

CROSS WALK

March 2023

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LOIS

Dear Reformation Nation,

As I write this message, Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday are in the rear-view mirror, the sermon for February 26 is drafted, and we are gearing-up for the roll-out of Vanco and "Amazing Grace" in March.

Thank you to all who played a part in "resurrecting" the pre-pandemic tradition of a pancake supper on Shrove Tuesday (February 21). It was great to see people whose life circumstances makes in-person worship on Sunday mornings difficult, including charter member Linda Edwards, charter member Karen Edwards, and Al "Coal Man" Williamson (who got a "to go" order for his bride, Mary Lou).

"What is God up to here?"

In addition to offering a traditional "full service" worship on Ash Wednesday (February 22), we also had "Ashes To-Go" this year! Six people stopped by that morning for the imposition of ashes, including a Roman Catholic woman whose work schedule precluded her from going to Mass. When I was not otherwise occupied, I also blessed vehicles and pedestrians as they traveled past the church. Two school bus drivers and two truck drivers honked their horns as I blessed their vehicles, and three high school students

asked if I would pray for them!

We discussed online giving via Vanco during our annual meeting in December and I tested it today (February 25). Vanco makes it super-easy to make one-time or reoccurring donations, and you can use ACH or credit card, and their system will automatically feed data into the donation-tracking portion of Reformation's accounting system. Watch for more information!

"Amazing Grace" is the focus of our Lenten midweek services (Wednesdays in March at 4 p.m.). We will be reflecting on that familiar song and scripture related to God's amazing grace. Instead of a sermon, there is a short skit each week. Invite someone (see enclosed flyer on page 18)!

Please take a few minutes to send me an e-mail regarding our ministry together. I want YOUR answer to this question: "What is God up to HERE?"

+ Pastor Lois



Inside this issue:

President's Message	2
Assisting Ministers	3
Financials	4
Synod Assembly	6
Commission Care Team	7
Stewardship	9
ALOafest	10
Online Giving	12
Music Director's Message	13
Lutheranism 101	14
2023 Lenten Project	16

Special points of interest:

- What is God up to here?
- Can you be a Synod Assembly "Voting Member?"
- How can we make this Church grow?
- Ideas about Prayer, Fasting, Alms-Giving
- Attend ALOafest
- Managing your Giving Online

Message from the President

Día suit! I just learned with a little research that this is "Hello" in Irish (Do not ask me how to pronounce it!!) With this being March and the month to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, I thought it was very appropriate! These months are flying by at high speed and our snowbirds will soon be thinking about going north. Council is busy every month taking care of business

and something we all should be thinking of is ideas to put on our Wish List. Our exciting project here this past month has been our new sound system which has enhanced our worship service so much. We are so very fortunate to be able to enjoy the wonderful music coming from the piano, the organ, and the choir, and the meaningful messages from Pastor Lois, as we

participate in our Sunday worship service. May you keep this Irish blessing in your thoughts,....."May God bless you in so many ways!" Have a great month!

Vickey



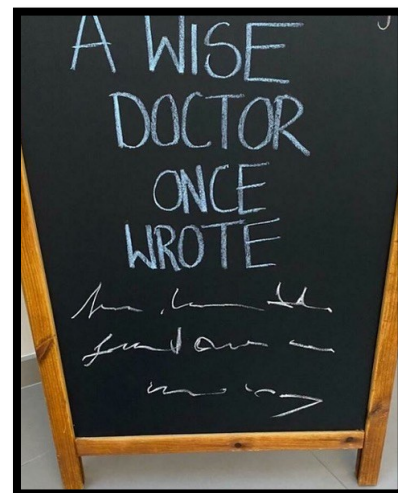
"LET'S DO LUNCH"

In February, we tried Harborside in Winter Haven for the first time. It was very pleasant to be able to look over the water as we visited. The food was good and the conversation even better. What a way to spend a portion of your day!

March 23rd, we will meet at 12:30 at The Back Porch in Lake Alfred. All ladies and their female friends are welcome. Watch for the sign-up sheet on the credenza in the

narthex. Tentative plans for the next two months are: April, Harry's, Lakeland; May, Garden Bistro @ Hollis Gardens. It's good to take a break and meet with friends for good conversation. Look forward to seeing you for lunch.

