



REFORMATION DAY (Observed)

October 26, 2025



A Reformation Service of Praise and Thanksgiving
In Honor of The Small and Large Catechisms of Dr. Luther
Service of the Sacrament, Divine Service Setting Four, pg. 209

Rev. Don McKillop, Vacancy Pastor

Please stand.

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Prayer

P Almighty, Triune God, for the re-emphasized, saving truths of the Reformation — salvation through the knowledge of “Scripture alone”, salvation through God’s “Grace alone”, and salvation through “Faith alone” in Christ — honor and glory to Your Name in the Church forever. May we in this Reformation service, being moved by Your truths, grow in Christian love and obedience, giving praise to Your Being — Three in One and One in Three — for all of Your Reformation blessings to our hearts.

C Amen.

657 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

sts. 1–2



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 wins sal -
ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, Whom God Him -



va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe Has sworn to
self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be? The Lord of



work us woe. With craft and dread - ful might He
hosts is He, Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord, God's



arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.
on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.

Text: tr. Lutheran Book of Worship, 1978. | Text and tune: Martin Luther, 1483–1546
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The Service Introduction



- P** Today's worship constitutes our celebration of the Festival of Reformation, the anniversary of Luther's nailing of the Ninety-five Theses to the church door in Wittenberg, Germany on October 31, 1517.
- C** Any celebration of the Reformation should remind us of Dr. Luther's great gifts to the Church, the *Large Catechism* and the *Small Catechism*. Written in 1529 and used ever since in the Evangelical Lutheran Church for public instruction and private devotion.
- P** In our service today, we shall review the circumstances behind the necessity of writing the catechisms, read the Six Chief Parts of Luther's *Small Catechism*, and intersperse appropriate hymns along the way,
- C** Since the whole of Reformation and Catechism truth revolves around the desire to teach Christ and His saving work of forgiveness on behalf of His Church, it is most appropriate that we start with a selection about Christ and His Church.

You may be seated.

645 Built on the Rock

sts. 1, 3-4

1 Built on the Rock the Church shall stand E - ven when
3 We are God's house of liv - ing stones, Built for His
4 Here stands the font be - fore our eyes, Tell - ing how

stee - ples are fall - ing. Crum - bled have spires in
own hab - i - ta - tion. He through bap - tis - mal
God has re - ceived us. The al - tar re - calls Christ's

ev - 'ry land; Bells still are chim - ing and call -
grace us owns Heirs of His won - drous sal - va -
sac - ri - fice And what His Sup - per here gives

ing, Call - ing the young and old to rest,
tion. Were we but two His name to tell,
us. Here sound the Scrip - tures that pro - claim

But a - bove all the souls dis - tressed,
Yet He would deign with us to dwell
Christ yes - ter - day, to - day, the same,

Long - ing for rest ev - er - last - ing.
With all His grace and His fa - vor.
And ev - er - more, our Re - deem - er.

Text: Nikolai Fredrik Severin Grundtvig, 1783-1872, abr.; tr. Carl Döving, 1867-1937, alt. | Tune: Ludvig M. Lindeman, 1812-87. | Text and tune: Public domain

The Background History to the Writing of the Catechisms

- P** Long ago at a time called the Middle Ages, most children were not taught that God loved them. Most people did not have any real knowledge of the love of God because their pastors were failing to do their jobs.
- C** **Children and parents only were taught that Jesus was an angry Judge. They were told they had to do all kinds of things to make God love them. People tried to work their way to heaven by different kinds of works, even by deeds which the Bible had never commanded.**
- P** At this time Martin Luther was born. Like everyone else, he was taught that he had to work his own way into heaven. He worked harder than just about anyone else to make God love him and forgive his sins, even to the point of starving and beating himself.
- C** **But Martin Luther became a teacher whose job it was to teach people about the Bible. By studying the Bible himself, Dr Luther found the truth that God loves everyone and that God the Son became a man, Jesus Christ, who suffered the punishment for our sins by dying on a cross.**
- P** Martin Luther taught that God forgives our sins freely because of Jesus' death. This meant that people could not get into heaven by doing good works. Instead, they were saved by grace, God's undeserved love. Any Christian deeds they were to do were simply "thank you's" to Jesus for what He had first done for them.
- C** **Martin Luther wanted everyone to know this wonderful truth of God's Word, but when he visited churches in 1528 he saw that they needed a book that they could use to teach this truth to children and to everyone else. Such a book would be called a Catechism. It was to be based on the Bible, God's Word.**

582 God's Word Is Our Great Heritage



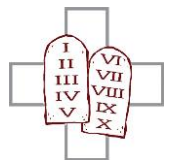
God's Word is our great her - i - tage And shall be ours for -
ev - er; To spread its light from age to age Shall be our
chief en - deav - or. Through life it guides our way, In death it
is our stay. Lord, grant, while worlds en - dure, We keep its
teach - ings pure Through - out all gen - er - a - tions.

