

Reformation Lutheran Church

3670 Perkiomen Avenue

Reading, PA 19606

www.reformationlutheran.org

Office (610) 779-0534

Pastor Stoddard (610) 334-1285

7th Sunday after Pentecost
A Service of Word and Sacrament

July 12th, 2026
9:30 AM



Welcome to Reformation!

Presiding Minister:	The Rev. Dr. Greg Stoddard
Director of Music:	Dr. Heidi Rochlin

Ushers	Bob Rutherford , TBD
Reader	Terri Adams
Assisting Minister	Judy Plica
Acolyte	TBD
Altar Guild	Cynthia Smoker-Johnston, Kathy & Charles Miller
Flowers	Russ and Harriet Clauser-in memory of our grandson, Gregory Ballinger
Live streaming	Tom Sahaida, Stu Johnston, Jared Preston, Andy Dobroskey

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

The assembly stands.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us. We confess that we have turned from you and given ourselves into the power of sin. We are truly sorry and humbly repent. In your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things we have done and things we have failed to do. Turn us again to you, and uphold us by your Spirit, so that we may

live and serve you in newness of life through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN:

ELW 524

What Is This Place



1 What is this place where we are meet - ing? On - ly a house, the
2 Words from a - far, stars that are fall - ing, sparks that are sown in
3 And we ac - cept bread at this ta - ble, bro - ken and shared, a



earth its floor. Walls and a roof shel - ter - ing peo - ple,
us like seed: names for our God, dreams, signs and won - ders
liv - ing sign. Here in this world, dy - ing and liv - ing,



win-dows for light, an o - pen door. Yet it be-comes a bod - y that lives
sent from the past are all we need. We in this place re - mem-ber and speak
we are each oth-er's bread and wine. This is the place where we can re-ceive

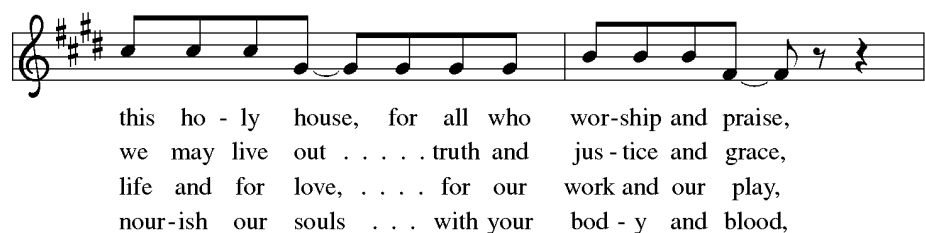
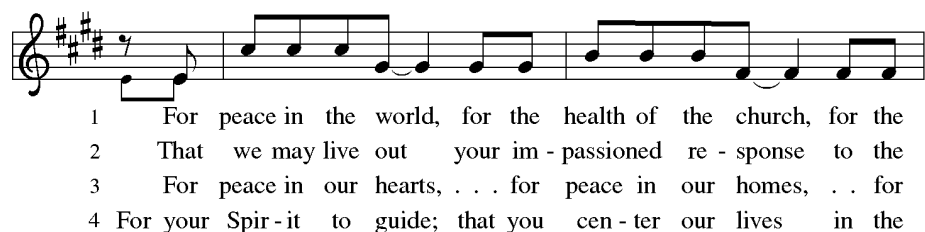
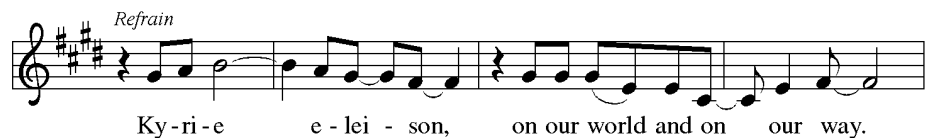


when we are gath - ered here, and know our God is near.
a - gain what we have heard: God's free re - deem-ing word.
what we need to in - crease: our jus - tice and God's peace.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE:



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray,

Almighty God, we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith and hope and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The assembly may be seated.

FIRST READING – ISAIAH 55:10-13

¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,

giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹² For you shall go out in joy
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle,
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

SECOND READING – ROMANS 8:1-11

¹ Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who

raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL – MATTHEW 13:1-9, 18-23

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ If you have ears, hear!”

