

THE FIVE SOLAS: A Service to Mark the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

This worship service for the commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation has been prepared by a small group with representatives from both The Christian Reformed Church of North America and The Presbyterian Church in Canada. This year, 2017, marks a significant moment in our shared reformed tradition. Together with the whole church, we remember that it was 500 years ago, that Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the church at Wittenberg, an event that set the Reformation in motion on October 31, 1517.

Over the last several years, the dialogue between our two denominations has encouraged local governing bodies and congregations to join together in mission, fellowship and worship where possible and practical. October 2017 provides a good opportunity to further encourage these connections through shared worship, and this service is intended as a resource to facilitate such sharing between Presbyterian and Christian Reformed congregations.

Although we mark this anniversary of the Reformation with thanksgiving for the foundations of reformed theology in the church that took root from this time, we take to heart the words offered by renowned church historian, Jaroslav Pelikan, which suggest that we view the Reformation as a “tragic necessity.” “Partisans on both [Protestant and Catholic] sides,” he wrote, “have difficulty acknowledging the Reformation was indeed a tragic necessity. Roman Catholics agree that it was tragic, because it separated many millions from the true church; but they cannot see that it was really necessary. Protestants agree that it was necessary, because the Roman church was so corrupt; but they cannot see that it was such a tragedy after all.”¹

We do give thanks for the ways that God’s Spirit has continued to work in and through the various branches of the Christian Church, continually calling us to dialogue, reconciliation, and unity. We rejoice that in the post-Vatican II Catholic Church of today, the practices of Scripture study and preaching have attained much greater prominence than at the time of the Reformation, and that the October 31, 1999 Lutheran/Catholic joint statement on the doctrine of justification, has staked out new common ground on the chief issue that divided Protestants and Catholics in the 16th century.²

For our part, the Protestant and Reformed churches have learned much, through the liturgical renewal of the 1960s, of the value of the church year, and many of us use the Revised Common Lectionary which is a Roman Catholic vehicle for preaching through the Scriptures.

¹ <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/anxiousbench/2013/05/protestant-reformation-approaching-500/>

² “Justification thus means that Christ himself is our righteousness, in which we share through the Holy Spirit in accord with the will of the Father. Together we confess: By grace alone, in faith in Christ’s saving work and not because of merits on our part we are accepted by God.” (The Lutheran/Catholic joint declaration on justification, Augsburg 1999, section 15).

While we are not yet in communion with the pope, recognizing his authority, we nonetheless value his leadership as a thoughtful Christian voice in ecumenical dialogue and as a pastoral figure to many of the world's Christians. We are very far from the hostile spirit of the 16th and 17th centuries which denounced the pope as "anti-Christ."³

The theme of the worship service is the "Five Solas." While this way of systematizing the Reformation's main emphases became popular only in the 20th century,⁴ the emphases themselves – Grace Alone; Scripture Alone; Christ Alone; Faith Alone and Glory to God Alone are clearly present in the writings of the Reformers. At the time of the Reformation, each of the *solas* was a counterpoint to something that the Reformers saw as misshapen within the Church at the time, so we are reminded that we need to keep evaluating our theology and practice within the Church today as well, not assuming that we now have everything right. We are Reformed and always being Reformed, according to the Word of God.

Ideally, this service will be used as a starting point for creating a shared worship service that is appropriate in your local context, that includes leadership from both congregations, and is held at a time when members of both churches can attend and participate. Instead of just one worship service, you may want to use the resources to develop a series of services (one for each of the Five *Solas*) or perhaps a shared Bible study that could be held on a series of evenings.

Of course, there is nothing to stop you from inviting other Christian Churches in your neighbourhood to join in this ecumenical worship with you. The particular emphasis of this service, however, is to give thanks for the Reformed Tradition which the Presbyterian and Christian Reformed Churches share. These emphases are some of the gifts of the 16th century Reformation which we have received, which have shaped our Churches, and which we have to share with the whole Church in our ecumenical dialogue and work towards reconciliation and the unity that God desires for us.

Key for Hymn/Song Suggestions

- LUYH = Lift Up Your Hearts Hymnal
- BoP = Book of Praise
- GSfW = Global Songs for Worship
- PsH = Psalter Hymnal

500 Years of
Sola Gratia Sola Scriptura Sola Fide
Solus Christus Soli Deo Gloria
Reformation

³ Westminster Confession of Faith XV.6. In searching for a parallel reference in the Canons of the Synod of Dort or the Heidelberg Catechism, HC Q. 80 speaks of the papal mass as "accursed idolatry" but that isn't so much about the pope as about the mass. Stephen Vicchio's book *Legend of the Anti-Christ* says on p. 214 that the language of the Canons of Dort includes a reference to the "Reformation against Anti-Christ. Against the Papacy (Roman Catholicism), the Jesuits, Islam etc." but these phrases were not found in the text of the Canons of Dort (many references to Pelagianism, which in the contemporary context would have meant the Catholic church).

