

July 2018
Reformation Lutheran
Church



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.



**Food, Fun, Fellowship
and Fireworks**
Wednesday, July 4
6:30 p.m.

What more could you ask for on the 4th of July than food, fun, fellowship and fireworks? Come to Reformation that evening for all of those things and more!

We'll be cooking up some hamburgers and hot dogs at 6:30 p.m., and we're asking people coming by to bring side dishes such as salads, beans, chips, deserts or whatever! We will need some help grilling, so if that is your thing, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex!

You are also invited to bring your favorite lawn game (sign up in the narthex!). But that's not all—we'll also have a bouncy house for the younger kids (or those young at heart), thanks to a Thrivent Action Team Grant! Around 7:30 we'll have some organized games as well.

Finally, as it gets dark, put out your lawn chair to watch the fireworks from the nearby Country Club.

It'll be a great time. Mark it on your calendar and plan to join us - bring friends and relatives, too, if you wish! It's open to all.

Vacation Bible School

July 23 - July 27
5:45 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

You are invited to
"Shipwrecked VBS: Rescued by Jesus"



Join us as we venture onto an uncharted island where kids survive and thrive. During our week of Vacation Bible School, we will anchor kids in the truth that Jesus carries them through life's storms. All kids ages 3 years old (that are potty trained) to those that are starting 6th grade are invited to come along on this grand adventure!

If we were really shipwrecked, one of the things we would need to figure out is what we were going to find to eat. As we think about those in our own community who aren't sure where their next meal will come from, we ask all participants to bring an offering of individually packaged snacks to supplement lunches as a part of Filling the Gap—a program that provides lunches to kids during the gap between summer lunch programs and the beginning of school. See more information about this program on page ___ of this newsletter.

We will once again offer a kid friendly meal, beginning at 5:00pm. Please note: children coming before 5:45 need to be accompanied by an adult, as we will not have enough staff on hand to be able to adequately supervise children before 5:45 p.m.

You can register online (<https://vbspro.events/p/events/reformationwichitaks>) and/or by paper registration (found on the display table in the narthex). A \$5 per child (max \$20 per family) fee is due by the first night of VBS.

We are still in need of a few more volunteers, especially as crew leaders and crew helpers. Volunteer forms are also available on the display table, and can be completed and placed in the offering plates. If you can't help during the week (or even if you can) and would like to "be a lifesaver" by making a donation of supplies, check out the donation board in the narthex.

Contact Tina Alstrom with general VBS questions or to volunteer (316-650-4126).



Remembering Debbie Stephens

Our Office Administrator died in her sleep on June 2. More than 80 members of Reformation attended her Memorial Service at Saint James Episcopal Church on June 12. Portions of my eulogy from that service follow.



*Rev. Dr. Mari Larson
Senior Pastor*

*For we know that if the earthly
tent we live in is destroyed, we
have a building from God, a
house not made with hands,
eternal in the heavens.
2 Corinthians 5:1*

Since 2003, Monday through Friday, Debbie's smile was the first thing most people saw when they came into Reformation's building. And everyone – members, strangers, voters, blood donors, staff members, even the multitudes of personnel who came to repair the roof – everyone was greeted with that smile. When sales people came, trying to sell us things we didn't need, Debbie smiled. When people came in asking for a handout and told her their story, Debbie smiled and offered them groceries, and sometimes she reached into her own pocket and gave them her own money, and sent them on their way with a hug.

Her welcoming presence was a priceless gift to our congregation and to everyone who walked through the door. But of course, Debbie didn't think it was such a big deal.

...She came in early to make coffee and prepare snacks for Lutheran Social Service Board meetings and other events. She always made families feel more comfortable when they came in to plan their loved one's funeral. She usually anticipated these things without being asked. It was awesome!

