

THE LITURGY OF WORD & SACRAMENT

Second Sunday after Pentecost

SUNDAY, June 7, 2026 10:00AM

REGULAR PRINT = PRESIDING MINISTER OR ASSISTING MINISTER

BOLD PRINT = CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSES

✠ = AT VARIOUS POINTS THROUGHOUT THE SERVICE, THE SIGN OF THE CROSS MAY BE
MADE BY ALL IN REMEMBRANCE OF THEIR BAPTISM

*The red EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP service book and hymnal is used for the
liturgy.*

WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

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

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

(We Stand)

*Words to be spoken or sung by the assembly are indicated in **bold type**.*

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the
presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God,
who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no
secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy
Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name,
through

Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Silence for reflection and self-examination

Confession and Forgiveness

When we don't know how or what to pray, the Spirit knows.

When all we can muster are sighs and groans, the Spirit knows those also.

When we feel that we aren't even worthy to approach God, the Spirit goes before us and with us and God welcomes us with arms open. Let us confess our sins together, saying . . .

By desiring instant results to most things these days, we confess that we forget what it's like to be patient. We find ourselves neglecting the needs of others because we run out of time to be kind to other than ourselves. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit in me.

When we persistently make self-centered decisions rather than Christ-centered ones, our understanding of your goodness and faithfulness is weakened and our discipleship lacks credibility. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit in me.

In this aggressive world, it's easy to believe one can't get anywhere by exercising a spirit of gentleness or even self-control. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit in me.

Gracious and merciful God, grant us your forgiveness and your love so that we may truly care for one another. Refresh and renew us with the Holy Spirit so that we are fruitful and vital disciples of Jesus Christ. Amen!

Those who are in Christ are a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God with whom we have been reconciled through Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17-18)

Thanks be to God!

Call to Worship: Psalm 71

God alone is our refuge and hope, our shelter and protection. From our very first breath to our last, God's love and compassion never fails. So come, lift your voices in praise to God. Bear witness to God's acts of mercy and love. Proclaim God's glory to all who will listen.

Let's worship God together.

Come, Ye Disconsolate



1 Come, ye dis - con - so - late, wher - e'er ye lan - guish;
 2 Joy of the des - o - late, light of the stray - ing,
 3 Here see the Bread of life; see wa - ters flow - ing



come to the mer - cy - seat, fer - vent - ly kneel.
 hope of the pen - i - tent, fade - less and pure;
 forth from the throne of God, pure from a - bove.



Here bring your wound - ed hearts, here tell your an - guish;
 here speaks the Com - fort - er, ten - der - ly say - ing,
 Come to the feast of love; come, ev - er know - ing



earth has no sor - row that heav'n can - not heal.
 "Earth has no sor - row that heav'n can - not cure."
 earth has no sor - row but heav'n can re - move.

Text: Thomas Moore, 1779–1852, sts. 1–2; Thomas Hastings, 1784–1872, st. 3

Music: CONSOLATOR, Samuel Webbe Sr., 1740–1816

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

II Corinthians 13: 13

And also with you.

LITANY OF WELCOME

God has shown us what is good, and what then is required of us?

**To act justly; to love mercy;
and to walk humbly with our God.**

Micah 6: 8

Jesus says, "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me,
and anyone who welcomes me
welcomes the One who sent me."

Matthew 10: 40

The Spirit says, "Come."

**Let each one who hears the Spirit say, "Come,"
for all are welcome here.**

Revelation 22: 17

In this service, let us draw near to our Reconciling Redeemer,
who knows our hearts and is able to mend our souls,
to strengthen and sustain us,
to reconcile our broken relationships and heal our wounds.

Let us worship God now

With words that proclaim God's inclusive love,

With works that bring forth God's powerful justice,

And with worship that rejoices in God's wondrous presence,

Now and always,

Amen!

HYMN OF PRAISE

As the Wind Song through the Trees

Shirley Erena Murray, 1931-2020

Lim Swee Hong, 1963-

1. As the wind song through the trees, as the stir - ring of the breeze,
2. As the rain - bow af - ter rain, as the hope that's born a - gain,
so it is with the Spir - it of God, as the heart made strange - ly warm,
so it is with the Spir - it of God, as the green - ing in the spring,
as the voice with - in the storm, so it is with the Spir - it of God.
as the kite high on a string, so it is with the Spir - it of God,
Nev - er seen, ev - er known where this wind has blown
mak - ing worlds that are new, mak - ing peace come true,
bring - ing life, bring - ing pow'r to the world,
bring - ing gifts, bring - ing love to the world,
as the danc - ing tongues of fire, as the soul's most deep de - sire,
as the ris - ing of the yeast, as the sweet wine at the feast,
so it is with the Spir - it of God.
so it is with the Spir - it of God.

The PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray...

Almighty Creator and ever-living God: we worship your glory, eternal Three-in-One, and we praise your power, majestic One-in-Three. Keep us steadfast in this faith, defend us in all adversity, and bring us at last into your presence, where you live in endless joy and love, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and psalm.

FIRST READING: Hosea 5:15—6:6

A reading from Hosea.

¹⁵ I will return again to my place
until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face.
In their distress they will beg my favor:

^{6:1} “Come, let us return to the LORD,
for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us;
he has struck down, and he will bind us up.

² After two days he will revive us;
on the third day he will raise us up,
that we may live before him.

³ Let us know, let us press on to know the LORD;
his appearing is as sure as the dawn;
he will come to us like the showers,
like the spring rains that water the earth.”

⁴ What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?
What shall I do with you, O Judah?

Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.

⁵ Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets;
I have killed them by the words of my mouth,
and my judgment goes forth as the light.

⁶ For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice,
the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 50:7-15

Read responsively

⁷ “Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.

⁸ **Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before me.**

⁹ I will not accept a bull from your house
or goats from your folds.

¹⁰ **For every wild animal of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.**

¹¹ I know all the birds of the air,
and all that moves in the field is mine.

¹² **“If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and all that is in it is mine.**

¹³ Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?

¹⁴ **Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and pay your vows to the Most High.**

¹⁵ Call on me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”

SECOND READING: Romans 4:13-25

A reading from Romans.

¹³ The promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law, neither is there transgression.

¹⁶ For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”), in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸ Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become “the father of many nations,” according to what was said, “So shall your descendants be.” ¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), and the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. ²⁰ No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²² Therefore “it was reckoned to him as righteousness.” ²³ Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone ²⁴ but for ours also. It will be

reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,²⁵ who was handed over for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Holy Ground

The musical notation is written on two staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of text: "We are stand-ing on ho-ly ground. And I know that there are an-gels all a-round." The second staff contains the melody for the second line of text: "Let us praise Je-sus now. We are stand-ing in His pres-ence on ho-ly ground." The music is in a simple, hymn-like style with a clear rhythmic pattern.

The assembly stands to welcome the gospel.

GOSPEL: Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

⁹ As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax-collection station, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

¹⁰ And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with Jesus and his disciples. ¹¹ When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" ¹² But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³ Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous but sinners."

¹⁸ While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader came in and knelt before him, saying, "My daughter has just died, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live." ¹⁹ And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰ Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from a flow of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, ²¹ for she was saying to herself, "If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well." ²² Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, "Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that

moment. ²³ When Jesus came to the leader's house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴ he said, "Go away, for the girl is not dead but sleeping." And they laughed at him. ²⁵ But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶ And the report of this spread through all of that district.

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

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Pastor Steven

The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Love Lifted Me

James Rowe (James S. Apple), 1865-1933

Howard E. Smith, 1863-1918



1. I was sink - ing deep in sin, far from the peace - ful shore,
2. All my heart to Him I give, ev - er to Him I'll cling,
3. Souls in dan - ger, look a - bove, Je - sus com - plete - ly saves;



Ver - y deep - ly stained with - in, sink - ing to rise no more;
In His bless - ed pres - ence live, ev - er His prais - es sing;
He will lift you by His love out of the an - gry waves;



But the Mas - ter of the sea heard my de - spair - ing cry,
Love so might - y and so true mer - its my soul's best songs;
He's the Mas - ter of the sea, bil - lows His will o - bey;



from the wat - ers lift - ed me, now safe am I.
faith - ful, lov - ing ser - vice, too, to Him be - longs.
He your Sav - ior true will be: be saved to - day.

Refrain



Love lift - ed me! Love lift - ed me! When noth - ing else could help,



love lift - ed me! Love lift - ed me! Love lift - ed me!



When noth - ing else could help, love lift - ed me!

A Statement of Faith from the Uniting Church in Australia:

**We believe in God,
sovereign in grace and love,
maker of all things.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ,
the eternal Word of God,
the firstborn of a new creation.**

**We believe in God's eternal Spirit,
pledge and foretaste of the future,
given that we may not lose the way,
who has endowed us with a diversity of gifts.**

**We are a pilgrim people
on the way to the promised goal.**

**On this way,
we are called to live and work
within the faith and unity
of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.**

**In this unity,
we offer our worship, witness and service
and receive one another in love and joy.**

**We are being led to the free obedience
of the children of God,
and so we look with yearning and hope
to the final reconciliation of humanity with God,
and the renewal of all creation.**

Alleluia. Amen.

