**Southeastern Wisconsin District**

**2015 Reformation Celebration Suggestions**

*These are SUGGESTIONS. Feel free to change and/or supplement according to your specific situations. There are many places for children to sing. The aim was to make the service special, yet not too challenging for choirs and instrumentalists. Still, there are plenty of options for more challenging music. It is hoped that these suggestions can make your worship planning for Reformation easier.*

***Not Because of Ourselves - God’s Gift of Grace***

**Pre-Service music**

*It would be wonderful if the chosen music could be listed along with composer.*

**Call to Worship (Opening Prayer)**

CW 205 – O Lord, Look Down from Heaven

*Optional. Adult choir or children could sing. Unison melody is simple and accents the chant style. Different groups (e.g. men/women, adults/children, solo/choir, etc.) can sing different stanzas. If four stanzas seems too long, then just sing st. 1 and 4.*

**Greeting**

**Opening Hymn**

CW 621 – For Years on Years of Matchless Grace

CW 380 – Lord, ‘Tis Not that I Did Choose you

*Both hymns are wonderful and emphasis God’s grace to us. 621 references the historical context of the Reformation very well. Since 621 is not that well known, if you use that it, consider having the choir sing at least stanza 1 to help teach the tune to the assembly. Have the children only sing stanza 5.*

**Invocation and Responses**

*These responses have a confession and absolution woven through statements from the 95 Theses and Scripture passages.*

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

M:When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, “Repent,” he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance. *Thesis 1*

C: **Have mercy on me, O God,**

 **according to your unfailing love;**

**According to your great compassion**

**blot out my transgressions.**

**Wash away all my iniquity**

 **and cleanse me from my sin.** *Psalm 51:1-2*

M: Those who believe that they can be certain of their salva­tion because they have indulgence letters will be eternally condemned, together with their teachers. *Thesis 32*

C: **All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written:**

 **“Cursed is everyone who does not continue**

 **to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”** *Galatians 3:10*

M: Any truly repentant Christian has a right to full remission of penalty and guilt, even without indulgence letters. *Thesis 36*

C: **Praise the Lord, O my soul,**

 **and forget not all his benefits—**

 **who forgives all your sins**

 **and heals all your diseases.**

 **He does not treat us as our sins deserve,**

 **or repay us according to his iniquities.**

 **For as far as the east is from the west,**

 **So far has he removed our transgressions from us.** *Psalm 103:2,3,10,12*

M: Any true Christian, whether living or dead, participates in all the blessings of Christ and the church. This is given to him by God, even without indulgence letters. *Thesis 37*

C: **A righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known,**

 **to which the Law and the Prophets testify.**

 **This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

 **and are justified freely by his grace**

 **through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.**

 **God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood.**

 *Romans 3:21-25*

M: It is vain to trust in salvation by indulgence letters, even though the one selling indulgences, or even the pope, were to offer his soul as security. *Thesis 52*

C: **Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel**

 **other than the one we preached to you,**

 **let him be eternally condemned!** *Galatians 1:8*

M: The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God.

 *Thesis 62*

C: **Therefore, since we have been justified through faith,**

 **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,**

 **through whom we have gained access by faith**

 **into this grace in which we now stand.**

 **And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.** *Romans 5:1-2*

M: Christians should be exhorted to be diligent in following Christ, their head, through penalties, death, and hell, and thus be confident of entering into heaven through many tribulations rather than through the false security of peace. *Theses 94 & 95*

C: **Rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ,**

 **so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.**

 **And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ,**

 **after you have suffered a little while,**

 **will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.**

 **To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.** *1 Peter 4:13 & 5:10-11*

**Song of Praise**

CW 262 – All Glory Be to God Alone

CW 263 – All Glory Be to God on High

*Both 262 and 263 have been used with Luther’s* Deutsche Messe*. They have wonderful historical precedent. There are a number of brass arrangements and descants to make them even more special.*

CW 277 – God, We Praise You

*277 is a metrical version of the* Te Deum *set to a rousing and popular tune. NPH has a rich musical setting for this hymn for those with the music ability. Congregation, SATB, trumpet, handbells, organ. (286061)*

Melodic Gloria

*The Melodic Gloria (GIA, G-2955) gives a chance for the choir and/or cantor to sing as the congregation sings the refrain. It is amazingly versatile with optional brass quartet and timpani parts.*

**Prayer of Day**

Gracious Lord, our refuge and strength, pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your Word, protect and comfort them in all temptations, defend them against all their enemies, and bestow on the Church your saving peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

**First Lesson**

[Deuteronomy 7:6-9](http://www.crossbooks.com/verse.asp?ref=Dt+7%3A6-9) – The LORD God chose his people to be his own.

Isaiah 41:8-14 – The LORD chose us as his own so we do not fear.

**Psalm**

CW Psalm 34

*Reformation Psalter from WELS Worship site (attached). Choir sings the old style English chant (in parts?). Congregation sings the refrain.*

CW Psalm 46 – 2 options

*Reformation Psalter from WELS Worship site (attached). Choir sings the old style English chant (in parts?). Congregation sings the refrain.*

Psalm 46

*The People’s Psalter, Hal Hopson (Morning Star, MSM-80-786) Simple, hymn tune based. Choir/cantor sings verses. Congregation sings the refrain.*

Psalm 98

*Children’s Sing Psalms (Augsburg, Marilyn Comer, editor) Especially good for children’s voices but adults will also enjoy singing it. Upbeat, cheerful. The “new song” is the gospel of justification by grace through faith.*

**Second Lesson**

Ephesians 2:1-13 – Saved by grace, through faith. We have been brought near to God through the blood of Christ.

