Prayer
Scripture: Ps. 37:1-7
Hymn: 413 "In the Hour of Trial"

THE HEIGHT OF ZWINGLI'S REFORMATION:

In 1529 Zwingli's reformation in German Switzerland reached its high point. Up to 1526 it had been limited to the canton of Zurich. Between 1526 and 1529 it spread through Northern Switzerland and Southern Germany. Zwingli was the religious leader in this territory and was praised and trusted as no other man of his day in this part of Europe. All who accepted his theology looked to him for direction in the management of the churches. The congregations were under the control of the local authorities. The congregations held their own independent church courts. Common opposition to Anabaptists, Lutherans and Catholics resulted in a bond of union that gradually produced uniformity of doctrine and church government. Synods attended by delegations from the various places met to consider religious, political and commercial problems. The delegations consisted of civil and ecclesiastical representatives. They discussed trade, how to deal with Anabaptists and Lutherans, how to resist Catholics, using the property of the monasteries for education, forming common creeds and liturgies.

Zurich, too, was at the height of its power. The council declared on February 11, 1529, that Zurich was free and subject to no emperor or lord; like France, Venice or any other state, Zurich ordered persons and property as the council thought best. Zurich sent a protest to Luzern against the satires of Thomas Murner whose Heretics! Calendar was offensive. Non-Reformers had only the barest civil rights in Zurich and no chance of holding office. Attendance at a mass even outside the city was punished by fine and the eating of fish on Friday instead of meat was a crime to be punished.

Zwingli encouraged the synods because he felt it was desirable to have regular interchange of views. The synods were democratic but Zurich was the model. Zwingli was the presiding officer at synods and local magistrates freely administered their own local churches.

"Christian Burgher Rights" was the name given to the synods which began on December 25, 1527, when Zurich concluded its alliance with Constance. By September, 1529, it included Bern, St. Gall, Biel, Mulhausen, Basel and Schaffhausen. Zwingli was anxious to extend the alliance.

THE DIET OF SPEIER (1529):

The Catholic majority at the Diet of Speier, led by the emperor and the papal representatives, ordered the reinstatement of the mass in those portions of the empire where it had been discontinued, and ordered Zwinglian and Anabaptist heresies to be destroyed. The Lutherans rejoiced at the Zwinglians being lumped with Anabaptists for destruction as heretics. Both Lutherans and Catholics scornfully called Zwinglians "Sacramentarians." Nine of the fourteen cities that on April 19, 1529, signed the "Protest" from which "Protestant" is derived, were Zwinglian, giving the Zwinglians good claim to being Protestants. Philip of Hesse protested the outrage of condemning the Zwinglians unheard and Melanchthon sided with him. Zwingli later expressed gratitude to Philip. It was this Diet that prompted Philip to press for the Marburg Colloquy between Luther and Zwingli.

THE FIRST CAPPEL WAR:

On September 11, 1528, while monks were celebrating mass in the monastery of St. John near Wildhaus, Zwinglian peasants burst into
the chapel, destroying the organ and the images. The abbot appealed to Schwyz for help in suppressing Protestantism. At the meeting of the Diet, September 23, Schwyz called on the Diet to punish the guilty peasants. Zurich on September 28 defended the actions of the peasants. Violence called for violence.

The five Catholic Cantons (Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Luzern, and Zug) banded together in 1528 into "The Christian Union" to oppose Zwinglianism. They began preparing for war.

In January of 1529 the pictures were removed from the church in Wesen and burned in the presence of delegates from Schwyz. On March 17 the church in Bremgarten in Argau adopted the ideas of Zwingli after its priest, Bullinger, openly declared himself in a sermon from the pulpit as favoring the Zwinglians. On April 22 the five Catholic Cantons concluded a treaty with Ferdinand of Austria in which both sides were pledged to destroy the Zwinglian movement.

The aged abbot of St. Gallen was ill and expected to die. Zwingli and Zurich made plans to seize the monastery on the death of the abbot and to secularize its wealthy lands. Some of the monks had already adopted the ideals of Zwingli while others remained fiercely Catholic.

