

**Home Worship October 25<sup>th</sup> Reformation Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**Announcements** We gather to remember God's love for us and give thanks for Gods' presence in our lives, especially in these challenging times.

Communion will be offered every week so that it is available to Gods' people as they desire. You may prepare a piece of bread or cracker, wine, juice or water to receive the Holy Spirit as we commune together.

Because of the continued rise in the spread of the covid virus, our council, our wellness team and I feel we should suspend gathering in person for a least 3 weeks. Please stay well and avoid infection or infecting others.

In church worship we have missed reflecting on Indigenous people's day and world hunger day but we never forget the challenges of these people. Today we would have worn red in remembrance of the protestant reformation, Although we miss lifting up our usual events, we still worship together and not forget or take these events for granted.

Thank you to the people of St. Paul's Lutheran church in Warren Illinois where our own seminarian Vicar Michelle Knight is the pastor. Vicar Michelle has shared videos the last 2 weeks while I was unable to lead worship. The ankle is healing slowly and the challenge is pain management now. Thank you for the cards, the food, the phone calls, texts and emails, the kind thoughts prayers for Oran and myself as I recover from this accident. God bless you all.

**Next week is All Saints Day and I invite you to have a candle to light nearby to remember your loved ones. Names will be read so please call me if you would like a name added to the names of departed saints.**

Confession and Forgiveness. Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. Amen. Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. *Silence is kept for reflection.* Faithful God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Forgiveness God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims:

Your sins are forgiven in the name of † Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. Amen.

### 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.**

### First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

*The renewed covenant will not be breakable, but like the old covenant it will expect the people to live upright lives. To know the LORD means that one will defend the cause of the poor and needy (Jer. 22:16). The renewed covenant is possible only because the LORD will forgive iniquity and not remember sin. Our hope lies in a God who forgets.*

<sup>31</sup>The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. <sup>33</sup>But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>34</sup>No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, “Know the LORD,” for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

### Psalm 46

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

**<sup>2</sup>Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;**

<sup>3</sup>though its waters rage and foam, and 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 shaken; God shall help it at the break of day.

**<sup>6</sup>The nations rage, and the kingdoms shake; God speaks, and the earth melts away.**

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

**<sup>8</sup>Come now, regard the works of the LORD, what desolations God has brought upon the earth;**

<sup>9</sup>behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world; who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.

**<sup>10</sup>“Be still, then, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”**

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

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

*Paul's words stand at the heart of the preaching of Martin Luther and other Reformation leaders. No human beings make themselves right with God through works of the law. We are brought into a right relationship with God through the divine activity centered in Christ's death. This act is a gift of grace that liberates us from sin and empowers our faith in Jesus Christ.*

<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 Holy Gospel according to John 8:31-36    Glory to you O Lord**

*Jesus speaks of truth and freedom as spiritual realities known through his word. He reveals the truth that sets people free from sin.*

<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 word of the Lord. **Praise to you O Christ**

## **Sermon**

In all of Christianity only a few denominations recognize this Sunday as Reformation Sunday. Reformation Sunday is a festival day where we celebrate and remember our history, beginning in 1517 when the catholic monk Martin Luther had a lot of questions for the Pope. While that is true, it should also be a day to reexamine our faith. Part of that is recognizing the truth about our inadequacies, our failings, and our sinfulness.

This is not Lutheran Pride Day. We may wear a red piece of clothing as a symbol of the fire of God's Holy Spirit however it is a day that we should focus on knowing God truthfully and in the process understanding who we are as people of faith and children of God in light of God's unbelievable grace.

Luther spent a great deal of time trying to know who God was and to find ways of expressing what he came to know and believe so that others would know God too. Truth about God and our faith, as complex as it is, should be something we can grasp and wrestle with. In John's gospel Jesus proclaims, "*You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free*" (John 8:32). Much of what is admired about Martin Luther is his courage in standing up for what he believed—a truth that was uncomfortable and inconvenient, especially to powerful people in his own time. Luther's arguments against indulgences were not only theological but also had a strong element of social justice for the poor who were the frequent victims of such purchases. God's truth sets free both souls and bodies. In our own time, businesses offering payday loans and reverse mortgages often intentionally prey on the hopes and fears of those living in poverty and take advantage of them for the benefit of the rich.

We look around and it's easy to see that there are many different teachings in Christianity and other faith groups about truth. Some think that this day should be Protestant day or protest day rather than reformation. Reforming and protesting are very different actions. Protestors make it known that change is needed. Reformers make it known that changes of reform are being studied and made, that we are looking inside ourselves to listen to God's guidance.

