



# Lutheran Church *of the* REFORMATION

<sup>20</sup> Jesus looked at his  
disciples and said:  
God will bless you people  
who are poor.

God's kingdom  
belongs to you!

<sup>21</sup> God will bless you  
hungry people.

You will have plenty  
to eat!

God will bless you people  
who are crying.

You will laugh!

*Luke 6:20-21*



*Worship on Independence Day Weekend*

*Our Common Prayer at Home*

July 5, 2020

# GREETINGS

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

## Prelude

## Welcome

In this time of national celebration, let it be our duty and delight to remember once more the faith of our forbearers who shaped our nation with their dreams and their tears. Let us remember those in our own time whose faiths guide and sustain them in doing the hard work of building a better country for all people. Sometimes it is the work of listening, sometimes it is the work of speaking up; sometimes it is the work of protest; sometimes it is the work of governing.

Today's service is based upon the scripture texts for celebrating a national holiday. The service includes moments of praise and lament, confession and rededication.

## Notes on Today's Hymns

*This Is My Song* is sung to the tune FINLANDIA. The melody comes from a symphonic poem by Jean Sibelius (1865-1957) which he wrote while his homeland was under Russian occupation in 1899. Lloyd Stone, a school teacher, wrote the first two stanzas in 1934 during the peace between two world wars. The final stanza was written by Methodist theologian and pastor, Georgia Harkness (1891-1974) in the late 1930s. Harkness transforms a hymn of peace with vague religious overtones into a prayer for peace that comes from the author of peace, Jesus Christ.

*Lift Every Voice and Sing* was written and composed by James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) and J. Rosamond Johnson (1873-1954) in 1900 for a children's musical celebration of Abraham Lincoln's birthday in Jacksonville, FL. James was the first African American lawyer admitted to the bar in Florida and was a US diplomat 1906-1912. He was a prolific author including the publication of *God's Trombones* in 1927. Rosamond was a music school teacher and Baptist church organist and choral director. "Lift Every Voice and Sing" is regarded by many African Americans as a "national anthem" because of its profound association with the struggle for equality and civil rights in the USA. It is both a biography and an expression of Black people. Besides being a magnificent sacred hymn, it is an important historical document. It should be taught to, sung by, and remembered by all Americans.

*Amazing Grace* was written in 1779 by John Newton (1725-1807), a former slave trader who became an abolitionist and Anglican priest. The first stanza sets God's grace in stark contrast with "a wretch like me." Although Newton uses the word "wretch" to describe the undeserved and unmerited forgiveness God gives, in some communities, the word reminds them of the abuse others have hurled upon them. So some communities and individuals change the word from "wretch" to "soul." Perhaps the greatest enigma of this hymn is that "Amazing Grace" speaks globally of the mystery of salvation without mentioning the name of Jesus. The universality of this hymn lies in our awareness of the wretchedness of the human condition and for a hope deeply embedded in humanity at large that we may be "saved" from that condition by something beyond ourselves — "Amazing Grace."

## **Indigenous Land Acknowledgement**

Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical to building mutual respect and connection across all barriers of heritage and difference.

At Church of the Reformation, we acknowledge that in DC we gather on the lands of the Piscataway and Nacotchatank, people who are Indigenous to this area. We honor their elders, past and present. In 2016, our synod and the ELCA repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery. This was religious edict by Pope Alexander VI in 1493 that unjustly gave European monarchs and their successors, including the United States of America, the right to claim Indigenous peoples as their wards and Indigenous lands as their own. US laws regarding Indigenous lands and peoples continue to be based on the Doctrine.

When the ELCA repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery, we repented of the ways our church and nation have benefitted from this unjust doctrine and the genocide, removal, and displacement of Indigenous peoples. We have also committed ourselves to listening more deeply to Indigenous neighbors and leaders within the church and society.

We have committed ourselves to serve alongside our Indigenous members and neighbors for their welfare and to move in solidarity with them when they are faced with disrespect, injustice, and violence. We also celebrate the leadership and gifts of the Piscataway community as well as other Indigenous leaders and representatives in Washington, DC. We do this work in partnership with the ELCA American Indian and Native Alaskan and the Native American advocacy program of the Friends Committee on National Legislation.

A portion of today's offering collection will be shared with these Indigenous communities and with the Onondaga Nation.



