



The Reporter

The Monthly Newsletter of Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church
A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Churches of America
Organized Feb 5, 1956

Volume 61 Issue 07/08

July/August 2017

Our Mission

**Invite, Engage, Equip,
Embody**

Invite our neighbors as Jesus
has invited us;

Engage in a community
of graceful discipleship;

Equip our members for growth
in faith and ministry;

Embody the love of Jesus for
the world around us.



Reformation Lutheran Church

613 Lakeview Ave.
Milford, Delaware 19963
Phone: 302 422-9117
www.reformation-lutheran.net

Kids, Inc.

Phone: 302 422-9099

Office Hours

Monday-Friday
9:30am-3:00pm

Worship Services

Sept.-May
8:30am & 11:00am

Memorial Day- Labor Day

10:00am

Faith Connections for All Ages

Sept-May
9:45am-10:45am



Our Pastoral Staff

Pastor Eric W. Evers

Pastor Paige G. Evers



“Just Ask”

I've got two convictions to share with you this month. These are spiritual truths that we are going to put into practice later in the summer, but we can't do that without your help. So, I invite you to read on, and see what's coming...

The first conviction is that **questions matter**. Faith is not a matter of having simple “answers,” and it also doesn't mean that we don't think or question or struggle. The first time the name “Israel” was given, in fact, was to Jacob who wrestled with God (Genesis 32:24-32). *Faith is a matter of wrestling, of searching, of asking and seeking and knocking (Matthew 7:7)*. In fact, I think believing in Christ often leads us to more questions, and more mysteries than we would have if we didn't believe!

Questions, then, are a necessary and essential part of faith. One of my calculus professors in college had a rule for his mathematics classes: **good questions are better than good answers**. I think that is even more true in the walk of faith! If we don't wonder and ask, we won't grow. If we don't struggle and wrestle, we'll never mature beyond a simplistic faith. Our questions won't always be answered, but they will provide the ways by which our relationship with God can be deepened.

So, conviction one is “questions matter.” Here's conviction two: **for the church, the needs and concerns of people outside the church are at least as important as the needs and concerns of people inside the church**. Not everyone knows that they hunger and thirst for the living God. But all human beings have that hunger and thirst deep in their souls. And we who know Christ should be most passionate about making him known to those who have not yet come to know his love and follow him. So, when mature Christians think about church, the main question shouldn't be, “What are my preferences,” but rather, “What will make a difference in sharing Christ with those who don't know him yet?” *The Church*

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

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The Reporter is published monthly, and mailed to all member households. The deadline for submitting material for the next issue is the **15th day** of each month. Please send, as early as possible, your articles, notices, photos, etc. to the newsletter email address above. The Reporter is assembled on the Monday of last full week of each month and mailed that week.

A full color downloadable PDF version is posted at:
www.reformation-lutheran.net/reporter

Pastor's Message Continues

exists not for our own sake, but for the sake of the world around us. To be a Christian is to be a missionary.

Now, this summer, we are going to put those two convictions into practice in our worship and preaching. In the month of July, we want to ask our community to share with us questions they have about God, about faith, about life. **We want to ask people outside our church, "If you could ask any question about God, about faith, or just about life, what would it be?" And then we will be using those questions as the basis of our sermons through the month of August.** We want to take the questions and struggles of our neighbors seriously, and we want to invite them to hear how the community of Jesus followers wrestles with their deepest concerns.

So, in July, we will have newspaper and Facebook ads inviting people to "Just ask." There will be a special part of our web site and a dedicated email address for people to share their questions with us. We will make business cards with the invitation to "Just ask" for you to hand out to friends, family, and neighbors. Now, if you have questions you want to ask, you can do so. But we really want the emphasis to be on the questions of people around us. The advertisements, web site, and business cards will also include the invitation for them to join us in August to hear us reflect on those questions. Now, we're not promising to directly answer every single question. But we do promise to take them all seriously and respond to them in some way during the month of August. We believe that demonstrating to people that we as a church take their questions seriously is an essential step in showing them that they matter, infinitely, to God.

