

# REFORMATION TIMES

January 2026

## Celebrate RIC Sunday



Both worship services on Sunday, **January 25**, will participate in the annual Reconciling in Christ Sunday to celebrate our commitment to welcome and affirm the LGBTQIA+ community and all God's people. For more information or to be part of the leadership on this day, contact Pastor Eileen.

## Finance Forum

Treasurer Marian Filtz will hold a Finance Forum on Sunday, **January 18**, where she will present a detailed financial report of 2025 and the budget for 2026. This forum will be in person and on Zoom at 9:45 am. It will also be recorded and shared prior to the Annual Meeting. At the Annual Meeting, Marian will present a brief summary of this information. The finance report and proposed budget will be available as part of the Annual Meeting Materials.

## Annual Meeting January 25

# ANNUAL MEETING

Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, **January 25**, at 12:00 noon in the sanctuary. The meeting will be live streamed but you must attend in person to have a voice and vote! The Annual Report and Annual Meeting Materials will be shared by the preceding Sunday at the latest, with printed copies available for pick up at the church and digital copies shared via email. Contact the church office if you need either mailed to you.

## SOUPer Bowl Sunday



The Souper Bowl of Caring <sup>SM</sup> is coming! This year, the Souper Bowl of Caring is Sunday, **February 8**.

Reformation will be collecting most needed

items to support those in need. The donations will be delivered to Chester Eastside. This year, we will be collecting shelf-stable items. Items will be collected between **January 25** and **February 8**, and may be placed on the tables in the hallway. Thank you for your support!

## Epiphany @ Home

On **January 4**, Epiphany @ Home packets will be available for families to take home. The packets will include a litany and instructions for Blessing your Home and Inscribing your Entryway, a traditional Epiphany practice in the church.



## Underwear Collection Success!

by Sally Burkam



Many thanks to all who donated underwear and socks to NGA! Reformation members donated 409 items. The total number of items given to 8 agencies was 8,273 (1,372 more than last year). NGA's year to date total is 13,453 items donated—3,347 more than last year. We are very grateful for your support!

## Lead a Connection Group

Connection Groups return in Lent! Do you have an idea for a Connection Group? Reach out to Pastor Alina or Pastor Eileen to sign up to lead a group. Groups begin the week of **February 15** and continue for 7 weeks. All group information must be confirmed by **January 15**.



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

**Paul Badey** entered eternal life on **December 5**. A funeral service was held on **December 11** at Reformation.

**Welcome Marcy Piasecki**, along with her son **Logan**, who joined Reformation on **December 21**.



## Sunday School Dates

All children from birth to grade 6 are invited to join us for Sunday School. Special Sunday celebrations are for all children and youth at Reformation. Contact Pastor Eileen with any questions.

Sunday School will be held on:

**January 4**

**January 11**

**January 18**

## Small Stars (Ages 0-3)

**Small Stars** Join us for story time, play, and music for infants and toddlers on Saturday, **January 3**, at 9:30 am in the church nursery.

## Ushers Needed!

We are in need of some additional volunteers to usher during worship at both services. For more information, please reach out to one of the pastors or contact the church office.



## Reformation Facebook Group



Did you know we have a Facebook group in addition to our church page? Scan this QR code to join!

## Prepare for First Communion



It is our practice at Reformation that children receive their first communion at the desire of their parents. This can be done for any age (or ages if you wish for siblings to receive first communion together).

First communion instruction is an at-home lesson set that can be completed at your own time and pace. Any time we celebrate communion as a congregation is a date that can be chosen.

Families desiring for their child to receive their first communion should contact Pastor Eileen.

## Reformation Merch!

Reformation apparel is still available to purchase at [repcmmedia.org/75](http://repcmmedia.org/75). Treat yourself or your loved ones to new Reformation gear!



## Donate by Phone!



Did you know that you can now donate to Reformation via text? Simply text the amount you wish to give to 844-628-3176!

