

OCTOBER 29, 2023
REFORMATION SUNDAY



The good news heals our divisions.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

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| Sunday | John 8:31-36 | The Son makes you free |
| Monday | Jeremiah 31:31-34 | The new covenant |
| Tuesday | Romans 3:19-28 | True righteousness |
| Wednesday | Psalms 141 | Prayer for preservation from evil |
| Thursday | 1 Kings 2:1-5 | David's instruction to Solomon |
| Friday | 1 Corinthians 16:13-20 | Final messages |
| Saturday | Psalms 46 | God is your refuge |
| Sunday | Matthew 5:1-12 | The Beatitudes |

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. Romans 3:19 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty and living God, may your grace and mercy cleanse the church and set us free to be your witnesses of hope and peace through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of power and might, thank you for the seas that roar, the mountains that tremble, and for this food that gives us strength and courage for each day. Amen. (Psalm 46:3)

A Blessing to Give:

May God free you to be blessed by our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

*A Mighty Fortress
Is Our God*



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Is it easy or difficult for you to be silent when you are with friends or family? Explain.
- Silent moments can be a time of renewal as we gain new insights and appreciation for life around us. When has silence been a renewing experience for you?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Romans 3:19-28.

Paul writes to Christians in house churches in Rome. These Christians oppose one another with words and finger pointing. One group is righteous and faithful while the other is not. The church today experiences a similar polarity. Paul speaks to us now as he did then: Be silent! The law that we want to justify our own lives silences every mouth because *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (v. 23). Once Paul declares our sinfulness and judgement on one another, we are ready to hear good news. The good news is that the only thing that justifies us is God's undeserved kindness (grace). Only God is righteous and God's righteousness shown in Christ is more than a morality, it is an activity that brings the unholy world into God's goodness. Through faith, we experience being reconciled to one another and to God through Christ. We are now part of God's righteousness to heal, save the world, and trust that God's goodness can even heal our condemnation of others through faith in Christ.

Discuss: How is this good news for you?

Pray: **Gracious God, thank you for your goodness that acts in our lives and world to bring hope and peace to our divided relationships and world through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, through what words and actions can you show acceptance and care for others?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Martin Luther wrote the words for *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* and composed the melody. This well-known hymn is based on Psalm 46. Circle or highlight words in Psalm 46 that you feel describe God as a mighty fortress. Read Psalm 46 aloud and pause for a moment when you read a word that is circled or highlighted. After reading, say, "Amen."



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org