



**World Communion
of Reformed Churches**

Witnessing to the God of Life

Reformation Sunday Worship Service

13:00 CET, October 30, 2022

Waldensian Church at the Piazza Cavour

Rome, Italy





Witnessing to the God of Life

Welcome and Greetings

WCRC President:

Welcome to our worship on Reformation Day. As Reformed Christians, we follow the Apostle Paul when he appeals to the church to not be conformed to the world but to be transformed by God's Word. The World Communion of Reformed Churches, therefore, celebrates its communion Sunday on Reformation Day.

WCRC Acting General Secretary:

Our worship this morning has the theme "Witnessing to the God of Life." We remember the Accra Confession in which our communion declared in 2004: "We believe in God, Creator and Sustainer of all life, who calls us as partners in the creation and redemption of the world. We live under the promise that Jesus Christ came so that all might have life in fullness (John 10.10)."

Waldensian Moderator:

We welcome you here in the Chiesa Waldese at the Piazza Cavour in Rome; we greet all people who participate via Zoom; we know that today many congregations use this liturgy to express their connection with our communion. In worship services on all continents, Christians come together today to respond to God's call to be transformed by the renewing of our minds.

In this worship, we celebrate Holy Communion and invite the whole congregation to participate. This is not a Reformed table. This is the Lord's Table. And to it are invited all who confess Jesus as Lord.

Invocation

Leader: Our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth.

All: **Yes, our help is in the name of God, who made heaven and earth.**

Praise and Thanksgiving

Invitation

Leader: The God of creation makes us one in body!

All: **Let us join hearts and voices in praise of our God!**

Leader: The God of Christ makes us one in the Spirit!

All: **Let us join hearts and voices in praise of our God!**



Song/Hymn of Praise

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Leader: God of the past, who has been faithful through all generations,

All: **we are here to thank you.**

Leader: God of the future, who is always ahead of us,

All: **we are here to thank you.**

Leader: God of the present, who is here in the midst of us,

All: **we are here to thank you.**

Leader: God of life, who has called us to be your people,

All: **we rejoice to be gathered in your holy name!**

Confession and Lament

Invitation

—based on Romans 8:39

Leader: We know that nothing is able to separate us
from the love of God in Jesus Christ.
Let us in freedom confess our sin before God and one another.

Prayer of Confession

Leader: God of life, our hearts are heavy with the violence of our world,
so much suffering through the ages,
wars and holocausts, genocide and abuse.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:

All: **Dio della vita, abbi pietà.**
[God of life, have mercy]

Leader: God of life, you love and care for us as a parent;
Christ, came to share life with us as a brother.
But we confess we have failed to live as God's children
and instead have broken many bonds.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:

All: **Dios de la vida, ten piedad.**
[God of life, have mercy]

Leader: God of life, you have called us to live together in community,
to consider one another as siblings,
regardless of ethnicity, economic status, or popularity.



Yet we prejudge one another,
refuse to love one another,
and victimize one another.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:

All: **Dieu de la vie, aie pitié.**
[God of life, have mercy]

Leader: God, giver of all life,
you fearfully and wonderfully made us
and breathed into our nostrils the breath of life.
Yet we endanger the lives of one another,
abuse the lives of young children among us,
destroy those who are defenseless,
and oppress those who are powerless.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:

All: **생명의 하나님, 자비를 베푸소서 (saeng-myung-e ha-na-nim, ja-bi-lul be-pu-so-suh)**
[God of life, have mercy]

All: **Loving God, forgive us through your son Jesus Christ, Amen.**

Assurance of Pardon

—based on Romans 8:1–2, 21

Leader: Hear the good news of the gospel for God's people!
There is no condemnation,
for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus
has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

Hear the good news of the gospel for all creation!
The creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay
and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

The Peace

Leader: As we are forgiven and reconciled to God through Christ Jesus, let us be reconciled to each other. The peace of Christ be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

(All share a greeting of peace.)


Prayer for Illumination

Leader: Blessed are you, Almighty God.
 In the beginning your Spirit breathed life into the creation,
 and you continue to renew the face of the earth.
 Your Spirit breathed life into the Scriptures,
 and we pray you will continue to speak your Word to us.
 Through Christ, the Word made flesh.

All: **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading: Psalm 104:24, 27–30

O LORD, how manifold are your works!
 In wisdom you have made them all;
 the earth is full of your creatures.

These all look to you
 to give them their food in due season;
 when you give to them, they gather it up;
 when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
 When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
 when you take away their breath, they die
 and return to their dust.
 When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
 and you renew the face of the ground.

New Testament Reading: Romans 8:18–25

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Sermon



Response to the Word

Confessional Readings

Leader: —excerpt from the Accra Confession
We believe in God, Creator and Sustainer of all life, who calls us as partners in the creation and redemption of the world. We live under the promise that Jesus Christ came so that all might have life in fullness (John 10.10). Guided and upheld by the Holy Spirit we open ourselves to the reality of our world.

All: —excerpt from the Belhar Confession
We believe that God’s lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God’s lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world.

Song/Hymn of Response

Celebration of Communion

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

All: **We lift them up to the Lord!**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right for us to give thanks and praise.**

Leader: With joy we praise you, gracious God, for you created heaven and earth, made us in your image, and kept covenant with us—even when we fell into sin. We give you thanks for Jesus Christ, our Lord, who by his life, death and resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. On this Reformation Sunday, we praise you for living in us now by your Spirit, and we pray that this bread and cup may be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All: **May we and all your saints be united with Christ and remain faithful in hope and love.**

Leader: Come, now, for all is ready! The gifts of God for the people of God.

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said,

“This is my body, which is for you;
do this in remembrance of me.”



After supper, he took the cup,
and gave thanks and gave to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant,
which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”

Take, eat, and drink, remember, and believe that the precious body and blood of our Lord was given for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

(Congregation comes forward to receive communion, or receives communion in their seats)

Response of Thanksgiving

—from Psalm 103:1–4

All: **Praise the Lord, O my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
Praise the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all his benefits—
who forgives all your sins
and heals all your diseases,
who redeems your life from the pit
and crowns you with love and compassion.**

Prayers of Intercession

(A leader will offer prayers of intercession, ending with)

All: **Loving God,
we offer these prayers,
joining our voices to the great chorus of those
who sing your praise and depend on you alone.
We long for that day when all your children
will live in your peace and praise your name.
Until that day, give us sturdy patience and enduring hope,
rooted only in Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

Song/Hymn of Dedication

Sending/Call to Service

Leader: Grant us, O God, the vision of your kingdom,
forgiveness and new life, and the stirring of your Spirit,
so that we may share your vision, proclaim your love,
and change this world in the name of Christ.

All: **Amen.**



Blessing/Benediction

Leader: The grace of Christ attend you,
the love of God surround you,
the Holy Spirit keep you
now and forevermore.

