
REFORMATION TIMES

DECEMBER 2019

Christmas Eve & Day Schedule

Christmas Eve Worship

All worships include Carols, Candlelight and Communion.

2 pm – a service featuring traditional carols sung in a traditional style

4 pm – a special service designed especially for children who will participate in “Las Posadas”, the journey of Mary and Joseph as they seek room for the Christ-child.

6 pm – a service featuring familiar carols sung in an upbeat contemporary rock style.

8 pm – a service featuring traditional carols sung in a traditional style

Christmas Day Worship

10 am – a service of Carols and Communion followed by a birthday party for Jesus.

Fill Christmas Food Bags

Thank you for generously providing Thanksgiving meals. We will hand out the next round of bags for the Christmas food drive on **Sunday, December 1**. Be sure to return them by **Sunday, December 15**. We also need volunteers to help deliver the bags on **Monday, December 16**. For more information, contact Sally Burkam 610-566-8737 or spburkam@yahoo.com.

Save the Date – Annual Meeting

Our Annual Meeting will be **Sunday, January 26**, immediately following the 11:00 worship. The presentation on the church finances will be **January 19**.

Celebrate Our Faith Engagement!



Let the “Call” process begin! How exciting is it to hear that news? Congregation Council was hopeful that there would be a positive response to the appeal for the Deacon Beth:

Faith Engagement Fund. When the results were announced by the Financial Secretary, Gary Kamin, just two weeks into pledging, we knew the action the congregation wanted us to take. The Faith Engagement Fund had reached \$59,264.00!

Council immediately voted to recommend that a call be made to Deacon Beth Ann Barkhau. The recommended call is a regular call not a term call which is currently in place for the Deacon and terminates on January 15, 2020.

The action of Council, with the support of our members, recognizes how important the work of the Director of Faith Engagement has been to our Mission to Invite All People, Serve our Neighbors and Build a Living Faith.

A Congregational Meeting will be held **December 29, 2019**, after the 10 am worship. What a way to welcome the New Year!

President Dick Hughey

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Special Congregational Meeting

A Special Congregational Meeting will be held on **Sunday, December 29, 2019**, immediately following the 10:00 am worship for the purpose of voting on the recommendation of the Congregation Council to extend a call to Deacon Beth Barkhau to serve as Director of Faith Engagement.



If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. – 1 Corinthians 12:26

Ethan Connor Marcus, child of Andrew and Kimberly Marcus, was baptized at Reformation on November 3.

St. Nicholas Celebration



Gift Giving – Once again, Reformation will provide Christmas gifts for people in need through community agencies. Stop at the St. Nicholas gift tables in the

hallway outside the church office. This year you can take a “Gift List Card” for one (or more) of these organizations (instead of the individual gift tags used in past years) and purchase a gift from the list on the card. Please attach the agency card to the unwrapped gift and bring gifts to worship on or before **Sunday, December 8**.

Easy Shopping on Amazon – If you are planning to shop for gifts for our St. Nicholas Celebration on Amazon, remember to use smile.amazon.com and specify Reformation as the charity to benefit from your shopping.

Celebration – Bishop Nicholas will visit us and dedicate the gifts we bring to support local community organizations during both worships on **Sunday, December 8**. Help is needed after the 11 am worship to sort the gifts for each agency, so that they can be delivered the following day. If you are able to spend a few minutes after the service to help, it would be greatly appreciated!

Hanging of the Greens

Everyone is invited to help decorate the tree and hang wreaths and pine roping **Sunday, December 22**, immediately following the 11:00 worship. Join us also for the Unhanging of the Greens on Sunday, January 5, after the 11:00 worship.

Longing for the Light

December 1 is the First Sunday in Advent. Worship that day will include our “Longing for the Light of Healing and Hope” liturgy which includes a Prayer Litany and, optionally, Candle Lighting and Individual Prayer for Healing.

Addresses Needed

Have a student in college? Please send the church office (rlc@relcmedia.org) your student’s address at school by **January 15**. Students can expect a surprise in the mail next semester!

