

Reformation Lutheran Church

3670 Perkiomen Avenue

Reading, PA 19606

www.reformationlutheran.org

Office (610) 779-0534

Pastor Stoddard (610) 334-1285

11th Sunday after Pentecost
A Service of Word and Sacrament

August 9th, 2026
9:30 AM



Welcome to Reformation!

Presiding Minister:	The Rev. Dr. Greg Stoddard
Director of Music:	Dr. Heidi Rochlin
Ushers	Dan and Taylor Bergey
Reader	Terri Adams
Assisting Minister	Pam Schneeberger
Acolyte	Paige Bergey
Altar Guild	Maddie and Ryan Klinikowski
Flowers	Alan and Nadine Blackburn-in memory of our parents
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.

GATHERING HYMN:
Shout to the Lord

ELW 821

My Je - sus, my Sav - ior, Lord, there is none like you.

All of my days I want to praise the won - ders of your might - y love.

My com - fort, my shel - ter, tow - er of ref - uge and strength;

let ev - ry breath, all that I am nev - er cease to wor - ship you.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth; let us sing pow - er and maj - es - ty, praise

to the King. Moun - tains bow down and the seas will roar at the

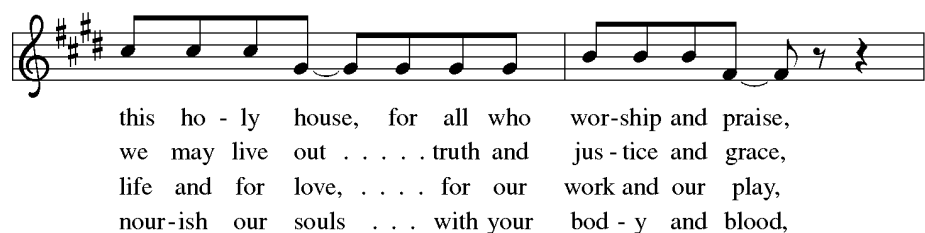
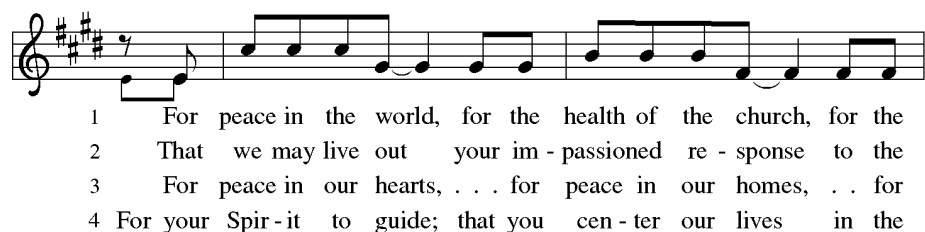
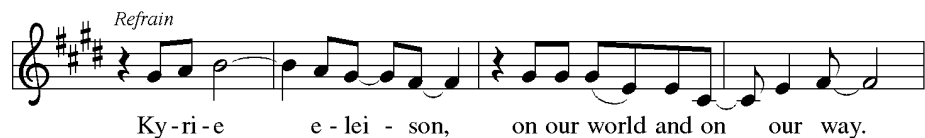
sound of your name. I sing for joy at the work of your hands;

for - ev - er I'll love you, for - ev - er I'll stand.

Noth - ing com - pares to the prom - ise I have in you.

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,

O God our defender, storms rage around and within us and cause us to be afraid. Rescue your people from despair, deliver your sons and daughters from fear, and preserve us in the faith of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The assembly may be seated.

FIRST READING – 1 KINGS 19:9-18

⁹ At [Horeb, the mount of God,][Elijah] came to a cave and spent the night there.

Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁰ He answered, “I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.”

¹¹ He said, “Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake, ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁴ He answered, “I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.” ¹⁵ Then the Lord said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. ¹⁶ Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel, and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. ¹⁷ Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill, and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. ¹⁸ Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

SECOND READING – ROMANS 10:5-15

⁵ Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that “the person who does these things will live by them.” ⁶ But the righteousness that comes from faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say?

