

was given us to treasure.
This heavenly washing now
A cleansing from transgression
And by his blood and agony
Release from death's oppress
A new life now awaits us.

These truths on Jordan's bank
By mighty word and wonder
The Father's voice from heaven
Which we do well to ponder
"This man is my beloved son
In whom my heart has pleasure
Him you must hear, and heed
And trust in fullest measure
The word that he has spoken

Oh, hear and mark the message
For God himself has spoken.
Let faith, not doubt, among
And so receive this token.
Our Lord here with his Word
Pure water freely flowing.
God's Holy Spirit here abroad
Our hearts with life bestowing.
The Father's love and plan
The Son's atoning blood
The Spirit's witness in our hearts

The love of God revealing,
Assuring his own pardon.

To his disciples spoke the Lord
"Go out to every nation
And bring to them the living Word
And this my invitation:
Let everyone abandon sin
And come in their contrition
To be baptized and thereby



REFORMATION

FESTIVAL

Preach the Word.
Teach the Word.
Don't Force it.

FESTIVAL OF THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION

”I will preach it, teach it, write it, but I will constrain no man by force, for faith must come freely without compulsion.”

-Martin Luther

October 30, 2022

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Welcome to the 68th joint Reformation service of the Mankato and River Valley Conferences of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. These two conferences are made up of 44 congregations. In our worship today we gather before our almighty God to offer him our worship and praise, and receive from him forgiveness and faith.

ABOUT WORSHIP TODAY

As Luther was kept hidden in the Wartburg, some of his followers desired to see changes happen in the Reformation more quickly. Their teaching made many believe that true Christianity consisted of persecuting priests, eating meat on fast days, destroying images of saints, and not going to confession. Receiving the Lord’s Supper, which was intended to comfort troubled consciences, had become a demonstration of protest, and that was even worse than the previous abuses. Luther felt compelled to return and preached eight sermons in eight days to deal with the matter. These sermons emphasized letting the Word of God work and not forcing anything and being careful not to destroy tender consciences. Our worship today takes its cues from these themes.

SERVING IN WORSHIP

Presiding Minister.....Rev. Patrick Feldhus
Preacher.....Professor Joel Otto
Organist.....Professor Craig Hirschmann
Choir Director.....Mr. Jon Hermanson
Choir.....Members of the River Valley and Mankato Conference
Handbells.....Martin Luther College Hosanna Ringers

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Joint Reformation Committee thanks Martin Luther College for being our gracious host today.

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

The Lutheran church is a liturgical church. Lutherans believe that the gospel is not only good news that Jesus has saved sinners, but also a power God uses to create and strengthen faith in Jesus. Lutheran worship places the gospel in central focus in an order of service called the liturgy. In message and sacraments, in specially selected Bible readings and in carefully crafted songs, prayers, and confessions, the liturgy points to Jesus as the Savior of all.

PRESERVICE MUSIC

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

O God, Our Lord, Your Holy Word | 643

Please rise as the hymn is introduced and face the entrance of the chapel and follow the processional cross to the chancel where it becomes the focus of Christian worship.

**O God, our Lord, your holy Word was long a hidden treasure
till to its place it was by grace restored in fullest measure.
For this today our thanks we say and gladly glorify you.
Your mercy show and grace bestow on all who still deny you.**

**Salvation true by faith in you—that is your gospel’s preaching,
the heart and core of Bible lore in all its sacred teaching.
In Christ we must put all our trust, not in our deeds or labor;
with conscience pure and heart secure love you, Lord, and our neighbor.**

**Lord, you alone this work have done by your free grace and favor.
All who believe will grace receive through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
And though the foe would overthrow your Word with grim endeavor,
all he has wrought must come to naught; your Word will stand forever!**

**Since you are mine, my Lord divine, death holds no dreadful terrors;
your precious blood, my highest good, has blotted out my errors.
My thanks to you, your Word is true; fulfill your promise ever,
and mercy give while here I live and heav’nly bliss forever.**

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INVOCATION

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

Amen.

