Prayer
Scripture: Isaiah 12:1-6
Hymn: 480 "Prince of Peace Control My Will"

The war that had long been talked of and dreaded came soon after the death of Luther. The Peace of Creepy that ended the Fourth War between Charles V and Francis I of France, opened the way for the emperor to turn his attention to the crushing of Lutheranism. He had not made war on Germany earlier because he needed German mercenaries and the support of the German princes against the French and the Turks. His fanatical devotion to Catholicism and his dream of restoring the unity of the church made it impossible for him to think of tolerating schism and heresy. Where he had the power to persecute he had persecuted. In Spain and in the Netherlands his methods were the Inquisition and the stake. The colloquies between the Catholics and the Protestants and the General Council that he intended to hold were a part of his preparation for war. He planned to make a few minor concessions to the Protestants to confuse and divide them and then he would crush them. When the Protestants stated the terms on which they would attend a general council and when they refused to attend the Council of Trent, it was clear that war was inevitable. The discussions that the emperor held with the Protestants in the winter of 1546 were an attempt to delude the Protestants and to hide his preparations for war.

Because he had a number of Protestants in his camp Charles V pretended that he was not preparing to attack the Schmalkaldic League for religious reasons. He was only preparing to move against those estates who had rebelled against the empire. He hoped to persuade other Protestant princes to join him. Charles forced Duke William of Cleves to repudiate his Protestantism and to marry Mary, the daughter of Ferdinand. The emperor concluded a treaty with Bavaria. His greatest diplomatic gain was the winning of the support of Maurice (Moritz) of Ducal Saxony. Duke George of Saxony had been one of the staunchest of Catholics. His son, Duke Heinrich, turned Protestant and brought Ducal Saxony with him. Duke Maurice, who had followed his father, was Protestant, but his motives were more political than religious. He wanted to add to his holdings Albertine Saxony of Elector John Frederick, a distant relative, with whom he had old scores to settle. The emperor invited the young duke to come to Regensburg and offered him the title of John Frederick plus the sees of Magdeburg and Halberstadt, and immunities for himself and his people from any decrees passed by the Council of Trent against Protestants. Duke Maurice deserted his Protestant allies in the Schmalkaldic league and turned Catholic, allying himself with the emperor. It was a great blow to the League.

Charles V assured Pope Paul III that his negotiations with the Protestants were only a means of gaining time to prepare for his war against "the enemies of God." He secured the blessing of Pope Paul along with 12,000 foot soldiers, 500 calvarymen and horses, half-a-year's ecclesiastical revenues from Spain and a
huge loan. Charles wrote his sister Mary and his son Philip that he was going to war to protect the Catholic Church.

The emperor moved his Spanish infantry to Germany. He proclaimed the imperial ban against John Frederick of Electoral Saxony and Philip of Hesse for having harmed imperial interests in the Pacz Conspiracy of 1528, for attacking Wurttemberg in 1634, and for seizing Brunswick in 1545. The Schmalkaldic League had a superior military force and an outstanding commander in Schaertlin of Burtenbach, but the League refused to leave military decisions to the commander. Every question had to be decided by a council of war. Charles had a relatively small military force on the Danube in the autumn of 1546. Schaertlin planned to block the Tyrolese passes to prevent additional troops from Italy from joining the emperor. Schaertlin, John Frederick and Philip had a force of 57,000 men as compared with 6,000 under the emperor. The council recalled Schaertlin for fear of offending Bavaria and Ferdinand who was still making offers of peace. The emperor's army was increased by troops from Italy and the Netherlands. The council's excuse was that it lacked funds to pay the soldiers and Maurice had invaded electoral Saxony. The emperor went to the aid of Maurice. In April 1547 John Frederick was overwhelmly defeated at Muehlberg in April, 1547, and was taken prisoner. Philip of Hesse was induced to surrender by his son-in-law, Maurice, by promises of good treatment. Philip and John Frederick were taken to the Low Countries as prisoners. With the loss of these leaders the League collapsed and Charles was soon master of Germany. All the Protestant cities of Southern Germany except Constance surrendered. Cologne was forced to return to Catholicism. Most of Northern Germany except Magdeburg and Bremen surrendered. At Wittenburg Maurice was given the title "Elector."

Just when it seemed that Charles had realized his dream of restoring religious unity and of establishing his authority over the empire, he was frustrated by the pope. Pope Paul III, fearing Charles would take control of the Council of Trent, moved the council to Bologna, made overtures to the French king, and withdrew papal troops. Charles threatened to sack Rome and in January, 1548, declared all future decrees of the council in session at Bologna null and void. He demanded that the council reconvene at Trent.

Charles determined to settle the religious problem without papal sanction. He called the Diet of Augsburg which met in September 1547. He tried to form a new Catholic League but the princes refused to cooperate.