In the days before her death, she was planning for not one but three youth groups to be staying with us on their way to the National ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston. The fact that there will be more than 100 people camping out in our building is more than a little daunting for me, but Debbie was calling around for places for them to take showers and getting ideas for service projects from her friend Sarah. I probably shouldn't admit this, but so far, it's taking three of us and a big spreadsheet to do what Debbie was doing.

I know I wasn't the only one to pull up a chair and have a conversation with Debbie. She talked about her pets and

her nieces and her excitement about Weston's birth. And she asked about our families, too.

Nine years ago, in the days and weeks after George Tiller was murdered in our narthex, even as Debbie dealt with her own grief, she had a ministry of presence with many – to the point of having trouble getting her regular work done because people came first. Debbie had this "Attitude is Everything" button attached to her office wall so she saw it when she sat down for work. She endeavored to live it.

And that was so important because, in recent years, Debbie was fearing and fighting memory loss, anxiety, and depression. Everything would be fine for a while, and then there would be a day when she would sit in front of the computer, almost paralyzed, trying to remember how to do a task that she had done a hundred or even a thousand times without even thinking about it. And she would eventually ask Pastor Kristin. And because of her anxiety disorder, with every mistake, she was convinced that I would fire her. It took us a lot of time and conversation to trust each other enough to get past that. Sometimes things were stable, and other times it was as if her short-term memory had left the building. There were doctors and tests and medications, different doctors, more tests, and different medications, one that made her fall asleep in a crowded theater, others that made her sick. And through that struggle, from 8 to 4:30, Mondays through Thursdays and 8 to 2 on Fridays, she kept smiling and welcoming and doing the best she could, which was usually more than enough but felt to her like it was never enough. And most people had no idea the struggle that was behind that smile.

...The people of Reformation are working through our grief. There have been e-mails and social media posts, cards and comments and hugs. We rejoice with Debbie because she is now free from dementia sneaking up on her and stealing her skills. She is free from anxiety about the future and present. She is free from depression stealing her hope.

Thanks be to God! Debbie is free for all eternity!



Open Door Food Pantry

Thank you for your faithful contributions of food that continue to make a difference in the lives of others. Our focus food for July is:

Canned Vegetables

Pick up a few cans of your favorite veggies and put them in the grocery cart located by the door in Parish Hall.

Don't forget we ALWAYS have a need for canned meat and fish, canned vegetables and fruit, boxed macaroni and cheese, dried beans, cereal and oatmeal, sugar and flour, soup and crackers.

Best Times of Life

Monday, July 9, 12:00 p.m.

Passageways

The July 9 BTOL program will be presented by Jennifer Garrison, one of the founders of



Passageways, a private, faith based non-profit organization providing services to Homeless and near homeless veterans. Come and hear their story.

Bring a covered dish to share and your own table service. Please call Jolene Dougherty (776-2068) or Doris Moden (213-2068) with your reservations.

Do You Have an Article for Ref Life?

Please e-mail to:
info@reformation-lutheran.org.
Deadline for the August *Ref Life* is July 15.

Women of Reformation Calendar

July 2	Blanket Makers, 9 a.m.
July 16	Blanket Makers, 9 a.m.
July 18	Dorcas Circle, 1:30 p.m. Lesson Leader: Lotus Gerards Hostess: Eva Whetstone (at her home)
July 30	Blanket Makers, 9 a.m.

Women's Night Out



All women are welcome to join us for an evening of good conversation and food at Bricktown Brewery, 2035 N Rock Road (the old Applebee's). We will meet on Tuesday July 24 at 6:30 p.m. We would love to see you there! Please contact Martha Deines at 214-4414 by Monday, July 23 if you would like to join us.

I Scream, You Scream, We all scream for ICE CREAM Wednesday, July 25—after VBS

Middle and high school students that are helping with VBS are invited to stick around after VBS on Wednesday night for an ice cream excursion. And PK is buying!

Churn & Burn? 8 Below? Braum's? Baskin Robbins? Marble Slab? Cold Stone? The options are endless. And you get to decide!



