

RE-FOCUS

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Thoughts for the Season Rev. Richard Monson

Most of us have four things in life that we are in search of. We search for individuality, meaning, hope, and community. The search for individuality is the search for personal integrity. The search for meaning is the search for purpose. The search for hope is the search for a future. The search for community is the search for belonging.

This month we brought in a total of fourteen new members into the fellowship of Reformation Lutheran Church. Their installation into the fabric of this faith community reminds me that in life, we are not searching for contracts; we are searching for covenants. We are not searching for activities but for experiences. We are not searching for meetings but for people with whom we are energized; and, we do not want to spend time in disagreement over how to care for our congregation's assets, instead we are seeking a community that will enrich our lives and enable them to be fulfilled. Therefore, it is not surprising that effective congregations have a strong sense of community. After all, a congregation is a collection of small groups. Therefore, there is no such thing as a large church.

I remember talking to a woman a few years ago that had decided to join a congregation. When I asked why she had chosen a particular congregation she said it was because the people were so friendly and that she felt she belonged. What I found interesting was that the congregation she decided to join had more than 4000 members while the other churches she had visited had less than 400 members. What we call a large church is simply a collection of small congregations who have enough in common to share the same pastors, staff, and facilities.

The first place people connect with a church is usually at worship and after they have worshipped for a few times they begin to look around for a group of people with whom they can share a relationship of sharing and caring.

This reminds me of a story of a group of men who had an unusual but vital ministry. This group of men had an interest in car repair. Now at first glance one might think such a group is not really suited for a church community. These men would meet each month to work on mechanically challenged cars and as they did they would also spend time in prayer and in support of one another. They also had a reason for being and that was to provide a safe and reliable car for anyone in the congregation who had for some reason lost their mode of transportation. By so doing they provided a great ministry and at the same time they benefited from their significant relationships of sharing and caring.

It has been my experience as your interim here at Reformation that you are a congregation with a strong sense of community. Therefore, as the summer season begins I hope you will renew your life as members of this congregation by setting aside:

- Time for prayer and spiritual reflection
- Time for sharing and fellowship
- Time when along with at least one other fellow member you engage in a ministry of service.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Acts 2:42

Thank You!

I would like to personally thank all of the caring friends at Reformation that prayed for me and sent get well cards since my diagnosis, surgery, and recovery.

Thank You!
Rich McDiffett

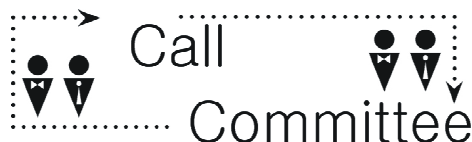
Thanks for all the wonderful prayers for our great grandson Logan and his mother. They are both doing very well and we are so grateful for our Reformation Family of prayers for them. Logan is now three weeks old and doing very well,

Thank You,
Nadine and Bob Norton

Thank you to everyone who remembered me in prayers, cards, and phone calls before and after my recent surgery. The cards from Rebecca Circle and Women of Reformation cheered me greatly. The pre-surgery visit and prayers from Pastor Kristin and Barb Lee meant more than words can express!

Eunice Myers

Thank you to the fifteen workers who came and cleaned up the church gardens on April 26. We planted nineteen replacement shrubs, weeded, trimmed and spread mulch. We are grateful to Thrivent which will contribute funds toward the cost of this project in the amount of \$375. Hats off to all the following: Ed Wilks, Eva Whetstone, Marsha Sears, Paul and Shari Ryding, Ron and Carol Ott, Russ and Sandy Muse, Marsha Meili, Keith and Susan Martin, Waldo and Lotus Gerards and Larry Ehrlich. The gardens look great!!



The Call Committee has completed four phone interviews and has scheduled a second interview for two candidates here in Wichita. As always we ask for and appreciate your continued prayers for the members of our committee as well as the candidates and their families.

GLOBAL MISSION FESTIVAL
Saturday, June 14, 2008, at 10:00 a.m.
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
1101 N. River Blvd., Wichita

Combined Choirs
Adult (including High School Youth)
Children (Kindergarten through Middle School)

Rehearsal Wednesday, June 11, 7-8 p.m.
at Gloria Dei

Please contact Marlene Hallstrom if you would like to participate.
687-3135

Global Mission Festival



Saturday, June 14, 10:00 a.m.—1:30 p.m.