So, will you help? Will you invite your friends and neighbors, co-workers and family members, to "Just Ask?" If you want to get started before we have the cards ready for you to hand out, you can give people this email: justask@reformation-lutheran.net. This is a way we can show our community that Jesus cares about them personally. It is a way we can grow in our own faith (because I suspect that the deepest questions our neighbors wrestle with aren't that different from the ones we wrestle with too) and grow in how we invite our neighbors to follow Jesus!

In Christ,

Pastor Eric

The Numbers!

From the Church Financial Desk:

YTD Annual Attendance Numbers (through mid-June):

Average Weekly Worship Attendance: 124 (128 last year)

Financial Report (as of 5/31/17):

Total Income: \$188,602.91

Total Expense: \$175,510.95

Income – Expense: \$ 13,091.96

We are in excellent shape as the summer begins. Our total income is up substantially, and while much of this is thanks to Kids, Inc., our offering income is up an impressive 7.32% compared to last year at this time! (This does not include gifts to the Capital Campaign, which are tracked separately.) Amazingly, expenses are up only \$3,300 compared to last year. We still have our line of credit balance at \$27,000, but we are working to reduce it. Thank you to everyone who is so generously supporting Christ's work at Reformation!

Even though we are in a very strong financial position, we do ask you to remember Reformation in your giving before you go on vacation.

The Bishop Is Coming!

Be sure to come to worship on Sunday, July 23 at 10:00am to hear **The Rev. Bill Gohl**, Bishop of the DE-MD Synod, as our guest preacher! After worship, we will have fellowship time with "Q&A with the Bishop."

"A Place for All" Update:

What an amazing story! We have received pledges of \$154,310, and they have not stopped coming in! We have placed a down payment for the roof over the sanctuary, and the work should be done in July. (We already have enough actual donations to pay the full amount of the roof.) Look in the narthex this summer for a display showing the progress God is blessing us with! Thank you to everyone who has pledged, and to all who are fulfilling those pledges.

Visitors are Invited to "New to Reformation"

Once a month, we are offering an informal conversation time for visitors to talk with one of the pastors and get to know more about Reformation Lutheran Church. If you are new to Reformation and would like to learn about our congregation, please plan to stay after the 10:00 worship service on Sunday, July 30 or Sunday, August 27. We'd like to share about our church and learn more about you! "New to Reformation" will meet in the Fellowship Hall.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Oh no, we had to delete birthdays and anniversaries this month, due to so much text for the 2-month version of the Reporter. We are sorry for any inconvenience. **Just kidding**, as the kids say, they are so important, we put them on a separate insert so you can post on your fridge and not forget one of those important people this summer! Make sure you check out the inserts in this double month volume of the Reporter ~ July and August, 2017!

Church Ministries

2017 Delaware/Maryland Synod Assembly Updates

The 2017 Delaware/Maryland Synod Assembly agreed to two resolutions on immigrants and migrants. Welcoming, helping and "loving the alien as yourself; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt," Leviticus 19:34 (NRSV) was agreed upon by the voters. This was a huge step in recognizing our Christian call to compassion and understanding of the refugees, migrants and yes, our neighbors.

I thank God for the Assembly's openness to this Christian responsibility. Words of prayer and participation increased our understanding of God's plan for our Synod and the ELCA. This was just one part of my joyful participation in the Assembly. God's work was done.

Submitted by Barbara Seth

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**It was a true joy to represent Reformation** at the 2017 Delaware/Maryland Synod Assembly. Over 400 pastors and lay voters listened to speakers sharing their commitment to God's work within the synod and the entire ELCA. During workshops, we learned how we can contribute within our own congregations. The Holy Spirit was clearly at work in the Ocean City Convention Center.

