

RE-FOCUS

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Love Fulfills the Law of Stewardship

In Psalm 50 God explains, "I have no need of a bull from your stall or of goats from your pens, for every animal of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills." God wants us to give out of love - our love for God and for all humankind.

Fortunately God consistently pledges and provides for me even when I more often than not fail to show love and gratitude for God's blessings. When "Life is good!" I take God's grace for granted.

Life was not good many years ago when I went through my divorce. Although I appreciated and accepted support from friends, I remained inconsolable and despondent. However, what I considered a miracle happened when I prayed. Through prayer I received comfort and peace of mind. I experienced a renewal that not even my most caring friends could provide, and I became acutely aware of God's immeasurable love.

Although I realized I could never repay God's grace, I wanted in some way to demonstrate my gratitude to Him. As an expression of my love and gratitude toward God, I pledged and gave beyond the Biblical ten percent minimum that one year.

Probably each of us can remember more than one difficult time in our lives when God provided love, renewal, and peace of mind. May an awareness of God's constant grace create in each of us a spirit of gratitude, love, and generosity to do God's will on earth as it is in Heaven.

Marsha Sears

new grandmother & member of the Stewardship Board



Stories to Tell † Gifts to Share Consecration Sunday, October 12



Each day of life is filled with stories and gifts: memories of the past, the gift of an e-mail or letter, even our very breath. Each moment draws us to one another and to God. As we participate in church life, we hear the story of God's love and forgiveness through Scripture, music, prayer,

preaching, and each other - gifts and stories of the church.

Sunday, Oct. 12 is Consecration Sunday at Reformation. "What's a *Consecration Sunday*?" The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines *consecrate* as "dedicated to a sacred purpose, a setting apart." Persons, places, or things can be consecrated. This day, we will not only talk about how God sets us apart in the world for ministry and mission, but also turn our hearts and wallets to the work that is ahead in 2009. In the weeks ahead, you'll hear stories of God's loving faithfulness as we think about where Reformation has

been, and look ahead with anticipation toward the coming year.

Each fall, every Reformation member is invited to make a financial commitment to the life and work of Reformation for the coming year. In the coming weeks, please take some time to celebrate what you have been given by God and prayerfully consider how your abundance might be shared with others. On Sunday, October 12, you will be invited to consecrate that pledge to the sacred purpose of God's mission through the ministries of Reformation Lutheran Church.

The Stewardship and Fellowship Boards have been planning for a day rich with telling stories and sharing gifts. These stories and gifts will center our worship and then lead us into the Biggest Pot-Luck in Town. The Stewardship Board is providing the BBQ meat and beverages - you are invited to round out the meal with salads, casseroles, and desserts. There will also be games inside and out for the young and the young at heart.

Save the Date! Consecration Sunday - Oct. 12.
Come to worship and then stay for lunch as our celebration continues.

Stories to Tell † Gifts to Share

Please allow me to tell three short stories about people sharing their gifts:

Gift of Time

I heard about a group of retired women who spend every Friday morning with little kids who don't belong to them. It's called *Mom's Morning*. Nine to noon, these surrogate grandmas give their time and love to little ones, so weary mom's can be refreshed. Sometimes the moms gather for Bible study. Other times, the moms support and encourage each other through the ups and downs of parenting. Laughter and tears are mingled with sips of coffee and chai tea. These three hours of respite care have the power to transform both mother and child. What a gift from these caring women – the gift of time.

Gift of Talent

Brian Spahr is a talented guitarist and songwriter who tells stories. Not too long ago, Brian was writing songs, playing coffeehouse concerts and working with junior high kids in Minneapolis when he felt a call to serve God in a more direct way.

Four years later, Brian is on the verge of something beautiful. Now a seminary graduate, he is merging his passion for music with his call to serve God as a pastor. Brian, along with his wife, Michelle who has amazing talent and skills with pre-K and elementary age children, is starting Graceway Church – a Lutheran mission congregation in the growing part of SE Charlotte, North Carolina. Brian and Michelle acknowledge a disturbing trend growing in North America – folks are not connected with a faith community. Since 1991, that number has almost doubled.

Enough! Brian and Michelle want to reverse that statistic. They have stories to tell and gifts to share as they reach out to folks who are seeking community and meaning in their lives. Their very lives are reaching out with love and grace through innovative worship, faithful children and family ministries, and lives grounded in prayer.

For more on Brian and Michelle and the way they are using their gifts and stories to change the world, please visit their church website (<http://gracewaycharlotte.com>).