¹⁸ “Hear, then, the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly may be seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY:

ELW 681

We Plow the Fields and Scatter



- 1 We plow the fields and scat - ter the good seed on the land,
- 2 You on - ly are the mak - er of all things near and far.
- 3 We thank you, our cre - a - tor, for all things bright and good,



but it is fed and wa - tered by God's al - might - y hand,
You paint the way - side flow - er, you light the eve - ning star.
the seed - time and the har - vest, our life, our health, our food.



who sends the snow in win - ter, the warmth to swell the grain,
The winds and waves o - bey you, by you the birds are fed;
No gifts have we to of - fer for all your love im - parts,



the breez-es and the sun - shine, and soft re - fresh-ing rain.
much more to us, your chil - dren, you give our dai - ly bread.
but what you most would trea - sure—our hum - ble, thank-ful hearts.

Refrain



All good gifts a - round us are sent from heav'n a - bove.



We thank you, Lord, we thank you, Lord, for all your love.

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, Lord, send your Spir-it in this place;



Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray-ing, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Assisting Minister: Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Each petition of the prayers concludes with these words:
God of grace, hear our prayer.

Assisting Minister: Grateful for your abundant provision and trusting in your goodness, we cast all our cares upon you, through the abundant grace of Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING & ANTHEM

A Community of Faith, *by John Rutter*

OFFERTORY: We Are an Offering

ELW 692

We lift our voices. We lift our hands.

We lift our lives up to You, we are an offering.

Lord use our voices. Lord use our hands.

Lord use our lives they are Yours, we are an offering.

All that we have. All that we are.

All that we hope to be we give to You, we give to You.

We lift our voices. We lift our hands.

We lift our lives up to You, we are an offering, we are an offering.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray:

God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy...

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

LORD'S PRAYER

**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 and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION & COMMUNION

Please note that, to be accessible to all, our communion bread is gluten-free, nut-free and lactose-free; both wine (served at the rail) and grape juice (in the trays) are available. When returning your used cups to the trays along the walls, please do not stack the cups. All are welcome to commune.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

COMMUNION HYMNS

United at the Table

ELW 498

Refrain / Estribillo



U - ni - dos en la fies - ta, la a - le - grí - a
U - nit - ed at the ta - ble: all our joy is



se ha - ce can - ción. U - ni - dos en la fe,
joined in song. U - nit - ed in the faith:



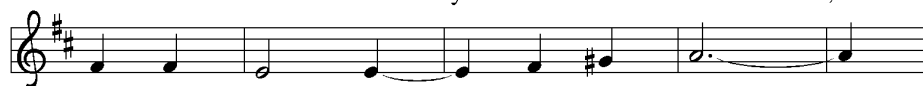
la a - le - grí - a se ha - ce o - ra - ción.
all our joy to God be - longs.



1 Can - ta - re - mos al Se - ñor
1 We will praise God, we will sing
2 We will praise God, we will feast
3 We will praise God, we will play



a - le - lu - yas con him - nos y sal - mos,
al - le - lu - ias with hymns and with psalm - o - dy;
at the boun - ti - ful ta - ble of life and grace;
al - le - lu - ias with rhy - thm and in - stru - ments;



por - que gran - de es el a - mor
we will praise God for the love
we will praise God and give thanks
we will praise God for the love

Refrain / Estribillo



que en no - so - tros por siem - pre mos - tró.
that sus - tains us e - ter - nal - ly.
for com - mu - nion with ev - 'ry race.
that in - vites all cre - a - tion to dance.

1 For the bread which you have bro - ken, for the wine which you have poured,
 2 By this prom - ise that you love us, by your gift of peace re - stored,
 3 With the saints who now a - dore you, seat-ed at the heav'n - ly board,
 4 In your ser - vice, Lord, de - fend us; in our hearts keep watch and ward;

for the words which you have spo - ken, now we give you thanks, O Lord.
 by your call to heav'n a - bove us, hal - low all our lives, O Lord.
 may the church still wait - ing for you keep love's tie un - bro - ken, Lord.
 in the world to which you send us let your king-dom come, O Lord.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

O God, we give you thanks that you have set before us this feast, the body and blood of your Son. By your Spirit strengthen us to serve all in need and to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.
 The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
 The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.
Amen.

