Sunday, October 25, 2026
Reformation Sunday

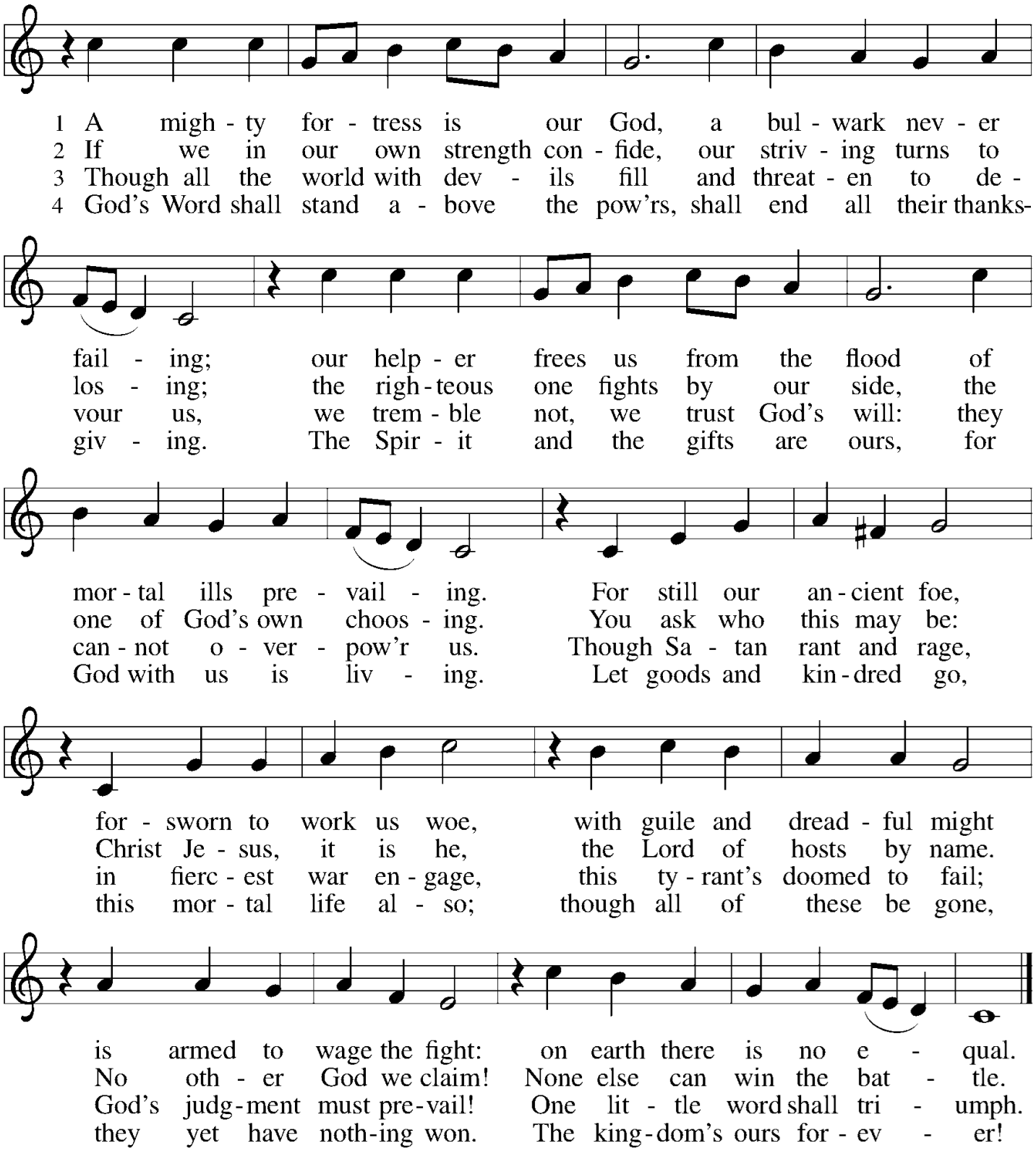
Introduction
Jesus' summary of the law in today's gospel echoes our first reading from Leviticus. We are called not only to love God with heart, soul, and mind, but also to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is out of such deep care that Paul shares the gospel with the Thessalonian community. In the confession of sins, we acknowledge that we have not loved God, neighbor, and self; yet we gather to hear the word of forgiveness and to be strengthened by word and meal to be signs of God's love and mercy in the world.

Prelude… "Our God Is Here"

Announcements

Preparation for Worship – Silent Prayer

Gathering Hymn…….. "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"



Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Frederick H. Hedge, 1805–1890, alt.
Music: EIN FESTE BURG, Martin Luther, 1483–1546
Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.
Amen.
Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.
Silence is kept for reflection.

