First English Lutheran Church

1311 East 18th Street

Spencer, Iowa 51301

10:00 am Non-Communion Service

Paul E. Kaldahl, Pastor

Kristin Kaldahl, Organist

Reformation
October 25, 2026
Phone: 262-5598

On this Reformation day, we remember the accomplishments of Martin Luther, who sought to hold the Church accountable for clearly communicating the truth of God's Word. The reformer writes, *"One thing, and only one thing, is necessary for Christian life, righteousness, and freedom. That one thing is the most holy Word of God, the Gospel of Christ."* (*"The Freedom of a Christian," Luther's Works, Vol. 31*) Luther was a prolific writer because he so desperately wanted the laity to know the Gospel in order that they might find salvation through the gift of Christ's righteousness. Therefore, our service this morning uses many of Luther's writings that come from the Book of Concord. These writings also are the basis of our confessional fellowship because they teach the foundational doctrines of the Christian Church.

Prelude *(Please Rise and Face the Cross)*

Processional Hymn: LSB #657 vs 1-2 "A Mighty Fortress"

Welcome

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Original Sin

The Book of Concord Reading #1:
Article II of the Augsburg Confession

We teach that, since the fall of Adam, all men who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin. That is, all men are full of evil lust and inclinations from their mothers' wombs and are unable, by nature, to have true fear of God and true faith in God. Moreover, this inborn sickness and hereditary sin is truly sin and condemns to the eternal wrath of God all those who are not born again through Baptism and the Holy Spirit.

Rejected are those who deny that original sin is sin, for they hold that natural man is made righteous by his own powers, thus disparaging the sufferings and merit of Christ.

Confession

P: What is the first part of confession?

C: The first part of confession is that we confess, or acknowledge our sin to God.

P: What sins should we confess?

C: Before God, we should plead guilty to all sin, even those sins of which we are not aware, as we do in the Lord's Prayer.

P: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

ALL: Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy Name. Amen

Repentance

The Book of Concord Reading #2:
Article XII of the Augsburg Confession

It is taught among us that those who sin after baptism receive forgiveness of sin whenever they come to repentance, and absolution should not be denied them by the church. Properly speaking, true repentance is nothing else than to have contrition and sorrow, or terror, on account of sin, and yet, at the same time, to believe the Gospel and absolution (namely, that sin has been forgiven and grace has been obtained through Christ), and this faith will comfort the heart and again set it at rest. Amending the sin in our lives and forsaking sin would then follow, for these must be the fruits of repentance, as John says, "Bear fruit that befits repentance!" (Matthew 3:8)

Rejected also are those who teach that forgiveness of sin is not obtained through faith, but through the satisfaction made by man.

Hymn – LSB #657 vs 3-4 "A Mighty Fortress"

Penitence

The Book of Concord Reading #3:
Article XII of the Augsburg Confession

The power of the keys administers and offers the Gospel through absolution, which is the true voice of the Gospel. In speaking of faith, therefore, we also include absolution since "faith comes from what is heard," as Paul says in Romans 10:17. Hearing the Gospel and hearing the absolution strengthens and consoles the conscience. Because God truly quickens through the Word, the keys truly forgive sin before Him according to the statement in Luke 10:16, "He who hears you, hears Me." Therefore, we must believe the voice of the one absolving, no less than we would believe a voice coming from heaven.

Absolution

P: What is the second part of confession?

C: That we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness of our sins.

P: Received then the forgiveness won for you by the passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. By His command, I forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Choir – "Amazing Grace"

Sola Fide (Faith Alone)

The Book of Concord Reading #4:

Article IV of the Apology (Justification)

Even our opponents will grant, we suppose, that the forgiveness of sins is supremely necessary in justification - for we are all under sin. Therefore, we argue this way:

First, forgiveness of sins is the same as justification according to Psalm 32:1, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven." We obtain the forgiveness of sins only by faith in Christ, not through love, or because of love, or because of works --- though love does follow faith. Therefore, we are justified by faith alone - justification being understood as making an unrighteous person righteous.

In the forgiveness of sins, the terrors of sin and of eternal death must be conquered in our hearts, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:56-57, "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." That is, sin terrifies consciences. This happens through the law, which shows God's wrath against sin. But, we conquer through Christ. How? By faith! It happens when we comfort ourselves by firm trust in the mercy promised because of Christ.

P: What is the Bible?

C: The Bible is God's Word.

P: Who wrote the Bible?

C: Holy men of God wrote the Bible. The prophets wrote the Books of the Old Testament, and the evangelists and the apostles wrote the Books of the New Testament.