⁴ Johann Baptiste Metz, *The Church and the World* (1965), p. 143.

WE GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Call to Worship

L: As followers of Jesus Christ, living in this world—
which some seek to control,
but which others view with despair—

**All: We declare with joy and trust:
Our world belongs to God!**

L: From the beginning,
through all the crises of our times,
until God's kingdom fully comes,
God keeps covenant forever.

**All: Our world belongs to God!
God is King! Let the earth be glad!**

L: Christ is Victor; God's rule has begun. Hallelujah!
The Spirit is at work, renewing the creation.

All: Praise the Lord! (*Contemporary Testimony, part 1*)

Prayer of Approach

L: Almighty God,
to you all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Gathering Songs

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (LUYH 776; BoP 316)

Dan Forrest Choral Arrangement, written for the 500th Anniversary

<http://www.beckenhorstpress.com/a-mighty-fortress-is-our-god-satb/>

<https://soundcloud.com/beckenhorst-press/a-mighty-fortress-satb-dan-forrest>

"I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art" (LUYH 586; BoP 678)

Historical, believed to be written by John Calvin himself, though evidence for that is inconclusive, and therefore it is listed as anonymous.

"Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" (LUYH 521)

"The First Place" (LUYH 15) – Matthew Westerholm – Contemporary

Based on Colossians 1:15-20, references Kuyperian thought on sphere sovereignty

"Come All You People/Uyai Mose" (LUYH 496)

Global song – Zimbabwe

"Holy God, We Praise Your Name," (LUYH 540)

Te Deum, 4th c. – Historical

“As a Deer in Want of Water” (Psalm 42), (LUYH 616)

Louis Bourgeois, historical – Could be used as a transition from opening praise into time of renewal.

“Not to Us” – CCLI Song # 4541093, Glen Soderholm

Psalm 115 - Short introit/song of approach

“Sola” – Zac Hicks

<http://www.zachicks.com/sola> for lead sheets, chord charts, video tutorials.

Good as a hymn of approach, or as a summary of the five *solas*.

Call to Confession (Romans 3:23)

L: We serve a holy God who desires a holy people.

We too desire to be a holy people who fully reflect God’s glory.

The reality, however, is that:

All: all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

L: We fall far short of the glory of God,

for we all have sinned, and sin daily,

and will sin in the future.

And we cannot cure ourselves from our sin.

But there is also good news:

Words of Assurance (Romans 3:24)

L: ...and all are justified freely by God’s grace

All: through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

L: Grace is a gift.

It does not depend on anything we do to make us worthy.

We are gifted with grace because God chooses to give it to us

through birthing faith in us.

All: Salvation comes from God.

L: It is God who initiates it.

God who gives it.

It is only by grace that we are saved.

All: Does God not expect us to live right, then?

L: Yes, God does.

But as a *response* to his grace, freely given,

and *not* in order to earn it.

Let’s declare that to each other in these words:

Holy Living (2 Timothy 1:9)

All: God saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time....

L: Let us sing a song of (dedication, thanksgiving?) in response to God’s good news.

Hymn/Song of Thanksgiving

“Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” (BoP 374) (LUYH 590)

Pulls in *sola* themes, praise/thanksgiving in response to God’s grace.

“Lord, Fill My Whole Heart with Love” (GSfW #36) – Global – dedication to holy living

“Here on Jesus Christ I Will Stand/Kwake Yesu Nasimama” (LUYH 708; GSfW 34) – Global

“I Will Offer Up My Life” – CCLI Song # 1083764 – Matt Redman – Contemporary

“Now Thank We All our God” (BoP 457) (LUYH 543)

WE PROCLAIM GOD’S WORD

Children’s Message – Two ideas for children’s messages can be found online at

<http://presbyterian.ca/worship/>

Grace Alone – Ephesians 2:1-10

Reflection – Reflection materials on each theme can be found online at

<http://presbyterian.ca/worship/>

Hymn/Song

“Rejoice, You Righteous, in the Lord” (Psalm 33) (LUYH 22)

“I Know Not Why God’s Wondrous Grace” (LUYH 690) (BoP 683)

“Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)” (LUYH 691) (BoP 670) (LUYH 693) – Contemporary