Eric Jensen, YAGM Update

As Eric Jensen is full-swing into his summer as leadership staff at Mt. Cross Ministries in Ben Lomond, California, we thank you for your generosity and ask for your continued support as he prepares for his upcoming year of service in the United Kingdom through the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission program.

Eric recently wrote, "I've been so humbled in the last few weeks, speaking to all of you, about my approaching year in Young Adults in Global Mission, and am still working to raise funds for my program. If you would offer a minute of your time to read more about YAGM and my own journey [on the ELCA website], I would be so touched, and appreciate any aid to this incredible endeavor. Let me know if you have any questions; I'd love to talk to anyone more about my upcoming journey!"

The easiest way to reach Eric's page is to find the link on Reformation's Facebook page. Thank you again for your generosity! Eric is almost to his goal (he has raised \$4,827.00 of the required minimum \$5,000.00), but could still use our support – spiritually, prayerfully, and, if you feel so called, financially.

Stephen Ministry

*You must do the thing you think
you cannot do.*

- Eleanor Roosevelt



When we are faced with uncertainty in life, optimism is difficult. We can't see the path ahead, a path cluttered with doubt and fear that shadows our optimism. This is the time to consciously choose to expect God's grace despite our shaken faith. We must act with the anticipation of good. Say "Yes" to new opportunities, adventures and unexpected doors opening. Let faith and optimism allow life to alter and expand.

Heavenly Father, I am fertile ground for your planting. Amen

If you or someone you know could benefit from Stephen Ministry, a confidential one-to-one ministry for people who are going through painful uncertainties in their lives, call one of the following Stephen Leaders for information: Anita Dorf (210-9124, David Dorf (208-4064), Lotus Gerards (283-8602), Marsha Sears (683-6101).

Thank you

Dear friends in Christ,
Thank you so very much for the lovely celebration of my ordination. Ten years in ministry seems a short time compared to most pastoral careers, but for me it has been an opportunity to serve God in a number of places in Montana and Kansas. Each place and the people in them have enriched my life beyond measure. It is a rare occasion to be asked to serve in one's own congregation and I have been blessed by that experience and continue to be blessed by fellowship with my Reformation family.

Blessings,
Pastor Cheryl



Thank you, Reformation family, for your gifts in memory of Debbie Stephens. Our first priority with those gifts was replacing the broken part of the basketball hoop on the playground. That project has been completed!

ROMEOS

...and when was the last time you called a restaurant for a reservation and were greeted with a giggle...

Well, years ago, a group of Reformation gentlemen formed a group called the ROMEOS.

Retired

Older

Men

Eating

Out

...whose sole purpose is to socialize and learn about one another's activities of the past week. For example what is the latest project that Gene and Raymond are involved in on behalf of our Church; how are Ron and Art recovering from their medical journeys; who's proud of his "man glitter" (LOL-sorry, Gary W., but I had to); what's the latest regarding Branson according to Russ; then our "Newest" member Steen will miss the occasional gathering as he is a member of RODEOs (Retired Older Doctors...); Bill and his "fish tales"; what treasure did Alan recently discover at an Estate Sale???; and this week the discussion centered around Bob & Carl's interest in Music Theatre Wichita's first musical of the season "Sister Act". PS – there's "talkers" and "listeners" alike – Thanks David.

Now for the "serious" (not) part of our group...well, you must be Retired; hence Older, Male, hungry (we meet at 11:30am almost every Wednesday for Lunch) hence Eating. We have an established calendar of (18 different) restaurant locations (so that provides a nice variety of menus) (and since it's lunch the fare is cheaper than prime-time dinner prices) and YES, we do use and share coupons! And that covers the final letter of our acronym "Out".

Here is our schedule for the next few weeks:

Wednesday, July 4th • no luncheon • Celebrate

Independence Day on your own (or at church!)

