



## Grief Like Glitter

Rev. Dr. Ralen M. Robinson

Almost ten years ago this summer, I lost my dad. And what no one prepares you for is how much it changes you. It quietly rearranges your heart. It takes a certain kind of joy, and you don't even know where it has been taken from until you walk into it. Not always loud. Not always dramatic. Sometimes it just settles into the room like a weight in the air, thick enough to feel, impossible to name. Grief becomes palpable in the quiet moments.

I wonder if you, too, have felt this quiet rearranging a loss that tilts the axis of your world, even if just by a degree. Perhaps you've found yourself in a familiar place, only to realize something essential is missing, a subtle ache where joy once lived. A fading smile where happiness lit up your face. Grief is strange like that. It waits. It lurks.

I heard someone describe grief like glitter. At first, it's overwhelming. It's everywhere. You didn't ask for it. You don't know how much there will be. And if you have worked with glitter, you know it clings to everything. You try to brush it off. You shower. You shake out your clothes. Still, it sparkles in places you didn't expect. It gets in your eyes. It frustrates you.

And then time passes. Months. Years. One day, a small fleck falls onto your hand. And instead of anger, there is memory. It's less heavy now. Not gone by any means, but lighter. A year later someone notices a piece of glitter still resting on your cheek. And instead of wanting to wipe it away, you pause. Because this shimmer is proof. Proof that there was someone worth loving. Worth missing. Worth grieving.

In this season of Christ's death and resurrection, we remember that grief does not disappear. The cross does not erase love; it proves it. Over and over again. The risen Christ still bears scars. Resurrection did not remove them.

The glitter remains. But it shines differently now.

It becomes remembrance. It becomes gratitude. It becomes a quiet testimony that love is real and still is. Long after your loved one is gone.

Grief may get in our eyes. But it also catches the light. And in the strange mystery of resurrection, even what once appeared unbearable can radiate with hope. The promise of Christ is not that we will never grieve. But that death does not get the last word.

The glitter stays!

# upcoming events

## Notable Church Events

Tuesday's in April 9:00 a.m. Blanket Makers  
Tuesday's in April 6:00 p.m. Bell Choir Practice  
Tuesday's in April 7:00 p.m. Reformation Singers Practice

**April 2** 7:00 p.m. **Maundy Thursday Service**  
**April 3** 7:00 p.m. **Good Friday Service**  
April 8 10:30 a.m. InReach Board Meeting  
April 9 10:00 a.m. Rebecca Circle  
April 12 9:45 a.m. Fellowship Board Meeting  
April 13 6:30 p.m. Ladies Night Out  
April 15 1:00 p.m. Dorcus Circle  
April 20 Noon BTOL  
April 21 7:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting



*Summer Worship schedule will begin May 24th.  
Join us for single service summer worship at 9:30am*

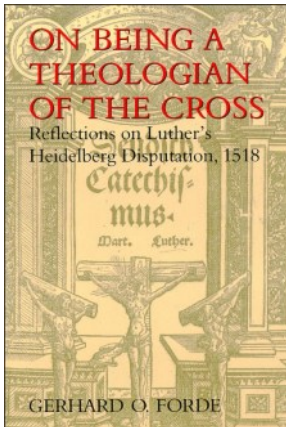


## Ladies Night Out

Mark your calendars for Monday  
April 13th at 6:30 p.m.

This month we will be dining at Red Robin, 9990 E 13th St. Join us for a fun evening of fellowship and food!

To RSVP, please contact Kalynn



### April Book Recommendation:

On Being a Theologian of the Cross:  
Reflections on Luther's Heidelberg Disputation, 1518  
by Gerhard O. Forde

Is a profound and deeply engaging exploration of Martin Luther's Heidelberg Disputation. Forde brings clarity and insight to Luther's radical vision of God revealed in the cross, highlighting the paradox at the heart of Christian faith: God's strength is perfected in weakness, and true wisdom is often hidden in what the world dismisses. A must-read for anyone wanting to wrestle honestly and faithfully with faith.



