



October 13, 2005

Dear Friends:

We are pleased to be able to provide you in this mailing a collection of materials designed to be of assistance to pastors and others involved in the planning of worship services for Reformation Sunday.

Feel free to use these materials as you choose, adapting them to the needs of your congregation. We have assembled this collection with the assumption that the materials will be used selectively, and we have cast them in a form that should allow you to do that easily.

The packet includes these items:

- 1) A one page descriptive statement about the Reformation, intended for use in bulletins and bulletin inserts. This statement is constructed in such a way that it can be used in its entirety or in a shorter form (only the initial paragraph, e.g.).
- 2) A brief list of recommended readings, intended to serve the same purpose.
- 3) A series of recommendations concerning music: hymns, organ selections, anthems, etc.
- 4) Prayers from key figures in the development of the Reformed tradition that are appropriate for use in public worship as well as liturgical suggestions for Reformation Sunday.
- 5) A selection of passages from the Book of Confessions that are appropriate for use in that part of the service where congregations are asked to confess their faith.
- 6) Suggestions for talking with children in worship about the Reformed tradition.

We also recommend the use of a special bulletin cover, such as the ones provided for use on Reformation Sunday by the Presbyterian Historical Society. A collection of those covers and other resources, including a Bible search that may be useful with youth, is available online at: www.history.pcusa.org.

The preparation of this packet has been a collaborative effort. I want to thank in particular the Rev. Ann Herlin of Old Presbyterian House in Alexandria, Va., Dr. Ed Moore, Minister of Music at the Lewinsville Presbyterian Church in McLean, Va., and Mary Hill, our own Program Coordinator, for their assistance in this project.

We appreciate your interest in this offering of the Reformed Institute, and we hope you will find it to be of value in making your preparations for the celebration of Reformation Sunday.

Sincerely,

R. Bruce Douglass
Director, Reformed Institute



THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

The Protestant Reformation is one of the most important developments that has taken place in the entire history of the Christian church. It began early in the 16th century with a series of actions taken by a German monk (and Biblical scholar) named Martin Luther who loved the Bible and came to believe that the church of his day was not faithful to the teaching of Scripture. After having tried privately (and unsuccessfully) to convince his superiors of the need for change in the church, Luther went public with his criticism by posting a series of 95 “theses” on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517—an action which eventually resulted in his excommunication. In the years that followed Luther took many actions that departed dramatically from the established religious practice of the day—including the translation of the Bible into the native language of the people and rejection of the authority of the papacy—and the example he set was soon followed by people in many other parts of Europe. But even though Luther enjoyed great respect among those who were attracted to the cause of reforming the church, by no means all of them agreed with him in every respect. In particular there were disagreements about how far to go in departing from the teaching and practice of the Catholic church, and out of those disagreements came the diversity that has characterized Protestant Christianity ever since. As early as the 1520’s the proponents of church reform had split into factions, and it was not long before those factions turned into organized movements that were known by such labels as “Lutheran,” “Anabaptist,” and “Reformed.”

The Reformed movement, which is the source of Presbyterianism, arose out of the work of such figures as Ulrich Zwingli (a German-speaking Swiss priest), John Calvin (a French lawyer turned pastor who spent most of his life in the Swiss canton of Geneva), and John Knox (a Scottish priest)—all of whom were Luther’s contemporaries. The members of this movement, which spread throughout much of central Europe (east and west), soon got into the habit of characterizing their cause as “Reformed,” and they did so to indicate that they were prepared to go farther than most other “Protestants” (including Luther’s followers) in changing the church. In their minds, however, all the changes they had in mind—from the elimination of bishops and the involvement of lay people in the governance of the church to the removal of all “graven images” from places of worship—were the fruit of their desire to be faithful to Scripture and return the church to its original form.

The Reformation did not succeed everywhere; in some places it had little appeal. Indeed, in some countries (Spain, e.g.) its main effect was to spark a vigorous counter-movement among Catholics. But in the places where the ideas of the reformers caught on they typically brought profound changes in people’s lives—and not just in the religious realm. Everything from economic practices to the laws governing marriage was affected, and in the process a whole new way of life was born—one that was to play a major role in the creation of the modern world.

R. Bruce Douglass, Director
Reformed Institute of Metropolitan Washington

**For further reading on the Protestant Reformation,
the Reformed Institute recommends...**

- *Benedict, Philip.* Christ's Churches Purely Reformed—A Social History of Calvinism (Yale, 2002)

A big book (500+ pp.), providing thorough treatment of a complex subject; the best scholarly work devoted entirely to the subject of Calvinism currently available; by a distinguished historian who is not himself a Christian; invaluable resource for those who are prepared to devote some sustained time and effort to the book.

- *Collinson, Patrick.* The Reformation—A History (Modern Library, 2004).

A short, readable introduction to the story of the Reformation by a distinguished English historian.

- *MacCulloch, Diarmaid.* The Reformation—A History (Viking, 2003)

Another big (but quite readable) book by a distinguished scholar; it provides an excellent overview of the entire Reformation, with in-depth analysis of virtually all the major movements involved, from the Anabaptists to the Jesuits. Excellent concluding chapters on the impact of the Reformation on daily life.

