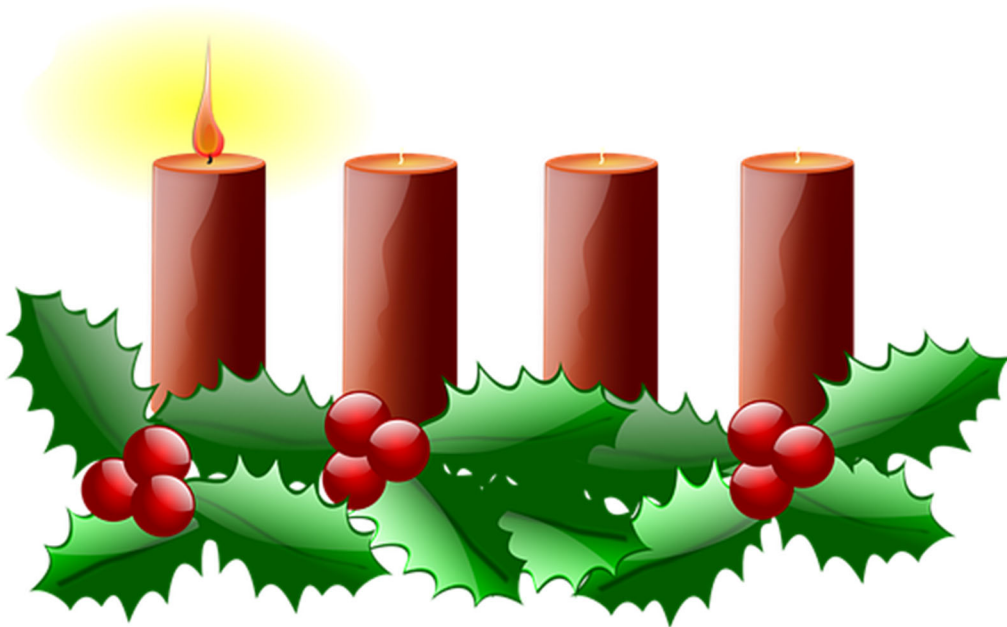


December 3, 2023  
First Sunday of Advent

8:30 & 11:00 AM

REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
613 Lakeview Avenue  
Milford, Delaware 19963



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Phone: 302-422-9117

[www.rlcmilford.com](http://www.rlcmilford.com)

Fax: 302-422-9184

Email: [office@reformation-lutheran.net](mailto:office@reformation-lutheran.net)

Office hours (*Closed holidays*):

9:00am-12:00pm, Monday–Friday

Gail Kelso

Director of Music / Organist

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

Pastors

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# First Sunday of Advent

**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](http://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.

***"Being transformed by Jesus so that, through us,  
he is transforming the world."***

Reformation's Mission is to:

**Welcome people to faith. Make disciples. Live what we believe.**

# 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**      “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”      *see next page*



1 Oh, come, oh, come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive  
 2 Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on  
 3 Oh, come, strong Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's  
 4 Oh, come, blest Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by your  
 5 Oh, come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide our



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here  
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times once gave the law  
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save  
 ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,  
 heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.  
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re - joi - ce! Re - joi - ce!  
 and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.  
 and close the path to mis - er - y.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Text: *Psalterium Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. John M. Neale, 1818–1866, alt.  
 Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.

**\*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 & Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah,” v. 1

**No. 240**

**\*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

Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— <sup>2</sup>as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! <sup>3</sup>When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. <sup>4</sup>From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. <sup>5</sup>You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

<sup>6</sup>We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. <sup>7</sup>There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. <sup>8</sup>Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. <sup>9</sup>Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

**A:** The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (read in unison)

<sup>1</sup>Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

<sup>2</sup>before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us!

<sup>3</sup>Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

<sup>4</sup>O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

<sup>5</sup>You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure.

<sup>6</sup>You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.

<sup>7</sup>Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

<sup>17</sup>But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself.

<sup>18</sup>Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.

<sup>19</sup>Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

## Second Reading

## 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

<sup>3</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup>I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup>for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— <sup>6</sup>just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you— <sup>7</sup>so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**A:** The Word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

## \*Gospel Acclamation



## \*Gospel

## Mark 13:24-37

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 13th chapter.