The secret council of Zurich on January 29, 1529, issued secret orders for St. Gallen to be seized as soon as the abbot died. Some of the people broke into the abbey on February 23, taking over for Zurich, without waiting for the death of the abbot. The Catholic monks elected a new abbot who fled to Bregenz and called for the defense of his monastery. The illegal action of Zurich brought the war closer.

Throughout the early months of 1529 Zwingli was very busy drawing up elaborate plans for battle.

Both sides were maneuvering for control of the Common Lands administered by the cantons. In these Common Lands were several cities that were free to choose Reformed or Catholic side. Thurgau decided for Reform. Savoy attacked Geneva. The Valais and the Christian Union supported Savoy. More free cities joined the Reform but Catholic embassies regained some of the cities. The Catholic majority hesitated to use force. In May Unterwalden sent a new bailiff to take office in territory that had been administered by Unterwalden before the territory had announced for Reform. Zurich resolved to prevent the Bailiff's entrance into the territory.

Zurich was ready for war but Bern held back and tried to negotiate a peace. Early in June 1529, Zwingli sent a letter to Bern urging that war was the only way to peace and to preserve liberty. Their alliance was with God and for the truth of the Gospel. Bern still insisted that peace would obtain better results than war.

Jacob Kaiser, a Zwinglian preacher, who lived in Zurich, was appointed pastor of the church of Oberkirch, a village claimed by both Glarus and Schwyz. As he went to his parish he was seized by representatives of the magistrade of Schwyz and taken to Schwyz where he was tried and condemned to be burned. In spite of strong protests from Zurich he was burned.

On June 8, 1529, Zurich declared war and proceeded with the plan of campaign prepared by Zwingli. The Five Cantons were not as well prepared and were depending on Austrian help. Zwingli's plan was to strike suddenly and to end the war before any Austrian help could arrive. Zurich would quickly crush the Catholic Cantons and force them to accept Zwingli's terms of surrender: 1) the Catholic Cantons would have to renounce their alliance with Austria and publicly burn the treaty with Ferdinand; 2) they would have to renounce foreign pensions and mercenary service; 3) they would have to allow free preaching in their own territory; 4) they would have to pay compensation to the family of Kaiser; 5) they would have to pay to Bern and Zurich indemnity covering the cost of the war.
In accordance with Zwingli's plan small detachments were rushed to strategic points to protect the Common Lands. Zwingli, as chaplain, with beautiful halberd, rode on horseback at the head of the thirty thousand troops from Zurich and her allies. This main force marched quickly to Cappel, a border town ten miles south of Zurich.

The war was over almost as soon as it was begun. Not a life was lost on either side. When the two armies confronted each other, the officers of neither side were willing to issue the order to start the battle. They realized it would be Swiss fighting Swiss—brothers killing brothers. Hans Aebli, the chief magistrate of Glarus, rushed from camp to camp, trying to arrange peace. Bern sided with Aebli in his efforts at mediation. While the leaders negotiated the soldiers fraternized. Several weeks earlier Zwingli had ordered an embargo on the shipment of grain to Schwyz. The soldiers of the Catholic Cantons had no bread. They did have milk. The Zurich army had plenty of bread but no milk. The two armies shared bread and milk and talk.

Zwingli strongly protested the fraternization. Otherwise the Zurich army was under very strict discipline. Daily religious services were held with hymns, singing, and prayer. There was no drunkenness, cursing, or prostitutes. It was an army of "puritans."

In spite of Zwingli's calls for war, peace was arranged at Cappel on June 21, 1529. No force was to be used in religious matters. Neither side was to attack the other for its faith. In the Common Lands religious offenders should not be punished. The majority would decide for or against the mass and other religious questions and only men of honor and moderation would be sent in as bailiffs. Free preaching was to be allowed. The Catholic Cantons' alliance with Austria was renounced and the treaty with Ferdinand was publicly burned. Indemnification was to be paid to the family of Pastor Kaiser. The Catholic Cantons were to pay war indemnity determined by arbitrators to Bern and Zurich. If the Catholic Cantons defaulted in indemnity payments, Bern and Zurich were granted the right to close their markets to the Five Cantons. The abolition of foreign pensions and mercenary service was recommended. Abusive speech on both sides was to cease.

