

Rev. Luke C. Werre
Peace, Sun Prairie
December 17, 2017
Children's Christmas Service Intro

A SOLA CHRISTMAS

Welcome to our 2017 Children's Christmas Service. 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation of the Christian Church which God brought about through His servant, Martin Luther. It is fitting that we should close out this year with a service that highlights the points of emphasis of the Reformation.

We should not be afraid to celebrate the Reformation as we have. A person might fear that it comes off as though we are putting too much focus on a man. But it is not really different from giving thanks to God for the patience of Job, the thoroughness of Saint Luke, the faithful service of Martha, or the courage of Joshua. God used those believers to further His Kingdom and bless His Church. He used Martin Luther the same way.

Only if we understand how dire our circumstances are do we begin to appreciate what a profound blessing the Reformation is to us. So often it is hard to perceive how

steeped in sin we are, how awash in death our planet is, how helpless against satan and his demons we are, how exacting and complete God's judgment is. Perhaps only as we get older and we encounter more heartaches and problems do we begin to sense more and more what Job said: *Mortals, born of woman, are of few days and full of trouble.* Scripture itself declares, *The Lord looks down from heaven on the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, any who seek God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.* Paul wrote in the book of Romans: *Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.*

What is our way out of this? Is there something we can do? Do we need to change? Should we reach into our own selves somehow to better our circumstances? Can we make our case with God in some way? The Bible says, *There is a way that seems right to a man but in the end it leads to death.*

What God brought about through Martin Luther and the Reformation of the Church is clarity once again, a clarity that had been lost, as to the solution for our dire

dilemma. That solution is Christ. Nothing more than Christ. Nothing less than Christ. Christ alone.

Jesus once said, *I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.* This is a declaration of independence for us, words that set us free and fill us with joy. You don't need to come up with a way to save yourself from this world. Christ IS the way. Hold to Christ. Ride on His back. Let Him carry you.

Many Green Bay Packers fans are anticipating whether Aaron Rogers will return to quarterback the next game. If we could fully grasp what it means that God's Son has joined as a player on our team, the human race team, the walls and roof of this building would not be able to contain our shouts of joy. For if Christ has joined us, then the victory is ours. All our enemies are decisively and utterly defeated. They cannot stand against Him for one second. Our guilt and sin before God is erased. His judgment on us becomes a happy verdict of not guilty. Death is obliterated and turned into life. Satan and all demons are crushed. All our problems diminish and disappear before the enormous panoramic backdrop of eternity in heaven's glory. We

are freed, freed from everything that confined us or held us captive in this life.

For Christ was born in human flesh to take on Himself all the punishment, weakness and sorrow that our sinfulness has earned when He suffered and died on the cross. But He also burst through it all by rising from the dead. To all who rely on Him He gives life everlasting. To all who rely on Him He gives the relief of a God who is friendly toward us, whose careful intentions are not to harm us but to save us.

How can we ever thank God enough for this? How can we ever thank God enough for Martin Luther and the Reformation? Because of God's guiding hand over history we now have this message with full, unmistakable clarity. Let us believe it. Let us cherish it. Let us once again celebrate it with grateful hearts.