

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Butler, Pennsylvania**



**October 31, 2010
Reformation Sunday**

The imperfect health [of soul] of the dying brings with it, of necessity, great fear... sufficient in itself, to constitute the pain of purgatory, since it approaches very closely to the horror of despair. With souls in purgatory it seems necessary that horror should grow less and love increase.

Moreover, it does not seem proved, on any grounds of reason or Scripture, that these souls are outside the state of merit, or unable to grow in grace. The dying are freed by death from all penalties; they are already dead to canonical rules, and have a right to be released from them.

--Abstracted from Theses 13-18, posted by Martin Luther
on the door of Wittenburg Castle in 1517

The Reverend Dr. James E. Swanson

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Order of Service for the Public Worship of God

Reformation Sunday ~ October 31, 2010

Eleven O'clock, A.M.

Pastor: Rev. Dr. James E. Swanson

Choir Director / Organist: Miss Beverly Antis

Liturgist: Betty Anderson

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP:

+ Please turn off your cell phone during worship

+ Our worship begins with the opening notes of the Prelude

PRELUDE
Held

A Mighty Fortress

Wilbur

THE CHORAL INTROIT *Surely the Lord is in This Place* Robert Lau

Surely the Lord is in this place.

This is none other than the house of God,

And this is the gate, the gate of heaven.

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (please stand, if you are able)

Pastor: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

People: **Hosanna in the highest.**
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the
Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Pastor: Know that the LORD is God! It is He who made us, and
we are His; we are God's people, and the sheep of His
pasture.

People: **We enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His**
courts with praise! We give thanks to God
Almighty and bless God's holy name!

*THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN 260

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

EIN' FESTE BURG

*THE PRAYER OF ADORATION

PSALM OF THE DAY Psalm 119: 137-144 (*Pew Bible p. 542*)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy Father, you see us as we are, and know our inmost thoughts. We confess that we are unworthy of your gracious care.

We forget that all life comes from you and that unto you all life returns. We have not sought to do your will with our whole hearts. We have not lived as grateful children, nor loved as Christ loved us. Apart from you, we are nothing. Only your grace can sustain us.

Lord, in your mercy, forgive us, heal us, and make us whole. Set us free from our sin, and restore us to the joy of your salvation now and forever. Amen.

A TIME FOR SILENT CONFESSION

THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Pastor: Hear what comforting words our Savior says to all who repent and surrender to Him: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

This is a true statement and worthy of full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world not to condemn but to save sinners. If your faith is in him this morning, then this is good news indeed:

People: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

*THE GLORIA PATRI 579

GLORIA PATRI

*THE EXHORTATION

Liturgist: The Lord God in all goodness has seen fit to call us together as the Church of Jesus Christ in this place. Since our beginning nearly 200 years ago, God has spoken to us words of creation, redemption and blessing; words of acceptance and grace; words of outreach and mission.

Therefore, my friends, on this day let us re-commit ourselves to God's holy Word and to God's loving purpose for us, the people of Covenant Presbyterian Church, so that our lives may be filled with joy, our minds may be enlarged by the mysteries of God, and the work of our hands may be a blessing to others, now and for many years to come.

*THE UNISON PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

Almighty God, help us to grow in faith and love toward you, so that we might always live in the assurance of your care.

Center us in routines that keep us close to you, O Lord.

Center us in weekly worship, daily prayer, and regular study of your Holy Word.

Center us in the mission of the church.

Center us in lives of thankful giving and generous loving for all the blessings which you have bestowed upon us.

We re-commit our lives to you and to your Word, O God. Upon the rock of Jesus Christ we set our hope.

Amen and amen.

*THE GREETINGS OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION *Seek Ye First* Robert Lau

*Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
And all things, all things will be added unto you.*

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4 (Pew Bible p. 825)

Liturgist: This is the Word of the Lord

All: **Thanks be to God**

EPISTLE READING 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12 (Pew Bible p. 193)

Liturgist: Here ends the reading of the Epistle.

All: **Praise be to you, O Lord.**

*GOSPEL READING Luke 19:1-10 (Pew Bible p. 78)

Pastor: The Gospel of our Lord.

