



Saint Andrew's Lutheran Church Smithtown, New York 11787

Info@standrewsofsmithtown.org

The Rev. Susan E. Shelhart, Pastor • Nicholas Suminski, Organist and Music Director • Jean Dougherty, Seminarian

Reformation Sunday with Affirmation of Baptism

October 30, 2022 † 10:00 a.m.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

The assembly stands as they are able. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who is eager to forgive
and who loves us beyond our days.

Amen.

Dear friends, together let us acknowledge
our failure to love this world as Jesus does.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy and forgiveness,
we confess that sin still has a hold on us.
We have harmed your good creation.
We have failed to do justice,
love kindness,
and walk humbly with you.
Turn us in a new direction.
Show us the path that leads to life.
Be our refuge and strength on the journey,
through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend.
Amen.

Beloved of God:
your sins are forgiven † and you are made whole.
God points the way to new life in Christ,
who meets us on the road.
Journey now in God's abiding love
through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

*Asterisk indicates where the assembly is invited to stand as they are able.

***GATHERING SONG # A Mighty Fortress Is Our God**

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a sword and shield vic -
2 No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, re -
3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land all threat - 'ning to de -
4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, no thanks to foes, who



to - rious; he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod and
ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, whom
vour us, we trem - ble not, un - moved we stand; they
fear it; for God him - self fights by our side with



wins sal - va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe
God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask - who this may be?
can - not o - ver - pow'r us. Let this world's ty - rant rage;
weap - ons of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house,



has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dread - ful might
The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord,
in bat - tle we'll en - gage! His might is doomed to fail;
goods, hon - or, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched a - way,



he arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.
God's on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.
God's judg - ment must pre - vail! One lit - tle word sub - dues him.
they can - not win the day. The king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

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.

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KYRIE (p. 138)

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

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CANTICLE OF PRAISE (p.139)

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

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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.

ANTHEM

WORD

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34

A 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 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.

³¹The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It 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. ³³But 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. ³⁴No 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**



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PSALM : Psalm 46

- ¹God is our ref- | uge and strength,
a very present | help in trouble.
- ²**Therefore we will not fear, though the | earth be moved,**
and though the mountains shake in the depths | of the sea;
- ³though its waters | rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble | with its tumult.
- ⁴**There is a river whose streams make glad the cit- | y of God,**
the holy habitation of | the Most High.
- ⁵God is in the midst of the city; it shall | not be shaken;
God shall help it at the | break of day.
- ⁶**The nations rage, and the | kingdoms shake;**
God speaks, and the earth | melts away.

*Asterisk indicates where the assembly is invited to stand as they are able.

⁷The LORD of ^l hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob ^l is our stronghold.

⁸**Come now, regard the works ^l of the LORD,
what desolations God has brought up- ^l on the earth;**

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

¹⁰**Be still, then, and know that ^l I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted ^l in the earth."**

¹¹The LORD of ^l hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob ^l is our stronghold.

SECOND READING: Romans 3:19-28

A reading from Second Romans.

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.

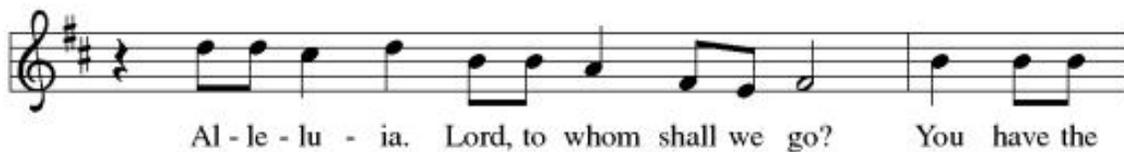
¹⁹Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰For "no human being will be justified in his sight" by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

²¹But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom 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; ²⁶it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

²⁷Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (p. 142)**



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GOSPEL: John 8:31-36

The holy gospel according to John. **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.

³¹Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." ³³They 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'?"

³⁴Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed."

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

*HYMN OF THE DAY #645 Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation



1 Christ is made the sure foun - da - tion, Christ, our head and
2 To this tem - ple, where we call you, come, O Lord of
3 Here be - stow on all your ser - vants what they seek from
4 Praise and hon - or to the Fa - ther, praise and hon - or



cor - ner - stone, cho - sen of the Lord and pre - cious,
hosts, and stay; come with all your lov - ing - kind - ness,
you to gain; what they gain from you, for - ev - er
to the Son, praise and hon - or to the Spir - it,



bind - ing all the church in one; ho - ly Zi - on's
hear your peo - ple as they pray; and your full - est
with the bless - ed to re - tain; and here - af - ter
ev - er three and ev - er one: one in might and



help for - ev - er and our con - fi - dence a - lone.
ben - e - dic - tion shed with - in these walls to - day,
in your glo - ry ev - er - more with you to reign.
one in glo - ry while un - end - ing a - ges run!

