

A Service for Reformation

Trusting Only Thee



- The **Confession and Forgiveness** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P Dear Lord Jesus, you have been trustworthy beyond measure toward us, yet we have so often failed to trust you as we ought. We confess to you now our untrusting ways:

C **Forgive us, O Savior, for doubting your promises to us. We have listened to the false statements of the world and the outright lies of the devil instead. We have put faith in ourselves instead of in you. We have questioned our belief in you and chosen to look to things of this earth for security and certainty. Have mercy on us, Lord, and help us to turn our hearts to you once again.**

(Please observe a time of self-examination to reflect on our sins.)

P I have Good News to share that you can trust in all your days: The Lord has forgiven you all your sins through his death on the cross for you. This is a free gift, not because of works, lest anyone should boast. Your place in the kingdom of God is restored through him, and you are now free to trust in him who is your one and only Savior and Lord.

C **Amen.**

- The **Hymn of Response** is sung by the congregation to the tune Olivet 664 6664, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Calvary, Savior divine!
Now hear me while I pray, take all my guilt away;
O let me from this day be wholly thine.

May thy rich grace impart strength to my fainting heart, my zeal inspire;
As thou hast died for me, O may my love to thee
Pure, warm, and changeless be, a living fire.

While life's dark maze I tread, and griefs around me spread, be thou my guide;
Bid darkness turn to day, wipe sorrow's tears away,
Nor let me ever stray from thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream, when death's cold, sullen stream shall o'er me roll,
Blest Savior, then in love, fear and distrust remove;
O bear me safe above, a ransomed soul.

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ O Jesus Christ, the world may put their trust in their possessions, their bank accounts, their jobs, or just themselves for survival, but we know to put our trust only in you for our life today and for our life to come in heaven. In the end, we know that you are the only thing in heaven and on earth that lasts and that saves us. Without you, we would not be anything. With you, we have everything we could ever need forevermore. Amen.

- The **Children's Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

(Needed: a trophy, a dollar bill, a piece of paper that reads, "Forgiven," a cross)

☐ Happy Reformation, children. Today, we are remembering what Martin Luther brought to light for us over 500 years ago. I have some items here to help you understand what Martin Luther said in his *95 Theses* that he nailed to the church door in Wittenberg, Germany in 1517. The first thing I have is this. *(Hold up the trophy.)* What is this? *(Allow the children to respond.)* That's right! It is a trophy. It is a symbol of our accomplishments in life, the good things we have done. But let me ask you, "Can this trophy get you into heaven?" *(Allow the children to respond.)* No, it cannot. How about this? *(Hold up a dollar bill.)* What is this? That's right! It's a dollar bill. This dollar bill is a symbol for all the money we have. Can money get us into heaven? *(Allow the children to respond.)* No, it cannot. Now here is a piece of paper that says "Forgiven" on it. *(Hold up the piece of paper.)* In Martin Luther's time leaders in the church were selling pieces of paper like this, which they called indulgences, and they were telling people that these pieces of paper could forgive their sins and get them into heaven. Do you think this piece of paper can get us into heaven? *(Allow the children to respond.)* No, it can't. Now let me show you this. *(Hold up the cross.)* What is this? *(Allow the children to respond.)* That's right! It is a cross. Does this get us into heaven? *(Allow the children to respond.)* Yes. Yes, it does. According to God's plan, Jesus died on the cross to forgive our sins and make it possible for us to go to heaven. Of all the things here, the cross is the only thing that gets us into heaven. Nothing that we do or have can get us into heaven. Only Jesus can do that for us. That is the wonderful and beautiful message that Martin Luther wanted people to know. And it is the message that I want you to remember today. Just trust in Jesus, and he will take care of you forever. Isn't that great news? Let us pray:

Dear Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross to forgive our sins and to open the door to heaven for us. Help us to remember that only you can do this for us. Let us be like Martin Luther and tell others this Good News. Amen.

- The **Old Testament Reading**, 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.”

- The **Epistle Reading**, 1 Timothy 1:12-17, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

- The **Gospel Reading**, John 17:1-26, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified

in them. And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

- The **Sermon Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Angel’s Story 76 76 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

O Savior, precious Savior, whom yet unseen we love,
 O name of might and favor, all other names above;
 We worship thee, we bless thee, to thee alone we sing;
 We praise thee and confess thee, our holy Lord and King.

O bringer of salvation, who wondrously has wrought,
 Thyself the revelation of love beyond our thought;
 We worship thee, we bless thee, to thee, O Christ, we sing;
 We praise thee and confess thee, our gracious Lord and King.

