

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda, NY
October 26th, 2025**



AS WE GATHER

We are blessed with many freedoms in this country. We have freedom of speech. We have freedom of religion, with the freedom to assemble. We live in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." It is easy to rely on our citizenship for proof of our freedom. In that way, we are like the Jewish people at the time of Jesus. They relied on their Abrahamic lineage for freedom, recalling the covenant God made with Abraham and his descendants. While these national freedoms are great blessings, in the Holy Gospel, Jesus points out that for true freedom, one must be free from slavery to sin. Only in Christ is anyone truly free.

Welcome to all our Members, Guests and Visitors today, if you're a visitor, please introduce yourself to the pastor after service in the Narthex. We here at St. Matthew pray that you enjoy your time worshiping with us today.

TLH 669 How Great Thou Art

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

“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.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Let us confess our sins to God, our Father.

Almighty God, You are our mighty fortress. We resist this reality when we live according to the so-called wisdom of the world. We resist the reality that, in Christ, we are free indeed when we use our law-keeping as a measure of our standing with You. We resist the reality that You are with us when we celebrate Your works as our own. Still our selfish nature and forgive our sins for Jesus’ sake. Gladden our hearts and set us free.

The prophet Isaiah reminds us, “The ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” This is our reality as Jesus forgives us and sets us free. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive You all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Introit

I will speak of your testimonies before kings, [O Lord,
and shall not be put to shame. I will bless the LORD at all times;
his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

My soul makes its boast in the LORD;
let the humble hear and be glad.
Come, O children, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of the LORD.
The LORD redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.
***Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in
the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.***

Kyrie

***Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy
upon us.***

Gloria in Excelsis

Glory be to God on high:
***and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee,
we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great
glory. O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God,
Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon
us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou
that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For
Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the
Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.***

SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

And with thy Spirit,

Let us pray,

Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. ***Amen.***

*******Choir: Sing Me of Heaven *******

Revelation 14:6–7

⁶Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people. ⁷And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Epistle Romans 3:19–28

¹⁹Now 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. ²⁰For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. ²¹But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— ²²the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom 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. ²⁶It 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. ²⁷Then 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. ²⁸For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Alleluia. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Alleluia.

St John 8:31-36

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the eighth chapter,

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

³¹So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?" ³⁴Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

This is the Gospel of the Lord

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,**

**the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.**

**TLH 262 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
Sermon**

***Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from
me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free
spirit. Amen.***

Offering

Prayer of the Church

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs. O Lord of hosts, we give You glory and thanks for being our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, especially on this Reformation festival Thank You for the gift of Your grace that alone sets us free through the blood of Your Son, Jesus. Faithful and forgiving God, thank You for bringing us to faith in You. It is through this faith alone that we are saved. Grow us in Your grace and guide us by Your Spirit in living our faith daily. O Word who became flesh and dwelt among us, You have given us the Word of Life. Strengthen us by Your Word. Lead and guide us by Your truth. Give Your church on earth faithful pastors who preach and teach the Gospel in all its purity. Lord Jesus, You are the One who sets us free. In You alone our hope is found. You are our strength and our refuge. Remember all who face adversity of any kind, [*especially* . . .]. Comfort, strengthen, and heal them by Your Holy Spirit. Preserve Your church, O Lord, and each of us as members of Christ's Body, that we may not surrender the true Gospel for any reason but be kept in this faith and fear throughout the days of our earthly pilgrimage, until that day when we and all Your people shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the reward You have prepared for us and all who have loved His appearing. To

You alone be all glory, now and forever, for You rule and reign as one God:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

BENEDICAMUS

Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.
Amen. Amen. Amen.

TLH 700 Be Strong and Of A Good Courage