

September 17, 2023

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

8:30 & 11:00 AM

REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

613 Lakeview Avenue

Milford, Delaware 19963



Phone: 302-422-9117

www.rlcmilford.com

Fax: 302-422-9184

Email: office@reformation-lutheran.net

Office hours (*Closed holidays*):

9:00am-3:30pm, Monday–Friday

Pat Sparks

Administrative Assistant

Gail Kelso

Director of Music / Organist

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

Pastors

The Sixteenth 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** “Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven” **No. 864**

***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

Genesis 50:15-21

¹⁵Realizing 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?” ¹⁶So 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. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, “We are here as your slaves.” ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even 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. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones.” In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

Romans 14:1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. ²Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³Those 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. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on servants 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. ⁵Some 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. ⁶Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. ⁷We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. ⁸If 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. ⁹For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰Why 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. ¹¹For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." ¹²So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

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 18:21-35

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 18th chapter.

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

²¹Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus 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. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to

him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But 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.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Eric W. Evers

***Hymn of the Day**

"Forgive Our Sins As We Forgive"

No. 605

Apostles' Creed (8:30)

**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.**

The Rite of Holy Baptism for Morgan Elizabeth Marvel (11:00)

***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 ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Collection of the Offering

Musical Offering "You're the Only Jesus" Choir 8:30

"Cause you're the only Jesus some will ever see,
and you're the only words of life some will ever read;
So let them see in you the One in whom is all they'll ever need.
'Cause you're the only Jesus some will ever see."

*Offertory

“Shout to the Lord”

No. 821

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: “We Sing to You, O God,” No. 791; “We Are Called,” No. 720; “O Master, Let Me Walk with You,” No. 818; “Change My Heart, O God,” No. 801

***Post-Communion Blessing**

Congregation responds with Amen.

***Post-Communion Prayer**

Congregation responds with Amen.

Sending

*Benediction

Congregation responds with Amen.

*Sending Hymn “Blest Are They”

No. 728

*Dismissal

Congregation responds with Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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SERVING TODAY

September 17

Usher

Lay Reader

Worship Assistant

Acolyte

Healing Prayer

Altar Guild

Live Stream Operator

Fellowship Host

8:30

Carol Benner-Chaffinch

Sally Newell

Mary K. Konesey

Janice Piatkowski

Sigrid Evers

Mary Lu Wilson

11:00

Bill Vendetti

Karolyn Hayes

Todd Hannah

Joy Rowe

Deb Davis

SERVING NEXT SUNDAY

September 17

Usher

Lay Reader

Worship Assistant

Acolyte

Healing Prayer

Altar Guild

Live Stream Operator

Fellowship Host

8:30

Al & Karen Stark

Matt Pencek

Eric Valentine

Connor Pencek

Carol Whyte

Jack or Shannon Pencek

Lisa Caccamise

11:00

Tim & Cheryl Altares

Dianna Smith

Trish Boyer

Maynard Gregory

Gary Johnson

THIS WEEK AT REFORMATION

Today	8:30 am — Worship Service
	9:45 am — Bible Study and Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 am — Worship Service and Baptism
Tuesday	7:00 pm — Church Council
Thursday	6:00 pm — Bell Choir Rehearsal
	7:00 pm — Choir Rehearsal
Next Sunday	8:30 am — Worship Service
	9:45 am — Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 am — Worship Service
	5:00 pm — High School Youth Group

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New High School Youth Group!

First gathering: Sunday, September 24 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. (with dinner)

The Growing Young Team is initiating a new youth group for High Schoolers (9th-12th grades) to get together twice a month in the Annex at church, talk about life and faith, and have fun together. The leaders are David Krantz & Silvia Martinez, Pastor Paige, and Jake McDuff (a high school senior serving on the Growing Young Team). We look forward to getting our high school students together for this new experience with faith and friends!

Confirmation Classes are beginning soon for middle schoolers—if you are interested in having your 6th-8th graders join those Wednesday evening classes, please contact Pastor Paige.

News from the Choir Loft: Come be part of the music ministry! Our Bell Choir rehearses on Thursday evenings at 6:00 PM followed by the Choir rehearsal at 7:00 PM.

From the Christian Service Committee: We are collecting items for the “Stockings for Soldiers” program. This is a community effort to send personalized holiday greetings to our brave men and women in uniform serving our country throughout the world. Suggested items include:

Individual packaged, shelf-stable items like Beef-a-Roni™, tuna, lasagna, etc., Slim Jims™ and beef & turkey jerky, small candy (chocolate preferred), chewing gum, granola and protein bars, cookies, nuts, pretzels, and trail mix in small servings, flavored drink mix, music cd’s, puzzles, crosswords, and sudoku, Beanie Babies™, and paperbacks (no romance). Personal items like tooth brushes and small toothpaste, razors, lotions, and foot powder are very much needed. Also, movie DVD's, pocket games, pens and note paper, as well as letters of appreciation from children, and signed holiday greeting cards would be welcomed.