Karen Hamilton, 863-853-9678



WOW! A BIG thank you to all who donated nonperishable food for Talbot House in February. Approximately **\$516.94** was collected and Doug Hodge delivered to them on the 20th! As always, we so appreciate your generosity in helping us with this monthly community outreach project....Our next collection day is March 19th.

Blessings,
Community Outreach Committee

HELP WANTED: ASSISTING MINISTER



In the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Assisting Minister during worship is typically a layperson. This is the role that Reformation used to call the “worship assistant.”

Simply put, the Assisting Minister assists the Presiding Minister (usually Pastor Lois or, in her absence, the “pulpit supply” minister). The Assisting Minister wears an alb (white robe) when the Presiding Minister does, but they do not wear a stole (unless they are a pastor or deacon instead of a layperson). If they can carry it, they may bring the ceremonial cross in and out of the sanctuary in lieu of a crucifer. If they can sing, they may lead the kyrie in lieu of a cantor.

They sit next to Presiding Minister when the Presiding Minister sits near the organ, and they stand next to the Presiding Minister when the Presiding Minister stands at the altar. They offer some of the prayers, serve as a back-up reader, and help distribute communion.

Two people have expressed an interest in serving in this capacity. We want one or two more! Written instructions and a walk-through tutorial (in other words, practice) will be provided. To volunteer, please contact Pastor Lois.

Make sure Pastor Lois or Marilyn Hodge know if you are hospitalized!

Tax-Aide **FREE INCOME TAX PREPARATION**

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide offers free tax preparation help to anyone. They understand that retirement or other life changes may mean your taxes are a little more complicated now. With the help of their team of IRS-certified volunteers they make it easy for you. AARP membership is not required.

Tax preparation in 2023 will be by **appointment only** — they will not be processing any walk-ins. You can schedule an appointment by stopping at the fellowship hall on either Monday (8-12) or Thursday (8-4) beginning Thursday, February 2nd. Information packets will be available for pick up when you schedule an appointment.

All volunteers are trained and certified by AARP/IRS to prepare and e-file tax returns.

LET'S INVEST IN AN OUTCOME!

As I say each month, ***"Giving to church is an investment in an outcome"***, not just paying the electric bill. Yes, we do need to pay the electric bill but by so doing we are able to provide worship both in-person and online, furnish services to our community, like packing lunches for the homeless, collecting school supplies, providing Christmas for foster kids, and above all, receiving the spiritual health and blessings we all need.

Soon you will be hearing more about a "wish list" for those items that would be nice to have but not a necessity, i.e. hearing aid assistance sound system, a solution for the sun that shines brightly through the windows at the front of the church and into the eyes of the organist and some worshippers, depending on where they sit,



or perhaps a drop-down screen to be able to project the bulletin, videos and other aids for worship.. The cost for these items on the wish list are not included in the budget but can be covered by special donations or gifts.

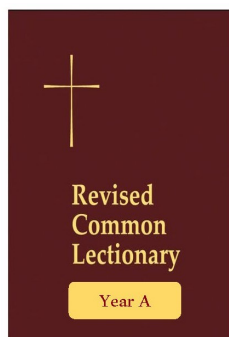
Finances for January started 2023 with a BANG! This is partially due to the fact that some members give their entire yearly pledge now. Our total income for January was \$22,500 with expenses of \$14,493.

As you contemplate future contributions, please consider electronic giving. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Hamilton or Barb Caballero.



MARCH LECTIONARY (SUNDAY READINGS)

NOTE: verses in [brackets] may or may not be used



DATE	FIRST	PSALM	SECOND	GOSPEL
3/5	Genesis 12:1-4a	121	Romans 4:15, 13-17	John 3:1-17
3/12	Exodus 17:1-7	95	Romans 5:1-11	John 4:5-42
3/19	1 Samuel 16:1-13	23	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
3/26	Ezekiel 37:1-14	130	Romans 8:6-11	John 11:1-45

MARCH 5TH - STUMP THE PASTOR (a/k/a Reformation Information)



Once a month (usually on the “first Sunday”), right after worship, we offer this brief (15 minutes or so) informal opportunity to chat with our pastor in the conference room.

Do you have a question about Christianity in general or Lutheranism in particular, including anything specific to this congregation? Or are you thinking about officially affiliating with the congregation (associate, seasonal, or full membership)? Then “Reformation Information” is for you!

If you are interested but not able to attend this month, feel free to contact Pastor Lois directly. She can be reached at 813-494-4052 (OK to text), pastorreformationlakeland@gmail.com, or by stopping-by during her designed office hours.