*Reformation 500, a celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Luther's 95 theses, was one of the predominant themes. As part of the celebration, Dr. Cheryl Pero and the Rev. Albert Starr Jr. shared their perspective as black Lutherans. Dr. Pero introduced her "38 theses," on "Black Lutheran Experiences," which augment Luther's work and makes Lutheranism relevant to people of color in the modern world.*

*Assembly attendees were invited to "A 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration of Repentance, Renewal and Recommitment," a joint service conducted by Bishop Bill Gohl and the Most Reverend William Malooly, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Dioceses of Wilmington. St. Luke Roman Catholic Church in Ocean City was packed with Lutherans and Catholics singing, praying and passing the peace, together. It was a moving experience and hopefully, the first step in a journey that has been called, "from conflict to communion." We are not there yet, but with God's help anything is possible.*

Submitted by Fred Seth

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Knit & Pray Ladies Minister Beyond RLC

When one of the regular providers of prayer shawls for the Rachel's Vineyard Ministry Weekend events broke her arm, our Knit & Pray ladies donated several of the shawls they make. The Rachel's Vineyard team was very appreciative. They sent a card, expressing their appreciation. It read like this ~

We had a need ~ you met it! We are so grateful! The prayer shawls are such an important piece of our Rachel's Vineyard Weekends that we could not imagine going on without them. When we realized that we were running short, Penny reached out to you. Thank you for your gracious support!

The shawls are a visibly tangible reminder of God's love, comfort and warmth for our retreatants as they revisit some painfully dark events in their lives. These prayer shawls are gifts that say "you are never alone!" Thank you for helping us to provide such a truth!

May God bless you,
Teresa, Rachel's Vineyard Team

Faith Connections!

Summer Women's Bible Study

You are invited to join us in a **Women's Bible Study** on **Thursday nights** from **6-8 pm** this summer. We will meet **on June 15 and 29; July 13 and 27; and August 3rd**. We will be completing a 5-week study over the summer written by Priscilla Shirer called "**Breathe**." The program includes a video each week and participants can buy a study journal for **\$9.99** through **Lifeway.com** or **Amazon**. The video portion of the evening will last from 30-40 minutes and we will discuss the previous week's "homework" as a group. **Please visit Lifeway.com to learn more about the Breathe Bible study program.** If you have any questions please contact Karen Oldland at 752-7130.

"Maker Fun Factory" Vacation Bible School

By Pastor Paige Evers

Vacation Bible School was held at Reformation from **June 19-23 from 9 a.m. to noon**. This year's theme was "Maker Fun Factory: Created by God. Built for a Purpose!" We had around 100 children participate. Around 50 volunteers, staff, and youth helpers from the church and Kids' Inc. took part as well. The helpers and leaders guided the children for the five days of VBS, through an Imagination Station, Bible Discovery, KidVid Cinema, Snacks, Games, and Music. Many children from our church, community, and Kids' Inc. were touched by God's love. A hearty **thank you** to all of our marvelous volunteers. A special **thank you** to the youth from the church and Kids' Inc. who took on responsibility and leadership throughout the week of VBS. They were impressive and inspiring! *Thank you to the congregation for your prayers and support!*



Children and Youth Connections!



You are Invited to *Coffee & Crawlers* on July 1 at the Playground!

Parents with children in preschool and younger are invited to come and play at "Coffee & Crawlers" on **Saturday, July 1 at 8:30 a.m.** Usually we meet at church, but in July we will meet outside at the Can Do Playground (at the Boys & Girls' Club). The playground address is 101 Delaware Veterans Blvd., Milford. Please contact Pastor Paige with any questions (pr.paige@reformation-lutheran.net). Guests and their little ones are welcome, so feel free to invite a friend!

Youth & Family Ministry Beach Day in September!

Save the date for a **Youth & Family beach day** at Cape Henlopen State Park on **Saturday, September 9**. Time will be determined soon and announced in worship bulletins in August. September is a wonderful time for the beach, and all ages can have fun playing in the water and on the sand together!



Back to School Celebrations for Teachers, School Staff, and Students

At Reformation, we have a tradition of blessing educators and students as they prepare to return to school. Please plan to attend worship and special fellowship events to prepare spiritually for the 2017-2018 school year:

August 20 at 10:00 AM Worship: Blessing of Teachers, School Staff, Educators, and Those Who Work with Children.

