Joint Liturgical Group
of Great Britain

Remembering
Reforming
Repenting
Rejoicing
Reconciling

Commemorating the Quincentenary of the Reformation

An Order of Service and Resources

Introduction

Music or Introit

Organ or choral music from J S Bach or his contemporaries, featuring the melodies of Martin Luther, and other writers or composers associated with the Reformation or Lutheran tradition.

Hymn

The following or some other hymn

Psalm 46

A safe stronghold our God is still,
a trusty shield and weapon;
he'll keep us clear from all the ill
that hath us now o'ertaken.
The ancient prince of hell
hath risen with purpose fell;
strong mail of craft and power
he weareth in this hour;
on earth is not his fellow.

With force of arms we nothing can,
full soon were we down-ridden;
but for us fights the proper Man
whom God himself hath bidden.
Ask ye, Who is this same?
Christ Jesus is his name,
the Lord Sabaoth's Son;'
he, and no other one,
shall conquer in the battle.

And were this world all devils o'er,
and watching to devour us,
we lay it not to heart so sore;
not they can overpower us.
And let the prince of ill
look grim as e'er he will,
he harms us not a whit;
for why? his doom is writ;
a word shall quickly slay him.

God's word, for all their craft and force,
one moment will not linger,
but, spite of hell, shall have its course;
'tis written by his finger.
And though they take our life,
goods, honour, children, wife,
yet is their profit small;
these things shall vanish all:
the City of God remaineth.

Words: Martin Luther (1483-1546) translation by Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881)
Melody: Ein Feste Burg *Martin Luther 1529, harmony chiefly J S Bach (1685-1750)*

Remembering

Bidding Prayer

Sisters and brothers in Christ, with Christians the world over, let us recall the gifts which Martin Luther brought to the birth of the Reformation and give thanks for the continuing inspiration which he brings to the life and work of the universal church.

Let us remember Luther's dedication to the Augustinian order, his commitment to the teaching of theology, his ground-breaking commentaries on Scripture, and his writings on the issues of the day.

Let us give thanks for Luther's testimony to our redemption in Christ, by the gift of grace and through the gift of faith.

Let us recall the vigour of Luther's translation of the Scriptures and the formative place of his vernacular Bible in the language and literature of his people.

Let us rejoice in Luther's emphasis on the catechizing of the young, on the discipline of penance and on the gift of the sacramental life.

Above all, giving thanks for God's boundless love and looking for the coming of God's kingdom, we pray as Christ himself has taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

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 for ever. Amen.

A Collect

Most mighty God,
our safe stronghold and defence,
who revealed to your servant, Martin Luther,
the glory of the gospel;
renew in us the work of your Spirit,
that being justified by the gift of faith
and saved by the gift of grace
we may live together in righteousness and peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Reforming

The Word of God

Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum — The Word of the Lord Endures Forever

The motto of the Lutheran Reformation

A reading from the Prophet Habakkuk

Habakkuk 2:1-4

I will stand at my watch-post,
  and station myself on the rampart;
I will keep watch to see what he will say to me,
  and what he will answer concerning my complaint.
Then the Lord answered me and said:
Write the vision;
  make it plain on tablets,
  so that a runner may read it.
For there is still a vision for the appointed time;
  it speaks of the end, and does not lie.
If it seems to tarry, wait for it;
  it will surely come, it will not delay.
Look at the proud!
  Their spirit is not right in them,
  but the righteous live by their faith.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Hymn

The following or some other hymn

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to thee,
Lord God! O hear my prayer!
Incline a gracious ear to me,
And bid me not despair:
If thou rememberest each misdeed,
If each should have its rightful meed,
Lord, who shall stand before thee?

'Tis through thy love alone we gain
The pardon of our sin;
The strictest life is but in vain,
Our works can nothing win;
That none should boast himself of aught,
But own in fear thy grace hath wrought
What in him seemeth righteous.

Wherefore my hope is in the Lord,
My works I count but dust;
I build not there, but on his word,
And in his goodness trust.
Up to his care myself I yield,
He is my tower, my rock, my shield,
And for his help I tarry.

And though it linger till the night,
And round again till morn,
My heart shall ne'er mistrust thy might,
Nor count itself forlorn.
Do thus, O ye of Israel's seed,
Ye of the Spirit born indeed,
Wait for your God's appearing.

