

Reformation Lutheran Church

3670 Perkiomen Avenue

Reading, PA 19606

www.reformationlutheran.org

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12th Sunday after Pentecost
A Service of Word and Sacrament

August 16th, 2026
9:30 AM



In Isaiah we hear that God's house shall be a house of prayer for all people and that God will gather the outcasts of Israel. The Canaanite woman in today's gospel is a Gentile, an outsider, who is unflinching in her request that Jesus heal her daughter. As Jesus commends her bold faith, how might our church extend its mission to those on the margins of society? In our gathering around word and meal we receive strength to be signs of comfort, healing, and justice for those in need.

Welcome to Reformation!

Presiding Minister:	The Rev. Dr. Greg Stoddard
Director of Music:	Dr. Heidi Rochlin
Ushers	Shirley Harner and Joanne Scattergood
Reader	John Bayer
Assisting Minister	Jeanne Gochnauer
Acolyte	Melanie Karasek
Altar Guild	Maddie and Ryan Klinikowski
Flowers	Bob and Shelby Rutherford-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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose compassion endures forever. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin to God.

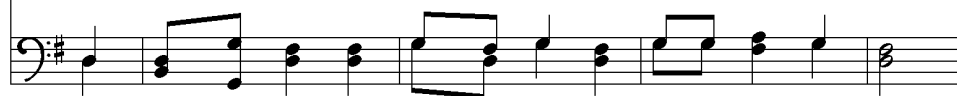
Compassionate God,
we confess to you all our sins. Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves. In your mercy, call us back to you. Your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Restore us to dwell in your peace. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." In the name of God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, your sins are forgiven. Rest in God's love.
Amen.

Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing



- 1 Oh, for a thou - sand tongues to sing my great Re-deem-er's praise,
 2 My gra - cious Mas - ter and my God, as - sist me to pro - claim,
 3 The name of Je - sus charms our fears and bids our sor - rows cease,
 4 He speaks, and lis - t'ning to his voice, new life the dead re - ceive;



the glo - ries of my God and king, the tri - umphs of his grace!
 to spread through all the earth a - broad the hon - ors of your name.
 sings mu - sic in the sin - ner's ears, brings life and health and peace.
 the mourn - ful, bro - ken hearts re - joice, the hum - ble poor be - lieve.



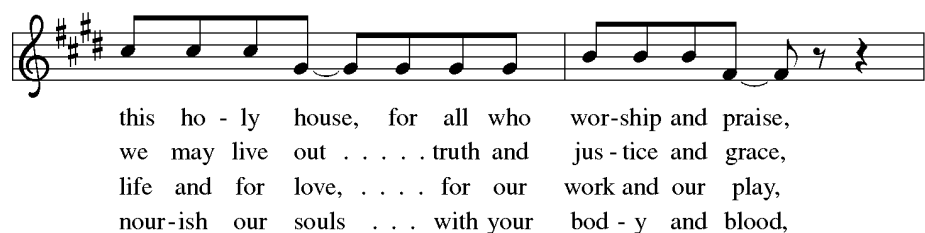
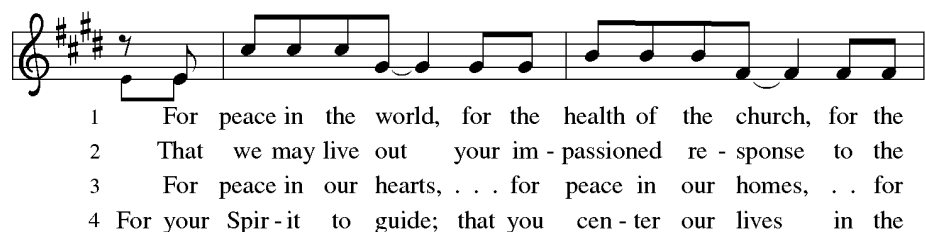
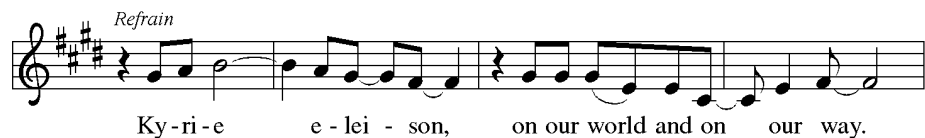
- 5 Look unto him, your Savior own,
 O fallen human race!
 Look and be saved through faith alone,
 be justified by grace!

