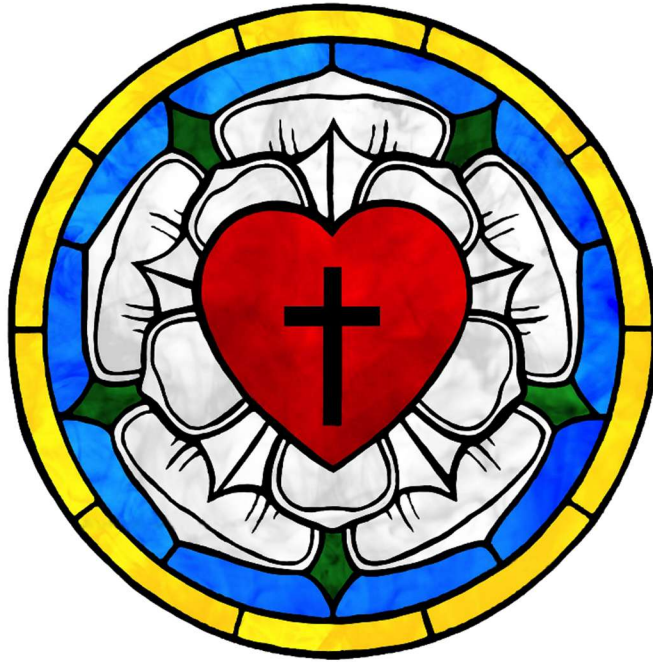




Luther's Rose

As was common practice at the time, Luther established a seal to identify himself: a cross on a heart in a rose. In a letter written in 1530, the same year the Augsburg Confession was given, Luther describes his seal in this way:

Grace and peace from the Lord. As you desire to know whether my painted seal, which you sent to me, has hit the mark, I shall answer most amiably and tell you my original thoughts and reason about why my seal is a symbol of my theology. The first should be a black cross in a heart, which retains its natural color, so that I myself would be reminded that faith in the Crucified saves us. "For one who believes from the heart will be justified" (Romans 10:10). Although it is indeed a black cross, which mortifies and which should also cause pain, it leaves the heart in its natural color. It does not corrupt nature, that is, it does not kill but keeps alive. "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17) but by faith in the crucified. Such a heart should stand in the middle of a white rose, to show that faith gives joy, comfort, and peace. In other words, it places the believer into a white, joyous rose, for this faith does not give peace and joy like the world gives (John 14:27). That is why the rose should be white and not red, for white is the color of the spirits and the angels (cf. Matthew 28:3; John 20:12). Such a rose should stand in a sky-blue field, symbolizing that such joy in spirit and faith is a beginning of the heavenly future joy, which begins already, but is grasped in hope, not yet revealed. And around this field is a golden ring, symbolizing that such blessedness in Heaven lasts forever and has no end. Such blessedness is exquisite, beyond all joy and goods, just as gold is the most valuable, most precious and best metal. This is my compendium theologiae [summary of theology]. I have wanted to show it to you in good friendship, hoping for your appreciation. May Christ, our beloved Lord, be with your spirit until the life hereafter. Amen.

Grace Lutheran Church

736 Cayuga Drive
Niagara Falls, New York 14304
www.gracenf.org
Divine Service: Sunday 10:30 AM

Office (716) 283-1843
office@gracenf.org

Our Vision: Welcoming people to grow in hope, love, and certainty through God's Word of grace.

ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR OCTOBER 26, 2025 REFORMATION DAY THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

– based on Divine Service 1: LSB 151 –

Members and Guests: Please help us serve you by indicating your presence today, and any special needs, on the fellowship sheet in your bulletin & place in offering plate.

RESTROOMS are located in the parent's room (back of the church) and next to the parking lot door.

Welcome, Announcements

 **Hymn of Invocation: "Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness"** *LSB 849*

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

C Amen.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Hymn of Praise

Music found in LSB #155

C REFRAIN: This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

Refrain

Power, riches, wisdom, and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are His.

Refrain

Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:

Blessing, honor, glory, and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.