REFORMATION TIMES

Published Monthly by

Reformation Lutheran Church

Deadline: Noon the 15th of every month

Materials to: newsletter@relcmedia.org

Congregation Council and Officers

Dick Hughey, *President*; Talitha D’Italia, *Vice President*; Marilyn Gilroy, *Secretary*; Tom Conroy, *Treasurer*; Emily Black, Deb Conley, Megan Gress, Skip Hoffman, Andrew Marcus, Uli Neubert, Bev Norton, Layla Phillips, Mike Polito, Pastor Alina Gayeuski, Pastor Wayne Matthias-Long

Faith Builders

Healing for the Holidays – Holidays often create unwanted stress. Healing for the Holidays guest speakers will help participants develop personal strategies for self-care while fostering a deepening sense of gratitude and servanthood.

Join registered dietitian, Danielle Burke, on **December 1**, Rev. Dr. Zuline Willkenson, Executive Director of Chester Eastside, Inc, on **December 8**, and Melissa Lavery, former high school teacher, yoga practitioner and author on **December 15**. Faith-Life Connection classes meets at 9:45 am in Creighton Hall.

What Makes TED Talks Tick? TED Talks posted their first six videos in 2006 and by 2012 they had reached a billion views. They continue to be viewed at a rate of 17 new views per second. They say this means, “That people want to learn. That people want be inspired. That people are hungry for ideas, and that there’s a bubbling desire not to let the unfortunate truths of our world remain the status quo, but to look for creative solutions.”

What can we learn from some of the most popular TED talks? Why are these specific ones so popular? What do they teach us about what people are searching for? How does faith factor in?

Join us to view TED talks that inspire, inform, and call us to action and to consider how answers to the questions above provide insights for our daily lives and out reach into our community. Kathie Leighton facilitates this discussion on **Sundays, January 5, 12, and 19**, at 9:45 am in Creighton Hall.

Give a “Good Gift”



As you plan for the coming season of gift-giving, consider a gift of hope and love that can help make a difference in the world with ELCA GOOD GIFTS.

The ELCA Good Gifts Catalog has more than 40 options, with prices ranging from \$10 (for 10 chicks or to stock a backpack with food) to \$1,000 (for an ox and plow) with many other possibilities in between, from health clinics to microloans, water wells to animal husbandry, community meals to advocacy, seminary education to evangelist training

It’s easy to give an ELCA Good Gift.

1. Choose your gift by browsing the website at ELCA.org/goodgifts or by checking out the display in the lobby outside the sanctuary.
2. Make your donation to ELCA Good Gifts.
3. Get a card. You can pick up a card on the display table. If your gift is in honor of a friend or loved one, it’s easy to tell them about it. A selection of printable cards and eCards are also available to print at ELCA.org/goodgifts.

(While gifts to ELCA.org/goodgifts grow the church, fight hunger, and transform lives, there are other ways to give similar gifts. You may want to visit the website of Lutheran World Relief at lwrgifts.org for additional “good gift” options.)

Try Music Together® for Free

If you're looking for a class to get moving with your little one, this is the class for you! Music Together® is for children birth-5 years old.



Free sample classes will be held at Reformation on **Thursday, December 12**, 3:45-4:30pm in the Choir Room. Speak with Kara Fontes for more information!

Mortgage Paid Off



Congregation Council, on November 12, 2019, passed a Resolution to pay off our mortgage with the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA. The payment in the

sum of \$53,722.00 will be made immediately and payment will come from the Building Fund.

Some background information will demonstrate the significance of this action. Reformation Lutheran Church commenced a major building project in 2005 that provided new administrative offices, a new narthex (lobby, welcome center), bathrooms, elevator and other needed improvements. The total project cost was \$1,770,000.00 and resulted in a mortgage of \$1,300,000.00.

By 2014 the mortgage was \$957,208.00 and the monthly payment over \$8,000.00. This was not a good situation for a congregation that wants to focus on service and outreach.