DIALOGUE FOR REFORMATION

In the words spoken by the minister, Dr. Luther remembered his “tower experience” in which he came to understand the central teaching of the Scriptures.

In the meantime in the same year (1519) I had begun again to lecture on the Psalter, believing that with my classroom experience in lecturing on the Psalms and the Letters of Paul to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews, I was now better prepared.

The Lord has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations. He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

All the while I was absorbed with the passionate desire to get better acquainted with the author of Romans. Not that I did not succeed, as I had resolved, in penetrating more deeply into the subject in my investigation, but I stumbled over the words concerning “the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel.” For the concept of God’s righteousness was repulsive to me, as I was accustomed to interpret it according to scholastic philosophy, namely as the “formal or active” righteousness, in which God proves himself righteous in that he punishes the sinner as an unrighteous person.

In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to shame. Rescue me and deliver me in your righteousness; turn your ear to me and save me.

After days and nights of wrestling with the problem, God finally took pity on me, so that I was able to comprehend the inner connection between the two expressions, “the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel” and “the just shall live by faith.”

But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

Then I began to comprehend the righteousness of God through which the righteous are saved by God's grace, namely, through faith; that the righteousness of God which is revealed through the gospel was to be understood in a passive sense in which God through mercy justifies man by faith, as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." Now I felt exactly as though I had been born again, and I believed that I had entered Paradise through widely opened doors.

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

I then went through the Holy Scriptures as far as I could recall them from memory, and I found in other parts the same sense: the "work of God" is that which he works in us, the "strength of God" is that through which he makes us strong, the "wisdom of God" that through which he makes us wise, and so the "power of God," the "blessing of God," and the "honor of God" are likewise to be interpreted.

It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord."

As violently as I had formerly hated the expression "the righteousness of God," so I was now as violently compelled to embrace the new conception of grace and, thus, for me, the expression of the apostle really opened the gates of paradise.

Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.



Martin Luther is a faithful witness to
God's Word at the Diet of Worms on
April 18, 1521



1 Your Word a - lone is sol - id ground,
 2 Thro' faith a - lone we come to you;
 3 In Christ a - lone we're jus - ti - fied;
 4 By grace a - lone we have been saved;



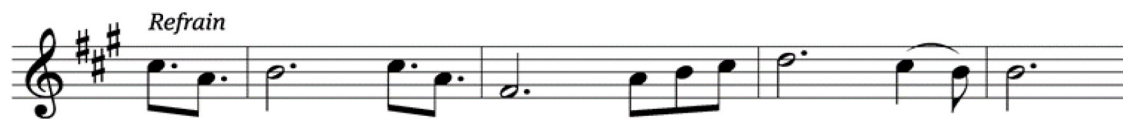
the might - y rock on which we build.
 we have no mer - it we can claim.
 his right - eous - ness is all our plea.
 all that we are has come from you.



In ev - 'ry line the truth is found,
 Sure that your prom - is - es are true,
 Your law's de - mands are sat - is - fied;
 Hearts that were once by sin en - slaved



and ev - 'ry page with glo - ry filled. v. 2
 we place our hope in Je - sus' name.
 his per - fect work has set us free.
 now by your pow'r have been made new.



Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ry to God a - lone.



Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ry to God a - lone.



SALUTATION

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

Isaiah 55:9-13

God's Word will always produce God's desired results

“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thorn bush will grow the juniper, and instead of briers the myrtle will grow. This will be for the LORD's renown, for an everlasting sign, that will endure forever.”

