

First Lutheran Church – ELCA
Worship Bulletin: Reformation Sunday
October 31, 2021

GATHERING AND COMMUNION

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Call to Worship (based on Hebrews 12:1-2, NRSV)

Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and the sin that clings so closely. And let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us. Looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. **Amen**

Prayer of Invocation

Gather us together this Reformation Sunday, O God, that we may celebrate the witness of our forefathers and foremothers and the courage that gave birth to the Reformation. Teach us how to honor the saints of God in ages past as well as in our present days. May the conviction of your grace written on their hearts be one that forms our own faith. Inspire us in the continuing reformation of the church and be present to us in your word and sacrament. In Christ's name we pray. Amen

(written by the Rev. Dr. Letty Russell and posted on the **Presbyterian Promise** website)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (ELW p. 94)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Gracious God, **have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG – “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” (*isometric*) (ELW 504)

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a sword and shield vic -
 2 No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, re -
 3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land all threat -'ning to de -
 4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, no thanks to foes, who

to - rious; he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod and
 ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, whom
 your us, we trem - ble not, un - moved we stand; they
 fear it; for God him - self fights by our side with

wins sal - va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe
 God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be?
 can - not o - ver - pow'r us. Let this world's ty - rant rage;
 weap - ons of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house,

has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dread - ful might
 The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord,
 in bat - tle we'll en - gage! His might is doomed to fail;
 goods, hon - or, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched a - way,

he arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.
 God's on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.
 God's judg - ment must pre - vail! One lit - tle word sub - dues him.
 they can - not win the day. The king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
 Music: EIN FESTE BURG, Martin Luther
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

1 A mighty fortress is our God,
a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.

2 No strength of ours can match his might!
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is he!
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,
God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.

3 Though hordes of devils fill the land
all threat'ning to devour us,
we tremble not, unmoved we stand;
they cannot overpower us.
Let this world's tyrant rage;
in battle we'll engage!
His might is doomed to fail;
God's judgment must prevail!
One little word subdues him.

4 God's Word forever shall abide,
no thanks to foes, who fear it;
for God himself fights by our side
with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
goods, honor, child, or spouse,
through life be wrenched away,
they cannot win the day.
The kingdom's ours forever!

GREETING (ELW p. 138)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

KYRIE (ELW p. 138)

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW p. 139)



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 142)

Let us pray. 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.**

WORD - God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:31-34

A reading from Jeremiah.

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.

³¹The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ³²It 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. ³³But 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. ³⁴No 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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 46 – Sanctuary Choir

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. (*Ps. 46:7*)

Response, TFF #6:

1 God is our refuge and strength,

a very present help in trouble.

2 **Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved,
and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea;**

3 though its waters rage and foam,

and though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

4 **There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.**

5 God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be shaken;

God shall help it at the break of day.

6The nations rage, and the kingdoms shake;

God speaks, and the earth melts away.

RESPONSE (Above):

7The Lord of hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

8Come now, regard the works of the Lord,

what desolations God has brought upon the earth;

9behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world;

who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.

10“Be still, then, and know that I am God;

I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”

11The Lord of hosts is with us;

the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

RESPONSE (Above)

SECOND READING: Romans 3:19-28

A reading from Romans.

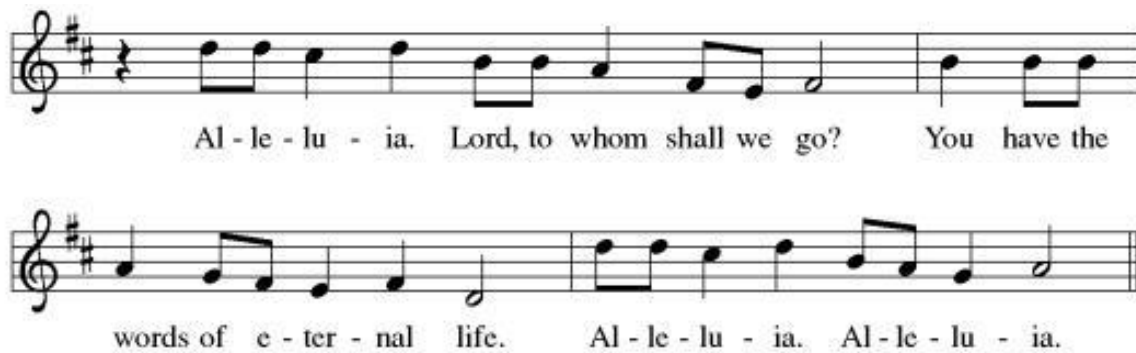
Paul’s words stand at the heart of the preaching of Martin Luther and other Reformation leaders. No human beings make themselves right with God through works of the law. We are brought into a right relationship with God through the divine activity centered in Christ’s death. This act is a gift of grace that liberates us from sin and empowers our faith in Jesus Christ.