1 This is my song, O God of all the na - tions,  
2 My coun - try's skies are blu - er than the o - cean,  
3 This is my prayer, O God of all earth's king - doms,



a song of peace for lands a - far and mine.  
and sun - light beams on clo - ver - leaf and pine.  
your king - dom come; on earth your will be done.



This is my home, the coun - try where my heart is;  
But oth - er lands have sun - light too, and clo - ver,  
O God, be lift - ed up till all shall serve you,

here are my hopes, my dreams, my ho - ly shrine;  
 and skies are ev - 'ry - where as blue as mine.  
 and hearts u - nit - ed learn to live as one.

but oth - er hearts in oth - er lands are beat - ing  
 So hear my song, O God of all the na - tions,  
 So hear my prayer, O God of all the na - tions;

with hopes and dreams as true and high as mine.  
 a song of peace for their land and for mine.  
 my - self I give you; let your will be done.

Text: Lloyd Stone, 1912–1993, sts. 1–2; Georgia Harkness, 1891–1974, st. 3

Music: FINLANDIA, Jean Sibelius, 1865–1957

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# Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address

## *Greetings to the Natural World*

*We thank the Onondaga Nation (one of the six nations of the Haudenosaunee) for their courage, strength, and perseverance and for sharing this greeting with us.*

Today we have gathered and we see that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things. So now, we bring our minds together as one as we give greetings and thanks to each other as People. To the Earth, Mother of all, who gives us all we need for life, greetings and thanks.

To all the waters, waterfalls and rain, rivers and oceans, greetings and thanks.

To all the fish life, greetings and thanks.

To the grains and greens, beans and berries, as one we send thanks to the food plants; to the medicine herbs of the world and their keepers, greetings and thanks.

To all animals and their teachings, greetings and thanks.

To the trees for shelter and shade, fruit and beauty, greetings and thanks.

To all birds, large and small, joyful greetings and thanks.

And from the four directions, the Four Winds, thank you for purifying the air we breathe and giving us strength, greetings and thanks.

To the thunderers, our grandfathers in the sky, we hear your voices, greetings and thanks.

And now the Sun, for the light of a new day and all the fires of life, greetings and thanks.

To our oldest Grandmother, the Moon, leader of women all over the world, greetings and thanks.

And to the stars for their mystery, beauty, and guidance, greetings and thanks.

To our teachers from all times reminding us how to live in harmony, greetings and thanks.

And for all the gifts of creation, for all the love around us, greetings and thanks.

We have now arrived at the place where we end our words. Of all the things we have named, it was not our intention to leave anything out. If something was forgotten, we leave it to each individual to send such greetings and thanks in their own way.

Now our minds are one.

*Learn more about the Haudenosaunee:* <https://americanindian.si.edu/sites/1/files/pdf/education/HaudenosauneeGuide.pdf>

## Greeting

*The presiding minister and congregation welcome each other with a greeting shared by Jesus' early apostles and then join their hearts in prayer.*

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.**

## Prayer of the Day

*Even though we are distant from one another, the Spirit unites us as we pray this ancient prayer that introduces the biblical readings for today.*

Let us pray.

*After a brief silence for personal prayer, the presiding minister continues:*

Lord God Almighty, you have made all the peoples of the earth for your glory, to serve you in freedom and in peace: Give to the people of our country a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance, that we may use our liberty in accordance with your gracious will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**



# PRAISE

*God speaks to us in scriptures read, sung and preached.*

Psalm

Psalm 146

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

<sup>2</sup>**I will praise the LORD as long as I live;**

**I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.**

<sup>3</sup>Put not your trust in rulers,

in mortals in whom there is no help.

<sup>4</sup>**When they breathe their last, they return to earth,  
and in that day their thoughts perish.**

<sup>5</sup>Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,  
whose hope is in the LORD their God;

<sup>6</sup>who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;  
who keeps promises forever;

<sup>7</sup>who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.

**The LORD sets the captive free.**

<sup>8</sup>**The LORD opens the eyes of the blind;**

**the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;**

**the LORD loves the righteous.**

<sup>9</sup>**The LORD cares for the sojourner;**

**the LORD sustains the orphan and widow,**

**but frustrates the way of the wicked.**

<sup>10</sup>The LORD shall reign forever,

**your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**



## Reading

Luke 6:20-26 (CEV)

<sup>20</sup> Jesus looked at his disciples and said:

God will bless you people who are poor.

God's kingdom belongs to you!

<sup>21</sup> God will bless you hungry people.

