

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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(A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod)

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Reformation Sunday

October 31, 2021

History records how the great reformer, Martin Luther, nailed his 95 Theses on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, Germany, on October 31, 1517. To this day, confessional Lutherans, faithful to the truth of God's word and remembering this historical event, observe this day as Reformation Sunday. By posting these Theses, Luther challenged theologians from the Roman Catholic Church to debate whether it was God-pleasing to sell indulgences. The Roman Church sold indulgences granting forgiveness of sins, reinforcing its false teaching that forgiveness came from what a person does through human works (in this case "buying" forgiveness through indulgences).

For a time, Luther had also incorrectly believed that a person earned forgiveness by what he did for God and not freely because of what Jesus did to forgive us. Then, by God's grace through the Holy Spirit, Luther came to the correct belief that the righteousness God demands from sinners, to be "right" with God, comes freely through faith in Jesus. Luther discovered that truth from Psalm 31:1, where David prays: "In your righteousness deliver me." Therefore, God's Reformation wasn't a man-made revolution. Rather, it served as a "reforming" of false teaching to the true teachings of Scripture as driven by the Holy Spirit.

Sadly, in our day, a great number of those who call themselves, "Lutheran," because of its false teaching have lost the blessing of the Reformation. Yet, our gracious God continues to preserve faithful Lutheran Church bodies, which uphold the truth of God's inspired, inerrant Word in the spirit and in line with the teachings as taught and upheld by Martin Luther. We call these believers "confessional" Lutherans because they still hold to the three foundational pillars of the Reformation: a person is saved "by Scripture alone, by faith alone and by grace alone" (*sola Scriptura, sola fide and sola gratia*).

Order of Worship: ELH Page 60, The Common Service "Rite Two."

Hymns: 549, 250, 374, 589

THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

Old Testament: Daniel 3:16-28. Rabid with sinful self-ego, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the LORD's three men of faith be thrown into the fiery furnace. We recall how Nebuchadnezzar issued a decree that all should worship "no other god" other than the ninety feet tall...nine feet wide image he had built. Shadrak, Meshak and Abednego refused. The LORD miraculously intervened, rescuing them from physical death. Nonetheless, if the LORD—as the men confess—chose not to deliver them from these earthly fires, He certainly rescued them from an eternity of hell fire. God grant us faithfulness to Him for His eternal rescue in our only Savior! *Psalms of the Day: Psalm 46.* This favorite Reformation psalm is the song of those whose whole trust is in the gospel promises of God for their salvation. We gladly join to sing it in the gospel-formed faith that God remains forever true to His gracious Word. (CW pg.84).

-1-

Epistle: Revelation 14:6-7. This standard Reformation Epistle lesson (used at Luther's funeral) extols both the grace of God and the true glory of the preaching

ministry. For it is God alone who preserves His Word from the destructive wiles of the devil and wicked men on earth. It is the great glory of the preaching ministry that the saving message, which ascribes all glory to God, is likewise preserved from age to age. Where God receives all the glory for our salvation, we need not dread what men may do, nor even the judgment of God Himself. May He by His grace preserve us faithful to His Reformation message and ministry!

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples. You will also know the truth, and the truth will set you free. Alleluia. (John 8:31-32, EHV)

Gospel: Mark 13:5-11. It should not surprise us that error runs rampant through the world and that both nature and nations are so often in chaos. For that is exactly what our Savior has foretold. Each error, each natural disaster, each country in turmoil should drive us to cling all the more tenaciously to His Word by which alone we are saved in the hour of judgment. For without His pure Word, there is only faithless error, fear and torment, and finally a total separation from grace in the Day of Judgment. To retain that Word in all of its truth and purity and then to share it, those are the goals of the true children of the Reformation.

Sermon: Revelation 14:6-7

Theme - "The Lord Proclaims His Eternal Gospel"

Points to ponder from the day's Scripture readings:

- Old Testament: Too many of the people of Jeremiah's day trusted in outward forms of religion making their faith empty formalism. What's the point of Jeremiah describing the LORD as a potter?
- Old Testament: Where do we witness the LORD's grace and mercy in these verses?
- Epistle: Evaluate this statement – "Where God receives all the glory for our salvation, we need not dread what men may do, nor even the judgment of God."
- Gospel: Of what does Jesus say we must be on guard?
- Gospel: What's Jesus' point by using the "birth pains" analogy?
- Gospel: What has God graciously given to us as the basis for what we confess so that we don't have to be worried about what to say?

Announcements:

+ Please join us for Bible class on Sunday mornings at 8:00 a.m. We are studying the Book of Psalms.

+ Confirmation class: every Monday from 3:15-5:00 p.m. at the church.

+ Sunday school on Sunday mornings from 8-8:30 a.m.

Daniel 3:16-28 – Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego answered King Nebuchadnezzar, "We have no need to answer you about this matter. Since our God, whom we serve, does exist, he is able to save us from the blazing fiery furnace. So, he may save us from your hand, Your Majesty. But if he does not, you should know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods, and we will not worship the golden statue that you set up." Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage, and the expression on his face

-2-

changed against Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego. He said to heat the furnace seven times hotter than it was usually heated. He ordered some men, who were soldiers from his army, to bind Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego in order

to throw them into the blazing fiery furnace. So these men were bound in their coats, their pants, their turbans, and their other clothing, and they were thrown into the middle of the blazing fiery furnace. Because the king's order was urgent and the furnace was extremely hot, those men who carried Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego were killed by the intense heat of the fire. But these three men, Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego, who had been tied up, fell into the blazing fiery furnace. Then King Nebuchadnezzar was startled and immediately stood up. He said to his advisors, "Didn't we throw three men, who had been tied up, into the middle of the fire?" They answered the king, "Certainly, Your Majesty." He said, "Look! I see four men, who are untied and walking around in the middle of the fire, unharmed. What is more, the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods." Then Nebuchadnezzar approached the door of the blazing fiery furnace. He said, "Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out!" Then Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego came out from the middle of the furnace. The satraps, the prefects, the governors, and the royal advisors gathered together and looked at these men. The fire had no power over their bodies. Not a hair on their head was singed, their robes were not damaged, and the smell of fire had not stuck to them. Nebuchadnezzar said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrak, Meshak, and Abednego, who sent his angel and saved his servants, who trusted in God and ignored the king's command. They gave up their bodies and did not pay homage or worship any god except their God. (EHV™)

Revelation 14:6-7 – Then I saw another angel flying in the middle of the sky. He had the everlasting gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth, to every nation, tribe, language, and people. He said with a loud voice: Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the sky, the earth, the sea, and the springs of water. (EHV™)

Mark 13:5-11 – Jesus began by telling them, "Be careful that no one deceives you. Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he,' and will deceive many. "Whenever you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled. Such things must happen, but the end is not yet. In fact, nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places. There will be famines. These are the beginning of birth pains. But be on your guard! People will hand you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues. You will stand in the presence of rulers and kings for my sake as a witness to them. And the gospel must first be preached to all the nations. Whenever they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand what you should say. Say whatever is given to you in that hour, because you will not be the ones speaking; instead it will be the Holy Spirit." (EHV™)