Wednesday, July 11, 2018 • **Abuelo's** • 1413 N Waterfront Pkwy (near 13th and Webb)

Wednesday, July 18, 2018 • **Firebirds Wood Fired Grill** • 10096 E 13th St N (near 13th and Webb)

Wednesday, July 25, 2018 • **Village Inn** • 1685 S Rock Rd (near Harry and Rock Road) Bonus: Wednesday's are "free pie" days

For the complete schedule please contact either Gene or Alan:

One last piece of information: we hold a "Business Meeting" every December, with the sole purpose of "voting in" and "voting out" restaurants. (That silly event is worth the price of attending - this group never uses "Robert's Rules".)

Please, come join us!

Community Breakfast Update

Just home from the community breakfast served at St. Paul's Lutheran. It is always such a joyful experience. I get to visit with the guests, laugh with Reformation folks and see firsthand what we do in the community. There are a multitude of jobs available to make the event happen. Just a small sample are egg breaking and cooking, sausage frying, pancake batter pouring, green pepper dicing, tables and chairs set up and cleaned up, dish washing, and the list continues.



We usually feed around 200 people once monthly. The total for today's breakfast was \$275 for the food and another \$175 for the bus tickets.

In addition to serving breakfast, we provide some of the necessities. Seasonal clothing, hygiene items, paperback books as well as shoes are needed. I noticed an increase in females today so please continue to provide feminine items. The complete list is posted on the wall in the parish hall. There is also a large green tub, but usually it fills so just stack your bagged donations in and around the tub. I pick up these items and deliver them to St. Paul's. The day varies according to my schedule, but always occurs during the week prior to the third Saturday of each month.

So here are ways to help: donate items, donate dollars, come and help out, and pray for this wonderful mission we provide to help our brothers and sisters.

For more complete information, please contact Susan Martin.

Suzanne Koch, participant

Family Promise Thanks

Dear Members of Reformation Lutheran Church,
Our warm thanks for your gift in April of \$466. These significant funds will allow us to continue the Family Promise program by bringing hope to homeless families. We are very glad to have you join us as a host congregation and look forward to working with you as we expand our work.

Warmly,
Katy Penner, Director

Why We Do What We Do in Worship Episode 2: Communion Practices

Frequency: Many of us have lived through a major theological change regarding Communion. What was once celebrated quarterly or monthly is now part of every worship service in most ELCA congregations. This change in understanding is explained well in the publication, *Use of the Means of Grace* © 1997, "The Church celebrates the Holy Communion frequently because the Church needs the sacrament, the means by which the church's fellowship is established and its mission as the baptized people of God is nourished and sustained..."

Multiple-Choice: Many of us also remember the days when wafers and wine were the only options at the Communion table. Now grape juice and gluten-free wafers are available and, at some worship services, there are also choices of homemade bread and individual cups. While we believe that to have bread or cup is to commune fully, we also think those who come to the Lord's Table should never have anxiety or discomfort about consuming things they shouldn't.

Kneeling, Standing, or Walking: While we all revere the gifts of bread and wine, body and blood, most often we receive these gifts by "Continuous Communion" which by its winding movement connects us to each other, to the Christian church around the world, and to the communion of saints in every age. It may not feel like it as we're walking by, but we are joined to the whole church.

Random Act of Kindness

We will soon be doing the laundromat random act of kindness. If you are filling a quarter tube, please drop it into the mail slot of the finance office (just inside the sanctuary doors). We will soon announce to the congregation when we'll be going and where we'll be going. All who can come will arrive at the laundromat wearing Live Generously T-shirts (pick up yours in the coat rack across from the restrooms) and using those quarters to pay for the loads of laundry for everyone who comes into the laundromat until all our collected money is gone. We're going to bring some snacks and water, too. And we'll take pictures of the smiles. This Action Team project is just one example of getting out into the community to make a difference. (Thrivent Financial is paying for the snacks and the quarter tubes to help us with this project!)



Christmas in July Craft and Bake Sale July 27-28

Back by popular demand at Reformation—Christmas in July! Worship will include the Christmas scriptures and hymns, and the message will be provided by soon-to-be seminarian Andrew Beers.