You will have plenty to eat!

God will bless you people who are crying.

You will laugh!

<sup>22</sup> God will bless you when others hate you and won't have anything to do with you. God will bless you when people insult you and say cruel things about you, all because you are a follower of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup> Long ago your own people did these same things to the prophets. So when this happens to you, be happy and jump for joy! You will have a great reward in heaven.

<sup>24</sup> But you rich people are in for trouble.

You have already had an easy life!

<sup>25</sup> You well-fed people are in for trouble.

You will go hungry!

You people who are laughing now are in for trouble.

You are going to cry and weep!

<sup>26</sup> You are in for trouble when everyone says good things about you. That is what your own people said about those prophets who told lies.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Abraham Lincoln, *Second Inaugural Address*

March 4, 1865

*Until late in the summer of 1864, Lincoln did not expect to be reelected as President. However, victories by Union troops in the autumn, particularly the fall of Atlanta, turned the tide, both on the field and at the ballot box. When he delivered his second inaugural address he knew the war was all but over. He knew the time had come to reflect on the nation's ordeals and look to the future.*

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it, all sought to avert it...

One eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the nation, but localized in the Southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war...Yet neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration of which it has already attained...

Each looked for an easier triumph...Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any man dare ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes... If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offences which, in the providence of God he wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offence came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a Living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope--fervently do we pray that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away.

Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn from the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago so still it must be said, the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous all together.'

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.

## LAMENT AND CONFESSION

### *Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekt Address in Washington, DC*

*The lands of the Nez Perce stretched from Oregon to Idaho. But in the 1860s the federal government seized millions of acres crowding them into small parts of their former territories. Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekht, also known as Chief Joseph, led the resistance of the colonization of Nez Perce lands. But his people came under fierce attack. In 1877 he and his followers were defeated. Joseph was sent to the Indian Territories (Oklahoma) where he continued to speak out about the crimes of the government as he did during his visit to Lincoln Hall in Washington, DC, in 1879.*

At last I was granted permission to come to Washington and bring my friend Yellow Bull and our interpreter with me. I am glad I came. I have shaken hands with a good many friends, but there are some things I want to know which no one seems able to explain. I cannot understand how the Government sends a man out to fight us, as it did General Miles, and then breaks his word. Such a government has something wrong about it. I cannot understand why so many chiefs are allowed to talk so many different ways, and promise so many different things. I have seen the Great Father Chief [President Hayes]; the Next Great Chief [Secretary of the Interior]; the Commissioner Chief; the Law Chief; and many other law chiefs [Congressmen] and they all say they are my friends, and that I shall have justice, but while all their mouths talk right I do not understand why nothing is done for my people. I have heard talk and talk but nothing is done. Good words do not last long unless they amount to something. Words do not pay for my dead people. They do not pay for my country now overrun by white men. They do not protect my father's grave. They do not pay for my horses and cattle. Good words do not give me back my children. Good words will not make good the promise of your war chief, General Miles. Good words will not give my people a home where they can live in peace and take care of themselves. I am tired of talk that comes to nothing. It makes my heart sick when I remember all the good words and all the broken promises. There has been too much talking by men who had no right to talk. Too many misinterpretations have been made; too many misunderstandings have come up between the white men and the Indians. If the white man wants to live in peace with the Indian he can live in peace. There need be no trouble. Treat all men alike. Give them the same laws. Give them all an even chance to live and grow. All men were made by the same Great Spirit Chief. They are all brothers. The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it. You might as well expect all rivers to run backward as that any man who was born a free man should be contented penned up and denied liberty to go where he pleases. If you tie a horse to a stake, do you expect he will grow fat? If you pen an Indian up on a small spot of earth and compel him to stay there, he will not be contented nor will he grow and prosper. I have asked some of the Great White Chiefs where they get their authority to say to the Indian that he shall stay in one place, while he sees white men going where they please. They cannot tell me.

I only ask of the Government to be treated as all other men are treated. If I cannot go to my own home, let me have a home in a country where my people will not die so fast. I would like to go to Bitter Root Valley. There my people would be happy; where they are now they are dying. Three have died since I left my camp to come to Washington.

When I think of our condition, my heart is heavy. I see men of my own race treated as out-laws and driven from country to country, or shot down like animals.