- *McGrath, Alister E.* A Life of John Calvin—A Study in the Shaping of Western Culture (Blackwell, 1990).

A concise, readable overview of the life, times, thought and historical influence of John Calvin by a respected scholar who is sympathetic to Calvin but not uncritical.

- *McGrath, Alister E.* In the Beginning—the Story of the King James Bible and How It Changed a Nation, a Language and a Culture (Anchor, 2001)

A stimulating, brief book—the tale of one of the most important developments in modern English history told by a gifted storyteller and distinguished historian.

- *Mouw, Richard.* Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport—Making Connections in Today's World (Zondervan, 2004)

A short, easy read by the current president of Fuller Theological Seminary; designed to make a case for the relevance of (orthodox) Calvinism to contemporary life.



A Few Music Suggestions for Reformation Sunday

Dr. Ed Moore, Minister of Music
Lewinsville Presbyterian Church

Hymns from the Presbyterian Hymnal

- PH 191 – *God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength*
- PH 192 – *God, Our Help and Constant Refuge*
- PH 193 – *Psalm 46* (Responsorial)
- PH 259/260 - *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*
- PH 327 - *O Word of God Incarnate*
- PH 420 - *God of Grace and God of Glory*
- PH 421 - *The Church of Christ, in Every Age*
- PH 457 – *I Greet Thee Who My Sure Redeemer Art*

Choral Music

- *A Mighty Fortress is Our God* (SAB) – Donald Busarow
MorningStar 60-8000
- *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* – Hal Hopson
SATB, optional congregation, brass, timpani
Augsburg Fortress 0800646150
- *Three Psalm Settings* (Unison) – Michael Burkhardt
MorningStar 80-705
- *God is Our Refuge* (SATB, optional trumpets) – Allen Pote
Hope Publishing A583
- *Psalm 46: The Lord of Hosts from Psalm Set* (SATB) - John Ferguson
Augsburg Fortress 0800656067

Organ Music

- *Improvisations on Reformation Hymns* – Paul Manz
MorningStar 10-803
- *Fanfare for Reformation* (Ein feste Burg) – Walter Pelz
MorningStar 10-802
- *Eight Chorale Preludes: For Manuals Only* – Aaron David Miller
includes *Ein Feste Burg*
Augsburg Fortress 0800677560

Handbell Music

- *Three Festival Psalms* (3-octaves, SATB) – arr. John Behnke
includes Psalm 46
Concordia 983365
- *Hymn Descants for Ringers and Singers Volume 3* (3-octaves) – arr. A.L. Page
includes *A Mighty Fortress*
Alfred Publishing 16057, handbells and 16059, vocal



Liturgy for Reformation Sunday

From The Worshipbook

Calls to Worship:

Psalm 27:4

Hebrews 12:1-2

Responsive Readings:

Psalms 85; 145; 150

Prayer of Confession:

God of our Fathers: you raised up brave and able men and women to reform the church. We confess that we have lost our way again, and need new reformation. We are content with easy religion, with too much money and too little charity; we cultivate indifference. Lord, let your word shake us up, and your Spirit renew us, so that we may repent, have better faith, and never shrink from sacrifice; in the name of Jesus Christ our only Lord and Savior. Amen.

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Holy God: you have chosen us to serve you, and appointed us the agents of your love. We thank you for prophets who recall us to your will. We are grateful for every impulse to confess and correct wrongs, to keep faith pure and purposes faithful. We praise you for your Holy Spirit always reforming the church, so we may better serve as disciples of your Son, Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

Collect:

God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob; God of prophets and martyrs: give us courage to obey your word, and power to renew your church, so that we may live in the Spirit, sharing faith with Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Submitted by the Rev. Dr. Gary Pinder
Pastor, Lewinsville Presbyterian Church
Chair, Board of Directors, Reformed Institute



Prayers of Two Reformers

Shortened and adapted by the Rev. Ann Herlin,
Associate Pastor, Old Presbyterian Meeting
House

Great Prayer (based on Zwingli 1523):

Most merciful and holy God, you created us in the beginning to enjoy paradise here and then afterwards to enjoy you. But we fell into sin, and then there was simply no hope of life, unless you, who alone are good, decided to relieve our distress. In the fullness of time, you offered your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who took our flesh, and who gave himself to be the sacrifice for those who were lost. Not content with this, so that we might lack for nothing, he gave himself to be our food and drink. So, most blessed Father, we pray that your goodness may be constantly on our lips: and, although our deepest gratitude can never match your kindness, we pray that in your constant and unfailing goodness you will make us worthy to sing your praises continually with our hearts and lips and in our deeds, and to ask for nothing that would be alien to you. In confidence, therefore, we shall offer you praise and prayer. Amen.

(Bucer 1539)

Blessed indeed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Since for our sake, Christ has not only offered his body and blood upon the cross to you for our sin, but also wishes to give them to us for food and drink unto eternal life, grant that we may accept his goodness and gift with complete longing and devotion, and faithfully partake of and enjoy his true Body and true Blood -- even himself, our Savior, true God and true man, the only true bread from heaven; so that we may live no more in our sins and depravity, but that he may live in us and we in him. Amen.