We have the blessing of incredible music available to us once again this Easter season. Just in case you are not aware, our own ELCA Liberal Arts College in Lindsborg, KS, Bethany College, presents two opportunities.

On Easter Sunday, April 5, Handel's Messiah will be presented at 3:00 p.m in Presser Hall on the Bethany College campus. This presentation of the Messiah is the longest running continual performance of Handel's Messiah. This performance is a centerpiece of the Annual Messiah Festival. This festival is recognized nationally for the quality of these important oratorios.

In addition this year Bethany will provide two opportunities to see and hear about the *Saint John's Bible*. *The Saint John's Bible* is the first completely handwritten and illuminated Bible to be commissioned by a Benedictine abbey since the invention of the printing press. The Bible was written on vellum and consists of seven volumes. A docent from the Hale Library at Kansas State University will show and talk about this very rare Bible. There is no charge for this presentation.

Plan to drive just one hour to Lindsborg for both the Holy Week musical presentations and the Saint John's Bible presentation. For more information go to [www.messiahfestival.org](http://www.messiahfestival.org).





Reformation joins with many other religious organizations around the city to clarify and address social issues that can be solved when we work together. Already through Justice Together homeless people have identification cards that assist them in getting employment or housing. In addition through the work of this organization as well as city agencies homeless people have a place to stay until they find housing through Second Light, located in the former Park Elementary school.

On Monday April 27 beginning at 6:00 p.m. Justice Together will gather at the WSU Hughes Metro Complex on East 29th Street with over 1,500 people of faith from across Sedgwick County to call on officials to enact community-driven solutions to gun violence, affordable housing and homelessness. The officials have and continue to listen and commit to the research and recommendations we have gathered in our work together.

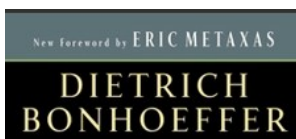
Why would you want to consider being part of that audience? That is the way that we demonstrate to our leaders that the community cares enough to research and develop ideas that will impact the social problems facing Wichita and surrounding area. In the last two years the officials have been surprised and impacted positively by our quality work. Your presence is essential to the impact of Justice Together.

You may have or will receive a call from a member of our Justice Together team at Reformation led by Susan Bachman to invite you to join us at this event we call the Nehemiah Assembly on April 27. If you are not contacted and want to be part of the voice of Sedgwick County, please let Susan know. Thank you for your consideration of this request.



### **Interested in becoming a member, or know someone who is?**

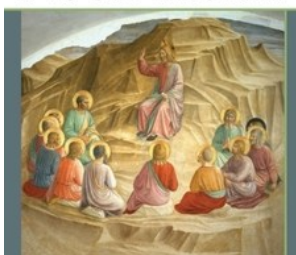
If you want more information about membership at Reformation, contact Rev. Ralen Robinson at [revralen@gmail.com](mailto:revralen@gmail.com) or [info@refluthks.org](mailto:info@refluthks.org)



### **April Book Recommendation:**

*The Cost of Discipleship*  
by **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP



This powerful classic explores what it truly means to follow Jesus in everyday life. Writing in the shadow of Nazi Germany, Bonhoeffer challenges the church to move beyond what he famously calls “cheap grace,” faith without obedience and forgiveness without transformation. Instead, he challenges readers to embrace “costly grace,” the kind that calls us to real discipleship, sacrifice, and courage. A great time for introspection as we wrap up the season of Lent.

## Growing in Faith & Fellowship

### Food Cart



**Canned meat** is a simple and easy way to make a meal for a family facing food insecurity. Tuna, salmon or chicken makes great sandwiches, noodle casseroles, burritos or stand-alone entrees. While you are grocery shopping, pick up some canned meats to help in our community. We deliver the supplies in the food cart to the Open Door Food Pantry at end of each month for those who depend on the food made available to them from the community. Consider helping a hungry family. And thank you!