I know that my race must change. We cannot hold our own with the white men as we are. We only ask an even chance to live as other men live. We ask to be recognized as men. We ask that the same law shall work alike on all men. If an Indian breaks the law, punish him by the law. If a white man breaks the law, punish him also.

Let me be a free man, free to travel, free to stop, free to work, free to trade where I choose, free to choose my own teachers, free to follow the religion of my fathers, free to talk, think and act for myself -- and I will obey every law or submit to the penalty.

Whenever the white man treats the Indian as they treat each other then we shall have no more wars. We shall be all alike -- brothers of one father and mother, with one sky above us and one country around us and one government for all. Then the Great Spirit Chief who rules above will smile upon this land and send rain to wash out the bloody spots made by brothers' hands upon the face of the earth. For this time the Indian race is waiting and praying. I hope no more groans of wounded men and women will ever go to the ear of the Great Spirit Chief above, and that all people may be one people.

## Langston Hughes, *Let America Be America Again*, 1935.

*Langston Hughes (1901-1967) was a central figure in the Harlem Renaissance, the flowering of black intellectual, literary, and artistic life that took place in the 1920s. His poem Let America Be America Again was first published in Esquire magazine in 1932, and then in Kansas Magazine in 1933. He did not consider it one of his better poems and he did not include it in his early anthologies. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall revived interest in Hughes' poem when he read it at an American Bar Association meeting in 1992.*

*In the video from the Loft Literacy Center in Minneapolis, Danez Smith reads the poem. Smith is a Black, Queer, Poet writer and performer from St. Paul. They are the author of "Homie" and "Don't Call Us Dead," both published by Graywolf Press. Please follow and support Black poets and writers by purchasing their works.*

Let America be America again.  
Let it be the dream it used to be.  
Let it be the pioneer on the plain  
Seeking a home where he himself is free.

(America never was America to me.)

Let America be the dream the dreamers  
dreamed—  
Let it be that great strong land of love  
Where never kings connive nor tyrants  
scheme  
That any man be crushed by one above.

(It never was America to me.)

O, let my land be a land where Liberty  
Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath,  
But opportunity is real, and life is free,  
Equality is in the air we breathe.

(There's never been equality for me,  
Nor freedom in this "homeland of the free.")

*Say, who are you that mumbles in the dark?  
And who are you that draws your veil across  
the stars?*

I am the poor white, fooled and pushed  
apart,

I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars.  
I am the red man driven from the land,  
I am the immigrant clutching the hope I  
seek—

And finding only the same old stupid plan  
Of dog eat dog, of mighty crush the weak.

I am the young man, full of strength and  
hope,  
Tangled in that ancient endless chain  
Of profit, power, gain, of grab the land!  
Of grab the gold! Of grab the ways of satisfy-  
ing need!

Of work the men! Of take the pay!  
Of owning everything for one's own greed!

I am the farmer, bondsman to the soil.  
I am the worker sold to the machine.  
I am the Negro, servant to you all.  
I am the people, humble, hungry, mean—  
Hungry yet today despite the dream.  
Beaten yet today—O, Pioneers!  
I am the man who never got ahead,  
The poorest worker bartered through the  
years.

Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream  
In the Old World while still a serf of kings,  
Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so  
true,  
That even yet its mighty daring sings  
In every brick and stone, in every furrow  
turned  
That's made America the land it has become.  
O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas  
In search of what I meant to be my home—  
For I'm the one who left dark Ireland's  
shore,  
And Poland's plain, and England's grassy  
lea,  
And torn from Black Africa's strand I came  
To build a "homeland of the free."

The free?

Who said the free? Not me?  
Surely not me? The millions on relief today?  
The millions shot down when we strike?  
The millions who have nothing for our pay?  
For all the dreams we've dreamed  
And all the songs we've sung  
And all the hopes we've held  
And all the flags we've hung,  
The millions who have nothing for our  
pay—  
Except the dream that's almost dead today.

O, let America be America again—  
The land that never has been yet—  
And yet must be—the land  
where every man is free.


The land that's mine—the poor man's, Indi-  
an's, Negro's, ME—  
Who made America,  
Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and  
pain,  
Whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in  
the rain,  
Must bring back our mighty dream again.

Sure, call me any ugly name you choose—  
The steel of freedom does not stain.  
From those who live like leeches on the peo-  
ple's lives,  
We must take back our land again,  
America!

O, yes,  
I say it plain,  
America never was America to me,  
And yet I swear this oath—  
America will be!