Refrain

For the Lamb who was slain has begun His reign. Alleluia.

Final Refrain

Luther's Morning Prayer

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

C 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.

First Reading

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Choir Anthem: "Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus"

Helen Lemmel

Epistle Reading

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel



C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter.



C Glo - ry to You, O Lord.

P ...This is the Gospel of the Lord.

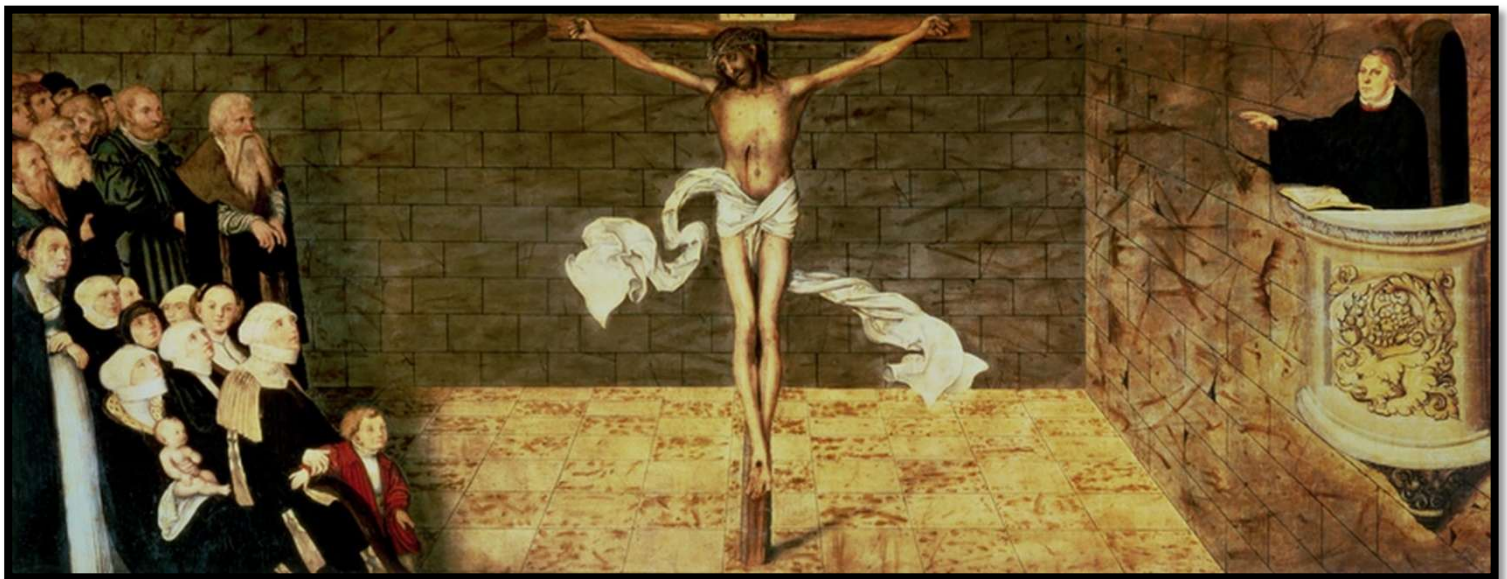


C Praise to You, O Christ.

 **Hymn of the Day: "A Mighty Fortress"**

LSB 656

Sermon



***Reformation Altarpiece (1547)*, by Lucas Cranach the Elder, depicts Martin Luther preaching Christ alone, as his hand rests on Holy Scripture. Cranach himself, along with Luther's wife and son, can be seen in the congregation. This painting was installed a year after Luther's death over the altar in St. Mary's Church, Wittenburg, where he frequently preached.**

The Rite of Confirmation

The catechumens stand and approach the altar rail. The pastor addresses them:

P Beloved in the Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ said to His apostles: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded You; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." You have been baptized and catechized in the Christian faith according to our Lord's bidding. Jesus said, "Whoever confesses Me before men, I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." Lift up your hearts, therefore, to the God of all grace and joyfully give answer to what I now ask you in the name of the Lord.

