



REFORMATION SUNDAY

OCTOBER 25, 2026

ST. MARK EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

HAMILTON, NJ

*A family of faith, rooted in Word and Sacrament,
proclaiming the redeeming love of Jesus Christ
through worship, nurture, and service.*

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

Jesus' summary of the law in today's gospel echoes our first reading from Leviticus. We are called not only to love God with heart, soul, and mind, but also to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is out of such deep care that Paul shares the gospel with the Thessalonian community. In the confession of sins, we acknowledge that we have not loved God, neighbor, and self; yet we gather to hear the word of forgiveness and to be strengthened by word and meal to be signs of God's love and mercy in the world.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Please stand as you are comfortable.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the prayer begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Compassionate God,

**we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.**

Creation groans from overuse.

Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.

Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.

Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.

Turn our hearts back to you.

Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.

**Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

Hear this good news:

We have peace with God through ✠ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

Amen.



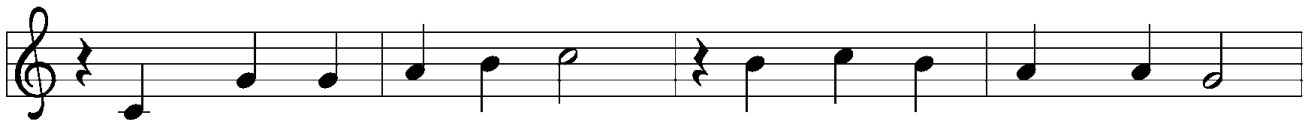
1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a sword and shield vic -
 2 No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, re -
 3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land all threat - 'ning to de -
 4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, no thanks to foes, who



to - rious; he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod and
 ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, whom
 your us, we trem - ble not, un - moved we stand; they
 fear it; for God him - self fights by our side with



wins sal - va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe
 God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be?
 can - not o - ver - pow'r us. Let this world's ty - rant rage;
 weap - ons of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house,



has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dread - ful might
 The Lord of hosts is he! Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord,
 in bat - tle we'll en - gage! His might is doomed to fail;
 goods, hon - or, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched a - way,



he arms him - self to fight. On earth he has no e - qual.
 God's on - ly Son, a - dored. He holds the field vic - to - rious.
 God's judg - ment must pre - vail! One lit - tle word sub - dues him.
 they can - not win the day. The king - dom's ours for - ev - er!

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**



1 "Ab - ba, Ab - ba, hear us," we cry; God's Spir - it
 2 With the whole cre - a - tion we cry, groan as in
 3 As we pray, the Spir - it breathes sighs, sighs far too



cries in us, names us a - dopt - ed and be - lov - ed
 child - birth. Soon all sin, all death's de - cay will be no
 deep for words; God, who search - es hearts and knows the Spir - it's



heirs, the heirs of God. All cre - a - tion
 more; we shall be free. All cre - a - tion
 mind, hears all our prayer. All cre - a - tion



waits, ea - ger and long - ing, for the glo - rious
 waits, ea - ger and long - ing; for the prom - ised
 waits, ea - ger and long - ing. As we live in



free - dom of God's chil - dren soon will be re - vealed.
 glo - ry that we soon shall see we wait and pray.
 hope, we know that in all things God works for good.



1 Hal - le - lu - jah! Sing praise to your Cre - a - tor, sun, moon, and
 2 Praise the Lord, all moun - tains and o - ceans, roll - ing thun - der and
 3 Give to God all glo - ry and hon - or. From the depths to the



stars and an - gels a - bove. Praise the Lord, whose word es -
 wind and storm clouds on high. Praise the Lord, your Mak - er,
 heights let prais - es re - sound to the Lord, the source of



tab - lished the heav - ens, who up - holds all the earth in pow - er and
 all liv - ing crea - tures, all the beasts in the fields and birds in the
 strength and sal - va - tion for all peo - ple on whom God's fa - vor is



love. God reigns on high, let the heav - ens re - jice! (Oh,)
 sky. Both young and old, come and join in the song! (Oh,)
 found. Praise God, you saints who are claimed as God's own! (Oh,)



God reigns on high, let the heav - ens re - jice!
 Both young and old, come and join in the song!
 Praise God, you saints who are claimed as God's own!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O Lord God, you are the holy lawgiver, you are the salvation of your people. By your Spirit renew us in your covenant of love, and train us to care tenderly for all our neighbors, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: **Leviticus 19:1-2, 15-18**

¹ The LORD spoke to Moses, saying:

² “Speak to all the congregation of the Israelites and say to them: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy.

