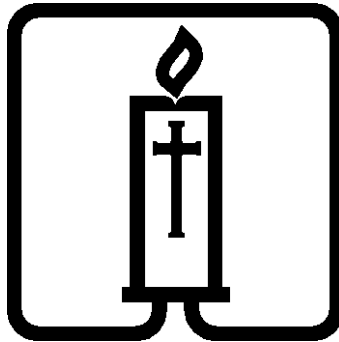


# REFORMATION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



## VIGIL OF EASTER

MARCH 30, 2024  
7:30 PM

102 WEST ROSE TREE ROAD  
MEDIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19063

[WWW.RELCMEDIA.ORG](http://WWW.RELCMEDIA.ORG)

**The Vigil of Easter** is the first service of Easter and follows the earliest tradition of the Christian Church. The service begins where Good Friday ended. The congregation gathers outside the darkened sanctuary and the new Paschal candle is lighted. The procession enters the sanctuary as individual candles for worshippers are lighted from the Paschal candle. This service of gathering light culminates with the Easter gospel and the news that “Christ is Risen!” The Sacrament of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion conclude the service and the benediction signals that the "Great Three Days" of Christianity are concluded with God's victory in Christ.

# Resurrection of Our Lord: Vigil of Easter

## March 30, 2024

### 7:30 pm

*This is the night! This is our Passover with Christ from darkness to light, from bondage to freedom, from death to life. Tonight is the heart of our celebration of the Three Days and the pinnacle of the church's year. The resurrection of Christ is proclaimed in word and sign, and we gather around a pillar of fire, hear ancient stories of our faith, welcome new sisters and brothers at the font, and share the food and drink of the promised land. Raised with Christ, we go forth into the world, aflame with the good news of the resurrection.*

**C**= Congregation    **A**=Assisting Minister    **P**=Presiding Minister    **R**=Individual Responses

## GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

### 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.**

### INTRODUCTION

- P** This is the night of salvation! At the Vigil of Easter, we gather around fire, word, water, bread, and wine, proclaiming through story and song that ours is a God who continuously brings life out of death. On this night we experience again the heart of God's baptismal promise and the center of our faith: we are claimed and cleansed, renewed in the death and resurrection of Christ. We gather with all the saints of every time and place to celebrate the good news: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

*The fire is lit.*

- P** Let us pray. Eternal God, in Jesus Christ you have given the light of life to all the world. Bless this new fire, and increase in us a desire to shine forth with the brightness of Christ's rising, until we feast at the banquet of eternal light; through the Sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**

*The presiding minister traces the inscription on the paschal candle.*

- P** Christ, yesterday and today,  
The beginning and the ending.  
To Christ belongs all time and all the ages;  
To Christ belongs glory and dominion now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

*The paschal candle is lit.*

- P** May the light of Christ, rising in glory, dispel the darkness of our<sup>l</sup> hearts and minds.

### *PROCESSION*

*The assembly lights individual candles from the paschal candle and begins a procession, following the cross and the candle, into the sanctuary. Three times the procession will stop as the assisting minister lifts the candle and sings the following:*

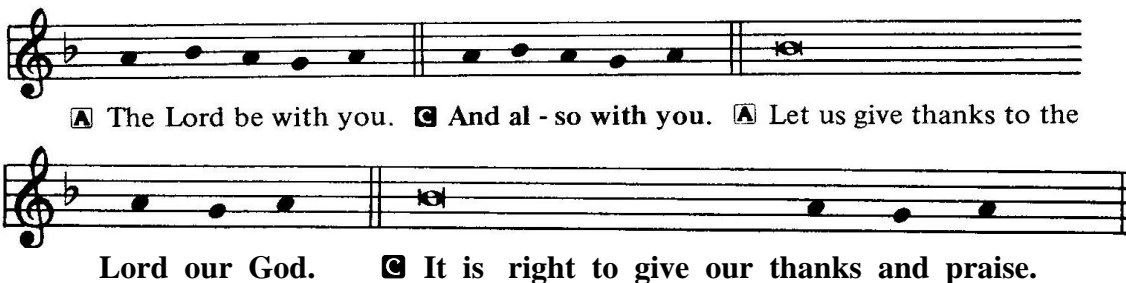
The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.