**C:** Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said,] <sup>24</sup>“But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, <sup>25</sup>and the stars will be

falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

<sup>26</sup>Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup>Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

<sup>28</sup>“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. <sup>29</sup>So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. <sup>30</sup>Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. <sup>31</sup>Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

<sup>32</sup>“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. <sup>33</sup>Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. <sup>34</sup>It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. <sup>35</sup>Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, <sup>36</sup>or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. <sup>37</sup>And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

**P:** The Gospel of the Lord.      **C:** Praise to you, O Christ.

**Sermon**

Pastor Paige G. Evers

**\*Hymn of the Day** “Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn”    **No. 242**

**\*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.**

*Please share a sign of peace with those around you.*

### Collection of the Offering

“Bethlehem Wind”      Choir; Sigrid Evers, violin      8:30

“Wondrous Love”      Sigrid Evers & Kelsey Oldland      11:00

**Offertory**      “Prepare the Royal Highway” (v. 1, 3)      **No. 264**

Prepare the royal highway; the King of kings is near!

Let ev'ry hill and valley a level road appear!

Then greet the King of glory, foretold in sacred story:

Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!

Then fling the gates wide open to greet your promised king!

Your king, yet ev'ry nation its tribute too may bring.

All lands will bow before him; their voices join your singing:

Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's word!

### \*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.**

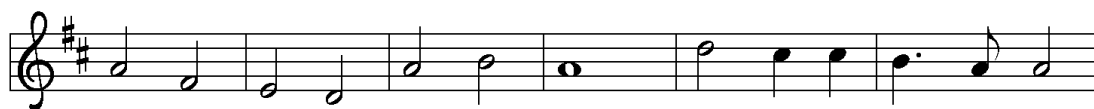
**P:** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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



**\*Proper Preface**

**\*"Holy, Holy, Holy"**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes



in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

**\*The Words of Institution**

**"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.

## **The Distribution of Communion, Standing, at the Altar Rail**

Communion Hymns: No. 715, "Christ, Be Our Light;" No. 492, "Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup;" No. 252, "Each Winter As the Year Grows Older;" No. 243, "Lost in the Night"

### **\*Post-Communion Blessing**

*Congregation responds with Amen.*

### **\*Post-Communion Prayer**

*Congregation responds with Amen.*

## **Sending**

### **\*Benediction**

*Congregation responds with Amen.*

**\*Sending Hymn** "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

**No. 254**

### **\*Dismissal**

*Congregation responds with Thanks be to God.*

## **Postlude**

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**SERVING TODAY**

**December 3**

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

**8:30**

Janice Weiner  
Matt Pencek  
Ken Newell  
Connor Pencek  
Diane Massey  
Gary Johnson  
Soren Evers  
Lisa Caccamise

**11:00**

Ed Huey  
David Krantz  
Todd Hannah  
  
Joy Rowe  
Deb Davis

**SERVING NEXT SUNDAY**

**December 10**

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

**8:30**

Al & Karen Stark  
Eric Valentine  
Chris Antonik  
Dresden Miller  
  
Carol Whyte  
Soren Evers  
Melissa Miller

**11:00**

Karolyn Hayes  
Sally Newell  
David Krantz  
  
Diane Massey  
Janice Piatkowski

## THIS WEEK AT REFORMATION

Today	8:30 am — Worship Service
	9:45 am — Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 am — Worship Service
	11:00 am — Santa House Cookies (until 2:00pm)
Tuesday	7:00 pm — Bible Study
Wednesday	7:00 pm — Confirmation Class
Thursday	12:00 pm — WELCA Lunch (Rookery South)
	6:00 pm — Handbell Rehearsal
	7:00 pm — Choir Rehearsal
Next Sunday	8:30 am — Worship Service
	9:45 am — Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 am — Worship Service
	11:00 am — Santa House Cookies Rain Date
	12:00 pm — Senior Quilt Meeting
	5:00 pm — Youth Group (in Annex)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Bake Cookies or Serve at the Santa House Cookie Table TODAY (or next Sunday if it's raining):** We will be offering free cookies to visitors to the Santa House in downtown Milford today! Even if you haven't signed up, you are welcome to pass out cookies and Christmas Eve worship invitations for an hour at the table on Walnut Street, right outside the Santa House. We'll be hosting the cookie table from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

**The Women of the ELCA (WELCA)** will be welcoming in the Christmas season at our annual Christmas luncheon. Please join us this Thursday, December 7 at 12 noon at the *Rookery South* in Milton, DE. All women are welcome. Even if you've never attended a WELCA meeting before, this is a great way to enjoy fellowship with other Reformation women. A signup sheet is posted on the bulletin board across from the kitchen. If you have any questions, please call Carol Whyte at 732-927-0231.

