



Reformation Sunday
8:30 a.m., October 26, 2025

Worship Leadership

Rev. Paul D. Erickson, *Bishop, Greater Milwaukee Synod*
Rev. Christian Marien, *Lead Pastor*
Rev. Anthony Acompañado, *Pastor*
Rev. Edwin Aparicio, *Pastor*
Vicki Taylor, *Director of Music Ministries*

Acolytes: Eli Escobedo, Madeline Paczesny **Altar Guild:** Julie Kinunen
Choir Accompanist: Kathy Johnson **Communion:** Jim Hahn, Julie Kinunen
Greeters: Marvin and Maddie Goetter **Instrumentalist:** Andrew Szymanek, trumpet
Media: Buck Houston **Ushers:** Dennis Mohr, Todd Schroeder, Paul Wehmeier

PRELUDE **Trumpet Concerto in Eb: 1. Allegro, Johann Neruda**

WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN **A Mighty Fortress Is Our God** **ELW 504**

GREETING

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

C: **And also with you.**

HYMN OF PRAISE **This Is the Feast** **p. 140**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

CHILDREN'S TIME **Pastor Chris**

FIRST READING **Psalm 46**

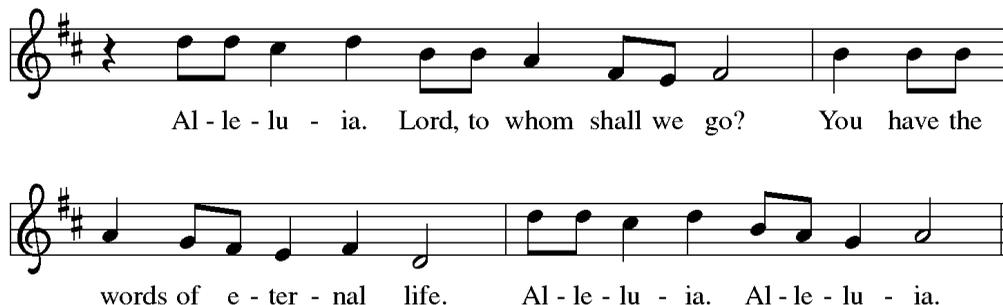
God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains shake in the depths of the sea; though its waters rage and foam, and though the mountains tremble with its tumult. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be shaken; God shall help it at the break of day. The nations rage, and the kingdoms

shake; God speaks, and the earth melts away. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. Come now, regard the works of the Lord, what desolations God has brought upon the earth; behold the one who makes war to cease in all the world; who breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, and burns the shields with fire. "Be still, then, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth." The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL ANNOUNCEMENT

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 8th chapter.

C:



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL READING

John 8:31-36

Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." They answered him, "We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be made free'?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C:



Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Bishop Paul Erickson

ANTHEM

Forevermore, Dan Forrest
(Please join in singing each verse as directed)

**Ascension Choir
with Congregation**

1. O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home.
2. Under the shadow of Thy throne Thy saints have dwelt secure;
sufficient is Thine arm alone, and our defense is sure.
3. O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
be Thou our guard while life shall last, and our eternal home.

RITE OF CONFIRMATION

P: I present the following students who desire to make public affirmation of their baptism.

Ariam Fernanda Cuesta Garcia	Karina Promotor
Joshua Erik Gunderson	Ryan David Rees
Aidan Joseph James Miller	Ava Grace Steinke
Grace Margaret Paczesny	Mikael Eugene Wagner

P: Dear friends, we give thanks for the gift of baptism and for these people, one with us in the body of Christ, who are making public affirmation of their baptism.

P: Let us pray...Merciful God, we thank you for these sisters and brothers, whom you have made your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called them to yourself, enlightened them with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished them in the community of faith. Uphold your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.

P: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.
Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

Confirmands: I do.

P: Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

Confirmands: I do.

P: Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

Confirmands: I do.