Text: Nikolai Fredrik Severin Grundtvig, 1783–1872; tr. Ole G. Belsheim, 1861–1925, alt.
Tune: Friedrich O. Reuter, 1863–1924
Text and tune: Public domain

- P** Martin Luther knew that everyone needed to know The Ten Commandments, The Apostle's Creed, and The Lord's Prayer. Christ had also commanded His Church to baptize and celebrate The Lord's Supper.
- C** So for 13 years Dr. Luthera preached sermons explaining all these things to the people. Then in 1529 he had these explanations printed so that even more people could hear and read them.
- P** In 1528 visitations to churches revealed that the people knew little of Christian doctrine. He met a priest who wanted to be a pastor but this priest did not know The Ten Commandments nor had he read a book for six years. Another pastor had not offered Communion for three years; still another priest who had become a pastor had gone without a Bible for 26 years because he didn't replace the one he lost in a fire. And Luther also found out that many farmers in Germany were angry at him because he insisted they learn The Lord's Prayer by heart. They thought it was too long to learn.
- C** Luther learned the meaning of God's words in Hosea 4:6, *Ignorance destroys My people.*
- P** Thus, Luther wrote two catechisms, or books of instruction.
- C** One was called *Luther's Small Catechism*. It was for parents and children, the laymen of the Church.
- P** The other was called *Luther's Large Catechism*. It was for pastors, designed to keep them a few steps ahead of the laymen in Christian doctrine.
- C** In this way, Luther started his great Christian education program which has come to dominate Lutheran parochial schools.
- P** He divided his *Small Catechism* into Six Chief Parts. The first part consisted of THE TEN COMMANDMENTS and their explanations. Let us recite them, not in the German in which Luther stated them, but in modern English.

THE FIRST CHIEF PART OF LUTHER'S CATECHISM RECITED

- P** The First Commandment
- C** You shall have no other gods.
- P** *What does this mean?*
- C** We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.
- P** The Second Commandment
- C** You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
- P** *What does this mean?*
- C** We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.
- P** The Third Commandment
- C** Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
- P** *What does this mean?*
- C** We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.
- P** The Fourth Commandment
- C** Honor your father and your mother.



P *What does this mean?*

C We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.

P The Fifth Commandment

C You shall not murder.

P *What does this mean?*

C We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.

P The Sixth Commandment

C You shall not commit adultery.

P *What does this mean?*

C We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

P The Seventh Commandment

C You shall not steal.

P *What does this mean?*

C We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

P The Eighth Commandment

C You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

P *What does this mean?*

C We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

P The Ninth Commandment

C You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

P *What does this mean?*

C We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

P The Tenth Commandment

C You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

P *What does this mean?*

C We should fear and love God so that we do not entice or force away our neighbor's wife, workers, or animals, or turn them against him, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

- P** The Close of the Commandments
What does God say about all these commandments?
- C** He says: “I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments.” (Exodus 20:5–6)
- P** *What does this mean?*
- C** God threatens to punish all who break these commandments. Therefore, we should fear His wrath and not do anything against them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. Therefore, we should also love and trust in Him and gladly do what He commands.
- P** Of course, the Law cannot save us because we cannot do it perfectly or even near perfectly. By nature, we are perfectly imperfect. It is only the Gospel which can save.

Hymn “The Law Commands and Makes Us Know”

TLH 289, Old Hundredth

- Women: The Law commands and makes us know What duties to our God we owe;
But ‘tis the Gospel must reveal Where lies our strength to do His will.
- All: The Law discovers guilt and sin And shows how vile our hearts have been;
The Gospel only can express Forgiving love and cleansing grace.
- Men: What curses doth the Law denounce Against the man that fails but once!
But in the Gospel Christ appears, Pard’ning the guilt of num’rous years.
- All: My soul, no more attempt to draw Thy life and comfort from the Law.
Fly to the hope the Gospel gives; The man that trusts the promise lives.

THE SECOND CHIEF PART OF LUTHER’S CATECHISM RECITED

- P** The First Article of the Apostle’s Creed
Creation
- C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
- P** *What does this mean?*
- C** I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them.
- He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.
- He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.
- This is most certainly true.



P The Second Article of the Apostle's Creed
Redemption

C And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

P *What does this mean?*

C I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord,

who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death,

that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.

This is most certainly true.

P The Third Article of the Apostle's Creed
Sanctification

C I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

P *What does this mean?*

C I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.

In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.

In this Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.

On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is most certainly true.

P The idea of the Trinity of the Apostle's Creed and His Gospel of salvation is beautifully expressed in one of Luther's hymns, "We All Believe in One True God". We will sing this hymn as the Offering is taken.

OFFERING

953 We All Believe in One True God



1 We all be-lieve in one true God, Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost,
2 We all be-lieve in Je - sus Christ, Son of God and Mar - y's son,
3 We all con-fess the Ho - ly Ghost, Who from both in truth pro-ceeds,



Ev - er - pres - ent help in need, Praised by all the heav'n - ly host;
Who de - scend - ed from His throne And for us sal - va - tion won;
Who sus - tains and com-forts us In all tri - als, fears, and needs.