- 6 To God all glory, praise, and love
 be now and ever giv'n
 by saints below and saints above,
 the church in earth and heav'n.

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,

God of all peoples, your arms reach out to embrace all those who call upon you. Teach us as disciples of your Son to love the world with compassion and constancy, that your name may be known throughout the earth, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The assembly may be seated.

FIRST READING – ISAIAH 56:1, 6-8

¹ Thus says the Lord:

Maintain justice, and do what is right,
for soon my salvation will come
and my deliverance be revealed.

⁶ And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord,
to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord,
and to be his servants,

all who keep the Sabbath and do not profane it
and hold fast my covenant—

⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain
and make them joyful in my house of prayer;
their burnt offerings and their sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar,
for my house shall be called a house of prayer
for all peoples.

⁸ Thus says the Lord God,
who gathers the outcasts of Israel:
I will gather others to them
besides those already gathered.

SECOND READING – ROMANS 11:1-2A, 29-32

[Paul writes:] ¹ I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. ^{2a} God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew.

²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so also they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they also may now receive mercy. ³² For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL – MATTHEW 15: 10-28

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁰ [Jesus] called the crowd to him and said to them, “Listen and understand: ¹¹ it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.” ¹² Then the disciples approached and said to him, “Do you know that the Pharisees took offense when they heard what you said?” ¹³ He answered, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. ¹⁴ Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.” ¹⁵ But Peter said to him, “Explain this parable to us.” ¹⁶ Then he said, “Are you also still without understanding? ¹⁷ Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach and goes out into the sewer? ¹⁸ But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. ¹⁹ For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. ²⁰ These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

²¹ Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. ²² Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.” ²³ But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, “Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.” ²⁴ He answered, “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” ²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, help me.” ²⁶ He answered, “It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁷ She said, “Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.” ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, “Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.” And her daughter was healed from that moment.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly may be seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

Healer of Our Every Ill

Refrain

Heal - er of our ev - 'ry ill, light of each to - mor - row,



give us peace be - yond our fear, and hope be - yond our sor - row.



1 You who know our fears and sad - ness, grace us with your

2 In the pain and joy be - hold - ing how your grace is

3 Give us strength to love each oth - er, ev - 'ry sis - ter,

4 You who know each thought and feel - ing, teach us all your



peace and glad-ness; Spir-it of all com-fort, fill our hearts.

still un - fold - ing, give us all your vi - sion, God of love.

ev - 'ry broth - er; Spir-it of all kind-ness, be our guide.

way of heal - ing; Spir-it of com-pas - sion, fill each heart.

Refrain

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: With bold trust in God's unfailing provision, we pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

Each petition of the prayers concludes with these words:

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Assisting Minister: Receive our prayers and answer, O God, as you have promised. All this we ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly may be seated.

OFFERING & ANTHEM

God Who Touchest Earth With Beauty, *by Alice Jordan*

The assembly stands.

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:

**Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts.
Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so
that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the
name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and
forever. Amen.**

