

October 1, 2023

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

8:30 & 11:00 AM

REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Office hours (*Closed holidays*):

9:00am-3:30pm, Monday–Friday

Pat Sparks

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Gail Kelso

Director of Music / Organist

The Rev. Eric W. Evers & The Rev. Paige G. Evers

Pastors

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

8:30 & 11:00 am service

You can find videos of this Sunday's service and our past services (along with downloadable bulletins) at www.rlcmilford.com/connect. Share these with your friends and family on social media so we can touch more lives with God's Word!

Please silence cell phones before worship begins. Thank you!

Welcome to Reformation!

We are especially glad to welcome visitors to worship. We hope you experience God's love for you this morning! Visitors are invited to sign the pew pads so we can be in touch with you.

Holy Communion

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Please follow the usher's directions to come forward down the center aisle to receive the bread and wine. If you prefer a gluten-free wafer or grape juice, please inform the server. Those who do not yet receive Communion are welcome to come forward to receive a blessing.

Lutherans believe that in Communion, we receive the Body and Blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins, the renewal of our faith, and the strengthening of our Christian community. Come, taste and see that the Lord is good!

Prayer Requests

To add someone to the prayers of the Church, please write their name on the list behind the altar.

The Mission of Reformation Lutheran Church is to:

Invite our neighbors as Jesus invites us.

Engage in a community of graceful discipleship.

Equip our members to grow in faith and ministry.

Embody the love of Jesus in our world.

Gathering

** indicates the congregation is invited to stand, as able*

Announcements

Prelude

*Confession and Forgiveness

P: We gather in the name of the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the forgiving and healing power of your Holy Spirit, so that we may reflect your glory as we grow in holiness and faith, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P: God of mercy and life,

C: **we confess that we have turned from you and have fallen under the deadly power of sin. Our thoughts, words, and deeds have broken our fellowship with you and with our neighbors. Forgive us, we pray, and set us free from sin and death, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, both now and forever, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and in him, we are freed from sin and death. His Holy Spirit renews us and leads us into life. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

***Gathering Hymn** “The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing” **No. 531**

***Apostolic Greeting**

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

C: **And also with you.**

***Hymn of Praise** “He is Exalted”

Twila Paris

He is exalted, the King is exalted on high; I will praise Him.

He is exalted, forever exalted, and I will praise His name!

He is the Lord; forever His truth shall reign.

Heaven and earth rejoice in His holy name.

He is exalted, the King is exalted on high.

***Prayer of the Day**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Let us pray...

C: **Amen.**

Children’s Sermon

Word

First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, “The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge”? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die. ²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

Philippians 2:1-13

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

***Gospel Acclamation “Alleluia”**

Traditional Melody

Alleluia, alleluia, Alleluia, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, Alleluia, alleluia.

***Gospel**

Matthew 21:23-32

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 21st chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' ²⁶But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Eric W. Evers

***Hymn of the Day** "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"

No. 631

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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.

***Prayers of Intercession**

A: Lord, in your mercy,

C: Hear our prayer.

***The 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.

Meal

***Peace**

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

The minsters and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Collection of the Offering

Musical Offering	“Feed My Sheep”	Choir	8:30
	<p>“I am going away. If you love me, please do what I say. Lose no soul to the cold night. Use your deep love to hold tight. Feed my sheep, feed my sheep.”</p>		
	Special Music		11:00

*Offertory	“Shout to the Lord”	No. 821
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My Jesus, my Savior,
 Lord, there is none like you.
 All of my days I want to praise
 the wonders of your mighty love.
 My comfort, my shelter,
 tower of refuge and strength;
 let ev'ry breath, all that I am
 never cease to worship you.

 Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing
 power and majesty, praise to the King.
 Mountains bow down and the seas will roar
 at the sound of your name.
 I sing for joy at the work of your hands;
 forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand.
 Nothing compares to the promise I have in you.

Text: Darlene Zschech, b. 1965

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***Offertory Prayer**

A: Let us pray:

C: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

***The Great Thanksgiving**

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

***Proper Preface**

***“Holy, Holy”**

Jimmy Owens

Holy holy, holy holy, holy holy, Lord God Almighty.

And we lift our hearts before you as a token of our love.

Holy holy, holy holy.

Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit, Come and fill our hearts anew, Holy Spirit.

And we lift our voice before you as a token of our love.

Holy Spirit, Holy Spirit.

***The Words of Institution**

“Spirit Song”

John Wimber

O, let the Son of God enfold you with his Spirit and his love,

Let him fill your heart and satisfy your soul.

Oh, let him have the things that hold you, and his Spirit like a dove,

Will descend upon your life and make you whole.

Refrain: Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs.

Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs.

O, come and sing this song with gladness

as your hearts are filled with joy,

Lift your hands in sweet surrender to his name.

O, give him all your tears and sadness,

give him all your years of pain,

And you'll enter into life in Jesus' name. (*Refrain*)

The Distribution of Communion, Standing, at the Altar Rail

Communion Hymns: “Baptized and Set Free,” No. 453; “Abide, O Dearest Jesus,” No. 539; “What God Ordains Is Good Indeed,” No. 776; “Strengthen for Service, Lord,” No. 497

***Post-Communion Blessing**

Congregation responds with Amen.