THANK YOU! HELP APPRECIATED!

We regularly have office volunteer on Tuesday mornings (usually Karen Wason, who focuses on drafting and publishing the Sunday bulletin). As this article is written, we have also been benefiting from having an office volunteer on Thursday mornings for four weeks.

Yvonne Mueller took the first two weeks. She was able to work on her own Community Outreach and Altar Guild tasks when not answering the office phone and greeting visitors. Sylvia Shaw took the next two weeks. She answered the office phone, retrieved and either answered or distributed voicemail messages, served as “pew angel” (put away hymnals and added connect cards), and started to help Pastor Lois organize her sermon files.

There are a few weeks still available in March, and there will be more opportunities starting in April, once Yvonne heads back to



Wisconsin for the rest of spring and summer. Can you help?

The office volunteer’s #1 responsibility on Thursday mornings is to answer the phone and deal with voicemail messages so that Pastor Lois can better focus on receiving office visitors and making member care calls. What else each office volunteer would do will depend on their current abilities and what they want to learn. Possibilities include helping Pastor follow-up with new visitors, organizing the congregation’s paper and electronic files, collecting and combining committee reports for the annual report (November/December only), and helping committees update their written policies by reviewing and/or typing committee documents.

Interested? Use the sign-up sheet in the narthex (it’s in one of the three-ring binders).

HELP WANTED: SYNOD ASSEMBLY “VOTING MEMBER”



FLORIDA-BAHAMAS SYNOD ASSEMBLY 2023

The next assembly (convention) of the Florida-Bahamas Synod will be June 8 to June 10 at the Caribe Royale resort and convention center near Orlando. Reformation needs a “voting member” (not a delegate voting on behalf of the congregation, but a faithful member who will vote their own conscience).

Reformation will pay for the hotel room, and you are allowed to share it with a spouse or other guest (Pastor Lois will probably bring her husband again; last year, he relaxed in their room and outside by the pool while she was busy). You are generally responsible for your own meals, but there is a refrigerator and a microwave in each room, so bringing some food and drinks with you is certainly an option (Pastor Lois and her husband did that last year). Maybe you can get Pastor Lois and her husband to treat you and your guest to one meal at the resort? Maybe you can meet-up and share a meal with friends who belong to other ELCA congregations?

This year, we will be electing or re-electing our synod bishop. The full agenda has not been released, but typically includes opening and closing worship (great preaching, wonderful singing, and communion), recognition of ordination and congregation anniversaries, a keynote speaker, break-out sessions (workshops on various topics), video and spoken reports on synod and churchwide efforts, and (similar to a congregation’s annual meeting) voting on the proposed (synod) budget and (synod) council positions. Pastor Lois will arrive a day early for First Call Theological Education workshops.

If you are interested, please contact any congregational council member!

Join these friends as they celebrate their birthday or anniversary in March:

03/02 PEARSON, Renee

03/11 SYPNIEWSKI, Lillian

03/12 COLEMAN, Roz

03/15 CORNELL, Gary

03/16 WHIPPLE, Richard

03/17 SOLOVITZ, Carol

03/20 RICHARDS, Jim

03/27 KNOLL, John

03/28 MUELLER, Harold

03/20 SOLOVITZ, Steve & Carol

03/26 JOHNSON, Wes & Judy

03/30 GELISSEN, Nick & Janice



DO YOU WANT THIS CHURCH TO GROW?

Join the Commission Care team today!

"Follow me, and I will make you fish for people"

- Matthew 4:19b

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"*

- Matthew 28:19 ("The Great Commission")

We are NOT expecting you to baptize people (leave that for Pastor Lois) and we are NOT expecting you spread the Good News by becoming foreign missionaries. We DO, however, need more people to participate in these areas:



✓ **Visitor Hospitality** (greet people when they arrive for worship, encourage first-time visitors to complete a connection card, introduce newcomers to our pastor, sit with a stranger and answer their questions)