Out of the rack and ruin of our gangster  
death,  
The rape and rot of graft, and stealth, and  
lies,  
We, the people, must redeem  
The land, the mines, the plants, the rivers.  
The mountains and the endless plain—  
All, all the stretch of these great green  
states—  
And make America again!

From *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*, published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright © 1953 the Estate of Langston Hughes.



1 Lift ev - 'ry voice and sing till earth and heav - en ring,  
2 Ston - y the road we trod, bit - ter the chas - t'ning rod,  
3 God of our wea - ry years, God of our si - lent tears,



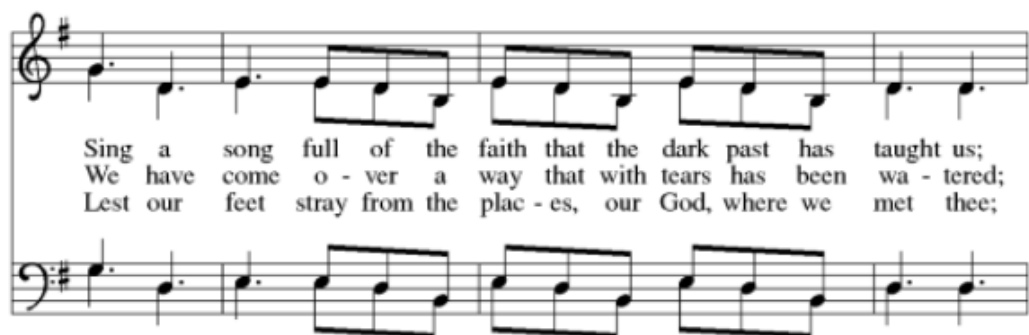
ring with the har - mo - nies of lib - er - ty,  
felt in the days when hope un - born - had died;  
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;



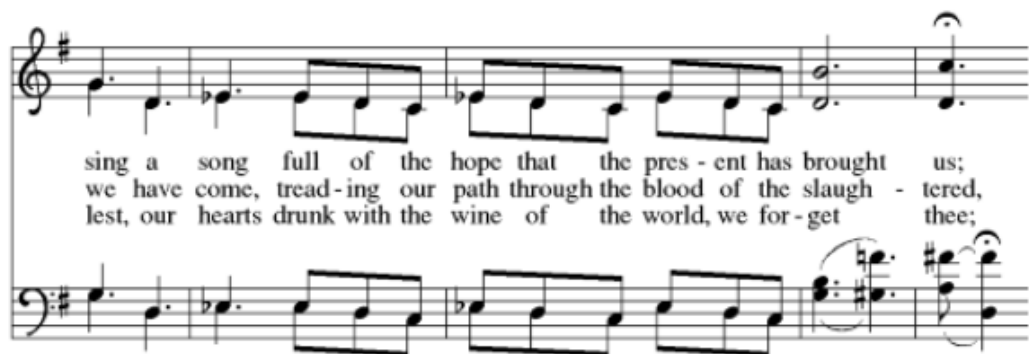
Let our re - joic - ing rise high as the lis - t'ning skies,  
yet with a stead - y beat, have not our wea - ry feet  
thou who hast by thy might led us in - to the light,



let it re - sound loud as the roll - ing sea.  
come to the place for which our par - ents sighed?  
keep us for - ev - er in the path, we pray.



Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us;  
We have come o - ver a way that with tears has been wa - tered;  
Lest our feet stray from the plac - es, our God, where we met thee;



sing a song full of the hope that the pres - ent has brought us;  
we have come, tread - ing our path through the blood of the slaugh - tered,  
lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we for - get thee;



fac - ing the ris - ing sun of our new day be - gun,  
out from the gloom - y past, till now we stand at last  
shad - owed be - neath thy hand, may we for - ev - er stand,



let us march on till vic - to - ry is won.  
where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.  
true to our God, true to our na - tive land.