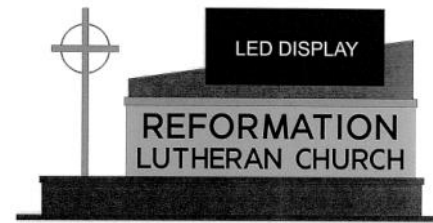
As an added bonus, we will also have another Craft and Bake sale, with the proceeds going to our seminarian support fund on behalf of both of our seminarians—Andrew, and Kaylie Ines. As we prepare to walk with them through their seminary experience, they have each provided a little reflection on their faith journeys to help us all get to know them better.

Kaylie writes, "When I entered college, my faith was uncertain. As I studied more and grew in the relationship with my surrounding community, I began to heal and restore my faith with God's help. As a sophomore I worked in campus ministry. This year really defined my thought process toward my idea of becoming a pastor. Between my studies in religion at Bethany and working in campus ministry, I began to understand myself better and my role in the world. I am excited for my journey to California to begin and am incredibly thankful for all the people supporting me here in Kansas." Kaylie is not able to be here for Christmas in July, but will be preaching at Reformation July 14-15.

Andrew writes: "My calling to ministry began at 14 when I asked my pastor if I could enroll in Lay Leadership classes. Over the next two decades, I would go on to serve as lay pastor in several congregations of the United Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church USA. Proving God has an ultimate goal to reach out to all his creation as well as a profound sense of humor, I was ordained as a Unitarian minister in 2014. I still held on to my Lutheran roots which drew me to Reformation Lutheran in 2015. With my family's support, I will pursue an M.Div in Systematic Theology at Luther Seminary this fall."

Nuts and bolts information is that the Craft and Bake Sale will take place the weekend of **July 28 and July 29**. This hopefully gives all you artists, craftspeople, stitchers, and bakers time to figure out what you would like to place for sale. Everyone should mark their calendars for this upcoming event. We especially need lots of small baked items such as brownies, bagged cookies, etc. Use your imagination.

Please take advantage of this opportunity to help these two future pastors realize their goals by baking, creating, and/or buying at **the Christmas in July Craft and Bake Sale, July 28 and 29**.



The Electronic Message Sign

During July, faithful volunteers will be doing prep work between the building and the sign. If you can help, please sign up on the pillar in the narthex. Some of the work is advanced, but much of it can be done by anyone.

Miracle Signs has been measuring and preparing to do their part of this process. They will be removing the letters, giving them fresh paint, and using them on the new "sleeve" beneath the LED display.

Stay tuned for more information!

Family Promise Benefit Run

Friday Night, July 27, 2018

5K & 10K start at 9:37 p.m.

25K, 50K & 50-Mile start at 9:00 p.m.

DOWNTOWN WICHITA

START & FINISH

To Register or Donate Visit:
www.RunUrbanICT.com



The UrbanICT course will be out-and-back along the Arkansas City River asphalt path from downtown Wichita to Sedgwick County Park. 1 loop for the 25K, 2 loops for the 50K, 3 loops for the 50-mile (plus 3.5 mile out and back). The 5K/10K courses will also run along the same River paths. Manned and unmanned aid stations will be approximately every 2.5 miles. There will be one live road crossing with live traffic where you will be required to use the crosswalk. It's a great event for first timers with a flat and easy course. Pacers WILL BE allowed for any portion of the 25K, 50K, 50-Mile.

Filling The Gap

Partners for Wichita is needing our assistance to once again help fill the gap during the three weeks no school summer lunch program is available. "Filling the Gap" provides close to 800 meals each day at 17 locations throughout Wichita and Haysville.

Here are some ways you can help:

Donate \$\$

You can donate to the program to help cover the cost of the lunches. Send donations designated for "Filling the Gap Lunches" to Partners for Wichita, 925 N. Waco, Wichita, KS 67203 or to Kansas Food, 1919 E. Douglas, Wichita, KS 67211.

