

Children's Sermon:

- How often have you been told to keep quiet?
- Who tells you to keep quiet? (teacher, parent, brother/sister, etc.)
- Has someone in church ever told you to keep quiet?

Sometimes it's good to be quiet. When we are quiet and listen to other people when they are talking, it shows them that we care about them. When people are singing up front or talking up front, we try to be quiet so that other people can hear and experience what's going on.

But sometimes it's good to make lots of noise too! When we are invited to make lots of noise, or when we sing, we can sing really loud, or if we are ever in danger or in trouble, sometimes it helps to make noise so that someone can hear us and help us ("HELP!!!")

In our Bible reading today, David had just been made king over all of Israel. He was very happy to be king and the people were very happy that David had become king. King David thought it would be a good idea to bring the box known as the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. This was the box the people had carried wherever they went as a sign that God was present and in their midst. King David thought it was time the Ark of the covenant should have a special place amongst the people in Jerusalem.

So he organized a huge parade, and encouraged people to make a joyful noise to welcome God. David got so excited and carried away that he even began to dance to the sound of the music and the queen was not too happy at the king dancing, like maybe sometimes you get embarrassed at your dad or grandpa dancing.

So today, I want us to make a joyful noise to let God know how great it is that he is always here when we need him. If you want to dance, you can dance. If you want to play an instrument, grab an instrument. We are going to ask the congregation to sing a song with us to the tune of "O when the saints go marching in" and we are going to dance and sing right out of the sanctuary on your way to Sunday school (teachers – get ready!)

O when King David, goes marching in,
When King David goes marching in.
Oh we're gonna be in that number,
When King David goes marching in!

O when our God, is here to stay
O when our God, is here to stay

Oh we're gonna be in that number,
When our God is here to stay.

O when we dance, and when we sing,
O when we dance and when we sing,
Oh we're gonna be in that number,
When we dance and when we sing.

2 Samuel 5:1-5; 6:1-5 Confirmation & Reformation

What a joyous day. This truly is a day of celebration. Today, we have 13 young people in our midst who will be confirming their faith – actually, they will be affirming the promises that were made to them on the day they were baptised. They will be affirming that they believe that they are children of God – named and claimed by God himself.

In just a bit, these students will be standing before God and before this congregation – and family and friends – and boldly state that they intend to continue on in this faith journey – with God leading and guiding them. These students admit that they don't know all the answers, nor do they understand completely how God works in this world – but these young people know and believe that they are children of God and they are saved by grace through faith – and they are ready to go out and live out this truth in their lives.

Confirmation Sunday. A day of celebration.

Did you also know it's reformation Sunday? This is one of the biggest days of the year that the Lutheran church celebrates. A day that we set aside to celebrate Luther's bold act of reforming the church and taking a stance in what he believed – even though it went against what an entire culture was telling him. In fact, it is because of Martin Luther that we are sitting here in these pews this morning. There would be no Lutheran Church if it weren't for Martin Luther.

And so today, we not only celebrate Confirmation, but we also celebrate reformation. And I LOVE that we celebrate these two life-changing events on the same day.

As these confirmation students stand before God this day, they are also taking a stance. They are going against the norm and standing up for what they believe in. They are changing what the world tells us is the most important thing in life. And I'm proud of them.

So what is it that the world tells us is the most important thing in life? Any guesses? prosperity, status, fame, fortune, power, being a CEO? From a very young age, we are taught that we go to school to get good **GRADES** so that we can go to a good **COLLEGE** and get a good **JOB** and get lots of **MONEY** to buy lots of **STUFF** (or have lots of power).

These confirmation students are boldly taking a stand today, much like Martin Luther did almost 500 years ago, and saying to this world, "I don't agree with you". This is NOT what MY life is all about. When you boldly and loudly say "AMEN" after we bestow a blessing – God's blessing onto you – you are taking a stand and saying to this world, "God is bigger than this. God is bigger than money and stuff, and God has a plan for me, and for His kingdom here on this world...and by golly, I'm a part of God's plan!".