The service then continues with the prayers of intercession.

Prayers of the Church and Response

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first system of music has the following lyrics: "O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer; when I call, an-swer me." The second system of music has the following lyrics: "O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer; come, and lis-ten to me." The chords indicated above the notes are: Em, Em/D, Am/C, D, G/B, C, Am, B for the first system; and Em, Em/D, Am/C, D, Em/G, Am7, B, Em for the second system.

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

A brief silent

God of mercy, you call us to a life filled with acts of mercy. Ground us in following Christ, that we might extend the mercy we receive. God of the nations, you promise to deliver those who call on you. Bring an end to conflict, bigotry, and injustice in all their forms wherever they are found. God of grace, **O Lord, hear my prayer...**

God of comfort, you provide for those in need. Bring an end to addiction. Comfort people as they mourn. Provide tenderly for those in need. God of blessings, you send the Holy Spirit to provide varieties of gifts in the body of Christ. Accompany those who travel this summer, make our gatherings joyous, and grant us a spirit of hospitality and togetherness. God of grace, **O Lord, hear my prayer...**

We lift up before you, O God, the members of our human family around the world—for those who are afflicted or suffering at this time—for those who need healing, for those who require bread or shelter, for those who live in violent homes and communities, for those who are grieving, and for those whose needs are known to you alone, especially those we remember silently or in our hearts with voice upon our lips (*pause*) Ava Jarvis (*granddaughter of Marc & Jill Mann*) David Cossey (*stepfather of Ben Bullock*); Maria Gallego (*mother of Pastor Steven*); Tiffanie Reeves; Joe Black (*father of Lynn Black*); Bill Black (*brother of Lynn Black*); Sharon Baldwin; Tracy Hamiter; Connie Pool; Emmy Reeves; Bobbie Prosser; Sarah Trani; Jeff Harrell; James Deckle; Sharon May (*wife of Peggy Thompson*). Merciful God, **O Lord, hear my prayer...**

Trusting you receive all our prayers, we commend our spoken and unspoken prayers to you, O God, through Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

The assembly remains standing for sharing the Peace.

PEACE

ELW pg. 106

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you!

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace, and may say,
"Peace be with you," or similar words.*

The assembly is seated.

The OFFERING & OFFERTORY

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

Offertory Anthem

"Freely, Freely"

Choir

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Anonymous

Louis Bourgeois, 1551

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow In heav'n a - bove and

The first system of musical notation for the doxology. It consists of a treble and bass staff in G major and 4/4 time. The melody is in the treble clef, starting on G4 and moving stepwise up to D5. The bass line provides harmonic support with chords and single notes.

earth be - low! One God, three Per - sons we a - dore,

The second system of musical notation. The melody continues from the first system, with a fermata over the final note of the first phrase. The bass line continues with harmonic accompaniment.

To whom be praise for - ev - er - more! A - men.

The third and final system of musical notation. The melody concludes with a fermata over the final note. The bass line ends with a final chord.

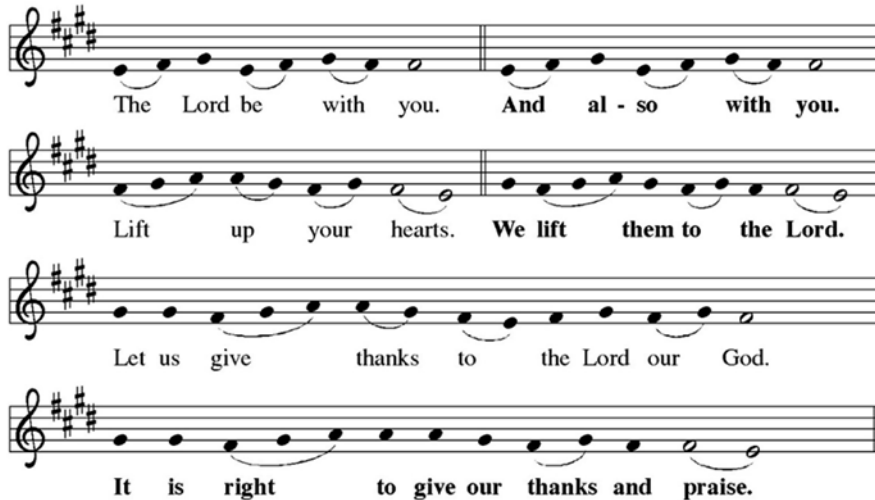
OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God our provider, you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