Donate Snacks

Give fruit or pudding cups, packaged snack bars, chips, or crackers to supplement the packaged lunch. We will have a donation box set up at Reformation beginning Saturday, June 23rd through Thursday, July 12th.

The Service Board and Partners for Wichita thank the members of Reformation for the continued support of this community project.

Camp Tomah Shinga

We have a great group of young people headed to Camp Tomah Shinga for an incredible week of learning, worship, and fun in God's creation the week of July 15-20.



- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Confirmation Campers: | High School Camper: |
| • Matthew Allbritten | • Alex Beers |
| • Spencer Beers | |
| • Isabella Encapera | Elementary Campers: |
| • Colin Fuller | • Dylan Fuller |
| • Ian Fuller | • Greyson Jowdy |
| • Cecelia Jowdy | |
| • Maya Reed | |

And Pastor Kristin will be there, too! Please keep these young people in your prayers as they attend this week of camp.

It is always great to get mail while you are at camp, so if you would like to send any of these campers a letter, here's the address:

Camper Name
Camp Tomah Shinga
7821 E Lyons Creek Rd
Junction City, KS 66441

Lutherans Restoring Creation

Saturday, August 11
9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

A resolution to encourage congregations of the Central States Synod (CSS) to become "green congregations" by forming a Green Team was passed by the voting members of the 2018 Synod Assembly.

Members of the CSS Lutherans Restoring Creation Mission Table stand ready to assist congregations in these efforts! Join us on Saturday, August 11, for a Creation Care Workshop right here at Reformation!

Learn along with others how to incorporate creation care into our congregation's worship life, educational programs, buildings and grounds, discipleship of members at home and work, and public ministry and advocacy.

We will work together to create action plans to move forward in our congregations and as individuals. Gathering begins at 9:00 am and the workshop will run from 9:30 to 4 pm.

The cost for each individual is \$15 which includes lunch as well as snacks. If that cost is prohibitive, please contact Pastor Noni Strand, chair of the CSS-LRC Mission. You can register online at <http://css-elca.org/lrc>



Thanks Volunteers!

Thrivent Financial wants to help us say "thank you" to those who help our at Reformation and in the community.

Dave Mack and Diana Adams from the Thrivent's KS/MO Region will be with us on August 5 to answer questions and say "thank you."

Additionally, Thrivent members who haven't yet used their Action Team Projects will get ideas and computer help to get those projects in motion.