### Community Outreach

We are mourning the loss of St. Paul's for many reasons, one of them being our long-time service of preparing and serving food to the homeless in the downtown area of Wichita. Thanks to Lynette Wetta and Susan Bachman we are searching for a new place in downtown Wichita to cook and to serve. Watch and listen for opportunities to get involved.

### Collecting Clothing for the Homeless

Boxes remain outside the office window for your donations of items of clothing for the homeless. The items may be gently used or new. We make the items donated available at the community breakfast. We thank you for your generosity in providing much needed clothing for men and women.

### Collecting for Family Promise

While we are not providing meals and sleeping services right now for Family Promise, we continue to be part of the overall program by providing needed home-settling items that you donate. You will find a container on the floor next to the Food Cart for any items you contribute. Think about what you would need as you settle in to a home after not having a home for a period of time. Any items you may be downsizing, such as sheets, towels, bedspreads, kitchen ware, etc., are welcome. We deliver the items you donate to Family Promise headquarters in downtown Wichita. Thank you for thinking of this incredible service opportunity.

### Stephen Ministry: The Courage to Receive Care



Stephen Ministry is a one-on-one confidential caregiving relationship with a trained Stephen Minister. Our purpose is to provide Christian caregiving to anyone who is facing a challenge such as illness, loneliness, unwanted change, etc. Contact **Anita**

## March 2026 Council Recap

As we wrap up the first quarter of 2026 we focus on looking forward as we carry out the mission of Reformation Lutheran Church.

### Financial Snapshot:

We have started off the year strong in giving, thank you all for your continued generosity and support. On the expense side we are managing things well and keeping expenses in line with anticipated spending.

### Property:

We have worked with contractors to maintain HVAC units and the outdoor electronic sign, AND we worked with a wonderful new flooring contractor and were able to strip and refinish almost all of the laminate flooring in the building. Three of the single bathroom floors were beyond cost effectiveness to strip and refinish so we are working on getting bids to do replacements in those bathrooms instead.

Special thanks to a financial benefactor whose support has allowed us the flexibility to keep up with roofing issues.



Our own members are taking on some smaller projects. We have new parking stop curbs in the front parking area and we have traded out all the faded handicap signs.



A HUGE thank you to all the willing hands that came out to help us on our March clean-up day. We were able to make our perimeter beds look great. There is still more work to be done but we are looking good for the start of spring.



# IN THE Spotlight

We're excited to celebrate the amazing opportunities, journeys, growth, and adventures our young people experience! This is their space to shine!

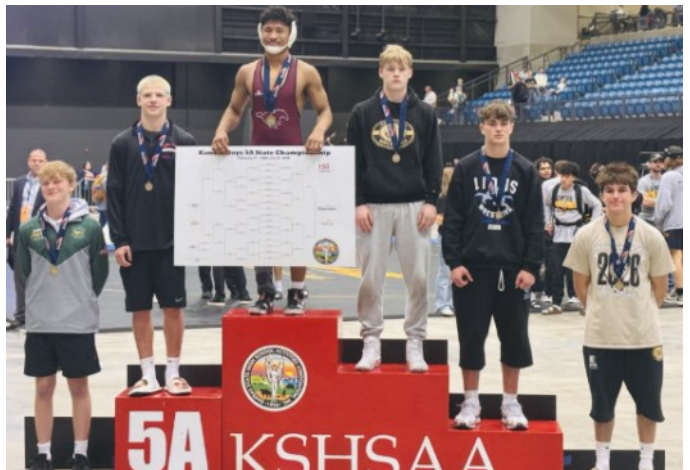


Ben took center stage this spring in his high school's production of *Les Misérables*, portraying the determined Inspector Javert. With a commanding presence and strong voice, Ben brought depth to one of the musical's most memorable characters. **Congratulations**, Ben, on a fantastic performance!



