Reformation Lutheran Church

December 14, 2025 | 11:00 am

Third Sunday of Advent

Welcome to Reformation!

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

Welcome! First time visitors are invited to stop by our welcome center in the lobby.
All are invited to **check in** with us using the friendship pads in your row or online at relcmedia.org/hello.

Land Acknowledgement – Reformation is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Lenapehoking (Lenni-Lenape) people, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We recognize and honor all of our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

Children in worship are a blessing. We invite our smallest members to sit toward the front where it is easiest for them to see and hear worship and to join the pastors for the Sermon on the Steps. A Pray Ground space is available during worship at the back of the sanctuary. Worship Bags can be filled at the Pray Ground and taken to your seat. A professionally staffed nursery is available for children from birth to age 4. Worship is livestreamed to the nursery as well as to the lobby. A family restroom is located on the lower level.

All are welcome at the table where we celebrate the presence of Christ. As ushers direct you forward:

1. Receive the bread (for gluten free, ask a pastor during distribution)
2. Dip the bread in one of the chalices
    - White grape juice is on the bread tray held by the pastor
    - Red wine is held by the Communion assistant to the side of the pastor

Those who do not commune are invited to come forward for a blessing.
Please let an usher know if you need Communion brought to your seat.

Our Prayer List can be found at relcmedia.org/virtualchurch. To make your prayer request known, please call or email the church office at 610-891-0600, rlc@relcmedia.org.

Worship is livestreamed and recorded. If you do not wish to be on camera, please sit in the balcony or speak to a pastor.

Williams Personal PA Receivers are available for use by the hearing impaired.

Large print bulletins are available from an usher.

Gathering

*Please stand as you are able **Congregational responses are indicated in bold**

Prelude Advent Hymn Christy Nockels

Welcome and Announcements

This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)

Confession and Forgiveness*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

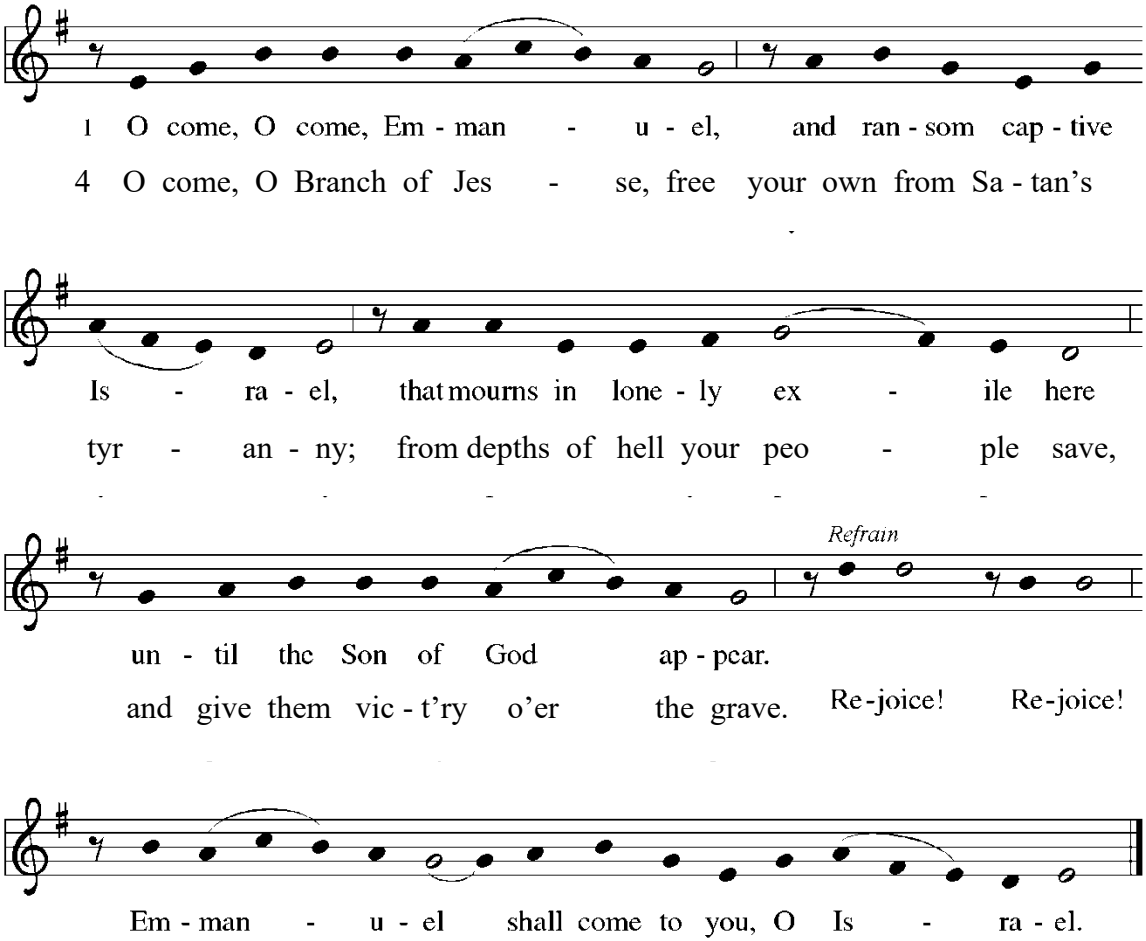
Let us come before God in confession.