From Paul's declaration that we have all been justified by grace to Luther's hammering his theses against the Wittenburg Church door, the whole Reformation-thing was intended to tell

us that, in the end, we don't need to do anything, earn anything, say anything, accomplish anything, or buy anything to earn God's love. It was a gift of Pure Grace, and we already have it, and most of our problems – and, indeed, the world's problems – start when we forget we already have love and worth and dignity as a gift from God and instead we try to earn it or take it from someone else.

It's not about what we do. It's about what has been done for us. And because of this, we are free to live out that truth in our lives as a part of God's reign here on this earth.

Each of our students who are being confirmed today had to do a final project. A faith project. They got to pick what these projects would be, but it had to be something that they enjoyed doing using the gifts and talents that God has given them. Do you know what kind of projects these students did?

Tie blankets that will be given to the food shelf and Aitkin Social services to be given to children when they are placed into foster care and to the hospital to be given to single mothers when they give birth. **Picnic tables** that have movable benches for our older members so they are able to get in and out of the table easier to be used at Maria Chapel, **clearing brush and rock** and boulders around the fire ring at maria chapel so that we are able to better use it. **Inspirational Artwork and photography** with scriptures attached to them, **faith care packages** that will be delivered to folks at Aicota Assisted living, **A garage sale** to raise funds for little Jacob Olavson who needs some new medication to help with his epilepsy. **Duck houses** to be used to better care for God's creation. **A blog** in which students can share their faith thoughts, struggles and understandings in which this student writes, "... My justification is that I was created beautifully in the eyes and in the hands of God; anything and everything made by Him truly is amazing. **You are.** Your hopes and dreams are; everything about you makes you something brilliant..."

These students GET it! They are preaching the gospel and sharing God's love in amazing ways. I think they have something to teach us as adults! The world will beat us up. It will throw us down and stomp on us even. Some of our confirmation students have already experienced this pain that the world brings. Many of us feel a bit that way after recent events that have happened in our community – and in this world! The Magnuson's house fire, the death of deputy Steven Sandberg, another mass school shooting in Tennessee...daily we deal with addiction, relationships, abuse, depression and stress.

But God can handle it all. God can handle our anger and our sorrow, our grief and our doubts. And not only that, God continues to use us to show love to other people – God uses us to be His hands and feet in this world – to show love to the elderly, the sick, the widowed, the abused, – to inspire others through pictures and garage sales and drawings and picnic tables and blankets.

God uses US – you and me – just like he used King David in the bible story that we heard just a bit ago. David wasn't anyone special before he became king. He was the youngest of Jesse's sons and was found out tending to the sheep when the prophet Samuel came by looking for the

next king. But God works in unpredictable ways and through unexpected people, and the prophet Samuel was called to look beyond appearance and status and chose David to be the King. And David was faithful to God, and in turn God used David to become one of the greatest kings that Israel would ever experience.

Are we living in response to God's call for us? We have been set free by God's grace that he freely gives us and we now know that we are free to love and care for others, and perform selfless acts – even when the world tells us to do otherwise. We are free to be reformers of this world. And it is our faith and God that will carry us through – faith is a powerful thing – and having a God that loves us and cares for us and uses us here on this earth is even more powerful!

So maybe today, as our 13 young people confirm their faith, maybe we should all do it. Maybe the world has gotten a hold of us and it is time to re-confirm your faith in God – reconfirm your belief that it is by God's gift of grace alone that we are saved – we didn't do anything to deserve it, nor can we do anything to earn it, but it is a gift! And with that gift, we now are free to love and care and be the church that God has made us to be. And with that gift, we now are free to take a stand and show the world that God is alive and present and active in our world today. Let today be confirmation Sunday for us all. Let today be reformation Sunday for us all.

Thanks be to God. Amen.