



Daily Prayer For Individuals and Families

Adopted from *The Lutheran Service Book* (p. 294)

October 27, 2024 A.D.

Reformation Sunday

This brief service is intended as a simple form of daily prayer for individuals and families. When more than one person is present, the psalm and responses may be spoken responsively, with one person reading the words in regular type and the others responding with the words in bold type. The Creed and Prayers that are in bold type are to be said by all.

The sign of the cross ✠ may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

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

Amen.

Psalm (*He enters into*)

From Psalms 119 & 34

I will speak of your testimonies before kings, [O Lord,]

and shall not be put to shame.

I will bless the LORD at all times;

his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul makes its boast in the LORD;

let the humble hear and be glad.

Come, O children, listen to me;

I will teach you the fear of the LORD.

The LORD redeems the life of his servants;

none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

For those with access to the internet, you may now play today's worship video, located on Bethany's website (www.bethanycr.org) under the Worship Resources tab and then continue with the Apostles' Creed. Everyone else may continue the service as printed....

Scripture Lesson

(*John 8:31-36*)

³¹So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"

³⁴Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

Sermon

(A copy is included at the end of this service.)

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

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.

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.

Bethany's Prayer List

Entrusting into God's Care

- Caregivers of those who are ill
- Mickie Sjullie - employment search
- Nathan & Sarah Federwitz - Lutheran Bible Translators
- Peace in Europe and throughout the world
- Project 24 students, Yvonne and Lorine

Healing

- Dave Christian— cancer
- Faye Sieck— hospitalization
- Brenda Heims - recovering after surgery
- Prudy Petersen - recovering at Cottage Grove after fall
- Luci Stoelting - recovering after fall
- Norma Filmore - recovering at home after surgery
- Phillip Hackbardt - recovering after surgery
- Elda Joyner - recovering at home after surgery
- Stephanie & Mateo (friends of Zimmermans) - healing
- Duane Pfeffer - recovering after surgery
- John Hamm - recovering at assisted living in Waukee
- Angela Yuza - recovering after surgery
- Wilson (son of Luke Viertel) - recovering after surgery
- Deb Heitland - health issues
- Elaine Cook - recovering at home after fall
- Ethel Doehrmann - immunotherapy treatment

Homebound

- Nadine Wax - Hallmar

Mourning, friends and family of

- Nancy (relative of Chuck Kroemer) - died 10/4
- Ty Robinson (son of Jeannine Robinson) - died 9/22
- Trevor (relative of Hackbardts) - died 9/17

Serving Our Country

- Devon (friend of Hedtkes & Chitticks) - deployed to Korea
- Mallory (friend of Abi Clark) - IA National Guard
- Amber (dght of Ann Balvanz) - US Army, stationed in Germany
- Ben (son of Kroemers) - IA National Guard
- Devin (friend of Kroemers) - IA Army National Guard
- Mitchell & Benjamin (relatives of Schoens & Smiths) - US Navy
- Harrison (son of Siecks) - US Army, stationed in TX
- Jordan (grandson of Kim Neuhaus) - IA National Guard

Collect of the Day

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Concluding Prayers

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, because of Your tender love toward us sinners You have given us Your Son that, believing in Him, we might have everlasting life. Continue to grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may remain steadfast in this faith to the end and finally come to life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Together we pray... **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.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Grace, mercy, & peace to you from God – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

On October 31, 1517, an Augustinian monk posted 95 theses, or statements, for discussion on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. This monk, Martin Luther, had hoped that posting these statements would lead to an academic debate regarding the topics of repentance, the sale of indulgences (which promoted the idea that one could buy their way out of Hell or the fictional purgatory), as well as other topics and practices that were common in the Church at that time. However, Church leaders were apparently just fine with the way things were going, so instead of listening to Luther, they excommunicated him, or kicked out of the church and even tried to kill him. But that didn't stop Luther. His reforms, based solely upon the Word of God and centered on justification by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, led to religious reforms in the church, not only in Germany, but throughout the world. Because of courageous teaching of God's Word by the reformers like Martin Luther, in 1667 Elector John George II of Saxony, standardized the custom of observing October 31st as Reformation Day – the day we celebrate this weekend.