[Silence is kept for reflection.]

Almighty God,
we confess that we have sinned against you and against our neighbors. Our words and deeds have not proclaimed your reign of justice and truth. We have failed to watch and pray for signs of your advent among us. Forgive our sin, and come quickly to save us.

In the advent of Christ, the dawn from on high breaks upon us with light and healing. Through Jesus Christ, God looks with favor upon you, and forgives you all your sins.
Amen.

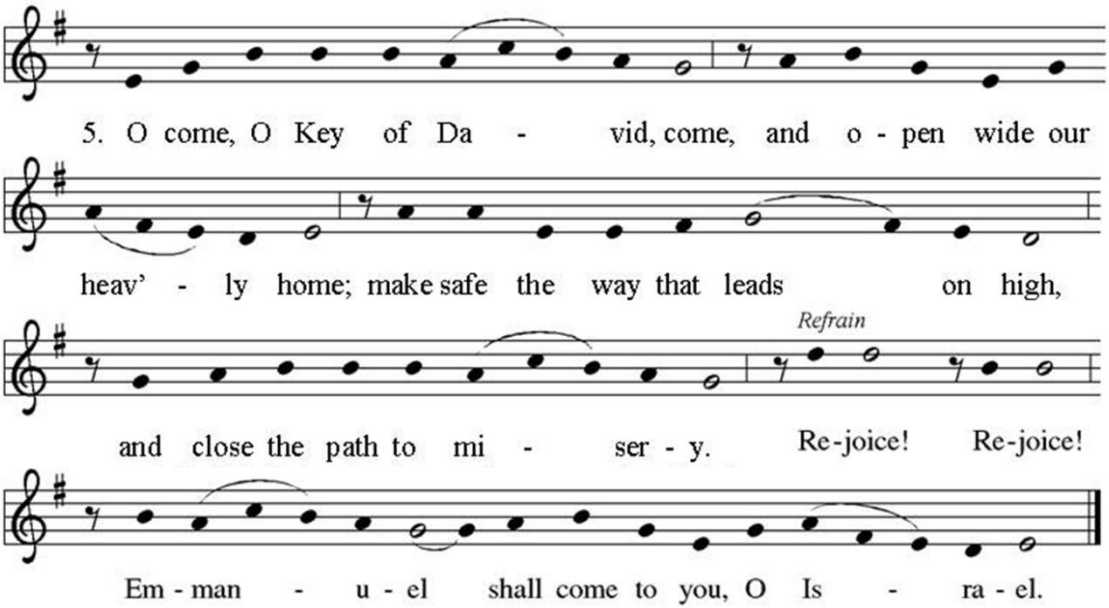
Gathering Song* O Come, O Come, Emmanuel Hymn 257



Blessing and Lighting of the Advent Wreath*

Let us pray. Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom and waters would break forth in the wilderness. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Strengthen our hearts as we prepare for the coming of the Lord. May he give water to all who thirst, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever. **Amen.**

[The assembly continues to sing the Gathering Song.]