O God, Whose Word Well-Planted

1 O God, whose word well-plant - ed yields fruit a hun - dred - fold,
 2 O God of seed and har - vest, of sun and soil and rain,
 3 O God, your fi - nal har - vest of his - t'ry's an - cient field



we praise your grac - es grant - ed to those who sowed of old,
 at - tend the word we sow, lest its plant - ing be in vain.
 will test with truth the proud - est that hu - man work can yield.



who by their wit - ness scat - tered good seed up - on the soil
 Send show - ers of your Spir - it, bright sun - shine of your grace,
 Op - pres - sion's blight will van - ish, fair free - dom's fruits in - crease;



where oth - ers, reap - ing, gath - ered the har - vest of their toil.
 that mul - ti - tudes who hear it your gos - pel may em - brace.
 and love and joy will flour - ish to clothe the earth with peace.

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

PRAYER LIST

Added - none

Reformation Family: Carol Baer, Steve Barnett, Ruth Blatt, Tom Brizek, Millie Castillo, Harriet Clauser, Nancy Edinger, Bob Galbraith, Rich Hawk, Roger Hillibush, Dana Humbert, Maddie Kemp, Cheryl Manella, Pat Schonour, Scott, Linda Sell,, Elinor Snyder, Erica Sweigert, and Herb Zettlemoyer

Friends of Reformation: Kathy Adomshick, Thomas Allmon, Sandy Bender, Andy Bishop, Claire Boarder, Karen Borsak, Michele Boucher, Mary Bowen, Susan Broome, Lucille Canta, Cathy, Barbara Connor, Carl and Laura, Patricia Derr. Bernadette Dieumegard, Wilgus Elliott, Judi and Carl Esterly, Ethan, Susan Flicker, Francis, Greg Geesaman, Robert Granko, Brian Gruber, Gino Hinnershitz, Richard Hoffman, John Howard, Deacon Kalbach, Kayden, Allison Kunkel, Batya Leidner, Scott Leone, Dana Little, Maryann and Elwood Long, Alyson, Sophie, and Avery Maas, Kathy McCoy,, Hank and Dee Narvaez. Andrew Nosti, Amy Papilla, Wyatt Plica, Chris Plue, Steve Puwalski, Molly Regan, Avery Reinert, Keith and Peg Ruch, Garrett Schanfelder, Carolyn Schrufer, Kim Sharp, Linda Smith, Charles Sperling, Herm Spitzer, Jacob Stoner, John Swartz, Taylor Tenuta, Grace Vetter, , Michael Ware, and Erika Wesch.

We pray for our Call Committee as they listen and discern during this season of transition.

Next Week's Worship Leaders:

July 19th

Ushers	Joanne Scattergood and Shirley Harner
Reader	TBD
Assisting Minister	Pam Schneeberger
Acolyte	TBD

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUMMER TOGETHER TIMES Every other summer Sunday, we will be gathering in the narthex after worship for a time of conversation, coffee, and goodies. Please plan to stay and visit a while. If you're able to help set up, clean up, or bring something delicious to share on one of the 6 dates, please sign up on the sheets on the door in the narthex. We are asking each family to sign up once during the summer. That would mean that all the slots would be filled. Join us this morning!

Clothing Bank – School has just ended but it's time to start thinking about the book bag and school supply drive. We will again be working with Pam's Promise (the food and clothing bank for Antietam School District). Items needed: book bags, 24 count Crayola crayons, large glue sticks, pencil boxes, #2 pencils, pens, dry erase markers, highlighters, block erasers, pocket folders and spiral notebooks. All items need to be at the church by Sunday, August 2nd. We will be sorting and filling bookbags on August 2nd immediately after church and Monday, August 3rd starting at 9AM. We will be distributing from the church on **Friday, August 7th from 9-11AM and 3-5PM**. Thank you for your support of this yearly cause. If you have any questions, contact Karen Hawk at karen.hawk514@gmail.com.

We are looking for children's summer clothing, sizes infant through 16 – especially for boys. Help is always needed on the second Tuesday morning of each month for unpacking, sorting and straightening up, as well as on the third Friday each month for the Give. Thanks again! Your help and donations are always appreciated.

Thrivent Charitable Giving: Are you a Thrivent member? If you are, you may be eligible to participate in a program called Thrivent Choice Dollars. This program is part of Thrivent's nation-wide grant program which distributes funds to approved charitable organizations across the country. Your Choice Dollar eligibility depends on the type and number of programs or policies you have with Thrivent. If you are eligible, you will get a written notice or email from Thrivent telling you have dollars waiting for you to donate to an organization. All you have to do is login to the Thrivent website, choose the Choice Dollars option and select the organization you want to donate to. It is easy and costs

you nothing. If you have difficulty logging in to the Thrivent website, contact your local Thrivent Financial professional for assistance. Just so you know, Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church, has over the last 4 calendar years, received \$9731 Choice Dollars for programs in the Church and community. However, if you have another organization your strongly support, by all means designate to that organization. The important thing is using the program for the good of all. Otherwise your Choice Dollars will be sent to the charities of Thrivent's choosing.