## VISION AND COMMITMENT

### Reading

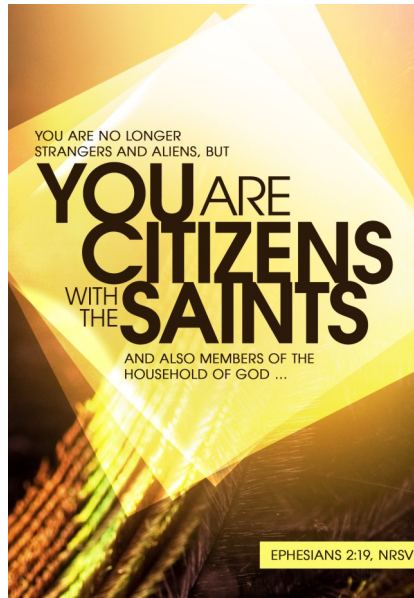
Ephesians 2:13-22

<sup>13</sup> Now, thanks to Christ Jesus, you who once were so far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. <sup>14</sup> Christ is our peace. He made both Jews and Gentiles into one group. With his body, he broke down the barrier of hatred that divided us. <sup>15</sup> He canceled the detailed rules of the Law so that he could create one new person out of the two groups, making peace. <sup>16</sup> He reconciled them both as one body to God by the cross, which ended the hostility to God.

<sup>17</sup> When he came, he announced the good news of peace to you who were far away from God and to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> We both have access to the Father through Christ by the one Spirit. <sup>19</sup> So now you are no longer strangers and aliens. Rather, you are fellow citizens with God's people, and you belong to God's household. <sup>20</sup> As God's household, you are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. <sup>21</sup> The whole building is joined together in him, and it grows up into a temple that is dedicated to the Lord. <sup>22</sup> Christ is building you into a place where God lives through the Spirit.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**



## George W. Bush, Dallas Shooting Memorial Service

July 12, 2016

*Former President George W. Bush and then President Barack Obama both spoke at the memorial service for the five Dallas police officers shot during a Black Lives Matter protest. The shooter was not affiliated with the protest, and Black Lives Matter organizers condemned this violent act. Black Lives Matter has been active for several years raising the attention to the disproportionate number of black men and women killed at the hands of police officers in our country.*

At times, it seems like the forces pulling us apart are stronger than the forces binding us together. Argument turns too easily into animosity. Disagreement escalates too quickly into de-humanization. Too often, we judge other groups by their worst examples, while judging ourselves by our best intentions. And this has strained our bonds of understanding and common purpose.

But Americans, I think, have a great advantage. To renew our unity, we only need to remember our values. We have never been held together by blood or background. We are bound by things of the spirit, by shared commitments to common ideals. At our best, we practice empathy, imagining ourselves in the lives and circumstances of others. This is the bridge across our nation's deepest divisions. And it is not merely a matter of tolerance, but of learning from the struggles and stories of our fellow citizens and finding our better selves in the process.

At our best, we honor the image of God we see in one another. We recognize that we are brothers and sisters, sharing the same brief moment on Earth and owing each other the loyalty of our shared humanity. At our best, we know we have one country, one future, one destiny. We do not want the unity of grief, nor do we want the unity of fear. We want the unity of hope, affection and high purpose. . . The Apostle Paul said, "For God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of strength and love and self-control."

*On June 17, 2015, a young man was welcomed into a Bible Study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Hoping to inspire a race war, he proceeded to shoot those at the Bible study, killing nine including the Rev. Pinckney. The shooter's explicit racist goals and use of the Confederate flag in his propaganda instigated a discussion about the continued display of the Confederate flag in places of honor around the country. On July 6, 2015, the South Carolina Senate voted to remove the Confederate flag from display outside the South Carolina State House. In 2020, the US Navy and Marines banned public displays of the Confederate Flag at their installations. The US Army has decided it will not ban the Confederate Flag unless ordered to do so by the Secretary of Defense, although local commanders may do so.*

... Blinded by hatred, [the alleged killer] failed to comprehend what Reverend Pinckney so well understood — the power of God's grace . . . God has visited grace upon us for he has allowed us to see where we've been blind. He's given us the chance where we've been lost to find out best selves. We may not have earned this grace with our rancor and complacency and short-sightedness and fear of each other, but we got it all the same. He gave it to us anyway. He's once more given us grace. But it is up to us now to make the most of it, to receive it with gratitude and to prove ourselves worthy of this gift.

For too long, we were blind to the pain that the Confederate Flag stirred into many of our citizens. It's true a flag did not cause these murders. But as people from all walks of life, Republicans and Democrats, now acknowledge, including Governor Haley, whose recent eloquence on the subject is worthy of praise - we all have to acknowledge, the flag has always represented more than just ancestral pride. For many, black and white, that flag was a reminder of systemic oppression and racial subjugation . . . Removing the flag from this state's capital would not be an act of political correctness. . . It would simply be acknowledgement that the cause for which they fought, the cause of slavery, was wrong. The imposition of Jim Crow after the Civil War, the resistance to civil rights for all people was wrong. It would be one step in an honest accounting of America's history, a modest but meaningful balm for so many unhealed wounds. It would be an expression of the amazing changes that have transformed this state and this country for the better because of the work of so many people of goodwill, people of all races, striving to form a more perfect union. By taking down that flag, we express God's grace. But I don't think God wants us to stop there.