JULY 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Youth Gathering in Houston 8:30 AM Rise Worship 9:30 AM Fellowship 10:00 AM Traditional Worship 10:00 PM Overnight Youth Groups, Maple Grove & Tyler, MN	2 8:00 AM Maple Grove & Tyler Youth Groups Depart 9:00 AM Blanket Makers 6:30 PM Rise Team 7:00 PM Back to Basics	3	4 July 4th - Office Closed 6:30 PM Food, Fun, Fellowship & Fireworks	5	6	7 5:30 PM Worship with Prayers for Healing
8 8:30 AM Rise Worship 9:30 AM Fellowship 10:00 AM Traditional Worship	9 12:00 PM BTOL Potluck 6:30 PM Rise Team 7:00 PM Back to Basics 7:00 PM Stephen Ministry Supervision	10 5:15 PM Learning Ministry Board	11 11:30 AM ROMEOs	12 9:30 AM Rebecca Circle	13	14 5:30 PM Worship
15 Confirmation Camp - Tomah Shinga <i>Ref Life Deadline</i> 8:30 AM Rise Worship 9:30 AM Fellowship 10:00 AM Traditional Worship	16 Confirmation Camp - Tomah Shinga 9:00 AM Blanket Makers 6:30 PM Rise Team 7:00 PM Back to Basics	17 Confirmation Camp - Tomah Shinga	18 Confirmation Camp - Tomah Shinga 11:30 AM ROMEOs 1:30 PM Dorcas Circle	19 Confirmation Camp - Tomah Shinga	20 Confirmation Camp - Tomah Shinga	21 5:30 PM Worship - Holden Evening Prayer
22 8:30 AM Rise Worship 9:30 AM Fellowship 10:00 AM Traditional Worship	23 5:00 PM VBS Meal 5:45 PM Vacation Bible School 7:00 PM Back to Basics 7:00 PM Stephen Ministry Supervision	24 5:00 PM VBS Meal 5:45 PM Vacation Bible School 6:30 PM Women's Night Out	25 11:30 AM ROMEOs 5:00 PM VBS Meal 5:45 PM Vacation Bible School	26 5:00 PM VBS Meal 5:45 PM Vacation Bible School	27 5:00 PM VBS Meal 5:45 PM Vacation Bible School	28 Christmas in July 5:30 PM Worship 6:15 PM Christmas Craft & Bake Sale
29 Christmas in July 8:30 AM Rise Worship 9:30 AM Christmas Craft & Bake Sale 9:30 AM Fellowship 10:00 AM Traditional Worship 11:00 AM Christmas Craft & Bake Sale	30 9:00 AM Blanket Makers 6:30 PM Rise Team 7:00 PM Back to Basics	31 8:00 AM Operation School Bell 7:00 PM Church Council	1 11:30 AM ROMEOs	2 12:00 PM Early Primary Election Voting 6:00 PM Youth Ministry Team 7:00 PM Ministry Boards	3 Early Primary Election Voting	4 Early Primary Election Voting 5:30 PM Worship with Prayers for Healing

Synod Assembly Experiences

I was privileged to represent Reformation Lutheran Church as a voting member at the Central States Synod Assembly at Bethany College in Lindsborg last month. It was my first time to experience Bethany College Campus and I did so right down to staying in a dorm and eating in the campus dining hall. The Assembly itself was a wonderful combination of accomplishing the business of the church, meaningful worship, inspiring music and thought-provoking workshops. Among the most meaningful experiences I had while there was the opportunity to connect with people from other places in Central States Synod and beyond who love being a Lutheran in the ELCA as much as I do. As the church together we make a difference in the world. It is why we are here. Cheryl Hoops

Being the one of youngest voting members was interesting. I wasn't sure where I fit in outside the few youth and Reformation. Even though we're different with our age, lifestyles, and places we call home, we all had one thing in common. We all believed in God and wanted the best for our churches. I enjoyed the conversations I had with other people. They all had an important story to share and I learned from all of them. I have now gained new knowledge to share with our church including music and reaching youth. This weekend rejuvenated my faith. Tara Rindt

Synod assemblies are often a time to catch up with friends from around our synod and to spend some quality time with the lay voting members, all while doing the business of the synod. This year the organizers threw a little wrench into that plan when they invited us to sit at tables according to the colored dot that was on our nametags. A quick glance around the table, and none of the Reformation folks or other friends had a red dot. I'd be sitting with a table of strangers. As it turned out, one of my seminary professors, Dr. Winston Persaud, was at the same red table as I was the next day, along with six others I got the privilege to meet and whose faith stories I was privileged to hear. At that table of mostly strangers (many of whom didn't initially know I was pastor), it was powerful to share our faith stories with one another as we reflected the theme of the assembly – "Sharing Hope." Throughout the assembly, we were often brought out of our seats (and sometimes our comfort zones), as music was led by the incredible Glocal (Global + Local) Music Team. As we sang songs from around the world – including Papua New Guinea, India, South Africa and others – we may have struggled with the pronunciation of some of the words, but the Spirit was alive, bringing joy, and even moving some of us to dance! It was an incredible weekend of fellowship and worship – and we also got some work done. Pastor Kristin