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AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

(Pastor) Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism and for these people, one with us in the body of Christ, who are making public affirmation of their baptism.

Presentation [Confirmands stand in the pews]

(Confirmation Leader) I present:

Kevin James Donohue
Charles Joseph Krikau
Rose E. Miller
Hailee Elizabeth Rannazzisi
Jack Thomas Reina
Hailey Victoria Roccisano
Addison Janelle Vanni

who desire to make public affirmation of their baptism.

(Pastor) Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you for these sisters and brothers,
whom you have made your own by water and the Word in baptism.

You have called them to yourself,
enlightened them with the gifts of your Spirit,
and nourished them in the community of faith.

The gifts and promises of baptism,
and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth.

We ask this in the name of Christ.

Amen.

Profession of Faith

The presiding minister addresses those making public affirmation of baptism.

I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.

Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Confirmands: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Confirmands: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Confirmands: I renounce them.

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The presiding minister addresses the candidates and the assembly. The assembly rises as able.

*People of God and Confirmands: Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**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.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

Affirmation

(Confirmation Leader) In your baptism, your parents and sponsors and the church made commitments for each one of you: to share your life with God's faithful people; to teach you the word of God; to bring you to the Lord's Supper; to serve all people, following the example of Jesus; to strive for justice and peace in all the earth. You have been taught to love God, love yourself, and love others. Now it is your turn to make these commitments for yourselves. I invite the family and sponsors of the confirmands to come forward:

Kevin James Donohue
Charles Joseph Krikau
Rose E. Miller
Hailee Elizabeth Rannazzisi
Jack Thomas Reina
Hailey Victoria Roccisano
Addison Janelle Vanni

[Pastor lays hands on Confirmand and invites the family to do so. For each confirmand:]

Name, do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism?

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Confirmand: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

God, pour out your Holy Spirit on **Name**, whom you have marked with the cross of Christ

[After all Confirmands have received laying-on of hands:]

People of God, do you promise to support these sisters and brothers and pray for them in their continued life in Christ?

We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, for the baptism of these young people. Through water and the Holy Spirit you give them new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

Father in Heaven for Jesus' sake, stir up in them the gift of the Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Confirm their faith; guide their lives; empower them in their serving; give them patience in suffering; and bring them to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Acclamation

(Confirmation Leader) Let us rejoice with these sisters and brothers in Christ.

We rejoice with you in the life of baptism.

**Together we will give thanks and praise to God
and proclaim the good news to all the world.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In gratitude and humility, let us join together in prayer on behalf of all of God's creation.

A brief silence.

God our fortress, we pray for the church. Write your law of love on the hearts of your people, that we remain steadfast in our witness to your grace. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God our liberator, we pray for your earth. Bring new life to overused land and contaminated rivers. Reform and reorient our relationship with the environment, that we faithfully care for all of your creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God, our refuge and strength, we pray for the nations. Where they are in an uproar, bring wise leadership and comfort for those in distress. Make wars to cease and peace to enter every land. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God, our very present help in trouble, we pray for those in need. Show mercy to refugees and all fleeing from danger. Shelter any without homes. Calm all who are facing illness, surgery, or a new diagnosis, especially the Flaherty family, the Ulc family, Frank, Gary, David and Carolyn; all on the prayer list; all people affected by COVID-19; and those we name before you now (pause). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

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God our redeemer, we pray for our congregation. Bless all who are preparing for baptism or affirmation of baptism. Open their hearts to your Holy Spirit, teach them your word, and give them courage to proclaim their faith. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

God our stronghold, we give thanks for those who have gone before us in faith, especially James and Stanley; Martin Luther and all reformers. Renew and reform us as we strive to continue in your word. Hear us,
O God.

Your mercy is great.

(Pastor) With grateful hearts we commend our spoken and silent prayers to you, O God; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you!

MEAL

OFFERING

Thank you for your support of the ministries of Saint Andrew's, by mail or by visiting our website for online giving. Donations: standrewsofsmithtown.org/donate

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Gracious God, in your great love you richly provide for our needs.