Greeting*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Prayer of the Day*

Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Word

First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

A reading from Isaiah.

1 The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and
blossom; like the crocus 2 it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and
shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and
Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. 3 Strengthen the
weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. 4 Say to those who are of a fearful
heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with
terrible recompense. He will come and save you." 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall
be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; 6 then the lame shall leap like
a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in
the wilderness and streams in the desert; 7 the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes. 8 A highway shall be there, and it shall be
called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's
people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. 9 No lion shall be there, nor shall
any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed
shall walk there. 10 And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with
singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

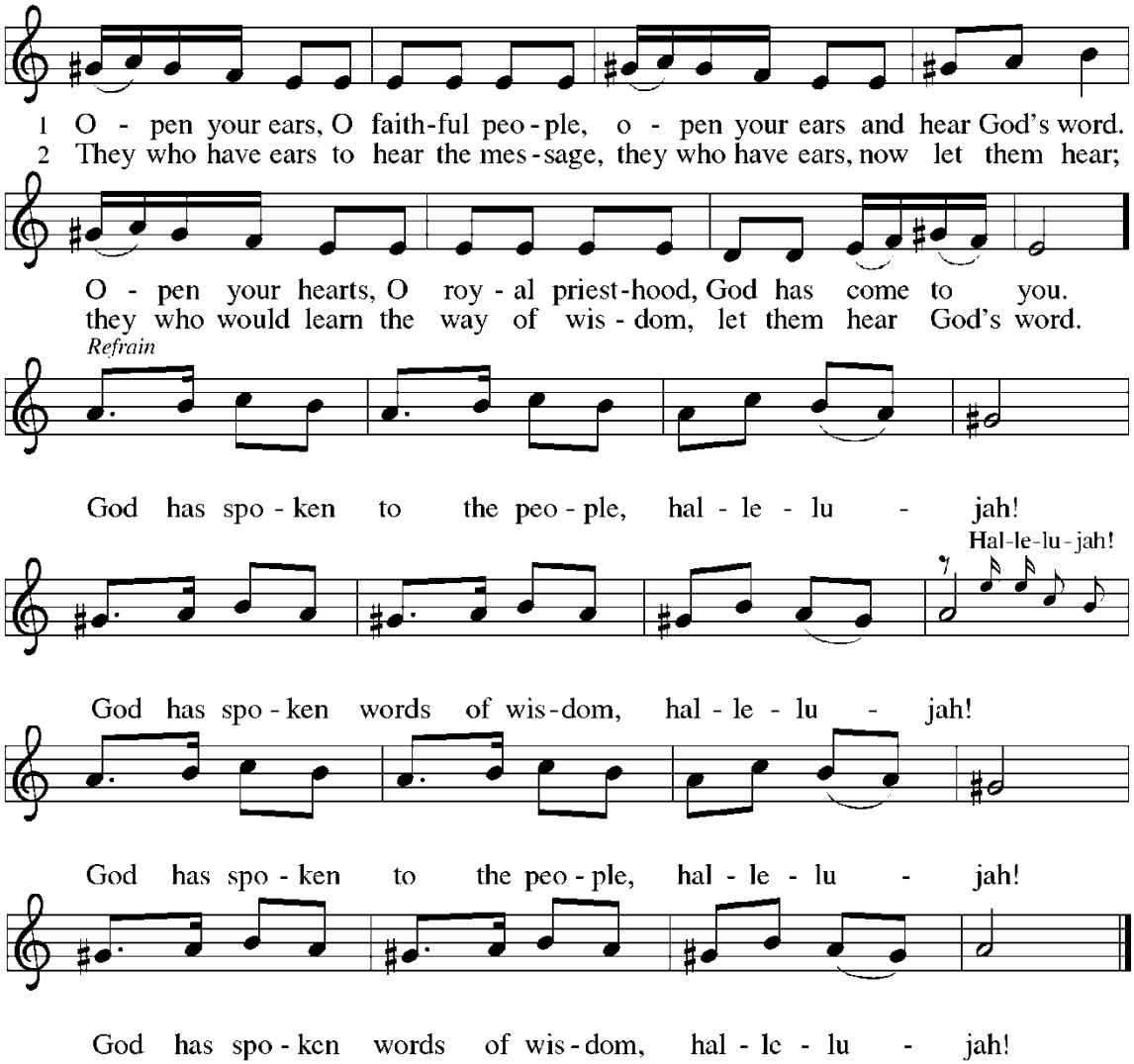
James 5:7-10

A reading from James.

