

September 24, 2023

The Seventeenth 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

Administrative Assistant

Gail Kelso

Director of Music / Organist

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

Pastors

The Seventeenth 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**

"Lord of Light"

No. 688

***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

Jonah 3:10-4:11

¹⁰When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

^{4:1}But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

⁴And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. ⁶The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered.

⁸When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, "It is better for me to die than to live."⁹ But God said to Jonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?" And he said, "Yes, angry enough to die."¹⁰ Then the Lord said, "You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night."¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?"

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

Philippians 1:21-30

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again.

²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— ³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

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 20:1-16****P:** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 20th chapter.**C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said,] "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?'"

⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' ⁹When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' ¹³But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?' ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

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

Pastor Paige G. Evers

***Hymn of the Day** "Spread, Oh, Spread, Almighty Word" **No. 663**

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

Collection of the Offering

Musical Offering “You’re the Only Jesus” Choir 11:00
“And if not for you, I wonder who
will show them love and love alone
can make things new?
If not from you, how will they learn
there’s One who’ll trade their hopelessness
for joy in return?
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: "Jesus Calls Us, o'er the Tumult," No. 696;
"Great Is Thy Faithfulness," No. 733; "Guide Me Ever, Great
Redeemer," No. 618; "Lord of All Hopefulness," No. 765

***Post-Communion Blessing**

Congregation responds with Amen.

***Post-Communion Prayer**

Congregation responds with Amen.

Sending

***Benediction**

Congregation responds with Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

"O Zion, Haste"

No. 668

***Dismissal**

Congregation responds with Thanks be to God.

Postlude

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THIS WEEK AT REFORMATION

Today	8:30 am — Worship Service
	9:45 am — Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 am — Worship Service
	5:00 pm — High School Youth Group (Annex)
Tuesday	2:45 pm — KIDS Inc. Chapel
Wednesday	7:00 pm — Confirmation Class (Annex)
Thursday	6:00 pm — Bell Choir Rehearsal
	7:00 pm — Choir Rehearsal
Next Sunday	8:30 am — Worship Service
	9:45 am — Bible Study & Coffee Fellowship
	11:00 am — Worship Service

SERVING TODAY

September 24	8:30	11:00
Usher	Al & Karen Stark	Tim & Cheryl Altares
Lay Reader	Matt Pencek	Kristin Schlegel
Worship Assistant	Eric Valentine	Trish Boyer
Acolyte	Connor Pencek	
Healing Prayer		Maynard Gregory
Altar Guild	Carol Whyte	Gary Johnson
Live Stream Operator	Jack or Shannon Pencek	
Fellowship Host	Lisa Caccamise	

SERVING NEXT SUNDAY

October 1	8:30	11:00
Usher	Ron Semmont	Edith & Steve Weipert
Lay Reader	Joyce Nauman	Lisa Caccamise
Worship Assistant		Todd Hannah
Acolyte		Lexi Caccamise
Healing Prayer		Joy Rowe
Altar Guild	Janice Weiner	Deb Bryant-Davis
Live Stream Operator	Scott Rainville	
Fellowship Host	Melissa Miller	

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New High School Youth Group!

First gathering: Tonight 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 this week for middle schoolers—if you are interested in having your 6th-8th graders join those Wednesday evening classes, please contact Pastor Paige.

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.

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

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: 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.

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: 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: Monty Suski, who celebrated on September 22, and to Jim Talbott on the 25th.

Happy Anniversary to: Matt & Kristin Schlegel on the 27th and Don & Ginny Hannah on the 28th

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