

THE FESTIVAL
of the
Reformation



A TIME FOR STEADFAST FAITH

Reformation Sunday

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska

October 29, 2023

SERIES THEME: THE TIME IN BETWEEN

In the great timeline of human history, there are only two ultimately significant points: the first time Christ came to our world to win salvation by his life, death, and resurrection; and the second time Christ will come to consummate his everlasting kingdom. We live in the time in between those two points. It is a time of tension. We know that peace and perfection are ours already because of what Jesus did the first time he came. Yet we do not enjoy a peaceful and perfect existence now already. We will not know such a life until Christ comes again. And so we wait and watch, living in the time in between. As the church year draws to a close, Scripture points us toward the end of time when Christ will come again. Until then Christ teaches us how to live in the time in between.

THEME OF THE DAY: A TIME FOR STEADFAST FAITH

Jesus told his followers, “You will be hated by everyone because of me” (Matthew 10:22). Satan and the world hate Christ and anyone who confesses faith in Christ. So, the time in between Christ’s first and second coming is going to be perilous for believers. A good example—Martin Luther. All that priest wanted was to share the pure gospel with the world. For trying to do that, both political and religious leaders attempted to end his life. The Festival of the Reformation emphasizes the true Church’s unfailing reliance on the Word of God and unflinching testimony to that Word even in the face of harsh persecution. Today we pray that the Lord would keep us steadfast in the faith and give us the peace of knowing that our lives are safe in his hands.

Worship Leader
Organist/Pianist

Pastor Justin Wilkens
Quinton Corwin

Acknowledgments

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The Service, Setting One (page 154 in Christian Worship 21)

Hymn: 866 If God Had Not Been on Our Side

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

CW 154

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

CW 213

Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful and answer me.

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory Be to God on High

CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



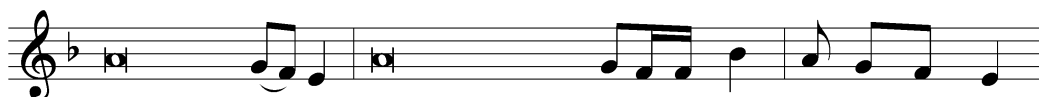
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



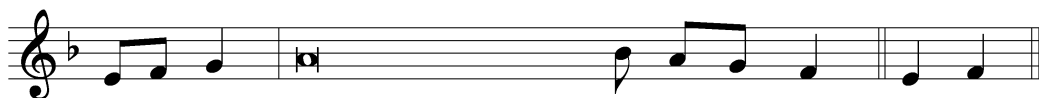
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

THE WORD

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Gracious Lord, our refuge and strength, pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your Word, protect and comfort them in all temptations, defend them against all their enemies, and bestow on the church your saving peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Daniel 6:10–12, 16–23

Even though it potentially meant death by lion, Daniel got on his knees and prayed to the Lord as he always had, demonstrating steadfast faith.

¹⁰ Now, when Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went to his house. It had windows on its upper story that opened toward Jerusalem. Three times each day he would get on his knees and pray and offer praise before his God. He continued to do that, just as he had been doing before this. ¹¹ Then these men came as a group and found Daniel praying and seeking favor from his God.

¹² They then went and asked the king about the decree. "Your Majesty, did you not sign a decree that anyone who prays to any god or person for thirty days except to you, Your Majesty, would be thrown into the den of lions?"

The king answered, "Indeed I did. The order is established as a law of the Medes and the Persians that cannot be revoked."

¹⁶ Then the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into the lions' den. The king said to Daniel, "May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you." ¹⁷ A stone was brought and placed over the mouth of the pit. The king sealed it with his signet ring and the signet rings of his nobles so that nothing could be changed with regard to Daniel's situation. ¹⁸ Then the king went to his palace. He spent the night without food, and no entertainment was brought before him. But he could not sleep.

¹⁹ At dawn the king arose as soon as it was light and hurried to the lions' den. ²⁰ As he came near the pit, he cried out in a fearful voice. The king said to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God, whom you serve continually, able to rescue you from the lions?"

²¹ Then Daniel spoke with the king. "Your Majesty, may you live forever! ²² My God sent his angel and shut the mouth of the lions. They have not hurt me because he found me innocent in his presence. Also before you, Your Majesty, I have committed no crime."

²³ Then the king was very glad and said that Daniel should be brought up from the pit. So Daniel was brought up from the pit, and he was unharmed because he trusted in his God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Romans 3:19–28

God justifies those who have been given the gift of steadfast faith in Jesus Christ.

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says is addressed to those who are under the law, so that every mouth will be silenced and the whole world will be subject to God's judgment. ²⁰ For this reason, no one will be declared righteous in his sight by works of the law, for through the law we become aware of sin. ²¹ But now, completely apart from the law, a righteousness from God has been made known. The Law and the Prophets testify to it. ²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all and over all who believe.

In fact, there is no difference, ²³ because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God publicly displayed as the atonement seat through faith in his blood. God did this to demonstrate his justice, since, in his divine restraint, he had left the sins that were committed earlier unpunished. ²⁶ He did this to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so that he would be both just and the one who justifies the person who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷ What happens to boasting then? It has been eliminated. By what principle—by the principle of works? No, but by the principle of faith. ²⁸ For we conclude that a person is justified by faith without the works of the law.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

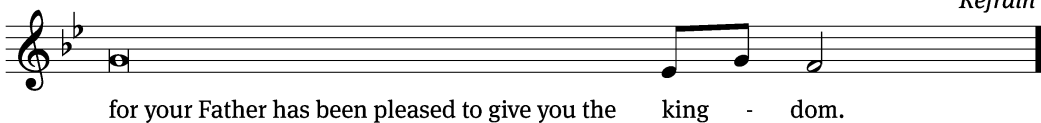
Luke 12:32



Refrain



Tone



Tune: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 713578

Gospel

Matthew 10:16–23

Our trust in Jesus doesn't mean absence of persecution, but faithfulness despite it.

