

ENTRANCE PRAYER: Since the beginning of time, O Lord, You have spoken to humanity. Through Moses and the prophets You made Your will known among us. When at the last Your time was fulfilled, You miraculously embodied Your Word in the person of Jesus Christ. In spite of all our efforts, human barriers often curtail the teaching and preaching of Your Word, You have always broken through those barriers sending Your chosen servants to restore Your Word. Help us, treasure Your Word. Help us read, hear, and inwardly digest the Holy Scriptures, so that we may grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, in Whose name we pray. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

"MARTIN LUTHER NAILED THE 95 THESES ON THE DOOR OF THE WITTENBERG CHURCH IN 1517. He had come a long way as a theologian, but was by no means a radical or revolutionary. He had combined his inner spiritual struggle with an exacting and comprehensive Biblical study to restore the theology of salvation taught by St. Paul. Luther's grasp of the doctrine of justification of sinners through faith in Christ had come through a personal struggle in which the Reformer had sought for a sense of certainty as to his own salvation." (The Reformation Era, CPH) We are allowed to find the truth of God, the truth of our salvation, in the Bible. We live in a wonderful era when the Bible is easy to own and fully accessible for reading. We gather in the wonder of the Word of God to worship Him for the accessibility of His salvation which has been made true for us in Jesus and which we have been allowed to find and understand as we read the Bible.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Sola Gratia; Sola Fide; Sola Scriptura

INTROIT—(Antiphon: Psalm 119:46;) Psalm 34:1-2, 11, 22

Psalm 119 was a huge accomplishment. It was written by David and has a section for all 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Verse 46 was very real for David. As king he had the opportunity to speak of His faith before other kings. Psalm 34 was written by David when he remembered to trust God in an unconditional manner. Together they give us God's Law as it concerns the cosmos and the Gospel by which we are saved.

COLLECT

The Holy Spirit brings the enlightenment of the Gospel. He brings the knowledge of Jesus Christ to our hearts. We ask to be kept from sin and defended from the enemies of the Gospel so that we have nothing else in our life but the saving wonder of Christ.

FIRST LESSON—Revelation 14:6-7

The Book of The Revelation was written in Apocalyptic language. As such it is much closer to the Old Testament Books than the New Testament. Revelation 14:6-7 was chosen in our most recent cycle of readings to replace the Old Testament on this day because in these verses the first angel preached the everlasting Gospel to all the nations on Earth. The connection to our day is how Luther received his understanding of faith through grace, exclusively through the Word of God (through his reading of the Scripture.) We hear the Angels sing when we read of the birth of Christ. We hear the Angels sing the Gospel when we read that they, "ministered to" Jesus.

GRADUAL—Psalm 48: 1a, 12-14a

Psalm 48 is a worship song written by the sons of Korah. It is a song about Jerusalem, but Jerusalem was a metaphor for Heaven. We sing a song of Heaven, to which God has invited us to walk around, noticing the wonder of the safety we find.

EPISTLE LESSON—Romans 3:19-28

Romans chapter 3 continues the discussion of Justification. Paul proved that we are far short of being able to declare ourselves worthy of Heaven. He is especially giving voice to our being Justified through faith in Jesus Christ. Justification is one of those theological terms that we don't always clarify. It means that through faith in Jesus we are seen by God the Father, just-as-if, we had fulfilled the whole law and earned Heaven by our works.

GOSPEL—John 8:31-36

First off, it appears that Jesus speaks the words of verse 31 to those who believed in Him and then in 32-36 was speaking to a different group who