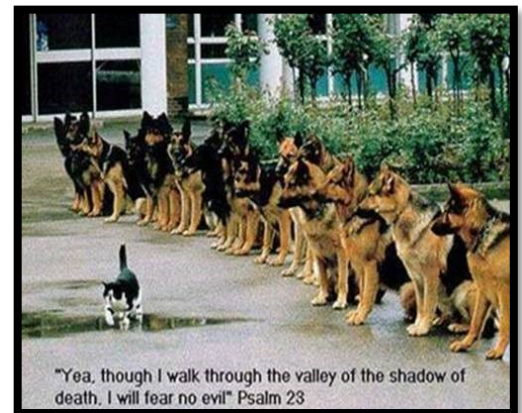
✓ **External Communication** (critique existing efforts, post and share pictures and other material on social media, identify other means of reaching select neighborhoods or special demographics, help update Reformation's website)

✓ **Un(der)Churched Engagement** (invite repeat visitors to coffee hour and other congregation activities, provide church representation at community events, work with Reformation's other committees to capitalize on evangelizing aspects of their events)

The Commission Care team is part of the Evangelism Committee. You can become one of our "Fishers of People" by contacting Pastor Lois (pastorreformationlakeland@gmail.com) or signing-up in the narthex.

Q: What do you call the wife of a hippie?

A: Mississippi



CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?



Last year, we received a \$2,000 pandemic-related grant from the synod to improve our worship audio-visual technology. We put it to use in January and February, focusing on the sound system.

First, we had two professionals from Carlton Music with church experience “tune up” our existing system. You noticed some improvement right away!

Second, they prepared a proposal to remedy the rest of our immediate concerns. This involved replacing the mixer (“sound board”), adding a “wireless” earpiece microphone, hooking-up a handheld microphone, and further optimizing the system. The old “sound board” had been only partially functional for years, and we will need to cover the new one when it is not in use to protect it. Use of the earpiece isolates Pastor’s voice from that of ambient room sounds even better than the pulpit microphone, allows us to remove the pulpit microphone so that her face is not obstructed by it (which helps those who are hard of hearing read her lips), and permits her voice to be amplified wherever she is in the sanctuary (including behind the altar, in front of the altar, and by the baptismal font). Optimization included fine-tuning the earpiece channel (increasing the amplification on the high end of Pastor’s voice, again to help those who are hard of hearing), further balancing the speakers in the sanctuary, and restoring the functionality of an auxiliary speaker in the conference room (which can now serve as an overflow or “crying” room). When we have an Assisting Minister, the handheld microphone can be used by that person.

And we are not done. For the further benefit of those attending online, we have asked for another proposal to enhance our camera capabilities, including close-ups of the altar and pulpit areas. Like the sound system work, these improvements will come from separate funds intended for this purpose, not the annual spending plan (operational budget).



Why is there a chicken sitting on the counter at coffee hour? Well, our chicken is waiting to be fed. It helps to purchase the coffee/tea, treats and paper products that we serve if you toss in a dollar or two.



This is a Real Helping Hand

PRACTICAL IDEAS ABOUT PRAYER, FASTING, ALMS-GIVING (*this month's stewardship article*)

PRAYER STEWARDSHIP - Even if health limitations or financial concerns make it impossible for you to contribute in other ways, SURELY you can offer more “time with God” through prayer!

- Pray Psalm 51 every day (aloud, so you say its words and hear them being said to God).
- Experiment with practicing a different form of prayer (for example, try contemplative prayer).
- Remember to “say grace” before eating (also an effortless way to publicly express your faith).



FASTING STEWARDSHIP – When you “give up” something, also “give in” to doing good!

- If you “give up” a self-indulgent food (say, chocolate), estimate the money saved and use it to buy more healthy food for our Lenten project.
- If you “give up” a self-indulgent habit (say, playing games on your phone), replace it with one honoring God (call a shut-in, read the Bible, etc.).
- Find a total of five hours in your social calendar to “give up” so that you have time to volunteer or attend the midweek “Amazing Grace” gatherings (4 p.m. on Wednesdays; be ready to sing)



ALMS-GIVING STEWARDSHIP – Another name for “alms-giving” is an act of self-less love.

- Even if you do not attend the “Amazing Grace” gatherings, use your Lent offering envelopes to give \$5 or \$10 a week in support of the KidsPack weekend feeding program.
- Find one purchase to “give up” each week (such as an indulgent drink or a basket of range balls) and use the funds to participate in the “Amazing Grace In Action” Lenten project.
- Do you have an Amazon, hardware store, grocery, or gas station gift card that you might never use? Donate it to Reformation for committee purchases or for regifting



never use? Donate it to Reformation for committee purchases to a family in need.

