

WORSHIP KIT

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

**A Service for
Reformation
Sunday**



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Order Of Service

- A Firm Foundation • Melita

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

A Mighty Fortress • Psalm 46

When darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

Our Firm Foundation • 1 Corinthians 3

His oath, his covenant, his blood sustain me in the raging flood;
When all supports are washed away, he then is all my hope and stay.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

Built Upon the Word • Matthew 7

When he shall come with trumpet sound, oh, may I then in him be found,
Clothed in his righteousness alone, redeemed to stand before the throne!
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

Our Forever City • Revelation 21

- Confession and Absolution • Ein Feste Burg

- ℒ *Without your Word, O God, our lives are built upon sand:*
- ☩ **The sinking sand of selfishness, the foolishness of pride.**
- ℒ *Forgive the arrogance that places ourselves above your Lordship.*
- ☩ **Place us upon a firm foundation. Help us to seek, to know, to do your will.**

A mighty Fortress is our God, a trusty Shield and Weapon;
 He helps us free from ev'ry need that hath us now o'ertaken.
 The old evil Foe now means deadly woe;
 Deep guile and great might are his dread arms in fight;
 On earth is not his equal.

- ℒ *Almighty God forgives you through his Son, and grants you the eternal peace of his Holy Spirit.*
- ☩ **Amen.**

• Prayer of the Day

- ℒ *You have crafted a new covenant, O God, written not on tablets of stone,*
- ☩ **but upon the chambers of the human heart,**
- ℒ *scrawled not in ink,*
- ☩ **but in blood—the blood of your Son.**
- ℒ *Keep us steadfast in your covenant.*
- ☩ **Keep us steadfast in your Word.**
- ℒ *Only then will we be defended against every temptation.*
- ☩ **Only then will your people be at peace.**
- ℒ *Through Jesus Christ, our Rock and Lord. He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now,*
- ☩ **and forever. Amen.**

• Hear the Word of the Lord • Ein Feste Burg

- Jeremiah 31:31-34 •
- Romans 3:19-28 •

With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected;
 But for us fights the Valiant One, whom God himself elected.
 Ask ye, who is this? Jesus Christ it is,
 Of Sabaoth Lord, and there's none other God;
 He holds the field forever.

- John 8:31-36 •
- The Children's Sermon •
- The Homily •

- A Creedal Hymn • Vater Unser

In God the Father we believe, who made all things, by whom we live,
Who for our daily needs provides, from harm and danger safely hides.

For this, obedient praise is due, for this most certainly is true!

True God, true man, Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God was sacrificed.

Upon the cross his life he gave and rose triumphant from the grave.

Because he lives, we shall live too. Oh, this most certainly is true!

The Holy Spirit now is sent, active in Word and sacrament,

To bind the Church below, above, in cords of sin-forgiving love

As those who have been born anew. Oh, this most certainly is true!

- The Offering

- The Prayers • Ein Feste Burg

L *Lord of Mercy,*

C **keep us strong upon a rock.**

Though devils all the world should fill, all eager to devour us,

We tremble not, we fear no ill, they shall not overpow'r us.

This world's prince may still scowl fierce as he will,

He can harm us none, he's judged; the deed is done;

One little word can fell him.

- The Lord's Prayer

(If Holy Communion is celebrated, it may take place at this time.)

- Hymn • Erhalt Uns, Herr

Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word;

Curb those who by deceit or sword

Would wrest the kingdom from your Son

And bring to naught all he has done.

Lord Jesus Christ, your pow'r make known,

For you are Lord of lords alone;

Defend your holy Church, that we

May sing your praise triumphantly.

O Comforter of priceless worth,

Send peace and unity on earth;

Support us in our final strife

And lead us out of death to life.

• We Are Sent • Ein Feste Burg

ℒ *The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.*

© **Amen.**

The Word they still shall let remain nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain with his good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life, goods, fame, child, and wife,
Let these all be gone, they yet have nothing won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth.