“The word is near you,
in your mouth and in your heart”

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim), ⁹ because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For one believes with the heart, leading to righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, leading to salvation. ¹¹ The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

¹⁴ But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵ And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL – MATTHEW 14:22-33

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²² [Jesus] made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead to the other side [of the Sea of Galilee,] while he dismissed the crowds.²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,²⁴ but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them.²⁵ And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea.²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear.²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.”

²⁸ Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.”²⁹ He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus.³⁰ But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!”³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”³² When they got into the boat, the wind ceased.³³ And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

The gospel of the Lord.

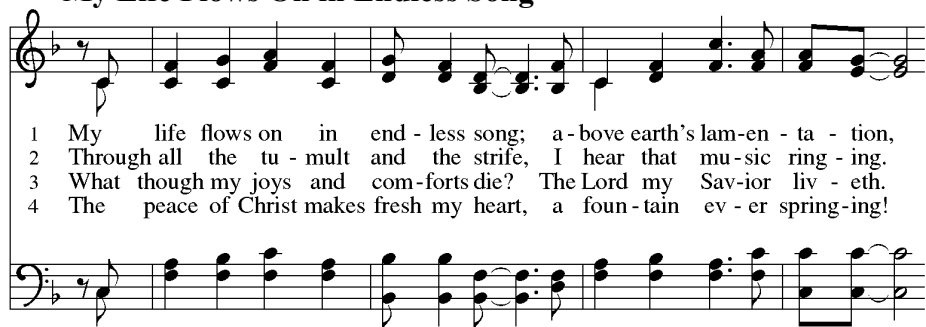
Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly may be seated.

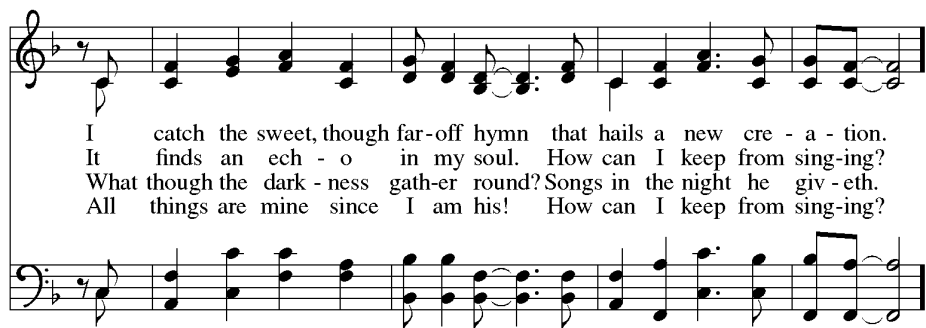
SERMON

The assembly stands.

My Life Flows On in Endless Song

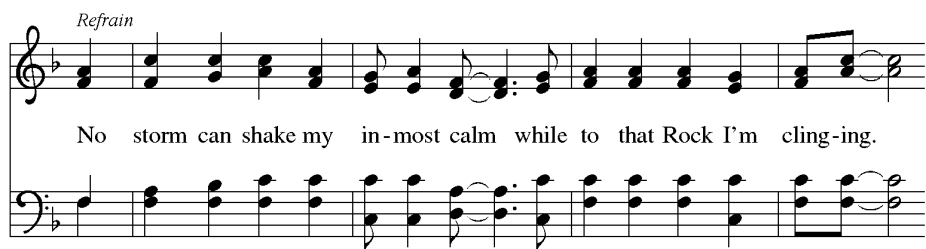


1 My life flows on in end - less song; a - bove earth's lam-en - ta - tion,
 2 Through all the tu - mult and the strife, I hear that mu-sic ring - ing.
 3 What though my joys and com-forts die? The Lord my Sav-ior liv - eth.
 4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a foun-tain ev - er spring-ing!



I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new cre - a - tion.
 It finds an ech - o in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing?
 What though the dark - ness gath-er round? Songs in the night he giv - eth.
 All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?

