

Anniversary Readings from the Lutheran Confessions

Worship Resources

Responsive Preface

Prior to the Lutheran Confessions anniversary reading, you may wish to use these simple responsive verses to prepare your people.

- P** Jesus says, “Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.” (*Matthew 10:32*)
- C** Therefore, “**I will speak of Your testimonies before kings and shall not be put to shame.**” (*Psalms 119:46*)

Confession and Absolution for the Chorale Service

ELH p. 107 outlines “Rite Four, the Lutheran ‘Chorale’ Service.” This outline, adapted from Luther’s Deutsche Messe (1526), suggests using hymn paraphrases and liturgical wording from elsewhere in ELH for the liturgical ordinary. In the interest of integrating Luther’s Small Catechism into the worship service, we have adapted the following form for Confession and Absolution from the Catechism especially for use with this service immediately after the Invocation.

This wording is based on An Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther’s Small Catechism (ELS, 2001) p. 23.

- P** Confession consists of two parts: one, that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, from the pastor or confessor as from God himself, and in no way doubt, but firmly believe that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven.

Therefore, let us confess our sins and receive God’s forgiveness.

- A** **Holy God, I acknowledge that I am guilty of all sins, even those which I do not know about. Before You, O Lord, and before Your representative, I acknowledge those sins which I know and feel in my heart. I have not kept the Ten Commandments. I have not been a good parent or child. I have not been a good worker or student. I have not served You with willingness and honesty, and I have harmed my neighbor through my own words and actions.**

O Lord, have mercy upon me, a sinner.

- P** The Office of the Keys is the special authority which Christ has given to His Church on earth: to forgive the sins of penitent sinners, but to retain the sins of the impenitent as long as they do not repent. This is written in the Gospel of John which says, “Jesus breathed on His disciples and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; and if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’” (*John 20:22–23*)

Therefore, on the basis of your penitent confession, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

- C** **Amen.**

Communion Liturgy for the Chorale Service

Another adaptation of the Deutsche Messe is found in the Lutheran Service Book (CPH, 2006). It is called "Divine Service, Setting Five" (LSB, pp. 213–218) where several historically important liturgical phrases are added to Luther's revision—most noticeably the Sursum Corda re-inserted prior to Luther's Communion exhortation. Beginning with the "Prayer of the Church" (LSB pp. 215 ff.), the LSB carefully follows Luther's wording in Luther's Works: American Edition, Vol. 53, pp. 78–80. Rather than reinvent the wheel, we point you to the LSB to consider this liturgical resource for your congregation.