

Reformation Day (Number 499) October 30, 2016

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday.
An opportunity to make the rhythms of the readings
become a part of the rhythms of your life.

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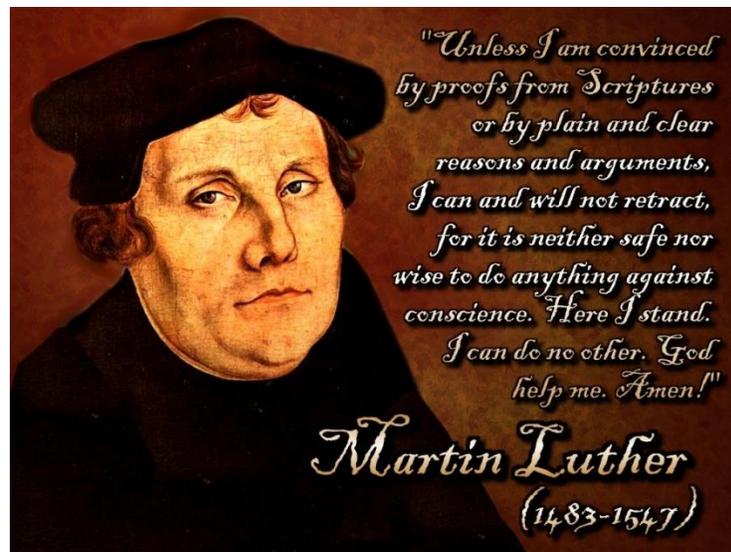
or

through Facebook at either “Living the Lutheran Lectionary”,
“Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma” or “Harold Weseloh”

October 27, 2016 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH

(Also presented as a part of the bible study/worship midweek service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church setting. E-mail puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details of this week's location.



<http://thegoodnewstoday.org/reformation-day/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 656/657 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH)262

“A mighty fortress is our God”

Alternate hymn is LSB 555 (TLH 377), “Salvation unto us has come”

“The original rhythms of EIN FESTE BURG ...had already reached their familiar isorhythmic (all equal rhythms)[LBW 656] shape by the time of Johann S. Bach (PHH 7) in the eighteenth century. The harmonization is taken from his Cantata 80. Many organ and choral works are based on this chorale, including Felix Mendelssohn (PHH 279) in his Symphony and Giacomo Meyerbeer in his opera Les Huguenots.

This rhythmic setting [LBW 657] needs a more majestic approach...
Sing in harmony on stanzas 2 and 3 and in unison on stanzas 1 and 4. Support the singing with strong accompaniment on the organ and/or with use of a brass ensemble.

--Psalter Hymnal Handbook, 1987

http://www.hymnary.org/tune/ein_feste_burg_luther

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHqutXoWRH8> By the a cappella group, Glad. Read about them at <http://www.glad-pro.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ADamVJaXZMg> Add some brass, percussion and a choir.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by [Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.](#)

*The readings listed are for Reformation Day. The Revised Common Lectionary readings are for the **24th Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 26. Next week's readings are for All Saints' Day. The Revised Common Lectionary readings are for the 25th Sunday after Pentecost, Proper 27.***

Reformation Day and or All Saints: Revelation 14:6-7; RCL, Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18, Psalm 149 (Next Week: All Saints' Day, Revelation 7:(2-8), 9-17; RCL, Haggai 1:15b-2:9 or Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21 or Psalm 98)

“When I was young, our annual summer vacation was to the Jersey Shore, usually Wildwood. We went to Wildwood, because at the time it was a nice family place to go, and because it was close to Cape May, where my uncle managed the Cape May Airport. Uncle Caddy flew those banners up and down the beach that advertized things like 'Laura's Fudge ' Best on the Boardwalk,' and 'Pier One Salt Water Taffy,' and 'Tony Bennett ' Tonight at the Red Garter.' Every time one of those little Piper Cubs flew overhead, towing one of those banners, my sister and I would wave and shout at the top of our lungs, 'hi uncle Caddy.'

St. John describes what he sees. 'An 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.' That's quite a banner that this angel is towing..." <http://lcrwvtl.org/2011/10/sermon-reformation-an-eternal-gospel-to-proclaim-revelation-146-7-103011/> A sermon from Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Waterville MA.

The Messages of the Three Angels

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.”

“ The pericope is commonly appointed for the festival of the Reformation. The assignment has less to do with the fact that Martin Luther was regarded by some of his contemporaries as the first (or even third) angel of the apocalypse and more to do with the Reformation’s emphasis on the good news of the person and work of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and on the distinction between law and gospel. The interpretation of the text should not be limited to Luther or the Reformation; more important than the reformer is the gospel message he proclaimed.

The text focuses on the appearance of the first angel and its message. Key to understanding the context here is to recall John’s vision of the dragon’s two beasts in chapter 13. The terrible beasts emerge from the sea and the earth respectively, and having been given the authority and power of the dragon, they make the earth their dwelling place. John’s vision continues in chapter 14 with the appearance of the lamb standing on Mount Zion together with the 144,000 who had been purchased from the earth. Then John sees the first angel flying in mid-heaven—between the sun and the earth—“having the eternal gospel to proclaim to those dwelling on the earth, people of every nation and tribe and language and people” (14:6).