There is a certain danger however, that celebrating the Reformation each year may cause further division in the one holy universal and apostolic Church. While correcting false teaching and proclaiming the truth of God's Word is always essential for the church, we must not let Reformation Day become a "Lutheran vs. Roman Catholic" contest. Such division in God's church is certainly not pleasing to our Lord. However, it is meet, right, and salutary to give thanks to God for the faithful Christians who have come before us, teaching the truth of God's Holy Word. We can clearly see this in our Scripture reading for today.

In John 8, Jesus is addressing a group called, "*the Jews who had believed in him*". It seems that these people to whom Jesus was talking were attracted to Him and His teachings on the surface, but that their commitment ran somewhat shallow. We might think of them as sort of "lukewarm" Christians. Maybe they saw Jesus calm a storm or feed thousands of people with some loaves of bread and few fish, and they thought this man Jesus really had something special about Him. Yet like so many, they never really listened to what Jesus was saying.

There are people like this today, the sort of "lukewarm" believers, who like being around the church and the churchly things, but they really aren't disciples of Christ. Some like to have their children baptized and have big fancy weddings in church. Others love the atmosphere of Christmas Eve and Easter Morning services, but forget about Christ for the rest of the year. These are the people who have voice of the world singing louder in their ears than the voice of their Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

But Jesus explains it's not where we are married or how much money we put in our offering envelopes that makes us Christians. It's not even who your parents are. Rather it's those who listen to His voice who are called His disciples. And His voice is the Word of God, the same Word that we have today called the Bible. His Word calls us to Him and by staying in the Word of God, we stay with God. The mark of a true disciple of Christ is one who remains true to God's Word – that is the Holy Bible. And it is here in God's own Word that we may find the truth that sets us free from our sin.

This truth is that Jesus was God sent from God, the second person of the Trinity. This truth is that all of us who sin and look to God for mercy through Jesus, are forgiven. This truth is that Jesus is the only way to our Heavenly Father, by His own sacrificial life and death. This is not some type of head knowledge that will lead us to political freedom or enlightenment. This is the truth that frees us from sin, even death, so that when we stand over, or even in, the grave we may have joy and hope in the victory that Christ has won for us. This is the truth that snatches us from the power of the Evil One and leads us to salvation.

The hearers in our Gospel lesson didn't understand this type of freedom. They assumed Jesus was talking about earthly chains of slavery, but even then they deceived themselves. They puffed out their chests and foolishly said that they were Abraham's descendants and had never been slaves to anyone. Apparently, they had forgotten about the years spent in Egypt and Babylon. Apparently, they did not notice the Roman legions patrolling their cities. But Jesus reminded them that they were indeed slaves, for He says that anyone who sins is slave.

It wasn't just back them that people didn't understand the freedom and slavery that Jesus talked about, but people today as well. There are many people today who believe that they are free because they live in America, the land of the free and the home of the brave. They fool themselves into thinking that they can do what they want, when they want to do it. They tell themselves that they are good people and don't sin all that much; they certainly are not slaves to sin. If they do mess up, they fool themselves into thinking that they can take care of it or it's so small that God will simply overlook it.

Before the Reformation, many in the church were fooling themselves as well, saying that while one may be held in slavery to sin, it was the Church who could free you - if you would just work hard enough. Just pay this or that amount of money to your local priest or bishop and you, or your relatives, will be sprung from the fictional purgatory. Go to confession to earn your forgiveness. More Hail Mary's and more Our Fathers is just what you need to take care of that sin. And while today, we may not find these teachings in many churches, we do find people urging others that they have to decide to follow Christ, and sort of help God in saving them. But this is not what God's Word teaches. This way of thinking leads us to trust in ourselves, which only leads to more sin or ultimately to despair. Instead, the Reformers led the church away from human ways and thinking and back to the Word of God, where they found the truth that sets us free. They rediscovered the Gospel of Christ that gives life and salvation.

Everyone one of us must look at themselves as a slave or a disciple. And our situation does not depend on the works that we do or the decisions that we make. It does not depend on whether we were born Lutheran, Catholic, or whatever. What matters, the only thing that matters, is our relationship with Jesus Christ that we have been called into through the work of Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself says that this saving relationship with Him is built upon His Word - the Bible. And that is a reason to give thanks and celebrate every day. Amen.

