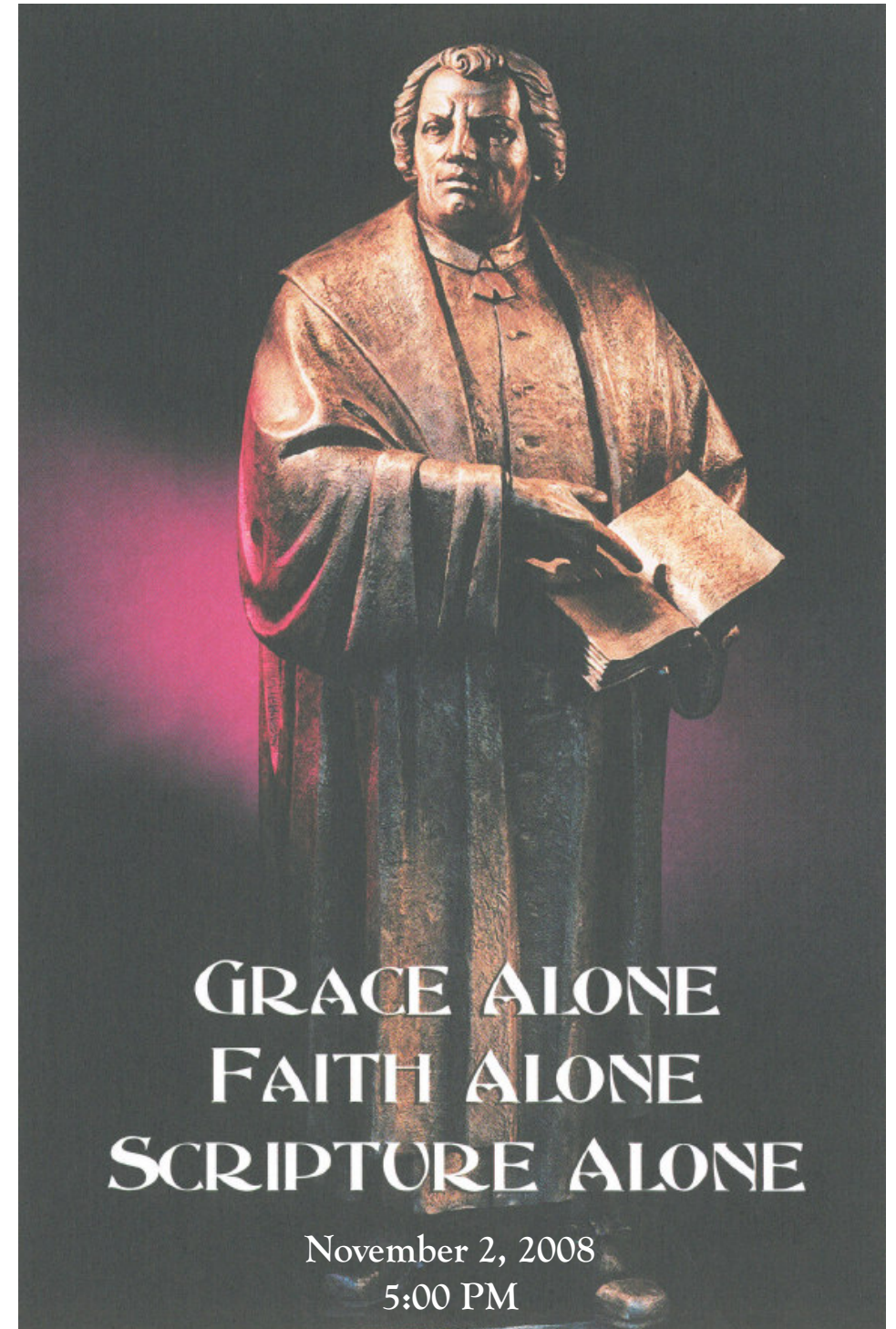




TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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**GRACE ALONE
FAITH ALONE
SCRIPTURE ALONE**

November 2, 2008
5:00 PM

**A SERVICE CELEBRATING
THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION**

WELCOME to all who are gathered here today!