Area Ministry 5 church members and friends are invited to gather for a Global Mission Festival at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 1101 N. River Blvd in Wichita.

Bishop August Kruse, the first Russian Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Russia, and Dean Manfred Brockman, Dean of the 8 Lutheran Churches in the Russian Far East will be special guests and Bishop Mansholt will join us.

The event will open with a Festival Worship Service with a procession of churches at 10:00 a.m. Adult and Youth Choirs are being formed.

A luncheon will be served, and afterwards there will be global mission exhibits and activities appealing to youngsters and adults to tour. See Congregation President, Gene Bowers, for your passport for the luncheon reservation.

Women of Reformation

CIRCLE MEETINGS

Rebecca Will **not** meet this month

Dorcas Wed., **June 18** 1:00 p.m.
Hostess: Barbara Lee
6903 E. 14th St. N.

Blanket Makers will meet Monday, June 2, 16, & 30 at 9 a.m. at the church.

Monthly Outreach Ministry: We will meet at Cornerstone Assisted Living on Tuesday, June 10, from 3 to 4 p.m. Please join us for fellowship with their residents.

Women's Night Out

June 24, 6:30 p.m.
The Larkspur Restaurant & Grill
Douglas & Mosley in Old Town

If you would like to attend, please call
Marcie Fosdick at 733-0340
by June 23 for reservations.

Hope to see you there!



Best Times of Life, Reformation's fellowship group for those 55 years of age or more, will gather on Monday, June 9 at 12:00 noon in Parish hall for our monthly luncheon and program.

Reformation's own Kylie Stupka, executive director of *Youth Entrepreneurs of Kansas* will present the program. Kylie will tell us about this worthwhile organization and explain its mission. Come, join us and enjoy tasty food, friendly fellowship and an informative program. Bring a dish to share, your own table service and call either Pauline 744-3328 or Betty 682-2030 with your reservation so we will prepare enough tables! We hope YOU will join us!

Prayer Shawl Blessing



The theme for this year's synod assembly is "God's Work, Our Hands." Many hands have been extremely busy doing God's work here at Reformation over the past few months, knitting prayer shawls. Many of these prayer shawls will be taken to the synod

assembly, as requested by the assembly planning team. Some of them will stay here at Reformation to be provided to those in need of extra prayer and support. On Sunday, June 1, all of these prayer shawls will be blessed during worship. Thanks to all whose hands and hearts have been busy creating these prayer shawls!

Thanks to our Sunday school teachers for another year of sharing and caring.



From left to right: Pastor Kristin Neitzel, Tina Alstrom (Co-superintendent), Glennyce Reimers (music), Brian Kampmann (7th & 8th grade), Judy Winters (Kindergarten), David Day (4th, 5th, & 6th grades), Sheryl Johnson (Kindergarten), Keith Martin (3rd grade), Tanya Flores (Preschool), Chris Steward (Birth to age 3), Amy Kuttler (Preschool), Kimberly Lindemann (3rd grade), Lisa Simon (1st & 2nd grades), and Carol Weaver (substitute).

Not pictured: Kate Johnson (Co-superintendent/High School) Dallas & Dulcinea Rakestraw (High School), Bob Weaver (substitute) & Kathy Wegner (substitute).

From Our Seminarian

Dear Reformation Friends,

Peace to you! I hope that the year is going well and this finds you happy and healthy.

Recently, we celebrated Rogation Sunday here at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd. The word "Rogation" comes from the Latin verb rogare, meaning "to ask," and the Sunday itself is often called Rogation Sunday as a result. The first Rogation was introduced as a Christian substitute for the Roman pagan celebration Robigalia, which was a special celebration to pray for crops. Many Lutheran congregations in rural areas of the United States celebrate Rogation Sunday, but here in Mexico, the tradition is not well known.

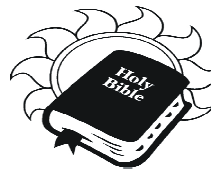
We celebrated Rogation Sunday with a blessing of water, earth, and seeds. The children participated, and they planted the seeds in their Sunday School class. We adorned the sanctuary with hundreds of flowers and a large basket of local fruits and grains, and we gave thanks and praise to God for the beauty and abundance of this earth with special music and prayers.