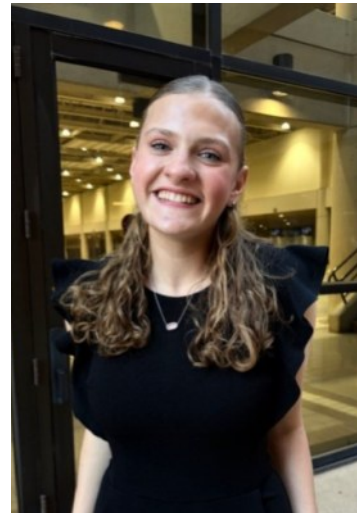
Look at Lena shine - She took the stage in her elementary school play and played a munchkin barrister and an Ozian in *The Wizard of Oz*

Congratulations to Thomas on a 4th place finish at the 5A KSHSAA State wrestling tournament in the 150lb weight class. The Goddard High team was the State Runner up at the tournament.





Congratulations to Cora who claimed 4th chair in the 2026 KMEA All-State band! She began the audition process in December and concluded it with a performance at Century II Convention Center in February as part of the KMEA In-Service Workshop.



Congratulations to Dylan who along his journey in Scouting America completed a series of six ranks and advancements, and has now met the requirements to be awarded the highest rank of Scouting America, Eagle Scout.



Congratulations to Greyson who signed with Tabor College to continue his athletic (Baseball) and academic career, he intends to study Exercise Science.

# Reformation Happenings



April 8th - 6-7:30pm

April 22nd - 6-7:30pm

### *March Baptisms*

Welcome Casen and Chloe to God's Family!



### *BINGO & Baked Potato Bar 2026*

Special thanks to all the members of the Fellowship Board for organizing and hosting this lively event for us in March.



## Bell Choir Is Ringing Again!

There is something holy about the sound of handbells.

When the bells ring, they do more than make music, they shimmer with joy. They ring with a rousing sound that fills the room and reminds us that worship can be both beautiful and joyful. It takes precision, discipline, and teamwork. Each ringer holds just a few notes, but together those notes become a hymn.

It's a beautiful reminder of the body of Christ: each of us with our own gifts, working together to proclaim God's glory.



Our Bell Choir known to us as the Reformation Ringers, though their group chat affectionately and playful calls themselves the “Ding-A-Lings” is a group of Reformation members who gather around the tables to make music together. And it is not only music they are making but laughter and memories as well. It is around the table that not only music was made but friendships were made and have lasted decades. Here are a few reflections from members of the group.

### *Why We Ring*

**Glenyce shares:** “I LOVE everything about handbells. There is something about the sound produced that seems so heavenly. Whether it is a solo, a small group, or a full choir, bell music has a special way of touching my soul. Playing in a group is special too because it takes a lot of work and patience to produce these beautiful harmonies together. I am enjoying the friendships back here at Reformation each time we gather around the tables to work on songs for worship. I am glad the bells play around the baptismal font because they are meant to be seen as they are heard. It is a double blessing.”

**Allison shares:** “I love being in the bell choir. I love making music with others. I love being a small part of a group that produces something larger and lovelier than we could ever do individually. I love that we get to worship God in this fashion. I once heard from a friend that the Bible doesn't command that we sing in our most professional singing voices, but that we make a joyful noise. I think we produce some beautiful joyful noises that enhance worship at Reformation.”

**Kris shares:** “I enjoy playing bells at Ref Luth because it allows me to stay connected to my musical training, explore my creativity with a group, and connects me to an open and accepting spiritual community.”

**Ruth Ann Shares:** “I have played handbells for about 30 years. We did not have bells at the Kellogg church but built space here. In the new church, the intended space was the balcony, but it always felt very separate from the congregation. I love the opportunity to play downstairs, and members have expressed the same sentiment. For a time, we also played along the windows on the 13th Street side of the sanctuary. Carol Ott, Ron’s wife, was an original member. After her death, Ron supported the bells through Carol’s memorial, providing new tables, pads, music stands, and music.

