

The City Church, New York

The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession – Sunday June 25, 2006

On this day in 1530, and risking his life, Philipp Melanchthon formally presented his masterful formulation of the Lutheran theology to the Holy Roman Emperor at Augsburg. With the endorsement of the German princes, it was accepted and the door to religious freedom from the corrupt papal powers was opened.

Let us pray

Our Triune God:

On this, another Trinity Sunday, we bow in awe before the Overwhelming Mystery of Your Holy Presence. And yet we do so in Your word's full assurance that we also come as children come to a loving Father, and as brothers and sisters together with our Elder Brother, Jesus. Aware that it is to You – Almighty God, yet, Heavenly Father – we come in humility, knowing that we won't be humiliated. We come with joy, knowing that You joy in us and in all Your creation. We thank You for giving Your only begotten Son to save us and the world from the mess we made of ourselves and all we touched. We come to You in prayer because, as our brother Philipp said, "trouble and perplexity drive us to prayer." And we come in anticipation of our repeated experience that, in prayer, as he said, our trouble and perplexity are "driven away" as we rest in our loving Father's arms.

We praise You for this, another service of worship together. May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord. May we learn to love You more. May we grow in grace for the service to which You've called us. May we not be ashamed of our Savior and not fail to speak up in identification with him. May we not fail to love each other as our Savior loved us. May we treat all our neighbors as we, ourselves, want to be treated. And so following what he said was the whole law and the prophets, may we do all we can do to work for liberty and justice for all. May we work against every effort at restricting the freedoms of others when we expect and enjoy those same freedoms for ourselves. Deliver us from all selfishness and all self-deception

We thank You that You, Yourself, hold us in prayer. You hear us more clearly than we hear ourselves, for You edit our foolish petitions, groaning with us, and for us in our real needs. So with this reassurance, we add these words that Jesus taught us to pray, saying:

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. Amen.