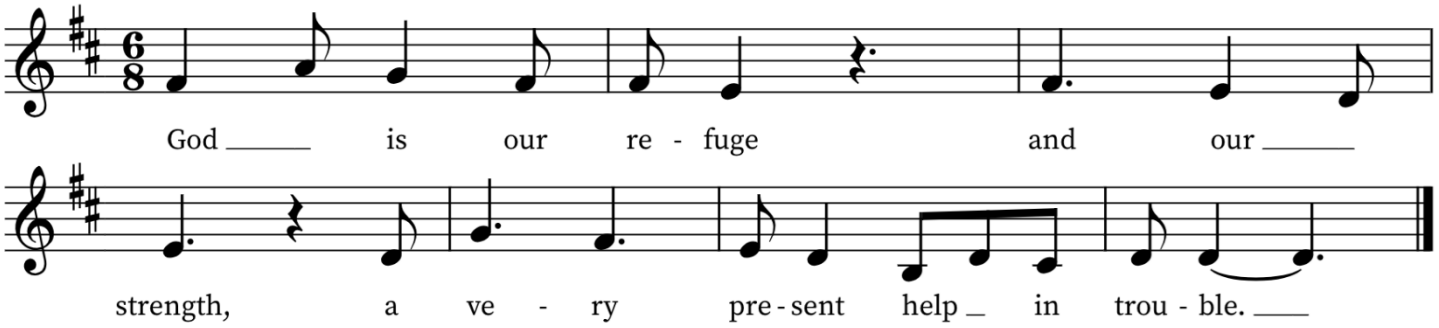
Compassionate God,
we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.
Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace.
Amen.

Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

Psalm 46—God Is Our Refuge

Refrain



2-3 God is our refuge and our strength, a present help in time of trouble. Therefore, we fear not, though the earth be shaken and mountains plunge into the depths of the sea.
Refrain.

5-6 There is a stream whose runlets glad-den the city of God, the holy dwelling of the Most High. God is in its midst; it shall not be disturbed; God will help it at the break of dawn.
Refrain.

8-9 The LORD of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob. Come! behold the deeds of the LORD, the astounding things he has wrought on earth.
Refrain.

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

The renewed covenant will not be breakable, but like the old covenant it will expect the people to live upright lives. To know the LORD means that one will defend the cause of the poor and needy (Jer. 22:16). The renewed covenant is possible only because the LORD will forgive iniquity and not remember sin. Our hope lies in a God who forgets.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says 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. No longer shall they teach one another or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more.

HERE ENDS THE READING.

Second 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 will be justified before him by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin. But now, apart from the law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed and is attested by the Law and the Prophets, [22] the righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is

no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; [24] 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 demonstrate his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; it was to demonstrate at the present time his own righteousness, so that he is righteous and he justifies the one who has the faith of Jesus. Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. Through what kind of law? That of works? No, rather through the law of faith. For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

HERE ENDS THE READING

Choir Anthem…… "His Strength is Our Song" *by Parker & Pethel*

Gospel: John 8:31-36

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus speaks of truth and freedom as spiritual realities known through his word. He reveals the truth that sets people free from sin.