The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.

The light of Christ. Thanks be to God.

### *EASTER PROCLAMATION*

- A** Rejoice, now, all heavenly choirs of angels ...  
... and let this house resound with the triumphant voices of the peoples.



**A** It is indeed right and salutary that we should with full devotion ...  
 ... one God, now and forever. Amen.

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** Let us pray. Eternal giver of life and light, this holy night shines with the radiance of the risen Christ. Renew your church with the Spirit given us in baptism, that we may worship you in sincerity and truth and may shine as a light in the world, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

*Candles are extinguished. The assembly is seated.*

## WORD

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

#### FIRST READING

Genesis 1:1—2:4a

#### RESPONSE

- A** The word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

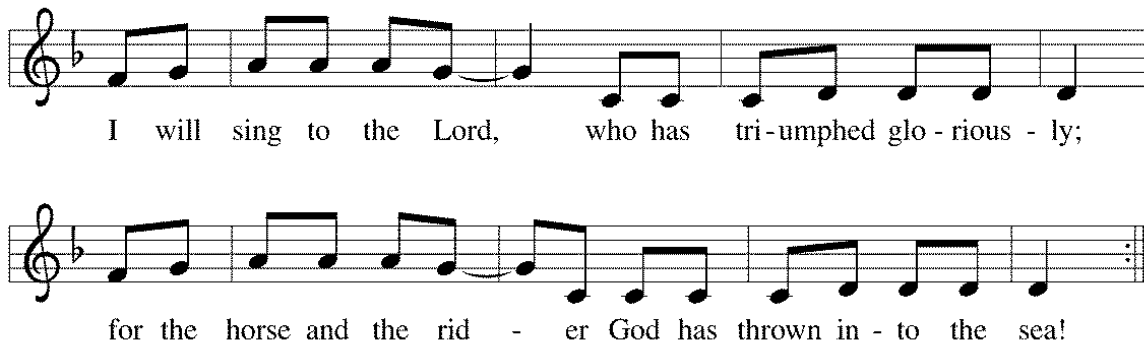
#### PRAYER

- P** Let us pray. Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.
- C** Amen.

## RESPONSE

*I Will Sing to the Lord*  
*Text based on Exodus 15:1b–13, 17–18*

*The cantor sings the refrain then the assembly sings the refrain;  
the cantor sings each verse and the assembly sings the refrain after each verse.*

*Refrain*


I will sing to the Lord, who has tri-umphed glo - rious - ly;  
for the horse and the rid - er God has thrown in - to the sea!

Text: Exodus 15:1, 6, 11, 13, 17, adapt.

Music: Julie Lindorff

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1. Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in pow'r, your right hand shatters the enemy!  
Who among the gods is like you, O Lord?  
Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders!     *Refrain*
2. In your mercy you led forth the people you set free;  
you guided them in your strength to your holy habitation.  
You will bring them in and plant them on the mount that is your own!     *Refrain*

## PRAYER

**P** Let us pray. O God, whose wonderful deeds of old shine forth even to our own day: By the power of your mighty arm you once delivered your chosen people from slavery under Pharaoh, a sign for us of the salvation offered to everyone by the water of baptism. Grant that all the peoples of earth may partake in the salvation of the Israelites and together dance on the safe side of the sea, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C** Amen.

## RESPONSE

- A** The word of the Lord.  
**C** Thanks be to God.

## PRAYER

- P** Let us pray. Holy God, you created all things by the power of your Word, and you renew the whole earth by your Spirit. Give now the water of life to all who thirst for you, that, rejoicing in your covenant of mercy, we may bring forth abundant fruit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C** Amen.