Reformation Congregational Council Highlights

Here's a quick recap of the key topics from the June 16, 2026, Congregational Council meeting:

- God's Work...Our Hands Sunday is September 13, 2026: The major activity this year will be "Fill the Truck". This goal is to fill an Opportunity House box truck. Our challenge is to fill it with household goods, clothing and/or anything people would need when they depart the shelter and move into their own apartments. Keep a lookout for information on the specific date and time of drop offs. In addition, other activities are planned. Stay tuned.
- We have begun a new project called "Pave the Road" (A shortened version of a strategic plan): The project goal is to provide information directly from the committees to council concerning their short-term and long-term projects/duties/goals. This information is vital to planning and budgeting. Working packets and instructions were handed out to council liaisons at the June meeting. Council liaisons are tasked with working with their assigned committee chair and/or the entire committee to develop the information. All that is required is some time, open communication, a pencil and the simple report sheet. Reports are due back to the council no later than the 3rd Sunday in August.
- Nominating Committee: Council is in the process of creating the nominating committee for elections of Council members at the January 2027 Annual Meeting.
- Social hall carpet: Thanks to a generous donation a new carpet will be installed in the social hall. Colors have been chosen by the Property Committee and the carpet has been ordered. We are now just waiting for delivery and installation dates.
- Synod Assembly was June 4-6, 2026: Pastor Greg Stoddard and Steve and Elisha Barnett attended as Reformation's synod

delegates. The main highlights are:

- 1) A new bishop was elected - Pastor Jennifer Dee, who currently serves at Trinity Robeson. Her term is for 6 years and starts September 1, 2026.
 - 2) The 2027 annual budget was approved along with the 2027 compensation guidelines.
 - 3) A new and exciting opportunity for lay folks to become a Lay Lead Minister was discussed and approved. More information to come.
- Joint worship service and lunch at Rustic Park: A joint worship service and picnic is planned for July 26 at 11:00 AM at Rustic Park in Birdsboro. This get together is sponsored by St Mark's Birdsboro, Schwarzwald Lutheran, and St Paul Douglasville. Reformation is invited to join and participate. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided, but, please bring a dish to share.

Health Ministry will be sponsoring a **Blood Drive**. Mark your calendar. Please consider giving the gift of life on Sunday, September 13, 2026. We will be having our Blood Drive in the social hall from 8:00 to 2:00 pm. There will be sign-up sheet or website to sign up for your preferred time. Let us make this successful for Miller Keystone Blood Bank. There is an urgent need for blood.

God's Work Our Hands: Planning has already started for our God's Work Our Hands Sunday, which is on September 13th. We are already teaming up with Opportunity House and undertaking their "Fill the Truck" challenge. Blood donations are scheduled and a blessing of the quilts is on the agenda. However, if any committee, group or individual has any other activities contemplated, please contact the front office with a brief description so we can start lining everything up. It is never too early to start. More information will be forthcoming as information rolls in and plans firm up.

Pave the Road: **Please put this on your calendar: 12 July – After church service – Classroom #5.** I have been asked to hold a short information/briefing session for council members, committee chairs, committee members and anyone else who wants to attend to discuss this important project. Whether you have started work on the project and been contacted by your council liaison, or are still awaiting information/direction you are welcome. The meeting is anticipated to be about 10-15 minutes, but, will last as long as needed.

As a refresher here is a “Pave the Road” recap from the original newsletter:

Quickly stated, council representatives will be assigned to each of our committees. Their jobs will be to assist the committee in refreshing/reviewing their agendas/goals for the near and far term. Committee members, along with anyone else, who wants to contribute, are invited to enhance current services and suggest new ones.All reasonable ideas or plans are viable, such as increased inter-committee or intra-church projects, working with local private or government groups or internal operational and administrative and process improvements. Various tools and information will be provided to assist in the basic effort. It may sound complex and drawn out, but, it places planning and decision making at the expert/committee level, provides a simple report format and has minimal restrictions..... Now, what’s the overall benefit you may ask? The final form will produce better short & long term planning, improved budgetary and fiduciary information, create clear and important church focus, reduce the need to “scramble” to meet emergencies and provide opportunities for member growth and participation. It will also help “pave the way/road” for our anticipated future full-time pastor.