P Do you this day in the presence of God and of this congregation acknowledge the gifts that God gave you in your Baptism?

R *Yes, I do.*

P Do you renounce the devil, and all his works, and all his ways?

R *Yes, I renounce them.*

P Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty?

R *Yes, I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.*

P Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord?

R *Yes, I believe 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.*

P Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

R *Yes, 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.*

P Do you hold all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God?

R *I do.*

P Do you confess the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, drawn from the Scriptures, as you have learned to know it from the Small Catechism, to be faithful and true?

R *I do.*

P Do you intend to hear the Word of God and receive the Lord's Supper faithfully?

R *I do, by the grace of God.*

- P** Do you intend to live according to the Word of God, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to death?
- R** *I do, by the grace of God.*
- P** Do you intend to continue steadfast in this confession and Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?
- R** *I do, by the grace of God.*
- P** We rejoice with thankful hearts that you have been baptized and have received the teaching of the Lord. You have confessed the faith and been absolved of your sins. As you continue to hear the Lord's Word and receive His blessed Sacrament, He who has begun a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.
- C** **Amen.**

Daniel J. Bahr – John 20:31

Dillon Deskovic – Galatians 5:1

Audrey Markel – Hebrews 12:1

The catechumens kneel to receive the confirmation blessing. The pastor will read a text of Holy Scripture as a remembrance of confirmation. He then places his hands on the head of each catechumen and makes the sign of the cross while saying:

- P** [Name], the almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given you the new birth of water and of the Spirit and has forgiven you all your sins, strengthen you with His grace to life ✠ everlasting.
- R** **Amen.**

*After all the catechumens have received the blessing, the following collect is prayed.
The congregation will please stand.*

- P** Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank and praise You for Your great goodness in bringing these Your sons and daughters to the knowledge of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, and enabling them both with the heart to believe and with the mouth to confess His saving name. Grant that, bringing forth the fruits of faith, they may continue steadfast and victorious to the day when all who have fought the good fight of faith shall receive the crown of righteousness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

The new confirmands stand and face the congregation. A representative of the congregation speaks the following:

A Upon hearing your confirmation of your baptismal vows, we of Grace Lutheran Church welcome you into confirmed membership in this congregation. We invite and charge you to participate fully in the life and witness of Christ among us. May almighty God keep you faithful now and always.

C **Amen. We welcome you in the name of the Lord.**

P Peace ☩ be with you.

R **Amen.**

The confirmands return to their seats during the singing of the Confirmation Hymn.

Offering (received during hymn)

Confirmation Hymn: “O Gracious Lord, with Love Draw Near” LSB 599 (TUNE: LSB 461)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 O gracious Lord, with love draw near
To these, Your children gathered here;
The Spirit’s gift in them renew:
The gift of faith that clings to You. | 4 Lord, keep them firm in their intent
To You, Your Word and Sacrament.
O make them bold, their faith to share
And make them strong, each cross to bear. |
| 2 Sustain the work You have begun
In these united to Your Son,
For in that pure baptismal flood
They have been cleansed by Jesus’ blood. | 5 O Father, grant that by Your grace
They may Your will each day embrace;
With fruits of faith their lives now bless,
Till they at death Your name confess. |
| 3 Deliver them from ev’ry wile,
From all that would their hearts beguile,
From worldly ways and Satan’s lies,
That they may not Your Word despise. | 6 Then robed in white before Your throne,
Your holy saints, by You foreknown—
Predestined, called, and justified,
Shall, crowned in light, be glorified. |

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Prayer of the Church

The Pastor will close each section: **P** Lord, in Your mercy,

Then please respond: **C** **Hear our prayer.**

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

We believe what Jesus says about Holy Communion: that it is His body and blood, not symbolically but actually present, given to us for the forgiveness of sins. The Bible cautions that anyone who receives Communion without this understanding will be receiving it to their great harm.