Gift of Treasure

When Tera and I started having the conversation about entering the ministry, there was one major hurdle – graduate school. If I wanted to pursue life as a pastor, I needed to attend seminary for four years. Where would we live? How would we pay for school, books, rent, and groceries? We hadn't planned on this. Could we afford it?

Seminary prices, like all schooling costs, continue to rise. A year of seminary is well over \$30,000. How could we make ends meet? A conversation with Melissa, of the Financial Aid Office at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio calmed our fears when she said, "We'll make it work. The actual cost to a student hovers around \$10,000 plus living expenses."

Where does that other money come from? Congregations. Sure there are many different folks that support seminaries, but congregations are key. Congregations support synods, who then pass along mission dollars to various theological schools, covering a great portion of the actual cost of education. Congregations also have a healthy habit of supporting their own who head off for theological education.

Your dollars to Reformation make a difference. Not only do they keep the lights on, pay pastor and staff salaries, and buy art supplies for Sunday School kids, but they also help soon to be pastors make ends meet.

For more about the ELCA Fund for Leaders, please visit <http://archive.elca.org/fundforleaders/about.html>

Thank you for all of the ways that you share your lives. The stories you tell and the gifts you share shape the ministry of Reformation Lutheran Church and so far beyond.

I praise God for you!
Pastor Lowell



Thank You!

To all my Church Family,

Thank you for the cards and prayers on my behalf. They were very much appreciated.

Twila Black

Thank you to everyone who participated in our last Red Cross Blood Drive on September 7. We gave a total of 20 units with 4 new donors!

Jette Mortensen,
Parish Nurse

Our heart-felt thanks for all the prayers, cards, and calls. We believe that your prayers are helping to bring about positive results with John's cancer treatment. What a blessing it is to be a part of this caring & supportive congregation!! God bless all of you!

John & Barb Lee

**You Are Invited
to the
100th Birthday Celebration
for
Margaret Shaft Rice
Saturday, October 4, 2008
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Larksfield Place Auditorium
7373 East 29th Street N.
Wichita, KS 67226**

**No gifts, please, just your presence!
If unable to attend, please send a card to:
Larksfield Place W-115 at above address.**



Mark your calendar for an evening of fun, food and fellowship on Sunday, December 7. Plans are underway for Reformation's annual Holiday Progressive Dinner and we need YOUR help. Traditionally, we travel different routes to homes where either an appetizer or

salad is served. We then meet together at Reformation for the main course, dessert, and entertainment. This year Blue Moon Catering will provide dinner for us. We are in need of eight households willing to host an appetizer or a salad course in their homes. If you would like more information or are eager to volunteer, please contact anyone on the Fellowship Committee. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Thrivent[®]
Builds**



Tentative plans are being made to build two Thrivent Builds/Wichita Habitat homes in Wichita in 2009. Mark your calendars and plan vacation days.

When: March 24 – May 2, 2009

Work days: March 24 – March 28,
Tuesday through Saturday
April 2 – May 2,
Thursday through Saturday

Where: Habitat Village near North Arkansas
and 33rd St

More Saturdays and more end of the week days will be available for building than for past Thrivent Builds. Plan now to be a part of this mission project to help two families become homeowners.

Women of Reformation

CIRCLE MEETINGS

- Rebecca** Thursday, **October 9** 10:00 a.m.
in the church library
Hostess: Twila Black
Lesson Leader: Dallas Cronk
- Dorcas** Wed., **October 15** 1:00 p.m.
Hostess: Olive Moehring
122 Hillsdale St.
Lesson Leader: Barbara Everson

Blanket Makers: will meet Monday, October 6 and 20, at 9:00 a.m. at the church.

Monthly Outreach Ministry: We will meet at Cornerstone Assisted Living on Tuesday, Oct. 8, from 3 to 4 p.m. Please join us for fellowship with their residents.

Prayer Shawl Ministry: will continue with individuals working at their homes. Anyone wishing to join the effort is asked to contact Jolene Dougherty, 776-2068 if you need information &/or patterns.

Best Times
— — —
B.T.O.L.
— — —
Of Life

Best Times of Life, our fellowship group for those 55 and over, will meet on Monday, October 13 at 12 noon in the Parish Hall for our monthly luncheon and program. This month, our presentation will be given by Kelly Harper who will

inform us of the community work being done by The United Way. We will learn of the program called 211 which is sponsored by The United Way in an effort to help those in the community find the help they need. Come and join us for great food, warm fellowship and an informative program. Bring a covered dish to share, your own table service and call either Pauline at 744-3328, or Betty 682-2030 with your reservation so we will know how many tables to prepare! We hope to see YOU there!!