## REFORMATION TIMES

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Reformation Lutheran Church*

Deadline: Noon the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month  
Materials to: [newsletter@repcmmedia.org](mailto:newsletter@repcmmedia.org)

Congregation Council and Officers  
John Grantland, *President*; Laura Reiter, *Vice President*; Chase Perry, *Secretary*; Marian Filtz, *Treasurer*, Jamie Anderson, Evie Fernandez, Kristen Forster, Eric Hathaway, Lindsay Lighton, Gabby Parker, Jameson Troutman, Pastor Alina Gayeuski and Pastor Eileen Ruppel-Doan.

## Mark E. Davis Scholarship



The Mark E. Davis Scholarship was established by The Rev. William and Irene Davis, following the death of their son, Mark. The scholarship is a one-year scholarship to a four-year college or university awarded to members of Reformation Lutheran Church. Applicants can be high school seniors or currently attending a college or

university. The scholarship is awarded to applicants who demonstrate a high level of academic, religious, and community-oriented commitment and achievement. The scholarship is awarded annually in the May-June time frame.

Applications may be obtained from the counter in the church lobby or from the Reformation website at [relcmedia.org/internshipsscholarships](http://relcmedia.org/internshipsscholarships).

Applications can only be submitted by email (in PDF file format) and must be received on or before the **May 1, 2026** deadline by email at [davisscholarship@relcmedia.org](mailto:davisscholarship@relcmedia.org). No other form of submission will be accepted. Applicants should be aware that requesting transcripts can take extra time and should plan accordingly in order to meet the deadline.

## Trip to the African American Museum



Kick off Black History Month with a trip to the African American Museum in Philadelphia! A group from Reformation will be visiting the museum on the afternoon of **February 1**, carpooling from church after worship. Contact Pastor Eileen to sign up! Information about the museum can be found at [aampmuseum.org](http://aampmuseum.org).

## Reformation School Corner

by Hannah D'Aquanno



Stay and Play has been off to a wonderful start the first half of this school year. Stay and Play continues to offer craft projects, games involving physical activity, science experiments and quiet homework time. With special visitors from Slimetopia Playland and Musicopia Bucket Drumming, the children are having fun and staying engaged. In November, Stay and Play also held their annual family Bingo Night - it was huge turnout! The excitement and liveliness of our families make our Bingo event that much more enjoyable. Following winter break, Stay and Play is thrilled to reintroduce our Peacemakers program, held for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. This program helps children learn to interact with one another and solve conflicts in a peaceful manner through stories with a theme, discussion groups, role-playing and art activities. We are also excited for the children to experience additional special visitors from Stars on the Move and Quiver Farms.

## Finance Smart

by Christine Corson



It's a bright, shiny new year and a smart time to focus on your finances for the year ahead. In order to do this, schedule a few hours one day on the calendar this month to work on your budget only. If it's written on your calendar, you will most likely do it! Gather monthly bills, bank statements, and checkbook (don't forget your calculator!) and bring to a table or desk so you have room to work. Get organized by filing previous year items for your upcoming taxes and create new files for 2026. Try to see where you are overspending to possibly reduce expenses in an area that is less needed (i.e. fast food, coffee runs, etc.) Sacrificing non-essentials can put extra money towards your budget or savings account which makes you...**Finance Smart!!!**

## How to Access the Reformation Church Directory



If it's been awhile since you accessed our church directory, here is a refresher on how to do so - either by using the app or your favorite web browser:

### **From your smartphone or tablet:**

1. Download the app "Instant Church Directory" from the App Store, Google Play or Kindle Fire
2. Open the app and enter your email address as it is listed in the directory.
3. Check your email for the code.
4. Enter the code into the app.
5. Enjoy access to the online directory.

### **From your computer:**

1. Go to: [members.instantchurchdirectory.com](http://members.instantchurchdirectory.com).
2. Click "Church Member Login."
3. Find "First Time Signing In?" and click "Create a Login Now."
4. Enter your email address and create a password.
5. Verify your email address by clicking the link in your email account.
6. Sign in with your email and new password.