Refrain



No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock I'm cling-ing.



Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth, how can I keep from sing-ing?

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.

OFFERING & ANTHEM

O That I Had A Thousand Voices, *by Jay Althouse*

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:

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

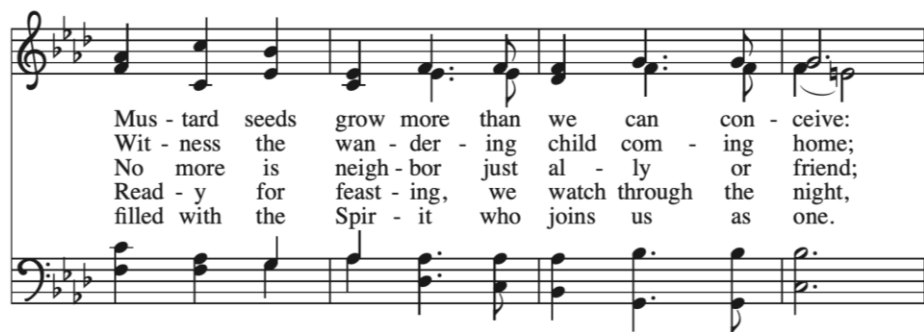
See his body, his blood
Know that he has overcome
Every trial we will face
None too lost to be saved
None too broken or ashamed
All are welcome in this place

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.

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.**

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine



- 1 What a fel - low-ship, what a joy di - vine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
 2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms;
 3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms?



what a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.

*Refrain*

Lean - ing, lean - ing, safe and se-cure from all a - larms;



Lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,



lean - ing, lean - ing, lean-ing on the ev - er - last-ing arms.



lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,

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

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

PRAYER LIST

Added - Zena Burkert

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, Valerie Entner, 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,, 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, and Grace Vetter

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

Next Week's Worship Leaders:

August 16th

Ushers	Shirley Harner and Joanne Scattergood
Reader	John Bayer
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, please sign up on the sheets on the door in the narthex. Join us this Sunday!

Clothing Bank – Thank you to all who donated and helped organize or distribute book bags this past week!

We will not be sorting or opening the Clothing Bank on Tuesday, August 11th or Friday, August 21st.

Family Promise – Monday Meal Ministry. We are still looking for meals for the three families for this coming Monday, August 10th. There is a sign-up sheet on the door in the narthex. Any questions, call Pam Schneeberger at 610.370.0790 or 484.599.1028. And a very big thank you to all of you who cooked meals this past Monday. And all those who donated items for the “goodie bag”. It is appreciated so very much.

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.

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.

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.

Do I Listen to the Sermon?

Most Sunday's I really enjoy attending church. The people, the setting and all the conversations going on at one time make it feel like one big family.

Even after Pastor quiets us all down, so he can make announcements and start the service, the good feeling still remains. However, as we move into the service, sometimes I get caught up in thoughts and ideas far from the script. I let my mind wander. My enthusiasm slowly wanes and I find myself in another world. Basically, I am not paying attention.

However, there is one part of the service that quickly breaks me out of my coma and brings me back. It is of course the Gospel reading, followed by the sermon. It is always interesting to hear the exact text of the Gospel and in my mind try and divine the message. Of course, the sermon either: denies my Gospel idea; verifies it; or adds important points to ponder. Best part of the service! A time of contemplation, listening and learning.

Now, on one Sunday not too long ago, the Gospel message eluded my wandering mind. Also, the early part of the sermon did not hit home. Initially, I was lost. However, close to the end of the sermon, I woke up and really listened. What was the message? These words struck home with me and haven't left. Scroll back in your mind and recount the messages. I am sure you will remember:

The Church mission is: Have Mercy; Practice Generosity; and Problem Solve

Prayer: Prayer is just not a conversation with God. After prayer action is required

Now these concepts are not new to any of us. But, I sometimes forget. They are the bedrock of our beliefs and lives as Christians. Great sermon!!!!