## FOURTH READING

## RESPONSE

*Song of the Three 1:35-65*

*The cantor introduces the refrain. The assembly repeats it.*

*The cantor sings the verses. The assembly sings the refrain as indicated.*



Psalm refrain reproduced from *Psalter for Worship Year C* © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.  
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## PRAYER

- P** Let us pray. Almighty and eternal God, the only hope of the world, by the proclamation of your prophets you declare to us the word of salvation. By the grace of your Spirit increase the devotion of all the baptized, that, strengthened by your presence, we may withstand hardship and sorrow and be united with your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- C** Amen.

# AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

*Baptism is permanent and indelible and lasts forever.  
The Christian life is one of daily returning to that covenant.  
On this most holy night we renew and affirm the faith we profess.*

- P** Friends in Christ, on this most holy night the church keeps vigil, awaiting the glorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In baptism we were buried with Christ Jesus so that as Christ was raised from the dead in the splendor of the Father, we too might live a new life.

Let us pray. Merciful God, we thank you that you have made us your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called us to yourself, enlightened us with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished us in the community of faith. Uphold us and all your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ.

**C Amen.**

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

- P** I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the Church.

- P** Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

**C I renounce them.**

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

**C I renounce them.**

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

**C I renounce them.**

- 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, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come 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.**

#### *AFFIRMATION*

**P** You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:  
to live among God's faithful people,  
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,  
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,  
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,  
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

**C** **I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

**P** Let us pray. We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in your people 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 assembly is sprinkled with water from the font as a sign of our renewal of baptism.*

ACCLAMATION

*We Belong to Christ*

*(sing three times)*



We be - long to Christ, in whom we have been bap - tized.



Bless'd be God, the source of life, who gives us new birth.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Romans 6:3-11

**A** A reading from Romans.

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. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

**A** The word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**P** The holy gospel according to John.

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

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes. But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?” Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni!” (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, “Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

**P** The gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**P** Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**C** **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*EASTER FANFARE*

*At the Lamb’s High Feast*

Paul Manz

*SERMON*

The Rev. Karen Sease  
Assistant to the Bishop, SEPA Synod

*Silence for reflection follows.*



1 Now all the vault of heav'n re - sounds  
 2 E - ter - nal is the gift he brings,  
 3 Oh, fill us, Lord, with daunt - less love;  
 4 A - dor - ing prais - es now we bring



in there - praise of love that still a - bounds: "Christ has  
 set fore our heart with rap - ture sings: "Christ has  
 and with the heav'n - ly things a - bove that we  
 sing: "Christ has



tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Sing, choirs of  
 tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!" Now still he  
 con - quer through your tri - umph; grant grace suf -  
 tri - umphed! Al - le - lu - ia!" Be to the



an - gels, loud and clear! Re - peat their song of glo - ry  
 comes to give us life and by his pres - ence stills all  
 fi - cient for life's day that by our lives we tru - ly  
 Fa - ther, and our Lord, to Spir - it blest, most ho - ly



here: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"  
 strife. "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"  
 say: "Christ has tri - umphed! He is liv - ing!"  
 God, all the glo - ry, nev - er end - ing!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

## *PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION*

*Opportunity will be provided for you to offer prayers for concerns on your heart, silently or aloud. Please conclude each prayer petition with the words, “Lord, in your mercy.”*

- A** Rejoicing in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we pray for the witness of the church, the wholeness of creation, and all who are in need.

*After each portion of the prayers:*

- A** Lord, in your mercy,  
**C** **Hear our prayer.**

*The prayers conclude:*

- A** We entrust all our prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them by the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**C** **Amen**

## *PEACE*

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**C** **And also with you.**

*The people greet one another with a sign of Christ’s peace saying “Peace be with you” or similar words.*