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

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

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

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

P: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

C: **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.**

P: You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

To live among God's faithful people,

To hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,

To proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,

To serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and

To strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

Confirmands: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

Confirmands may kneel. The pastors pray for God's blessing over each confirmand.

P: People of God, do you promise to support these sisters and brothers and pray for them in their life in Christ?

C: **We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.**

P: Let us pray: Holy God, we give you thanks for this day. For the gift of faith from your open hands. For the hope you offer to each of us and to all the world. For the life, death, and resurrection of your Son, Jesus and the promise of eternal life. Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Comfort: For Garnet Wolff and family at the death of her husband Rolland
For the Jauregui / Jewett family following the death of Ariya's paternal
grandma, Carolyn Jewett

Healing: For Linda Foss

OFFERING

God Is Our Refuge, *Allen Pote*

Ascension Choir

	<p>Many Ways to Give Electronically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• QR code• VancoMobile Giving app on your smartphone• Online at tinyurl.com/SupportALC• Via text to 262-214-3681 with the amount
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OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: Let us pray ... Blessed are you, O Lord our God,

C: **Maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

All those believing in the saving power of Jesus Christ through the gift of his life, death, and resurrection are welcome to receive communion at this table of grace. We offer both bread and wine for holy communion. Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.

LAMB OF GOD

p. 146

HYMNS

By Your Hand You Feed Your People

ELW 469

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

ELW 517

The Church of Christ, in Every Age

ELW 729

COMMUNION BLESSING

BENEDICTION

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, and of the Son ☩, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

The Church's One Foundation

ELW 654

SENDING

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott, *Johann Pachelbel*



Children Are God's Gift: We are a noisy church. We are happy to celebrate the sounds of children during worship. You are welcome to step into the lobby with your child for a break if needed. There are also Busy Bags available in the lobby.

Pew Pads: Please fill-out the blue pew pad and pass it to your neighbor. You might make a new friend!

Baptized: We welcome Gabriel Michael Equila in baptism today at the 10:45 a.m. service. Gabriel's parents are Luis and Shayla Equila. Proud big sisters are Serena and Stella.

All Saints Sunday: All Saints Sunday is Nov. 2. You will have the opportunity to light candles in memory of those who now rest from their labors. Please invite a family member, neighbor, or friend who might appreciate this tangible way of remembering loved ones.

Children's and Youth Choirs: Youth and Children's Choirs begin rehearsals Thursday, Oct. 30. Oct. 30 through Dec. 11. RSVP to Vicki Taylor, vicki@ascensionelca.org. Both choirs will sing for Advent Concert Worship on Dec. 13 & 14.

- Children's Choir, grades K-5, 5-5:40 p.m.
- Youth Choir, grades 6-12, 5:45-6:30 p.m.

Sing for a Season: Sing with the Ascension Choir for the Advent/Christmas season! Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings, 7:15-8:15 p.m., Nov. 5 through Dec. 10; sing for Advent Concert Worship Dec. 13 & 14. Contact Vicki Taylor, vicki@ascensionelca.org, to join.

Budget & Annual Meetings: Join us as we prepare for 2026 at Ascension. Members are invited to a budget listening session on Sunday, Nov. 9, between services. The listening session is an opportunity for members of the congregation to ask questions and review the budget in more detail before it is presented at the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, Nov. 16, between services where we'll vote for a new church council, the budget and see what's planned for 2026.

Children's Breakfast & Christmas Program Rehearsal: Ascension Children's Ministry invites all families for breakfast, conversation, and a Christmas program rehearsal on Sunday, Nov. 9, at 9:50 a.m. We'll rehearse in the sanctuary (BLAST & JUMP only) and then have breakfast and conversation in West Hall. JAM students will meet with Ms. Kelly for a quick lesson before joining everyone for breakfast.

Welcome to the LIGHT: Our new young adult ministry kicks-off this month with an event tonight from 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the home of Pastor Chris and Ileen. We will cook together and get to know each other and dream about ways to connect young adults inside and outside our community of faith. Questions or to RSVP, contact Lauren Birner, ljbirner@wi.rr.com.