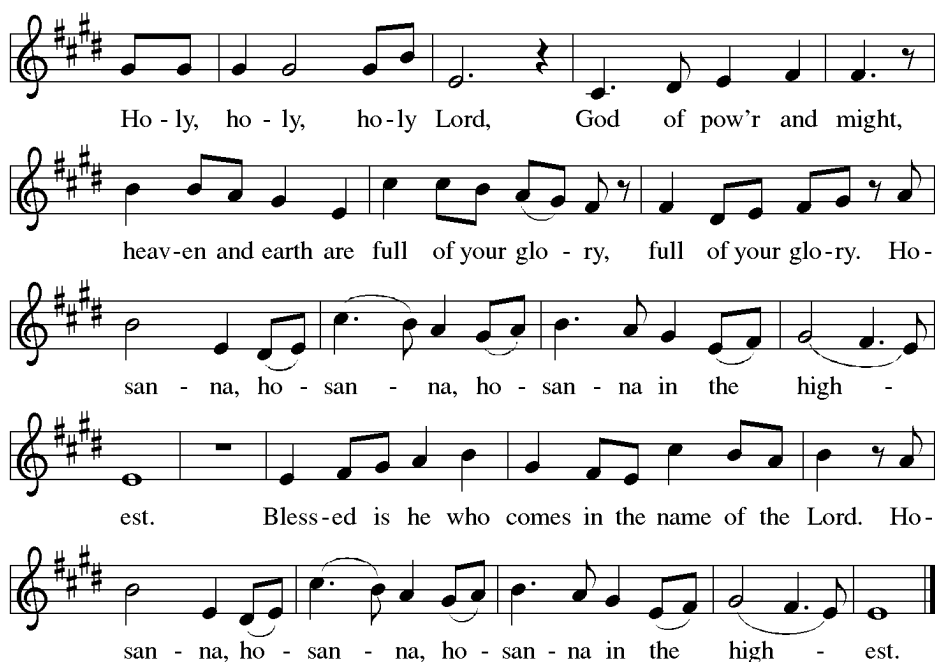
GREAT THANKSGIVING

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,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



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

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

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.**

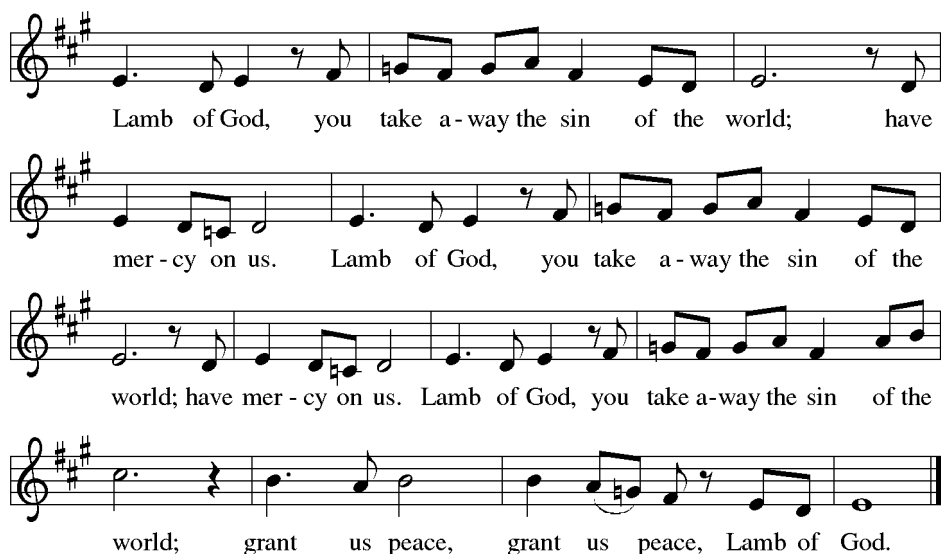
**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION & COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

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.

Remembrance (The Communion Song)

C 26

Music can be found in the spiral Contemporary Hymnal

Oh how could it be
That my God would welcome me
Into this mystery
Say take this bread, take this wine
Now the simple made divine
For any to receive

By mercy, we come to your table
By your grace, you are making us faithful

[Chorus]
Lord, we remember you
And remembrance leads us to worship
And as we worship you
Our worship leads to communion
We respond to your invitation
We remember you

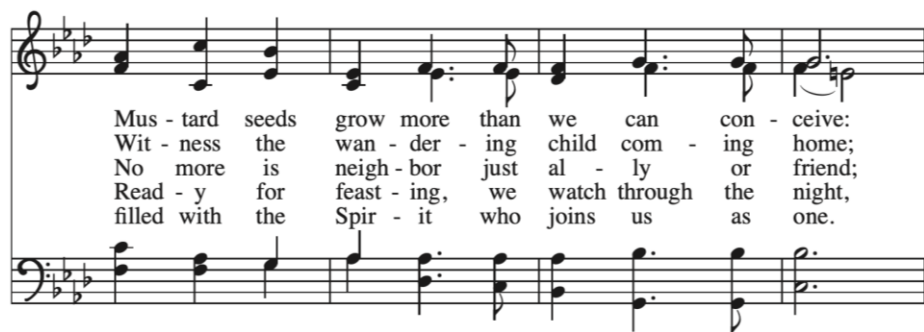
See his body, his blood
Know that he has overcome
Every trial we will face
None too lost to be saved
None too broken or ashamed
All are welcome in this place

By your mercy, we come to your table
By your grace, you are making us faithful [Chorus]

Dying, you destroyed our death
Rising, you restored our life
Lord, Jesus come in glory
Lord, Jesus come in glory
Lord, Jesus come in glory
Lord, Jesus come in glory [Chorus]