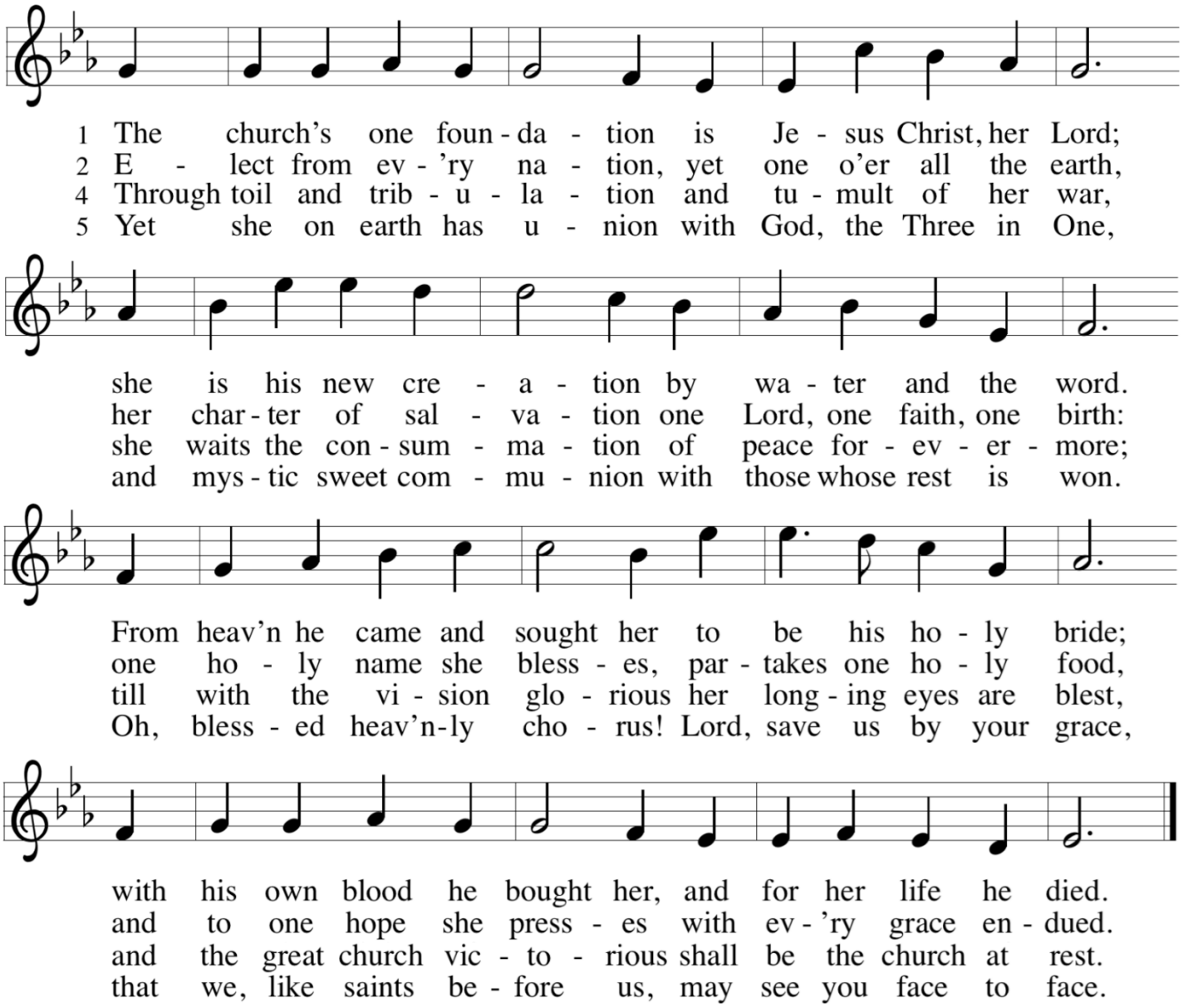
Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made 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."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Sermon Hymn…… “The Church’s One Foundation”



Text: Samuel J. Stone, 1839–1900
Music: AURELIA, Samuel S. Wesley, 1810–1876

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 power of 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

Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

A brief silence.

As we celebrate Reformation Sunday, we remember the witness of Martin Luther and the reformers of the church in every generation. Empower us to continue the work of reform and renewal in our own day.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the healing of natural places despoiled by pollution and human greed. Give all living creatures access to safe land, water, and air.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for our criminal justice systems and all those whose lives are affected by them. Give wisdom and discernment to police, probation officers, judges, and attorneys; give courage and peace to prisoners and the formerly incarcerated.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We ask your blessing upon all people who have been harmed by the church and its leaders, that the truth may make them free.
We pray for the relief of all those who are sick or suffering (*especially Joyce, Sylvia, Jeff, Eric, Cole, Brian, Lizzy, Christi, Julia, Larry, Gene, Dimitri, Eileen, Don, Angelika, Jenna, Dave, Joy, Frank, Robert, John, Tom, Lois, Matt, Terry, Prestyn, Gene, Shirley, Roy, Jana, Karen, Del, Keith, Jim, Dale, Kristen, Bob, Michael, Iris, Peter, Marge, Andy and Kelly*).
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We give thanks for those exploring or returning to a life of faith. Encourage and guide them, that they may find their hope in you.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

With gratitude, we remember those disciples who paved the way for us and all of our beloved dead.
Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Sharing of the Peace
The peace of the Lord be with you all.
And also with you.

Offering

Offering Song….. "He Who Began A Good Work In You"

Offering Prayer
God of creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always.
Amen.

Thanksgiving at the Table
In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Distribution

We will be using the intinction method for distribution. You will be handed bread and asked to dip the bread in the chalice. Gluten-free bread and grape juice are available. Please make your way forward by the center aisle, returning down the side. If mobility is a problem for you, please notify an usher and you will be served at your seat.

Invitation to Communion

Christ invites you to this table. All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

Communion Song.... "I Will Rise"

Post Communion Prayer

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray.
Amen.

Blessing

The God of love draw you into full accord and one mind, in the body of Christ Jesus. The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit. The God of grace ☩ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Sending Hymn..... "Amazing Grace"

When shadows veiled the truth of grace,
And fear held hearts in thrall,
God raised a voice in Wittenberg
To sound the gospel call.

Martin Luther stood firm in faith,
well known throughout the land
He questioned wrongs and sought the truth,
By Scripture took his stand.

No indulgence could buy God's love,
No coin could cleanse our sin;
Christ paid the price upon the cross,
And welcomes sinners in.

By faith alone the just shall live,
Not trusting works we do;
God's promise, sealed in Christ the Lord,
Makes broken spirits new.

O grace alone, our hope and song,
God's gift so rich and free;
The Reformation's light still shines:
To Christ all glory be!

Rev. Dr. Dennis Nelson

Dismissal

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