E-Giving



- [Tinyurl.com/SupportALC](https://www.tinyurl.com/SupportALC)
- Via text to 262-214-3681 with the amount
- Vanco giving app

Food Donations Needed: Federal funding for FoodShare, Wisconsin's food assistance program, is at risk due to the government shutdown at a time when the need is particularly great. The Waukesha Food Pantry has had a big increase in the number of people using the pantry and we find our Blessing Box heavily used. When you shop, please pick up some food items that can help our community neighbors get through this difficult time. Place your donations in the bins in the Donation Center.

Immigration Forum: The Immigration and Refugee Ministry Team of the Greater Milwaukee Synod is sponsoring an immigration forum on Thursday, Oct. 30, at 6:30 p.m. at Martin Luther Church, 9235 W. Bluemound Rd., in Milwaukee. Tim Muth, Senior Staff Attorney at ACLU of Wisconsin Foundation and a fellow Lutheran, will be providing an overview of current issues related to immigration enforcement in Wisconsin. If you are interested in carpooling or would like the link to livestream, contact Shirley Wehmeier, shwehmeier@gmail.com.

Outreach for Hope: Outreach for Hope surpassed their goal of raising \$172,126 through the annual Ride, Run, Walk thanks to all the participants, volunteers, and donors. This incredible achievement will directly fund grants for the 2026 Ministry Partners across the Greater Milwaukee Synod. Donations to the fund will be collected until the end of October to provide vital support for ministries in Southeastern Wisconsin to continue their life-giving work: feeding the hungry, clothing those in need, providing healing, and walking alongside individuals facing the challenges of extreme poverty.

Get Connected: Do you get Ascension's e-alerts? If not, sign-up and never miss another event or announcement. Sign-up online <https://tinyurl.com/ALCealert> or contact the church office. We send out e-alerts weekly on Wednesday and occasional special notices.

The Lutheran Starting Point

Martin Luther was a monk with a mission in sixteenth century Germany. His mission was intensely personal. He wanted to find a way to satisfy God, and he tried the surest means available according to his spiritual training. Luther fasted; he confessed his sins for hours on end; he did everything within his power to clean up his act and make himself righteous. Certainly then God would have to accept him, Luther thought. And yet Luther did not achieve what he craved from God. The more he sought God, the more distant and angry God seemed to him. Later Luther would grumble that the God his church presented him with was like a banker, demanding greater and greater sums of interest, while Luther himself felt poorer and poorer.

Luther's father was a small businessman in the new mining industry in sixteenth-century Germany. Luther knew what it was like firsthand to have creditors breathing down one's back making demands for payment beyond one's means. God seemed to be no more merciful than these loan sharks. Luther wished God would just leave him in peace, but this was not to be.

This personal frustration was mirrored in the larger parish where Luther served as pastor. When Pastor Luther saw others living with this same understanding of a demanding God, he knew that his problems were part of a widespread crisis. When he saw his fellow Christians trying to buy their way up to heaven by purchasing the false promises of those who preyed on the ignorant, he knew all was not well.

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But to know that things are not right is not to know what the right thing looks like. Luther's response to the spirituality of his day could not have come from within himself. Inside of himself he only found confirmation of the demanding God. But Luther was also a professor of the Bible. As he read the Bible, a different kind of God became known to him. This God did not extract interest mercilessly from people, but forgave them freely without cost. The God revealed in the Bible did not simply demand that we achieve righteousness, but rather declared us righteous for Jesus' sake. This God did not erect spiritual ladders for us to scale with our own efforts and understanding, but rather came down to meet us in Jesus. This God was not pleased to look down at humanity in anger from a distance; in Jesus, God came down to the depths where humanity lay helpless and in anguish. God was not best known in power and glory, but in the shame and humiliation of the cross. God descended to be fully in our place, rather than demand that we somehow get up to heaven.