When the peace was announced there was thanksgiving and rejoicing among the soldiers on both sides. The terms were highly approved by the Reformed. Bern had felt that Zwingli's terms were too harsh. The Catholic Cantons considered the terms humiliating. Zwingli distrusted the Catholic Cantons and declared that the peace really meant war and not peace. He saw loopholes in the treaty that would mean future war. He declared that while the Catholic enemy was weak he spoke fair and made peace. At a future time when he was strong and fully armed he would make no peace nor would he spare the Zwinglians.

Zurich was at the height of her power but the peace contained the seeds of future war. The Zwinglians thought the free preaching extended to the Catholic Cantons themselves. The Five Cantons insisted that the free preaching applied only to the Common Lands. By August, 1529, Zwingli was convinced another war was inevitable.

THE MARBURG COLLOQUIY:

The lull in Swiss affairs following the first peace of Cappel allowed Zwingli to go to Marburg on the invitation of Philip of Hesse to meet with Luther. Zwingli and Philip hoped for a military alliance. Zwingli and Luther were able to agree on fourteen and a half proposition but strongly disagreed on the Lord's Supper. Luther insisted that Christ was present in the elements. Zwingli insisted that the Supper was a symbol. The disagreement made impossible the military alliance.

THE SCHWABACH ARTICLES:

Luther, on his return to Wittenburg from Marburg, drew up the Schwabach Articles, containing the propositions he had maintained at Marburg. He declared that the true church was the church that held
these articles. The true church could form no alliance with anyone who denied any of these articles.

Zwingli's views continued to spread in south German cities where dislike of Luther's alliance with the princes was strong. Augsburg had been on Zwingli's side since 1527. Conrad Sam of Ulm supported Zwingli. Ulrich of Württemberg was won by Oecolampadius and by Zwingli's sermons. Philip of Hesse continued to correspond secretly in code with Zwingli. Hedio from Basel supported Zwingli in Mainz. Froschauer was the Zwinglian leader in Frankfort. The Strassburg preachers spread Zwinglianism down the Rhine. Carl Stadt carried Zwingli's message to Friesland. Luther could not understand the rapid spread of Zwingli's doctrine and ascribed it to the devil. In Nurnberg Zwingli's books were forbidden as "books of the devil."

Zwingli's questioning the reality of any presence of Christ in the elements and his denial of supernatural grace in the Sacrament made him the revolutionary theologian of the Reformation. His making the Lord's Supper purely symbolical brought it down from the supernatural to the human plane. In this he was followed by later Sacramentarians, Socinians and radical sects. Zwingli's divergence from Rome went far deeper than Luther's objections to the pope and abuses in church practice.

ZWINGLI'S CONTINUING POLITICAL ACTIVITY:

After Marburg Philip of Hesse and the Duke of Württemberg wanted to join the Christian Burgher Rights. Philip wanted to bring in the Protestant princes and cities of Northern Germany. Bern and other Swiss cities opposed all foreign alliances. Zwingli hoped to bring into the league all the Southern German Protestant cities, France, and Venice. Venice rejected Zwingli's overtures and made a treaty with the emperor. The king of France, although a Catholic, had no scruples against negotiations with heretics if they were useful as a balance of power against the emperor. The French spent large sums in Switzerland to promote an alliance. The emperor feared to take action against the Swiss lest he provoke such an alliance. Bern opposed any alliance with Württemberg for fear of provoking Austria.

THE DIET OF AUGSBURG:

In November, 1529, the German princes met in Schmalkalden. John of Saxony led the majority in their declaration that any military alliances would be subordinated to theological agreement. Philip of Hesse was distressed.