If you are unable to login or have any questions, please contact Andrea at [rlc@relcmedia.org](mailto:rlc@relcmedia.org).

## St. Nick Sunday

As you can see, the Pastors had plenty of help on Sunday, December 7!



## Upcoming Youth Events



- **January 4** - Breakfast Club, Confirmation , Youth Group (12:00 pm to 2:00pm)
- **January 11** - Confirmation, Mentor Only Meeting
- **January 18** - Confirmation
- **January 25** - Confirmation

## Breakfast Club for High School Students



Attention High School Students: We invite you to join us for Breakfast Club this year! This is an opportunity for those in grades 9-12 to gather during the education hour – with breakfast! This is a safe space for everyone to learn valuable life skills you will actually use in the future as well as to build lasting friendships, eat some yummy food and have fun. Questions are encouraged! Jen & Jameson Troutman are the leaders of this group. They will also have guest speakers throughout the year. The group meets the first Sunday of the month at 9:45 am in the Community Room through May. Please register using the QR code or at [relcmedia.org/breakfast-club](http://relcmedia.org/breakfast-club).



## Faith and Family Newsletter



e-newsletter with prayers, readings, and activities for each liturgical season - designed for children, youth, and families.

Scan below to register for our seasonal "Faith and Family"



## Eco Ministry

by John Berberich

Eco Ministry would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year, and a resolution to think globally but act locally. The committee invites all who would like to join us to our meeting on Wednesday, **January 7** at 7:00 pm. Contact Pastor Alina for Zoom link.



## BEAR CREEK CAMP

### Upcoming Events

Visit the websites listed below to register!

- Spring Family Nature Retreat  
**March 20 - 22, 2026**  
[bearcreekcamp.org/spring-nature-family-camp](http://bearcreekcamp.org/spring-nature-family-camp)
- Summer Camp Early Registration  
**NOW OPEN!**  
**June 21—August 14, 2026**  
Secure your spot early by making a deposit by **March 31** and receive a free 2026 themed t-shirt. \*Full payments and optional add-ons like rafting and the camp store wallet will be available starting **January 5** at [bearcreekcamp.org/camps/summer-camp](http://bearcreekcamp.org/camps/summer-camp).
- Use code RLCM50 for \$50 off your registration for summer 2026!



## Overdose Prevention Program



The Pennsylvania Overdose Prevention Program is providing free Naloxone as well as drug-checking strips designed to detect xylazine and fentanyl. Reformation keeps Naloxone stocked in our first aid kits located in the main lobby, the Community Room kitchen and in Creighton Hall kitchen. For more information, please visit [pa.gov/agencies/ddap/overdose/overdose-prevention-program](http://pa.gov/agencies/ddap/overdose/overdose-prevention-program).



# FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Reformation,

There are so many members of Reformation that do behind-the-scenes work at the end of every year to keep our ministry moving forward. As we begin this new year, let us start with a moment of gratitude for these groups.

As we prepare for our Annual Meeting, we do so with the benefit of these groups that work on behalf of our congregation all year long but especially at this time of year. This is especially true when it comes to our budget. If you have ever wondered how we determine the budget presented to the congregation each year, here's a peak into that process:

At the end of every year, our Personnel Committee meets to review job descriptions, the Personnel Policy, and make salary recommendations to the Council for the budget. The Mutual Ministry Team meets to do the same for the rostered leaders.

Our Financial Secretary, Suzanne Clain, enters pledge data, reviews giving for budget data, and completes annual giving statements. (Suzanne and our Counters gather every week to count offering and enter giving information into our database!)

Our Council Executive Committee meets to review the budget detail with the help of the information provided by our Financial Secretary and Christine Corson, Reformation's Operations Manager. Christine manages all of our expenses and contracts and helps us navigate the daily financial realities of the congregation.

The Council then reviews the budget and recommends it for action at the Annual Meeting.

Everything we are blessed to do here at Reformation is because of the dedication of all of these leaders. This work is often the less exciting part of congregational life, but the commitment to our mission is the same.

Please join me in thanking all of these individuals for helping us to live out our call every day!