PICTURES FROM “ASHES-TO-GO”



ALOAFEST – Saturday, March 11

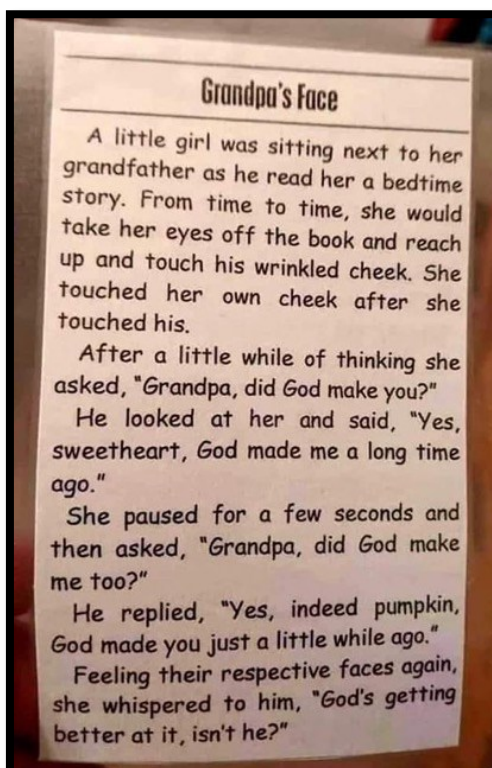
“ALOA” is an acronym for the “Adult Lutherans Organized for Action” organization. It was formed in the early 1990’s by a group of LCMS (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod) and ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) church leaders to help prepare the church for “the age wave” of older adults.

“ALOAFest” is a day of inspiration, music, workshops, and fellowship provided by ALOA. One of the sessions will be on March 11 at Christ Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Temple Terrace, only 34 miles away from Reformation.

Speakers this time include Rev. Dr. Kenneth Blyth (fondly known as “Shrek” by people who have observed him in action at Synod Assembly), Al Ernst (a Lutheran comedian), retired Pastor Marilyn Crosby (Pastor Lois’ candidacy committee liaison until she retired from Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Leesburg), and Hospice Chaplain Jim Fischer (a sweet soul who taught visitation for the diakonia program when Pastor Lois was the site manager in Tampa).

Please refer to the poster (on page 11 in this newsletter and also posted in the narthex at Reformation) for more information. The cost of attending this 7-hour event is only \$20 plus a can of food. The money covers a continental breakfast, lunch, and snacks. The food will be donated to Metropolitan Ministries in Tampa.

If you want to carpool from Reformation, please sign-up in the narthex.



Boy aged 4: Dad, I've decided to get married.

Dad: Wonderful; do you have a girl in mind?!

Boy: Yes... grandma! She said she loves me, I love her, too....and she's the best cook & story teller in the whole world!!

Dad: That's nice, but we have a small problem there!!

Boy: What problem?!

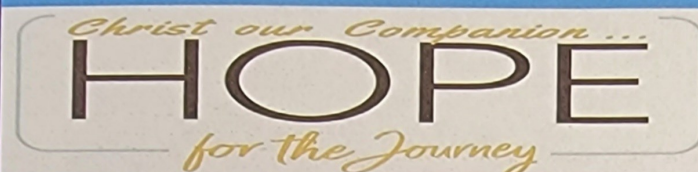
Dad: She happens to be my mother. How can you marry my mother!!

Boy: Why not?! You married mine!!!!

Felt uncomfortable driving into the cemetery. The gps blurted out you have reached your final destination.

J

Join us for ALOAfest!



A day of inspiration,
music, workshops and
fellowship!

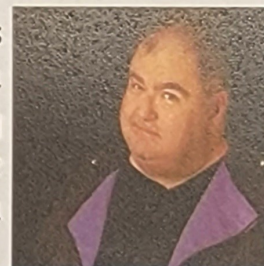
Saturday, March 11, 2023

Christ Our Redeemer Lutheran Church 304 Druid Hills Rd - Temple Terrace



The Rev. Dr. Kenneth Blyth, Pastor of St. Armands Key Lutheran Church in Sarasota and Secretary of the ELCA Florida-Bahamas Synod explores the Mark Twain quote "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts."

Lifelong Lutheran and professional comedian Al Ernst is credited with three Entertainer of the Year awards with Carnival Cruise Lines and appeared on Hulu, Comedy Central, and toured nationally. Al expands upon the Martin Luther quote "You have as much laughter as you have faith."