A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

A Service for Reformation Sunday

Complete Script For Worship Leaders

- **A Firm Foundation** includes spoken Bible verses interspersed with hymn verses sung by the congregation to the tune *Melita 88 88 88*:

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

- **A Mighty Fortress** reading, **Psalm 46**, is read:

Ⓛ *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. 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 her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come, behold the works of the LORD, how he has brought desolations on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire." Be still, 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 fortress.*

When darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace;
In ev'ry high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

- **Our Firm Foundation** reading, **1 Corinthians 3:10-17**, is read:

Ⓛ *According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—each one’s work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.*

His oath, his covenant, his blood sustain me in the raging flood;
When all supports are washed away, he then is all my hope and stay.
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

- **Built Upon the Word** reading, **Matthew 7:24-27**, is read:

Ⓛ *Jesus said, “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”*

When he shall come with trumpet sound, oh, may I then in him be found,
Clothed in his righteousness alone, redeemed to stand before the throne!
On Christ, the solid rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.

- **Our Forever City** reading, **Revelation 21:9-27**, is read:

Ⓛ *Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues and spoke to me, saying, “Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.” And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed—on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

And the one who spoke with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its width. And he measured the city with his rod, 12,000 stadia. Its length and width and height are equal. He also measured its wall, 144 cubits by human measurement, which is also an angel's measurement. The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every kind of jewel. The first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass. And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

- The **Confession and Absolution** is spoken responsively, interspersed with a hymn verse sung by the congregation to the tune *Ein Feste Burg* 87 87 55 56 7:

ℒ *Without your Word, O God, our lives are built upon sand:*

☩ **The sinking sand of selfishness, the foolishness of pride.**

ℒ *Forgive the arrogance that places ourselves above your Lordship.*

☩ **Place us upon a firm foundation. Help us to seek, to know, to do your will.**

A mighty Fortress is our God, a trusty Shield and Weapon;
He helps us free from ev'ry need that hath us now o'ertaken.

The old evil Foe now means deadly woe;

Deep guile and great might are his dread arms in fight;

On earth is not his equal.

ℒ *Almighty God forgives you through his Son, and grants you the eternal peace of his Holy Spirit.*

☩ **Amen.**

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken responsively:

ℒ *You have crafted a new covenant, O God, written not on tablets of stone,*

☩ **but upon the chambers of the human heart,**

ℒ *scrawled not in ink,*

C but in blood—the blood of your Son.

L *Keep us steadfast in your covenant.*

C Keep us steadfast in your Word.

L *Only then will we be defended against every temptation.*

C Only then will your people be at peace.

L *Through Jesus Christ, our Rock and Lord. He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now,*

C and forever. Amen.

- The **Hear the Word of the Lord** readings are read by the pastor, interspersed with a hymn verse sung by the congregation to the tune *Ein Feste Burg* 87 87 55 56 7:

- **Jeremiah 31:31-34** is read:

L *“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”*

- **Romans 3:19-28** is read:

L *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. For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 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. 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. 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. For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.*

With might of ours can naught be done, soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the Valiant One, whom God himself elected.
Ask ye, who is this? Jesus Christ it is,
Of Sabaoth Lord, and there's none other God;
He holds the field forever.

- **John 8:31-36** is read:

Ⓛ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." 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'?" Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

- **The Children's Sermon** is given:

Ⓛ Good morning, boys and girls. Today I have a song that I'd like to teach you. It has some simple hand motions that you can do along with me. It should be easy to learn because it goes to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot." Let me sing it and then we can sing it together:

God is like a castle, full of might. (Flex both arms in muscle-builder pose.)
God keeps me safe and God holds me tight. (Hug arms around body.)
When the devil tempts me, God will fight. (Put arms up in front like a boxer.)
God is with me day and night. (Lay head on praying hands like a pillow.)

Let's try it together:

God is like a castle, full of might. (Flex both arms in muscle-builder pose.)
God keeps me safe and God holds me tight. (Hug arms around body.)
When the devil tempts me, God will fight. (Put arms up in front like a boxer.)
God is with me day and night. (Lay head on praying hands like a pillow.)

This song is very much like one that Martin Luther wrote. His song is called A Mighty Fortress is Our God, and it tells the good news that God has sent his son, Jesus, to guard and protect us from anyone that wants to lead us away from God. God loves us just that much. Both my song and Martin Luther's song are based on a Psalm from the Bible. The Psalm says that God is our refuge and our strength. It says that God is our help in any trouble. Isn't that good news to hear? Isn't that good news to share? Martin Luther thought so, that's why he wrote this song. He wanted everyone to remember, even to sing and hum, that good news. And I think so, too. And that's why I taught you

my song. Can we sing it together again?