I'm sure by now some of you have heard about the pain and agony many of us were subjected to at this year's Synod Assembly. That's right. I'm talking about sub-freezing temperatures in the assembly hall. I wonder if this was a plot by Synod leadership to keep us all awake. Once I could clothe properly, it was time to start focusing on the task at hand. This year's theme was **"God's Story. Our Voice."** with an emphasis on evangelism. There is a stigma attached to this word that I know makes me uncomfortable to even talk about. As mentioned by Bishop Gustafson in one of his messages, many of us think of evangelism as going door-to-door spreading the Word. I know that's how I had interpreted it for many years. And, as that word first appeared on a screen and uttered at Assembly, the first thought that entered my brain was, "Am I going to have to 'evangelize' with the person next to me – someone I just met a few minutes ago?" It wasn't long before I had my answer – YES! Turns out it wasn't bad at all. But what I took from this experience, and the message as a whole, is that evangelism doesn't have to be a word I cringe at each time I hear it. There are many ways we all evangelize throughout a day. It's as simple as finding what method of evangelizing makes you comfortable and using that to go out and spread Hope through sharing. Kevin Winters

This year's synod assembly felt a little bit different than the last one I attended in 2013. The last one seemed to have more impactful changes to focus on like the election of a new Bishop. But overall, I enjoyed seeing how the church operates in keeping the important issues in function. Another difference was that the assembly was closer to home in the small town of Lindsborg at Bethany College which I enjoyed. Dalton Winters

This year's assembly focused on evangelism. Anyone that truly knows me, knows that talking to people is one of the hardest things for me to do. So when the talk turned to evangelism you can imagine that I was a little more than stressed. I know that it is important to share our love of Christ with everyone that we meet, but I have always tried to do my evangelism more by actions than by words. I offer to help when there is a job to be done, offer kindness to someone in need, and try to just do the best that I can do each day. I am by no means perfect and fail on a daily basis. My most frequent prayer is for patience.

I shouldn't be scared to share God with others but I am. When I was young I always believed in God. I can't remember a time that God wasn't in my life. But the truth is I hardly ever went to church, I didn't have a Bible, (except for the little green one that I got from the Gideons), I went to VBS for a week in the summer, and I loved visiting my older sister and going to the Wesleyan church with her on Sunday's and listening to Reverend Busby and my mom's cousin Bonnie sing on Sunday morning. The songs are what I took with me the most. Hot summer days riding bikes with my friends singing This Little Light of Mine and I Am A Promise still play over and over in my head. So why am I scared? I'm scared because I don't know the Bible as well as I should. I know a lot of the stories but I don't know where to look for them in the Bible. I was never taught a proper way to pray. I just talk to God wherever and whenever I need to. I have no knowledge of theology. I have trouble telling what the difference between a Lutheran, Methodist, or a Presbyterian. I am embarrassed to admit all of these things. What I learned at the assembly is that I am not alone. In the workshops that I attended we talked about the reasons people don't go to church and overwhelmingly discovered that it wasn't because people didn't want to go, but they were afraid of not being accepted because they didn't know what to do. Repeatedly, I heard people say, "I didn't grow up Lutheran, I hope that I am doing everything right." at the assembly. After being at the assembly I think the reason we were there is to spread the understanding that it is okay to come to church even though we may not understand all the traditions. It's wonderful that so many have come to the ELCA from different denominations or from no faith background, and that they are even willing to go to the assembly to learn and be even more a part of the Church. As a church, through evangelism maybe we can spread this word so that more people, especially younger generations will feel like becoming part of our church family. Melissa Rindt

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JULY



Beginning Memorial Day weekend
through Labor Day weekend,
our summer worship times will be:

Saturday Worship at 5:30 p.m.

Rise Worship at 8:30 a.m.

Traditional Worship at 10:00 a.m

Office Hours

Monday-Thursday, 10:00am - 3:00pm
Friday, 8:00am - 2:00pm

How to Reach Us

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Nancy Martin, Saturday Pianist

Kristal Cutler, Director of Choirs

Carole Lyons-Osborne, Custodian

Kim Powell, Childcare Provider

Andrew Beers, Special Project

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