On October 31, 1517 Martin Luther stood before the doors of the Castle Church in Wittenberg Germany and nailed 95 Theses to them to spark debate on abuses occurring in the Catholic Church. The movement brought back to the forefront the main teachings of the Bible captured in "5 main slogans, all using the word "SOLA," which is the Latin word for "ALONE." It was this word "ALONE" that designated the true biblical Gospel and set it apart from all other pretenders. Urging a return to the Scriptures as the source of all truth, the cry of these Reformers was not simply FAITH!, GRACE!, CHRIST!, THE SCRIPTURE!, or THE GLORY OF GOD! (All embracing a false Gospel could do that.) But the cry was "FAITH ALONE!, GRACE ALONE!, CHRIST ALONE!, SCRIPTURE ALONE!, THE GLORY OF GOD ALONE!" With Scripture alone as the sure foundation, the Reformers affirmed that justification is by grace alone, received through faith alone because of Christ alone — for the glory of God alone." (<http://www.reformationtheology.com>)



ORDER OF SERVICE

DIALOGUE OF REMEMBRANCE

- M: It was in Eden that Satan destroyed the relationship that existed between God and man when Satan led Adam and Eve into sin. It was in Eden then that began the tragic cry from human beings:
- C: Lord, have mercy on us. Smile on us, O Lord. Remove us from Satan's power.**
- M: When the time was right, God acted. He sent his one and only Son into the world to do for his people what his people could not do for themselves. Jesus Christ lived and died and rose again to restore mankind's unity with God and to renew the holy nature in humans that was lost in Eden. And the Church was born to carry the message of restoration and renewal into all the world.
- C: Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth! We will not die but live and declare the praises of God.**

Closing Hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"
Verse 4 *Christian Worship Hymn 200*

The Word they still shall let remain,
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With his good gifts and Spirit.
And do what they will -- Hate, steal, hurt, or kill --
Though all may be gone, Our victory is won;
The kingdom's ours forever!

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SOLI DEO GLORIA – To God Alone Be the Glory!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU to all who joined us this afternoon to praise our great and gracious God for these simple truths of his Word.

A special thank you to those that enhanced our worship:

- Musicians:
Dawn Williams – Tree of Life
Choirs from Gethsemane & Tree of Life
- Presiding Minister:
Pastor Rob Guenther – Gethsemane Lutheran, Raleigh
- Preacher:
Pastor Michael Geiger – Tree of Life, Cary

FELLOWSHIP and ENTERTAINMENT
to follow the worship in the entry area.
Please stay!

M: Let this be the time, Lord, for confession and repentance. Because of Jesus, forgive us whenever we love ourselves more than you and whenever we serve ourselves instead of your people. Forgive us for the apathy which harms our faith and hinders our work. Forgive us for boasting about our past achievements and for blaming others for our present problems. Rid us of indifference toward public worship and continued growth.

C: Create a pure heart in us, O God, and renew in us a steadfast spirit.

M: Let this be the time when we recommit ourselves to the ministry of the gospel. Savior of all, let us find joy in our unity, zeal for our work, and, if it is your will, success in our labor.

C: Give us courage to proclaim you to our relatives, friends, neighbors, community, nation, and world. Hear our prayer and help us in our mission.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

C: Amen.

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER

C: In the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen. I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have graciously kept me this day. Forgive me all my sins and graciously keep me this night. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

BLESSING

M: May the love of the Lord Jesus draw us to himself.
May the power of the Lord Jesus make us strong to do his will.
May the peace of the Lord Jesus fill our lives.

C: Amen.

M: Satan, however, was not finished. He challenged the Church's faith and mission with his evil influence. God preserved his Church, often quietly, sometimes only with a whisper. But even in the depths of darkness the light of God's goodness flickered. . . . In the A.D. 300s, as Satan attacked the teaching of the divine nature of Christ, the Church confessed with the words of a creed:

C: We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God.