God is like a castle, full of might. (Flex both arms in muscle-builder pose.)

God keeps me safe and God holds me tight. (Hug arms around body.)

When the devil tempts me, God will fight. (Put arms up in front like a boxer.)

God is with me day and night. (Lay head on praying hands like a pillow.)

Share that song, and the good news that God protects us all, with everyone you meet today.

- **The Homily** is given:

P *My dear Christian friends, the text of today's sermon comes from Romans 8:37: "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." The "things" that it is talking about are things that might "separate us from the love of Christ"—things like hardship, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword. That's the list St. Paul enumerated, the list of things that we might think could "separate us from the love of Christ." But his conclusion begins with the triumphant word NO: "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."*

"More than conquerors"? How can we be more than conquerors? Ah, that's the message of the Reformation, the great Good News which God's Word has to share with us. "In all these things we are more than conquerors ..." Because "we are his people," God says to us in our Jeremiah reading for today. God has sent Someone to watch out for us.

The Conqueror goes forth; do you perceive him? The Champion, whom God has chosen to fight for us, for all of us, goes forth to face the fearsome Foe, to win the victory that we could never win by ourselves. Watch him go forth to do battle for you, to be the Conqueror.

He doesn't look like a superhero, you say? That's right; he doesn't. He looks like one of us, for that is what he is—born among us, in our midst, a human being. And so subject to the enmity of the old evil Foe, and all those things which might deprive us of the victory. He looks so weak, so helpless, so vulnerable, so prone to defeat like all the others who have gone to face the Foe.

But that is his very strength. Although he looks like one of us—and is—there is something else going on here, almost unnoticed by the Foe. Remember David, the young shepherd boy, as he stepped down into the valley to face the fearsome giant Goliath? He knew he had the Mighty God, our Mighty Fortress, on his side. David even said to Goliath, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come

to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied" (1 Samuel 17:45). Now that's what I call trust in our Mighty God, our Mighty Fortress. It is that kind of innocent strength our champion carries to the fray, and the kind of strength in our Mighty God, our Mighty Fortress, that we can carry with us too in our battles with enemies of all shapes and sizes. Goliath was so taken by the looks of David—the shepherd's staff he carried and the fact that he was just a youth, devoid of the customary armor of a warrior—that Goliath never noticed till too late the shepherd's sling and the skill with which the youth could handle it. A champion would return that day.

And so our Champion steps into the fray. And what is so deceptive here is that, at every confrontation on the way, he seems doomed to lose. Like David of old, he seems so frail confronting adversaries that would surely do him in, and us as well:

- Tribulation? Hardship? (The Greek word here literally means pressure.) Our Champion understands it fully, for look—there are folks on all sides ready to accuse and condemn, no matter what he tries.
- Distress? (That word might be better understood in our context if we dropped the first two letters): "My soul is extremely sorrowful, even unto death."
- Persecution? The word means to be driven out .. as he shoulders a cross and drags it painfully to the place of punishment and death.
- Famine? Listen! He who fed the multitudes cries out, "I thirst."
- Nakedness? Behold! Stripped of his garments, stripped of his dignity, stripped of his life at last—and left to dangle and die in utter humiliation.
- Peril? Obviously.
- And sword. In this case a spear, the final blow, thrust deep.

Is that the way to be a Conqueror? Yes! That is, in fact, the only way. Young David knew it long ago—that one small person in the posture of defeat could be God's instrument for victory where armies of heroes had failed.

Remember how that victory was won? A stone, a single stone—a stone moved, and when its deed was done, the victory was assured, the Conqueror was evident. And so it is again. Another stone, a larger one. And once again, the stone moves; the stone is rolled away! And the message begins to sink in, a shout of victory erupts and echoes—through the valley and over the hills, across the plains down the corridors of time: "The Conqueror returns! Look who is walking back toward us, alive! The victory is won, and it can never be undone! Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord! Behold, the Conqueror!"