¹⁶ "Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. ¹⁷ Be on guard against people. They will hand you over to councils, and they will whip you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ You will be brought into the presence of governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ Whenever they hand you over, do not be worried about how you will respond or what you will say, because what you say will be given to you in that hour. ²⁰ In fact you will not be the ones speaking, but the Spirit of your Father will be speaking through you.

²¹ "Brother will hand over his brother to death, and a father will do the same with his child. Children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. ²² You will be hated by all people because of my name, but whoever endures to the end will be saved. ²³ And when they persecute you in one town, flee to the next. Amen I tell you: You will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day: 864 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Sermon: Daniel 6:10-12,16-23

Stand

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and became truly human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,**

**who in unity with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Gracious God, in mercy you sent your only Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, into this world to redeem us from sin and rescue us from hell. Through your Scriptures and by your Spirit, you have brought us to faith in your Son and have assured us that Christ has fully completed the work of our salvation. Lead us to rejoice in the message of forgiveness through faith alone in Christ Jesus. When guilt grieves our consciences and shame squelches our confidence, use your Word to encourage and comfort our souls with the good news of your unconditional love.

Almighty God, in the face of immense pressure to compromise their confession, you emboldened Martin Luther and the Lutheran reformers to take a firm stand on the truths of Scripture. Through their clear confession of faith, you restored the gospel to your church and have preserved this saving truth among us today. Send us your Holy Spirit that we exhibit the same zeal and faithfulness as the Lutheran confessors. Give us courage to confess our faith sincerely and boldly in the classroom, the workplace, the community, and to everyone we encounter who needs to hear the truth of your Word. Use our confession to bring faith in your Son to the hearts of those who do not yet believe in you.

Eternal God, you have promised to preserve and protect your church in every age. Even when it appeared that the enemies of the gospel had silenced your truth, you kept your people faithful to you and your Word. Bless all who face hardships for their faith with an added measure of your Holy Spirit so that they do not lose heart as they bear their crosses. Comfort the sick and suffering, the depressed and lonely, those who are persecuted and ridiculed for their faith, and all others who need the encouragement of your love. Fix our eyes on the cross of your Son, his empty tomb, and the sure promise of eternal life in heaven's glory.

Lord God, you know the concerns of our hearts and minds. Hear the public prayers we have spoken with our lips and the personal prayers we offer to you in our hearts, and answer them according to your gracious will. Increase our trust in your power and wisdom that we may rest secure in the plans and purposes you have for our lives; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

Offering

Offering Hymn: 561 Before the Throne of God Above

sts. 1–2

THE SACRAMENT

Stand

Preface

CW 165

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who in blessing his saints of the past has given us assurance and hope that, following their example, we may run the race marked out for us and receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy

CW 167

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en-ly hosts:
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho-san - na, ho -
san - na, ho-san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he,
bless-ed is he, bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho-san - na, ho-san - na, ho-san - na in the high - est.

The musical score is written in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics underneath. The second staff continues the melody and includes a measure with a fermata over a whole note. The third staff continues the melody and includes a measure with a fermata over a whole note. The fourth staff continues the melody and includes a measure with a fermata over a whole note. The fifth staff concludes the piece with a double bar line.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

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.**

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

O Christ, Lamb of God

CW 169



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;

have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,
 you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.
 O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
 grant us your peace. A - - - men.

Be seated

Distribution

Close Communion We ask that only those who have previously spoken to our pastor or are members in good standing of this or another WELS or ELS congregation come to Holy Communion today. Our practice of Close Communion (which has been the practice of the Christian Church throughout the ages) is in no way trying to judge anyone's faith. What we are trying to do is follow the Bible's clear teaching (1 Corinthians 11) to first study God's Word together. As we do so, we can share with/review with you what the Lord's Supper is all about. You, then, also have an opportunity to examine what we believe and teach before you come to the Lord's Supper and make a public profession that you agree with what we teach.

Distribution Hymn: 667 Lord Jesus Christ, You Have Prepared

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn: 877 Reformation Song

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 9:30 AM Bible Study and Sunday School, 10:30 AM Worship and Communion

Sunday: 9:30 AM Bible Study and Sunday School, 10:30 AM Worship

Collection for NELHS Meals

During the month of October we are collecting donations to go towards the meals that NELHS provides following events (like opening service) throughout the school year. Each association congregation is invited to assist with these meals.

Joint Area Reformation Service

This year's joint area reformation service will be at NELHS on October 29th at 4:00 PM. The offering collected will go towards NELHS to purchase a lawnmower with snowplowing capabilities.

Forward In Christ and Meditations

If any members would like the Forward in Christ magazine, or the Meditations booklet they can be found on the table in the narthex.

CONNECTION CARDS: Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at www.bethelyork.com on the member connect tab or scan this code.



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Personal assisted listening devices are available.

Given to the Lord: Attendance: Worship 62, Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,920.37, Given \$3,120.25. **To God be the glory!**

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