Women of Faith Study Begins Sunday Oct. 12

"I really want to do what God wants me to do ... but what is it?"

If you've ever asked yourself that question – and who hasn't? – maybe you will find some answers in a new discussion class offered on Sunday mornings, beginning Oct. 12.

The study is part of the "Women of Faith" series, subtitled **"Discovering God's Will for Your Life."** Discussion leader is educator and Reformation member Barbara Orsak.

Discussions will focus on our everyday journeys as we seek to know and understand the will of God.

**Classes will meet in the Library at 9 a.m.
Sundays from Oct. 12- Nov. 16,
resuming Jan. 4- Feb. 8.**

Can't attend every session? Don't stay away for that reason. Come when you can and share as you are willing. Contact Barbara Orsak for more info or to register (260-6851).



It's again time for our fall garden clean-up! Mark Saturday, October 25 at 1:00 p.m. on your calendar! Put on your garden gloves, bring some weed diggers, pruners, & maybe a rake (or if you don't have gardening tools, just come and someone else will share theirs!). We will spruce up all the gardens and get ready for

the cold weather. Be sure you wear gloves and come and join us! Trash bags will be provided and of course, refreshments served. We will work about two hours.

Church Library Donation Policy

Gifts of new and used books for the library are welcomed. We have limited space, however, and the Library Team asks that donations for an adult audience have a specific relationship with modern Christian life, Christian theology, Bible study, commentary, criticism, or scholarship concerning Christianity or other religions.

All donations of books, CDs, and DVDs will be evaluated for appropriateness and utility before inclusion in the library. The criteria are:

- **Relevance:** Does this work contribute in any way to our understanding of our God, our faith, or our life as disciples?
- **Utility:** Will members use and understand it?
- **Modernity:** Does it have anything to do with contemporary Christian life?
- **Redundancy:** Do we already have a copy of it?

For those considering designating a major gift or memorial to the library: We are in the process of developing a list of resources that would be most beneficial to library development. The list is not yet complete, but please let one of the pastors know of your interest.

October Choir Schedule



October 5 - Parish Choir
 October 12 - Adult Handbell Choir
 October 19 - Parish Choir
 October 26 - Parish Choir
 Adult Handbell Choir, Brass

Children's Choir and Youth Handbell Choir



It's not too late to sign up for a choir for young people. We need a little more interest in order to have enough singers for a children's choir and enough ringers for a youth handbell choir (grades 5 and older). Please contact Marlene Hallstrom as soon as possible if you or someone you know might be interested. This is a wonderful opportunity to use your musical talents to serve your church!



The
Wichita Chapter
A G O
presents
Organ Spectacular

international
year of the
organ
2008-2009
American
Guild of
Organists

October 21, 2008 — 7:30 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
330 N. Broadway — Wichita, Kansas

*A Celebration of the Organ
 in its historic and evolving roles:
 in solo, with various instruments,
 with choir, and with the congregation*

The Friends University Singing Quakers
The Wichita Brass Quintet
Catherine Mitchell, Oboe
Organists Anna Jeter, David Josefiak,
Carrol Hassman, & Brett Valliant

international
year of the
organ
2008-2009

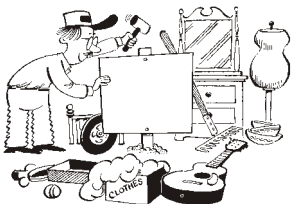
Organ
Spectacular
21 October 2008



YOUTH GROUP NEWS

The annual senior high lock-in with youth from the Oaks Indian Mission will take place again this year at Reformation on Saturday, November 15. Worship at 5:30 p.m., and then be ready for a fun night of activities, food and fellowship! This is a great opportunity to get to know some of the youth from Oaks Indian Mission and to build relationships with other high school youth from Wichita.

All high school youth are invited to participate. Contact Pastor Kristin for more info (634-0586).



Garage Sale

The Annual Garage Sale will take place on Friday, October 3 and Saturday,

October 4 from 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. each day. All proceeds will send our youth and sponsors to the 2009 National Youth Gathering. Thrivent will also provide some matching funds.

Join us on Thursday, October 2, from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., in the Parish Hall for the Member's Only night to be able to purchase items prior to opening to the public.



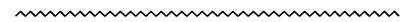
High School group will meet on Sunday, October 5, at 3 p.m. to make Soup Jar Mixes to be sold at a Craft Fair in Minnesota. All

proceeds will go toward the National Youth Gathering expenses.