The Emperor Charles V after his victories over France and the pope declared his intention to turn his attention to Germany and to end division and heresy there. On January 21, 1530, he sent out invitations to a meeting of the Diet to be held in Augsburg, beginning on April 6. He proposed to let the Protestants state their case and to try to resolve differences. Luther could not attend because he was under the double ban. Zwingli considered going if Philip of Hesse would guarantee his safety, but it was decided that Philip's guarantee could not provide safety. Oecolampadius suggested that Zurich, Basel, and Bern unite in choosing a delegate who would join the delegates from Strassburg in presenting the Reformed case to the emperor.

The meeting in Augsburg was a carefully and elaborately prepared display of imperial and Catholic power. It was a drama of protocol and tradition. The emperor made an impressive entrance with his brother, Ferdinand of Austria, Cardinal Campeggio as papal legate, a host of Catholic princes, cardinals, archbishops and bishops. There was an escort of a thousand foot soldiers. In the cathedral the Archbishop of Mainz in magnificent vestments celebrated mass. The Protestants felt much out of place and greatly intimidated. The emperor had taken elaborate precautions against any Protestant preaching. He called for a return to the church. The princes of Brandenburg and Philip of Hesse replied that they would offer their heads to the emperor's executioner before they would deny God and His Gospel. Both Catholics
and Lutherans spoke so bitterly against Zwinglians that Bucer and Capito, delegates from Strassburg, hid themselves for a time. The divisions among the Protestants put them at a great disadvantage and were embarrassing.

The emperor ordered the Protestants to submit statements of their case. Melanchthon prepared his "Augsburg Confession" which was presented to the emperor on June 25. Luther who was kept informed of the proceedings was not happy with it. The leading German princes signed the Confession but felt that Melanchthon had been too compromising. Melanchthon tried to be as conciliatory as possible in hopes of restoring unity while reforming the church. The German princes thought Melanchthon was naive. Worldly wise, they distrusted the emperor and the Catholics. Melanchthon attempted to show from the ancient writings that the Lutherans had departed from the ancient Catholic Church in no vital or essential respect. He repudiated the ancient heresies along with Zwinglians and Anabaptists. He did not mention the distinctive Lutheran doctrines of the sole authority of Scripture nor the universal priesthood of all believers. He did reject the invocation of saints, the mass, the denial of the cup to the laity, monastic vows, and prescribed fasting. Cardinal Compeggio advised the emperor to appoint Roman theologians to examine the Confession and John Eck was made the chief examiner. Eck and the theologians drew up a confutation of the Confession. The Catholic majority declared that the Lutherans had been duly confuted and they were given six months (until April 15, 1531) to conform to Catholic practice.

Melanchthon's compromising attitude cost him face with the Lutheran princes. He hastily prepared his Apology, a strong defense of Lutheranism, which he published in 1531.

Bucer and Capito submitted to the emperor on July 11, a confession in the names of Strassburg, Constance, Nemmingen, and Lindau, which came to be known as the Tetrapolitana. It affirmed the sole authority of Scripture, rejected the images, and affirmed the true body and blood of Christ were given in the Supper to nourish souls. They tried to come as close as possible to the Lutheran view. The Catholic majority treated the Tetrapolitana with scorn and rejected it, ordering the Zwinglians to give up their heresy. In November at the meeting of the Swiss Diet at Basel, both Basel and Zurich rejected the Tetrapolitana.

Zwingli prepared and sent to the emperor his own confession, Fidei ratio ad Carolum Imperatorem, which expounded the Nicene faith, Wyclif's doctrine of the invisible church, his own idea of the Sacraments as symbols. He denounced images, exalted the office of the preacher, and discussed the relations of church and state. He strongly condemned the Anabaptists. Zwingli's confession was ignored.

