

# **Church on the Hill**

A Congregation of the  
Reformed Church in America  
167-07 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Flushing, NY 11358

**September 17, 2023**

**10:30 AM**



Photo Credit: Emerson Chen Photography

**Rev. Carlos Rivera — Guest Preacher**

**Mr. Sean Cotty — Music Director**

Rev. Robert A. Perless – Pastor Emeritus

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

**BOLD** – Congregation responds

\* – Congregation Stands

**Prelude** Improvisation on “Be Thou My Vision” and “It is Well With My Soul”  
Evan Swanson

## Welcome

\* **Gloria Patri**

*Glory be to the Father,  
And to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
World without end. Amen, Amen.*

## Votum

Our help is in the name of the Lord,  
who made heaven and earth. **Amen.**

## Sentences of Scripture

### Prayer of Invocation

As we stand in awe of your goodness and mercy today, we invite you to be present amongst us by the power of your Holy Spirit. Father, we declare that we love you. Thank you that you have made the way of love known through your son Jesus Christ. We pray that you would reveal this great love to us all today as we gather to worship. May our hearts overflow with thanksgiving and our mouths proclaim your everlasting greatness. In the wonderful name of Jesus we pray, **Amen.**

## Call to Worship

O Lord, open our lips; **and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.** O God, make speed to save us; **O Lord, make haste to help us.** Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; **As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.** Praise the Lord. **The Lord's Name be praised.**

\* **Hymn No. 532**

Be Thou My Vision

## Prayer of Confession

**Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and apart from your grace, there is no health in us. Restore all those who are penitent, according to your promises declared in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may now live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

## Assurance of Pardon/God's Wisdom for Life

### Anthem

I Love Thee

Benjamin Harlan

*I love thee, my Lord;  
I love thee, my Savior, I love thee, my God:  
I love thee, and that thou dost know;  
But how much I love thee my actions will show.  
O Jesus, my Savior, with thee I am blest,  
My life and salvation, my joy and my rest:  
Thy name be my theme, and thy love be my song;  
Thy grace shall inspire both my heart and my tongue.  
Oh, who's like my Savior? He's Salem's bright King;  
He smiles and He loves me and helps me to sing:  
I'll praise Him with notes loud and clear,  
While rivers of pleasure my spirit shall cheer.*

## Prayer of Illumination

Living God, help us so to hear your holy Word that we may truly understand; that, understanding, we may believe, and, believing, we may follow in all faithfulness and obedience, seeking your honor and glory in all that we do; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Scripture Readings

Victor Han

Psalm 119: 129- 133

p. 496

1 John 5: 19-20

p. 866

*This is the Word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

“Spiritual Understanding”

Rev. Carlos Rivera

**\* Confession of Faith**

The Apostles' Creed (RCA contemporary version)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
And born of the Virgin Mary.  
He 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,  
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
The holy catholic<sup>†</sup> Church,  
The communion of saints,  
The forgiveness of sins,  
The resurrection of the body,  
And the life everlasting. Amen.**

<sup>†</sup> The word "catholic" means "universal,"  
referring to all followers of Christ worldwide.

**Anthem**

God Is Our Refuge

Allen Pote

*God is our refuge and strength;  
A present help in time of trouble  
Though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,  
Though the waters roar and foam, we will not fear.  
Come and behold the work of the Lord,  
The awesome acts of God.  
He is in the midst of his people,  
In all the earth.  
He is the Word, we are His hands,  
He will lead us  
He is the air, we are His song,*

*We will celebrate his presence all the day long.  
God is our refuge and strength;  
A present help in time of trouble  
Though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,  
Though the waters roar and foam, we will not fear.  
Come and behold the work of the Lord,  
The awesome acts of God.  
He is in the midst of his people,  
In all the earth.  
He is the rain, we are the stones,  
He will cleanse us  
He is the air, we are His song,  
We will celebrate his presence all the day long.*

**\* Doxology**

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below,  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

**Prayers of the People**

***Lord's Prayer***

**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.  
Lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the Kingdom and the power  
And the glory, forever. Amen.**

**Prayer Response**

Hear Our Prayer, O Lord

*Hear our prayer, O Lord;  
Incline thine ear to us  
And grant us thy peace.*

Amen.

\* **Hymn No. 519**

It Is Well With My Soul

\* **Benediction**

**Response** (please be seated)      May the Grace of Christ Our Savior

*May the grace of Christ our Savior  
And the Father's boundless love,  
With the Holy Spirit's favor,  
Rest upon us from above. Amen.*

**Postlude**

His Eye is on the Sparrow

Evan Swanson

### Music Notes

"I Love Thee" comes to us from Jeremiah Ingall's (1764-1808) *Christian Harmony* published in 1805 (not to be confused with *The Christian Harmony* compiled by William Walker in 1866). The composer of the piece itself is unknown. In addition to the anthem version we offer today, the work is in many hymnals with an additional verse. The arranger of our version is Benjamin Harlan (1954-present). In addition to a lifetime of service to multiple churches as minister of music, he has been devoted to fostering congregational hymn singing. In an interview in 2019 as he prepared to retire he explained, "...when it comes down to the basics, the Word, prayer, and singing together are the most important components of Christian worship."