For too long, we've been blind to the way past injustices continue to shape the present. Perhaps we see that now. Perhaps this tragedy causes us to ask some tough questions about how we can permit so many of our children to languish in poverty or attend dilapidated schools or grow up without prospects for a job or for a career. Perhaps it causes us to examine what we're doing to cause some of our children to hate. Perhaps it

softens hearts towards those lost young men, tens and tens of thousands caught up in the criminal-justice system and lead us to make sure that that system's not infected with bias. That we embrace changes in how we train and equip our police so that the bonds of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve make us all safer and more secure.

Maybe we now realize the way a racial bias can infect us even when we don't realize it so that we're guarding against not just racial slurs but we're also guarding against the subtle impulse to call Johnny back for a job interview but not Jamal ... so that we search our hearts when we consider laws to make it harder for some of our fellow citizens to vote... by recognizing our common humanity, by treating every child as important, regardless of the color of their skin... or the station into which they were born and to do what's necessary to make opportunity real for every American. By doing that, we express God's grace. . .

And I'm convinced that by acknowledging the pain and loss of others, even as we respect the traditions, ways of life that make up this beloved country, by making the moral choice to change, we express God's grace.

We don't earn grace. We're all sinners. We don't deserve it. But God gives it to us anyway. And we choose how to receive it. It's our decision how to honor it. . .



1 A - maz - ing grace! — how sweet the sound — that  
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and  
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I  
 4 The Lord has prom - ised good to me; his  
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but  
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that  
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me  
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and  
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.  
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!  
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.  
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.  
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

Text: John Newton, 1725–1807, alt., sts. 1–4; anonymous, st. 5

Music: NEW BRITAIN, W. Walker, *Southern Harmony*, 1835; arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1851–1921, alt.

## Reading

Jeremiah 29:7-11

<sup>7</sup> Seek the shalom of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its shalom you will find your shalom. <sup>8</sup> For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to the dreams that they dream, <sup>9</sup> for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the LORD.

<sup>10</sup> For thus says the LORD: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you home. <sup>11</sup> For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Prayer

Let us pray.

Mighty God of mercy we pray to you

For the needs of the whole world

**for peace and justice on the earth;**

for this city

**that we may be a community of hope;**

for the unity and mission of the Church

**that we may strengthen our community, our nation, and our world;**

for the sick, the needy, and the oppressed

**that they may experience healing and freedom;**

for those who have died

**that they rejoice with the saints in light.**

Finally, let us remember our country as it continues to struggle with the tragic legacy of slavery, the sin of discrimination, and the need for repentance, repair and renewal, that we may remember that all things are possible in you who created us and calls us to new life.

**Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4

*We conclude the thanksgiving with the prayer Jesus taught us. You can say this or another translation you know by heart.*

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

**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.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever.**

**Amen.**

## Blessing & Peace

Numbers 6:23-26

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

The Peace of Christ is with you always!

**And also with you!**

Go in peace to love and serve you neighbor and the Lord!

**Thanks be to God!**

## Postlude & Offering of Gifts

*Although we are not gathering in the sanctuary, Reformation's ministries continue every day. Staff members are providing individual and communal pastoral care, coordinating lay leaders and volunteers, caring for our facilities, connecting us with one another, and developing resources for worship and spiritual growth. This time has disrupted the usual way we gather offerings and severely restricted the gifts of some households. We invite you to give as you are able.*

*Please give online at [ReformationDC.org/give](https://ReformationDC.org/give) or send your checks to the church office. If you want to begin or change your Simply Giving weekly or monthly donation, email [Office@ReformationDC.org](mailto:Office@ReformationDC.org).*

*To use our new **Text-to-Give** option, send a text message to 844-414-8057 with the amount you would like to give to Reformation. You will receive a secure link to input your payment information. Once you have filled out your payment information, the contribution will be deposited directly into Reformation's bank account. After completing this setup, you can use text-to-give to donate again by simply texting additional donations to 844-414-8057*