M: In the A.D. 400s, as the doctrine of the Trinity was attacked, the Church confessed the words of a creed:

C: Now this is the true Christian faith: We worship one God in three persons and three persons in one God, without mixing the persons or dividing the divine being. For each person—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—is distinct, but the deity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, equal in glory and coeternal in majesty.

M: Through the centuries the battle continued. Often Satan seemed to be the winner. The cry of God's people continued:

C: Lord, have mercy on us. Smile on us, O Lord. Protect us from Satan's attacks.

M: In the 1500s, many teachings of Scripture had become ignored and corrupted. The heart of the gospel, which says that a person is saved by faith alone in Christ Jesus alone, was not being taught. So God acted. He raised up a man to take a stand on the truth of God's Word. That man was just a human being, with weaknesses and failures. But God used that man to be a messenger of the true gospel and to revive the pure and correct teachings of Scripture. That man was Martin Luther. We don't praise Luther, but we praise God for using him to restore to his Church the good news about Jesus Christ.

C: Lord Jesus, you have reformed the church and restored your gospel to its full truth and purity. For this we give you our thanks today and always.

M: This is a service of thanksgiving on the Festival of the Reformation of the Church. Come, let us worship the Lord!

Hymn “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”
Verses 1-3 *Christian Worship Hymn 200*

A mighty fortress is our God,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He helps us free from ev'ry need
That has us now o'ertaken.
The old evil foe Now means deadly woe;
Deep guile and great might Are his dread arms in fight;
On earth is not his equal.

With might of ours can naught be done;
Soon were our loss effected.
But for us fights the valiant one
Whom God himself elected.
You ask, "Who is this?" Jesus Christ it is,
The almighty Lord. And there's no other God;
He holds the field forever.

Though devils all the world should fill,
All eager to devour us,
We tremble not, we fear no ill;
They shall not overpower us.
This world's prince may still scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none. He's judged; the deed is done!
One little word can fell him.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Lord Jesus Christ, thank you for your written Word which you restored through the Reformation. Open our hearts to a better understanding of your Word and a deeper appreciation of your mercy and forgiveness so that our faith in you may grow and flourish.
C: AMEN.

**HAVE A REFORMATION
CELEBRATION!**

Nehemiah 8:5-12
Pastor Mike Geiger

Friendship Registers

Offering: *Monies given today will be applied toward the debt reduction Year of Jubilee offering of our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).*

Prayer of the Church Reformation—Responsive

M: Almighty and eternal God, when the time was right, you sent your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to crush Satan and to live and die for our sins.

C: By your grace you have saved us. Strengthen our faith in Jesus with your Scriptures.

M: When the time was right, you ripped apart Satan's hold on the Church and raised up bold servants, such as Martin Luther, to restore to your Church the pure teachings of Scripture.

C: We thank you for renewing your people throughout the world and for allowing us to share in the blessings of the Reformation.

M: When the time was right, you made our Lutheran forefathers bold to take their stand on the truth of your Word. In the centuries since, you have blessed your people.

C: Thank you for the benefits passed down to us through the efforts and confessions of these men.

M: Let this be the time, Lord, when you renew us again by your Word, when you reform our hearts and minds, and when you revive for us the joy of fellowship and service.

C: Be with us as you were with our forefathers in the faith. May you never leave us.

Continued on next page

**SOLA CHRISTO:
IN CHRIST ALONE**

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

¹When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. ²For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. ³I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. ⁴My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, ⁵so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power. (NIV)

M: Without Christ, the Scripture would have no substance. Without Christ, faith would have no object. Without Christ, grace would have no source. But Christ came. He lived, died and rose again for me. As Luther confessed, so do we:

C: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord. He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with his holy precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death. All this he did that I should be his own and live under him and his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally. This is most certainly true.