Morning and afternoon workshops include:

Experience the Labyrinth (Walking Meditation) by Pastor Marilyn Crosby

Hands on Creativity by Jean Archer

Advance Directives by Hospice Chaplain Jim Fischer

What a Music Arranger Does by Music Director Chris Robinson from COR
My Life as a Deaconess by Sister Ann Hall—Deaconess Community of the ELCA
Fall Prevention Exercises by the Physical Therapy Staff at Concordia Village

REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 8:30 AM - Event 9AM to 4PM

Cost: \$20.00 per person plus a canned food donation for Metropolitan Ministries
(Cost includes continental breakfast, lunch and snacks)

Download a registration form or register online at aloaserves.org/events/aloafest

Many thanks
to Sponsors:



Christ Our Redeemer
Lutheran Church



Concordia
Village
of Tampa

thrivent

ALOIA | P.O. Box 4367 | Clearwater, FL 33763 | (800) 930-2562 | aloa4U@gmail.com

MANAGE YOUR GIVING ONLINE!



We are pleased to announce that you can now manage your giving online! Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the internet.

We are utilizing VANCO Financial Solutions to safely and securely make your offering. Your gift will be automatically debited from your checking/savings account or processed using your debit/credit card. If you use online giving, we are asking that you consider adding the small processing fee to your donation. This will help cover the cost of offering this convenient way of giving to Reformation.

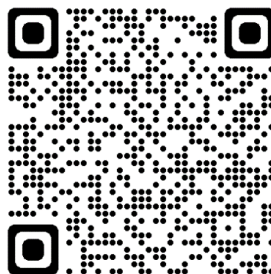
Vanco Online Giving Allows:

- Anytime and anywhere giving, conveniently and securely.
- No need to write out physical checks or prepare envelopes.
- Schedule for and manage recurring offerings.
- View your complete online-giving history.

To make a donation, you can:

- ***Go to our facebook page ([facebook.com/lovinglutherans](https://www.facebook.com/lovinglutherans))***
- ***Go to your internet browser and enter <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z95R>***
- ***or scan the QR Code below***

Set up your Login username and password or make a one-time donation.



A HUGE MUSICAL THANK YOU !!



As part of our continuing efforts to rebuild the Music Ministry here at Reformation, I wanted to pause in the middle of all our kinetic activities to reflect on the progress we have made. It is a commonly held opinion that worship music at its best is collaborative and participatory, which is why the Lutheran liturgy still appeals to our congregants after eons of use. We worship together. There are many ways that music enhances corporate worship, and some of those ways involve the congregation listening to church musicians.

Already, many talented and diligent people have made the bold decision to present their musical gifts in front of others. At this time, I want to take a moment to thank the people who have gone the distance to get our collaborative Music Ministry up and running. Without these people, we would be unable to do what we are doing, which is to present a multifaceted musical worship experience.

Special thanks are due to our splendid choir, which delights the congregation when they sing in worship. Members are Karen Hamilton, Marilyn Ebbers, Ellen Musser, Marilyn Hodge, Carol and Steve Solovitz, John Knoll, and Ed Atkinson. A huge thank you to these people for bringing Chancel Choir back to Reformation!

Another huge thank you goes to Marilyn

Hodge, who has relentlessly managed to keep our Chimes Choir alive as an appealing integral part of the Music Ministry here at Reformation. We love hearing their musical presentations, which add sparkle and variety to our worship. Members are Marilyn Hodge (Director), Sandy Hoffland, Ellen Musser, and Vicky Zelazny.

Additionally, a huge thank you to those musicians who have shared their vast musical talents via solo presentations. Vocalists have been Jeannine Sweet and Marilyn Ebbers, who did a superb job preparing their musical offerings, leaving all of us at Reformation grateful for their shared talent. Marilyn Ebbers also has contributed mightily by sharing her keyboard excellence, playing wonderful piano music on a regular basis before worship.

It soon becomes evident that our Music Ministry here at Reformation is back on track because of willing people who offered their particular musical talents. Because of all of them, we now have been able to broaden our scope of corporate worship exponentially. Thanks be to God!

Elise Knoll, Director of Music

REMINDER: There are empty spaces on the sheet for Lectors, Ushers, Communion Clean up, video help and Counters "PLEASE" help us out and sign up for a Sunday or two or even a month. We need to have help to keep our church and worship services going.