# Prayer List

## **WE GIVE THANKS ...**

### **For those who celebrate birthdays this week:**

*Ethan Guthrie (7/5); Craig Middlebrook (7/8); Grace Botts (7/11).*

## **WE PRAY FOR...**

*Family and friends of Kathleen Ahrens, Aunt of Sarah Berndt, who died this week, and especially for Kathleen's daughters Deb, Rebecca, Elizabeth, and their children.*

*Family and friends of Marilyn Thaemert, Aunt of Sarah Berndt, who died this week, and especially Marilyn's children Angie, Kent, and Kirk.*

*Family and friends of Kevin Lee Sarring, friend of Parry Carlson and architect extraordinaire, who died from ALS. He helped pro-bono with renovation projects in LCOR.*

*Nancy Dinse, as she settles into her new home in Indiana.*

*Members and friends affected by COVID-19.*

*Mike Cochrane, brother of Karen Carlson, in thanksgiving for a successful brain surgery and continued prayers for increased mobility in outpatient rehab.*

*Chester and Kim Hart, for health and healing from COVID-19*

*Len Hawley, friend of Dale Manty, as he receives treatment for leukemia.*

*Erica Hoff, daughter of Betty Walker, as she continues treatment.*

*Rebecca Pfahl, for health and healing.*

*Wayne Krumwiede, for health and healing.*

*Family of David Hartlove, friend of many in Cheverly, who died recently of COVID-19.*

*Mel Antonen, as he continues to heal from serious health issues, including COVID-19.*

*David, the father of Phillip and Harriet Vender's daughter-in-law.*

*Robert Pfahl and his family for health and healing.*

*Kate Hawkins, a friend of Brianna Widner's family, who is battling cancer.*

*Luke Frerichs, on the honorable completion of his Army commission and his homecoming to Virginia.*

## **For our congregational and family members in military and foreign service**

*Drew Shealy, Diane Kohn, Melinda Manning, Paul Cowden, Jon Jones, Lee Patterson and family members of those in service here and around the world.*

## **From our hearts for**

*Phil Abbott, Tim Allmond, Angela Braxton, Emanuele and Emmajean Crupi, Bob Hedrick, Bernice Hoveland, Mary James, Leah Jones, Marvin Jones, Emmanuel Kabasaala, Wayne Krumwiede, Margot Lyddane, Carol Ann Mumaw, Valerie Platz, Ron and Daphne Rhine, Bill Scott, Madge Selinsky, Al Stauderman, Helen Vigness, Carolyn Walker, Thomas Winter, and Gloria Wolf.*

**Please email your prayer requests to Pastor Mike at [wilker@ReformationDC.org](mailto:wilker@ReformationDC.org)**



## Thanks be to God for today's Worship Leaders

Presiding Minister

Pastor Ben Hogue

Readers

Jenna Jablonski, Bryan Anderson, Eva Steege,  
Ted Steege, Ivy Finkenstadt,  
Graham Finkenstadt, Maxwell Finkenstadt,  
Jennifer Novak, Mel Antonen

Cantors

Jon Korman, Jon-Michael Eclar, Gabbi Levy,  
Alexa Newlin

The most up-to-date Worship Schedule, will be found on our website, [www.reformationdc.org](http://www.reformationdc.org).

We will continue to follow the guidelines of health professionals, scientists, government officials, and church leaders to make decisions regarding gathering for in-person worship. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

**LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE REFORMATION**  
**212 EAST CAPITOL STREET, WASHINGTON, DC 20003**

[www.reformationdc.org](http://www.reformationdc.org)

Phone: 202-543-4200 ☩ Email: [office@reformationdc.org](mailto:office@reformationdc.org)

**A Reconciling in Christ congregation**

Lead Pastor

Pastor Michael Wilker  
[wilker@ReformationDC.org](mailto:wilker@ReformationDC.org)

President: Matt Fuehrmeyer

Associate Pastor

Pastor Ben Hogue  
[hogue@ReformationDC.org](mailto:hogue@ReformationDC.org)

Vice President: Bonnie Franklin

Administrator

Tegan Peterson  
[peterson@ReformationDC.org](mailto:peterson@ReformationDC.org)

Financial Secretary: Suzanne Hazard

Director of Music & Arts

Paul Leavitt  
[pdleavitt0918@gmail.com](mailto:pdleavitt0918@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Roger Moffatt

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