OCTOBER Fun-Fest

October Fun-Fest is a family fun day being co-hosted by Cedar Chapel United Methodist Church and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Saturday, October 18. Activities will include a mini-health fair, children's games (ages 6-8), youth games (ages 9-11), and karaoke contests (for ages 12 and up). The event will start at 9:00 a.m. and run until approximately 5:00 p.m. See the poster in the narthex for more information and to sign-up. Pre-registration is required by October 10.



Area 5 Lutheran churches are invited to participate in the 15th annual Area 5 Halloween Party at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 925 N. Waco on Saturday, October 25th from 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. All ages are invited and encouraged to bring friends and at least one canned food item each for a local Food Bank. Activities will include: spook house, cupcake & cookie walk, games for all ages, hot dogs, chips and a drink will be provided. Wear a costume for the Judging Contest!



Youth of Area 5 congregations will enjoy helping host the Halloween Costume Party for neighborhood and area children at St-Paul's-Wichita, on Saturday, Oct. 25. Volunteers and donations are needed from all the area churches, to set up Friday evening from 6 -8 p.m. and again Saturday morning at 10:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and to help with the party. If you come to help, bring \$ for pizza for lunch.

Following the Halloween Party and clean-up, a Lock-In at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 1451 E 47th South is planned for all Middle School/High School youth and sponsors. Activities planned: Cox Corn Maze 9 -11 p.m. on south Seneca followed by pizza, karaoke, games and movies at Good Shepherd. Lock-In will end at 8:30 a.m. after breakfast. All youth are invited to stay for worship at Good Shepherd – Sunday School 9 a.m. and church at 10:15 a.m. Info: Mike or Diane Harman (St. Paul's) 722-7272, or Lynne Kreft (Cross of Glory) 788-5421 for the Halloween Party ; or call Pastor Natacha Kemp (Good Shepherd) 524-3401 for the Lock-In.

Come, join the fun!!

Quarters for Camp!



Join in the fun for the 10th Annual Camp Tomah Shinga Quarter Challenge. October is "Quarters for Camp" Month. Let's show our support for the ministry of Camp Tomah Shinga by giving as many quarters as we can during the month of October! (Larger denominations are, of course, also appreciated!). The Camp Tomah Shinga jar will be on the table at the entrance to the sanctuary during the month of October. Drop your quarters, dimes, nickels or maybe even dollars into the jar to help support the great ministry that is happening at Camp Tomah Shinga, as we join with congregations around the synod in this fun challenge!



Thanks for the support you have already given Camp Tomah Shinga. During the month of June, we participated in the Five Challenge for Tomah Shinga. As you may remember, generous friends of Camp Tomah Shinga from Area Ministry Five offered to match financial contributions generated from our area ministry up to a total of \$9,000! The camp also challenged the congregations of Area Ministry Five to increase the number of campers coming to Camp Tomah Shinga from 31 in 2007 to 50 in 2008.

The results are in! As a result of the Five Challenge, the camp received \$7,480 in individual gifts, and \$4,379 in congregational gifts! Combined with the matching gift of \$9,000, a total of \$20,859 was raised! Thanks for your generosity! And while we didn't quite meet the goal of 50 campers, we did increase the number of campers from 31 last year to 43 this year! That's an increase of over 35%!

Thanks to your generosity, Camp Tomah Shinga was able to improve the summer camp experience for every camper at Tomah Shinga. A few of those projects included 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. Some of our own campers from Reformation even helped create a worship space by the creek!



Amy Yeskie, Hanna Brittain, Cora Burgoyne, Halle Hund, Andrew Annett, Beau Desmarreau and Eric Jensen at the Chapel of the Waterfall, a worship area they helped create!

September Happenings

The month of September has definitely left us with many stories to tell and a chance to celebrate many gifts that were shared! It was a full month, with lots of exciting things happening at Reformation! Check out some of these moments captured on camera as people shared their gifts and created new stories to tell:



On Saturday, September 6, around 200 people from several of the Area 5 churches gathered together for a fun **Concert** with Lutheran singer-songwriter, Jonathan Rundman. Jonathan, along with his "band" (drummer Pastor Lowell), sang for us and also led us in a few hymns and some of his original songs. It was a fun, exciting way to kick-off another year of Christian education with several of the other ELCA congregations in the Wichita area, and specifically here at Reformation. We were blessed to have Jonathan here with us on Sunday morning as well, as he provided special music in worship and led a few pieces of the liturgy that morning.