The “eternal gospel” to be proclaimed is the good news that the angel, as God’s messenger, brings to all the inhabitants of the earth. But this good news is not limited to Christ’s work of saving the world from sin and death; it is a message speaking both law and gospel. In a mighty voice, the angel announces God’s imminent judgment, but also calls for the reverence of God as God and for a response to him as judge of the earth and as its creator. This preaching of the gospel to all nations is one of the signs of the end of the age as prophesied by Christ himself (cf. Mk 13:10). In Revelation, Christ’s work of salvation is completed, and now the work of judgment remains... <http://concordiatheology.org/2010/08/reformation-day-%E2%80%A2-revelation-146%E2%80%93%E2%80%A2-october-31-2010/>

Psalm 46; RCL, None (*Psalm 149; RCL, Job 19:23-27a or Psalm 17:1-9*)

**“It is said of Luther that, when he heard any discouraging news, he would say,
Come let us sing the forty-sixth psalm.”**

https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/mhc/psa/psa_046.cfm

*To the choirmaster. Of the Sons of Korah. According to Alamo^[a] A Song. **

46 God is our refuge and strength,
a very present^[b] help in trouble.

²Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,

³though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah

⁴There 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 her; she shall not be moved;
 God will help her when morning dawns.

⁶ The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
 he utters his voice, the earth melts.

⁷ The LORD of hosts is with us;
 the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah

⁸ Come, behold the works of the LORD,
 how he has brought desolations on the earth.

⁹ He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;
 he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
 he burns the chariots with fire.

¹⁰ "Be still, and know that I am God.
 I will be exalted among the nations,
 I will be exalted in the earth!"

¹¹ The LORD of hosts is with us;
 the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah

1. [Psalm 46:1](#) Probably a musical or liturgical term
2. [Psalm 46:1](#) *Or well proved*

*"...A Song upon Alamoth. Which may denote that the music was to be pitched high for the treble or soprano voices of the Hebrew virgins. They went forth in their dances to sing the praises of David when he smote the Philistine, it was meet that they should make merry and be glad when the victories of Jehovah became their theme. We need to praise God upon virgin hearts, with souls chaste towards his fear, with lively and exalted expressions, and happy strains. Or the word Alamoth may refer to shrill sounding instruments, as in 1Ch 15:20, where we read that Zechariah, and Eliab, and Benaiah were to praise the Lord "with psalteries on Alamoth." We are not always, in a slovenly manner, to fall into one key, but with intelligence are to modulate our praises and make them fittingly expressive of the occasion and the joy it creates in our souls. These old musical terms cannot be interpreted with certainty, but they are still useful because they show that care and skill should be used in our sacred music..."

<http://www.spurgeon.org/treasury/ps046.php>

"A Mighty Fortress is Our God" -- the hymn, which according to Ulrich Leupold, "more than any other epitomizes Luther's thought and personal experience" -- is a rather free paraphrase of Psalm 46.

For that reason, the psalm is assigned for Reformation Sunday. But as Leupold notes, Luther "did not write [the hymn] to express his own feelings, but to interpret and apply the 46th Psalm to the church of his own time and its struggles."¹ This is a fine summary of the preaching task -- to interpret and apply the biblical text to our own time and struggles. So why not preach this Reformation Day on Psalm 46?

The Text of the Psalm

The psalm is tightly composed, with three, three-verse-long stanzas and two refrains:

Stanza 1 (verses 1-3)

Stanza 2 (verses 4-6)

Refrain: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." (verse 7)

Stanza 3 (verses 8-10)

Refrain: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." (verse 11)

An important note about the text of the psalm is necessary, because some recent modern editions of the Book of Psalm "restored" (a fancy scholarly term meaning "fussed with") the text of the psalm to include the psalm's refrain after the first stanza, too. The *Lutheran Book of Worship* of 1978 and *The Book of Common Prayer* of 1977 both used a version of this psalm with the refrain so restored.² More recently, however, postmodern sensibilities have rightfully undermined scholarly confidence in the ability to fuss with the biblical text in these ways. So here is the point: Just be aware of which text your congregation is using. The commentary here does not supply the supposed missing verse. If you are still using a version that "restores" the refrain after the first stanza, adjust your interpretation accordingly..."

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1110 **Rolf Jacobson**
Professor of Old Testament and Alvin N. Rogness Chair in Scripture, Theology, and Ministry, **Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn**

Romans 3:19-28; RCL, Ephesians 1:11-23 (1 John 3:1-3; RCL, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17)

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

The Righteousness of God Through Faith

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom 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. ²⁶ 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.

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

a. [Romans 3:20](#) Greek *flesh*

**“The Holy Gospel according to St. John , the 8th Chapter”
Or St. Matthew, the 11th Chapter**

John 8:31-36 or Matthew 11:12-19; RCL, Luke 6:20-31 (Matthew 5:1-12; RCL, Luke 20:27-38)

“These verses promise good news to those who desire to be Jesus' disciples: He and only he brings true freedom.