P: Why is the Bible the Word of God, although it was written by men?

C: The Bible is the Word of God because these men wrote it by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

P: Whose Word, then, is every word of the Bible?

C: The Bible is God's own Word and Truth, without any errors (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

P: For what purpose did God give us the Bible?

C: God gave us the Bible to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and to train us in holy living.

Hymn – LBS #578 vs. 1-2 "Thy Strong Word"

Sola Fide (Faith Alone)

The Book of Concord Reading #5:

Epitome Part 1 and 2

We believe teach and confess that the prophetic and apostolic writing of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and all teachers alike must be appraised and judged, as it is written in Psalm 119:105, "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." And St. Paul says in Galatians 1:8, "Even if an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to that which we preached to you, let him be accursed." Other writings of ancient and modern teachers, whatever their names, should not be put on par with the Holy Scripture. Every single one of them should be subordinated to the Scriptures.

Hymn – LSB #578 vs. 3-4 "Thy Strong Word"

Sola Gratia (Grace Alone)

The Book of Concord Reading #6:

Article XX, Apology

This issue is so weighty ... "Do not yield to the wicked, but go on still more boldly," every one of you who has agreed to our Confession, when our opponents use their terrors, tortures, and punishments to try to drive you away from the consolation which this article of ours offers to the universal church. Anyone who looks will find any passages in Scripture to set his mind at ease, for Paul fairly screams, as it were, that sins are freely forgiven for Christ's sake. He says, "We are justified by His grace as a gift" (Romans 3:24) "In order that the promise may be guaranteed," (Romans 4:16). That is, if the promise were conditional on our works, it would not be guaranteed. If the forgiveness of sins were given on account of our works, when would we know that we had attained it, when would a terrified conscience find a work that it thought adequate to placate the wrath of God? The reader can find our proofs in our earlier discussion of this whole issue. The shameful way in which our opponents have treated this issue has compelled us to register a complaint rather then compose a point-by-point refutation. They have gone on record as rejecting our doctrine that we obtain the forgiveness of sins, not on account of our works, but freely for Christ's sake.

Old Testament Reading: Revelation 14:6-7 ESV

(God gives John a futuristic vision of the new heaven and the new earth after the resurrection of all flesh.)

> Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. 7 And he said with a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water."

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Epistle Reading: Romans 3:19-28 ESV

(The righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus)

Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. [20] For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. [21] But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it — [22] the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: [23] for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, [24] and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, [25] whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. [26] It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. [27] Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. [28] For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God!

(Please rise)
P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 8th chapter.
C: *[Sung]* **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Gospel Reading: John 8:31-36 ESV

(Freedom comes from Knowing the Truth of Jesus' teaching.)

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, [32] and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." [33] They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" [34] Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. [35] The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. [36] So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
C: *[Sung]* **Praise to You, O Christ!**

The Creed

P: What is a creed?
C: A creed is a statement of what we believe, teach, and confess.
P: What is meant by "I believe in God?"

C: It means I trust God and His promises and accept as true all He teaches in the Holy Scriptures. ***(Psalm 31:14, 37:5)***
P: What three creeds has the Holy Christian Church confessed for over 1,600 years?
C: The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed.
P: Today, on this Reformation Day, we confess our faith through the words of the Apostles' Creed.
All: I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

The Creed

The Book of Concord Reading #7:
Article I of the Augsburg Confession

We unanimously hold and teach, in accordance with the decree of the Council of Nicaea, that there is One divine essence, which is called and which is truly God, and that there are Three Persons in this One divine essence, equal in power and alike eternal: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. All three are One divine essence, eternal, without division, without end, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, one Creator and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. The word "person" is to be understood as the church fathers employed the term in this connection.

Hymn – LBS #644 vs. 1-2 "The Church's One Foundation"

Sermon

Offering *(hymn will be sung during the offering)*

Offering Hymn – LSB #644 vs. 3-5 "The Church's One Foundation"

Prayers

Lord's Prayer

Consecration of the Lord's Supper

Distribution Hymns

LSB # 617 “O Lord We Praise Thee”
LSB # 645 “Built on the Rock”
LSB # 555 “Salvation Unto Us Has Come”
LBS # 566 “By Grace I’m Saved”

Benediction

Hymn – LSB #662 vs. 1 and 4 “Onward, Christian Soldiers”

Announcements and Postlude

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10:00 a.m. - October 25, 2026



www.spencer.church.com

Rev. Paul Kaldahl, Pastor