

Sunday Worship Service – October 25, 2026
Reformation Sunday
Evangelical Lutheran Worship Book – Holy Communion Setting 7 (p.175-183)

Words of Welcome by Pastor

Land Acknowledgement & Welcome Statement

Introduction to the Theme of the Bible Readings

We celebrate Reformation Sunday today, a day that we celebrate our Lutheran heritage, because October 31, 1517 was the day that Martin Luther posted the 95 Thesis on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. This set off a chain of events that evolved into our Lutheran tradition.

Martin Luther stood up to the institutional church of his time, using the Bible, the word of God, as the guide to his faith and conscience, as he challenged the church to return to the teachings of Jesus.

Prayer of Confession

Blessed be the holy Trinity, the one who fashions us,
the one who heals us, the one who reforms us again and again.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

(Silence for reflection)

Source of all life,

We confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free. We fear that we are not good enough. We hear your word of love freely given to us, yet we expect others to earn it. Sometimes we turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward. Forgive us. Stir us. Reform us to be a church powered by love, willing to speak for what is right, act for what is just, and seek the healing of your whole creation. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

#505 (ELWB - lyrics) Gathering Hymn “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” (v.1-2,4)

#504 (ELWB – tune)

1. **A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper frees us from the flood of mortal ills prevailing.**

For still our ancient foe foresworn to work us woe!
 With guile and dreadful might is armed to wage the fight:
 on earth there is no equal.

2. If we in our own strength confide, our striving turns to losing;
 The righteous one fights by our side, the one of God's own choosing.
 You ask who this may be: Christ Jesus, it is he,
 the Lord of hosts by name. No other God we claim!
 None else can win the battle.

4. God's Word shall stand above the pow'rs,
 shall end all their thanksgiving.
 The Spirit and the gifts are ours, for God with us is living.
 Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
 Though all of these be gone, they yet have nothing won.
 The kingdom's ours forever!

p.175 **Greeting**

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

Litany for Reformation Sunday

We give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit whose light brought new understanding of both the Living Word and the written Scripture.

We give thanks for the reminder of God's constant love, forgiveness and presence.

We are grateful for the inspiration that led to the printing press, enabling the spread of information and the sharing of the gospel in many languages.

We thank God for the technologies that can be used for good for the support of communities and individuals.

Generous God, we thank you for open hearts that were prepared to hear and receive the good news of freedom in Christ.

We also thank you for our continued freedom to share your love, forgiveness, and the gift your presence, as we witness our faith through words and actions of faithfulness.

We thank you for the teaching that comes through our church heritage – the catechism, the understanding of the saints (past, present, and future), the gift of community, and a deeper appreciation of God's gifts of Holy Communion and Holy Baptism.

We thank you for the presence of Jesus Christ – in us, with us, and for us – and for the support of the Holy Spirit, ever-reforming us.

God of stability and change, we thank you that true reformation is always your gift and always being done in us and through us, out of your love for your whole creation. We are ever reformed by the gift of your love.

We are ever reformed by the gift of God's love.

Prayer of the Day¹

Reforming God, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us. Keep us steadfast in your word, protect and comfort us in times of trial, defend us against all enemies of the gospel, and give your church your saving peace, in Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

In this reading from Jeremiah, the renewed covenant will not be breakable, but like the old covenant it will expect the people to live upright lives.

To know God means that one will defend the cause of the poor and needy.

The renewed covenant is possible only because God forgives.

Our hope lies in a God who forgets.

A reading from Jeremiah, the 31st chapter:

The time is coming, God declares, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. It won't be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt. They broke that covenant with me even though I was their partner, God declares. No, this is the covenant that I will make with the people of Israel after that time, declares God. I will put my Instructions within them and engrave them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. They will no longer need to teach each other to say, "Know God!" because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares God; for I will forgive their wrongdoing and never again remember their sins.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

¹ <https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/DayTexts/2026-10-25>

Psalm 46

God is a safe place to hide, ready to help when we need God.

