

Sunday Worship Service – October 26, 2025
20th Sunday after Pentecost – Reformation Sunday
Confirmation Covenant Sunday

Words of Welcome

Land Acknowledgement & Welcome Statement

Introduction

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 as the guide to his faith and conscience, as he challenged the church to return to the teachings of Jesus. Celebrating our Lutheran heritage, we also remember God's covenant to us that we acknowledge and celebrate through our baptism. Covenant is a "churchy" word for promise or agreement. This day we "covenant" with our confirmation youth – make promises to them - to support and nurture them in their lives of faith during their confirmation journey and beyond.

#504 (ELWB) Gathering Hymn "*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*" (v.1-2,4)

1. **A mighty fortress is our God, a sword and shield victorious;
 he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod and wins salvation glorious.
 The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe!
 With craft and dreadful might he arms himself to fight.
 On earth he has no equal.**
2. **No strength of ours can match his might!
 We would be lost, rejected.
 But now a champion comes to fight, whom God himself elected.
 You ask who this may be? The Lord of hosts is he!
 Christ Jesus, mighty Lord, God's only Son adored.
 He holds the field victorious.**
4. **God's Word forever shall abide, no thanks to foes, who fear it;
 for God himself fights by our side with weapons of the Spirit.
 Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse,
 though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day.**

The kingdom's ours forever!

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.

Confirmation Covenanting

We have 5 youth beginning the confirmation ministry here at Bread of Life this year. Confirmation is about *confirming* our faith.

Another way to put this is *affirming* our baptism by acknowledging and celebrating the promises that God made to us at our baptism.

Our understanding of baptism is about what God has done for us.

Through baptism we acknowledge and celebrate that God loves us, God forgives us and God is always with us.

Three promises are present in baptism:

- 1) God's promise to us to love us, forgive us, and always be with us.
- 2) The parents and godparents promise to God to help their children grow in the Christian faith and life.
- 3) The congregation's promise to God to support and pray for the child in their life of faith.

A new confirmation year offers us the invitation to be reminded of these promises and to renew these promises to God and to one another.

I am happy to introduce our confirmation youth:

- Eisa
- Mandan
- Conor
- Ethyn
- Peyton

The congregation in which these confirmation youth were baptized, as the body of Christ, made promises to God on the day of their baptism to support and pray for them in their new life in Christ.

The Holy Spirit has been active in the lives of their families,
As witnessed by their presence here today.

These youth, with the support of their parents,
Are committing to learn more about their faith
and God's presence in their lives and in the world.

We give thanks to God for their presence with us
and their commitment to our confirmation ministry.

On this day, we all renew our covenant promises to God.

Pastor (to confirmation students): Through the waters of baptism your parents presented you to God. In a few years, on the day of your confirmation, you will make a promise of your own to God.

Therefore I ask you, will you participate in the confirmation ministry and in the life of the church as a way of deepening your understanding of God, growing in your relationship with God, with each other, and with your family of faith?

If you intend to do so, please respond by saying, ***"We will with the help of God."***

Confirmation Youth: “We will with the help of God.”

Pastor (to congregation): People of God, do you promise to support our confirmation youth and intentionally pray for them during this year of confirmation and in the years to come?

C: We promise to God that we will support and pray for our confirmation youth. We recognize that each one has unique gifts, given to them by God, and we will encourage them to share these gifts as part of our church family and the family of God.

Let us pray,

Gracious God, we give you thanks for the gift of baptism and your promise to love us, forgive us, and always be with us. We thank you for the gift of church family. Strengthen us in our lives of faith and in our relationships with you and with each other that we all may be faithful to the promises we have made to you and to each other on this day. We thank you for the gift of belonging as we give thanks that we belong to you and to your family of faith. Amen.

As children of God, we give thanks for our baptism
that reminds us that each and every day
we are washed in God’s love, forgiveness, and presence!
Thanks be to God!

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always! **And also with you!**

Prayer of the Day¹

O God, in remembrance of those who have handed the faith down to us, we give you thanks. Remembering that they did not stand still, we ask that you move us forward in faith and action. O God of signs, wonders, and mighty deeds, make your work clear and active through us. Amen.