“Marvelous Grace” (LUYH 696)

“Your Grace is Enough” (LUYH 698) – Contemporary

“All Along” (GSfW #21) – Global song from Russia

Scripture Alone – 2 Timothy 3:14-17

Reflection

Hymn/Song

“Speak, O Lord” (LUYH 755)

“I Love to Tell the Story” (LUYH 262)

“May the Mind of Christ, My Saviour” (LUYH 334) (BoP 644)

“Dawk’yah towgyah/Take the Saving Word of God” (LUYH 752)

“Order My Steps” (LUYH 758)

“Ancient Words” (LUYH 762)

Faith Alone – Philippians 3:4b-12

Reflection

Hymn/Song

“We’ve Come This Far By Faith” (LUYH 341)

“My Faith Looks Up to Thee” (LUYH 426) (BoP 677)

“By Grace We Have Been Saved” (LUYH 675)

“I Know Not Why God’s Wondrous Grace” (LUYH 690) (BoP 683)

“By Faith” - CCLI Song # 5469291 Keith Getty | Kristyn Getty | Stuart Townend

“Lord of the Church” (Global Songs for Worship #39), Best if led by a praise team.

Christ Alone – Colossians 1:11-20

Reflection

Hymn/Song

“In Christ Alone” (LUYH 770)

“Hail, Our Once-Rejected Jesus” (BoP 353)/“Hail Thou Once-Despised Jesus” (PsH #395)

“There is a Redeemer” (BoP 358) (LUYH 833)

“Cornerstone” – CCLI # 6158927

(Edward Mote | Eric Liljero | Jonas Myrin | Reuben Morgan | William Batchelder Bradbury)

“God Is Our Refuge and Strength” (Psalm 46) (BoP 30; PH 468)

Historical, Martin Luther

“Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation” (BoP 482) (LUYH 250)

Historical, Latin, 8th c.; tr. John Mason Neale

To God Alone be Glory – 1 Corinthians 10:23-33

Reflection

Hymn/Song

“Oh Sing to our God” (BoP 453) (LUYH 493) – Global

“God of Wonders” (LUYH 4) - Contemporary

“O God Beyond All Praising” (BoP 448) (LUYH 557)

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore You” (BoP 410) (LUYH 581)

“The Heavens Declare Your Glory” (Psalm 19) (LUYH 3)

“Tout est fait pour la gloire de Dieu/All is Done for the Glory of God” (LUYH 273) - Global

WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD

Prayers of the People

This bidding prayer is revised from one in the Book of Common Worship, and includes an opening prayer by the leader followed by a series of subjects provided by the leader or the people, a period of silent prayer after each subject is named, and a concluding petition.

L: Lord God of heaven and earth,
with gladness we praise you

All: for you create all things and sustain all things.

L: For making us in your image to love one another
and to care for your creation,

All: we give you thanks.

L: For the gift of your Son Jesus Christ
through whom we have received grace upon grace,

All: we give you thanks.

L: For the gift of your Word,
a lamp to our feet and a light to our path,

All: we give you thanks.

L: For the gift of faith
through which we can be reconciled to you,
All: we give you thanks.

L: For the gift of your own Holy Spirit
who leads us into all truth,
All: we give you thanks.

(Choose any of the following areas of need to include in your own congregation's prayer)

L: By your Holy Spirit, empower us to show your love to others even as we pray for

the church and those who lead in it...
Silence

the world that we may learn to reverence and care for it...
Silence

those who rule in the nations of the world...
Silence

those who serve as teachers, healers and caregivers...
Silence

the poor, the homeless, the hungry...
Silence

those who mourn and are alone...
Silence

those imprisoned for defending truth or justice...
Silence

those who, like many Reformers, are refugees for religious reasons...
Silence

the powerless and the oppressed in all nations...
Silence

those who are persecuted in the service of Christ...
Silence

L: God eternal, keep us in communion with your saints of all time that we may serve you well until your will is done on earth as it is in heaven and your kingdom fully comes.
To you, through Jesus Christ your Son and the Holy Spirit, we offer all praise and honour.
And now we join our voices in the prayer which Jesus Christ himself taught his followers saying:

**All: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come.
Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For yours is the kingdom and power
and the glory forever.
Amen.**

Gathering of Offerings Doxology and Prayer of Dedication

GOD'S WORD MADE VISIBLE

Communion Hymn/Song

"One Bread, One Body" (BoP 540; LUYH 835)

"Let Us Break Bread Together" (LUYH 837) (BoP 548)

"Behold the Lamb" (LUYH 840)

"Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah" (LUYH 43) (BoP 651)

For contemporary option, consider retuned version by Jeremy Casella –

<http://www.igracemusic.com/hymnbook/lead/guidemeothougreatjehovah-CAPO.pdf>

"Here, O My Lord, I See Thee Face to Face" (BoP 543)

Probably the best loved traditional communion hymn for Presbyterians.