¹⁹Now 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. ²⁰For “no human being will be justified in his sight” by deeds prescribed by the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin. ²¹But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been disclosed, and is attested by the law and the prophets, ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction, ²³since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; ²⁴they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. He did this to show his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶it was to prove at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus. ²⁷Then what becomes of boasting? It is excluded. By what law? By that of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 142)



**Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life.
Alleluia. Alleluia.**

GOSPEL: John 8:31-36

The holy gospel according to John. **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.

³¹Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” ³³They 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?’” ³⁴Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. ³⁶So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON (ELW p. 143)

Martin Luther was a man who lived his life seeking truth. And the truths he found set him free to have a deeper and greater understanding of God and the church. He re-wrote the doctrine of vocation to reflect the truth that all of us are called to godly work that is equally important in God’s sight and pastors and priests are not any closer or more valued by God than anyone else; they only have specific skills and training that is useful in a certain way. He discovered the truth that salvation is a free gift from God. Though it is good to give to the church financially and though our neighbors, families and community need our actions of good works, no financial giving or good works are necessary to achieve salvation. It’s simply a gift. In his theological journey, Luther discovered and shared the value of ensuring that God’s word was placed in people’s hands and translated so they could read it and experience it themselves. He wrote the Small Catechism based on a burning truth inside of him that faith should be nurtured in the home (because, in fact, the Small Catechism was originally written for parents to use to instruct their children about their faith in their homes). Martin Luther lived the truth that sometimes standing alone and sometimes standing in a place of criticism, hardship and danger is what we are called to do by God. He knew the truth that the easiest path isn’t always the right one. He discovered the truth that family life is a holy and messy calling from God.

Perhaps most importantly, though, Luther’s entire theological journey was about discovering and rediscovering the truth that God loves us unconditionally, even though we are sinners. That truth sounds so simple and elementary, but for Luther, finding that truth really was, as the Gospel says, what set him free. As a young monk, he was convinced that God hated him because he was a sinner. He would sleep in the snow, whip himself with chord and confess every single sin he could think of to his confessor to the point that confessor said, “Do not come back until you have a real sin to confess!” But, reading in the belltower one

day, he discovered the truth that God pours out God’s righteousness on us through Christ. In “the Great Exchange” as it’s theologically sometimes called, Christ takes on our sins on the cross and we take on Christ’s righteousness through His resurrection. We become righteous not by our own doing, but because God makes it possible through God’s love.

Discovering this love gave Luther the courage to speak truth to power, study, teach, translate and change the world. In the words of today’s Gospel, that truth of God’s love made known through God’s Son made him free to change the world. His work and words started the Reformation and our church. His courage led the ways for others to seek truth and reform the church in their own ways, too
 Today’s Gospel notes, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” Today, we celebrate Martin Luther, his courage and his lasting impact on our church and world. But, more importantly, as he would be the first to note, we celebrate the truth, love and freedom we have in Christ.”

This week, may you see yourself as a reformer. May the amazing power of God’s love set you free, too. You are freed from worrying if you measure up because the truth is, by God’s power, despite all of your errors and failings, you do, not because you are always great, but because God is. May that free you to speak truth when you see injustice in the world, in your homes, and even in the church. May that free you to love others with joy and all you have not because God needs it, but only because the world is hurting. May that truth free you to question, study and wonder... never worrying or doubting that you will lose God’s love. It simply is not possible. May you be grounded in God’s love so unshakingly that you go out and change the world. Today, we do not celebrate just a time period in history, the reformation, but also the freedom we all have to be reformers, movers and shakers in the world, too. We have been and will be freed by the truth of God’s love, forgiveness, power and grace. That truth frees us for whatever God is calling us to still today.

HYMN OF THE DAY – “Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word” (ELW 517)

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

1 Lord, keep us stead-fast in your word; curb those who
 2 Lord Je - sus Christ, your pow'r make known, for you are
 3 O Com - fort - er of price - less worth, send peace and

by de - ceit or sword would wrest the king - dom from your Son
 Lord of lords a - lone; de - fend your ho - ly church, that we
 u - ni - ty on earth; sup - port us in our fi - nal strife

and bring to naught all he has done.
 may sing your praise e - ter - nal - ly.
 and lead us out of death to life.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
 Music: ERHALT UNS, HERR, J. Klug, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1543

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

1 Lord, keep us steadfast in your word;
curb those who by deceit or sword
would wrest the kingdom from your Son
and bring to naught all he has done.

2 Lord Jesus Christ, your pow'r make known,
for you are Lord of lords alone;
defend your holy church, that we
may sing your praise eternally.

3 O Comforter of priceless worth,
send peace and unity on earth;
support us in our final strife
and lead us out of death to life.

APOSTLES CREED (ELW p. 104)

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 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.