1 What is the world like when God's will is done?
 2 What is the world like when God's will is done?
 3 What is the world like when God's will is done?
 4 What is the world like when God's will is done?
 5 These are the sto - ries that Je - sus im - parts,



Mus - tard seeds grow more than we can con - ceive:
 Wit - ness the wan - der - ing child com - ing home;
 No more is neigh - bor just al - ly or friend;
 Read - y for feast - ing, we watch through the night,
 filled with the Spir - it who joins us as one.



roots thread the soil; branch - es reach for the sun.
 watch as the par - ent breaks in - to a run.
 peace thrives in plac - es where once there was none.
 tend - ing our lamps till the new day's be - gun.
 Born through our voic - es, our hands, and our hearts,



This is how God moves us each to be - lieve.
 This is how God longs for us when we roam.
 This is how God works when ri - val - ries end.
 This is how God read - ies us for the light.
 this is a new world where God's will is done.

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, ✠ one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always. **Amen.**

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

1 My faith looks up to thee, thou Lamb of Cal - va - ry,
 2 May thy rich grace im - part strength to my faint - ing heart,
 3 While life's dark maze I tread and griefs a - round me spread,
 4 When ends life's tran - sient dream, when death's cold, sul - len stream

Sav - ior di - vine! Now hear me while I pray, take all my
 my zeal in - spire; as thou hast died for me, oh, may my
 be thou my guide; bid dark - ness turn to day, wipe sor - row's
 shall o'er me roll; blest Sav - ior, then, in love fear and dis -

guilt a - way, oh, let me from this day be whol - ly thine!
 love to thee pure, warm, and change - less be, a liv - ing fire!
 tears a - way, nor let me ev - er stray from thee a - side.
 trust re - move; oh, bear me safe a - bove, a ran - somed soul!

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

PRAYER LIST

Added: Family of Valerie Entner; Family of Richard Hoffman

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: Thomas Allmon, Sandy Bender, Andy Bishop, Claire Boarder, Karen Borsak, Michele Boucher, Mary Bowen, Susan Broome, Zena Burkert, 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 John Howard, Deacon Kalbach, Kayden, Allison Kunkel, Batya Leidner, Scott Leone, Dana Little, Maryann and Elwood Long, Alyson, Sophie, and Avery Maas, Kathy McCoy,, Tom Mulvey, Andrew Nosti, Amy Papilla, Wyatt Plica, Chris Plue, Steve Puwalski, Molly Regan, Avery Reinert, Keith and Peg Ruch, Garrett Schanfelder, Karolyn Schrufer, Kim Sharp, Linda Smith, Charles Sperling, Herm Spitzer, Jacob Stoner, Taylor Tenuta, Grace Vetter, the family of Valerie Entner, and the family of Richard Hoffman

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

Next Week's Worship Leaders:

August 23rd

Ushers	Dale and Carole Miller
Reader	Jackie Morrissey
Assisting Minister	Dee Dee Werner
Acolytes	Brion Morrissey and Ethan Pasko

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, please sign up on the sheets on the door in the narthex. Join us next Sunday for our final Together Time!

Clothing Bank – We will not be sorting or opening the Clothing Bank on Friday, August 21st.

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.

Call Committee Update – We are in a season of discernment as we seek the pastor God is preparing for us. We have now begun receiving candidates from the synod. At this time, we are meeting with one candidate, and the process is designed to bring candidates one at a time so that we can listen carefully and prayerfully.

The call committee has prepared questions that reflect both the synod's guidance and our congregation's unique needs. These questions will help us discern how a candidate's gifts align with Reformation's mission: *Preach, Teach, Reach*.

Your role in this process is prayer. Please continue to pray for the call committee, for the candidates, and for our congregation as we listen for the Spirit's guidance. After interviews, the committee will discern together and, if led, recommend a candidate to the council and congregation. This process takes time, but we trust God's timing. Please keep the call process in your prayers. May the Spirit guide us with wisdom, patience, and hope as we move forward.

Blessing of Teachers, Students, and School Staff – As we look ahead to the beginning of a new school year, there will be a Blessing of Teachers, Students, and School Staff during the service on Sunday, August 23rd.