[7] Be patient, therefore, siblings, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the
precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late
rains. [8] You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is
near. [9] Siblings, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged.
See, the Judge is standing at the doors! [10] As an example of suffering and patience,
siblings, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation*



Gospel* Matthew 11:2-11

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew.
Glory to you, O Lord.

2 When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his
disciples 3 and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for
another?” 4 Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the
blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the
deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. 6 And
blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.” 7 As they went away, Jesus began to
speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look
at? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 What, then, did you go out to see? Someone
dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. 9 What,
then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a
prophet. 10 This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my
messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ 11 “Truly I tell you,
among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the
least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon on the Steps

Sermon Pastor Eileen Ruppel-Doan

Hymn of the Day* God With Us

Verse 1
Oh You've come to bring peace to be Love
To be nearer to us
You've come to bring life to be Light
To shine brighter in us
Oh Emmanuel God with us

Chorus
Our Deliverer You are Savior
In Your presence we find our strength
Over ev'rything our Redemption
God with us
You are God with us

Verse 2
Oh You've come to be Hope to this world
For Your honor and name
And You've come to take sin to bear shame
And to conquer the grave
Oh Emmanuel God with us

Chorus

Bridge
You are here
You are holy
We are standing in Your glory (Lord) (REPEAT X 3)

Chorus

repeat Chorus

Ending
Oh God with us
You are God with us

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Apostles' Creed*

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
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.
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*

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

[After each prayer petition:]

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

[The prayers conclude:]

Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy.
Amen.

Blessing of the Prayer Shawls*

Peace*

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

[The people greet one another with "Peace be with you" and a sign of Christ's peace.]