Hymn "In Trembling Hands, Lord God, We Hold"
Verses 1-4 *Christian Worship Hymn 199*

In trembling hands, Lord God, we hold Our heritage, your gift of grace, Your gospel, bringing wealth untold: All blessings here, in heav'n a place.	"In trembling hands" -- with joyous awe, Like Luther, we behold your Son: For us he kept your holy law, In dying full salvation won.
"In trembling hands" -- for how could we Retain your gift by our own pow'r? The pearl of priceless worth would be Soon lost -- attend us ev'ry hour!	"In trembling hands" -- and yet we cling With grip of steel, which you must give, To Christ, our all, our ev'rything, To Christ, the life in whom we live.

**SOLA SCRIPTURA:
BY SCRIPTURE ALONE**

Psalms 119:101-116

¹⁰¹ I have kept my feet from every evil path so that I might obey your word. . . .¹⁰³ How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! ¹⁰⁴ I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.

¹⁰⁵ Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. . . .¹⁰⁷ I have suffered much; preserve my life, O LORD, according to your word. . . .¹¹¹ Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart. . . .

¹¹⁴ You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word. . . .¹¹⁶ Sustain me according to your promise, and I will live; do not let my hopes be dashed. (NIV)

M: Salvation is revealed to us by Scripture alone! Luther pointed out that no one must stand above any part of Scripture with one's own ideas:

C: "We should rather allow Scripture to rule and master us, and we ourselves should not be the masters, according to our own crazy heads, setting ourselves above Scripture."

Hymn "How Precious Is The Book Divine"
Christian Worship Hymn 284

How precious is the Book divine, By inspiration giv'n! Bright as a lamp its doctrines shine To guide our souls to heav'n.	It shows to us our wand'ring ways And where our feet have trod But brings to view the matchless grace Of a forgiving God.
Its light, descending from above Our gloomy world to cheer, Displays a Savior's boundless love And brings his glories near.	This lamp through all the dreary night Of life shall guide our way Till we behold the clearer light Of an eternal day.

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**SOLA GRATIA:
BY GRACE ALONE**

Ephesians 2:3-5, 8-10

³ Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions -- it is by grace you have been saved. . . ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (NIV)

M: Salvation is by God's grace alone! This was Luther's refrain:

C: "Grace consists in this, that God is merciful to us, shows himself gracious for the sake of the Lord Christ, forgives all sins, and will not charge them to us for eternal death. This is grace: the forgiveness of sins for the sake of the Lord Christ, the covering up of all sins."

Hymn "By Grace I'm Saved"
Verses 1-2, 5 *Christian Worship Hymn 384*

By grace I'm saved, grace free and boundless;
My soul, believe and doubt it not.
Why waver at this word of promise?
Has Scripture ever falsehood taught?
So then this word must true remain:
By grace you, too, shall heav'n obtain.

In Jesus' promise I rejoice.
For though I know my heart's condition,
I also know my Savior's voice.
My heart is glad; all grief has flown
Since I am saved by grace alone.

Text, Tune, Setting: public domain.

By grace God's Son, our only Savior,
Came down to earth to bear our sin.
Was it because of your own merit
That Jesus died, your soul to win?
No, it was grace, and grace alone,
That brought him from his heav'nly throne.
By grace! On this I'll rest when dying;

**SOLA FIDA:
BY FAITH ALONE**

John 3:5-18

⁵ Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

⁹ "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked.

¹⁰ "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. ¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." (NIV)

M: Salvation becomes our own by faith alone and not by our own works or efforts! Luther compared faith to a hand which receives God's gift of salvation in Christ :

C: "In what manner, then, do we lay hold of this treasure and gift? It is faith alone. It holds out the hand and opens the bag and is content to receive nothing but benefits. For as God, the Giver, moved by his love, bestows these blessings upon us, so we are the recipients through faith, which does nothing but accept the gift. For salvation is not of our doing and cannot be merited by our work."

CHOIR "On Faith Alone"