We stand fearless at the cliff-edge of doom,

courageous in seastorm and earthquake,

Before the rush and roar of oceans, the tremors that shift mountains.

Jacob-wrestling God fights for us, God-of-Angel-Armies protects us.

River fountains splash joy, cooling God's city,

this sacred place of the Most High.

God lives here, the streets are safe,

God at your service from crack of dawn.

Godless nations rant and rave, kings and kingdoms threaten,

but Earth does anything God says.

Jacob-wrestling God fights for us, God-of-Angel-Armies protects us.

Be still and know that I am God.

God plants flowers and trees all over the earth, bans war from pole to pole,

breaks all the weapons across God's knee.

"Step out of the traffic! Take a long, loving look at me, your High God,

above everything."

Jacob-wrestling God fights for us, God-of-Angel-Armies protects us. (MSG)

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.

A reading from Romans, chapter 3:

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. For no human will be justified before him by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin. But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed and is attested by the Law and the Prophets, the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood,

effective through faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; it was to demonstrate at the present time his own righteousness, so that he is righteous and he justifies the one who has the faith of Jesus.

Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. Through what kind of law? That of works? No, rather through the law of faith. For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law. (NRSVUE)

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

p.179 **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia!

Gospel Reading: John 8:31-36

In the gospel reading from John, Jesus speaks of truth and freedom as spiritual realities known through his word. Jesus reveals the truth that sets people free from sin.

The holy gospel according to John, the 8th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said to those who believed in him, "If you live according to my teaching, you really are my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

They responded, "We are Sarah and Abraham's children; we've never been anyone's slaves. How can you say that we will be set free?"

Jesus answered, "I assure you that everyone who lives in sin is a slave to sin. A slave isn't a permanent member of the household, but a child is. Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you really will be free.

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

#650 Hymn of the Day *“In Christ There Is No East or West”*

1. In Christ there is no east or west in him no south or north,
but one community of love throughout the whole wide earth.
2. In Christ shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find;
his service is the golden cord close binding humankind.
3. Join hands, disciples of the faith, whate’er your race may be.
All children of the living God are surely kin to me.
4. In Christ now meet both east and west, in him meet south and north;
all Christly souls are one in him throughout the whole wide earth.

Re-commissioning of Church Council

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 Intercession²

Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world. Prayer petitions will end with “God of grace” and the congregation is invited to respond by saying: **“receive our prayer.”**

A brief silence.

² <https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/DayTexts>

Free your church, O God, with grace, mercy, and love to be transformed by your word. Direct your church to be united in word and deed so that all creation knows the uniting and transforming power of the gospel.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Renew creation, O God, so that all living creatures thrive together.

Guide those who work to restore and renew creation. Preserve and care for endangered species throughout the world. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Bring peace among the nations, O God, so violence and terror are not the norm on your earth. Inspire leaders of communities to work for peace and justice. Unite our politicians with a common mission and purpose.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Heal all who suffer, O God, and bring them peace. Draw near to people who are incarcerated. Give hope to people experiencing housing or employment insecurity, oppression, or discrimination. Heal those who are ill. Comfort those who are mourning. Be our stronghold at all times.

God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Forgive us our shortcoming, O God, and grant us your grace. Move us to understanding and reconciliation between people of other faiths and other Christian traditions in our community. Mend hurt feelings and heal wounds we have caused one another. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

Offering and Offering Prayer*

You bless us in our offering, O God;

you bless the worship and work our gifts make possible.

You bless our understanding of the Word;

you bless the fellowship we enjoy in this church;

you bless our links with other faith groups;

you bless the Christian witness we make day by day;

**you bless our stand with the powerless;
 you bless our work for peace in a troubled world.
 You bless our gifts, for they have the Spirit of Jesus within them. Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving ³

May God our refuge be with you! **And also with you!**
 People of God, lift your hearts to the One who created you.
We offer them to God, who writes words of hope upon our hearts.
 God's children, come to the Table of grace.
We will feast on the wonders of the God who loves us.