All: **Glory to You, O Christ.**

CONGREGATIONAL CANTICLE

God of Our Life (Hymn 275, vs. 1) SANDON

**God of our life, through all the circling years,
We trust in Thee;
In all the past, through all our hopes and fears,
Thy hand we see.
With each new day, when morning lifts the veil,
We own Thy mercies, Lord, which never fail.**

THE SERMON “ IN TIMES OF TROUBLE ” Dr. Swanson

PASTORAL PRAYER & PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

CHORAL AMEN *Three-Fold Amen* Robert Lau

*THE PRESENTATION OF TITHES, OFFERINGS & GIFTS

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

How Firm A Foundation arr. John Rutter

*How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?*

*"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.*

*When, through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow,
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee the deepest distress.*

*When though fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.*

*The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes.
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never, no, never, no, never forsake."*

***DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow:
Praise Him all creatures here below:
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

***UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Use us, O God of miracles, and the offerings we have brought, to bring life and health and hope to your world. Make us generous and faithful stewards of your mysteries, as we share the bounty which you have granted unto us; through Christ we pray. Amen.

***RECESSIONAL HYMN 417**

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

REGENT SQUARE

***THE BENEDICTION**

CHORAL RESPONSE *The Lord Bless You and Keep You* Robert Lau

*The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make his face to shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
And give you peace, give you peace.*

*A TIME OF SILENCE

*THE CHARGE AND DISMISSAL

Pastor: May the God of hope go with us every day,
Filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.

People: **May the God of justice speed us on our way,
Bringing light and hope to every land and race.**

Pastor: Praying, let us work for peace,
Singing, share our joy with all.

People: **Working for a world that's new,
Faithful when we hear Christ's call.**

Pastor: Go in peace! Serve the Lord!

People: **Thanks be to God!**

*THE POSTLUDE

Postlude on "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" Max
Reger

ed. by Dennis Eliot

* THOSE WHO ARE ABLE, PLEASE STAND

YOU WERE GREETED TODAY by Pat Foringer.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR (downstairs in the Assembly Room) immediately follows our worship service. *The Worship and Music Committee will be providing refreshments today.* If you are a visitor, please join us for fellowship so we may get to know you better.

WELCOME! GRACE AND PEACE TO ALL!

We are delighted to have you with us in worship today!

If you are visiting, please sign one of the cards in the pew rack, and place it in the offering plate when passed.

If you have any needs, just speak to one of the ushers.

**THE FLOWERS
IN THE SANCTUARY**

...are placed this morning by
Mary Lee Marten

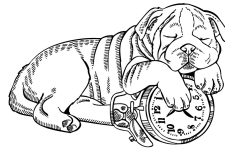
*In Loving Memory of
Ethel Stover (Mary Lee's mother)
Whose Birthday is October 31st*



DON'T FORGET TO "FALL BACK" NEXT SUNDAY!

*Daylight Savings Time ends and Standard Time
begins next Sunday, November 7, 2010 @ 2 am.*

**Remember to turn your clocks BACK ONE
HOUR at bedtime this Saturday, Nov. 6th.**



"One more hour of sleep!"

Next Sunday, November 7 @ 11:00 a.m.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER
(come forward)

also next Sunday, November 7

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

"What Does Covenant Mean To Me?"

In The Life of Our Church

Prayer Concerns:

- Art Forbes Released from the hospital, now at home
- Enid Dunmire Scheduled for shoulder surgery Nov. 18
- Ken Schreffler In ICU at Butler Hospital with kidney
and liver failure; Ken will be remembered
for his involvement in community
theater
- Lauren Cesnales Our accountant at the presbytery
office, awaiting another back surgery on
Monday, Nov. 1 for herniated disc
- Gladys Strobel At Concordia for rehabilitation following
her second hip replacement
- Julie Bruno Prayers for comfort and mobility
- Merry Hope Meloy . . Still on “light duty” at Saint Andrews
with continuing eye problems
- Charmaine Tack . . . Still awaiting the arrival of her baby
- Jim Harmon Jim is at home re-adjusting to life follow-
ing a fall that crushed his spinal cord.
Remember to pray for Jim’s wife, Mary,
also. (*Covenant Church members have
been providing casseroles and desserts
distributed at intervals to help the
Harmons at this time.)