For this reason, out of sincere love, we ask that those who commune at this altar are baptized Christians who, having been instructed in the faith, regret their sins and desire to receive Christ's real Body and Blood for forgiveness, trusting in God's Word as He revealed it in Scripture. If you are not a member of a Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod congregation, please speak with the pastor before you commune.

If you are not communing today, you are welcome to come forward for a pastoral blessing. Simply cross your arms over your chest at the rail. There is non-alcoholic white wine on each tray for those who require it. Finally, those who have difficulty walking may indicate such to an usher and Communion will be brought to you.

In the timeless tradition of the Christian church, the Common Cup is offered to all. If you desire to commune using the common cup, raise your hand as the individual cups approach, then assist the Elder by holding the chalice at its base and guiding it as you receive.

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

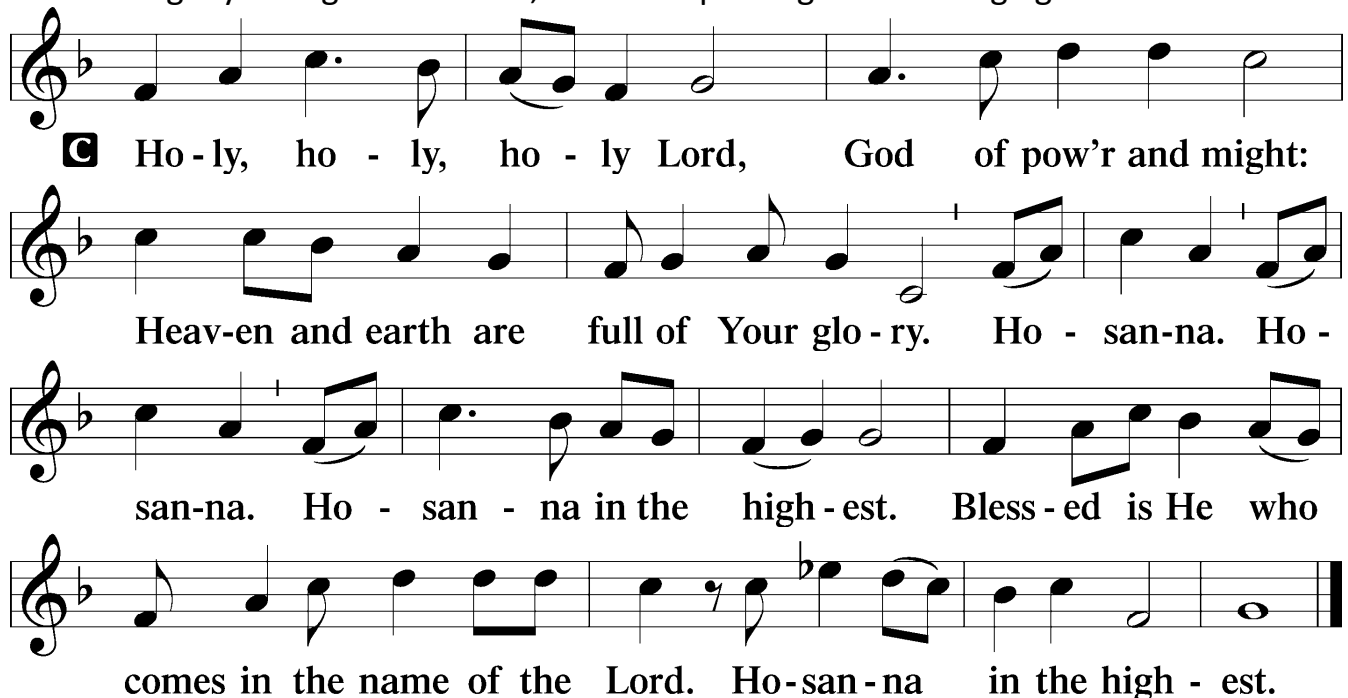
P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for You have proclaimed an eternal Gospel to all who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. For this Gospel, centered in Jesus Christ, we give You glory, and we worship You, who made heaven and earth. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:
Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

P Jesus bids us to pray: “Our Father.” What does this mean?