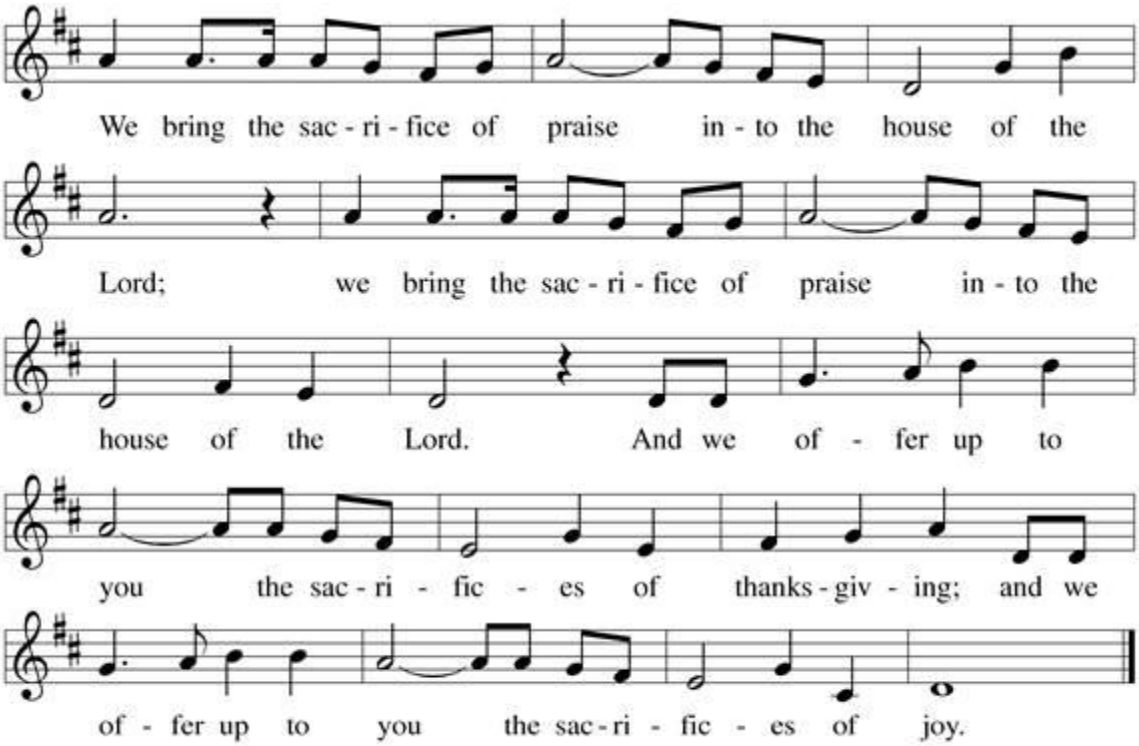
Meal

Offering

[Use pew envelopes, scan to give online,
or text 844-628-3176 with the amount you wish to give.]

Musical Offering Come Thou Long Expected Jesus arr. Rita West Gernon

Setting the Table*



Offering Prayer*

Let us pray. God our provider,
by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

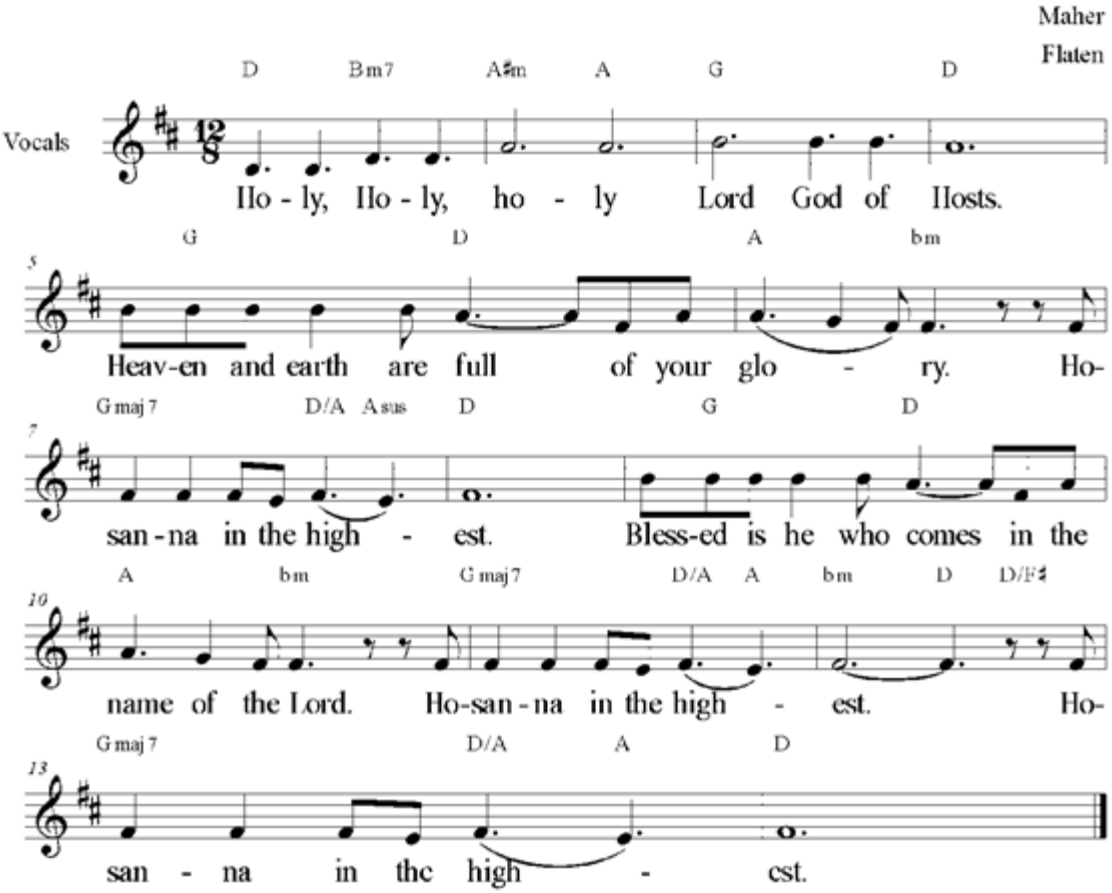
Great Thanksgiving*

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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



Holy God, the Beginning and the End …
… in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer*

With the confidence of the children of God, let us pray.