Pastor Alina

## Constitution Updates

At the 2025 Churchwide Assembly, the ELCA ratified updates to the model constitution for congregations. The applicable amendments have been added to a proposed version of our constitution to be voted on at the annual meeting. To view the proposed changes and rationale from churchwide as well as the proposed updates to the RELC Constitution and Bylaws, please visit [relcmedia.org/constitution](http://relcmedia.org/constitution). (In accordance with C17.03 of the Constitution, this serves as the official notice of the Council's recommendation at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.) If you have questions about any of the updates, please contact Pastor Alina.

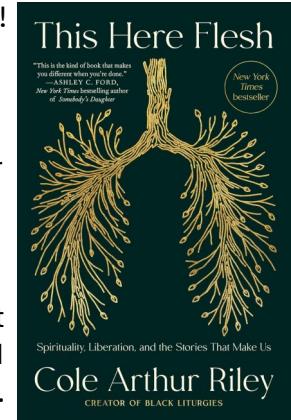


## Conversation with Friends

Conversation with Friends returns from our holiday break on Wednesday, **January 7**. We will gather from 7 to 8:30 in the Alyce Thompson Room. This is a time set aside to share a story, to have a meaningful conversation, to laugh and sometimes to cry. You are welcome to join us. Contact Pat Polilli for more information.

## Lent Book

Read along with us this Lent! Our 2026 Lent Book is *This Here Flesh: Spirituality, Liberation, and the Stories That Make Us* by Cole Arthur Riley. Copies are available at the church, as a Kindle download, or from your favorite book seller. Contact the church office if you need assistance obtaining a copy. Connection Groups for discussion will be offered. More details to come!



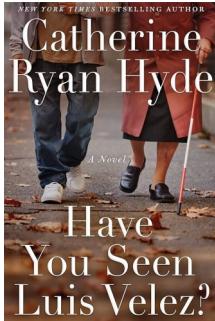
## Library Book Club News

All are invited to join the Reformation Library Book Club via zoom for our always lively book discussions. Contact Laura Reiter at longreiter@gmail.com for more details.

### Coming in January:

#### **Have You Seen Luis Velez?**

**- January 20, 2026 at 7:00 pm:**  
**led by Marilyn Berberich**



From Goodreads.com:

New York Times bestselling author Catherine Ryan Hyde brings heartwarming authenticity to the story of two strangers who find that kindness is a powerful antidote to fear.

Raymond Jaffe feels like he doesn't belong. Not with his mother's new family. Not as a weekend guest with his father and his father's wife. Not at school, where he's an outcast. After his best friend moves away, Raymond has only two real connections to the feral cat he's tamed and to a blind ninety-two-year-old woman in his building who's introduced herself with a curious Have you seen Luis Velez?

Mildred Gutermann, a German Jew who narrowly escaped the Holocaust, has been alone since her caretaker disappeared. She turns to Raymond for help, and as he tries to track Luis down, a deep and unexpected friendship blossoms between the two.

Despondent at the loss of Luis, Mildred isolates herself further from a neighborhood devolving into bigotry and fear. Determined not to let her give up, Raymond helps her see that for every terrible act the world delivers, there is a mirror image of deep kindness, and Mildred helps Raymond see that there's hope if you have someone to hold on to.



## Little Worship Helpers



Our youngest disciples are invited to help in worship! Located on the wall outside of the Prayground, children can "sign up" to help in worship by taking a Worship Helper clothespin to put on their nametag, or just to hang onto during the service. Please speak to a pastor before the service if your child needs instructions on how to serve in any of these ways: Welcome, Peace, Usher, or Dismissal. Though these jobs are especially great for little hands and voices, ALL of our worship leadership roles are open to anyone, regardless of age.

## Worship Busy Books

Look in the pews to find one of our new Worship Busy Books! Designed by Pastor Eileen, these packets can help children follow along during the service with the included dry erase markers. Please be sure to help your kids erase the pages and cap the markers at the end of worship!



