

Continue *in* My Word

A SERVICE FOR THE **500TH ANNIVERSARY**
OF THE REFORMATION

Leader's Guide

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By Mike Ramming. Art and design: Jamie Wyatt. © 2017 Creative Communications for the Parish, a division of Bayard, Inc., 1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026. 800-325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com. Most of the Luther quotes are taken from the reference set *Luther's Works*, Fortress Press, 1967: Volume 54, "Table Talk" and Volume 53, "Liturgy and Hymns." Quotes are also taken from *Here I Stand*, Bainton, Copyright © 1991, Abingdon Press, p. 185, and *National Geographic*, Oct 1983, p. 455. Used by permission All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. Purchase of this kit gives the purchaser the copyright release to use the material in any format for use in worship.

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About the Service

This is a special worship service celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation with dramas that use quotes from Martin Luther's Table Talk and involve historical people from the time of the Reformation. The service highlights major events and elements of the Reformation in an understandable and informative way. Hymns include "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word," "Dear Christians One And All, Rejoice" and "A Mighty Fortress."

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Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

Newsletter Notice

Join us for a special worship service celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation with dramas that use quotes from Martin Luther's Table Talk and involve historical people from the time of the Reformation. The service highlights major events and elements of the Reformation in an understandable and informative way and includes the beloved hymns "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word," "Dear Christians One And All, Rejoice" and "A Mighty Fortress."

Bulletin Notice

Welcome to this special worship service celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation with dramas that use quotes from Martin Luther's Table Talk and involve historical people from the time of the Reformation. Let the major events and elements of the Reformation come alive for you this day in an understandable and informative way in this service as we sing, say and hear the Gospel message that we are saved by grace through faith.

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Order of Service

Introduction

Drama 1:

Two Christians from Luther's day are on their way to church, discussing the current unrest due to Luther's presenting of his 95 Theses. The date is soon after October 31, 1517.

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

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

Hymn Erhalt Uns, Herr LM

Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word; curb those who by deceit or sword
Would wrest the kingdom from your Son and bring to nought all he has done.

Lord Jesus Christ, your pow'r make known, for you are Lord of lords alone;
Defend your holy Church that we may sing your praise triumphantly.

O Comforter of priceless worth, send peace and unity on earth;
Support us in our final strife and lead us out of death to life.

Drama 2:

Luther, in the monastery, struggles with his faith.

Old Testament Lesson..... Jeremiah 31:31-34

Drama 3:

Luther's awareness of the importance of God's Word.

Second Lesson..... Romans 3:19-28

Drama 4:

Luther's realization of salvation by faith in Jesus.

Gospel Lesson John 8:31-36

Drama 5:

Luther's reliance of God's grace above all else, as he stands before the church authorities at the Diet of Worms and says, "I cannot, and will not, recant."

A Creedal Hymn Wir Glauben All (metrical) 87 77 77

We all believe in one true God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
Ever-present help in need, praised by all the heav'nly host;
All he made his love enfolds, all creation he upholds.

We all believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God and Mary's son,
Who descended from his throne and for us salvation won;
By whose cross and death are we rescued from all misery.

We all confess the Holy Ghost, who from both in truth proceeds,
Who sustains and comforts us in all trials, fears and needs.
Blessed, holy Trinity, praise forever be to thee!

Drama 6:

*The message for today is highlighted by discussions at Luther's dinner table—
a frequent pastime for many of his friends and students.*

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Complete Script For Worship Leaders

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/monument-martin-luther-wittenberg-germany-first-223567285>

- The **Introduction** is spoken by the pastor:

¶ This is a special Reformation Service in celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Today, segments of drama will be intertwined with the usual parts of our worship service. Special dramatic scenes, based on Luther's life and portions of this Table Talks, will be presented. I hope that the drama segments will give you a fresh insight into the spiritual miracles God worked through the Reformation and Martin Luther, its leader. May the Lord richly bless this hour of worship, reflection and celebration for you!

- **Drama 1** is performed by 2 readers playing 2 Christians of Luther's day (1 and 2):

Two Christians from Luther's day are on their way to church, discussing the current unrest due to Luther's presenting of his 95 Theses. The date is soon after October 31, 1517.

(Following the Introduction. Two people in period costume enter sanctuary by back center doors. Dialog is spoken while slowly walking up aisle. Eventually both will exit at the front of the church as if they were going into the front doors of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany.)

1: I just don't know! *(Pause)* I'm really concerned! *(Pause)* I'm worried about all the turmoil here in Wittenberg and the unrest all over the countryside since Doctor Luther put up his 95 Theses. He really stirred up a bee hive there! All the trouble! I'm worried about what will happen.