C With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father and that we are His true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask Him as dear children ask their dear father.

P Let us then pray as Christ has taught us.

C 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.

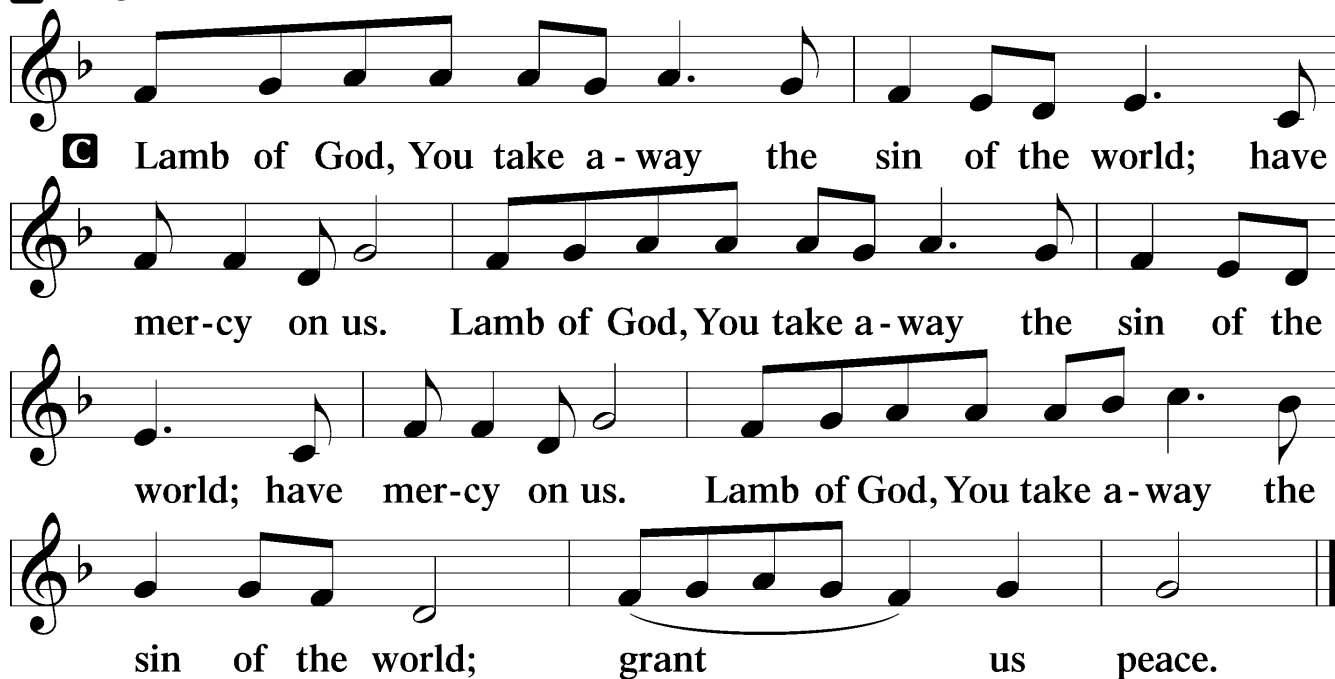
P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.” In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.



The musical notation is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are: "Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace." The word "grant" is underlined with a slur, and "us" is also underlined with a slur.

Distribution Hymn:

“By Grace I’m Saved”

“Thy Strong Word”

LSB 566

LSB 578

Post-Communion Canticle

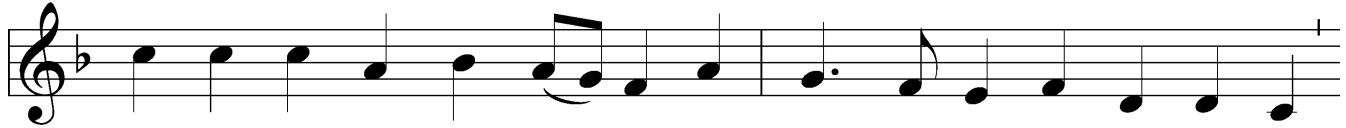
LSB 164



C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re-calls His prom-is - es and leads His peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

Dismissal Blessing and Prayer

P Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C Amen.