In thee all fullness dwelling, all grace and pow'r divine:
The glory that excelleth, O Son of God, is thine;
We worship thee, we bless thee, to thee alone we sing;
We praise thee and confess thee, our glorious Lord and King.

O grant the consummation of this our song above
In endless adoration and everlasting love;
Then shall we praise and bless thee where perfect praises ring,
And evermore confess thee our Savior and our King.

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

¶ Grace, mercy and peace be to you, followers of Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior, as we celebrate the Reformation this day. There was a game show in the 1950s and '60s called "Who Do You Trust?" It involved deciding if you could trust your spouse to answer a question or answer the question yourself. Whether you won or lost the game was determined by how much you trusted yourself or your partner.

In the game of life, we put our trust in more things and more people than we may actually realize. We trust the our alarm clock will wake us up in the morning. We trust that our car will start when we turn the key in the ignition. We trust that the food we eat is safe. We put our trust in doctors, plumbers, mechanics, teachers, coworkers, friends and family to help and support us. But because of sin in the world, sometimes the alarm does not go off, the car fails to start, food goes bad, people don't come through for us. Our trust in people and things can be broken as a result.

But God has provided us with a solution when we have little or no trust in this broken world. The solution is Jesus. We can always trust in Jesus. He will never fail us or abandon us or forsake us. He will always protect us and support us and love us. No matter what we have done or said in disobedience to him or to God, we can forever trust him to forgive us and restore us to new life in him, which will last for all eternity.

Jesus makes it clear in Scripture how trustworthy he is. He says:

"And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

"In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (John 14:2-3).

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love" (John 15:9).

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10).

“Your sins are forgiven you” (Luke 5:20).

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11).

“No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you” (John 15:15).

All these trustworthy sayings from Jesus are very comforting to us and help to build up our faith in him. But we can be a forgetful people, can't we? We can forget what Jesus said to us and even start to distrust him or doubt him when faced with difficulties in this life, or we start to listen to other false Messiahs telling us to trust in them instead. Who are these fake Messiahs? As mentioned in the children's sermon for today, they can be such things as money or fame or accomplishments, but they can also be movie stars or popular authors or talk show hosts or just that casual acquaintance who puts strange notions in your head that you begin to obsess about or start to consider to be more valuable than the Gospel message of Jesus.

Martin Luther, in his day, was running into people and even a church body that had forgotten that all we need to do is to trust only Jesus. He wrote his *95 Theses* to discuss his opposition to the sale of indulgences, which were certificates that were said to grant forgiveness of sins. Martin Luther knew that it was Christ alone who could forgive sins. Christ's death on the cross guaranteed that the punishment for our sins would be erased. His death on the cross assured us that we would have life in heaven with him, Luther knew. By faith alone, by grace alone, by Scripture alone, Luther declared, we are called to live a life devoted and dedicated to Jesus Christ and him crucified.

But our human nature is to think that there is still something that we must do or say to somehow win forgiveness or salvation for ourselves. “Be a good person.” “Say nice things.” “Go to church every Sunday.” These are all wonderful things, of course, but they are not a means to an end to get us into heaven or win Christ's favor. The only way to look at being good or doing nice things or frequenting the Lord's house is to view them as a response to what God has already done for us through Jesus' death on the cross. We want to love and care for others, and we want to worship our Savior because Christ has loved and cared for us so deeply, even to death, and will come to take us home to heaven to live with him forever. There is nothing more that has to be done on our part for salvation. Everything has already been done by Christ.

In his study of Scripture as a monk, Martin Luther came to this amazing revelation that we need only trust in Christ for forgiveness and salvation while he was reading Ephesians 2:8-9, which reads,

Tune.....Lobe Den Herren, O Meine Seele 10 8 10 8 8 8 8

Piano accompaniment for the hymn "Lobe Den Herren, O Meine Seele". The score is written for piano in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It consists of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked "Allegretto". The first system is marked with a "1" in the treble and bass staves. The second system is marked with a "7" in the treble and bass staves. The third system is marked with a "13" in the treble and bass staves. The fourth system is marked with a "19" in the treble and bass staves. The fifth system is marked with a "25" in the treble and bass staves. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

- The **Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Lobe Den Herren, O Meine Seele 10 8 10 8 88 8, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Praise the Almighty; my soul, adore him!
Yes, I will laud him until death.
With songs and anthems I'll come before him
As long as he allows me breath.
From him my life and all things came;
Bless, O my soul, his holy name.
Alleluia, alleluia!

Trust not in rulers, they are but mortal;
Earth-born they are and soon decay.
Vain are their counsels at life's last portal
When the dark grave engulfs its prey.
Since mortals can no help afford,
Place all your trust in Christ, our Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia!