

RE-FOCUS

A Publication of Reformation Lutheran Church
February 2012

Volume 32

Number 2

Ash Wednesday – February 22



*Remember that
you are dust...*

Ash Wednesday Worship February 22

12:00 p.m.

(lunch following)

7:00 p.m.

(Chris Cakes, 5:30 p.m.)



Midweek Lenten Worship Wednesdays February 29 March 7 - 28

12:00 p.m.

(lunch following)

7:00 p.m.

(dinner at 6:00 p.m.)

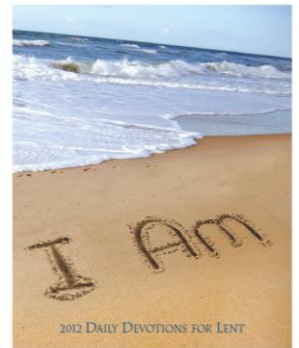
Ash Wednesday is a solemn day of prayer that begins the season of Lent. On this day, we confess our sin in a litany of repentance and may receive the sign of ashes, the ancient symbol of repentance, which reminds us of our mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross of Christ on our brow, we make our way through Lent, longing for the promises of Easter morning.



Please join us for worship (12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.) as we begin our Lenten journey together. We'll share a lunch meal following the noon worship time and all are invited for pancakes with Chris Cakes at 5:30 p.m. before the evening service. See page 6 for more information about Chris Cakes.

"I Am" God is... 2012 Daily Devotions for Lent

God creates. God promises. God cares. God helps. God comforts. What does that mean for us? Reformation's Daily Devotions for Lent will journey to the heart of these and other action words as we explore and discover who God is, what God says, and how God is active in our lives today. This six-week devotional booklet, written by members and friends of Reformation, invites us to reflect on the very real presence of the God of Exodus who called himself I AM, led the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt, guided the Church through the ages, and still surrounds and loves us through our own Lenten journeys.



The 2012 Lenten Devotions will be available for pick-up beginning the weekend of February 11/12. If you would like to receive them via e-mail, please let Mark Yeskie know.

Conversations with God - Lenten Midweek Worship

In the weeks following Ash Wednesday, come and join us as we continue our journey to the cross with a half hour worship service grounded in Scripture, song and prayer. Our times together will feature a series of Lenten dramas, *Conversations with God*, where we will meet Barabbas, Pilate, Peter and other key figures in the final days of Jesus' life. Come and hear their conversations with God as they wrestle with words of forgiveness, truth, freedom, promise and life.

Lenten midweek worship services are each Wednesday in Lent at 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Plan to stay for lunch following the noon worship time or come early at 6:00 p.m. for food and conversation before the evening service.

The Simple Joys of Life



*Pastor Kristin Neitzel
Associate Pastor*

*May 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.*

Romans 15.13

It was the week after Christmas. My family and I had celebrated Christmas and exchanged gifts. So I was surprised when my older brother walked into my parents' kitchen with a big smile on his face and a wrapped package under his arm.

He knew my question before I asked it, just by the look on my face, but I asked it anyway. "What's that?" His smile shifted into a laugh, as he handed me the package with a "Happy Birthday" greeting. I looked at him a little suspiciously...after all, my birthday was a couple of months away. I cautiously asked, "Do I get to open it now, or do I have to wait until my birthday?"

Now you need to understand that my big brother is the typical big brother. He loves to tease. And I believe that if he had given it a little more thought, the opportunity to torture me by making me wait would have been too tempting to resist. But on this particular day, he couldn't hold back his excitement any more than I could hold back my curiosity. "No, go ahead and open it now."

So, with child-like joy in his eyes, he watched, and with child-like impatience, I ripped into the package.

Under the shiny blue paper, I discovered a toaster! But not just any toaster...this one is bright yellow and toasts a smiley face on one side of your piece of bread! How fun is that?

Now, each time I have a piece of toast, I'll be greeted by a smiley face. A little joy inserted into my day.



My new toaster isn't the only smiley face object in my home, however. It joins the cookie jar, several mugs, a bank (or two or three), and even my shower curtain. Yes...it is nearly impossible to walk around in my home without smiling. Little hints of joy are everywhere you look!

The same is true of this amazing world that we live in. Little hints of joy are everywhere we look.

Not knowing what February will bring us here in Kansas, that joy may show up in the form of beautiful, intricate, one-of-a-kind snowflakes. Or it may appear as a tulip or daffodil breaking through the soil – a first sign of spring. That hint of joy may come in the smile of a stranger, or the hug of your closest friend. It may be a song on the radio, or a happy memory of a lost loved one.

Joy is all around us. But our deepest joy comes from knowing that we are loved and forgiven by the Creator of the world.

During his last night with the disciples before his crucifixion, Jesus shares his love with them and encourages them to abide in the commandments and in God's love. He says, "I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete" (John 15.11). Abiding in God's love and grace, we are filled with joy beyond our understanding – the joy of Christ.

As we move toward the season of Lent, a season of repentance and a journey toward the cross, may we each become more and more aware of the big and small joys that fill our lives. For in each of those small joys, we catch a glimpse of the greatest joy – the joy of Christ.

God's peace & JOY,

Pastor Kristin

A special thank you!

+ To my Reformation family,
As I enter the final semester in my Seminary Journey, I am grateful for the support that you have given me and continue to give as I learn to grow! I am humbled by the financial support I received before Christmas and want to thank you. I hope all is well with you in this New Year and may God richly bless you.

In Christ,
Chris Deines

+ Dear Pastor and Mama Reimers.

Again I greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am sending you a lot of greetings from my co-workers, evangelists and from my family. We wish you a merry Christmas and prosperous and Blessed New Year 2012.

On behalf of KIA Lutheran Parish workers I am sending to you the word of hearty Thank You for a Christmas gift from the Reformation Lutheran Church of Wichita, Kansas USA through you, our dear Mama. We can't explain how it helped us this time. I didn't give the money to them in November when you sent it until now in order to help them for Christmas time. I gave it to them on Monday, December 19, 2011.

Why? From November to December every year it is a circumcision ceremony among Masai tribe. It is difficult to see Masai men in the church. Very few men and women attend Sunday services and because of that our Sunday collection drops greatly. That situation faces us and we have two months without being paid.

So mama when we say Thank You we mean it. Really you touched us greatly and now we can celebrate Christmas nicely as our fellow servants of God. Kindly pass our word of Thank You to the Reformation Lutheran Church for their gift to us.

May God our Lord bless you greatly,
Rev Elirehema Lyamuya

+ The above is a "thank you" mail from Pastor Lyamuya for the \$921 gift from the Reformation Mission Endowment Fund that was given to him and the KIA parish in Tanzania in November.

Best Times of Life

February 13, 12:00 p.m.



Best Times of Life (BTOL) Reformation's fellowship group for those 55 or more will meet on Monday, February 13 at 12:00 p.m. in the Parish hall for our monthly

luncheon and program. This month, our program will be presented by Reformation member, Ron Blum who will tell us about the Kansas Aviation Museum and what it offers to the community. We hope you will join us to learn the goals of the Museum and all you can view there. Bring a covered dish to share, your own table service and call either Betty Hayenga (682-2030) or Jolene Dougherty (776-2068) with your reservation so we will know how many tables to prepare. Come and join us for great food, warm fellowship and an interesting program.

Stephen Ministry



It is the month of valentines, but not everyone feels loved. If you are feeling un-loved and overly loaded with problems, maybe a Stephen Minister could help.

Consider having a Stephen Minister walk with you or a friend on a journey to wholeness. Here are the steps:

- A person-you, a relative, or a friend-is in need of Christian care
- Call the church office, 634-0586
- The Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator will be notified
- The Stephen Ministry Referrals Coordinator meets with you and describes the Stephen Ministry program
- With your permission, the Referrals Coordinator assigns a Stephen minister to meet with you on a regular basis
- The Stephen Minister continues to provide distinctively Christian Care for you with strict confidentiality

**Do You Have an Article for the Re-Focus?
Please E-Mail Debbie
or leave in the office mailbox. Deadline for the March Re-Focus is February 15, 2012.**

Women of Reformation Calendar

All activities are held at the church unless otherwise noted.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Feb. 6 | Blanket Makers, 9 a.m. |
| Feb. 9 | Rebecca Circle, 10 a.m.
Jolene Dougherty, Lesson Leader |
| Feb. 14 | Cornerstone Ministry
3 p.m. at Via Christi Village |
| Feb. 15 | Dorcas Circle, 1:30 p.m.
Carol Ott, Lesson Leader
Glennye Reimers, Hostess |
| Feb. 20 | Blanket Makers, 9 a.m. |
| March 13 | WELCA Board, 1:30 p.m. |



A hearty thank you to all of you who donated to the Thank a Teacher fund to buy copy paper for the Coleman teachers. We collected \$129.85 to use for paper purchasing. Dallas Rakestraw helped us to secure a price that enabled us to purchase 4 cases of paper with 10 reams in each case. The faculty was very happy to receive it!

Please watch your newsletter and Sunday bulletin for news of the partnership. We met in January to plan activities for the second semester. We thank the Coleman Vocal Music department for the caroling at the progressive dinner and Mrs. Forsberg's students who provided a wonderful talent show for the residents at the Via Christi Village. They had everything from a trash can band to a rousing rendition of "Who's on First?"

Pastor Lowell and Suzanne Koch attended the *Good Apple Award* presentation on December 5. All recipients crossed the stage, received a certificate and shook hands with the school board members. Here is the message printed in the program regarding the partnership: "Reformation Lutheran Church is our primary evacuation site and last year created a true partnership providing volunteers, supplies, luncheons and meals for staff. We played music for meetings, planted around the church and presented a play for their senior ministry. We appreciate and delight in the partnership."

We hope to expand our volunteer efforts in the coming year. Perhaps several/many of you have some time you could spare to make a difference in the life of a child. To volunteer or for questions please see anyone on the Coleman Task Force.

Coleman Task Force: Marsha Sears, Dallas Cronk, Sheryl Johnson, and Suzanne Koch

Clothing Drive: In April, WELCA will collect women's clothing for *Dress for Success*. It should be clean, in good condition and appropriate for job interviews. Please do not bring donations until after Easter.

Spring Cluster Meeting for WELCA will be at Resurrection Lutheran in Haysville, Saturday, April 21 with registration starting at 9:00 a.m. Topic: "Creative Prayer" led by Lynn Standrich.

New Member Orientation Tuesday, February 7, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Are you looking for a church home? Are you interested in learning more about Reformation Lutheran Church? Join us for some refreshments as we get to know one another and have a chance to learn more about the Christian faith and specifically about life together here at Reformation. Childcare is available upon request. Please RSVP to the church office (634-0586) by Monday, February 6.

Book Club in February February 21, 7 p.m.



Our February book selection is "Left Neglected" by Lisa Genova, and the discussion will be held on Tuesday, February 21 at 7:00 p.m. at the church.

Men's Retreat - "One Year to Live"

March 23-25



Men of Reformation! Are you looking for a way to deepen your faith? To have a weekend retreat with other men where you can be adventurous and courageous, as well as spiritual, genuine and vulnerable? Well, look no further! The "One Year to Live" retreat at Camp Rivercrest, Fremont, NE, offered through Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM) of the ELCA, just might be your answer.

Here's a brief description of the retreat from a recent LMM newsletter: "Although One Year to Live follows the story of Jacob, it is not a Bible study or singing Kumbaya around the campfire. It's not about getting fixed by an analyst or lectured by an authority. It's regular guys helping other regular guys sort out their lives in a structured way. Participants learn what's really important to them, what's been holding them back, and they leave with a one-year plan centered on how they would live their lives if they had one year to live." Interested? Contact Dallas Rakestraw or Pastor Kristin (634-0586).

Women of Faith

March 31, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.



Did you miss the opportunity to attend the Women of Faith weekend in Kansas City in November? Were you one of the women who went to that event and came home hungry for more? Well, you are in luck! Women of Faith is holding a one-day event right here in Wichita on Saturday, March 31 at Century II Concert Hall.

Popular speaker and Bible teacher Sheila Walsh is teaming up with inspirational funnyman Ken Davis for what promises to be a fun and faith-filled day. The cost for the event, including a box lunch, is \$61. Contact Pastor Kristin (634-0586) if you are interested in attending.

Making Sense of the Cross

Begins Sunday, February 25, 9:00 a.m.



"The heart of the cross is an element of mystery that can't be resolved either easily or entirely."

As Christians, the cross is central to what we believe. But when put on the spot, we may sometimes struggle to come up with the words to explain why this mystery is so important. During the season of Lent, we will dive into the third book in the Making Sense Series by David Lose, *Making Sense of the Cross*, in order to ask some of those essential questions about the cross, including: "So what's with the cross?" "What does the cross say about God?" "What's the big deal?" and "Did Jesus have to die?"

We'll have the chance to discuss these questions and more as we devote some time to *Making Sense of the Cross*, Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall, beginning February 25. Join us for discussion as we eavesdrop on "an open and candid conversation and discussion about the cross" through the book. Books are now available in the church office for \$10.00.

Reformation Lutheran Church Financial Results through December 31, 2011

	Budget To Date	Actual	Favorable (Unfavorable)
Income	\$486,800	\$488,374*	\$1,574
Expenses	\$517,899	\$496,862*	\$21,037
Net income/ (loss)	(\$31,099)	(\$8,488)	\$22,611

* Not including Seasonal Gifts, donated to charity.

Pledges finished the year with \$23,031 in unpaid pledges, with \$389,289 paid in against pledges of \$412,320.



Get Wild. Get Crazy. Get the Message.

This month, 26 youth and 8 adult sponsors from Reformation will have an unforgettable weekend as they experience speakers, musicians, crazy dress night, and small group break-out sessions at the annual Youth Quake/Zone. This time to hear the message of God's love in new and different ways is always a highlight for the youth of Reformation, and they are looking forward to this time together again this year! Our middle school youth will be right here in Wichita February 3-5, and our high school youth will be in Topeka February 10-12. Please pray for safe travel and meaningful, fun weekends for these youth and adults!

Youth Quake (Middle School)

February 3-5, 2012

Hyatt Regency, Wichita, KS

Youth:

Sophie Bachman
Kathryn Bunting
Jacob Camenzind
Mark Camenzind
Abby Davis
Michelle Desmarteau

Caitlyn East
Katie Hobart
Kameron Koeber
Elise Lindemann
Andrew Marsden
Peace Mwamunyang

Libby Weaver
Lauren White
Braeden Winters
Morgan Winters

Sponsors:

Susan Bachman
Bob Weaver
Marcia Werts
Kevin Winters
Pastor Kristin Neitzel

Youth Zone (High School)

February 10-12, 2012

Capitol Plaza Hotel, Topeka, KS

Youth:

Hanna Brittain
Beau Desmarteau
Cameron East
Eric Jensen

Dean Keith
Luke Lindemann
Eileen Vlamis
Emily Weaver

Miranda White
Dalton Winters

Sponsors:

Mary Brittain
Dan East
Ron Blum

Lenten Lunches/Suppers



Once again the Fellowship Board is seeking individuals and groups willing to prepare and serve the Lenten meals. Ash Wednesday is February 22 and Chris Cakes will

be serving our pancake supper beginning at 5:30 p.m.

We are looking for individuals or groups to volunteer to serve the remaining meals during the Lenten season. Each Wednesday in Lent a lunch is served immediately following the Lenten Worship at 12:00 p.m. and a supper is served at 6:00 p.m. prior to the Lenten Worship at 7:00 p.m. The Lenten meals are all free will offering except for Chris Cakes.

All paper goods are available at the church and hosts/hostesses can be reimbursed by turning in receipts to the Fellowship mailbox in the office.

Traditionally, individuals have served the lunches and groups have served the suppers. Lunch guests are generally around 25 and suppers 50-60.

Any individual or groups willing to prepare a meal should please contact Rebecca Bunting (734-9611).

Chris Cakes

Ash Wednesday Supper



Once again Chris Cakes will be with us on Ash Wednesday, February 22 flipping pancakes. This is always a fun evening as we see who is the best pancake catcher in the group. We start serving at 5:30 p.m. and finish up around 6:45 p.m. just prior to worship at 7:00 p.m. The cost is \$4.00 a plate.