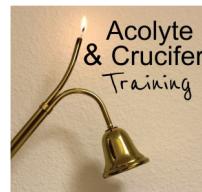
## New Processional Cross and Star!



We now have a smaller, lightweight processional cross and star available for children who would like to participate in worship. Please see one of the pastors if your child would like to join in.

## Acolyte and Crucifer Training

Are you interested in becoming an Acolyte or a Crucifer? If so, please join Pastor Eileen on Sunday, **February 15** at 9:45 am for training.





### Everyday Faith:

#### What You Didn't Know You Needed to Know.

In a world that often pushes us toward quick judgments and polarization, **Everyday Faith** is an invitation to slow down, get curious, and engage with the complex ways that religion, spirituality, and worldview shape our daily lives.

This interactive workshop series offers a space to learn, ask questions, and connect across the many ways our friends, colleagues, and neighbors orient around religion.

A signature feature of the *Everyday Faith* experience is our *Living Library* format — offering a unique opportunity to engage directly with individuals from a variety of faiths, spiritual paths, and worldviews.

Facilitated by Rev. Edward Livingston, Director of Community Partnerships and Trina Gary, Executive Consultant and Leadership Coach

#### Upcoming programs:

#### **Everyday Faith: Muslim Holy Days**

**Wednesday, February 4**

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Virtual

#### **Everyday Faith: Bahá'í Holy Days**

**Thursday, March 12**

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Virtual

For more information and to register, please visit [interfaithphiladelphia.org/everyday-faith](http://interfaithphiladelphia.org/everyday-faith).



### MLK Day of Service

**Monday, January 19, 2026**

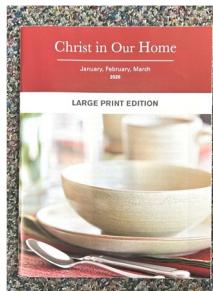
**9:30 am - 12:00 pm**

**Refreshments provided**

**Mt. Airy Campus of United Lutheran Seminary,  
7301 Germantown Ave, Philadelphia**

This MLK Day, we invite you to honor Dr. King's legacy through service and compassion. Lutheran Congregational Services and Lutheran Disaster Response, in partnership with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, will be collecting and assembling hygiene kits — a critical resource for individuals and families affected by disaster. All ages are welcome! To register or to learn more, please contact: Heidi Shilanskus by email at [hshilanskus@gmail.com](mailto:hshilanskus@gmail.com) or visit [LibertyLutheran.org/mlk-service-day](http://LibertyLutheran.org/mlk-service-day).

### **Christ In Our Home Booklets**



The January/February/March issue of the *Christ in Our Home* devotional booklets are now available for pick up at the church. If you would like to have one mailed to you, please contact the church office.

### **Service Project Success!**

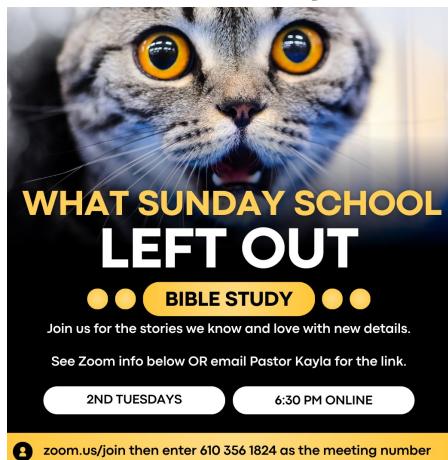


During the month of October, Xavier Berkey collected donations for Providence Animal Center for his school service project. Thanks to the generosity of Reformation members, it was a great success! The photo above shows Xavier with all of the donated items he collected.