This message so freed Luther that he had to proclaim it to the world. This alternative understanding of God was welcomed by diverse people who had groaned long enough under the old ways. Luther's message was embraced by many, and their lives were transformed. They struggled to create a space of freedom where this gracious God could be celebrated.

Yet not all rejoiced. Very powerful people, including the leader of the Holy Roman Empire, sought to destroy this new movement. But the new believers stood firmly upon the testimony of Scriptures and would not let go of the God who they knew graciously held onto them. They did this at great personal cost, but they felt they would lose more by turning back. As one leader of Luther's day put it, "Better an ungracious emperor than an ungracious God."

This commitment to God as the one who meets us where we are and loves us in that same place has marked the church, which eventually was branded with Luther's name and called the Lutheran church. This commitment to the God who accepts us as we are continues to mark the way that Lutherans understand the Christian life. Here are just some of the ways that this commitment has been translated in practice.

Given that God comes to us just as we are and offers us forgiveness, all people are invited to participate in the whole life of the church and especially the Lord's Supper. What God requires at that meal is not prior perfection, but a heart hungry for forgiveness.

Given that God comes to us and loves us just as we are, we need not pretend to be something that we are not. We can confess that we are sinners whom God alone declares righteous. Thus we can be an honest community that frankly admits we are not perfect; we are simply forgiven.

Source: Who Is the Holy Spirit? Leader Guide, copyright © 1998 Augsburg Fortress. Reproduced for local use.

CALENDAR <https://ascensionelca.org/events/>

Sun Oct 26

Reformation Sunday
8:30am Worship S
 9:45am BLAST WH
 9:45am JUMP CR
 10am Chosen (Spanish) MR
10:45am Worship S
 1:30pm Private Event S, N
4:30pm LIGHT
 7pm AA WH

Mon Oct 27

10am/6pm Chosen Study HR
 1pm Knit Wits HR
 6:30pm AA Sm Group WH
 6:30pm AMEN CR

Tue Oct 28

7am AMEN zoom
 9:30am Women's Bible CR
 7pm Holloway Mtg HR

Wed Oct 29

6pm Handbells S
 7pm AA WH
 7:15pm Adult Choir S

Thu Oct 30

10am Al Anon CR
 11am Thorp visitation
12pm Thorp service
 5pm Children's Choir MR
 5:45pm Youth Choir S
 6pm JOLT EH

Sat Nov 1

9am Jubilate rehearsal S

Sun Nov 2

All Saints Sunday
8:30am Worship S
10:45am Worship EH S
 2pm Wild Church MG WH
 7pm AA WH

Mon Nov 3

10am/6pm Chosen Study HR
 12pm Staff Mtg HR
 6:30pm AA Sm Group WH
 6:30pm AMEN CR

Tue Nov 4

7am AMEN zoom
 9:30am Women's Bible CR
 10:30am Boyer group HR

Worship Support <https://tinyurl.com/worshippupport>

Nov. 2	8:30	10:45
Acolyte (1)	Hadley Marien, Brooklyn Stigler	Marti Mustapich, Ella Pfahler
Altar Guild	Gary Bauer	Cindy Finn, Kris Wells
Communion	Jim Hahn, Sharon Coralline	Jeff Froh, Becky Hastings, Teri Quam
Greeters	Dennis and Joyce Beauchene, Linda Blodgett	<i>Always appreciated</i>
Media	Cheryl Werner	Cheryl Anspach
Readers	Maggie Mulroy	Sue Mathews
Ushers	Dennis Mohr, Scott Werner, <i>1 needed</i>	Dennis Leatherwood

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Are You Visiting?

Date of Visit: _____

Time of Worship: _____

Names: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

How did God invite you here?

How can we share the life of Ascension with you?

- E-Alert
- Newsletter: e-mail or U.S. Mail
- BLAST (ages 3-5th gr.)
- JOLT (confirmation, 6-8th gr.)
- CRASH (high school)
- Bible study (small groups)
- Choirs or other music ministries
- Serving others (local/global options)
- Starting Point (membership)



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