LUTHERANISM 101: LENT



“whenever you pray”

“whenever you fast”

“whenever you give alms”

“where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”

– select phrases from Matthew 6:1-21

(the Gospel reading on Ash Wednesday)

Last month, our “Lutheran 101” article discussed anointing, which involves the use of fragrant oil to mark a person with the sign of the cross, typically on their forehead or hands. Anointing is used to remind someone that they are “sealed by the Holy Spirit” (a churchy-phrase meaning they are recognized as a beloved child of God and accepted as a member of the Body of Christ). In the Lutheran tradition, anointing is available to anyone in need of spiritual comfort.

Lent, on the other hand, is often associated with spiritual discomfort. Lent is the solemn 40-day church season that starts on Ash Wednesday and ends on Maundy Thursday each year. If you consult with a calendar and count more than 40 days, it is because the Sundays “of” Lent are technically not “in” Lent (each Sunday throughout the year is technically a “little Easter”).

In the early church, Lent was a period of preparation for converts who would be baptized and join the church during the Easter Vigil. In the church today, Lent lasts for 40 days because it commemorates the time in the wilderness during which Jesus was tempted by Satan.

Lent is a time for us to set-aside time to repent. This means acknowledging the temptations we ourselves have encountered and also admitting that we have given-in to those temptations.

Lent is also a time for us to set-aside time to renew. This means building-up our resistance to temptation and giving thanks to God because we do not do resist temptation on our own. The key to both building-up our resistance and giving thanks to God is an intentional focus on three spiritual practices: prayer, fasting, and alms-giving. We are not to engage in these practices for the sake of being seen and praised for doing them; rather, the intent is to honor and praise God by the very act of engaging in these practices.

For some practical ideas about prayer, fasting, and alms-giving, please refer to this month’s stewardship article.

*I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life.
He gave me life that I might enjoy all things.*

WHERE DO OUR LENTEN OFFERINGS GO?



The contributions you give in your Lenten Offering envelopes do not go into the general fund. This money is currently designated to go to Grace Lutheran Church to help provide food for the **kidsPACK** program.

An everyday backpack is turned into a food transportation module stocked with nutritious, child-friendly and easy to prepare food for children to eat over the weekend and times when they are away from school. Volunteers from Grace pack non-perishable containerized

items like ramen noodles, fruit cups, trail mix, portable snacks like granola bars and pop-tarts along with jars of peanut butter and cartons of non-refrigerated milk.

Grace Lutheran Church provides backpacks for 30 kids in Polk County at the approximate cost of \$600 per month. In order to support this worthwhile project, we assist by sending our Lenten Offerings to Grace to help purchase the food they need along with items collected during *"Amazing Grace in Action"*, our Lenten Project.

HELP PACK A BAG LUNCH !!

Want to try something different? It doesn't take very long, and no experience is needed! Signup to pack lunches for our unsheltered neighbors following worship on March 19th. 4-6 ladies put together meat and cheese sandwiches and put them in plastic baggies. 4 men or ladies work the assembly line to put drink, fruit cup, condiments, a sweet, sandwiches, and chips in a paper lunch



bag. That's all there is to it! So little time spent – So much good as a result!! Hope to see some new faces on the 19th.

Q: Why did the golfer bring an extra pair of pants?

A: In case he got a hole in one

Amazing Grace in Action



Lent is here and this is a time to give thanks for the many blessings we have and at the same time share with others who need our help. Lent is a period of preparation, so let us prepare the less fortunate with these Lenten Gifts.

This year Pastor Lois has chosen Amazing Grace for the Lenten theme, so our Lenten Project theme is "**Amazing Grace in Action**". God's grace is amazing because it is undeserved and a free gift. It cost us nothing, but it cost Jesus everything.

Each Sunday we will be bringing things for **Talbot House**, like all sizes of men's and ladies' underpants, men's and ladies' socks, T-shirts and bar soap. For the **backpack program at Grace Lutheran**, we will bring Ramen noodles, 16-18 ounce peanut butter and horizon milk cartons (these are non-refrigerated milk cartons). These back packs are taken home and have easily prepared food for kids when they are away from school such as weekends.

If you cannot get your items to church let us know and we will make arrangements to help you get them here. Anything you donate will be greatly appreciated and used.

Please take the sheet out of your newsletter on the Lenten Project (page 17) and put it on your refrigerator for handy reference during the week or when you may go shopping.