Though great our sins and sore our wounds,
And deep and dark our fall,
His helping mercy hath no bounds,
His love surpasseth all:
Our trusty loving Shepherd, he
Who shall at last set Israel free
From all their sin and sorrow.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) after Psalm 130 translation by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)
Tune: Aus tiefer Noth schrei ich zu dir *Germany hymn melody, 16th century*

A reading from the Letter to the Romans Romans 5: 1-11

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem

The following or some other anthem

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
which according to his abundant mercy
hath begotten us again unto a lively hope
by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled,
that fadeth not away,
reserved in heaven for you,
Who are kept by the power of God
through faith unto salvation
ready to be revealed at the last time.

But as he which hath called you is holy,
so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.
Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.

Love one another with a pure heart fervently.
See that ye love one another.
Love one another with a pure heart fervently:

Being born again,
not of corruptible seed,
but of incorruptible,
by the word of God.

For all flesh is as grass,
and all the glory of man
as the flower of grass.
The grass withereth,
and the flower thereof falleth away.

But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. Amen.

Music by S.S.Wesley, 1810-1876
Based on: 1 Peter 1:3–5, 15, 17, 22b, 23a, 24 (Authorized Version)

Hymn

The following or some other hymn

Christ Jesus lay in death's strong bands
For our offences given;
But now at God's right hand he stands,
And brings us life from heaven:
Wherefore let us joyful be,
And sing to God right thankfully
Loud songs of Hallelujah!
Alleluia!

It was a strange and awesome strife,
When life and death contended;
The victory remained with Life,
The reign of death was ended:
Stripped of power, no more death reigns;
Its empty form alone remains;
Its sting is lost for ever.
Alleluia!

So let us keep this festival
Whereto the Lord invites us;
Christ is himself the joy of all,
The Sun that warms and lights us;
By his grace he does impart
Eternal sunshine to the heart;
The night of sin is ended.
Alleluia!

Words: Adaptation of Victimae paschali laudes immolent Christiani,
translated as Christ lag in Todesbanden *by Martin Luther (1483-1546),*
translated into English by Richard Massie (1800-1887).
Music: Christ lag in Todesbanden *by Martin Luther (1483-1546)*

A reading from the Gospel according to John John 8.31-36

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

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Reading

One of the following or some other reading

Luther discovers the meaning of the justice or righteousness of God

In that same year, 1519… I had conceived a burning desire to understand what Paul meant in his Letter to the Romans, but thus far there has stood in my way, not the cold blood around my heart, but that one word which is in chapter one: "The justice [or righteousness] of God is revealed in it."… I constantly badgered St. Paul about that spot in Romans 1 and anxiously wanted to know what he meant.

I meditated night and day on those words until at last, by the mercy of God, I paid attention to their context… 'The just [the righteous] person lives by faith.'

I began to understand that in this verse the justice [or righteousness] of God is that by which the just person lives by a gift of God - that is by faith. I began to understand that this verse means that the justice [or righteousness] of God is revealed through the Gospel… All at once I felt that I had

been born again and entered into paradise itself through open gates. Immediately I saw the whole of Scripture in a different light.

I ran through the Scriptures from memory and found that other terms had analogous meanings, e.g., the work of God, that is, what God works in us; the power of God, by which he makes us powerful; the wisdom of God, by which he makes us wise; the strength of God, the salvation of God, the glory of God.

Preface *to the Complete Edition of Luther's Latin Works (1545), translation by Bro. Andrew Thornton, OSB, Saint Anselm Abbey, 1983*

A reading from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's The Cost of Discipleship

Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a person must knock.

Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a person their life, and it is grace because it gives a person the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner.

Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: 'You were bought at a price', and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us.

Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, The Cost of Discipleship

Repenting

Act of Penitence

The following or some other Act of Penitence

Let us call to mind our sin and the infinite mercy of God.

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit
have mercy on us.

We have failed to see in every human being a person created in God's image.
We have denied dignity to those differing from us in gender, ethnicity or ability.
We have ignored and spurned others on account of their race or religion.

Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal
have mercy on us

We have failed to meet the claims of human rights and natural justice.
We have turned away from the causes underlying poverty and hunger.
We have refused to press for the equitable distribution of the earth's resources.

Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal
have mercy on us

We have turned aside from the vulnerable and marginalized.
We have ignored those enduring discrimination and violence.
We have drawn back from transparency, integrity and honesty.

Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal
have mercy on us

We have failed to love and engage with our fellow Christians.
We have cherished our ancient differences.
We have refused a place to others within the household of God.