Devoted readers of Music Notes will recall that "God is Our Refuge" was offered on Psalm Sunday so we will not repeat that summary other than to note that the text is from Psalm 46:1-3, 8. But it is worth adding that verse 9 is one of the most significant in this Psalm: "He [God] makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire." (NRSV) Psalm 46 is a vision of God's world at peace.

# Announcements

## INTRODUCTION

Carlos Rivera serves in his home church Harvest Fields Community Church as an associate Pastor. He has over 30 years of experience working in senior financial positions in community development-related nonprofit organizations. He is the founder of Leviticus 25 Financial Ministries and is working on a devotional book on biblical generosity. He holds an MBA from Baruch College in New York and a Master in Divinity at New Brunswick Theological Seminary.

## MUSIC NOTE

Thank you to Evan Swanson for filling in for Sean this morning! You can hear Evan play again in two months as a guest artist in the QCCC concert on 11/18.

## FREE SEMINAR

Join us on **Thursday, September 28th at 7:00 pm** in Gessner Hall for a free seminar on Differences and Disagreements as Opportunities for Growth. Presented by Dr. Jay R. Feld, D.Min., a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist serving individuals, couples, and families- and a friend of the church, as he holds office hours here at Church on the Hill during the week. Flyers with more information for this seminar can be found on the table at the rear of the sanctuary.

## OFFERING

If you feel called to give, offering plates are located in the rear of the sanctuary, where you can leave your offering upon entry or exit of the sanctuary.

## CONGREGATIONAL CARE COMMITTEE

The Congregational Care Committee is looking for volunteers to assist in driving a Church member to the store to shop or to doctors' appointments. If you are interested, please contact the church office for further information.

## QUEENS COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CHOIR

A new semester for The Queens Community Children's Choir will be starting soon in September. The group meets in the Music Room at Church on the Hill on Thursdays from 5-6 p.m. The program will start on 9/28 and run every Thursday to 11/16. The semester will culminate in a grand concert on Saturday 11/18 in the COTH sanctuary. Children of all ages are welcome to join!

## HARVEST FESTIVAL

This year's festival will take place on **Saturday, October 14th** with a rain date of October 21st. There are copies of the list of new items we are looking to put in raffle baskets, along with copies of a letter requesting donations from your favorite local merchants that you can take with you to ask for a donation, on the table in the rear of the church.

## BARGAIN BOUTIQUE

The Bargain Boutique is open on Saturdays from 10 am- 1 pm. Donations are accepted on Saturdays only. \*We are unable to accept: Electronics, TVs, Furniture, Textbooks, and Large Toys\*

### **JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!**

Be sure to sign up for our email list to keep up with the latest Church on the Hill happenings through the weekly email and the Beacon. A sign-up form can be found on **[churchonthehill.org](http://churchonthehill.org)**



## Prayer Requests

If you would like to add a loved one to the prayer list, or if your loved one no longer needs to be on the prayer list, please contact the church office at [office@churchonthehill.org](mailto:office@churchonthehill.org)

Diane Blagburn

Thomas Degnen

Gabe DeMelo

Joanne Dunckhahn

Randy Eastman

Adam Gonzalez

The Family of

Richard Iovale

Susan Laurita

Lynn Lauterbach

Donna Lemay

Gessa Markantonis

Rose McLain

Kathy Mendler-Murphy

Paul Mobius

Rev. Bob Perless

The Redfern family

Patrick Sullivan

Ed Surujballi

Virginia Young



The sanctuary is looped for the hard of hearing. In order to connect to the system, please sit in the north set of pews (on your right when you enter the sanctuary) and set your hearing device to the "T" setting.



*Consistory & Staff*

Nancy Gessner, Victor Han, **Vice Presidents**  
Nancy Gessner, **Clerk**

**Elders**

Linda Diez  
Nancy Gessner (VP)  
Victor Han (VP)  
Rhoda Jabbour  
Sarah White

**Deacons**

Ginny Chan  
Emerson Chen  
Jerry Lutz  
Adriene Toy

**Sean Cotty**, Music Director: [sean.cotty@churchonthehill.org](mailto:sean.cotty@churchonthehill.org)

**Amanda Sudolsky**, Office Administrator: [office@churchonthehill.org](mailto:office@churchonthehill.org)

Phone: (718) 358-3671  
Email: [office@churchonthehill.org](mailto:office@churchonthehill.org)  
[www.churchonthehill.org](http://www.churchonthehill.org)