All He made His love en-folds, All cre - a - tion He up-holds.
By whose cross and death are we Res - cued from all mis - er - y.
Bless-ed, ho - ly Trin - i - ty, Praise for - ev - er be to Thee!

Text: Tobias Clausnitzer, 1619–84; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt. | Tune: Neu-vermehrtes . . . Gesangbuch, 1693, 3rd ed., Meiningen | Text and tune: Public domain

THE THIRD CHIEF PART OF LUTHER'S CATECHISM

P The Lord's Prayer

C 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.



THE FOURTH CHIEF PART OF LUTHER'S CATECHISM RECITED

P The Fourth Chief Part of the catechism deals with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Luther asks, *What is Baptism?*

C Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God's command and combined with God's word.

P *Which is that word of God?*

C Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19)

P *What benefits does Baptism give?*

C It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

P *Which are these words and promises of God?*

C Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16)



P *How can water do such great things?*

C Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, along with the faith which trusts this word of God in the water. For without God's word the water is plain water and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three: "He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying." (Titus 3:5–8)

P *What does such baptizing with water indicate?*

C It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

P *Where is this written?*

C St. Paul writes in Romans, chapter six: "We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:4)

THE FIFTH CHIEF PART OF LUTHER'S CATECHISM RECITED

P *What is Confession?*

C Confession has two parts. First, that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.



P *What sins should we confess?*

C Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

P *Which are these?*

C Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments: Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?

P *What is the Office of the Keys?*

C The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His Church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent.

P *Where is this written?*

C This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (John 20:22–23)

P What do you believe according to these words?

C I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself.

607 From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee

sts. 1, 5

1 From depths of woe I cry to Thee, In trial and
5 Though great our sins, yet great - er still Is God's a -
trib - u - la - tion; Bend down Thy gra - cious
bun - dant fa - vor; His hand of mer - cy
ear to me, Lord, hear my sup - pli - ca - tion.
nev - er will A - ban - don us, nor wa - ver.
If Thou re - mem - b'rest ev - 'ry sin, Who then could heav - en
Our shep - herd good and true is He, Who will at last His
ev - er win Or stand be - fore Thy pres - ence?
Is - rael free From all their sin and sor - row.

Text: tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt. | Text and tune: Martin Luther, 1483-1546 | Text and tune: Public domain

THE SIXTH CHIEF PART OF LUTHER'S CATECHISM RECITED

P The Sixth and last Chief Part is The Sacrament of the Altar. How beautifully Luther wrote it! He asked, *"What is the Sacrament of the Altar?"*

C It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.

P Where is this written?

C The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul write: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."



- P** *What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?*
- C** These words, “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,” show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.
- P** *How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?*
- C** Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words written here: “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament. Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: “forgiveness of sins.”
- P** *Who receives this Sacrament worthily?*
- C** Fasting and bodily preparation are certainly fine outward training. But that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” But anyone who does not believe these words or doubts them is unworthy and unprepared, for the words “for you” require all hearts to believe.

St. Paul’s Service concludes with The Summary on pages 13-14.

Trinity’s Service continues on the next page and following.



P Let us now celebrate the Sacrament of the Altar. *Lutheran Service Book*, Divine Setting Four, pages 209–211, from the Words of Our Lord through the Nunc Dimittis.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei

LSB 210

C 1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
You take the sin of the world a - way;
You take the sin of the world a - way;
O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus Christ,
Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray.
And grant us peace, O Lord, we pray.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

You may be seated.

Distribution

Distribution Music

Nunc Dimittis

1 O Lord, now let Your ser - vant De -
2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All

part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the
glo - ry to the Son, All glo - ry to the

glo - ry it, Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;

A light to lead the Gen - tiles Un -
For as in the be - gin - ning, Is

to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -

peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

THE SUMMARY

- P** As said above, the catechisms of Luther were completed in 1529.
- C** The *Small Catechism* originally cost six pennies, but Justus Jonas, Luther's fellow worker, said that "6,000 worlds cannot begin to pay for it."
- P** Another write has said, "If Dr. Luther had done nothing but to write his two catechisms for homes, schools, and churches and to bring the morning, evening, and mealtime prayers back into the homes, the whole world could never thank him enough or repay him."
- C** Luther himself said, "At least once a week, let the father of the house examine his children and servants, to see how much they have learned. He is under *divine* command either to teach them himself or to provide for their instruction."
- P** By 1700, *Luther's Small Catechism* had appeared in 100 different versions. Wherever the Germans went, Luther's catechism went with them. It was the first book translated in the

© We pray that our Lord Jesus will ever keep it translated in our believing hearts.

I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

P Now may the God of Luther, our God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, remain in our hearts and lives forever.

Text: Ludwig Helmbold, 1532–98; tr. Matthias Loy, 1828–1915, alt. | Tune: As hymnodus sacer, 1625, Leipzig | Text and tune: Public domain.

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