¹⁵ “You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor. ¹⁶ You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand idly by when the blood of your neighbor is at stake: I am the LORD.

¹⁷ “You shall not hate in your heart anyone of your kin; you shall reprove your neighbor, or you will incur guilt yourself. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against any of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 1

¹ Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel | of the wicked,
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats | of the scornful!

² **Their delight is in the law | of the LORD,
and they meditate on God’s teaching | day and night.**

³ They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with
leaves that | do not wither;
everything they | do shall prosper.

⁴ **It is not so | with the wicked;
they are like chaff which the wind | blows away.**

⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when | judgment comes,
nor the sinner in the council | of the righteous.

⁶ **For the LORD knows the way | of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked shall | be destroyed.**

SECOND READING: **1 Thessalonians 2:1-8**

¹ You yourselves know, siblings, that our coming to you was not in vain, ² but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. ³ For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, ⁴ but, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals but to please God, who tests our hearts. ⁵ As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed, ⁶ nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, ⁷ though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. ⁸ So deeply do we care for you that we are

determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are comfortable.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

LORD, LET MY HEART BE GOOD SOIL

ELW 512

Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

GOSPEL: Matthew 22:34-46

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

³⁴ When the Pharisees heard that [Jesus] had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, ³⁵ and one of them, an expert in the law, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶ "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" ³⁷ He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the greatest and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question:

⁴² "What do you think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of

David.” ⁴³ He said to them, “How is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴ “The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet” ’?

⁴⁵ “If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?” ⁴⁶ No one was able to give him an answer, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

This is the good news of the gospel.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Please stand as you are comfortable.

HYMN OF THE DAY

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, IN EVERY AGE

ELW 729



1 The church of Christ, in ev - 'ry age be - set by
2 A - cross the world, a - cross the street, the vic - tims
3 Then let the ser - vant church a - rise, a car - ing
4 For he a - lone, whose blood was shed, can cure the
5 We have no mis - sion but to serve in full o -



change, but Spir - it - led, must claim and test its
of in - jus - tice cry for shel - ter and for
church that longs to be a part - ner in Christ's
fe - ver in our blood, and teach us how to
be - dience to our Lord; to care for all, with -



her - i - tage and keep on ris - ing from the dead.
bread to eat, and nev - er live be - fore they die.
sac - ri - fice, and clothed in Christ's hu - man - i - ty.
share our bread and feed the starv - ing mul - ti - tude.
out re - serve, and spread his lib - er - at - ing word.

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Please be seated.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Seeking the Spirit of God who makes all things new, we pray for the church and the world.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, as we remember the Reformation, we thank you for all those who have worked to hold the church accountable to its mission. Protect them as they speak truth to power. Attend to us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We give thanks for the beauty of the world's islands, coastlines, and low-lying places. Keep them and their inhabitants safe from harm. Attend to us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We thank you for the diversity of humankind, made in your image. We pray for the future of endangered languages and cultures. Preserve them to show forth your glory. Attend to us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for the healing of all who are sick or injured, especially those who cannot access medical care. We remember those whom we love who are suffering or in pain. Attend to us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We thank you for all the faithful departed who taught us to love God and our neighbor. By their example, help us to seek after you with heart, soul, and mind. Attend to us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Trusting in your boundless grace, O God, we lift up these spoken prayers and those in our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. Offering plates are located by the entrances to the sanctuary. Your gifts support St. Mark, its mission, and its partnerships with local, statewide, and national partners.

Please stand as you are comfortable.

OFFERING HYMN

FOR THE WHOLENESS OF THE EARTH

ACS 1067



1 We lift this prayer for the whole-ness of the earth. We lift this
2 We turn our lives to the whole-ness of the earth. We turn our
3 Give thanks to God for the whole-ness of the earth. Give thanks to



prayer for the whole-ness of the earth. We lift this prayer for the
lives to the whole-ness of the earth. We turn our lives to the
God for the whole-ness of the earth. Give thanks to God for the



whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it ris - ing in you?
whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it spin - ning in you?
whole-ness of the earth. Can you feel it ris - ing in you?