Holy God, Holy Strong, Holy Immortal
have mercy on us

May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon and remission of all our sins, time for amendment of life, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Act of Penitence is based on Core Values of the Lutheran World Federation
The translation of the Trisagion *is by the late Archimandrite Ephrem Lash, 1930-2016*

Hymn

The following or some other hymn

We all believe in one true God,
The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
An ever present help in need,
And praised by all the heavenly host;
All God has made his love enfolds,
All God creates his power upholds.

We all believe in Jesus Christ,
The Son of God and Mary's son,
Who came to earth from God's own throne
And for us all salvation won;
And by whose cross and death we see
That all creation is set free.

We all confess the Holy Ghost
Who forth from God in love proceeds,
Who comforts to the uttermost
In perils, trials, fears and needs.
Now and for ever let there be,
All praise to you, blest Trinity.

Words: Based on Wir glauben all an einen Gott *by Tobias Clausnitzer, 1619-1684*
This version, by Norman Wallwork, 1946 –
Tune: Melita *by J.B. Dykes (1823-1876)*

Rejoicing

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed are you, Lord God, the source of goodness and grace:
By Word and Spirit, you brought forth all living things,
and out of the fullness of your love
you have created men and women in your own image and likeness.
To the patriarchs you granted the gift of faith
and to the prophets the vision of your righteousness.
Blessed be God for ever

By your Holy Spirit, your eternal Son and Word, Jesus Christ,
was born of the Virgin Mary and anointed at his baptism in the Jordan.
In word and deed he proclaimed the coming of your kingdom.
Through Christ's saving death and mighty resurrection
you have abolished death and brought life and immortality to light.
Blessed be God for ever

Through Christ, and in Christ, in the power of the Spirit
you have created a people for your praise
and called into being one holy church to proclaim the gift of salvation.
Blessed be God for ever

Through the testimony of the apostles
you have stirred up the gifts of your grace,
and through the witness of Martin Luther,
and every saint and martyr of the Reformation era,
you have recalled us to the life of faith.
Blessed be God for ever

Therefore, in communion and fellowship
with the whole company of the redeemed,
on earth and in heaven,
we give you our thanks and praise.
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessed be God for ever.

Reconciling

Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ let us pray to the Father:

We pray that the unity of Christ's church may be revealed in the one faith we proclaim and through the one mission we have been received.

We pray for the integrity of our life and witness, one with another, among the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, together with the Churches of the Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Evangelical and Pentecostal traditions.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for all engaged in the promotion of the Bible,
for scholars dedicated to its translation, preachers committed to its message,
and Christians of all ages seeking to be formed by its teaching.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the nations of the world and for all in authority that they may work for justice and peace, draw back from war and violence and seek the common good.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the whole created order,
that the resources of the earth may be freely shared,
that the dignity and freedom of all may be promoted
and that men, women and children may live in security and diversity.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray that help will come to those enduring poverty and hunger,
and that adequate treatment be available to all living with sickness and disease.

We pray that relief will come to those forced from their homeland
and that compassion and justice be shown to all prisoners denied their freedom.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

Rejoicing in the fellowship of the saints, apostles and martyrs,
we pray that with all who have died in faith and hope
we may share in the life of God's eternal kingdom.

God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

The Peace

Since we are justified by faith,
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has given us access to his grace.

cf Romans 5.1-2

God has reconciled us to himself through Christ
and given us the ministry of reconciliation.

cf 2 Corinthians 5.18

The peace of the Lord we always with you.
And also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace:

Hymn

The following or some other hymn

Now thank we all our God,
with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessèd peace to cheer us;
and keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God
the Father now be given,
the Son, and him who reigns
with them in highest heaven,
the one eternal God,
whom earth and heaven adore,
for thus it was, is now,
and shall be evermore.

Words: Martin Rinkart (1586-1649),
trans. Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878),
Tune: Nun danket alle Gott *(later form of melody by Johann Crüger, 1598-1662)*

The Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you,
and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face towards you
and give you peace;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Blessing as commended in Luther's Formula Missae et Communionis, *1523*
Cf. Numbers 6:24-26

Postlude

Organ or other music from J S Bach or his contemporaries, featuring the melodies of Martin Luther, and other writers or composers associated with the Reformation or Lutheran tradition.

Acknowledgements

An Order of Service and Resources offered to the churches for use before or in connection with 31 October 2017

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The English translation of *The Lord's Prayer* [pg. 4] prepared by English Language Liturgical Consultation, 1988.

Reformation 500 image from Concordia Seminary, St Louis, Missouri [reformation500.csl.edu]

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