THE AUGSBURG INTERIM:

The emperor appointed a commission to draw up a compromise statement of faith. The commission consisted of Michael Helsing, suffragan Bishop of Mainz, Julius von Pflus, Bishop of Naumburg, and John Agricola the Lutheran. The compromise that they drew up became known as the Augsburg Interim (June, 1548). A few concessions were made to the Protestants: permission for clerical marriages, communion in both kinds, a modified doctrine of justification by faith, the sacrificial character of the Mass was weakened, some of the prerogatives of the Pope were denied, and recognition of the need for reforms. The basic Catholic doctrines were retained: the Seven Sacraments, the worship of the Virgin,
prayers to the Saints, fasts, processions, most Catholic ceremonies, and the dogma of Transubstantiation. The impression was given that this Interim would apply to both Catholics and Protestants until a national council should finally solve the religious problem. The Protestant electors and princes were maneuvered into accepting the Interim. Pope Paul III was incensed over the Interim but was assured that Catholics were not bound by it. The Catholic princes refused to accept the Interim until the Emperor assured them the Interim had no other purpose than the conversion of backsliders from the faith and that the Interim would not apply to Catholic territories. Several changes were made in the wording to please the Catholic princes without the knowledge of the Protestants. The concession of the cup to the laity and clerical marriages would have to have papal approval. In the revised form the Interim was proclaimed by an edict of the emperor.

Charles had to use Spanish troops to enforce the Interim. The Protestants were furious when they learned of the changes and that the Interim was not binding on both parties. Over four hundred members of the Lutheran clergy went into exile rather than accept the Interim. Osiander left Nuernberg, Blarer left Constance; Schnepf was driven from Tuebingen; Fagius left Strassburg; Brenz of Swabian Hall and Bucer of Strassburg found a home in Cambridge, England. The people stayed away from church services. All manner of satirical songs, posters, and pamphlets ridiculed the Interim. Wandering preachers, dodging the police, went over the country denouncing it.

The behavior of the Spanish troops thoroughly alienated the German people and aroused great hatred for the emperor. The hatred grew when the emperor did not keep his promises to many of the cities that had surrendered to him. Some Germans conformed in hopes of imperial favors. Duke Ulrich of Wurttemberg conformed to gain territory. Philip of Hesse accepted the Interim in hopes of better prison conditions.

Elector Maurice met such strong Lutheran opposition that he was allowed to work out what became known as the "Leipzig Interim." It was essentially Lutheran but kept such Catholic features as the use of Latin in worship, Catholic fast and feast days, and recognition of the Seven Sacraments. Bishop Pflug helped prepare the Leipzig Interim. Melanchthon reluctantly accepted it calling the Roman parts "adiaphora," or non-essential matters. He was bitterly denounced for this weakness by Matthias Placius Illyricus and Nikolaus von Amsdorf.

The Germans deeply resented the high handed way Charles had dealt with the Diet. Their dislike grew over the indignities he inflicted on John Frederick and Philip of Hesse. He further alienated them when he announced that his son, Philip, would succeed him on the imperial throne, rather than his brother, Ferdinand. Germans also resented the emperor's backing Mary in England in resisting the Protestant innovations of Edward VI.

Henry II of France made peace with England and sided with the pope against the emperor. The Turks were threatening the empire again. Fearing war with France and the Turks Charles's German supporters began deserting him. Margrave Hans of Juestrin, who had fought on the emperor's side against the Schmalkaldic League, deserted him and formed a defensive league with Albert of
Mechlenburg and Duke Albert of Prussia.

Duke Maurice who had gained what he wanted from the emperor and who resented his keeping Philip of Hesse in prison, decided that the German hatred of Spanish servitude made time ripe for him to change back to the side of the Protestants quickly assuming a leading role.

THE WAR OF LIBERATION:

Henry II of France with 35,000 men, moved against the empire in Lorraine. Elector Maurice, Landgrave William of Hesse, and Margrave Albert Alcibiades attacked the Emperor in Franconia where the Emperor had stationed himself at Innsbruck. Charles was overwhelmed and forced to flee over the mountains to Carinthia. Maurice and the emperor's brother, Ferdinand, worked out the Peace of Passau (August 2, 1552). The peace treaty provided that Philip of Hesse should be released from prison and Lutherans were guaranteed religious freedom until the next meeting of the Diet, at which, with both sides duly represented, another attempt would be made to solve the religious question. John Frederick had been released before the peace treaty, but was not restored to his title. Charles had hoped to thwart Maurice by restoring the title to John Frederick.

Charles returned to Germany. He concluded an alliance with Albert Alcibiades and attempted to take Metz from the French. Though he had an army of 80,000 the French valiantly defended the city. Winter came on and Charles lifted the siege on December 26, leaving behind the sick and wounded. The physician, Paré, gained great fame by his skillful surgical work on the wounded soldiers of Charles.