Sending Hymn: "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word"

LSB 655

P Go in peace; serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God!

THOSE ASSISTING OUR WORSHIP TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Ben Bahr

Organist: Maye Smith

Acolytes: Virginia & Tyler Markel

Head Ushers: Mark Andrews & Neil Stenzel

Communion Assistants: Mark Binkley & Gary Krull

Reader: Stewert Smith

Tech Crew: Mark Binkley, John Goodnick & John Bahr

Altar Care: Sherry Cassatt & Virginia Markel

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

TODAY – 10/26/25 - REFORMATION

9:00 am Christian Education

10:30 am Worship (HC)

11:30 am Choir Practice

MONDAY – 10/29/24

6:30 pm Survivors' Group

NEXT SUNDAY – 11/2/25 – ALL SAINTS' DAY

9:00 am Christian Education

10:30 am Worship (HC)

11:30 am Choir Practice

**Statistics for the week of
October 19, 2025**

Worship Service: 70 Attended, 21 Views

Adult Education: 18

Youth Education: 17

Education Staff: 4

Offering: \$2,388.24

Mission of the Month: \$50.00

Sunday School: \$11.45

* Weekly budget needs \$4,206

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Please submit new announcements
by **Thursday 10AM**: office@gracenf.org.
Office Hours 1st Sun 8:30-12:30, M/W/Th 10-2
GIVING: Options at www.gracenf.org*



ALTAR FLOWERS today are given to glory to God for all of his blessings and the celebration of Sue Loss' 78th birthday on October 30, 2025. God continue to watch over you and keep you safe in his loving arms. John

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS are Revelation 7:9-17, 1 John 3:1-3, and Matthew 5:1-12.

SOCIAL MINISTRIES MEETING: There is a meeting after worship next Sunday. New members are welcome to join Social Ministries and turn your compassion into action. Meetings last approximately one hour, and lunch will be enjoyed during the meeting.

HURRAY! IT'S BACK ON! Our turkey and ham collection has resumed and our new freezer is ready for your donations. Thank you to the generous donor that made this possible, and to Doug Goodnick (our Trustee) for doing the leg work. All donations will be delivered to local charities that offer free Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for those in need in Niagara Falls.

CHOIR will PRACTICE in the balcony after worship today. It's not too late to join the fun! New members are welcome.

OCTOBER MISSION ENVELOPES will support Orphan Grain Train, a non-profit that helps those in need in the United States and throughout the world. They share the love of Christ as they provide whatever is needed when disaster strikes, including food, clothing, water, shelter, medical supplies, and more. If you would like to support Orphan Grain Train, place your mission envelope in the offering plate today, or give online by Friday by choosing "monthly mission".

HARVEST FOOD COLLECTION continues until Thanksgiving. SHOPPING LISTS are available on the tables in the narthex and chapel that offer suggestions for the most needed items, but all non-perishable foods are appreciated. Our donations will support St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry on Military Road. As you've probably heard, requests for assistance continue to be on the rise as both unemployment rates and grocery prices rise. Thank you for helping your neighbors.

FROM THE GRACE LADIES: The upstairs kitchen may be used for special events, but please clean up when you finish.

**About the Cover**

Martin Luther's seal symbolizes the rock-solid confession of the Reformation. It was not about Luther. It was about Christ and His cross at the center of everything. Christ enlivens our hearts, makes us holy, gives us joy, and has won eternal life for us. We have a firm foundation of refuge and strength to stand on because Christ is our rock.

REFORMATION DAY (OBSERVED)**First Reading:****Revelation 14:6–7**

⁶Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

Epistle: Romans 3:19–28

¹⁹Now 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. ²⁰For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

²¹But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that

is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom 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. ²⁶It 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.

²⁷Then 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. ²⁸For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

Holy Gospel: 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."