As a result of wonderful bequests and the *Always in Mission* Campaign, we have been able to substantially reduce the principal and make the satisfaction possible at this time. We give thanks to you, the members of the *1517 Society* and financial leaders in our congregation who have provided sound advice. We also thank the Mission Investment Fund for its assistance over the years. Our satisfaction of this loan provides addition funds for the Mission Investment Fund to provide to other congregations.

Now, how shall we celebrate? Let us know what kind of mortgage burning ceremony and party we should have.

President Dick Hughey

Join the Holiday Hayride

Families are invited to join us on **Sunday, December 8**, for the Arasapha Holiday Hayride. We will meet at Arasapha at 6:00 pm. A sign up email will be sent out. See Pastor Alina with any questions.

Celebrate Christmas @ Home

Christmas @ Home packets are available! You can pick up a packet on the counter in the lobby outside of the sanctuary. These simple activities can be done in your home on Christmas Day and are great for all ages! Please see Pastor Alina or Deacon Beth for more information.

Attend a Free Concert

The Haverford-Bryn Mawr College Chorale (including Reformation member Adam Fernandez) and Chorale Orchestra will perform Handel's oratorio "Judas Maccabeus" on **Sunday, December 8**, at 3 pm at Marshall Auditorium (Roberts Hall) on the campus of Haverford College, 370 Lancaster Avenue, Haverford. This event is free and open to the public.



Pastor Alina, Pastor Wayne, Bishop Davenport and Deacon Beth at the Rostered Ministers Equipping Event (formerly known as the Bishop's Convocation)

Enjoy a Historical Lunch Bunch

If you were traveling between Philadelphia and Baltimore in the late 1770's and needed a place to get a meal or to spend the night, you might have stopped at a warm and inviting tavern along a dusty road in Concordville. In fact, at one time, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin were each said to have stayed at this inn.

Many years and 25 owners later, Ye Old Concordville Inn still offers the good food and warm atmosphere of that earlier time. Join the Lunch Bunch there for our **Wednesday, December 11**, get-together! The food is renown (especially the crab cakes!) and prices reasonable (Lunch entrees start at \$13).

Anyone who would like to join the Lunch Bunch at the Concordville Inn, 780 Baltimore Pike, Glen Mills, is invited to sign-up on the green sheet in the church lobby. All are welcome to join us!

10 Eco-Friendly Wrap Ideas

- 1) Old newspaper
- 2) Sheet music you don't use anymore
- 3) Cardboard rolls from toilet paper for little stocking stuffers
- 4) Pages of old books folded into gift bags
- 5) Old cereal boxes
- 6) Sleeves from old shirts are excellent for wrapping bottles
- 7) Leftover paper cups from a party
- 8) Wrap the gift in a new scarf
- 9) Paper bags decorated with dried flowers, or doilies
- 10) If you sew, wrap the gift in old fabrics and lace

For more ideas go to:

<https://ecobnb.com/blog/2015/11/eco-friendly-gift-wrap-ideas/>

Bring Joy to our Homebound



Join members in spreading Christmas cheer to our homebound on **Sunday, December 15**. Come to

Creighton Hall after the 11:00 worship for a light lunch and then we will carpool to sing Christmas Carols until about 3 pm. You will lift your own spirits and the spirits of the homebound. All ages are welcome. Sign up in the lobby. Please contact Karen Chorney at 610-405-1659 with any questions.

Advent Gospel Procession by Children

There will be a special opportunity for children to be involved in worship during the season of Advent (which begins on December 1). Children will be invited to help the preacher bring the Bible forward from a table in the back of the sanctuary and stand around the preacher for the reading of the gospel. Everyone will then continue with the Sermon on the Steps as usual in the service.

Join the Holiday Choir

Would you like to sing with the Chancel Choir for Advent and Christmas? We would be thrilled to have you! Rehearsals will be at 10:00 am on **Saturday, December 7, 14 and 21**, as well as a warm-up session before the 8:30 am worship on Sunday morning at 8:00 a.m. Our special holiday choir will sing at the 8:00 pm Christmas Eve worship.