**Verse**

# Alleluia! Not to us, Lord.

Not to us but to your name be the glory,

Because of your love and faithfulness.

Not to us, Lord. Alleluia!

*By Sonja Hummel © 1999 WELS. (attached) This was commissioned for the 150th Anniversary celebration of the WELS.*

Alleluia. If you continue in my Word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the

truth, and the truth will make you free. Alleluia.

*NPH Verse – Simple unison. If congregations aren’t familiar with the Verse of the Day series from NPH, this will be a happy thing to hear. Whole year (280007). Season (280006).*

CW 204 – O God, Our Lord, your Holy Word

*Adult choir or children could sing. Unison melody is simple. A great way to teach a Lutheran classic. If all four stanzas are used, have the congregation join in for the last two. If four stanzas seems too long, then sing st. 1,3.*

A Mighty Fortress (Choristers Guild CGA1324)

*A fresh approach to Ein Feste Burg. Challenging piano, but simplistic unison choir. Choir/children/cantor can alternate. A way to include A Mighty Fortress in this service.*

**Gospel**

John 6:35-51 – Jesus is the bread of life who comes down to us by God’s grace.

**Choir Anthem**

Only By Grace

*Simple 2 part for children or adult. Awesome gospel proclamation as the choir comments on the Gospel. (NPH, 289027E)*

**Hymn of Day**

CW 199 – In Trembling Hands, Lord God, We Hold

CW 392 – Not unto Us

*NPH has a setting of this Eggert classic for those groups that have the ability. Choir (SATB), congregation, optional trumpet, and organ. (286003E)*

*Both hymns proclaim pure grace. Both have a WELS heritage. 199 is listed as a Reformation hymn and has the starkness of a classic Lutheran Hymn of the Day.*

**Sermon**

**Confession of Faith**

*Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article III:9-11*

*Kolb, R., Wengert, T. J., & Arand, C. P. (2000). The Book of Concord: the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (pp. 563–564). Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.*

**Regarding the righteousness of faith before God, we unanimously believe, teach, and confess on the basis of the general summary of our Christian faith and confession expressed above that poor sinful people are justified before God, that is, absolved—pronounced free of all sins and of the judgment of the damnation that they deserved and accepted as children and heirs of eternal life—without the least bit of our own “merit or worthiness,” apart from all preceding, present, or subsequent works. We are justified on the basis of sheer grace, because of the sole merit, the entire obedience, and the bitter suffering, death, and the resurrection of our Lord Christ alone, whose obedience is reckoned to us as righteousness.**

**The Holy Spirit conveys these benefits to us in the promise of the holy gospel. Faith is the only means through which we lay hold of them, accept them, apply them to ourselves, and appropriate them. Faith itself is a gift of God, through which we acknowledge Christ our redeemer in the Word of the gospel and trust in him. Only because of his obedience does God the Father forgive our sins by grace, regard us as upright and righteous, and give us eternal salvation.**

**Offertory**

*Consider designating the offering for some WELS mission effort.*

*It would be wonderful if the chosen music could be listed along with composer.*

**Prayer of Church**

*In his German Service, Martin Luther suggested that the congregation use a paraphrase of the Lord’s Prayer as a way of learning the true meaning of the prayer.*

O God, through Jesus’ sacrifice you have restored us as your forgiven children. In his name we pray:

Our Father in heaven,

Help us to know you through your inspired Word and to live according to it as children in your family.

Hallowed be your name.

Give us your Holy Spirit to rule in our hearts as your faithful people, and use us to extend your kingdom of grace to others.

Your kingdom come.

Make us zealous to live according to your will as the angels in heaven do, so that the devil, the world and our sinful nature might not distract us from the path to glory.

Your will be done on earth as in heaven.

Merciful Lord, since you are the provider of all things necessary for our bodies; fill us with trust, contentment and thankfulness.

Give us today our daily bread.

Continue to blot out our iniquities, and help us gladly to forgive and do good to those who wrong us.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

We know the devil seeks to destroy our souls and the world lures us to ruin by appealing to the desires of our flesh. Grant us strength to resist all temptations and the trap of unrepented sin.

Lead us not into temptation.

Keep our bodies and souls safe, and above all send the Holy Spirit to preserve our faith in Christ which leads to life everlasting where we will be delivered from all evil forever.

But deliver us from evil.

Here us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

For all these petitions we look to you as King of Kings and Lord of lords. You alone hold the power to grant our requests and we worship you from whom all blessings flow.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever.

Relying on Jesus, who cancelled our sins and made us acceptable in your sight, we pray with confidence:

Amen. It shall be so.

[**Lord’s Supper**

*Those who wish to celebrate the Sacrament can obviously choose whichever order of service works best for their setting:*

*Common Service*

*Service of Word and Sacrament*

*Divine Service I*

*Divine Service II*

*If the Sacrament is celebrated, then one or more hymns and choir anthems can be sung after CW 384, during the distribution*.]

**Hymn**

CW 384 – By Grace, I’m Saved

*Consider supplementing the hymn with brass descant. Extra stanzas not included in CW are available in CW:Handbook.*

**Prayer**

O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever*.*

**Amen.**

**Blessing**

The grace of our Lord Jesus + Christ

and the love of God

and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**Amen.**

**Closing Hymn**

CW 390 – Salvation unto us Has Come, st. 1,6

*Although the entire hymn is a classic, stanzas 1 and 6 accent the message of grace and send God’s people home with a quick and powerful message.*