You took creation by the hand, leading it out of chaos,
 as the first morning dawned, mountains trembling in the mist,
 running rivers which gladdened your heart, God of our lives.
 You created all this for us, giving us peace and righteousness
 to be our playmates in the fields of grace.
 But when we beheld the works of temptation, sin, and death,
 we became their slaves, writing their lies on our hearts.
 Longing to be our God, you sent the prophets
 to call us to be your people, but we refused to listen.
 Finally, Jesus came, the bearer of truth and freedom for all.
 With those whose hearts are broken,
 and those who long for your days of peace,
 we offer our thanksgiving to you:

Holy, holy, holy are you, God who forms our hearts.
All creation finds refuge in your tender care.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the One who sets us free by your truth!
Hosanna in the highest!

You are our strength, God of holiness, and Jesus Christ your Son, our Savior.
 When our lives are filled with despair, Jesus is our hope;
 when we are lost and cannot find our way, Jesus is our help;

³ Reformation Sunday Communion Liturgy by Thom M. Shuman © 2014.
 from: <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/2014/10/reformation-sunday.html>

when the world closes its doors and heart to us, Jesus is our refuge;
 when sin and death hunger for us, Jesus is our liberator,
 present with us in this life and in the one to come.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 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, Jesus took the cup,
 Gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the covenant in my blood,
 Shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

As we remember Jesus' life, death, and resurrection,
 as Jesus continues to re-form us into your people,
 we proclaim that mystery called faith:

Christ died, his heart broken for us;
Christ was raised, resurrection written upon his heart;
Christ is ever with us, in every moment, until your days come.

Pour out your Spirit upon the gifts of this table,
 and upon the gathered people who seek to be your faithful people.
 The bread symbolizes that life which can reshape our brokenness
 into the peace which a warring world needs,
 the hope which can bring healing to others.
 The cup which is filled with your grace can strengthen us to be new people,
 who go forth to speak truth to power,
 who bring freedom to all the oppressed.
 And when your days of eternity finally come,
 when we gather as your children around the table of wonder and life,
 we will sing your praises forever and ever, God in Community, Holy in One.
 Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
 Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.
 Amen.

Communion Distribution

p.182 ***Lamb of God***

O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
 have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.
 O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
 grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.
 have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us.
 O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
 Grant us your peace, grant us your peace.

#471 Communion Hymn “Let Us Break Bread Together”

1. Let us break bread together on our knees;
 let us break bread together on our knees.

Refrain

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
 O Lord, have mercy on me.

2. Let us drink wine together on our knees;
 let us drink wine together on our knees.

Refrain

3. Let us praise God together on our knees;
 let us praise God together on our knees.

Refrain

Communion Blessing

Prayer after Communion⁴

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your freedom, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Announcements

Blessing⁵

In the name of God, our parent,
 who gives us everything we need.
 In the name of Jesus Christ, our healer,
 whose love transforms us.
 In the name of the Holy Spirit,
 who strengthens our faith and increase our love.
 Let us go with God and transform the world. Amen

#513 Sending Hymn “*Listen God is Calling*”

- Refrain:* Listen, Listen, God is calling,
 through the Word inviting,
 offering forgiveness, comfort and joy. (*repeat*)
1. *Jesus gave his mandate: share the good news*
 that he came to save us and set us free. (*Refrain*)
 2. *Let none be forgotten throughout the world.*
 In the triune name of God go and baptize. (*Refrain*)
 3. *Help us to be faithful, standing steadfast,*
 walking in your precepts, led by your Word. (*Refrain*)

Sending

Go in peace, to love and serve God through word and deed.
Thanks be to God!

⁴ <https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/DayTexts/2026-10-25>

⁵ From *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2016*, edited by Mary Scrifes and BJ Beu. Copyright © 2015 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.