

Reformation Lutheran Church

3670 Perkiomen Avenue

Reading, PA 19606

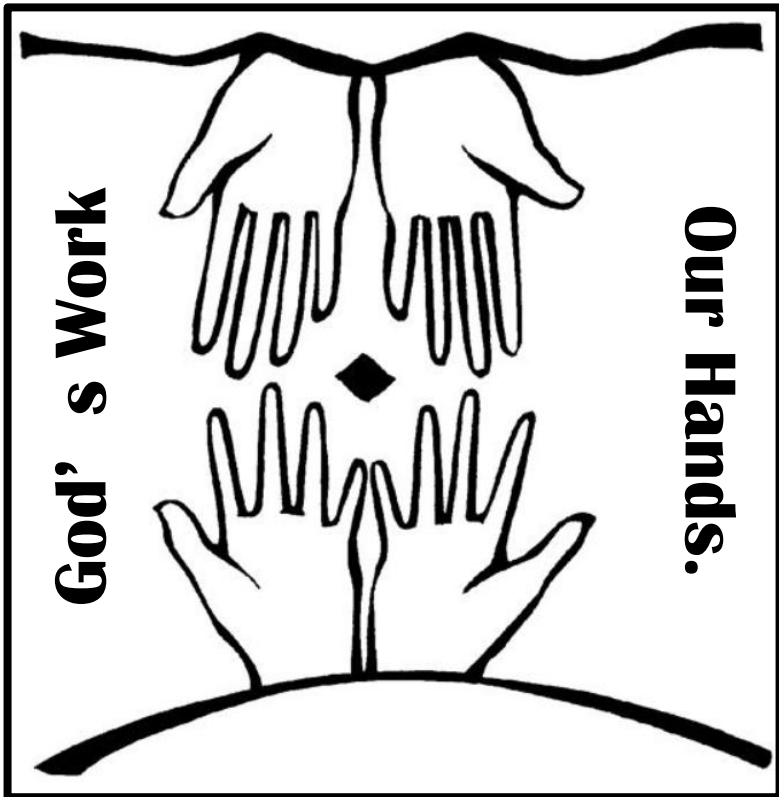
www.reformationlutheran.org

Office (610) 779-0534

Pastor Stoddard (610) 334-1285

16th Sunday after Pentecost
A Service of Word and Sacrament

September 13th, 2026
9:30 AM



In today's second reading Paul questions why we judge one another, since we all stand before the judgment of God. Yet we do sin against one another, and Jesus' challenge that we forgive seventy-seven times reveals God's boundless mercy. When we hear the words of forgiveness in worship and sign ourselves with the cross, we are renewed in baptism to be signs of reconciliation in the world.

Welcome to Reformation!

Presiding Minister:	The Rev. Dr. Greg Stoddard
Director of Music:	Dr. Heidi Rochlin
Ushers	Pat and Kathy Austin
Reader	Kathy Austin
Assisting Minister	Pam Schneeberger
Acolyte	Jen Weaver
Altar Guild	Kathy Austin and Dee Dee Werner
Flowers	Karasek Family-in honor of Kayla's birthday Smoker-Johnston Family-in memory of Dorothy Y. Smoker
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, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth. **Amen.**

Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith, let us confess our sin.

Compassionate God,
we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness in the world and in our own hearts. Creation groans from overuse. Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships. Indifference keeps us from seeking justice. Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others. Turn our hearts back to you. Restore our world and reconcile us to one another. Renew us to live as your holy people, following the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hear this good news: We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ, in whom there is no condemnation, but only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. Receive freely this healing gift of grace. **Amen.**

All Creatures, Worship God Most High!



- 1 All crea-tures, wor-ship God most high! Sound ev-'ry voice in earth and
 2 Sing, broth-er wind; with clouds and rain you grow the gifts of fruit and
 3 Sing, broth-er fire, so mirth-ful, strong; drive far the shad-ows, join the
 4 All who for love of God for-give, all who in pain or sor-row



sky: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Sing, broth-er sun, in splen-dor
 grain: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Dear sis-ter wa-ter, use-ful,
 throng: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Dear moth-er earth, so rich in
 grieve: Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Christ bears your bur-dens and your



bright; sing, sis-ter moon and stars of night:
 clear, make mu-sic for your Lord to hear: Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-
 care, praise God in col-ors bright and rare:
 fears; still make your song a-mid the tears:



lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

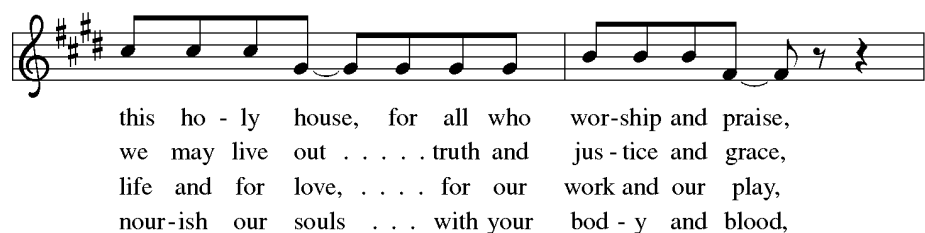
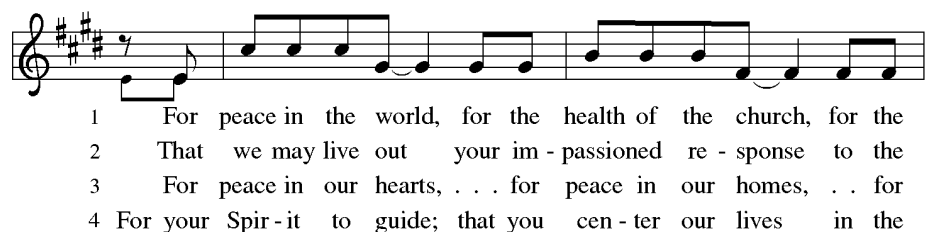
- 5 And you, most gentle sister death,
 waiting to hush our final breath:
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Since Christ our light has pierced your gloom,
 fair is the night that leads us home.
 Alleluia.

- 6 O sisters, brothers, take your part,
 and worship God with humble heart:
 Alleluia! Alleluia!
 All creatures, bless the Father, Son,
 and Holy Spirit, Three in One:
 Alleluia.

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 Lord God, merciful judge, you are the inexhaustible fountain of forgiveness. Replace our hearts of stone with hearts that love and adore you, that we may delight in doing your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The assembly may be seated.

FIRST READING – GENESIS 50:15-21

¹⁵ Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶ So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹ So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

SECOND READING – ROMANS 14:1-12

¹ Welcome those who are weak in faith but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat, for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on slaves of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it for the Lord. Also those who eat, eat for the Lord, since they give thanks to God, while those who abstain, abstain for the Lord and give thanks to God.

⁷ For we do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God."

¹² So then, each one of us will be held accountable.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL – MATTHEW 18:21-35

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

²¹ Peter came and said to [Jesus,] “Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ “For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly may be seated.

SERMON

The assembly stands.

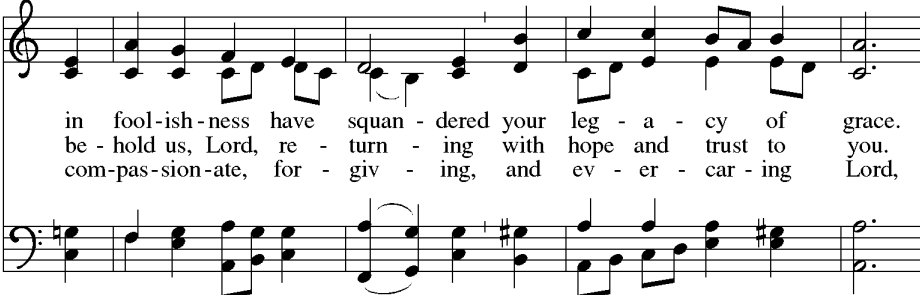
HYMN OF THE DAY:

ELW 606

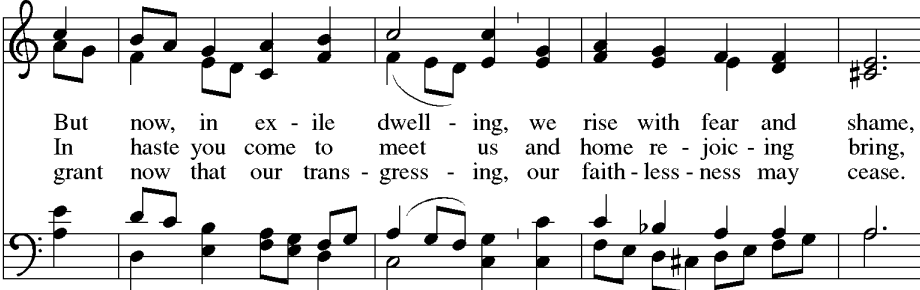
Our Father, We Have Wandered



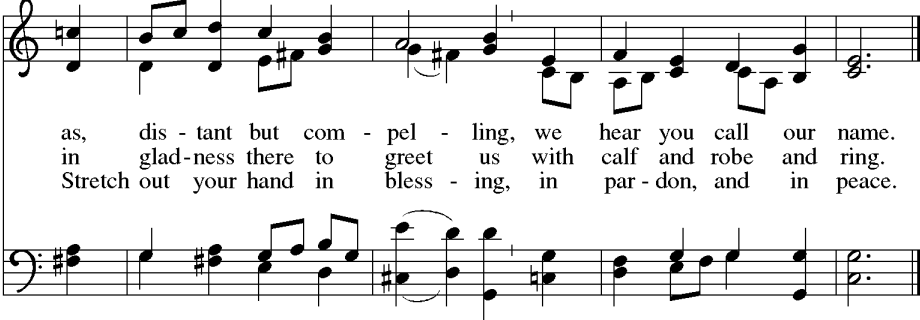
1 Our Fa - ther, we have wan - dered and hid - den from your face;
2 And now at length dis - cern - ing the e - vil that we do,
3 O Lord of all the liv - ing, both ban - ished and re - stored,



in fool-ish-ness have squan - dered your leg - a - cy of grace.
be - hold us, Lord, re - turn - ing with hope and trust to you.
com-pas-sion-ate, for - giv - ing, and ev - er - car - ing Lord,



But now, in ex - ile dwell - ing, we rise with fear and shame,
In haste you come to meet us and home re - joic - ing bring,
grant now that our trans - gress - ing, our faith - less - ness may cease.



as, dis - tant but com - pel - ling, we hear you call our name.
in glad-ness there to greet us with calf and robe and ring.
Stretch out your hand in bless - ing, in par - don, and in peace.

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: Reminded of God's gracious and abundant love, we offer our prayers, confident that God hears us.

Each petition of the prayers concludes with these words:

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Assisting Minister: Grant the prayers we have offered, what we have forgotten to ask, and whatever else you see that we need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

The assembly may be seated.

OFFERING & ANTHEM

Lord, It is Good to Sing Praise, *by Martin*

The assembly stands.

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 creation, you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. 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.**

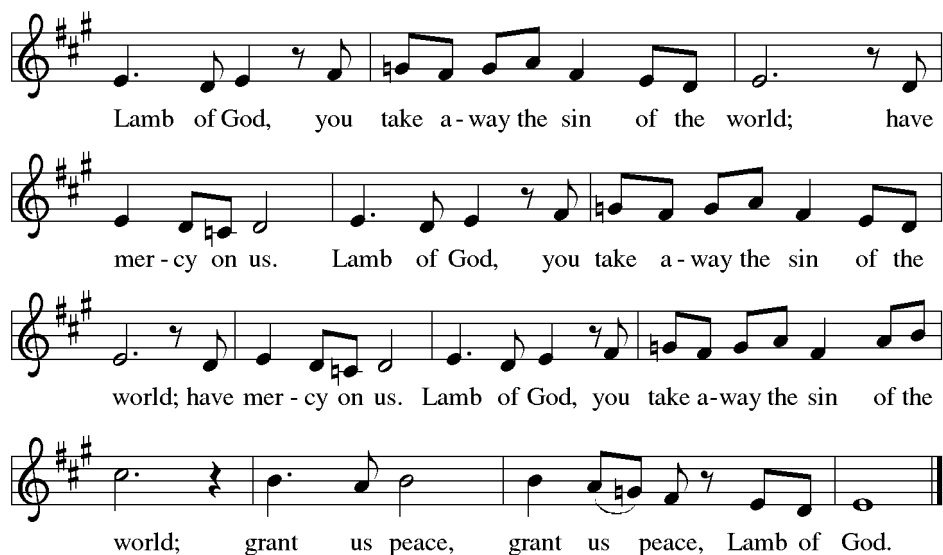
**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION & COMMUNION

Christ invites you to this table.

All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

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.