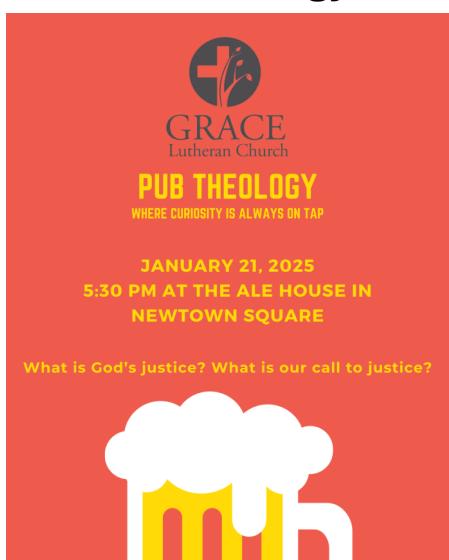
## Upcoming Events at Grace Lutheran, Broomall

For more details on any of these events, please contact them at 610-356-1824 or [pastorkayla@gracebroomall.org](mailto:pastorkayla@gracebroomall.org) or visit [gracebroomall.org/events](http://gracebroomall.org/events).

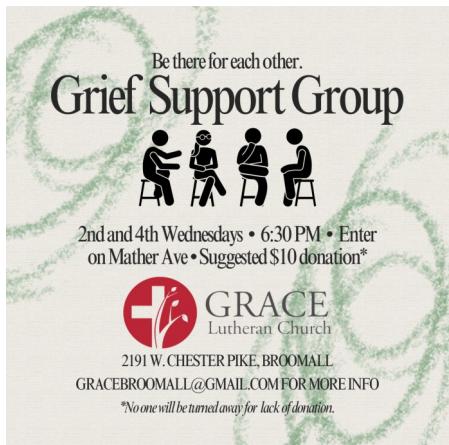
### Bible Study



### Pub Theology



### Grief Support Group

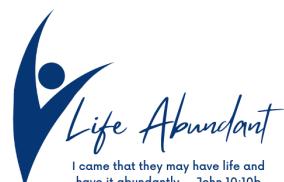


## Council Highlights

The December Council meeting included the following highlights:

- Appointment of Endowment Trustee
- Approval of updates to the Personnel Policy

### Capital Campaign Update



We are preparing to start work on the Reflection Garden. We are meeting with contractors and engineers to complete the necessary planning process before we break ground.

Thank you for your continued, generous support of our Capital Campaign projects!

More information is always available at [reclmedia.org/lifeabundant](http://reclmedia.org/lifeabundant).

### Life Center Update

Our next serving date is **January 22**. Watch for our sign-up sheet and casserole pans in the lobby. For more info about this meal program and to offer your assistance, please contact Dave Smith, [yanky68@icloud.com](mailto:yanky68@icloud.com) or 610-719-7190.



### Sound System Volunteers Needed



We are in need of some additional volunteers to help with our sound system during worship. No experience necessary! For more information, please reach out to one of the pastors or contact the church office.



## Seen Around Reformation

There is always so much to see at Reformation. We thank you for sharing your photos with us! Please remember to send your photos of recent events to: [newsletter@relcmedia.org](mailto:newsletter@relcmedia.org).



Confirmation students and their Mentors discussed the 8th commandment on November 15.



The Marcus family lighting the Advent candle on Sunday, November 30.



Some of Reformation's younger members got to try on Pastor Eileen's stoles on Sunday, November 23.