From Prayers of the Eucharist: Early and Reformed, 3rd Ed. Trans. and Ed. by R.C.D. Jasper and G. J. Cuming. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990.



Use of Psalms

Reading and singing the psalms has long been a part of our Reformed heritage. Consider a responsive reading of a psalm about God's sovereignty or providence, such as Psalm 46 outlined below as found in the Book of Common Worship:

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be toppled into the depths of the sea;

Though its waters rage and foam, and though the mountains tremble at its tumult.

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

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

God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be overthrown; God shall help it at the break of day.

The nations make much ado, and the realms are shaken; God has spoken, and the earth shall melt away.

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Come now and look upon the works of the Lord, what awesome things God has done on earth.

It is the Lord who makes war cease in all the world, who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire.

“Be still, then, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”

The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.



Affirmations for Use on Reformation Sunday

We are a confessional church. If you use a traditional ancient creed each Sunday, consider substituting a piece from one of our Reformed church's confessions. Below are some suggestions.

Excerpts from The Scots Confession (1560)

We confess and acknowledge one God alone, to whom alone we must cleave, whom alone we must serve, whom only we must worship, and in whom alone we put our trust. Who is eternal, infinite, immeasurable, incomprehensible, omnipotent, invisible; one in substance and yet distinct in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. By whom we confess and believe all things in heaven and earth, visible and invisible, to have been created, to be retained in their being, and to be ruled and guided by his inscrutable providence for such end as his eternal wisdom, goodness, and justice have appointed, and to the manifestation of his own glory.

As we believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so we firmly believe that from the beginning there has been, now is, and to the end of the world shall be, one Kirk, that is to say, one company and multitude of men chosen by God, who rightly worship and embrace him by true faith in Christ Jesus, who is the only Head of the Kirk, even as it is the body and spouse of Christ Jesus. This Kirk is catholic, that is, universal, because it contains the chosen of all ages, of all realms, nations, and tongues, be they of the Jews or be they of the Gentiles, who have communion and society with God the Father, and with his Son, Christ Jesus, through the sanctification of his Holy Spirit. It is therefore called the communion, not of profane persons, but of saints, who, as citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, have the fruit of inestimable benefits, one God, one Lord Jesus, one faith, and one baptism.

From the Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 1

What is your only comfort, in life and in death?

That I belong – body and soul, in life and in death – not to myself but to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ, who at the cost of his own blood has fully paid for all my sins and completely freed me from the dominion of the devil; that he protects me so well that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, that everything must fit his purpose for my salvation. Therefore, by his Holy Spirit, he also assures me of eternal life, and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.



From the Westminster Confession of Faith (1649): Of Justification

Those whom God effectually calls, he also freely justifies: not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

From The Confession of 1967

God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of man's mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals his love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men. The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of his love.

A Brief Statement of Faith

This statement is written in such a way that any one or more of the sections can stand alone.



Talking with Children on Reformation Sunday

We lift out the following themes from our Reformed tradition with some talking points that would be appropriate to use in worship with children. The themes get increasingly more complex. Know your crowd and stop when they have had enough.

What does “Reformed” mean?

- Use playdough while talking to make a ball, then punch holes with a finger until the ball needs re-forming back into a ball
- Have you ever wanted to change something important to you? For example, have you ever wanted to change your room so that it fits you better? Or have you ever changed what you snack on after school so that it gives you more energy for what you want to do?
- Many years ago in Europe some people wanted to change or re-form the church. The people were going to church regularly but they did not usually have Bibles in their pews or in their homes, they were not allowed to receive regularly the Lord’s Supper, and the important news of God’s grace was not being told in ways the people could understand. The people who wanted to change or re-form the church came to be known as the Reformers.
- The Reformers insisted that the Bible, which had been read only in languages that the people did not understand, be translated into their own language.
- They encouraged people to read the Bible, and for those who did not know how to read – and there were a LOT of people, including adults, who did not know how to read – they insisted that they learn to read. (Consider handing out a bookmark with a Bible sticker, or a psalm, such as psalm 46, paraphrased into language appropriate for children, and encouraging them to read it with their families that evening.)
- They encouraged families to pray together at home, not just at church. Do you pray?
- The Reformers taught the people that they could pray directly to God, without a priest to be the go-between or mediator.
- And they taught that we don’t need to worry about what is going to happen to us. We can trust that God has made everything right with us and with the world. Our job is to live thankful lives serving God. What are some ways we can live thankful lives? (It’s stewardship season; don’t forget to encourage children to set aside some of their money for giving as well as show kindness, stand up for what’s right when someone else is being hurt, etc.)
- Instead of just the church official receiving communion at church, everyone was invited to the Table because Jesus made it clear that all are invited to taste God’s goodness.
- It was so exciting for the people to have the church changed in these ways that these ideas spread around the world, and are still spreading around the world today.
- Is there anyone you would like to invite to learn more about our Reformed tradition? Invite that friend to our church sometime! Everyone is welcome here.

Mary J. Hill
Program Coordinator, Reformed Institute