***Post-Communion Prayer**

Congregation responds with Amen.

Sending

***Benediction**

Congregation responds with Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

“All Are Welcome”

No. 641

***Dismissal**

Congregation responds with Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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SERVING TODAY

October 1

Usher
Lay Reader
Worship Assistant
Acolyte
Healing Prayer
Altar Guild
Live Stream Operator
Fellowship Host

8:30

Ron Semmont
Joyce Nauman
Mary K. Konesey
Diane Massey
Janice Weiner
Scott Rainville
Melissa Miller

11:00

Steve & Edith Weipert
Lisa Caccamise
Eric Valentine
Lexi Caccamise
Joy Rowe
Eric Valentine

SERVING NEXT SUNDAY

October 8

	8:30	11:00
Usher	Carol Benner-Chaffinch	Ed Huey
Lay Reader	Mickey Chaffinch	Kelsey Oldland
Worship Assistant	Dave Curnock	Ken Newell
Acolyte	Dresden Miller	
Healing Prayer		Kristin Schlegel
Altar Guild	Eric Valentine	Janice Piatkowski
Live Stream Operator	Soren Evers	
Fellowship Host	Sandi Shea	

THIS WEEK AT REFORMATION

Today	8:30 am —	Worship Service
	9:45 am —	Bible Study & Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 am —	Worship Service
Tuesday	6:30 pm —	Growing Young Team
Wednesday	6:30 pm —	Mutual Ministry Committee
Thursday	1:00 pm —	WELCA (Annex)
	5:00 pm —	Stewardship Committee (Annex)
	6:00 pm —	Bell Choir Rehearsal
	7:00 pm —	Choir Rehearsal
Next Sunday	8:30 am —	Worship Service
	9:45 am —	Bible Study/New Member Class & Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 am —	Worship Service

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCA: The Women of the ELCA will meet on Thursday, October 5, at 1:00 PM in the Church Annex. Please join us for Bible Study, Business, Fellowship, and Refreshments. We'd love to see you at the meeting!

Interested in Joining Reformation?

On October 8, 15, and 22, our Sunday morning Bible study will be a New Members' Class to help potential members learn more about the mission and ministries of Reformation. As our tradition is, we also strongly encourage current members to come so that they can get to know new members! Making connections with others is the most important thing for people joining a church, so we hope our existing members will attend. If you are thinking about joining Reformation, please contact Pastor Eric at (302) 422-9117 or pr.eric@reformation-lutheran.net.

Blessing of the Pets: You are invited to bring your animal friends for a Blessing on Saturday, October 14 at 10 a.m. We will gather in the grassy area near the Prayer Labyrinth. This is a fun occasion to meet one another's pets and give thanks to God for their companionship. All animals are welcome!

From the Christian Service Committee: Thank you to everyone for your generous gifts to the Stockings for Soldiers program. Our military personnel around the world will have a brighter holiday because of your donations.

During the month of October we are focusing on keeping the homeless population warm this winter. We will be collecting the following items for the Code Purple shelters: socks, hats, gloves, hand warmers, long johns, t-shirts, wash cloths and hand towels, sheets, backpacks, razors, travel-sized baby powder, foot powder, and deodorant, and razors. Monetary donations made be given at <https://donate.riverpartners.org/give/416419/#!/donation/checkout>. **Code Purple** provides emergency night time shelter for our homeless neighbors during the winter months.

Financial Update: Thank you for your generous support of Reformation's ministries. A summary of Income and Expenses for January through August 2023 is posted on the bulletin board across from the kitchen.

Electronic Giving: Did you know that when you give electronically, Reformation is charged a fee? Starting in November, when you give at www.rlcMilford.com/give you will be given the **option** to add an additional 1.9% of your donation to your contribution to help defray some of the electronic giving fee. Thank you for your generous support of Reformation's ministries!

Give By Text: You can make a financial gift to Reformation by sending a text with a dollar amount to (302) 204-1410 and follow the instructions you receive back. However you give, your support matters! Thank you!

Sign Up for Church News! If you aren't receiving Reformation news through Constant Contact, please send an email to Pastor Eric at pr.eric@reformation-lutheran.net, and he will add you to this distribution list. It's a great way to keep up with what's going on at Reformation.

Daily Devotional Guide: Every Sunday afternoon, we post a daily guide for Bible readings and reflections, psalms to read and pray, and prayer suggestions. You can find it on our website: www.rlcMilford.com/connect. We also offer a few printed copies in the narthex. We hope you will make use of this spiritual resource to grow in your faith!

Children's Bulletins are available in the Narthex. There is a version for 3 to 6 year olds and one for children age 7 and up. The usher can help you locate them.

Happy Birthday to: Rod Kopp on the 2nd, Avery Richard on the 3rd, Ryan Fleming on the 5th, Dean Fleming on the 6th, and Jack Pencek on the 7th.

Spread the word!

Please “Like” Reformation’s **Facebook** page for news, announcements, and photos of church events!

www.facebook.com/RLCmilford

Check in and **tweet** or post about what’s going on with the hashtag #RLCMilford, or post on Facebook and tag *Reformation Lutheran Church*.

Reformation is on **Instagram!**

Please follow our church’s profile: @rlcmilford