*The assembly is seated.*

# MEAL

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

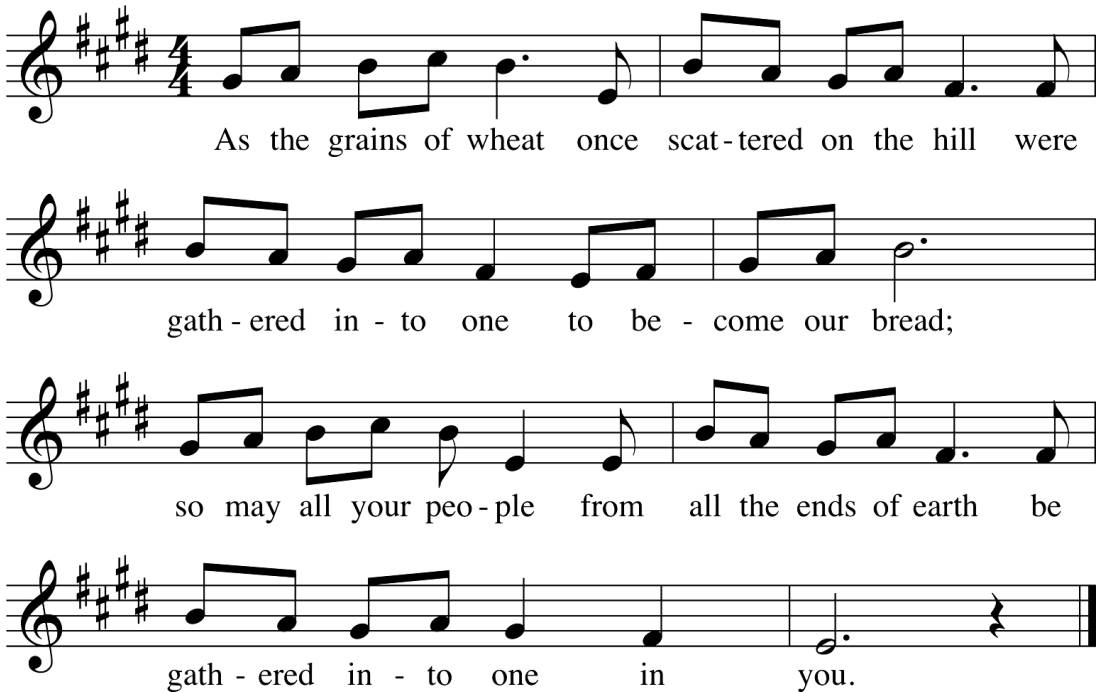
## *OFFERING*

*Tithes and offerings are gathered for the mission of the church.*

## *MUSICAL OFFERING*

## SETTING THE TABLE

*The assembly stands to sing as the gifts are brought forward.*



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were  
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread;  
so may all your peo-ple from all the ends of earth be  
gath-ered in - to one in you.

## OFFERING PRAYER

- A** Let us pray. Blessed are you,  
**C** O Lord, our God, maker of all things. Day by day you shower us with blessings.  
As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts,  
ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our  
Savior and Lord. Amen.

## 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.

**P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and  
might; Heav - en and earth are filled with your  
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!  
Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est!

**P** Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three! . . . We proclaim the mystery of faith.

**C** Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

**P** Holy God, we remember your Son, . . . His resurrection for us all.

**C** Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

**P** Holy God, we beg for your Spirit. . . . Nourish the life of the earth.

**C** Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

**P** You, Holy God, Holy One, Holy Three . . . praise tomorrow, praise forever!

**C** Amen.

**P** Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**C** **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.**

*COMMUNION*

**P** This is the feast of victory for our God!

**C** **Alleluia! Thanks be to God!**

All are welcome at the table of the Lord! We believe and teach that Christ is present in the mystery of the sacrament of Holy Communion and that by communing with him we receive forgiveness of our sin.

Communion will be distributed by intinction – after you receive the bread, you may dip it in the chalice on the bread tray, which has grape juice, or the chalice held by the communion assistant, which has wine. Children who have not received instruction for communion are invited to come forward for a blessing. If you are unable to walk to communion, please let an usher know so that a pastor can bring communion to your seat. Gluten free wafers are available upon request to the pastor distributing the bread.



## LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
(Easter:) you broke the bonds of sin and of  
you are the way of jus - tice and  
you are the way of mer - cy and



world: have mer - cy on us, mer - cy on us,  
death:  
peace:  
love:



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you



take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace,



grant us peace, grant us peace.

Leader or All



1 Come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread,  
2 Come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured,  
3 In Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest,  
4 Rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word,

All



come, let us eat, for now the feast is spread.  
come, let us drink, for now the wine is poured.  
in Je - sus' pres - ence now we meet and rest.  
rise, then, to spread a - broad God's might - y word.

Leader or All



Our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er,  
Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er,  
In the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er,  
Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom,

All



our Lord's bod - y let us take to - geth - er.  
Je - sus' blood poured let us drink to - geth - er.  
in the pres - ence of our Lord we gath - er.  
Je - sus ris - en will bring in the king - dom.

*After all have communed, the assembly stands.*

**P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**C** Amen.

*PRAYER*

**A** Let us pray. Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

**C Amen.**

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

*BLESSING*

**P** The God of life, who raised Jesus from the dead, who sends forth the Spirit to renew the face of the earth, be merciful to you and ✠ bless you, now and forever.

**C Amen.**



- 1 Christ is ris-en! Al - le - lu - ia! Ris - en our vic - to - rious head!
- 2 Christ is ris-en! All the sad-ness of our Lent-en fast is o'er;
- 3 Christ is ris-en! All the sor-row that last eve-ning round him lay
- 4 Christ is ris-en! Hence-forth nev - er death or hell shall us en - thrall.



Sing his prais - es! Al - le - lu - ia! Christ is ris - en from the dead!  
through the o - pen gates of glad-ness he re-returns to life once more;  
now has found a glo-rious mor-row in the ris - ing of to - day.  
We are Christ's, in him for - ev - er we have tri-umphed o - ver all.



Grate-ful - ly our hearts a - dore him as his light once more ap - pears;  
death and hell be - fore him bend-ing see him rise, the vic - tor now,  
See the grave its first-fruits giv - ing, spring-ing up from ho - ly ground;  
All the doubt-ing and de - jec - tion of our trem-bling hearts have ceased;



bow - ing down in joy be-fore him, ris - ing up from griefs and tears.  
an - gels on his steps at-tend-ing, glo - ry round his wound-ed brow.  
Christ was dead, but now is liv - ing; he was lost, but he is found.  
hail the day of res - ur - rec - tion! Let us rise and keep the feast.

*Refrain*

Christ is ris - en! Al - le - lu - ia! Ris - en our vic - to - rious head!



Sing his prais-es! Al - le - lu - ia! Christ is ris - en from the dead!

*DISMISSAL*

**A** Called by Christ,

**C** We invite all people, serve our neighbors, and build a living faith.

**A** Go in peace. Share the good news.

**C** Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

*POSTLUDE*

*Come Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain*

arr. Wilbur Held

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**To see the list of today's worship volunteers,  
you can go to [relcmedia.org/worshipteam](http://relcmedia.org/worshipteam),  
scan here:**



**or visit the Worship Team  
information stand in the lobby.**

## **OUR MISSION**

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

## **WELCOME**

Called by Christ we invite all people, celebrating the diversity of God's creation. Reformation is an affirming congregation for all: rejoicing with the young and old, welcoming people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, working to cultivate an accessible and inclusive community for all abilities, and embracing all races, cultures, and faith traditions.

We serve our neighbors following the teachings of Christ. Reformation responds to the needs of the most vulnerable - providing nourishment and comfort, supporting the work of the local and global church, and protecting God's creation for future generations.

We build a living faith emboldened by the Holy Spirit. Reformation embodies the unconditional love of God through worshiping and learning together and valuing the gifts of everyone. To create the fullness of our community of faith, we nurture relationships, pursue racial equity and gender justice, and advocate for the wellbeing of the marginalized.

## Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church Leadership Team

To contact those with an extension please call **610-891-0600** and use the listed extension number or send e-mail to the listed address.

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**Office Hours:** Monday-Thursday, 9:00am – 3:30pm  
Friday, Closed