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

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.

¹ From *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2019*, edited by Mary Scrites and BJ Beu. Copyright © 2018 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

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.**

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.

#509 Gospel Acclamation "God's Word Is Our Great Heritage"

God's word is our great heritage and shall be ours forever;

to spread its light from age to age shall be our chief endeavor.

Through life it guides our way; in death it is our stay,

Lord, grant while time shall last your church may hold it fast

throughout all generations.

Gospel Reading: John 8:31-36

The holy gospel according to John, the 1th 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

Hymn of the Day *“O God We Are a Church Reformed”*²

(sing to tune of #886 *Oh for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*)

1. **“Our God, we are a church reformed, a church reforming still:
We long to grow in your true Word, and follow more your will.**
2. **How awesome is your sovereign rule; you reign from heav'n above.
Yet you knelt down in Jesus Christ, in sacrificial love.**
3. **In love, you bring your people here and call your church to you,
That we may know salvation’s joy and serve in all we do.**
4. **You call us to community; by faith our hearts are stirred.
In church, we seek an ordered life, according to your Word.**
5. **As faithful stewards we find joy; we need no rich display.
Lord, teach us all to use with care the gifts you give each day.**

Affirmation of Faith³

**As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world—
which some seek to control, but which others view with despair—
we declare with joy and trust: our world belongs to God!
From the beginning, through all the crises of our times,
until God’s kingdom fully comes, God keeps covenant forever.
Our world belongs to God! Let the earth be glad!
The Spirit is at work, renewing creation. Praise the Lord!**

² Words by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette © 1998 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

³ Adapted from “*Our World Belongs to God*,” articles 1, 2, 6. Posted on the [Calvin Institute for Christian Worship](http://www.calvin.edu/ChristianWorship/) website.

**We rejoice in the goodness of God, renounce the works of darkness,
and dedicate ourselves to holy living and loving.
As covenant partners, called to faithful obedience,
and set free for joyful praise,
we offer our hearts and lives to do God's work in God's world.
And we are confident that the light which shines in the present darkness
will fill the earth. Come, Lord Jesus! Our world belongs to you.**

Prayers of Intercession⁴

Renewed in God's everlasting grace, let us pray for the church, the world,
and all creation. Prayer petitions will end with "God of grace" and the
congregation is invited to respond by saying: **"receive our prayer."**
A brief silence.

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 (especially).
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

⁴ <https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/TextsAndResources#texts>

Christian traditions in our community. Mend hurt feelings and heal wounds we have caused one another. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We offer our prayers, O God, trusting in your everlasting grace and mercy, through Jesus Christ, in us and with us. **Amen.**

Offering Prayer ⁵

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 ⁶

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.

⁵ *Offering Prayer* written by David Sparks, from **Prayers to Share Year A: Responsive Prayers for each Sunday of the Church Year** © 2004 David Sparks, published by Wood Lake Books, Kelowna, BC

⁶ Reformation Sunday Communion Liturgy by Thom M. Shuman © 2014.
 from: <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/2014/10/reformation-sunday.html>

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;
 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.
 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.

p.39 **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 *(for online worshippers)*

Communion Distribution

#471 Communion Hymn “Let Us Break Bread Together”

Communion Blessing

Post-communion Prayer ⁷

Blessed be your name, O God, for we have feasted on your Word, Christ Jesus, the joy and delight of our hearts. Strengthened by this food, send us to gather the world to your banquet, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Announcements

Blessing⁸

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.

⁷ *Prayer after Communion and Blessing* from sundaysandseasons.com © 2023 Augsburg Fortress, Minneapolis, MN

⁸ From *The Abingdon Worship Annual 2016*, edited by Mary Scrites and BJ Beu. Copyright © 2015 by Abingdon Press. Used by permission.

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 the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Sources: Bible passages (except where otherwise indicated) from Common English Bible (CEB) and have been adapted for inclusive language.