

Reformation Sunday | October 25th, 2020

Online Reader: Barb Stuart

Announcements

- Reformation Sunday + Stewardship Kick-Off
- We will have worship on **Sunday @ 9:00 -and- Wednesday @ 11:00.**
 - Because we are limited to 50 people, you will need to RSVP by contacting the church office. Thank you for your flexibility and understanding.
- Wednesday education began last **Wednesday, October 21st.**
 - Wednesday Ed: 5:30 - 6:15 in the education wing (Groups A/B)
 - Confirmation: 6:00 - 7:30 in the sanctuary
- Today is Confirmation Sunday
- We will continue to gather for Communion on Tuesdays at 10:00, 5:00, and 7:00. We will meet in the sanctuary. Please enter through the front doors and maintain proper distance. RSVP to Pastor Ally if you'd like to celebrate Communion this week!
- There will be a countywide food distribution on October 28th at the Le Sueur County Fairgrounds from 4:00 - 5:30.

We Are the Church Together and Apart | 2021 Stewardship Appeal

It's been an interesting year, to say the least. And yet here we are nearing the end of 2020. Last year around this time our Council and Stewardship Team introduced you all to our 2020 Stewardship Appeal: *Gathered by God*. The Holy Spirit moved fiercely through this congregation and generosity abounded as we looked forward to our ministry goals around worship and outreach. Unfortunately, thanks to COVID, some of those goals got set on the backburner and some came to the forefront as we adapted to our changing context. And needless to say, we're still adapting.

This is where our 2021 Stewardship Appeal comes in: *We Are the Church Together and Apart*. The past several months have made it very clear that we are the church, both when we are able to gather together for worship, fellowship, and learning *as well as* when we are unable to gather together as "normal." Because here's the thing, the church is not a building. It's not a specific place or time you have to be at in order to "be church."

We are the church when we're in the building that bears the name "St. Paul Lutheran," but we're also the church when we exit its doors and go out into the world. We are church at school and at work. We are church at the grocery store and at the hair salon. We are the church when we are with members of this congregation and when we are with strangers. God's church has no physical bounds, which is why we are the church together and apart.

In the weeks to come, you'll hear more about the hopes and dreams we have as St. Paul Lutheran for the mission and ministries of this congregation. These hopes and dreams come from those cottage conversations we had a couple years ago, so these hopes and dreams come from you. So let us join together as the church, let us join together in

generosity, as we continue to be God's church in the world for the sake of the world. We are the church together and apart.

Gathering Hymn | *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*

ELW 504 (new)

Confession + Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

Faithful God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgement on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. **Amen.**

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.**

Prayer of the Day

Gracious God, **we pray for your holy church. Fill it with all truth and peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in anything it is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in need, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

[Online Children's Message]

First 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.

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 being will be justified in his sight” by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.

But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, the righteousness of God through faith in 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 show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus.

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

[Online] Gospel Acclamation (pg. 205)

Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.

Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.

Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

***Gospel Reading | 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.

Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” They 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’?”

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

Sermon

Hymn of the Day | *Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word*

ELW 517 (new)

Apostles’ Creed

Let us confess our faith using the words of the 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 Intercession**

With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Renew and inspire the church in the freedom of the gospel, O God, and pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word. Bestow on the church your saving peace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

As the earth changes, as mountains shake and the waters roar, may we care for this planet as a holy habitation for all living things. Guide areas of this world divided or traumatized by conflict, especially in our own land. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Release those living in bondage to debts, chronic pain, or addiction. Grant your healing touch to those who are ill, especially Tanya Bohmer, Dave Farm, Dave Krenik, Dave Weber, Donna Sladek, Erin Buss, Jane Lorsung, Nancy Gjerde, Ron Germsheid, Sara Lobatos, Teri Knish, and all those we lift to you in the quiet of our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In this family of faith we give thanks for the courageous voices that have remained firm in their commitment to the one who frees us from sin and death. We thank you especially for Jordyn Berg, Dylan Hollom, Delanie Lobatos, Adam Schley, Riley Thelemann, and Sami Tiede who today affirm their faith. Centered in your grace, unify us in the hope of the gospel. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***Lord's Prayer**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray: **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.**

***Final Blessing**

For all that God can do within us, for all that God can do without us, **thanks be to God!**

For all in whom Christ lived before us, for all in whom Christ lives beside us, **thanks be to God!**

For all the Spirit wants to bring us, for where the Spirit wants to send us, **thanks be to God!**

The blessing of God, Father, Son, and + Holy Spirit, be with you now and forever. **Amen.**

***Dismissal**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sending Hymn | *Amazing Grace, My Chains are Gone* (old recording)

*** Dismissal + Sending Hymn reversed for online worship ***