Verses 1-3 are sung before communion, and verses 4–7 after communion.

The hymn articulates the Calvinist theology of the sacrament as an elevator, which does not drag Christ down from the right hand of the Father but lifts the people up, for that "brief bright hour of fellowship" in the heavenly places.

"Bread of the World" (BoP 551)

Tune by Louis Bourgeois, one of the writers of tunes for the Genevan Psalter.

The Thanksgiving

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right for us to give thanks and praise.

Pastor: We praise you, loving God. You created heaven and earth, you made us in your image, and you kept covenant with us—even when we fell into sin.
We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord, who came among us as the Word made flesh to show us your glory, full of grace and truth.

We sing of the awesome glory of your name.

Sing: LUYH #538:4; PH #249:4; BoP #299:4

***Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Your works shall praise Your name,
In earth and sky and sea;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!***

The Institution

Pastor: We give thanks to God the Father that Jesus Christ, our Saviour, gave us this commemoration of his sacrifice.
At his last supper, the Lord Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said,
“This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”
In the same way, he took the cup, after supper, and said,
“This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this in remembrance of me.”
So whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.
Therefore we proclaim our faith as signed and sealed in this sacrament:

People: Christ has died, Christ has risen. Christ will come again.

Pastor: Let us with the church of all ages, stand and profess the fullness of our confession in the words of the Apostle’s Creed:

***All: We believe in God the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
We believe in Jesus Christ,
God’s only begotten son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again from the dead,
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
We 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

Prayer of Consecration

Pastor: Lord, our God, send your Holy Spirit so that this bread and cup may be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we and all your saints be united with Christ and remain faithful in hope and love. Gather your whole church, O Lord, into the glory of your kingdom. We pray in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

Here you are offered TWO options:

1. For communities that file forward for communion. (This method is recommended by the Committee as it more closely resembles the practice of some reformers.)

The Invitation

Pastor: People of God, the Lord has prepared his table for all who love him and trust in him alone for their salvation. All who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, and who desire to live in obedience to him as Lord, are now invited to come with joy to the table of the Lord.

Take eat, remember and believe that the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all of our sins.

Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all of our sins.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

2. For those who remain seated while the first the bread and then the wine are distributed and who then eat and drink at the same time:

The Invitation

Pastor: People of God, the Lord has prepared his table for all who love him and trust in him alone for their salvation. All who are truly sorry for their sins, who sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, and who desire to live in obedience to him as Lord, are now invited to come with joy to the table of the Lord.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

Distribution of the bread

Pastor: Take eat, remember and believe that the precious body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all of our sins.

Distribution of the juice

Pastor: Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for the complete forgiveness of all of our sins.

Thanksgiving

Pastor: We have truly experienced anew today the goodness, grace and gifts of our God. We have been visibly bound together again in faith with sisters and brothers near and far, our contemporaries, and those from long ago.

Let us rise and express our praise and thanksgiving:

L: Praise the Lord, my soul;

All: **all my inmost being, praise God's holy name.**

L: Praise the Lord, my soul,

All: **and forget not all God's benefits—**

L: who forgives all our sins

All: **and heals all our diseases,**

L: who redeems our life from the pit

All: **and crowns you with love and compassion,**

L: who satisfies our desires with good things

All: **so that our youth is renewed like the eagle's.**

L: Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,

All: **to receive power and wealth**

and wisdom and strength

and honour and glory and praise! (Ps 103:1-4, Rev 5:12)

WE GO OUT IN GOD'S NAME

Closing Hymn/Song

"The Church's One Foundation" (LUYH 251; BoP 479)

For contemporary option, consider doing Brian Moss retuned version

<http://hymnbook.igracemusic.com/hymns/the-churchs-one-foundation>

"How Great Thou Art" (LUYH 553) (BoP 332)

"May the Love of the Lord/Wei yuan Shen di ai" (LUYH 939) - Global, blessing

"The Church that is One/Bersatu teguh" (GSfW #38) - Global

"Church of God, Elect and Glorious" (LUYH 252)

Based in 1 Peter 2:9-10, James E. Seddon

"Somos uno en Cristo/We Are One in Christ Jesus," (LUYH 255)

Benediction



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