OFFERING PRAYER

God of creation,

You send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

Blessed are you, O Lord our God:

you are a shepherd for your people—

feeding them,

protecting them from danger,

binding up their wounds,

searching for the lost and bringing them safely home.

Therefore we praise you,

joining the song of the universal church

and the heavenly choir:



1 Heav-en o - pened to I - sa - iah, show-ing him God's glo-rious
 2 Ser - a - phim con - tin - ue sing - ing; cher - u - bim still lift their
 3 One day heav - en will be o - pened and be - fore the Sav - ior's



throne: Lord of might, high and ex - alt - ed, tem - ple flow-ing
 praise. Earth and all its crea-tures wor - ship; moon and stars are
 throne, saints from ev - 'ry time and na - tion will be - gin their



with his robe. Ser - a - phim flew all a - round him,
 still a - mazed. Now a - bove cre - a - tion's cho - rus
 end - less song: "To our God of all sal - va - tion,



hum - bled at the ho - ly sight. As they cir - cled they were
 comes an - oth - er fer - vent cry: all of earth's re - deemed are
 to the high and ho - ly Lamb, to the bless - ed Ho - ly



sing - ing, call - ing out with all their might.
 sing - ing, "Glo - ry to the Lord on high!"
 Spir - it be for - ev - er praise. A - men!"



Refrain
 "Ho - ly, ho - ly, you are ho - ly," ev - 'ry



an - gel voice pro - claims; "All the earth re - flects your



glo - ry; ev - 'ry tongue sings out your praise!"

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed is Jesus Christ, our Savior:
Jesus is coming in glory to judge the world.
Those who have cared for the needs of the least
will be welcomed into his kingdom.

On the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup,
gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering your goodness and grace,
we offer ourselves to you with gratitude
as we share this joyful feast.
Great is the mystery of faith:
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and cup.
Make us one in the body and blood
of Jesus Christ our Lord.
Give us your Spirit of wisdom and revelation
that we may live in faith, hope, and love.
Through the Lord Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Spirit,
we bless you, God of glory,
now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table. These are the gifts of God for the people of God, holy things for holy people, and they are for you.

We share communion with wheat and gluten-free wafers, red wine, and red grape juice. Everyone is welcome to receive communion, regardless of religious background or age.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION SONG

O LAMB OF GOD, YOU BEAR THE SIN



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf - fered death our lives to save: have mer - cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer - cy now, we pray.
e - ter - nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.



1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and



heav'n, to earth come down! Fix in us thy
 ev - 'ry trou - bled breast; let us all in
 all thy life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re -
 spot - less let us be; let us see thy



hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy faith - ful mer - cies crown.
 thee in - her - it; let us find thy prom - ised rest.
 turn, and nev - er, nev - er - more thy tem - ples leave.
 great sal - va - tion per - fect - ly re - stored in thee!