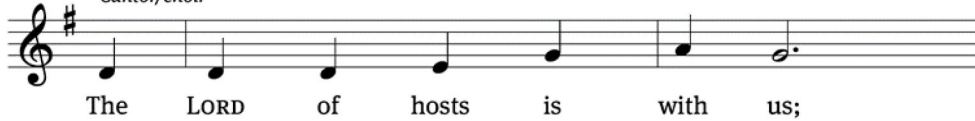
The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 46

Refrain

Cantor/choir



Congregation



Tone



God is our ref- / uge and strength,
an ever-present help in / trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the / earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart / of the sea,
though its waters / roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their / surging. *Refrain*

There is a river whose streams make glad the cit- / y of God,
the holy place where the Most / High dwells.
God is within her, she / will not fall;
God will help her at / break of day.
Nations are in uproar, / kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the / earth melts. *Refrain*

Come and see what the / LORD has done,
the desolations he has brought / on the earth.
He makes wars cease to the ends / of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the / shields with fire.
He says, "Be still, and know that / I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted / in the earth." *Refrain*

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SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 8:7-13

Paul limited his freedom for the sake of the weak

But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol's temple, won't that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

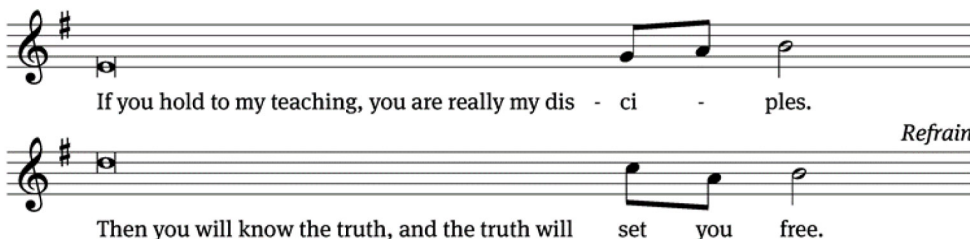
Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Refrain



Tone



God calls us to sow the seed of his Word, he makes it grow.

“This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain—first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ.

Be Seated

HYMN OF THE DAY

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God | 863



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a trust - y shield
2 With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss
3 Though dev - ils all the world should fill, all ea - ger to
4 The Word they still shall let re - main nor an - y thanks



and weap - on; he helps us free from ev - 'ry need
ef - fect - ed; but for us fights the val - iant one
de - vour us, we trem - ble not, we fear no ill;
have for it; he's by our side up - on the plain



that has us now o'er - tak - en. The old
whom God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask,
they shall not o - ver - pow'r us. This world's
with his good gifts and Spir - it. And take



e - vil foe now means dead - ly woe;
“Who is this?” Je - sus Christ it is,
prince may still scowl fierce as he will,
they our life, goods, fame, child, and wife,



deep guile and great might are his dread arms in fight;
the al - might - y Lord, and there's no oth - er God;
he can harm us none. He's judged; the deed is done;
though all may be gone, our vic - to - ry is won;



on earth is not his e - qual.
 he holds the field for - ev - er.
 one lit - tle word can fell him.
 the king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

SERMON

Mark 4:26-29


The Word Did Everything!

Stand


WE PRAISE YOU, GOD

Te Deum Laudamus

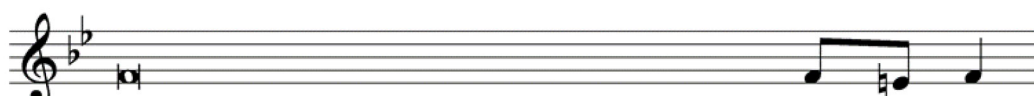
Luther valued the ancient Te Deum Laudamus and suggested it might be considered among the ecumenical creeds of the Christian Church. Speak the words of the canticle as a confession of faith.



1 We praise you, O God, we acclaim you as Lord;
 2 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of heav'n - ly hosts,
 3 The white-robed army of martyrs praise — you.



1 all creation worships you, Fa - ther ev - er - last - ing.
 2 heaven and earth are full — of your glo - ry.
 3 Throughout the world the ho - ly Church ac - claims you:



1 To you all angels, all the pow'rs of heav'n,
 2 The glorious company of apostles praise — you.
 3 Father of majesty unbounded; your glorious, true, and on - ly Son;



1 cherubim and seraphim, sing in end - less praise:
 2 The noble fellowship of proph - ets praise — you.
 3 and the Holy Spirit, ad - vo - cate and guide.