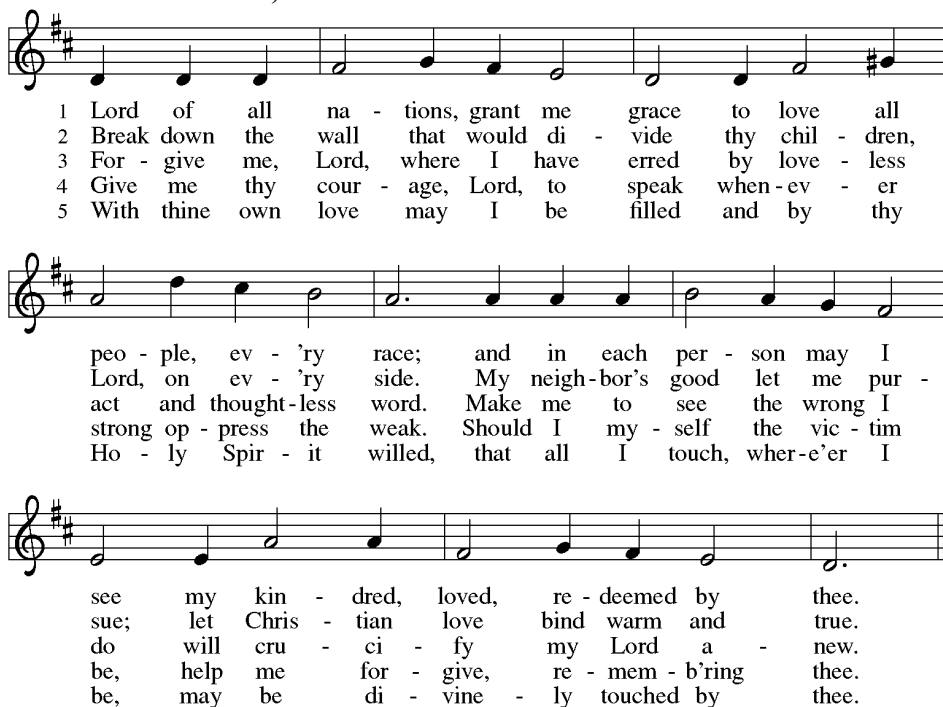


Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

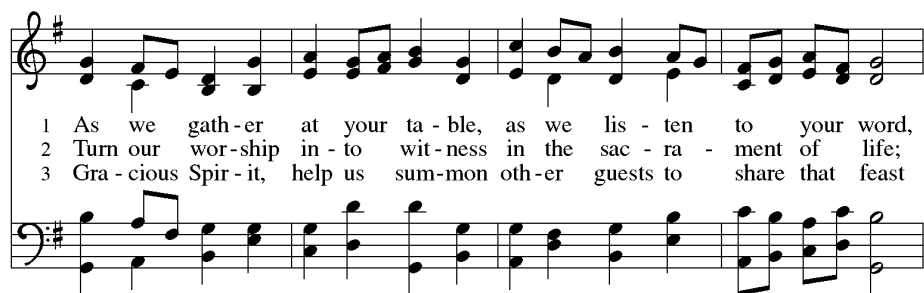
COMMUNION HYMNS

Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace

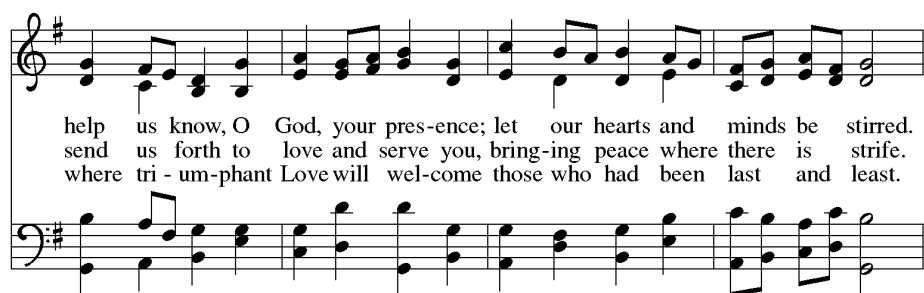
ELW 716



1 Lord of all na-tions, grant me grace to love all
2 Break down the wall that would di- vide thy chil- dren,
3 For- give me, Lord, where I have erred by love- less
4 Give me thy cour- age, Lord, to speak when- ev- er
5 With thine own love may I be filled and by thy
peo- ple, ev- 'ry race; and in each per- son may I
Lord, on ev- 'ry side. My neigh- bor's good let me pur-
act and thought- less word. Make me to see the wrong I
strong op- press the weak. Should I my- self the vic- tim
Ho- ly Spir- it willed, that all I touch, wher- e'er I
see my kin- dred, loved, re- deemed by thee.
sue; let Chris- tian love bind warm and true.
do will cru- ci- fy my Lord a- new.
be, help me for- give, re- mem- b'ring thee.
be, may be di- vine- ly touched by thee.