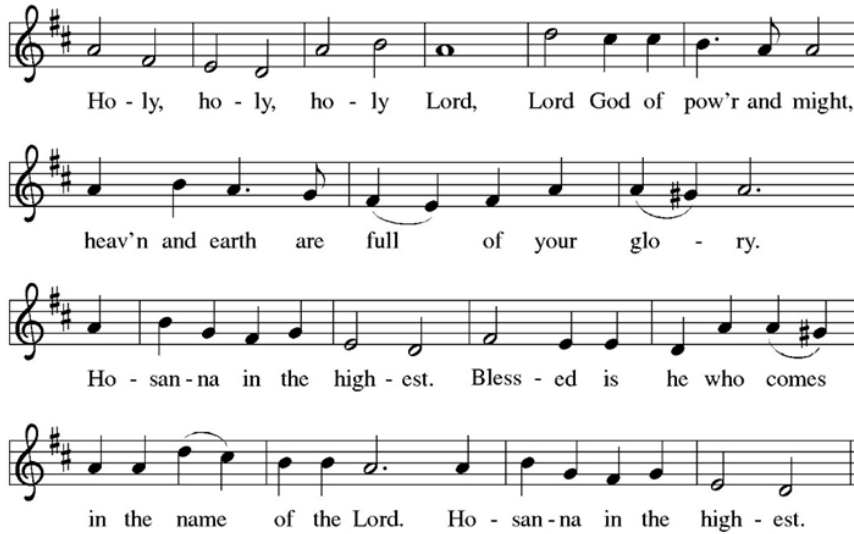


The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE and SANCTUS

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

Fulfilling the promise of the resurrection,
you pour out the fire of your Spirit,
uniting in one body people of every nation and tongue.
And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,
with earth and sea and all their creatures,
and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
 Your mercy is everlasting
 and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.
 Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.
 Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.
 Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness
 to the land of milk and honey.
 Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.
 Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.
 Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
 Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink, saying:
 This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

O God of resurrection and new life:
Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast.

Grace our table with your presence.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.

Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.

Breathe new life into us.

Send us forth,
burning with justice, peace, and love.

Come, Holy Spirit.

With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord's Prayer

C7 F F/E Dm Dm/C B♭ C F

Our Fa - ther in heav-en, hal-low-ed be your name;

C7 F F/E Dm Dm/C B♭ Gm F

Your king-dom come, Your will be done on earth as in heav-en.

B♭ Am Gm Dm Gm C

Give us this day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins

E♭ Dm B♭ Gm C7

as we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.

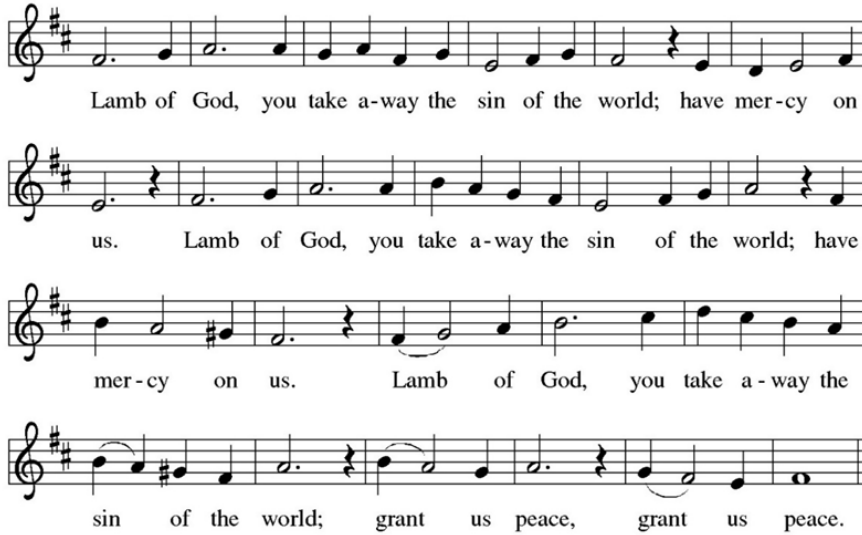
F F/E Dm Dm/C B♭ B♭/F F

Save us from the time of trial and de - liv-er us from e - vil,

B♭ Am Gm F E♭ Dm Gm C7 F B♭ Gm F

for the king-dom, the pow'r, and the glo-ry are yours, now and for - ev - er.

LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

THE COMMUNION OF THE BELOVED

In Christ's presence there is fullness of joy. Come to the banquet. **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR WORSHIP IS THIS SHARED MEAL

ALL ARE WELCOME to join us as members of God's family in Christ, as we share in this powerful gift of God's love and grace for the whole human family. We gather around the altar, kneeling or standing, wherever there is a place. The presiding minister offers wheaten wafers but can provide a gluten free wafer by request.

The assisting minister offers individual cups of wine (red) or grape juice (white) for you to choose. The church also affirms our Lord's full presence in, with, and under each element alone. If you prefer to commune in your pew with a prepackaged communion set, please alert an usher.

COMMUNION SONG

When Peace, like a River *It Is Well with My Soul*



1 When peace like a riv - er at - tend - eth my way, when
2 Though Sa - tan should buf - fet, though tri - als should come, let
3 He lives— oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought; my
4 Lord, has - ten the day when our faith shall be sight, the



sor - rows like sea bil - lows roll, what - ev - er my lot, thou hast
this blest as - sur - ance con - trol, that Christ hath re - gard - ed my
sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to his cross and I
clouds be rolled back as a scroll, the trum - pet shall sound and the



taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul.
help - less es - tate, and hath shed his own blood for my soul.
bear it no more. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!
Lord shall de - scend; e - ven so it is well with my soul.

Refrain



It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

COMMUNION HYMN

Jesus, Lamb of God

Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name;

Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Jesus, Lamb of God'. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: 'Je - sus, Lamb of God, wor - thy is your name;'. The first system ends with a semibreve note, and the second system ends with a double bar line.

The assembly stands and the presiding minister says a table blessing.

THE 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.

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.. **Amen.**

BLESSING

The God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony with one another,
in accordance with Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The God of all grace ✝ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

ELW#860 (Red book)

I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me



1 I'm so glad I'm so glad
2 Sa - tan had me bound, Je-sus lift-ed me. Sa - tan had me bound,
3 When I was in trou - ble, When I was in trou - ble,



Je-sus lift-ed me. I'm so glad Je-sus lift-ed me,
Sa - tan had me bound, When I was in trou - ble,



sing-ing glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Je - sus lift - ed me.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: JESUS LIFTED ME, African American spiritual

DISMISSAL

Praise God who loves us.
Praise God who cares.

POSTLUDE

Announcements

100TH ANNIVERSARY JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

Join us as we honor

100 YEARS OF FAITH, FREEDOM, HERITAGE & COMMUNITY

**Sunday, June 21st, 2026
Worship Service – 10:00 AM**

Guest Preacher
Rev. Leroy Cannon
John Corley Temple Talk
Meal Provided (Cash Donations)
Immediately Following Service

Topics:

- Black Lutherans in the South
 - Harvey Huntley Jr
- African American Lutherans at Reformation

Come worship, celebrate, and fellowship as we honor the spirit of Juneteenth and a century of ministry together.

100 Years of Faith, Freedom & Community

Dear Reformation family,

Church council is calling a congregational meeting to provide an update on church finances and solicit the congregation's input on how to build on current momentum and address current financial challenges.

Please join us at 11:30 in the fellowship hall on Sunday, June 14, as we provide more detailed financial information, share options we may pursue, and ask for your input as we collectively discern our next steps.

Attached is an announcement with some additional details, with more to come during the meeting. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me, Pastor Steven, or any other member of council if you have questions. We look forward to seeing you then.

Best wishes,

Matt Klopfenstein, Council President

Congregational Meeting June 14, 2026

Reformation Lutheran Church council is calling a congregational meeting to provide an update on church finances and solicit the congregation's input on how to build on current momentum and address current financial challenges.

The Challenge: we have a structural deficit of approximately \$40,000 - \$50,000 per year, and we are facing cashflow challenges.

Please join us as we provide more detailed financial information, share options we may pursue, and ask for your input as we collectively discern our next steps.

Background: Reformation has approved deficit budgets for at least the past five years. The church saw a decline in membership and congregational giving after 2022 when Pastor Tim left. Membership further declined during the two-year interim period. Council has adopted lean budgets that have accurately projected expenses, but revenue has not met expenses, which have increased due to inflation and maintenance needs for our aging property. We still possess reserve funds, but they have been significantly depleted, and our remaining funds are primarily in our endowment and a dedicated organ repair fund, which are not easily accessible due to the church's constitution or their restricted nature.

