.

What does this mean?

What does it mean that we celebrate in worship three young people who have completed this portion of their religious instruction?

What does it mean that we don't consider this a completion of that faith formation journey, but rather a continuation of it?

What does it mean that in affirming the promises of our baptism we are taking ownership of the faith that our parents, sponsors, and the larger congregation promised to instill in us?

What does all of this mean?

First: Let's look at the caption on this section in John's gospel (True Disciples), and the words we hear Jesus use, "truly my disciples." In the great commission Jesus send out the apostles to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them all that he had commanded them." Go out and make disciples. We are hear today, a people gathered to hear of the Good News of God's Love for God's people, because the disciples did just that. They went out and made disciples.

And, the call that they went with is one that we hear today. "Go and make disciples." We are continually called, the Great Commission – much like the Reformation – is a continual event. Each and every time there is a baptism the Great Commission is realized. We hear again and again that call to make disciples.

Next, just as the Reformation was not a one time singular event, the Affirmation of Baptism and the promises made therein is NOT a one time event marking the completion of your faith journey. For many I'd imagine it is actually a beginning. At the very least it is a continuation. If Confirmation was indeed the culmination of one's faith journey, would we have people in worship on Sunday mornings? No. Instead, because it is a continuation, we have folks 5, 10, 15, 20 all the way up to 80 years removed from when they were confirmed.

Why? Because it matters. There is no completion to one's faith journey and I don't know that I could argue that one's faith is every completely formed. And that is good!

Why? Because it brings us to community. It brings us to the happenings of life with Luther's famous question on our hearts and on our lips, "What does this mean?"

People of God, young people affirming your faith and the promises of your baptism, look around you. We are surrounded by people who to this point have carried that faith for us. We are surrounded by folks who have made that promise over and over and over again to make sure that each and every one of us comes to this place knowing that they are loved by God and loved by us as a congregation.

And now, it your turn as young people of faith, affirming those promises that were made for you, to take hold of that life of faith and live it to the fullest. Be curious. Be excited. Sometimes, you'll be angry. Ask questions. Don't ever think you've got all the answers. But know this. You are loved by a God who on that day that you were baptized took delight, looked at you and marked you as beloved. And nothing will ever change it.

One of the other readings for this day that we didn't select was Psalm 46 and it is a beautiful Psalm for not only these young people and a glimpse of what a life of faith might look like, but for all of us as a reminder that we don't go about this journey alone, no matter how much this faith is our own.

#### **Psalm 46**

<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength, a very present<sup>[a]</sup> help in trouble.

<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,

<sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

<sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

<sup>5</sup> God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.

<sup>6</sup> The nations are in an uproar; the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice; the earth melts.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge,

<sup>8</sup> Come, behold the works of the LORD; see what desolations he has brought on the earth.

<sup>9</sup> He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire.

<sup>10</sup> "Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth."

<sup>11</sup> The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

People of God, we believe in a God who daily re-forms us as individuals and us as church to be what God hopes for us to be. God knows along the way that we will make mistakes. God knows along the way we are going to think we can't do it anymore. God knows along the way that we aren't always going to have an answer for "what does this mean." And, God knows along the way we are going to want to give up.

But, we hold fast as people of faith, surrounded by this incredible cloud of witnesses, that we can and will go on. Sometimes, perhaps more often than not, it takes the encouragement of those around us. Sometimes it takes for our neighbor to carry our load when we simply can't. And that's okay.

But know this. God's love for us never waivers. God's longing for us does not fade. God's hope for us remains the same each and every day.

Thanks be to God. AMEN

**The Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Prayers of Intercession**

In gratitude and humility, let us join together in prayer on behalf of all of God's creation.

*A brief silence.*

God our fortress, we pray for the church. Write your law of love on the hearts of your people, that we remain steadfast in our witness to your grace. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God our liberator, we pray for your earth. Bring new life to overused land and contaminated rivers. Reform and reorient our relationship with the environment, that we faithfully care for all of your creation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God, our refuge and strength, we pray for the nations. Where they are in an uproar, bring wise leadership and comfort for those in distress. Make wars to cease and peace to enter every land. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God, our very present help in trouble, we pray for those in need. Show mercy to refugees and all fleeing from danger. Shelter any without homes. Calm all who are facing illness, surgery, or a new diagnosis (*especially for Gena, Peyton, Matt, David, Cassie, Verna, Irene, Connie, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Jacob, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Bill and Bonnie, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Daniel*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God our redeemer, we pray for our congregation. Bless all who are preparing for baptism or affirmation of baptism. Open their hearts to your Holy Spirit, teach them your word, and give them courage to proclaim their faith. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

God our stronghold, we give thanks for those who have gone before us in faith, especially Martin Luther and all reformers. Renew and reform us as we strive to continue in your word. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

With grateful hearts we commend our spoken and silent prayers to you, O God; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

**Offering**

### **Offertory Prayer**

Gracious God,

in your great love you richly provide for our needs. Make of these gifts a banquet of blessing, and make us ready to share with all in need; through Jesus Christ, who sets a table for all.

**Amen.**

### **Words of Institution**

#### **Lord's Prayer**

**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**

### **Communion**

#### **Prayer**

God of the abundant table,

you have refreshed our hearts in this meal  
with bread for the journey.

Give us your grace on the road  
that we might serve our neighbors with joy;  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

#### **Blessing**

God, who gives life to all things  
and frees us from despair,  
bless you with truth and peace.

And may the holy Trinity, † one God,  
guide you always in faith, hope, and love.

**Amen.**

### **Sending Song**

**“We Are Called”**

**#720 vs. 1,3**

### **Dismissal**

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

**Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!**

And all of Good Shepherd said,

**AMEN!**