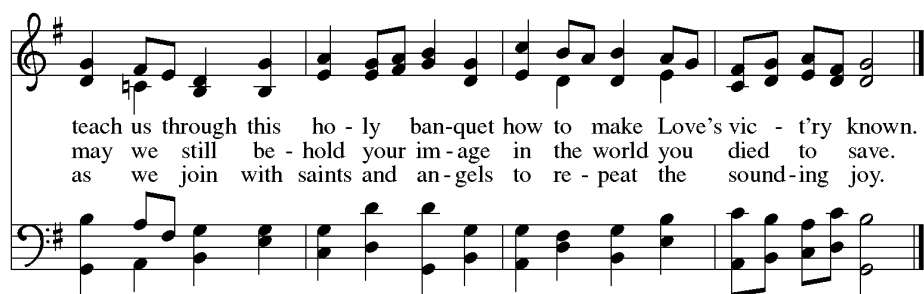
1 As we gath-er at your ta-ble, as we lis-ten to your word,
 2 Turn our wor-ship in-to wit-ness in the sac-ra-ment of life;
 3 Gra-cious Spir-it, help us sum-mon oth-er guests to share that feast



help us know, O God, your pres-ence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
 send us forth to love and serve you, bring-ing peace where there is strife.
 where tri-um-phant Love will wel-come those who had been last and least.



Nour-ish us with sa-cred sto-ry till we claim it as our own;
 Give us, Christ, your great com-pas-sion to for-give as you for-gave;
 There no more will en-vy blind us nor will pride our peace de-stroy,



teach us through this ho-ly ban-quet how to make Love's vic-t'ry known.
 may we still be-hold your im-age in the world you died to save.
 as we join with saints and an-gels to re-peat the sound-ing joy.



1 By your hand you feed your peo - ple, food of an - gels, heav-en's bread.
 2 In this meal we taste your sweet-ness, bread for hun - ger, wine of peace.
 3 Send us now with faith and cour - age to the hun - gry, lost, be - reaved.



For these gifts we did not la - bor, by your grace have we been fed:
 Ho - ly word and ho - ly wis - dom sat - is - fy our deep - est needs.
 In our liv - ing and our dy - ing, we be - come what we re - ceive:

Refrain



Christ's own bod - y, blessed and bro - ken, cup o'er - flow - ing, life out - poured,



giv - en as a liv - ing to - ken of your world re - deemed, re - stored.

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Sustaining God, with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

BLESSING

The God of love
draw you into full accord and one mind,
in the body of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

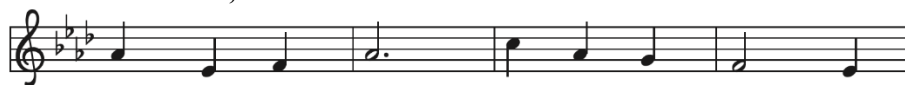
The God of hope
grant you strength and joy in all circumstances
through the interceding of the Spirit.

Amen.

The God of grace
✠ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

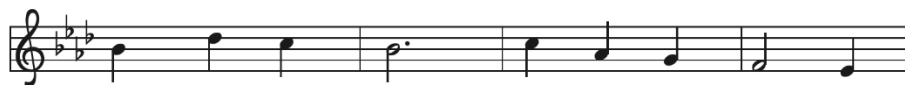
God's Work, Our Hands



1 God's work, our hands: work - ing to - geth - er,
 2 God's work, our feet: trav - 'ling to - geth - er,
 3 God's work, our voice: sing - ing to - geth - er,
 4 God is at work in and a - round us:



build - ing a fu - ture, re - pair - ing the world,
 fol - low - ing Je - sus to plac - es un - known,
 prais - ing, pro - claim - ing to all who will hear,
 seed - lings are sprout - ing and bread's on the rise!



rais - ing up homes, plant - ing new gar - dens,
 walk - ing as friends, march - ing for free - dom,
 pray - ing for peace, shout - ing for jus - tice,
 Washed and set free, hum - bled and hon - ored,



feed - ing the hun - gry and shelt - 'ring the cold.
 run - ning the race with God's fu - ture the goal.
 claim - ing God's love for the lost and the least.
 gift - ed by grace, we re - spond in God's love.



Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
 Bless, God, our feet as we fol - low your way,
 Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
 Bless, God, our lives as we an - swer your call,



shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.
 shar - ing the good news of your gos - pel.

Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

PRAYER LIST

Added – none

Reformation Family: Carol Baer, Steve Barnett, Ruth Blatt, Tom Brizek, Millie Castillo, Harriet Clauser, Audrey DiGuardi, Nancy Edinger, Bob Galbraith, Rich Hawk, Roger Hillibush, Dana Humbert, Maddie Kemp, Nancy Kern, 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, Anthony Gross, 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, 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:

September 20th

Ushers	Heather McHale and Kathy Miller
Reader	Jackie Morrissey
Assisting Minister	Jeanne Gochnauer
Acolyte	Brion Morrissey and Ethan Pasko

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is the ELCA’s annual day of service where congregations engage in hands-on service projects that benefit their local communities. Today Reformation will be participating in the following activities:

- **Lutheran World Relief** Quilt Blessing - More than 135 quilts will be blessed during this morning’s worship service. The quilts were made by 20 volunteers in our “Links of Love Quilting Ministry” which meets at 9:30AM on the last Tuesday of each month in the parish hall.
- An introductory **Yoga Class** will be held in the sanctuary beginning at 11AM. Join us as we experience wellness of mind, body, and soul! Weekly yoga classes are offered on Wednesday and Friday mornings at 10AM in the parish hall.
- We’re partnering with **Opportunity House** to **Fill the Truck** and help Our Neighbors - yesterday and again today (12-3PM) we’re collecting furniture, clothing, and household items to help families get back on their feet after experiencing homelessness. Over 1600 flyers were distributed in the community and we’re hoping to fill a truck (maybe 2!).
- Our Health Ministry team is sponsoring a **Miller-Keystone Blood Drive** today in the parish hall from 8AM - 2PM. Twenty-four appointments have been taken and we have afternoon openings for 8 more participants. Give the gift of Life!
- The Food Ministry Trailer from **St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, Birdsboro** will be located on the portico driveway beginning @11:30AM today, serving hamburgers, hotdogs, chicken sandwiches, soda and water. All proceeds will be given to **Opportunity House**.

Thank you to the following organizations for partnering with Reformation on today’s activities:

Reformation Boy Scout Troop
Thrivent Financial
Exeter Township Lions Club

NEW YEAR FOR BURGER-A-MONTH – September begins a new year for Burger-A-Month. If you have participated in the past – THANK YOU! It doesn't seem possible, but over the years since 2008, this program has raised over \$50,000 for ELCA World Hunger Relief. Please pick up your new pack of envelopes (September 2026 through August 2027) in the narthex. If you are not familiar with Burger-A-Month, please read the explanation papers on the table with the Burger Envelopes. Help us slow down the spread of hunger in the world!

Sunday School - Starting on Sunday, September 20th, we will have Sunday School programming for toddler to adult! For toddler to elementary school age, we will meet once a month after the service for some music, crafts, and lesson. For older school age students, there will be a pre-confirmation class and a post-confirmation class. Adults will continue to meet in the parlor for a time of study and conversation. Join us on the 20th to see what opportunities are here for you and your family!

Call Committee Update – We remain in a season of discernment as we seek the pastor God is preparing for Reformation. Recently, we met with our first candidate from the synod and, after prayerful reflection, decided not to move forward.

We now wait for the synod to send us the next candidate. The synod presents candidates one at a time, allowing us to listen carefully to each person's gifts and discern how they align with Reformation's mission: *Preach, Teach, Reach*.

As we wait, the committee continues preparing thoughtful questions to guide our conversations. Your role is prayer: please keep the committee, the pastors discerning a call, and our congregation in prayer as we trust God's timing. May the Spirit lead us with wisdom, patience, and hope.

Church Online Cookbook - If you would like to submit a recipe for the new church online cookbook use this QR code to access the Google Form. Thank you for your participation!