Continued next page



As part of our **Rally Day** celebration on Sunday morning, Jonathan also sang “Miracle Song,” which he wrote for the Firelight Sunday School curriculum we are using. That was just a small piece of the fun-filled morning, as the Sunday School students went on a scavenger hunt to discover bits and pieces about the miracle stories they will be learning about this fall. David Day, who is teaching the 5th-6th grade class with



Keith Martin this year, helped the classes on their scavenger hunt by telling them the story of “Sharing Lunch – The Feeding of the 5,000.” Before the class went on their way, they received part of their snack – Swedish fish & crackers!

Some of our Sunday School students helped co-Sunday School superintendent, Katie Johnson, with actions to a song at the Rally Day Celebration. Katie and Tina Alstrom are serving as the co-superintendents for the second year in a row, helping our children learn more about God’s amazing and powerful love for each one of us!



Evan Byers and Matthew Annett, along with Grant Fosdick (not pictured), came up with creative ways to pop balloons during the **Third Grade Bible Mini Retreat**. Once the balloon was popped, they had to find the name of the book of the Bible that was inside and decide whether it was from the Old or New Testament. After all 66 balloons were popped, we checked our work – 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books. Right on! Nicely done, guys! Bibles were presented to our third grade students on Sunday, September 14, as Reformation helped the parents of these students fulfill the promise they made at their child’s baptism to “place in their hands the Holy Scriptures.”

Sunday, September 21 was a day of great joy and celebration here at Reformation as Pastor Lowell Michelson was installed as our Senior Pastor. As a part of the installation service in worship that morning, Hanna Brittain says, “You have been called among us to proclaim the good news.”



Pictured here (left to right) are Pastor Lowell, Pastor Janice Kibler (Synod Staff), Wil Johnson, Hanna Brittain, and me (Pastor Kristin).

Worship was followed by a great lunch and time for fun and conversation! Thanks to the call committee and congregational council for all of your work that led up to this day, and to the fellowship ministry board and their many helpers for all of the time and energy you put into a great reception!

So many lives have been touched through the ministries of Reformation during this past month. It has been an exciting time in the life of this congregation as we gear up for another year of Christian education and look forward to the future of the ministry in this place. Thanks to all of you who have shared of yourselves, your time, and your resources to further God's mission in this world through the ministries of Reformation and beyond.

God's peace and joy,
Pastor Kristin

Confirmation Retreat

On Friday and Saturday, October 3-4, our confirmation students will head to Camp Tomah Shinga for a weekend retreat! We will play games, dig into some great Bible stories, worship around a campfire, and hopefully spend some time on the ropes course! Confirmation students, if you have not already registered with Pastor Kristin, contact her right away!



Community Breakfast

“Thank You”

We may not say it enough, but we never want to forget to say “thank you” to everyone who donates clothing, food, time, money and prayers for our much-needed ministry. Without you, the congregation, we would not have been able to feed and clothe nearly 120 less fortunate brothers and sisters this past Saturday at St. Paul Lutheran on Waco St in downtown Wichita. Pastor Fulton (St. Paul's pastor) came by to offer grace and greet our guests and volunteers too.

Thank you to our volunteers who work tirelessly in the hot kitchen, cracking and frying eggs and flipping pancakes for what seems to be an eternity, I'm sure. And for the volunteers who greet and speak and serve our guests, you are all truly disciples of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And a very special thank you to Debbie Stephens, our Administrative Assistant, who manages the church office for seeing that this article gets published every month. And last but not never least, thank you all for your prayers for this ministry.

Here's our list of needs again for the warm months (soon to change):

- Backpacks!!!!!! (or any carry case, satchel, tote, bag, etc.)
- Pants/Slacks (Blue Jeans, Dockers, etc., no suits or dress slacks, please)
- Shirts/T-Shirts/Blouses (nothing too formal, silky or see through, etc., please)
- Socks/Stockings
- Shoes/Boots/Athletic Shoes
- Baseball Caps/Hats
- Belts
- Toiletries (Individual)
- Sunglasses
- Books (paperbacks; crossword puzzle books, etc.)
- Sports Water Bottles (refillable kind)

Please continue to give as you can to our donation jar or mark your donation for “Community Breakfast” made payable to Reformation Lutheran and put in the offering plate anytime.

Please pray for those we serve, as we pray for you.

Until next time, in His Service,

Bob L. Livingston,
Community Breakfast volunteer
Susan Martin
Coordinator