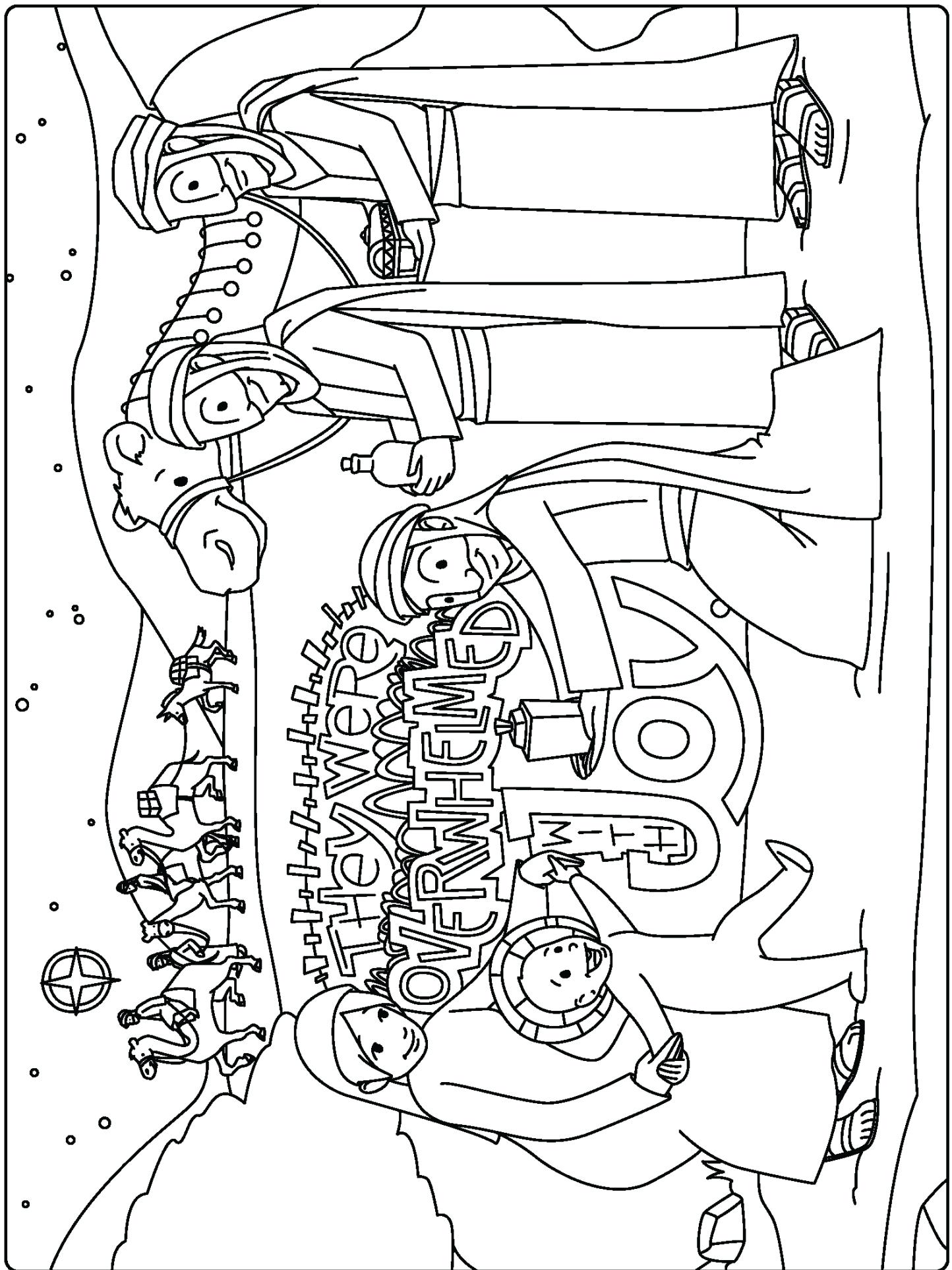
Vicar Megan reading to our Sunday School students about St. Nick.



On November 19, Edna Bogert and Phyllis Brady dropped off Reformation's Thanksgiving food bags to Amy Hannigan, of Family and Community Service of Delaware County for Second Time Around Parents.



Reformation had a visit from Bishop Nicholas on Sunday, December 7.





102 W. Rose Tree Road • Media, PA 19063

relcmedia.org • 610.891.0600

Sunday Worship: 8:30 am Indoor & Online Worship

11:00 am Indoor & Online Worship

Worship services are livestreamed to our virtual church page.

*Pastors*

The Rev. Dr. Alina S. Gayeusk

The Rev. Eileen Ruppel-Doan



**Return Service Requested**

Label

## REFORMATION TIMES

### January 2026

**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.

Sunday, January 4

Epiphany

Unhanging of the Greens

Saturday, January 18

Finance Forum at 9:45 am  
(In person and on Zoom)

Sunday, January 25

RIC Sunday

Annual Meeting at 12:00 pm  
(in the Sanctuary)