It is not necessary to wear a robe and you may sit with your family during the service. Come join us as we prepare for the coming of our Lord!

Register for Tuscarora

The Tuscarora Lutheran Youth Retreat, for all youth in grades 6-12, will be held March 27-29. Registration materials and payment will be due by Sunday, January 19. More information will be communicated with parents via e-mail. Please speak with Pastor Alina if you have any questions.

Men's Breakfast



The Men's Breakfast group invites all Reformation Men to our next Breakfast on **Saturday, December 14.**

While we do not have a presentation or speaker scheduled for this breakfast, the Men's group would like to offer hot coffee and warm food to anyone interested in joining us for interesting discussion. Coffee and Fellowship begin at 8:30 am, breakfast is served by 9:00, and our lively discussions begin shortly thereafter.

YOUTH GROUP

Save The Dates

December 8 – Arasapha Holiday Hayride

January 19 – Cooking Class

February 9 – College Care Kit Making

March 27-29 – Tuscarora Youth Retreat

May 3 – Scavenger Hunt and Dessert

Donate Blood, Give Life

Congratulations! Last July we registered 26 total donors, collected 19 pints of blood and recruited 2 first-time donors. Our next blood drive is scheduled for **Sunday, January 20.**

Library News



The next Library Book Club meeting is **Tuesday, January 21**, at 7pm in the Alyce Thompson Room. We will discuss *Eleanor Oliphant is*

Completely Fine, a debut novel by Gail Honeyman. The book focuses on the question - is Eleanor Oliphant completely fine? Eleanor, a social misfit, is juggling a troubled youth, a stalled career, and an otherwise isolated life with strange new happenings and acquaintances. Eleanor sees some cracks in the shell she has been hiding in and the reader wonders whether her plucky courage will see her through to a new and fuller life. We would be thrilled if our new church members would join the discussion!

Check out the new bulletin board display, **100% Chance of Good Reading!** for some great book suggestions for reading on a snowy day while drinking hot chocolate by the fireside.

BEAR CREEK

Register for Winter Camp

CONNECT is a fun-filled weekend at



Bear Creek Camp during the winter! It's a time to CONNECT with God and to CONNECT with your friends. We have a blast doing all of the fun activities that Bear Creek Camp has to offer during the winter, plus all the other great activities you've come to expect! The weekend kicks off on Friday night and runs until Sunday after lunch.

9-12th grades – January 10-12.

4-8th grades – January 24-26.

Go to bearcreekcamp.org for additional details.



FROM THE DEACON

“For we have observed God’s star at its rising and have come to pay God homage.” – Matthew 2:2b

In our evolving computer culture, digital communication often combines letters and small icons. Such are used as a form of cyber shorthand. They can describe a word, an emotion, and at times even a sentence. For example, "C" and "S" are used interchangeably for the word "see". "U" and "Y" are used interchangeably for "you". The shorthand "LMK" means "Let me know". "ILY" means "I love you".

Similar to an abbreviation, cyber shorthand may be used to save space and time, avoid repetition of long words and phrases, or convey a quick message.

But, long before computer culture, there was *Christian culture*. In early Christian life, symbols were used as a form of shorthand to denote places of worship and homes of the faithful. Images of fish and seas shells marked pathways for pilgrims as well as places of safety and care. One symbol we see each December and throughout the Christmas season is the "X." Yes, we are getting close to *Xmassing* time.

Long before "X" marked the spot on a treasure map, or "X" suggested crossing something off a list, they symbol implied to early followers of Jesus that they were in the company of Christians. The "X", when marked on a pole, carved into a stone, or even drawn in the soil along a dusty road, indicated that other Christians were nearby.