**To All Quilters and Sewers:** This year we have three graduating seniors. We will be busy making three quilts! I'm hoping you will meet me for a

SHORT meeting after the 11:00 service next Sunday, December 10, so we can figure out schedules and choose patterns. Please contact Pastor Judy Moller-Gavlick by phone or text (302-466-7245), or email (Mollergavlick@gmail.com), to say you will help!

The Christian Services Committee is again hosting an "**Advent Reverse Giving Calendar**" to support the Food Bank of Delaware. We're inviting you to add a food item to your very own Advent box each day to **give** a gift to help those with food insecurity in Delaware.

The Calendars are available in the Narthex. We encourage you to post it on your fridge and mark off the days as we approach Christmas, or use it for ideas of the needs of the Food Bank and give as you can. We will have a container in the Narthex to bring gifts weekly through Christmas Eve. All gifts will be delivered to the Food Bank in Milford for their pantry.

**The Mitten Tree is back!** Please see the information in the narthex and note that all gifts must be here by Sunday, December 17, to ensure that the gifts are delivered by Christmas. Please do not hesitate to call Suzanne Madanat at 302-382-6065 with any questions.

**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!

**Blue Christmas Service:** Sometimes it can be hard to celebrate Christmas due to loss or grief. Reformation is offering a Blue Christmas service on Wednesday, December 13 at 7:30 p.m. to come together and reflect on God's comforting presence in difficult times. We will sing familiar Christmas hymns, light candles, and receive Holy Communion. The service will be offered in person and online ([rlcmilford.com/video](http://rlcmilford.com/video)).

**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](mailto: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.

**Happy Birthday to:** Tammy Mook, today; Emily McDougall, Emily Racz, and Bill Deeter on the 4th; Edith Weipert on the 5th; Mia Wright and Rhys Ranney on the 9th, and Karolyn Hayes on the 10th.

## ***Advent and Christmas Special Services & Events***

*All 8:30 or 10:00am Sunday worship services and special services are **on-site and online** unless noted*

**Wednesday, December 13th at 7:30pm:**

Blue Christmas Worship

**Sunday, December 17th at 8:30 & 11:00am:**

Reformation Ringers handbells at both services

**Sunday, December 17th at 3:00pm:**

Decorating the Sanctuary for Christmas

**Sunday, December 24th at 10:00am:**

One 4th Sunday of Advent service—Choir Cantata & Holy Communion

**Sunday, December 24th at 4:00pm:**

Christmas Eve Service with young musicians

**Sunday, December 24th at 7:00pm:**

Christmas Eve Service with Choir (in person only)

**Sunday, December 31st at 10:00am:**

One service of Lessons, Carols, and Communion

**Sunday, January 7th, 2024 at 8:30 & 11:00am:**

Celebrating the Festivals of the Epiphany and the Baptism of Our Lord, removing sanctuary decorations after the 11:00 service.

**REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH**

***Christmas Poinsettia Order Form***

**~ 2023 ~**



If you would like to purchase poinsettia plants to decorate the Church Sanctuary for Christmas, please fill out the form below and include it with your payment by **December 17**. Please make checks payable to **Reformation Lutheran Church** with “Poinsettias” noted on the memo line and place in the offering. Cash may be placed in an envelope with your name and “Poinsettias” on the outside. If you prefer, you may give an offering to the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund. A list of dedications will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletins.

Our poinsettia plants are provided by Pepper Greenhouses. Each plant has 5-6 blooms and comes in a 6.5 inch pot wrapped in green foil.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of plants: \_\_\_\_ x \$12.00 each. Total for plants: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to the Pastor’s Discretionary Fund: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please be sure to pick up your plants on or before Sunday, January 7, 2024 . Unclaimed plants will be discarded.*

**Spread the word!**

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

[www.facebook.com/RLCmilford](http://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