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

God fills the hungry with good things. Come with joy to the feast.
Thanks be to God!

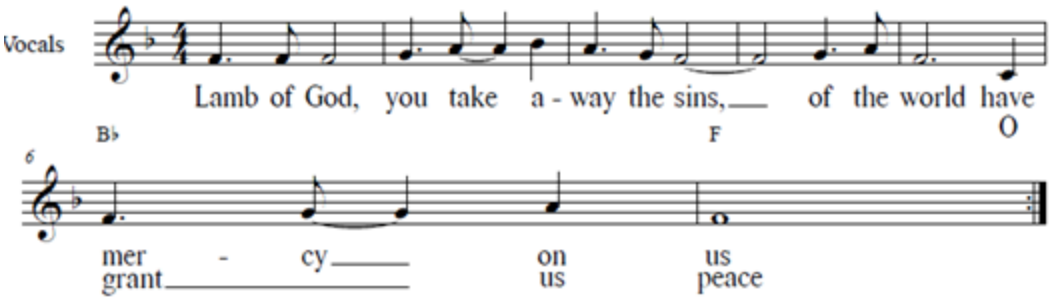
All are welcome at the table where we celebrate the presence of Christ. As ushers direct you forward:

1. Receive the bread (for gluten free, ask a pastor during distribution)
2. Dip the bread in one of the chalices
    - White grape juice is on the bread tray held by the pastor
    - Red wine is held by the Communion assistant to the side of the pastor

Those who do not commune are invited to come forward for a blessing.
Please let an usher know if you need Communion brought to your seat.

[The assembly sings the following during communion:]

Lamb of God



Communion Song God’s Highway

Verse 1 **My feet are strong my eyes are clear**
I cannot see the way from here
But on we go You know the way
And in Your arms You keeps me safe

Chorus **Fear not keep on watch and pray**
Walk in the light of God’s highway

Verse 2 **The shadows flee the valley's deep**
But evil cannot conquer me
Your rod and staff they protect me
You give me rest You give me peace

Chorus

Verse 3 **I see the shore from troubled seas**
This tiny ship that carries me
It is not yet but it will be
So heaven come it’s You we need

Chorus

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Table Blessing*

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

Prayer after Communion*

Let us pray. Holy One, we give you thanks that in this bread and cup we have feasted again on your endless love. Let that love overflow more and more in our lives, that we may be messengers to prepare your way, harvesters of justice and righteousness, and bearers of your eternal Word, our Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Sending

Blessing*

The God of hope, through Christ our peace, in the power of the Holy Spirit, + bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Sending Song Even So Come

Verse 1
All of creation all of the earth
Make straight a highway a path for the Lord
Jesus is coming soon

Verse 2
Call back the sinner wake up the saint
Let ev'ry nation shout of Your fame
Jesus is coming soon

Chorus
Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be a Church ready for You
Ev'ry heart longing for our King we sing
Even so come Lord Jesus come Even so come Lord Jesus come

Verse 3
There will be justice all will be new
Your name forever faithful and true
Jesus is coming soon

Chorus

Bridge
So we wait we wait for You
God we wait You're coming soon
So we wait we wait for You
God we wait You're coming soon

Chorus 2
Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be a Church ready for You
Ev'ry heart longing for our King we sing
Like a bride waiting for her groom We'll be a Church ready for You
Ev'ry heart longing for our King we sing
Even so come Lord Jesus come
Even so come Lord Jesus come

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Dismissal*

Called by Christ,
We invite all people, serve our neighbors, and build a living faith.

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Today's Worship Team

relcmedia.org/worshipteam

Instrumental Musicians

Erik Flaten, Piano
Matthew Murphy, Guitar
Michael Hagarman, Bass
Jack Burdwood, Drums

Welcome to Reformation!

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.

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Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9:00am – 3:30pm; Friday, CLOSED