In Greek, the original language of the New Testament, the word Christos (Christ) begins with the letter X or chi. The first letter of the

Greek word Christos is transliterated into our alphabet as an X. When we see the abbreviation Xmas, we see the English letter X. It is natural to see it as X. People literally say, *"X"mas, not Christmas.*

For early Christians, the X was both an important abbreviation, and a comfort. In our current cultural context, the use of the term *Xmas* has caused some discomfort. It might even prompt the question, "Why would someone take Christ out of Christmas?"

And yet, when we gain awareness of the meaning behind the symbol, we affirm what historians and archeologists have confirmed. The use of X as an abbreviation for the name of Christ came into use in our culture with no intent to show any disrespect for Jesus the Christ, God's Son, our Savior. It is just the opposite. The combination of X along with the 'mas' (part of the Latin term referring to worship) became *Xmas=Christ worship in the late 1800's to celebrate Immanuel, God with us.*

In December, as we celebrate the seasons of Advent and Xmas, *Christ-mass*, think about your home, the symbols and traditions that currently define your life and family practices. Explore the history and meaning of such. Spend time together with loved ones and friends, and share the stories of life and faith together. Until we gather in worship and learning at Reformation, let us celebrate again that God IS with us and that X is coming again!

Peace, Deacon Beth

P.S. I look 4ward 2 Cing U @ worship on Sundays and at Xmas services at RLC

Order Poinsettias

Poinsettia plants may be ordered by filling out this form and placing it on the offering plate or in the church office. The plants cost **\$6.50** each. Checks should be made out to *Reformation Lutheran Church* and attached to your order.

The names of those persons ordering plants will be printed in the Christmas Eve worship folders.

Please be sure to complete all **four** sections:

1. Your name as it should appear in the bulletin PRINT clearly

Envelope Number: _____

2. Select your plants

Red poinsettias _____ X \$6.50 = \$ _____

White poinsettias _____ X \$6.50 = \$ _____

Donation for trees, wreaths, etc. \$ _____

3. Check one box below and please PRINT clearly

- In memory of _____
- In honor of _____
- In memory of loved ones
- To the glory of God

- 4. I would like to:** Pick up the plant(s)
- Donate the plant(s)



Plants may be taken home after the 8 pm worship on Christmas Eve, after worship Christmas morning or during the week following Christmas.

Deadline for ordering is Sunday, December 8

Lutherans Remember Las Posadas

Las Posadas is found on the ELCA calendar on Dec. 16 as a "Commemoration." A commemoration illuminates an aspect of the church's life and mission.

Las Posadas means "lodgings". Each night from Dec. 16 to Dec. 24, the journey of Mary and Joseph is celebrated with re-enactment, music, scripture reading and masses. A child dressed as an angel leads "Mary" and "Joseph" through the town followed by others dressed as shepherds and wise men. Musicians follow. At a preselected door a song asking for entry is sung. Those inside sing a song refusing entry and then have a change of heart and invite them inside. Then there are refreshments, carol singing and usually a service with Scripture reading. The evening ends with the children breaking star shaped piñatas.

Spanish missionaries brought this to Mexico 400 years ago to "Christianize" two important Aztec holidays celebrated in December. Before that it was a medieval play meant to educate a largely illiterate population. Las Posadas is celebrated with some variations in many areas with a Spanish heritage including parts of the US.

However you celebrate we wish you a joyful and happy Christmas.