“At the same time, these verses take us into the teeth of the Gospel according to John's pointed polemic against the people represented by the characters called "the Jews..." continued below

The Truth Will Set You Free

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “**If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**” ³³ 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?’”

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

- a. [John 8:34](#) For the contextual rendering of the Greek word *doulos*, see Preface; also verse [35](#)

“...It is imperative that congregations come away from their encounter with this text understanding that "the Jews" mentioned in 8:31 do *not* stand for all Jews (neither all Jews of Jesus' time nor all Jews of any time) or for an abstract notion of Judaism. To make this passage imply that Judaism is an enslaving religion or that Jesus somehow stood outside of Judaism is to misunderstand the passage, the historical setting in which it was written, and its enduring theological implications. Consulting a reputable commentary on John will re-acquaint preachers with this Gospel's polemical bent and help them guard against perpetuating old forms of anti-Judaism and creating new ones.

These six verses are cut from a tightly-constructed dialog (8:21-59) that resembles a courtroom deliberation over Jesus' identity. In the larger episode, Jesus takes the divine name as his own and tells his interlocutors that they are estranged from God and their Abrahamic ancestry. While the lectionary's sharp knife keeps the core dispute of 8:21-59 hidden, in doing so it also carves out space for preachers to consider the six verses on their own terms. That is, congregations will hear 8:31-36 as a mini-dialog more or less dislocated from the most problematic and controversial aspects of the wider narrative context. This allows a sermon to direct focus toward the rich language Jesus uses...”

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=436 Matt Skinner
 Professor of New Testament, *Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.*

Or

¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,^[a] and the violent take it by force. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴ and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears to hear,^[b] let him hear.

¹⁶ “But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates,

¹⁷ ““We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
 we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.”

¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’
¹⁹ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.”^[c]

- a. [Matthew 11:12](#) Or *has been coming violently*
- b. [Matthew 11:15](#) Some manuscripts omit *to hear*
- c. [Matthew 11:19](#) Some manuscripts *children* (compare [Luke 7:35](#))

“Glory to You, O Lord”

“Go to any farmer’s market, open-air craft fair, or urban street bazaar, and you can get a reasonable idea of the market Jesus is speaking about in our Gospel. The merchants arrive and set out their wares for the day, and soon the customers come looking for the best deals. And while this is going on, And kids will be kids, whether in ancient Palestine, or 21st century America. Playing happily one minute, the next minute the children are looking about for something to do. And then comes one of the most maddening, tedious conversations ever you will hear from child or adult:

“So, what do you want to do?” “*I don’t know.*” “*What do you want to do?*”...

Suggesting things to do, but the other person not only wants to do none of them, but neither do they offer an idea of what they might want to do. There are times when people are more focused on having a problem, than on finding a solution for the problem. Jesus presents a situation as a metaphor. There were kids that went to the marketplace, the gathering place, looking for something to do. But when some suggested they play wedding games, the other mates weren’t interested in doing that, they weren’t in the mood to dance and be happy; so they counter with the idea of a playing funeral games, but their mates don’t want to do that either, they weren’t in the mood to be mournful. They just weren’t in the mind for a solution...”

<https://scotkinnaman.com/2011/10/31/sermon-for-reformation/> “**Blog My Soul** is the store front for the ruminations of this Lutheran cleric on liturgy and the Divine Service, Lutheran culture, sermons, devotional writing, tidbits from some of the projects I am working on.” He is a senior editor at CPH.

The Home page for this site has an excellent article about the Lectionary. Worth a read.

“Ever since the beginning of creation – since the time of our first parents, Adam and Eve – God has promise that He would send a Savior (the Messiah) into the world who would redeem His creation from sin, death and the power of the devil through His own sacrificial death. The Law and the Prophets bore witness to the same plan and promise of God. His almighty and merciful kingdom would come and His perfect will be done!

This is exactly what we pray in the first, second and third petitions of the Lord’s Prayer... “Holy Be Your Name; Thy Kingdom Come; Thy Will Be done...But there have always been (and always will continue to be) those who war against His kingdom – who “forcefully lay hold of it,” such as the Scribes, Pharisees and Teachers of the Law. There were many who stood against Jesus’ ministry, the coming of His Kingdom, and the proclamation of His life-giving Gospel.

Of these Jesus said, “To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’” (Matthew 11: 16-17) Jesus was saying that these petulant, rebellious children would never be satisfied. They wanted their own will to be done. They wanted everyone else to “dance to the tune they chose” rather than to the perfect and gracious plan of God. How true that was in that generation and at that time! How true that is in our generation and at our time!

So our Heavenly Father in His infinite mercy and love, sends His ambassadors throughout history to bring His people back to Himself...And He calls us to be His ambassadors of the Gospel in our time, to our world, to our generation.

“He who has ears, let him hear.” (Matthew 11: 15) May God give us eyes to see, ears to hear and hearts filled with compassion and the love of God as we work, and watch, and pray that His Kingdom would come and His will be done! See you in church!

<http://holycrosslutheran.net/blog/2015/10/24/thy-kingdom-come-matthew-11-12-19/> Pastor Snow. Holy Cross Lutheran, Wichita, Kansas LCMS



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