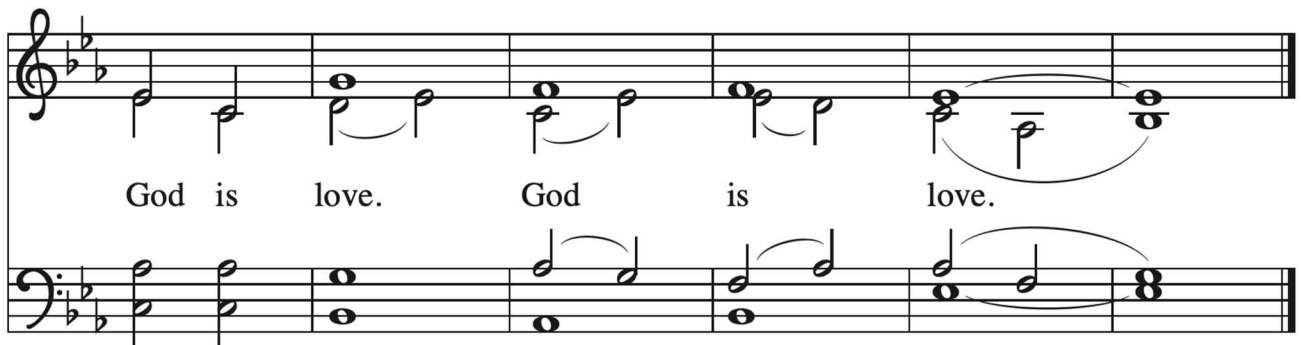
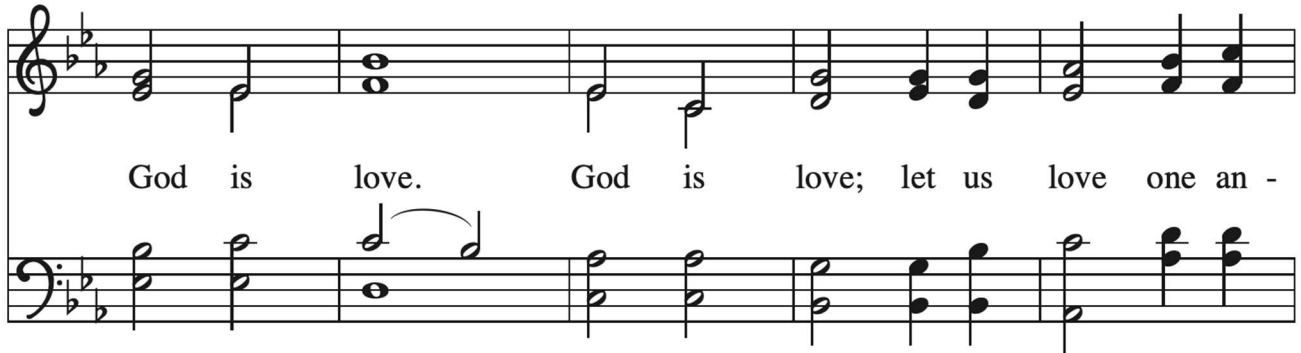
Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion, pure, un -
 Take a - way the love of sin - ning; Al - pha
 Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing, serve thee
 Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry, till in



bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!



Please stand as you are comfortable.

TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Sustaining God,

with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

The God of grace bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

TO BE YOUR PRESENCE

ELW 546



1 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion here, to show com -
2 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion bold, to feed the
3 To be your pres - ence is our mis - sion blest, to speak for
4 We are your heart, O Christ, your hands and voice, to serve your



pas - sion's face and lis - t'ning ear, to be your heart of mer - cy
poor and shel - ter home - less cold, to be your hands of jus - tice,
all the bro - ken and op - pressed, to be your voice of hope, your
peo - ple is our call and choice, and in this mis - sion we, the



ev - er near,
right up - hold, al - le - lu - ia!
love ex - pressed,
church, re - jice,

DISMISSAL

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Thank you to today's worship leaders!

Lector: Jeff Clair

Communion Assistant: Terri Clair

Ushers: Bobbie Huffman and Nadine Mileski

Livestream Operator: Michaela Arzt

Altar Guild: Lisa Fritzinger and Michaela Arzt

Pastor: Rev. Linnéa Clark

Seminarian: Erin Brody

Minister of Music: John Kling

Office Administrator: Robin Harris

Ministers: People of St. Mark

Worship with Us

*We gather for worship on Sundays at 9:30 am (a full-length, more formal service)
and on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm (a shorter, more informal service). You are always welcome.*

*We host Peace of Mindfulness, a mindfulness meditation class, on Tuesdays at 6:30 pm in the sanctuary.
Beginners and advanced practitioners alike are welcome.*

Serve with Us

*We welcome volunteers every Sunday after worship to help with Lunches with Love, which prepares lunches
for clients of HomeFront. Recently, we shared our **20,000th lunch!** Contact Karen Breninghouse
(kbreninghouse@gmail.com) for more information.*

Contact Us

You can reach our office at admin@stmarkhamilton.org and at (609) 585-7087.

*You can reach Pastor Linnéa Clark directly at pastor@stmarkhamilton.org
or at (215) 620-4977 in case of emergency.*

*You can also find us online at stmarkhamilton.org
and at facebook.com/stmarkhamilton.*

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