

Order of Worship for 10-31-21 (Reformation Sunday)

Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn *“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”* – Hymn #655

Confession and Forgiveness: p 213

Entrance Psalm:

P: I will speak of Your testimonies before kings, O LORD,

C: and shall not be put to shame.

P: God is our refuge and strength,

C: an ever present help in time of need.

P: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way

C: And the mountains fall into the midst of the sea.

P: The LORD Almighty is with us.

C: The God of Jacob is our refuge.

All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

P: I will speak of Your testimonies before kings, O LORD,

C: and shall not be put to shame.

Prayer of the Day:

P: Let us pray... 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.

C: Amen

The Old Testament Lesson: Deuteronomy 6:1-9

R: "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. But 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."

R: This is the Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God.

The Epistle Lesson: Romans 3:19-28

R: Now 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. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God has been revealed apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an atoning sacrifice 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. It 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. Then 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. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God

Alleluia Hymn: "*Alleluia! Let Praises Ring*" – **Hymn #822 verse 1**

The Holy Gospel: John 8:31-36

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 8th chapter:

C: Glory be to You, O Lord.

P: So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered Him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that You say, 'You will become free'?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

Hymn of the Day: "*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*" - **Hymn #656**

Sermon: "*Hearing the LORD*" - **Deuteronomy 6:1-9**

Some scholars feel that social media in particular — as well as a broader range of internet technologies, including algorithmically driven search and click-based advertising — have changed the way that people get information and form opinions about the world. And they seem

to have done so in a manner that makes people particularly vulnerable to the spread of misinformation and disinformation.

Just as one example: A paper — a poorly done research paper — can come out suggesting that hydroxychloroquine might be a treatment for Covid. And in a matter of days, you have world leaders promoting it and people struggling to get this medicine and it being no longer available to people who need it for treatment of other conditions. This is actually a serious health problem.

So you can have these bits of misinformation that explode at unprecedented velocity in ways that they wouldn't have prior to this information ecosystem. As Carl Bergstrom says, "There's no reason why good information will rise to the top of any ecosystem we've designed."

In contrast to that is the knowledge we have from God. God's Word isn't something we have designed. It isn't the result of misinformation or disinformation. It is that Word which tells us in Deuteronomy 6:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

But how do we know that is any more correct than all we can see on the internet? There are all kinds of different versions of the Bible, different translations, none of which go back to even over a thousand years after Moses, who spoke those words from God, lived.

"Hear, O Israel, the LORD, Your God, the LORD is one." "LORD" you notice is all written in capitals. This is because it is not the word for "Lord," but the actual name of God which He revealed to Moses back when God first appeared to him in the burning bush back in Exodus 3. The name "LORD" means "I am who I am." But even better, it means, "I will be what I will be." This is not just the God who just set the world in motion, but the God who is still active, personally involved in our world.

In confirmation class we use this symbol to describe God:



On one hand you see the circle showing that God is. He has no beginning and no end. But from the circle come the arrows, showing that God is continually reaching out in love, the “God who will be.”

“LORD” is what we write for the Hebrew “Yahweh. Yahweh is God’s name, not as a description or Social Security number. It doesn’t just identify God. It is His name because He is God, personal, not just some force or notion. And this God is one!

As we do each Reformation—and this year it is not just Reformation Sunday, but the 31st, Reformation Day!—we sang Luther’s hymn “A Mighty Fortress.” This hymn is based on Psalm 46 which says, “Be still and know that Yahweh is God.” Luther wrote, “Let God be God.” He was challenging the prevalent teaching among the scholars of the Renaissance that mortals were at the center and that everything moved around them. Instead, Luther claimed that God is the center, and without him, humanity is nothing. Human salvation lies not in things mortals do, but in what God does. How can we be certain of that? Because God tells us in His Word.

God did not create the world and then let it go on its own. “He will be what He will be.” God didn’t just guide the work of inspiring the writers of the Bible when they first wrote the words down. He was inspiring the many parts of the Bible that were first passed on by spoken words from generation to generation. He guided the work of copying the written words over the centuries, those learning and proclaiming His Word based on Scripture. He is guiding both me in sharing this word to you and you in listening to it. Otherwise it could certainly be misinformation, as when people take the Scriptures and add or subtract to it or especially take it out of the context of it being the words that convey to us the Word, Christ Jesus.

Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, that you may fear the Lord your God, you and your son and your son’s son, by keeping all His statutes and His commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey.

God was giving His people something more definite and certain than any other people had—His Word.

In the movie “A Beautiful Mind” the main character played by Russell Crowe is a Noble winning mathematician who is afflicted with schizophrenia. In the movie we see things as he does in his mind and are convinced that “bad guys” are trying to discredit his attempts to help with vital national security. Then we find that all of that is just in his mind. The only way they can seem to control it is with medications that crippled him into being too tired to do anything. Then he realizes that a girl that he keeps seeing in his mind never gets older. He begins to use the one thing certain in his mind—his wife—to make certain what is real what isn’t. If he meets

a new person, he first asks people he knows if this person is real. With the reality of his wife he began to cope with life without the crippling effects of the medication.

We need solid ground in the midst of all the information and uncertainty out there. That is what we have in God's Word. As we sang in "A Mighty Fortress,"

And take they our life,
Goods, fame, child, and wife,
Though these all be gone,
Our victory has been won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth.

Creed Hymn: "*We All Believe in One True God*" - **Hymn # 954** (soloist sings verse 1)

Prayers:

Call to Communicants:

P: I exhort you in Christ that you give attention in true faith to the last will and testament Jesus gave on the night before He died and that you take to heart the words which Christ Jesus presents His body and blood to us for forgiveness. Take note and give thanks for the boundless love the He showed us when He saved us from the wrath of God, sin, death, and hell, by His blood. Then externally receive the bread and wine, that is, His true body and blood, as a guarantee and pledge. Let us in His name, according to His command, and with His own words administer and receive this testament.

Words of our Lord (Pastor)

Lord's Prayer:

Peace:

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

Agnus Dei Hymn (Lamb of God) "*Lamb of God, Pure and Holy,*" - **Hymn #434**

Choir and Brass Anthem: The Church's One Foundation, arr. Dan Forrest

Distribution of Holy Communion

Distribution Hymns: "*O Lord, We Praise Thee*" - **Hymn #617**

"*Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior*" - **Hymn #627**

Dismissal

Prayer after Communion

(Pastor)

C: Amen.

Blessing

(Pastor)

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: *“God’s Word Is Our Great Heritage”* - **Hymn #582**

Postlude