

Reformation Lutheran Church

3670 Perkiomen Avenue

Reading, PA 19606

www.reformationlutheran.org

Office (610) 779-0534

Pastor Stoddard (610) 334-1285

8th Sunday after Pentecost
A Service of Word and Sacrament

July 19th, 2026
9:30 AM



Welcome to Reformation!

Presiding Minister:	The Rev. Dr. Greg Stoddard
Guest Muscian:	Jane Quaintance

Ushers	Joanne Scattergood and Shirley Harner
Reader	Jeanne Gochnauer
Assisting Minister	Pam Schneeberger
Acolyte	to be determined
Altar Guild	Cynthia Smoker-Johnston & Kathy and Charles Miller
Flowers	Pam and Mike Schneeberger-in honor of our wedding anniversary
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 694

Sing to the Lord of Harvest



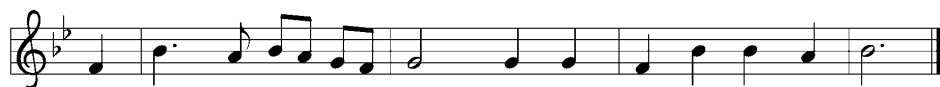
- 1 Sing to the Lord of har - vest your songs of love and praise;
- 2 God makes the clouds drop fat - ness, the des - erts bloom and spring,
- 3 Bring to this sa - cred al - tar the gifts his good-ness gave,



with joy - ful hearts and voic - es your al - le - lu - ias raise;
the hills leap up in glad - ness, the val - leys laugh and sing.
the gold - en sheaves of har - vest, the souls Christ died to save.



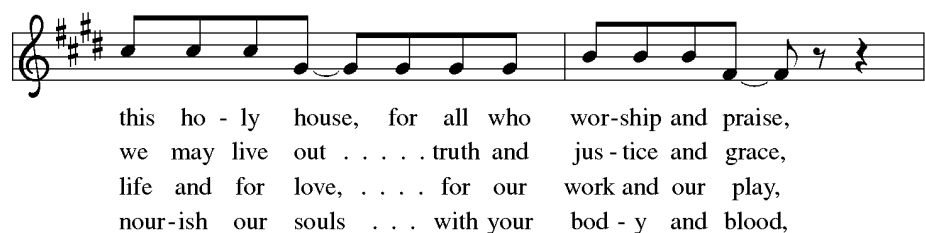
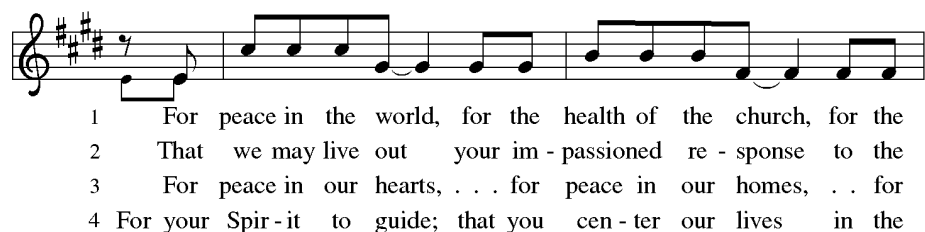
by him the roll - ing sea - sons in fruit - ful or - der move;
God fills them with his full - ness, all things with large in - crease,
Your hearts lay down be - fore him when at his feet you fall,



sing to the Lord of har - vest a joy - ous song of love.
and crowns the year with good - ness, with plen - ty and with peace.
and with your lives a - dore him who gave his life for all.

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,

Faithful God, most merciful judge, you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The assembly may be seated.

FIRST READING – ISAIAH 44:6-8

⁶ Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:

I am the first, and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.

⁷ Who is like me? Let them proclaim it;
let them declare and set it forth before me.

Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.

⁸ Do not fear or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
You are my witnesses!

Is there any god besides me?
There is no other rock; I know not one.

SECOND READING – ROMANS 8:12-25

¹² So then, brothers and sisters, we are obligated, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³ for if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if we in fact suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already

sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL – MATTHEW 13:24-30, 36-43

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²⁴ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field,²⁵ but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷ And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ ²⁸ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ ²⁹ But he replied, ‘No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’ ”

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field.” ³⁷ He answered, “The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly may be seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY:

ELW 740

God of the Sparrow



1	God	of	the	spar - row	God	of	the	whale	God	of	the	swirl - ing
2	God	of	the	earth - quake	God	of	the	storm	God	of	the	trum - pet
3	God	of	the	rain - bow	God	of	the	cross	God	of	the	emp - ty
4	God	of	the	hun - gry	God	of	the	sick	God	of	the	prod - i -



stars	How	does	the	crea - ture	say	Awe
blast	How	does	the	crea - ture	cry	Woe
grave	How	does	the	crea - ture	say	Grace
gal	How	does	the	crea - ture	say	Care



How	does	the	crea - ture	say	Praise
How	does	the	crea - ture	cry	Save
How	does	the	crea - ture	say	Thanks
How	does	the	crea - ture	say	Life

5 God of the neighbor
God of the foe
God of the pruning hook
How does the creature say Love
How does the creature say Peace

6 God of the ages
God near at hand
God of the loving heart
How do your children say Joy
How do your children say Home

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

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.