For Continued Prayer:

Minnie Anderson; Julie Bruno; Marion Campbell; Marian
Curran; Les, Enid & Sandy Dunmire; Dorothy Hershberger;
Eleanor Ritts; Jeanne & Chuck Schlicht; Gladys Strobel;
Phyllis Thoma, John Towns, Jr.; Bill & MaryLou Wilson

Birthdays: Tamra Martin (Nov. 1) Cole Patterson (Nov. 6)

SEEKERS' ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

*always provocative speakers, interesting
topics & lively discussions*

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the Assembly Room

Next Sunday, November 7th

A History Channel Documentary

“The Antichrist” (Part II)



*Coffee, tea, juice & snack are available before class,
served from the small kitchen beginning at 9 a.m.*

THIS FRIDAY . . .

SPAGHETTI DINNER !

Nov. 5th ~ Serving from

5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

(Fellowship Hall in basement)

Take outs available!

COST: \$6.50 ~ adults

\$3 ~ children 3-12 yrs.



**Why not mark your calendar
and plan to join us?!!**

(You have to eat that day, anyway!)

Sponsored by the Fellowship & Outreach Committee

Open to the Community



The Reformers & Their View of Scripture

Before Luther was a Lutheran, he was a professor of theology at the University of Wittenberg and lectured on the Holy Scriptures. During his entire life, he taught the Bible, translated the Bible, and preached from the Bible. For Luther, it was the Christian book *par excellence*,

and he valued it above all others because it brought him the good news of salvation.

Not as well known, however, is the fact that Luther did not at first understand the Gospel as truly good news. According to his own recollections, he experienced his "Reformation breakthrough" some time after he had first begun lecturing on the Scriptures at the university. For years, he had been laboring personally under the weight of sin without finding a satisfactory remedy within the ministry of the contemporary church, and even his study of Paul's epistles did not initially bring him peace, for he kept stumbling over Paul's phrase, "the righteousness of God" in Romans 1:17.

Initially, Luther understood the phrase as a reference to God's holiness—the idea that God is righteous and therefore punishes unrighteous sinners. But this would mean that the content of the Bible was nothing but Law, Law— and more Law! Luther did not yet understand that the Gospel directs us to Christ and not to ourselves, to His saving work and not to our own sin-filled works.

But, as Luther said, "by the mercy of God," at length he came to a new understanding of God's righteousness. For in that same passage from Romans, Paul (quoting Habakkuk 2:4) explains, "He who through faith is righteous shall live." In

other words, the righteousness of God in the Gospel is not God's *demand* but God's *gift*, not condemnation but life; and it is ours simply through *faith* in Christ, not works. God counts us righteous when we believe.

In the 1522 New Testament which he published, Luther offered a “preface” to rescue the reader from mistaken interpretations that were current. In an apparent reference to his own experience, Luther directs the reader to keep in mind the real theme and purpose of the Scriptures “so that one may not seek laws and commandments where he ought to be seeking the gospel and promises of God.”

In 1557, while in exile in Geneva, John Calvin, assisted by a handful of English men who had fled the persecution of Bloody Mary, undertook to translate the complete Bible. This made Calvin's Bible the first complete Bible to be translated into English from the original Hebrew and Greek texts.



Calvin viewed Scripture as being both majestic and simple. He wrote that “Scripture possesses a divine majesty which will subdue our presumptuous opposition, and force us to do it homage... how beautifully it harmonises in all its parts—and how rich it is in all other qualities which give an air of majesty.”

Calvin also praised the Bible for its “simplicity,” and would surely have railed at the flowery prose of the King James Authorized Version which gained popularity following its publication in 1644. Scripture, according to Calvin, “is not particularly eloquent, for that would detract from its message. The sublime mysteries of the kingdom of heaven have for the greater part been delivered with a contemptible meanness of words. An unpolished simplicity, almost bordering on rudeness, makes a deeper impression than the loftiest flights of oratory.”

Calvin was careful not to set the New Testament against the Old and stressed the continuity of the revelation of God throughout the Bible as a whole. His teaching style was far more progressive than Luther's (who still indulged in fanciful allegory.) While Luther brought the Bible out of the darkness, Calvin laid the foundations and set the standard for Biblical study and exposition.