Albert Alcibiades plundered Franconia until Maurice arrived with support from Ferdinand and the League of Heidelberg, a league formed to enforce peace. Maurice defeated Albert at Sievershausen in July, 1553 but was killed in the battle. He was thirty-two years of age. John Frederick had died earlier in the year without regaining his title.

The next year the emperor gave his brother Ferdinand complete authority over German affairs and Charles left Germany to return to Spain for the last time.

THE PEACE OF AUGSBURG:

On February 5, 1555, Ferdinand opened the meeting of the Diet at Augsburg. No elector was present in person. Only two ecclesiastical princes came: the Bishops of Augsburg and Eichstadt. There were only four temporal princes in attendance: young Archduke Charles, the Dukes of Bavaria and Wurttemberg, and the Margrave of Baden. The Catholics had a majority in the Diet but the Protestants had a majority in the population represented. The goal of the Diet was peace. The Catholics found it very difficult to concede that they would have to give up the idea of the seamless unity of the church. Ferdinand made one more effort to save the unity of the church, proposing that they concentrate on achieving public peace and refer religious matters to a conference. Duke Christopher of Wurttemberg and the Elector of Brandenburg suggested that the Interim be the basis of agreement. It soon became clear that the only way to peace was to agree to differ.

The Protestant princes held a council of their own at Naumburg
(March 3, 1555) to form a common policy. The leaders were the Electors of Brandenburg and Saxony, the sons of John Frederick, the ill-fated "born Elector," and the Landgrave of Hesse. Attending were sixteen princes and a number of magnates. After long debate they agreed to stand by the Augsburg Confession of 1530 and to support each other. The results of Naumberg forced the Diet to recognize there could be no peace without the recognition of Lutheranism as a legal religion within the German Empire.

The Protestants placed their demands before the Diet: security under the Law of the Empire for all who professed the Augsburg Confession, and for all who in the future might make the same profession; liberty to hold legally all the ecclesiastical property which had been or might in the future be secularized; complete toleration for all Lutherans resident in Romanist States without corresponding toleration for Romanists in Lutheran states. It was just the reverse of what the Catholics had tried to enforce on the Protestants at Speyer in 1529 that called forth the "Protest".

The Romanist members of the Diet vehemently rejected the Protestant demands. Both parties seemed unwilling to yield anything and war seemed about to break out again. After months of debate Ferdinand for the Catholics and Augustus of Saxony for the Protestants worked out a compromise. The Lutheran religion should be legalized in the Empire and full security to practise their religion was given all Lutheran princes. Episcopal jurisdiction would cease in their lands. The Lutheran princes could keep all ecclesiastical property secularized before the Treaty of Passau (1552). In the future each secular prince would be binding on all his subjects. A subject who rejected his sovereign's religion would have the liberty to migrate to other lands without molestation. Two important matters could not be agreed upon and remained unsettled. The Romanists demanded that any ecclesiastical prince who changed his faith should thereby forfeit his lands and dignities but a Lutheran changing his faith carried his lands with him into the Catholic church. This demand became known as "The ecclesiastical reservation." It was written into the Peace of Augsburg, but the Protestants declared they would not be bound by it. The Protestants demanded toleration for all Lutherans living within the territories of Romanist princes. This was not written into the Peace of Augsburg but Ferdinand verbally promised to see that it was carried out in practice. The promise would have value only as long as Ferdinand lived or as long as he chose to keep his word.

The Peace of Augsburg was published on September 25, 1555. It was only a truce—both sides were weary of fighting. With the double equivocation it contained the seeds of the future ruinous Thirty Years' War. Although the words of the old motto, "cujus regio ejus religio", were not written into the agreement, they were its spirit—the religion of the prince would determine the religion of his subjects. The Peace of Augsburg recognized the territorial churches. There was no freedom of conscience for the individual citizen. Only two religions were recognized: Catholicism and Lutheranism. There was no freedom for Zwinglians, Calvinists, Anabaptists, or Socinians. There would be no tolerance in either Catholic or Lutheran lands. Lutherans were determined to give no toleration to Catholics. Catholics, filled with the
spirit of Roman Revival, were determined to regain as much of the lost territory as possible. The Lutheran Church had at last gained recognition. Other churches would have to wait and struggle for years to gain recognition. Liberty for the individual conscience was still years away. Actually in this period there was less tolerance than in most of the Middle Ages.

The Peace meant that Germany was divided into a collection of petty states whose rulers were dominated by petty jealousies. Germany ceased to be an international force. The Religious Peace made of Germany something of an intellectual, religious, moral and political desert until the time of Frederick the Great of Prussia.

The grandiose dreams of Charles V had collapsed. He abdicated formally in 1556 with Ferdinand succeeding him as Emperor and Philip becoming ruler of Spain, the Low Countries, and the Spanish possessions in Italy and the New World. Charles withdrew to a villa near the monastery of St. Juste in Estremadura in Spain, to prepare for death which came to him in September, 1558.