Games Night

When: Friday Night August 28th from 7 – 9:30ish

Where: Fellowship Hall

Our last games night was a lot of fun, and we had many people express an interest in another one. So, come out and enjoy your favorite board game, card game, or any other type of game. This is open to all ages! We will be bringing a variety of games, but we encourage you to bring some of your own favorites to share with the group. We will also be bringing some drinks and several snack items but if you would like to bring something to add to the snack table, that would be great. We hope to see you there for another fun night together. Feel free to bring a friend. Nadine and Alan Blackburn

Council Highlights: July 21, 2026

Because of all the activity surrounding the church this summer, council held a July session, in lieu of the traditional summer break. Here are the highlights of the meeting:

- As a result of a recommendation contained in the final listening team report and with the agreement and support of the council, we plan to re-establish the Mutual Ministry Committee. A work group has been formed to review church constitutional requirements, the duties and best form for the committee. This positively supports our desire for open communication throughout the congregational family.
- In an effort to better schedule Sunday activities and encourage attendance, we will look in to setting up a better time schedule for worship service, Sunday school and any other event occurring on Sunday. New ideas and activities are welcome.
- In support of church finances, we are planning a fall stewardship drive. More information will follow.
- God's Work Our Hands "Fill the Truck" is moving forward. Opportunity House has approved our poster and flier, will mass print the poster and a bulletin insert for our distribution. They are also providing a short internet piece we can post on Facebook and our website. We have a Thrivent action team to help pay for the cost of our in-house informational flier, thus giving us a complete/enhanced 2-piece information package for distribution. We are meeting with St Marks to discuss their participation, along with Schwarzwald Lutheran, in our "Fill the Truck" effort. The Exeter Fire Dept has agreed to assist by posting information

throughout the firehouses in Berks. Our Boy Scout Troup will help on August 12th-13th with material handling. They will also distribute fliers in the community. The Exeter School system, through our contact with the organizer of the senior band car wash, will electronically post our flier and poster on the school media and club platform. The Health Ministry is organizing a blood drive. Please be sure to sign-up. The quilters have scheduled a blessing of the quilts during Sunday service. There might even be a special yoga session. Plenty going on – sign-up, gather items for the truck, ask questions and if able please step up to the plate.

- Pave the Road is gaining momentum. Thanks to everyone who attended the July 12th meeting. Information is quickly being assembled. Check with council and committee members on topics or thoughts you want to add to the effort. The project is designed to inform and invite you to be part of the process. Please submit your final information no later than the 3rd Sunday in August.
- The Nominating Committee is forming and will be looking to talk to candidates for open positions on next year's council. Please take the time to talk to them and consider volunteering for these important positions.
- As a result of discussions with the Call Committee and Synod, we are considering establishing a sabbatical leave policy for rostered members of the church. The sabbatical process is designed to allow study, reflection and growth for rostered church personnel. The end result is to improve pastoral service and church mission fulfillment. A work group has been formed to study and recommend action on this concept. More information will follow as the team meets and works through the process.
- Pastor Stoddard and council have signed an extension of service contract as designated pastor for the period 1 Sept - 31 Dec 2026.
- Finally, but, most important, our parish book has been posted on the Synod list of churches looking for a permanent pastoral candidate. Please take some time and look at the excellent status report, in the newsletter and bulletin, provided by our committee.

Family Promise – Monday Meal Ministry. A very big **thank you** to all of you who cooked meals these past Monday's. And all those who donated items for the "goodie bag". It is appreciated so very much.

Isaac's Fundraiser for Family Promise. On August 31st Isaac's in Wyomissing will be donating 15% of all orders, dine-in, take-out and catering. If you wish to help, there are flyers on the table in the narthex, or take a picture of it. Make sure you let the cashier know you are part of the fundraiser. Isaac's, 94 Commerce Dr. Wyomissing, PA 19610 – all day.

Prayer Shawls – If you know of someone who would like a prayer shawl, we have several. There are many colors and types. Prayer shawls can be given for illness, birth, graduation, retirement or any number of reasons. See Pam Schneeberger or Pastor Greg if you would like to take one to your special relative or friend.

Pave the Road – 16 August: Just a quick reminder, Sunday 16 August is the deadline for submitting your input on this important project. Please be sure to submit it to our Business Manager, Larry Varone, no later than this date. Your input will be used to formulate and support existing and future activity, budgeting, outreach and a myriad of other initiatives. Thank you for your time and input.