

Reformation Sunday (25th October, 2020)

Pastor Peter Ghalayini

M: Jesus said: 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples;

All: **and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'**

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

Opening Hymn – A mighty fortress *LHS 195*

- 1. A mighty fortress is our God,
a trusty shield and weapon,
our faithful helper in all need,
our stay whate'er may happen.
The old evil foe
now means deadly woe;
deep guile and great might
are his dread arms in fight;
on earth is not his equal.**
- 2. With might of ours can naught be done;
soon were our fall effected.
But for us fights the valiant one,
whom God himself elected.
Ask ye, who is this?
Christ Jesus it is.
Of Sabaoth Lord
and there's none other God;
he holds the field for ever.**
- 3. Though devils all the world should fill,
all eager to devour us,
we tremble not, we fear no ill,
they shall not overpower us.
This world's prince may still
scowl fierce as he will,
he can harm us none,
he's judged, for e'er undone;
one little word can fell him.**

**4, The Word shall stand despite all foes,
no thanks they for it merit.
For God is with us, and bestows
his gifts and Holy Spirit.
And take they our life
goods, fame, child and wife.
Though these all be gone,
yet have our foes not won.
The kingdom ours remaineth.**

*Music: M. Luther 1483-1546 (1528);
Words: Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott
Martin Luther (1483-1546) Tr. 'Church
Book', Philadelphia, 1868, alt.
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M: No one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. Therefore let us confess our sins to God our Father and ask him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us;

C: **We confess to you, almighty God,
before the whole company of heaven, and to each other,
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, by our own fault.
Have mercy on us, for Jesus' sake, forgive us all our sins,
and bring us to eternal life.
Amen.**

M: As a called and ordained servant of the Word I announce the grace of God to all of you. On behalf of my Lord Jesus Christ, and by his command, I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

L: God is our refuge and strength,
Lord have mercy,

C: **Lord have mercy.**

L: God is an ever-present help in trouble.
Christ have mercy,

C: **Christ have mercy.**

L: The Lord Almighty is with us;
Lord have mercy,

C: **Lord have mercy.**

M: The Lord be with you,

C: **And also with you.**

M: Lord God, you have given all holy Scriptures for our learning.
Lead us to hear them, read, note, learn, and inwardly digest them.
Encourage and support us by your holy word, so that we may always
hold on to the joyful hope of eternal life, which you have given us
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.
For he lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

First Reading – Jeremiah 31:31-34

The Lord will write his law on our hearts

³¹ “The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. ³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will they teach their neighbour, or say to one another, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 46 (Spoken responsively)

M: ¹ God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.

All: ² **Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,**

M: ³ though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

All: ⁴ **There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells.**

M: ⁵ God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.

All: ⁶ **Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.**

M: ⁷ The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

All: ⁸ **Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.**

M: ⁹ He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth.

All: **He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.**

M: ¹⁰ He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;

All: **I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."**

M: ¹¹ The Lord Almighty is with us;

All: **the God of Jacob is our fortress.**

Second Reading – Romans 3:19-28

Justification by faith

¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. ²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin. ²¹ But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. ²² This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. ²⁵ God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through

the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—²⁶ he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.²⁷ Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith.²⁸ For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

L: Alleluia, alleluia.
Sanctify us in the truth, Lord;

All: **your word is truth.**

Alleluia.

Gospel Reading – John 8:31-36

(Spoken) **Glory to you, O Lord,**

'In my word, you will know the truth'

³¹To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³²Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” ³³They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?” ³⁴Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

L: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: *(Spoken)* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for the gift of your word.

**Keep us faithful to your word,
so that we may know the truth,
and the freedom it brings.**

Amen.

Gospel Hymn- God has spoken by his prophets *LHS 822*

- 1. God has spoken by his prophets,
spoken his unchanging word,
each, from age to age proclaiming
God, the one, the righteous Lord.
In the world's despair and turmoil
one firm anchor still holds fast:
God is king, his throne eternal,
God the first, and God the last.**

- 2. God has spoken by Christ Jesus,
Christ, the everlasting Son,
brightness of the Father's glory,
with the Father ever one;
spoken by the Word incarnate,
God, before all time began,
Light of Light, to earth descending,
man, revealing God to Man.**

- 3. God is speaking by his Spirit,
speaking to the hearts of men,
in the age-long word expounding
God's own message, now as then,
through the rise and fall of nations
one sure faith is standing fast;
God abides, his Word unchanging,
God the first, and God the last.**

*Music: Ad. from Ludwig van Beethoven;
Words: George W. Briggs, 1875-1959
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Sermon

All: **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, dead, and 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.

Offering hymn- *Amazing grace* LHS 857

1. **Amazing grace how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now I'm found,
was blind, but now I see.**
2. **'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!**
3. **Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come:
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.**
4. **When we've been here ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun;
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun.**
5. **Amazing grace how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now I'm found,
was blind, but now I see.**

*Music: American folk hymn melody;
Words: John Newton 1725–1807 alt.
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L: Heavenly Father,
there is nothing that we could offer to you
as a sacrifice for our sin.
Yet in your great love,
you have offered up your own Son,
so that through him we may be put right with you.
Accept the gifts we offer here today,
as mere tokens of our gratitude
for the great gift of salvation
which you have given to us.

All: **Amen.**

Prayer of the church

All: **Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive
those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen.**

M: May God the holy Trinity,
who has created, redeemed,
and sanctified you, bring you to know and adore him as one God;
Go in peace. The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

M: 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 favour,
† and give you peace.

All: **Amen.**

Closing Hymn – By Grace I'm Saved *LHS 329*

- 1. By grace I'm saved,
grace free and boundless;
My soul, believe and doubt it not;
Why stagger at this word of promise?
Has Scripture ever falsehood taught?
No; then this word must true remain:
By grace you too will life obtain.**
- 2. By grace! None dare lay claim to merit;
Our works and conduct have no worth,
God in His love sent our Redeemer,
Christ Jesus, to this sinful earth;
His death did for our sins atone,
And we are saved by grace alone.**
- 3. By grace God's Son, our only Saviour
Came down to earth to bear our sin,
Was it because of your own merit
That Jesus died your soul to win?
No, it was grace, and grace alone,
That brought him from his heav'nly throne.**
- 4. By grace! This ground of faith is certain;
As long as God is true, it stands.
What saints have penned by inspiration,
What in His Word our God commands,
Our faith in what our God has done,
Depends on grace— grace through his Son.**
- 5. By grace to timid hearts that tremble
In tribulation's furnace tried,
By grace, in spite of fear and trouble,
The Father's heart is open wide.**

**Where could I help and strength secure
If grace were not my anchor sure?**

- 6. By grace! On this I'll rest when dying;
In Jesus' promise I rejoice;
For though I know my heart's condition,
I also know my Saviour's voice.
My heart is glad, all grief has flown
Since I am saved by grace alone.**

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