This week history was made again in the reforming church. Pope Francis made some surprising statements of a reforming nature: "*Homosexual people have the right to be in a family. They are children of God,*" Francis said in an interview for the documentary "Francesco." "*What we have to have is a civil union law; that way they are legally covered.*"

In another remark in the film that could stir up Christians, Francis condemns the U.S. administration's policy on family separation at the southern border. "*It's cruelty, and separating kids from parents goes against natural rights,*" the pope said, adding that "*it's something a Christian cannot do.*" In the week when protestant reformers continue to reevaluate the reforms needed in the church today, our Roman Catholic family introduces more reforming. The dialogue continues. The church continues to reform.

John's gospel invites us to embrace and examine the truth Jesus speaks of. The truth that we cannot often see our sin and the need to be set free in body and in spirit.

Jesus reinforces grace, Jesus is grace. A forgiveness undeserved and as Paul points out in Romans, grace overcomes the law. The law is like a mirror in a room with intense fluorescent lights; it shows us who we are with every flaw and wrinkle. But God doesn't look at us in that mirror. The truth about God brings us new knowledge about ourselves. God shines a new light on us, where iniquities are forgiven and sins forgotten.

The message of Reformation Sunday is God's love for us. It is a love that frees us and redefines us as people of God and as members of the whole body of Christ. In God's eyes, we are beautiful even in a world that can reflect great ugliness at times. God sees the beauty in us. We are called to see the beauty in each other. Amen.

### Prayers of Intercession

With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. *A brief silence.* Renew and inspire the church in the freedom of the gospel, O God. Where the church is in error, reform it. Where the church speaks your truth, strengthen it. Where the church is divided, unify it. Ignite in us the working of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As the earth changes, as mountains shake and the waters roar, may we care for this planet as a holy habitation for all living things. Sustain all peoples and lands recovering from natural disasters of any kind (*especially the fires in the Western United States and hurricanes south and east*). Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Guide areas of the world divided or traumatized by conflict, especially in our own land. Keep our country from violence. Free all from slavery and human trafficking, and protect all in harm's way. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Release those living in bondage to debts, chronic pain, or addiction. Grant healing touch to those who are ill (*especially Richard Hose, Kent Anders, Karla Gipe, Lyle Printz and Lyle Reap and Brad Shippert*). We pray for the family of Terry and Pam Jenkins suffering with the coronavirus and others in our congregation, among our families, friends and co-workers in the country and in the world. We pray for an end to the virus with safe vaccinations and treatments. We pray for scientists, physicians and all involved with healing. For police, firemen, paramedics, hospital workers who are affected in every way from the pandemic. We pray for those who suffer without jobs and money to sustain them. We pray for those in care facilities: Sibyl, Barb, Lois, Tammy, Trudy, Jessica, Hazel, Jeanne and Linda. We pray for those in military service: Logan, JJ, Bryan, Dustin, Brad and Travis). We pray for Darlene Barnhart and her family at the death of her brother Kenneth Miller. We also pray for God's blessing at the marriage of Shelbi Massolle and Ray Pigott. Bless them and keep them in your grace.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In this family of faith we give thanks for courageous voices that have remained firm in their commitment to the one who frees us from sin and death. Centered in your grace, unify us in the hope of the gospel. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Even in death, you free us and give us a place in your house. We give thanks for our ancestors who have shown us truth and freedom, especially Martin Luther and those who work for the renewal of the church. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OFFERING PRAYER Blessed are you, O God maker of all things. Please bless all who remember your church and the ministries that continue even when we must be separated from one another. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: ourselves, our time and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding your world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Gathered into one by the power of the Holy Spirit we pray as Jesus taught

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.

Invitation to Communion

Come to the banquet where Christ gives himself as food and drink

Holy Communion Together

Friends of Jesus, receive nourishment for your journey.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God. You reveal your glory as the glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: equal in majesty, undivided in splendor, one Lord, one God, ever to be adored in your eternal glory.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,

and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Take your bread/wafer	The body of Christ given for you
Take you juice/wine	The blood of Christ given for you

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

### Prayer after Communion

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us with food beyond compare, the body and blood of Christ. Lead us from this place, nourished and forgiven, into your beloved vineyard to wipe away the tears of all who hunger and thirst, guided by the example of the same Jesus Christ and led by the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Blessing

Mothering God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. **Amen.**

### Dismissal

Go in peace. Remember the poor.

**Thanks be to God.**