George and Nancy Clark



Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church

102 West Rose Tree Road, Media, PA 19063

www.relcmmedia.org

Urgent Pastoral Care Line: 610-314-7747

All other phone calls: 610-891-0600

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 1st Sunday of Advent 8:30 am Worship 9:45 am Sunday School & Adult Faith Builders 11:00 am Worship 8:00 pm Men's AA	2 1:30 pm FA Group 7:00 pm Alanon 7:15 pm Boy Scouts 8:00 pm Alanon/Alateen	3 1:00 pm Mah Jongg 7:00 pm Leadership for Faithful Innovation Team 7:30 pm Women's AA	4 12:00 pm Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Souls 7:15 pm Prayer Shawl	5 6:30 pm Zumba 8:00 pm AA	6	7 10:00 am Chancel Choir 7:30 pm AA
8 2nd Sunday of Advent St. Nicholas Celebration 8:30 am Worship 9:45 am Sunday School & Adult Faith Builders 9:45 am Reader Training 11:00 am Worship 12:00 pm Reader Training 1:30 pm Mah Jongg 6:00 pm Arasapha Holiday Hayride 8:00 pm Men's AA	9 1:30 pm FA Group 7:00 pm Alanon 7:15 pm Boy Scouts 8:00 pm Alanon/Alateen	10 1:00 pm Mah Jongg 6:30 pm Children's Choir 7:00 pm Council Meeting 7:30 pm Women's AA	11 12:00 pm Staff Meeting 12:00 pm Lunch Bunch 7:00 pm Souls	12 3:45 pm Music Together Sample Class 6:30 pm Zumba 8:00 pm AA	13 9:30 am NS Christmas Program 6:30 pm Gratitude for Grandparents	14 8:30 pm Men's Breakfast 10:00 am Chancel Choir 11:30 am Citizens Climate Lobby 7:30 pm AA
15 3rd Sunday of Advent Newsletter Deadline @ noon 8:30 am Worship 9:45 am Sunday School & Adult Faith Builders 11:00 am Worship 12:00 pm Caroling 8:00 pm Men's AA	16 1:30 pm FA Group 7:00 pm Alanon 7:15 pm Boy Scouts 8:00 pm Alanon/Alateen	17 1:00 pm Mah Jongg 6:30 pm Children's Choir 7:30 pm Women's AA	18 12:00 pm Staff Meeting 6:30 pm Community Action 7:00 pm Souls	19 6:30 pm Zumba 7:00 pm Eco-Ministry 8:00 pm AA	20 6:00 pm Cub Scout Event	21 10:00 am Chancel Choir 7:30 pm AA
22 4th Sunday of Advent 8:30 am Worship 11:00 am Worship 12:00 pm Hanging of the Greens 1:30 pm Mah Jongg 8:00 pm Men's AA	23 1:30 pm FA Group 7:00 pm Alanon 7:15 pm Boy Scouts 8:00 pm Alanon/Alateen	24 Christmas Eve Office Closed 2:00 pm Worship 4:00 pm Worship 6:00 pm Worship 8:00 pm Worship	25 Christmas Office Closed 10:00 am Worship	26 Office Closed 6:30 pm Zumba 8:00 pm AA	27 6:30 pm Gratitude for Grandparents	28 7:30 pm AA
29 1st Sunday of Christmas 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Special Congregational Meeting 8:00 pm Men's AA	30 1:30 pm FA Group 7:00 pm Alanon 7:15 pm Boy Scouts 8:00 pm Alanon/Alateen	31 1:00 pm Mah Jongg 7:30 pm Women's AA				



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Sunday Worship: 8:30 am & 11:00 am
Sunday School for all ages at 9:45 am
Summer Worship: 8:30 am & 10:00 am

Pastors

The Rev. Wayne A. Matthias-Long
The Rev. Alina S. Gayeuski

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REFORMATION TIMES

December 2019

MISSION: Called by Christ,
we **INVITE** all people,
SERVE our neighbors, and
BUILD a living faith.

WELCOME: Called by Christ, we invite and welcome all people. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, age, abilities, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or employment status. We welcome all without regard to religious belief or identity, citizenship, political views, or anything that might divide us. Our unity is in Christ.

Sun, Dec. 8 – St. Nicholas Celebration

Sun, Dec. 15 – Caroling at 12 pm

Sun, Dec. 22 @ 12:00
Hanging of the Greens

Tues, Dec. 24
Christmas Eve Worship at 2, 4, 6, & 8

Wed, Dec. 25
Christmas Worship at 10 am

Sun, Dec. 29 – Worship at 10:00
Special Congregational Meeting
following worship