*Or, "he descended into hell," another translation of this text in widespread use.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Set free from sin and death and nourished by the word of truth, we join in prayer for all of God's creation.

We pray for all who long for a word of truth and for the radical grace that flows from the cross. Inspire congregations to freely and boldly proclaim your love for all people with persistence and hope. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for your creation, for mountains, rivers, streams, cities, homesteads, and neighborhoods. Write in our hearts a new love and care for creation. Give us the will to curb wasteful habits and to hold accountable those who neglect the vulnerable. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all who aspire to public office and for all who will vote on Tuesday at local polling places (*especially*). Pour wisdom and understanding upon all who govern so that communities of justice and peace may thrive. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all who long for healing in mind, body, or spirit (*especially*) **Members:** Todd Poppema, Dave Livingston, Linda Towne, Al Luing, Janice Berger, Sandy Rogers, Todd Hallstrom, Charlene Wachter, Marilyn Frisch, Julie & Denny Christensen, Dianne Sanderson, Betty Nelson; **Members in Nursing Homes:**

Don Grant, Albert Mattisen, Bobbie Elvin, Sandra Marsh; **Members in Care Facilities:** Fred Wietzema, Bob Dieter, Joan Doeden, Jean Bender; **Family Members & Friends:** Arlene (Fern Burmeister's sister), Butch Zeiner (Valerie Veen's brother), Maverick Thalberg (Fern Burmeister's great-grandson), Josh Hansen (Mary Ingenthron's son), Lee Morrison (Terry Morrison's son), Henrietta Lais, Tom Morgan (Sandy Randall's dad), Brad Martens (Valerie Veen's son); **Our service men and women and Love INC.** Strengthen hospitals, clinics, counseling centers, nursing homes, and recovery centers to be holy spaces of renewal that all might live the abundant life you intend. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Lord, be with our farmers in the field. Prosper the work of their hands and keep them safe. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for all who seek to grow in faith and love of you. Guide teaching and learning in confirmation, small groups, Sunday school, youth groups, schools, seminaries, and universities. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks for all the saints and reformers who have gone before us who dwell in your holy habitation (*especially*). Give us courage through their example to challenge unjust systems and work toward life-giving reformation. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Confident that you hear us, O God, we boldly place our prayers into your hands; through Jesus Christ, our truth and life. **Amen.**

OFFERING (ELW p. 144) - Choir Anthem: "The Truth Will Make You Free" by Anne Krentz Organ

OFFERING SONG – “Create in Me a Clean Heart”

Create in Me a Clean Heart
Offering Song

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are: "Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it." The score ends with a double bar line.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923

Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

Create in Me a Clean Heart

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER (ELW p. 144)

Let us pray. Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 145)

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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

BLESSING (ELW p. 146)

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrod-
den, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only
that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG – “Rise, O Church, like Christ Arisen” (ELW 548)

Rise, O Church, like Christ Arisen



1 Rise, O church, like Christ a - ris - en,
2 Rise, trans - formed, and choose to fol - low
3 Rise, re - mem - ber well the fu - ture
4 Ser - vice be our sure vo - ca - tion;



from this meal of love and grace;
af - ter Christ, though wound - ed, whole;
God has called us to re - ceive;
cour - age be our dai - ly breath;



may we through such love en - vi - sion
bro - ken, shared, our lives are hal - lowed
pres - ent by God's lov - ing nur - ture,
mer - cy be our des - ti - na - tion



whose we are, and whose, our praise.
to re - lease and to con - sole.
Spir - it - ed then let us live.
from this day and un - to death.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia;
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia;
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia;
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



God, the won - der of our days.
Christ, our pres - ent, past, and goal.
Spir - it, grace by whom we live.
Rise, O church, a liv - ing faith.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953
Music: SURGE ECCLESIA, Timothy J. Strand, b. 1958
Text © 1997 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress.
Music © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

Rise, O Church, like Christ Arisen

1 Rise, O church, like Christ arisen,
from this meal of love and grace;
may we through such love envision
whose we are, and whose, our praise.
Alleluia, alleluia;
God, the wonder of our days.

2 Rise, transformed, and choose to follow
after Christ, though wounded, whole;
broken, shared, our lives are hallowed
to release and to console.

Alleluia, alleluia;
Christ, our present, past, and goal.

3 Rise, remember well the future
God has called us to receive;
present by God's loving nurture,
Spirited then let us live.
Alleluia, alleluia;
Spirit, grace by whom we live.

4 Service be our sure vocation;
courage be our daily breath;
mercy be our destination
from this day and unto death.
Alleluia, alleluia.
Rise, O church, a living faith.

DISMISSAL (ELW p. 146)

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The liturgy and music is reprinted by permission from
One License – #736873-A/CCLI – #1941935/Sundays and Seasons - SAS003615