Reformation sponsored a worship service at the River Festival for several years, originally over by Cowtown, and later next to the river at A. Price Woodard Park, where 600–700 people would attend. The bells played there, providing both fun and outreach to the community. For several years on Palm Sunday, the bells led the procession from the Meditation Garden into the sanctuary. A more recent tradition is the mini-concert or extended prelude on Christmas Eve. Over the years, bells have played with organ, piano, brass, and choir. In recent years, several of our players have subbed with other choirs (United Methodist and Presbyterian), and their players have subbed with us, providing opportunities to share worship. One year, we even joined with Grace Presbyterian to perform as a combined choir. “

**Judy Shares:** I first learned to play handbells when I was in 4th grade in KCMO. Fast forward to when I was a mother of 3 young children, I again had an opportunity to play in the bell choir at my church in Topeka (Our Savior's). It was a chance to have an hour to myself every week and to create music at the same time. And it still is!

I love everyone in this bell group! While most of us have played together for years, we welcome new people into our little group. We love to be challenged with the music, but we also like to have fun when we practice. In the past, we have enjoyed the occasional workshops and playing for others at special events. I feel that when the bells play during worship, it enhances our worship experience - whether the song is joyful or moody, perfectly rung or full of mistakes!

**Twyla Shares:** I really enjoy making music with a group where every part is important. While this is true as well for a vocal choir (and I also like singing with a choir), playing bells is different because we are responsible for separate notes so the music is created from combining all the notes. We are all working together to bring the music to life.

I have played with most of the Reformation Ringers for a long time so there is a feeling of familiarity with each other which makes learning new music easier and playing older pieces more comfortable. There’s also a feeling of support; I know people will help with my part if there’s a need and that they feel the same way about me.

Instrumental music plays an important part in worship, allowing people to meditate on what’s happening in a different way than vocal music. It uses some different parts of the brain.

**Marcia Shares:** I really enjoy being a part of Reformation Ringers. They are so dedicated, diligent and a fun group of people. It is satisfying for me to be able to contribute to their successful participation in worship

## *A Joyful Sound (and a Few Ding-A-Lings)*

The Reformation Ringers prove that faithful music ministry is equal parts dedication, laughter, and grace. Around the bell tables you'll hear careful counting, the occasional missed note, and plenty of smiles. Whether they're ringing a triumphant hymn, a reflective piece during communion, or preparing their beloved Christmas Eve mini-concert, this group reminds us that worship is something we create together. And while they may jokingly call themselves the "Ding-A-Lings," the truth is that their music rings out with joy, community, and praise.

Our Bell Choir is preparing for upcoming worship services, and we would love for you to be part of it! Whether you read music fluently or are willing to learn, there is a place for you at the table and at the bell table.

### **Join the Bells!**

Our Bell Choir is preparing for upcoming worship services, and we would love for you to be part of it! Whether you read music fluently or are willing to learn, there is a place for you at the table.



### *Annual Auction and Open House*

Saturday, April 25, 2026 4:00 PM - 9:00 PM

4:00 - Open House & Tours

5:00 - Ribbon Cutting for New Office

6:00 - Dinner & Auction

7821 E Lyon Creek Road Junction City, KS 66441

For tickets please visit: [www.camptomahshinga.com/auction](http://www.camptomahshinga.com/auction)

JOIN US THIS

**SUMMER**

Beginning **Pentecost Sunday at 9:30 AM**, we gather as one to hear the story of Acts, a story of community, connection, and the Spirit bringing us together once again for another season of summer worship.

This summer, we trace the bonds of faith and friendship through the stories of Ruth and Esther, the guidance of 1 & 2 Timothy, and the timeless wisdom of the Ten Commandments. In these stories, we discover the power of women's relationships, the courage of leaders, and the faith that carries us forward.

As our pastor enjoys sabbatical, we are blessed with a multitude of voices leading us in worship. Together, we rejoice, reflect, and journey in faith, lifting our hearts in song and prayer. We look forward to seeing you!