Give By Text: Did you know that 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: Chris Antonik today, Kelley Chadder on the 21st, Doug Emmett on the 22nd, and Les Guyer on the 23rd.

Happy Anniversary to: Les & Dawn Guyer today, Darryl & Trish Boyer on the 18th, Monty & Marion Suski on the 22nd, and Bob & Peggy Tlasek on the 23rd.

*The Rite of
Holy Baptism*

for

Morgan Elizabeth Marvel

September 17, 2023

11:00 AM

Reformation Lutheran Church

Milford, DE

Presentation

The baptismal party gathers with the ministers at the font. The assembly is seated.

P: In baptism our gracious heavenly Father frees us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are born children of a fallen humanity; by water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn children of God and made members of the church, the body of Christ. Living with Christ and in the communion of saints, we grow in faith, love, and obedience to the will of God.

The Godparents present the candidate for Holy Baptism:

R: We present Morgan Elizabeth Marvel for baptism.

The presiding minister addresses the parents.

P: Nicholas and Kate, called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, do you desire to have your daughter baptized into Christ?

R: We do.

P: As you bring your daughter to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:

to live with her among God's faithful people,
bring her to the word of God and the holy supper,
teach her the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
place in her hands the holy scriptures,
and nurture her in faith and prayer,
so that your daughter may learn to trust God,
proclaim Christ through word and deed,
care for others and the world God made,
and work for justice and peace.

P: Do you promise to help your daughter grow in the Christian faith and life?

R: We do.

The presiding minister addresses the Godparents:

P: Jeff and Betty Ann, do you promise to nurture Morgan in the Christian faith as you are empowered by God's Spirit, and to help her live in the covenant of baptism and in communion with the church?

R: We do.

The presiding minister addresses the congregation:

P: People of God, do you promise to support Morgan and pray for her in her new life in Christ?

C: **We do.**

Profession of Faith

The presiding minister addresses the baptismal party:

P: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church. Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

R: I renounce them.

P: Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

R: I renounce them.

P: Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

R: I renounce them.

The congregation stands and joins in confessing the Creed.

P: Do you believe in God the Father?

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

P: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

C: **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.**

P: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**C: 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.**

The presiding minister leads the Thanksgiving at the font.

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

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

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

P: We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight. Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family, and through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the baptism of Jesus' death and resurrection you set us free from the power of sin and death and raise us up to live in you. Pour out your Holy Spirit, the power of your living Word, that those who are washed in the waters of baptism may be given new life. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

Baptism

Water is poured on the candidate's head three times with the following words:

P: Morgan Elizabeth, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

The congregation responds:

**C: You belong to Christ, in whom you have been baptized.
Alleluia!**

P: Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give your sons and daughters new birth, cleanse them from sin, and raise them to eternal life.

Sustain Morgan with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

C: Amen.

The presiding minister marks the sign of the cross with oil on the forehead of the newly baptized.

P: Morgan Elizabeth, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.

C: Amen.

Welcome

A lighted candle is presented to the Godparents with these words:

A: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

P: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

C: We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

The baptismal party follows the pastor as our newest brother in Christ is introduced to the congregation!

About Holy Baptism:

The Lutheran church believes and teaches that in Holy Baptism, God claims us as his own, seals us with the Holy Spirit, and begins a new life in us. We cannot earn these gifts, but receive them by trusting in the Lord Jesus, who commands us to make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).

The water used in baptism symbolizes cleansing, and so points to the forgiveness of sin that is given to us in the sacrament. Whenever we stumble and fall short of God's will, we can remember that in our baptism, the Lord has promised to forgive, cleanse, and redeem us.

The water also symbolizes drowning and rebirth. Saint Paul writes in Romans 6:3-4, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." Baptism marks the beginning of our new life in Christ. All who are baptized are called to die daily to sin through repentance; in the mercy of Christ, we rise again to a life of faith, hope, and love. In baptism, we are claimed for a life of discipleship, to serve Christ and neighbor and bear witness to God's kingdom of grace, mercy, and truth.

Oil is used to make the sign of the cross on a newly-baptized person. Oil is an ancient symbol of God's blessing and of the Holy Spirit, who is the seal of God's presence in us by faith. The candle that is presented is lit from the Paschal Candle, which represents Christ's presence, showing that the gift of salvation comes from Jesus to us. Families are encouraged to mark "baptismal birthdays" every year by lighting this candle and remembering the gift of God's promise.

Godparents, or sponsors, are traditionally chosen for candidates for baptism. They have the special role of encouraging and supporting the disciple in their life of faith.

*You belong
to Christ, in whom
you have been baptized.*

Alleluia!