Make of these gifts a banquet of blessing, and make us ready to share with all in need; through Jesus Christ, who sets a table for all. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE AND PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

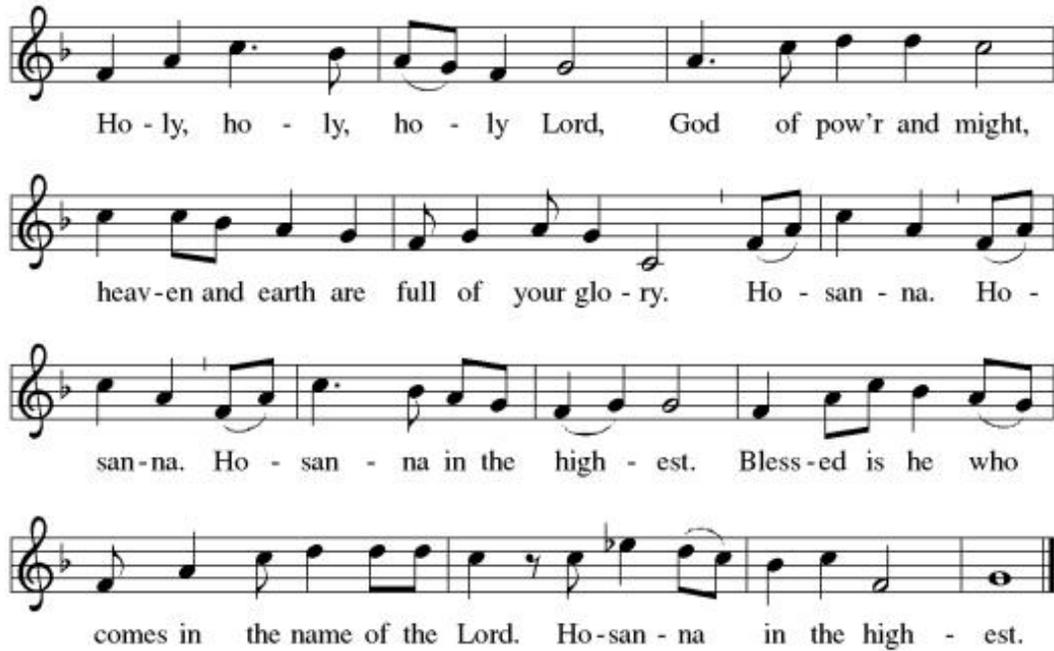
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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,
through our Savior Jesus Christ;
who on this day overcame death and the grave,
and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

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SANCTUS (p.144)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en 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 who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.
You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world
to fulfill for us your holy will
and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

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Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension,
and the promise of his coming again,
we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty,
not as we ought but as we are able;
we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,
may be formed to live as your holy people
and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, 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.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table.
Come, taste and see.

LAMB OF GOD (p.146)

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

Body of Christ, given for you.
Blood of Christ, shed for you.

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COMMUNION HYMN #654 The Church's One Foundation

The Church's One Foundation



1 The church's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ, her Lord;
2 E - lect from ev - 'ry na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
3 Though with a scorn - ful won - der this world sees her op - pressed,
4 Through toil and trib - u - la - tion and tu - mult of her war,
5 Yet she on earth has u - nion with God, the Three in One,



she is his new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the word.
her char - ter of sal - va - tion one Lord, one faith, one birth,
by schisms . . rent a - sund - er, by her - e - sies dis - tressed,
she waits the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for - ev - er - more;
and mys - tic sweet com - mu - nion with those whose rest is won.



From heav'n he came and sought her to be his ho - ly bride;
one ho - ly name she bless - es, par - takes one ho - ly food,
yet saints their watch are keep - ing; their cry goes up: "How long?"
till with the vi - sion glo - rious her long - ing eyes are blest,
Oh, bless - ed heav'n-ly cho - rus! Lord, save us by your grace,



with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.
and to one hope she press - es with ev - 'ry grace en - dued.
and soon the night of weep - ing shall be the morn of song.
and the great church vic - to - rious shall be the church at rest.
that we, like saints be - fore us, may see you face to face.

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

God of the abundant table,
you have refreshed our hearts in this meal
with bread for the journey.
Give us your grace on the road
that we might serve our neighbors with joy;
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen.

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BLESSING

God, who gives life to all things
and frees us from despair,
bless you with truth and peace.

