



Celebrate

Reformation Sunday

October 27, 2024

Rooted in the past and growing into the future, the church must always be reformed in order to live out the love of Christ in an ever-changing world. We celebrate the good news of God's grace, that Jesus Christ sets us free every day to do this life-transforming work. Trusting in the freedom given to us in baptism, we pray for the church, that Christians will unite more fully in worship and mission.

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.**

First Reading

Jeremiah 31:31-34

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.

The 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 LORD of hosts is with us; the
God of Ja - cob is our strong - hold.

God is our ref-¹uge and strength,
a very present¹ help in trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear, though the¹ earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths¹ of the sea;

³though its waters¹ rage and foam,
and though the mountains tremble¹ with its tumult.

⁴There is a river whose streams make glad the cit-¹y of God,
the holy habitation of¹ the Most High.

⁵God is in the midst of the city; it shall¹ not be shaken;
God shall help it at the¹ break of day.

⁶The nations rage, and the¹ kingdoms shake;
God speaks, and the earth¹ melts away. **R**

⁷The LORD of¹ hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob¹ is our stronghold.

⁸Come now, regard the works¹ of the LORD,
what desolations God has brought up-¹ on the earth;

⁹behold the one who makes war to cease in¹ all the world;
who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear,
and burns the¹ shields with fire.

¹⁰“Be still, then, and know that¹ I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations;
I will be exalted¹ in the earth.”

¹¹The LORD of¹ hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob¹ is our stronghold. **R**

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.

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. 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.

Gospel

John 8:31-36

Jesus speaks of truth and freedom as spiritual realities known through his word. He reveals the truth that sets people free from sin.

Jesus 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.”

Prayers of Intercession

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Challenged by God's Word in Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

Lord of all, we give thanks for the whole church throughout the world. Open wide the paths toward unity between denominations so that all followers of Christ may join in shared worship and mission. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Renewing God, as the dying leaves display their beauty, we are reminded that nature's cycle of life includes and requires both life and death. Instill in your people a mission of preservation and appreciation for trees, animals, and waterways threatened by climate collapse. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, in the spirit of reformation we pray for all who cry out for relief from systemic oppression. May the hearts of those who occupy seats of power be reformed so that peace becomes the center of our life together. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Preparing for Next Week

Monday (Simon and Jude, Apostles) John 14:21-27. **Tuesday** Acts 9:32-35. **Wednesday** Matthew 20:29-34. **Thursday** (Reformation Day) Romans 3:19-28. **Friday** (All Saints Day) John 11:32-44. **Saturday** Luke 10:25-37. **All Saints Sunday** (commemoration of Martín de Porres, renewer of society, 1639) Isaiah 25:6-9 *or* Wisdom 3:1-9; Psalm 24; Revelation 21:1-6a; John 11:32-44, *OR* **24th Sunday after Pentecost** (commemoration of Martín de Porres, renewer of society, 1639) Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Psalm 119:1-8; Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 12:28-34.

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Comforting God, be with all who are sick, suffering, or grieving in our own community and beyond (*especially*). Surround them with the promise of your love, comfort, and grace that never ends. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Divine Guide, continue to challenge this community to be ever reforming in our ministries and outreach efforts. Inspire creative ideas among us so that the communal, grace-filled word of God remains at the heart of our ministry. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Almighty God, in Christ's resurrection you ensure that though life be wrenched away, death cannot win the day. May the truth of your saving grace through faith sustain our hope for life in you. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in the saving grace you freely give, both now and forever.
Amen.