2: Happen? *(Getting excited)* All sorts of things are happening! Good things, too! The City Clerk read the theses to me. Can't say I understood all the arguments, but I do know Doctor Luther really lambasted that Friar Tetzl for selling indulgences. *(Grin of satisfaction)* At first I thought the idea of being able to buy forgiveness sounded good! Really easy, but the more I thought about it . . . I don't know. *(Shaking head)* It just didn't sound right. Any way . . . I know that everyone has taken new notice of the church services and his sermons. Something special is going on every Sunday. I've never heard such wonderful sermons before, either. O, Luther isn't the greatest preacher. Sometimes I just can't follow all the problems, but I've heard more about the Lord Jesus than ever before in my life. And, I like that! *(Walking taller)*

1: Yes, I know what you mean. *(Bright grin turns slowly into frown)* But, what about all the trouble? Where is it going to lead us? I'm afraid nothing good will come of it.

2: You show me a time without trouble! There's always something go on! Some problem, somewhere! I don't know . . . what Pastor Luther is saying and doing may lead to some changes. Heaven knows we need some. But, whatever, I know worship services mean much more to me now than they used to. A lot of my spiritual struggles have been answered! Pastor Luther was telling me of some of his earlier struggles of the heart and soul. What is going on now comes from down deep inside the response to what God is doing. Any way . . . I'm ready to get into church.

1: Me too. It should be almost time for the service to begin.

(Characters proceed like they are heading to church and walk offstage.)

• The **Opening Prayer** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

☐ In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

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

• The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Erhalt Uns, Herr LM:

Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word; curb those who by deceit or sword
Would wrest the kingdom from your Son and bring to nought all he has done.

Lord Jesus Christ, your pow'r make known, for you are Lord of lords alone;
Defend your holy Church that we may sing your praise triumphantly.

O Comforter of priceless worth, send peace and unity on earth;
Support us in our final strife and lead us out of death to life.

- **Drama 2** is performed by 1 reader playing Luther (ML):

Luther, in the monastery, struggles with his faith.

(Non-verbal prayer struggles shown. Suddenly hits kneeler, jumps up and shouts.)

ML: Is there no peace? Why don't you speak to me? Answer me when I pray!

(Cocks head listening, followed by dejected look)

ML: All I hear is silence!

(Kneels again)

ML: O God, you are the righteous judge who sifts the hearts of men. You pronounce punishment upon sin. You demand that we walk before you and be holy. . . . Show me your way that I might please you! Light my path that I may walk in Your righteousness.

(Rises slowly and turns with thoughtful expression)

ML: Ah! Maybe a change will help me. Abbot Staupitz wants me to go back to school and study Holy Scripture. Maybe something can be found there that will point the way to peace.

(Sigh with shake of head)

- The **Old Testament Lesson**, Jeremiah 31:31-34, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares 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. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

- **Drama 3** is performed by 1 reader playing Luther (ML):

Luther's awareness of the importance of God's Word.

(Pacing with mused look, holding a Bible)

ML: Who to follow? Scholars disagree with each other. The Pope says one thing about pleasing God;

councils in the past have said something else. Where can I find authority for my faith and life? . . . It has to be Scripture! (*Jabbing finger into Bible*)

(To self but loudly)

ML: Scripture alone!

- The **Second Lesson**, Romans 3:19-28, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

- **Drama 4** is performed by 1 reader playing Luther:

Luther's realization of salvation by faith in Jesus.

(Luther studying the Bible. Begins talking to himself, but loudly.)

(Expression of joy shifts into look of peace)

ML: That's it! The long sought after peace! The answer to when enough is enough!

(Reads from the Bible)

ML: "For we hold that a man is justified by faith apart from the law" (Romans 3:28). Here is the peace!

(Falls to knees)

ML: Lord Jesus Christ, my faith is in you alone!

- The **Gospel Lesson**, John 8:31-36, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

P So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my

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Music Guide

Erhalt Uns, Herr LM.....	38-39
Wir Glauben All (metrical) 87 77 77.....	40-41
Nun Freut Euch 87 87 887.....	42-43
Vater Unser 88 88 88.....	44-45
Ein Feste Burg (Rhythmic) 87 87 55 56 7.....	46-47

Tune.....Erhalt Uns, Herr LM

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Erhalt Uns, Herr LM'. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The first system starts with a measure number '1' in both staves. The second system starts with a measure number '6' in both staves. The music is written in a simple, homophonic style with block chords and moving lines in both hands.

Creative
Communications
Sample

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Erhalt Uns, Herr LM:

Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word; curb those who by deceit or sword
Would wrest the kingdom from your Son and bring to nought all he has done.

Lord Jesus Christ, your pow'r make known, for you are Lord of lords alone;
Defend your holy Church that we may sing your praise triumphantly.

O Comforter of priceless worth, send peace and unity on earth;
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