You know we live in an amazing world, and I am so proud of this congregation; you are surprisingly GENEROUS and UNIMAGINABLE and INCREDIBLE when it comes to giving. I am challenging you to start our "Amazing Grace in Action" 2023 Lenten Project with your donations. I know you won't disappoint me on this project.

Committee members are Bev Nelson, Jeanne Yager, Barb Caballero and me. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask us; we would be glad to answer them. Other outreach committee members are Karen Hamilton, Marilyn Hodge, Vicki Zelazny and Pastor Lois.

Yvonne Mueller, Project Chair

ALTAR FLOWERS/ETERNAL CANDLE

There will be no flowers during lent but on Palm Sunday we will have two dish gardens and then for Easter, the lilies and the lily saddle on the cross. The flower chart still has lots of empty spaces after Lent, so if you have a special day or event, this is one way to honor or remember someone, how about a birthday, anniversary, parents, kids, grandkids, or great grandkids or maybe just because you have such a wonderful husband, wife or partner. The flower bouquets are \$25.00 each, you can do one, two or three. The eternal candle chart has spaces to be filed during Lent and the rest of the year. Candles are \$7.00 per Sunday. SIGN UP NOW.

Amazing Grace in Action



2023 Lenten Project

Benefitting Talbot House and Polk County KidsPack

Borrowing from the words of “Amazing Grace”:

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound! That saved a wretch like me!

The Lord has promis’d good to me; His word my hope secures.

Choose items Weekly and bring to church

February 26th

Men’s & Ladies underwear (all sizes)

March 5th

Men’s & Ladies socks

March 12th

FOOD BARREL SUNDAY

Ramen noodles	Peanut butter (16-18 oz only)	Horizon milk cartons
---------------	-------------------------------	----------------------

March 19th

Bar Soap	Men’s t-shirts (all sizes)	(new or gently used)
----------	----------------------------	----------------------

March 26th

Ramen noodles	Peanut butter (16-18 oz only)	Horizon milk cartons
---------------	-------------------------------	----------------------

Lent Gatherings

(weekly reflections on that familiar song!)



Wednesdays at 4:00 P.M.

March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29



REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

460 Old Polk City Rd - Lakeland 33809

863-859-2264

www.facebook.com/lovinglutherans

MARCH 2023

sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
			1 4:00 "Amazing Grace"	2 8:00-4:00 AARP FH	3	4
5 8:45 Choir Practice 10:00 Worship w/communion In-Person & Facebook Live Reformation Information	6 8:00-12:00 AARP FH	7 9:30 Chimes	8 4:00 "Amazing Grace"	9 8:00-4:00 AARP FH	10	11 9:00-4:00 ALOAfest Christ Our Redeemer, Temple Terrace
12 Daylight Savings Begins 10:00 Worship w/communion In-Person & Facebook Live Coffee Hour	13 8:00-12:00 AARP FH	14 9:30 Evangelism	15 9:30 Worship & Music 4:00 "Amazing Grace"	16 8:00-4:00 AARP FH	17 	18
19 8:45 Choir Practice 10:00 Worship w/communion In-Person & Facebook Live Pack Lunches for Homeless	20 8:00-12:00 AARP FH	21 9:30 Chimes 6:30 Council	22 4:00 "Amazing Grace"	23 8:00-4:00 AARP FH 12:30 Lunch Bunch @ The Back Porch	24	25
26 10:00 Worship w/communion In-Person & Facebook Live Coffee Hour	27 8:00-12:00 AARP FH	28 9:30 Chimes	29 4:00 "Amazing Grace"	30 8:00-4:00 AARP FH	31	





Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

(in-person and Facebook Live)

Lectionary Bible Study

(3 online devotions/week)

*Liturgical Worship
Congregational Singing
Weekly Communion
Mostly "55+" Members*

Rev. Lois Sorensen, Pastor

460 Old Polk City Road

Lakeland, FL 33809

863-859-2264

lovinglutherans@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/lovinglutherans

MANAGE YOUR GIVING ONLINE!



Did you forget to write your check for the offering today? Are you out of town and thinking you've got to remember to write your check when you get back? You can forget all of this! Check out page 12 to learn more about Online Giving – the easy way to support Reformation. We encourage you to add a very small fee for the convenience of setting up your giving and forgetting it! Contact Karen Hamilton or Barb Caballero if you have questions.



Sunday, March 12, 2 a.m.