August 27 at 10:00 AM Worship: Blessing of the Backpacks for students of all ages

August 27 at 11:00 AM: Annual Church Picnic. Enjoy great food and fellowship!

Make a Joyful Noise unto the Lord

From the choir loft...

Put **July 16th** on your calendar!! That's the day that you say "***Gee, I think I'll sing with the choir for a couple of weeks this summer!!!***"

We'll have a short choir ***practice***, in the sanctuary, beginning at **9AM** and then *share our gift* of song during the **10AM service**. That's right!! You'll have great fun and offer your talents to the Lord all in one day!

We will have our 'Summer Choir' for the next 4 weeks in July and early August and then we'll head back to our '***regular***' schedule in the fall. We'll be meeting at 7:30PM in the Sanctuary on Thursday nights for rehearsal. We'll sing at the 8:30AM service on the 1st Sunday of the month and the 11AM service for the other Sundays of the month.

Enjoy the summer!

Gail

ReCreation will resume in September!

Watch the summer worship bulletins and the September Reporter for more announcements about ***ReCreation!*** We are looking forward to the 2017-2018 ***ReCreation*** year full of fellowship and growing in faith, for all ages. ***ReCreation*** is for everyone, and it is for **YOU!**

Ways to Pray

Prayer Chain: Reformation has an email prayer chain group that will lift up specific requests in prayer throughout the week. This is separate from the Sunday prayers of the Church. If you have a request you would like on the email prayer chain, please contact the church office. If you would like to join the prayer chain group, please contact one of the pastors.

Sunday Worship Prayer List: The following prayer requests are from the most recent Sunday before the Reporter publication deadline. To add someone to the prayers of the Church in worship, please write their names on the list behind the altar.

Bryan

June Breitfeller

Linda Caccamise

Elyse Cillage

David

Madi Dodge

Zach Emory

Patty Eustis

Kimberly Finch

Ray Gannon

Kevin Gruwell

Pam Gruwell

Melissa Hays

Richard & Madeline Hooven

Kathy Hubbard

Lisa Johnson

Marli Julian

Jamey Kehler

Albert McAllister

Brad McDougall

Rose Nailor

Graham Pomfret

Latecia Prophet

Pastor John Ranney

Candace Rivera

Bonnie Russell

Sharon

Barbara Seth

Pat Venett

Eric Wolfgang

Jill Young



ReCreation News!

How are you being *ReCreated* This Summer?

When we started our *ReCreation* series of intergenerational lunch and learning events, we chose the name *ReCreation* for two reasons.

First, you can think of it as **rec-reation**, or the refreshment you get when you play and spend time with others. The other meaning is **re-creation**, or having God renew your mind, body, and spirit with the gifts of forgiveness and eternal life. We hope your summer is filled with both meanings of *ReCreation*!

Our *ReCreation* events will begin again in September. The theme for the **2017-2018 ReCreation** year will be **PRAYER**. Stay tuned, because the *ReCreation* team has a lot of exciting and enriching activities planned to help you grow in your prayer life, and in your relationship with God.

We hope you enjoy the summer being **re-created** through worship, Bible study, fellowship, and other encounters with God's word and His people. We also hope you have lots of time for **rec-reation**, so you can enjoy God's beautiful world, family time, events with friends, and more. In all of it, know that God is with you and that He loves you. And remember to give thanks to the Lord who **re-creates** you anew each day.

The **ReCreation Team members** (Karen Oldland—Leader, Mary Currie, Linda Helm, Marv Navarro, Kristin Schlegel, Barbara Seth, Pastor Paige, and Pastor Eric) are meeting over the summer to prepare for the **2017-2018 ReCreation** year. We look forward to seeing you at next year's *ReCreation* events, starting in September.

The Core Team members are also collecting feedback from those who have participated in *ReCreation*. If you haven't turned in a slip with your thoughts already, **please e-mail Karen Oldland** your responses to these three questions (oldlandkaren@gmail.com):

- 1) What do you like about *ReCreation*?
- 2) What difference does *ReCreation* make for your life and your faith?
- 3) What would you say about *ReCreation* to invite someone new to attend?

Watch for *ReCreation* to return in September