4 You, Christ, are the King of glo - ry, the eternal Son of the Fa - ther.

5 When you became man to set us free,
6 You sit at the right hand of God

5 you humbled yourself to be born of a vir - gin.
6 in the glory of the Fa - ther.

5 You overcame the sting of death
6 We believe that you will come

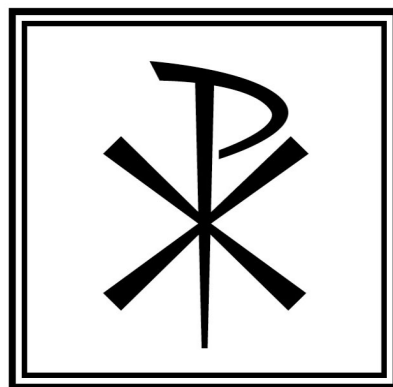
5 and opened the kingdom of heaven to all be - liev - ers.
6 to be our judge.

7 Come then, Lord, and help your peo - ple,

7 bought with the price of your own blood,

7 and bring us with your saints to glory ev - er - last - ing.

Be Seated



LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

With grateful hearts, O Lord

We remember before you this day...

That great cloud of witnesses whose living trust in you, recorded in your Word, becomes an example for us to imitate and follow.

Inspire us as we remember them, O Lord.

With grateful hearts, O Lord

We remember before you this day...

The reformers and confessors who faced the terror of church and empire but stood firm in your truth because they were moved by grace, empowered by faith, and guided by Scripture.

Inspire us as we remember them, O Lord.

With grateful hearts, O Lord

We remember before you this day...

Your faithful followers of every age, among them our own mothers and fathers, pastors and teachers, called, gathered, enlightened and sanctified by the Holy Spirit to be your Church and by whose faithful witness the gospel of your grace has reached at last to us.

Inspire us as we remember them, O Lord.

With grateful hearts, O Lord

We remember before you this day...

The early and present leaders of our synod, the teachers who trained our grandfathers and those who now teach us, the missionaries who once went to lands uncharted and unmapped, and those who now walk among teeming millions in over-crowded cities.

Inspire us as we remember them, O Lord.

With grateful hearts, O Lord

We remember before you this day...

Our own loved ones whose memories still burn within our hearts, whom you have called in your good time from their labors in life to that life which knows no end.

Inspire us as we remember them, O Lord,

To carry on their work in this our day, trusting your Son, holding to your Word, confessing your truth, loving the lost, reaching out with your love, until you call us, too, by your great grace in Jesus Christ, to join them where memories are swallowed up by everlasting joy.

Amen.

OFFERING

Hosanna Ringers

Offerings at this service defray the costs. Additional offerings will be given to MLC's Equipping Christian Witnesses campaign. Thank-you for your generous support of your WELS College of Ministry.

ANTHEM

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word

Members of the River Valley and Mankato Conferences

Stand

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.

Almighty God, grant to your Church the Holy Spirit and the wisdom that comes from above. Let nothing hinder your Word from being freely proclaimed to the joy and edifying of Christ's holy people, so that we may serve you in steadfast faith and confess your name as long as we live, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

BENEDICTION

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

Thy Strong Word | 630

Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous;
bright with thine own holiness,
glorious now, we press toward glory,
and our lives our hopes confess.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise to thee who light dost send!

Alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia without end!

From the cross thy wisdom shining
breaketh forth in conqu'ring might;
from the cross forever beameth
all thy bright redeeming light.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise to thee who light dost send!

Alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia without end!

Give us lips to sing thy glory,
tongues thy mercy to proclaim,
throats to shout the hope that fills us,
mouths to speak thy holy name.

Alleluia, alleluia!

May the light which thou dost send

fill our songs with alleluias,

alleluias without end!

God the Father, light-creator,
to thee laud and honor be.
To thee, Light from Light begotten,
praise be sung eternally.
Holy Spirit, light-revealer,
glory, glory be to thee.
Mortals, angels, now and ever
praise the holy Trinity!

The one who
STANDS FIRM
to the end
WILL BE SAVED