It might seem strange to bring a traditionally rural celebration to pray for crops to a congregation in a city of more than 20 million people. Sometimes, it is good to take part in the traditions of people who are different from us; the traditions of others can remind us of important dimensions of faith and life that we may miss. Here in Mexico City, people in my congregation have told me they feel disconnected from the earth. I remember driving past open fields on the way to school when I was growing up in Kansas, but here there is concrete and traffic instead of open spaces.

Our Rogation service helped us to talk about the way that God blesses us through the earth, and to reflect on our relationship with God's creation in a context where our connection to the land often goes unnoticed. One of my great joys in ministry is to witness the power of church communities for reconciliation—reconciliation among people, and also reconciliation between God's people and God's creation.

Thank you for your continued support of me. Your generosity has opened wonderful opportunities for me, and I am truly grateful. I ask your prayers for my continued ministry of reconciliation in my final months in this internship. May God bless you abundantly, now and always.

In Christ,
Quinn E. Gorges



Saturday Worship at Reformation

All are welcome at the Eucharist each Saturday evening at 5:30 p.m. in addition to a Sunday Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. The Saturday service alternates among a spoken liturgy, spoken liturgy with prayers for healing, and a setting with music from Taizé'. These services offer simplicity and an intimate setting. Visitors are always welcome.

During summer, the Saturday service may offer a worship option for those with travel plans, Sunday morning work, military duty or recreation plans. May 17 & June 14, music from Taizé; May 24, June 7 & 21, spoken liturgy; May 31 & June 28, spoken liturgy with prayers for healing. For information, contact Reformation, 634-0586.

Future pastors abound at Reformation!

Not just one, but three members of Reformation plan to be attending seminary this next year! Quinn Gorges will be returning to the campus at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, California, for her senior year after a year of internship in Mexico City. Tim Meyer is involved in the process of getting started in a distributive learning program through Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, most likely starting after the first of the year. And last but not least, Chris Deines will be starting his studies at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa this summer. We celebrate with all three of these people as they have discerned a call to ministry and are moving forward in the process. Chris will be preaching at Reformation the weekend of May 31-June 1. For those of you who don't know Chris, here's a little background information. Chris is a life-long member of Reformation, baptized here when he was just an infant. He was an active member of the youth group, and also served as a middle school youth sponsor. Chris graduated from Bethany College in 2007 and is currently serving as the Parish Worker at Emanuel Lutheran Church in Hutchinson. Chris and his fiancée Chelsea will be married in early July, and will shortly thereafter move to Dubuque where Chris will begin his seminary studies with a six-week intensive course in Biblical Greek.



FUTURE PASTORS

April Showers bring May flowers and breakfast



Did we really have spring or did we skip straight to summer? With such a beautiful Saturday to be cooking and serving, you would think so! First, I have an apology to make before I get started with May's article. Last month's article congratulated Michelle Pfeiffer. Wow, bet you didn't know we had a movie star working with us! The correct person, who spends a lot of her time gathering and delivering new clothing for us to give away, is none other than our own, Mary Pfeiffer. Thanks, Mary!

Today, Saturday, May 17th, was another weekend for Reformation volunteers at St. Paul on Waco. Our guests numbered approximately 85. For those who are reading this for the first time, Reformation has volunteered for several years now to be on a program of rotating churches that take one Saturday each month to cook and serve a free breakfast at St Paul Lutheran. A majority of our guests are homeless and the rest are typically in a low or fixed income, where a free meal goes a long way to help them survive. We are so blessed to be a part of this ministry that God has provided for us, under the leadership of Susan Martin.

We chop, cut, crack and stir, and flip and fry and stack in a blur. The eggs are scrambled; the pancakes light brown, with plenty of Country Crock, syrup and peanut butter to go around. The juice and coffee with fruit on the side make for a meal that any good restaurant could provide! But it's Reformation and our crew of dedicated volunteers that come out each month, year after year.

Thank you to everyone who donates to this ministry, either through time, donated items, money or prayers. We desperately need your continued support and if you happen to have the third Saturday of the month free, come on down by 7 a.m. and grab a spoon. You'll be glad you did!

Please continue to pray for our volunteers, for this ministry and especially for those we serve, as we pray for you.

Until next time, in His Service,

Bob L. Livingston, Community Breakfast volunteer
Susan Martin, Coordinator

Community Breakfast

THE FIVE CHALLENGE



Camp Tomah Shinga, your Central States Synod's summer camp, located outside of Junction City, KS is proud to announce and ask Area Ministry Five for its partnership in a special matching funds challenge to raise program dollars and camper registrations from Area Ministry Five.