And may the holy Trinity, † one God,
guide you always in faith, hope, and love. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN #729 The Church of Christ, in Every Age

The Church of Christ, in Every Age



1 The church of Christ, in ev - 'ry age be - set by
2 A - cross the world, a - cross the street, the vic - tims
3 Then let the ser - vant church a - rise, a car - ing
4 For he a - lone, whose blood was shed, can cure the
5 We have no mis - sion but to serve in full o -



change, but Spir - it - led, must claim and test its
of in - jus - tice cry for shel - ter and for
church that longs to be a part - ner in Christ's
fe - ver in our blood, and teach us how to
be - dience to our Lord; to care for all, with -



her - i - tage and keep on ris - ing from the dead.
bread to eat, and nev - er live be - fore they die.
sac - ri - fice, and clothed in Christ's hu - man - i - ty.
share our bread and feed the starv - ing mul - ti - tude.
out re - serve, and spread his lib - er - at - ing word.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903–2000

Music: WAREHAM, William Knapp, 1698–1768

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace, with Christ beside you. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

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PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER (30 October 2022)

THOSE IN NEED OF HEALING:

Luke Meyveci [requested by Dana Sanzone]
Emilie Diehl [requested by daughters Cindie & Kathy]
Sara Larson [requested by Julie & Michael Francis]
Gerard Tuohy [requested by Leslee & Steve Mathieson]
Virginia Levitsky [requested by Lydia Moser]
Amy Gabelman, Chris Peck, Bob Widmer, Lex Stolle, Carmine Colasanto, Richard & George Mengert [requested by Carolyn Gabelman]
Cindy English, Tracey Parisi, Margo Naranjo, John Hochuli [requested by Barbara English]
Norma Martin [requested by Sue Rorke]
Brenda Dugan & granddaughter Chanelle, Robert & Pat Richards, Don & Marianne Spagna [requested by Mary Fjellstad]
Marilyn Havighorst [requested by Martha Hahn]
Nicholas Mauceri and Rocky Cinque [requested by Marianne Spagna]
Richard Wiles [husband of Joan Wiles]
Stefanie Spath [requested by Marianna Ulc and family]
Jim Cahote, John Sullivan [requested by Dottie & Jim Clavell]
Kerri Swanson [requested by Linda & Jud Taylor]
Ruth Aiello [requested by Cindy Davis]
Theresa Heedles [requested by Darlene Klouda]
Andy Hazin & the Hazin family, Ilse Gunther, Ralph Gunther [requested by the Hoffman family]
Zach Hills [requested by Brian & Diane Marley]
Bernadette Uneberg [requested by John Hinsch]
The Flaherty family, the Ulc family, Pete Gambitsky, the Rilke family, Sharon Wolf, Dana Stankevitz, Pastor Roger Schleef, Carol Pascale, Walter Henning Sr., Pastor Frank Modr, Gary Weymer [requested by Pastor Shelhart]
David Travis [requested by Richard Travis]
Carolyn Martin [requested by Linda Overton]
The family of Elaine Robinson [requested by Deborah Cella]
Bill Feigin [requested by Jessica Michalski]
Bill Davey [requested by Tom & Pat Pernice]
Suzie DiSanza [requested by Donna Ihlen]
Viola Giovinco [requested by Liz DeLuca]
Amy Kitay [requested by Diana Smiloff]

THOSE IN MILITARY SERVICE:

Captain Zachary Hinsch [nephew of Judy & John Hinsch]
Major Lenore Livingston [daughter of Helen & Art Fortin]
Sergeant Charlee Seto [granddaughter of Jacci & Mike Milo]
Corporal August Detting
Major William Fortin



Every year on the last Sunday in October, many Lutheran churches mark Reformation Sunday. If you didn't grow up with this practice, you may wonder where the tradition comes from, and why we still practice it.

The story dates back to the 16th century – to the year 1517.

Across Europe, the Roman Catholic Church was engaged in one of the greatest fundraisers in history. If a person, as a sign of repentance for their sins, made a financial gift to help with building Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, the church furnished them with a certificate (or indulgence) recognizing the gift and promising that they or their loved ones would be freed from a portion of the time expected in purgatory, in the afterlife.

November 1st, known as All Saints Day on the church calendar, was an important day for selling and buying these indulgences.

In 1517 on the day before All Saint's Day, October 31st, German monk Martin Luther posted a list of 95 Theses – 95 reasons that he objected to this practice of selling indulgences on the door of All Saints Church in the town of Wittenberg, Germany. Those 95 Theses (reasons) went viral.

Luther insisted that we are not forgiven because of anything we do, including buying indulgences or doing enough good work. **Instead, we are forgiven because of who God is.** We are loved and forgiven because God is full of grace and mercy.

Martin Luther's teachings and writings got him kicked out of the church. But he didn't go alone. Others agreed with him, and after his death those who agreed with Luther became known as Lutherans, and also as Protestants. All Protestant churches trace their roots back to this moment in history.

Every Reformation Sunday, we return to the core of our faith: that God loved us first, and God continues to shower us with grace and mercy.

Happy Reformation Sunday!