When the Diet of Augsburg came to an end in November, 1530, the Lutherans and Zwinglians went home with the emperor's threat that if they did not conform he would crush them with military might. In December, 1530, the German Lutheran princes formed the Schmalkalden League for defense. Philip of Hesse wanted to bring the Swiss into the League. Bucer and the Strassburg preachers labored so arduously to resolve the differences between Lutherans and Zwinglians that they were accused of being Lutherans. The German princes rejected the idea of accepting the Swiss into the League until they would reject their Confession and adopt that of the League. Zwingli declared he would never sign the Schmalkalden articles.

THE LAST YEAR AND DEATH OF ZWINGLI:

Early in 1531 Ferdinand of Austria urged the emperor that the Zwinglians were a greater threat to the empire than the Lutherans. The Catholic Cantons, still smarting from defeat, renewed their alliance with Austria and began preparing for war.

At the meeting of the Swiss Diet in January, 1531, the Five Cantons protested the seizure of St. Gallen by Zurich. At another
meeting of the Diet in March, Zwingli submitted a list of complaints against the Catholic Cantons, giving specific cases of persecution against Evangelical preachers. The situation continued to deteriorate. Zwingli urged immediate military action before the Catholic Cantons grew too strong. Zurich and the Zwinglian cities did not listen and did not follow his advice to prepare for the coming war. Plague broke out in Zurich in the late summer.

In Zurich Zwingli was losing power and influence. The unrestrained power of the Privy Council had grown distasteful. There was growing resentment against Zwingli's stern discipline. The nobility began to try to recover some of their former powers. There was growing resentment against Zwingli's efforts at foreign-alliances. There was great discontent among tradesmen and artisans over economic conditions. Zurich had suffered the loss of trade. There was growing criticism of the closing of the monasteries and the confiscation of their property. Zwingli's sermons had lost much of their charm for the people. There was widespread feeling that Zwingli was the cause of all the troubles.

On July 26, 1531, he asked permission to resign his office and on July 28 expressed a desire to devote himself to preaching and teaching.

In the late summer in addition to the plague there were many strange signs and portents reported. Zwingli declared they pointed to death and defeat.

The Catholic Cantons paid the indemnity but refused to admit Evangelical preaching. Zwingli urged war but Bern insisted that instead of war a food embargo be declared against the Five Cantons. Facing starvation or war, the Catholic Cantons assembled their forces at Zug on October 4. On October 9 their troops crossed the border. When the news reached Zurich only twelve miles away the Council hastily took action. George Boldli was appointed to lead an advance guard to make a stand the next morning. About noon, October 10, he left Zurich with 1,200 men to make a stand at Cappel. His artillery arrived during the night. A general call to arms went out but the response was far from adequate. On Wednesday, October 11, the main army of about 1,500 men set out for Cappel. Zwingli as pastor and chaplain, in helmet, shirt of mail with side sword and handgun, rode at the head of the troops. The battle began in the late afternoon and went badly for the Zurchers who faced 8,000 Catholic troops who were well prepared. When Zwingli arrived with his weary and poorly armed troops, he rushed them into the battle to aid their hard pressed comrades. The Zurichers fought bravely but the unequal fight became a rout.

Zwingli fell in the battle. A Catholic plundering the dead came upon the wounded Zwingli and offered to call a priest to hear his dying confession. Zwingli shook his head in refusal. Other Catholics who had come up concluded that he was of the Reformed faith. They cursed him and finished him off with the sword.

On the morning of October 12, Zwingli's body was recognized and word spread that the heretic was dead. A multitude flocked to gaze at the heretic. Then he was quartered and burned.

THE SECOND PEACE OF CAPEL:

Over five hundred Zurichers had died in battle. The Catholics were able to dictate the peace. The first peace of Cappel was abrogated. Zurich had to return the war indemnity and had to pay the cost of the second war. The Christian Burgher Rights was dissolved and no new political alliances were to be formed. Neither side was to interfere with the faith of the other nor to make religion a matter of reproach.

Zwingli's son-in-law, Heinrich Bullinger, attempted to carry on Zwingli's religious work without political involvement. He did his best to care for Zwingli's widow and the children.