During the interim period the synod suggested that Reformation look to share a pastor with another congregation, because they did not believe we had the means to call a fulltime pastor.

The congregation took a leap of faith to call a fulltime pastor, pledging to use our remaining reserves because we believe that God is still using this congregation and that a new minister could help lead the church into a new season of ministry.

Pastor Steven answered our call, and shares our belief that God is still using Reformation to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly as a community seeking to embody God's love and inclusive welcome. Since joining us we have seen growth in membership and the launch of new opportunities for fellowship, learning, service, and outreach.

Reformation is experiencing a rebirth. Our challenge is to extend the runway financially to allow this rebirth to continue.

Sunday Bible Study – 9:15 AM

Join Pastor Steven each Sunday at 9:15 AM as we explore trees throughout Scripture and their connection to humanity, including reflection on the Tree of Life.

VBS at Reformation

If you are interested in helping out with VBS this August please let pastor Steven or Stephanie Garcia know.

Sesquicentennial State Park

We are looking to have a church picnic in the park. You can rent pedal boats, kayaks, and canoes, play on the playground, and go for a walk. There is also a sand volleyball court, a dog park, and a splash pad. Let the pastor know if this is something that you are interested in, and then we will choose a weekend to go.

Youth opportunity

Grace Works 2026 will take place June 28–July 2. This local servant camp is open to Midlands youth who are rising 6th graders through recently graduated 12th graders. Home base will be Ebenezer Lutheran Church downtown. The cost is \$50 per participant. Youth will gather daily from 8:00–8:15 AM with pick-up at 5:00 PM. On Sunday, June 28, participants will meet at Ebenezer Lutheran Church from 5:00–7:00 PM. Please let Pastor Steven know if your youth would like to participate or if you are interested in serving as a volunteer.

Flower Arrangements

During our talent show, Jill Mann showed off amazing flower arrangements. Folks shared that they would love to learn how to do what she does, and she agreed to lead a session. Please let pastor Steven know if this is something that you would be interested pastor will work to pick a date that works for Jill.

Baking

Pastor Steven is looking for people who love to bake and are willing to teach others how to bake their favorite recipes. If this is something you would like to lead, please let the pastor know.

GriefShare

Grief is something that is hard to deal with on your own. We are trying to start a support group where people can lean on each other to help manage life through grief. If this is something that you believe would be helpful, please let pastor Steven know.

REFORMATION LUTHERAN IS AN INCLUSIVE, LGBTQIA+ AFFIRMING congregation



that believes Christ calls us to serve others with joy. Safe Space Dinners, a ministry for homeless LGBTQIA+ youth, including people of color. The ministry is simple. On the second and fourth Thursday of each month, these youth (14-23 years old) are offered a safe space and time to gather for a time to rest and recharge, a home-cooked meal, a haircut, and a backpack of items they will find helpful in their day-to-day life. There are always a number of games to play, including video games. Sometimes we have entertainment from the community. There is no preaching, no conversion therapy attempts; only support and comfort. This is a ministry of giving – nothing more.

Do Justice:

Below is information on ways to contact your elected officials to voice your opinion on issues.

SOUTH CAROLINA ISSUES

SC state legislative issues: [SC Womens' Rights and Empowerment Network \(WREN\)](#) keeps you informed about legislation that affects women's rights in the state. The [American Civil Liberties Union of South Carolina](#) is broader in scope and addresses all legislation affecting civil liberties. Both sites have an "Action" section which allows one to sign petitions and call or write state officials regarding issues. Each organization also provides talking points for calls and letters; prewritten letters which can be modified are also provided. It's easy to identify your legislators on both websites.

The URLs below take you to the action section of each organization:

scwren.org/act-now

aclusc.org/actions

NATIONAL ISSUES

A popular national website for letters and petitions is [resistbot](https://resistbot.com). It provides an easy way to write or petition both federal and state legislators. Choose from a variety of already written letters and petitions, or write your own. Emailing officials is free with the service, or you can buy "coins" to either fax or send your correspondence via first class mail.

The URL is below:

resist.bot/petitions

If you prefer to call your federal legislators, [5Calls](https://5calls.org) provides the names and phone numbers of your Congressperson and Senators, and scripts for a variety of national issues that you can use when calling them. It also provides additional talking points for each issue so that you can customize your message.

The URL is below:

5calls.org