

Reformation Sunday

October 30, 2022

Online Bulletin for the

Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service



1812 North Highland Avenue

Clearwater, Florida 33755

Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

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Welcome! 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.

There are a few things to know about this service: you are not required to stand at any point though you can move around anytime you want or need, prayer slips are available for your prayers to be included in Prayer Time, and Holy Communion is served with gluten-free bread and grape juice.

GATHERING SONG

All Are Welcome

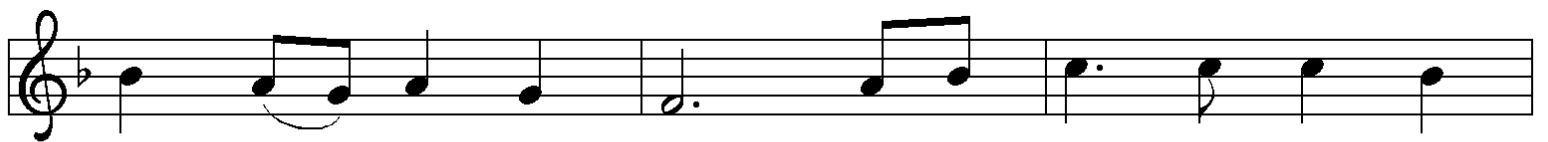
Verses 1 & 4



1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly



live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how



hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and



vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of



Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,



all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

4 Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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GREETING

Worship Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Worship Leader: Let us pray. 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.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

Romans 3:19-28

Introduction to the Lesson: 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.

Reader: 19 Now we know that everything in the Law applies to those who live under the Law, in order to stop all human excuses and bring the whole world under God's judgment. 20 For no one is put right in God's sight by doing what the Law requires; what the Law does is to make us know that we have sinned.

21 But now God's way of putting people right with himself has been revealed. It has nothing to do with law, even though the Law of Moses and the prophets gave their witness to it. 22 God puts people right through their faith in Jesus Christ. God does this to all who believe in Christ, because there is no difference at all: 23 everyone has sinned and is far away from God's saving presence. 24 But by the free gift of God's grace all are put right with him through Christ Jesus, who sets them free. 25-26 God offered him, so that by his blood he should become the means by which people's sins are forgiven through their faith in him. God did this in order to demonstrate that he is righteous. In the past he was patient and overlooked people's sins; but in the present time he deals with their sins, in order to demonstrate his righteousness. In this way God shows that he himself is righteous and that he puts right everyone who believes in Jesus.

27 What, then, can we boast about? Nothing! And what is the reason for this? Is it that we obey the Law? No, but that we believe. 28 For we conclude that a person is put right with God only through faith, and not by doing what the Law commands.

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL

John 8:31-36

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

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to John in the 8th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Worship Leader: So Jesus said to those who believed in him, "If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples; you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." "We are the descendants of Abraham," they answered, "and we have never been anybody's slaves. What do you mean, then, by saying, 'You will be free'?" Jesus said to them, "I am telling you the truth: everyone who sins is a slave of sin. A slave does not belong to a family permanently, but a son belongs there forever. If the Son sets you free, then you will be really free."

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Who Needs to Be Freed?

Martin Luther disliked the idea that adherents to his ideas would call themselves "Lutherans," preferring the term "Christians" instead. Luther wanted the focus to be on

what Christ had done, not on what he had done. So perhaps Luther would be distressed to see so many faithful people not only calling themselves Lutherans five centuries later, but also celebrating Reformation Sunday as a church holiday! Lucky for Luther, the focus of Reformation Sunday is not on Luther's writings or accomplishments but on the freedom in Christ that is at the heart of the gospel message.

In today's text from John's gospel, Jesus' audience also quibbled over terminology. When Jesus told them, "The truth will make you free" (John 8:32), they were suspicious about what exactly he meant by "free." They rejected any implication that they or their ancestors might previously have been slaves in need of being set free. However, Jesus wasn't talking about politics or history. He was referring to a kind of slavery that transcends context: the slavery of sin. All people have been enslaved by sin, and all people need God's mercy. We are bound by the individual sin of personal choices and by the societal sin of complex systems that are beyond any one person's control.

The weight of all that sin can feel crushing, but at the heart of the Reformation message is the truth that, through Christ's death and resurrection, God has already offered us unconditional forgiveness for all our sins, no matter how heavy. We don't need to earn God's mercy because it is a gift offered without reservation or requirement. God's grace is given to us for free and to make us free. Thanks be to God, the chains are gone! That is the good news at the heart of Luther's teachings, and it is the good news at the heart of our celebration on Reformation Sunday and every day.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am

sung 2x



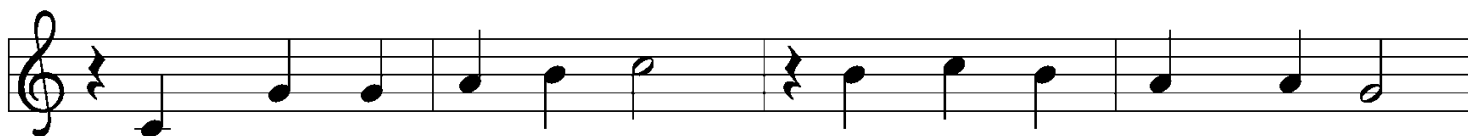
1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a sword and shield vic -
 2 No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, re -



to - rious; he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod and
 ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, whom



wins sal - va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe
 God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be?



has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dread - ful might
The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord,



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.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Music: EIN FESTE BURG, Martin Luther
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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: 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. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: God our stronghold, we give thanks for those who have gone before us in faith, especially Martin Luther and all reformers. Renew and reform us as we strive to continue in your word. Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: 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. We pray for those on our prayer list, those suffering from war and terror such as the people of Ukraine and victims of mass shootings, those suffering from natural disasters including the victims of Hurricanes Fiona and Ian, and these we name now..... and those we name now with our lips or in our hearts Lord, in your mercy,

Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the “Donate” button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: 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.

Pastor: 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.

Pastor: 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.

Pastor: Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in whichever language is closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

Prayer Leader: Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another. **Amen.**

Pastor: Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, help those who go to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, or imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your everlasting presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Congregation: Amen.**

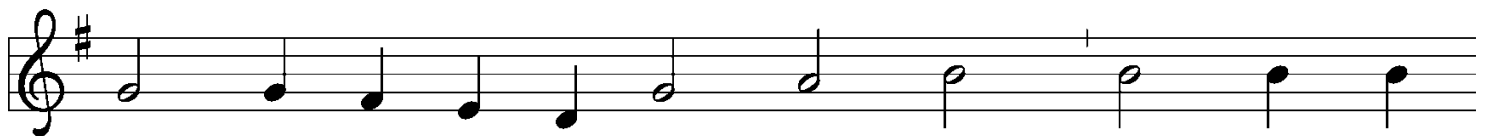
BLESSING

Worship Leader: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all



crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye



heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. Tell what God has done.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!