Sent Forth by God's Blessing



1 Sent forth by God's bless - ing, our true faith con - fess - ing,
2 With praise and thanks - giv - ing to God ev - er - liv - ing,

the peo - ple of God from this dwell - ing take leave.
the tasks of our ev - 'ry - day life we will face—

The sup - per is end - ed. Oh, now be ex - tend - ed
our faith ev - er shar - ing, in love ev - er car - ing,

the fruits of this ser - vice in all who be - lieve.
em - brac - ing God's chil - dren, the whole hu - man race.

The seed of Christ's teach - ing, re - cep - tive souls
With your feast you feed us, with your light now

reach - ing, shall blos - som in ac - tion for God and for all.
lead us; u - nite us as one in this life that we share.

Your grace shall in - cite us, your love shall u - nite us
Then may all the liv - ing with praise and thanks - giv - ing

to give work for your king - dom and an - swer your call.
hon - or to Christ and his name that we bear.

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

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

PRAYER LIST

Added - Family of Rev. Michael Ware, Family of Barbara Rentz

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, Rod and Patti Kline, Cheryl Manella, Pat Schonour, Scott, Linda Sell,, Elinor Snyder, Jack Swartz, 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 Schanfelter, Karolyn Schrufer, Kim Sharp, Linda Smith, Charles Sperling, Herm Spitzer, Jacob Stoner, Taylor Tenuta, Grace Vetter, Erika Wesch, family of Rev. Michael Ware, and family of Barbara Rentz

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

Next Week's Worship Leaders:

July 26th

Ushers	Kathy Miller and Heather McHale
Reader	Jackie Morrissey
Assisting Minister	Jeanne Gochnauer
Acolyte	to be determined

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 next Sunday!

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 is installed in the social hall. Check out the finished project.
- 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 Robesonia. 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.

Car Wash – Reformation will be hosting the Exeter Township Senior High School Band for a car wash fund raiser held in the front of the church along the service road. The car wash is planned for Saturday **July 25th from 9 AM – 3 PM**. This is a wonderful community project, an opportunity to shine-up the car and support our youth in the band. We would like to provide the students with some snacks. Please reach out to Dee Dee Werner at 484-332-3981 or Melanie Bechtel at 610-406-9434 if you would be willing to make or purchase a treat for the students the day of the car wash. Thank you!

Call Committee Update: Where We Are in the Process

Reformation is now moving into the next phase of the call process as outlined by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. According to the synod's official steps, we have completed Steps 1–6, which include establishing a transition pastor, forming the call committee, and completing our Ministry Site Profile (MSP).

With the MSP finalized, we recently met with Rev. Zach Labagh, the Associate to the Bishop for our mission district, to review our materials and prepare for the interview stage. All documentation has been submitted, and Reformation is now listed on the Synod's Available Calls page as actively seeking a pastor.

This means we have officially entered Step 7: The call committee is now in the queue to receive Rostered Minister Profiles of potential candidates.

During this stage, the synod reviews available pastors and prayerfully discerns which candidates may be a good match for our congregation. Once names are sent to us, we will move into the interview phase. Confidentiality is essential throughout this part of the process. While we cannot share details about candidates, the call committee will continue to keep the congregation informed about where we are in the overall timeline. We have been told that the transition of the new Synod Bishop will not affect our timeline. We deeply appreciate the patience, prayers, and support of the congregation as we wait for the next steps to unfold. Please continue to pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance—for our committee, our council, the synod staff, and the pastor God is preparing to call to Reformation.

Listening Team –Final Report: On July 7th, the Synod provided Church Council and Call Committee members the final report on Reformation's listening team process. It is 5 pages long and therefore in the spirit of brevity here are the highlights:

- Communication is critical and needs to be improved/practiced, up and down, throughout the congregation
- Healing, reconciliation and understanding amongst members, with an appreciation of personal viewpoints, needs to be a focus – respect one another
- Celebrating congregational strengths should be emphasized
- Youth activities and sermons are wanted – focus on bringing young families into the church
- Look at the need to reinstitute the Mutual Ministry committee
- Remember what is important and what the Church stands for and

strives to accomplish

There are numerous other recommendations/suggestions contained within the report, but the major thrust has been provided. This information will be roundly discussed at council and is being used by the Call Committee to assist them in interviewing pastoral candidates. Overall, the listening team process has been and will be beneficial to Reformation.

Rustic Park Get Together: We have been invited to join St Marks, St Paul's and Schwarzwald Lutheran congregations on 26 July at 11:00 AM for worship and a picnic. Meet new people, old friends and exchange ideas. Enjoy hot dogs and hamburgers on the grill and bring along a side dish to share. It is a great opportunity to join in the fun of a picnic and common worship service.