Generous friends of Camp Tomah Shinga from Area Ministry Five are matching financial contributions generated from Area Ministry Five up to a total of \$9,000!

Area Ministry Five congregations are also challenged to increase the number of campers coming to Camp Tomah Shinga from 31 in 2007 to 50 in 2008!

The projects chosen for this challenge focus on improving the summer camp experience for every camper at Tomah Shinga. A few of those projects include creating two new permanent worship sites, developing a river view trail that connects the pavilion trail to the Chapel area, and building a roof between the Schnackenberg Cabins to provide a shaded gathering space.

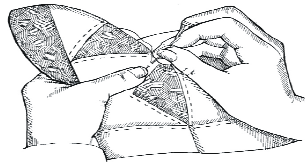
Here at Reformation, we will be giving The Five Challenge our extra attention during the month of June. There will be offering envelopes in the pews June 8-June 29 for you to make a donation toward this challenge. Help support Camp Tomah Shinga and the amazing ministry that happens through our camps!

Calling All Campers!



There is still time to register for summer camp at Camp Tomah Shinga! There are camps for youth in grades 1-12. Don't miss this opportunity to hike, sing, swim, climb, and be creative, all while growing in your relationship with God!

Mark your calendars! The Annual Camp Tomah Shinga Quilt Auction is Saturday, July 12.



Camp Tomah Shinga Quilt Auction

The Reformation Blanket Makers have been hard at work and have created a beautiful quilt to donate to the auction. We will bless this quilt in worship on Sunday, June 1. Come to see it. It's guaranteed to inspire you to start saving your money for the auction.



Yellow Bag Ministry

Thank you for your gifts of dried beans, rice and pasta and other nonperishable foods for the United Methodist Urban Ministry Food Ministry last month. **In June the Food of the**

Month is cereal and oatmeal. Let's do our part by supporting the Yellow Bag Food Ministry. Feed the Hungry!

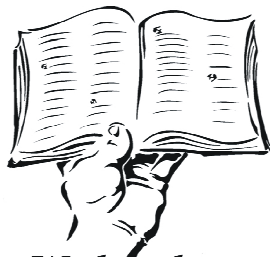
Vacation Bible School



It is time again to plan for Vacation Bible School. This year our theme is going to be "Power Lab: discovering Jesus' miraculous power. The dates for VBS will be July 13 - 17 (Sunday through

Thursday), with a performance for parents and friends on Friday, July 18.

We are looking for volunteers to assist with Vacation Bible School. If you are interested or have any questions please call Stephanie Larma at 207-5652.



Wednesday Bible Study

As mentioned in last month's Re-focus, Pastor Kristin will be starting a mid-week Bible Study on Wednesdays at noon. That study will begin on Wednesday, July 9. Bring your lunch and plan to be fed by the Word of God as you eat! Contact

Pastor Kristin to let her know if you are interested.



It is time to start thinking about the National Youth Gathering! "Jesus, Justice, Jazz" is the theme for the 2009 Gathering which will be held in New Orleans, July 22-26, 2009. All students who are in high school (9th-12th grades) during the 2008-2009 school year are eligible to go. It may seem early to be planning since the event is over a year away, but we will register for the event this September. If you want to read more about it, check out the website:

<http://archive.elca.org/youth/gathering.html>

A short meeting is planned for those youth and parents after service on June 22nd. Please plan to join us. Questions? Contact Kathy Wegner at 683-6172.

Join us in the Parish Hall at 9 a.m. for Intergenerational Sunday School on the first Sunday of every month during the summer (June 1, July 6, Aug. 3)!



People of all ages are invited to participate in these fun learning experiences. Building on the fact that the designs for the new stained glass windows have recently been revealed, the June 1 class will focus on stained glass and symbols, complete with a lesson, singing, craft and snack. Come join us!

Also note that the adult Sunday School class will continue to meet during the summer. Join us in the Parish Hall for a discussion about the Gospel lesson for the day each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. On the first Sunday of each month, we will join with the students of all ages for the Intergenerational Sunday School class.

Rally Day Kick-Off

Sunday School may have just concluded for the summer, but plans are already being made to kick-off another year of learning in style! On Saturday, September 6, all



of the Area 5 churches will gather at Reformation to celebrate the beginning of Sunday School with a concert by Jonathon Rundman. Plan now to be there!
