

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

102 WEST ROSE TREE ROAD • MEDIA, PA 19063

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Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church
102 W. Rose Tree Rd., Media, Pennsylvania

ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING

JANUARY 29, 2017

12:30 P.M.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Confirmation of Quorum
2. Opening Prayer
3. Approval of Minutes of January 31, 2016, Annual Meeting
4. Ministry Review and Opportunities
5. Update on *Always in Mission* campaign, Mortgage, Building Fund and Moser Bequest
6. Report of the Treasurer
7. Endowment Fund Review
8. New Business
 - Adoption of 2017 Budget
 - Election of Council Members
 - Election of Nominating Committee Members
9. Prayer and Adjournment

2016 - 2017 OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

President	Dick Hughey
Vice President	Kate Fernandez
Secretary	Andrew Marcus
Treasurer	Tom Conroy

2016 - 2017 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Member.....	Term expires at the end of May of
Alexis Bingeman [†]	2017
Ron Bingeman*	2017
John Chesters	2017
Matthew Gane [†]	2017
Andrew Marcus	2017
Emily Black	2017
Keith Bocian*	2018
Karen Chorney*	2018
Kate Fernandez	2018
Richard Hughey ^a	2018
Marian Filtz*	2019
Kristin Gress*	2019
Uli Neubert	2019
Walter Woerheide	2019
Pastor Wayne A. Matthias-Long	<i>ex officio</i>
Pastor Alina S. Gayeuski	<i>ex officio</i>

* = currently serving second full three-year term

† = currently serving second 1-year term (youth)

^a = appointed to fill unexpired term by Council on 3/8/16

MINUTES

Annual Congregational Meeting

January 31, 2016

At 12:45 pm President Marian Filtz called the meeting to order and declared a quorum. She thanked the Hospitality Ministry for the excellent lunch they provided. Pastor Alina opened the meeting with prayer.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the January 25, 2015, Annual Meeting minutes. The minutes were amended to note that the 2015 budget included an \$11,000 challenge to the congregation. The minutes were accepted as amended.

Pastor Alina Gayeuski and Pastor Wayne Matthias-Long highlighted their written reports. They made note of the upcoming 6 word Lent devotional that the church would be putting together and invited all members to participate. They also made a general invitation for congregational members to update their contact information and email addresses with the church office to facilitate the electronic communications of the church.

President Marian Filtz presented all the other reports included in our annual report booklets by having each table create a 6 word summary theme of an assigned ministry which they shared orally with the group. Following the Ministry summaries she presented the staff with the Christmas gifts given by the congregation.

John Chesters gave a brief invitation to all members to participate in Interfaith Initiatives that will be forming in the upcoming year, particularly those offered in conjunction with the Interfaith Center.

The Mission Campaign was highlighted by President Marian Filtz. She noted that “Where one stands depends on where one sits.” The Always in Mission (AIM) results were something to take joy in as the message to “prayerfully consider” different aspects of the mission resonated strongly throughout both the AIM campaign and the annual Stewardship Campaign. It was noted that we met our promised synod benevolence contribution as well as made up for a previously missed year .

John Pritchard, chair of the **Financial Management Ministry**, summarized our current **mortgage status**. He stated that the mortgage is currently around \$865,000 and that our current building fund is around \$380,000. He noted that the financial management ministry will be considering several options on how to address the church’s mortgage in 2016. Some options being considered include:

- Holding the course and continuing to pay the mortgage according to our current schedule.
- Refinancing the current mortgage to lower the interest rates.
- Pay down the principal of the mortgage.

He noted that there are other possibilities being explored as well including variations and combinations of each of these three stated options. The Financial Management Ministry will present recommendations to the church council when they have concluded their explorations.

Treasurer’s Report

Tom Conroy highlighted his report and the 2015 finances.

- The year ended with our contributions having a \$5,830 surplus and our expenses being \$17,776 under budget.
- He noted that after adjustments were made for surplus treatments, \$14,308 was transferred into a surplus/deficit account to be used at a later time.
- He noted that our Building Fund ended the year with a total of \$339,926.11 in the final reserve. This demonstrated the congregation’s commitment to the church and to meeting the challenge that was a part of the 2015 budget.

- He also made point to highlight the list of the Holiday Offering Fund recipients from 2015 which highlighted Reformation's unquantifiable generosity of spirit.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion carried.

Stewardship Campaign & Always In Mission (AIM) Campaign

Tom Conroy highlighted the results of both campaigns and how they impacted the proposed 2016 Budget.

- The Stewardship Campaign showed a 6% increase in pledged giving from 2015 to 2016.
- The 2016 Budget has now reached a record mark of over \$600,000 for the first time in Reformations history (\$609, 755).
- AIM campaign currently has \$379,312 pledged over a 3 year period.
- \$32,242 was budgeted for 2 new partial year positions that may be created during 2016 including:
 - Director of Faith & Life Connections
 - Custodian

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2016 Budget as recommended by Council. The motion carried.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Report of the Nominating Committee as presented by the nominating committee chair Bill Grauer

- Eric Lucas and Kathy Schmick will be ending their terms on May 31, 2016. Both were offered thanks for their service.
- 6 total positions to fill on Council.
 - 4 positions are being filled by current council members renewing their terms including: Alexis Bingeman, Matt Gane, Marian Filtz, and Kristin Gress
 - 2 positions are being filled by new council members including: Uli Neubert and Walt Woerheide

A motion was made and seconded to close the nominations for Council. The motion carried. Election by unanimous consent.

- The 4 members of the 2016 Nominating committee presented include: Katie Cotter, Eric Lucas, Connie Richardson, and Rhonda Mirarchi.

A motion was made and seconded to close the nominations for the Nominating Committee. The motion carried. Election by unanimous consent.

A motion was made and seconded to add John Pritchard to the Endowment Committee. The motion carried.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

Pastor Wayne closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Bocian
Secretary

MINUTES

Special Congregational Meeting

January 1, 2017

- A. President Dick Hughey called the meeting to order and pronounced a quorum in attendance of greater than 35 voting members of the congregation. A voting member, as defined by the by-laws, is a confirmed member of the church who has received communion and made a contribution of record in the current or previous year.
- B. Dick presented the tellers: Deb Felton, Gary Kamin, Les Bryant, John Pritchard, Dave Helms, and John Berberich. The tellers are responsible for distributing, collecting, and counting the ballots for the resolution.
- C. Dick presented Pastor Arden Krych as the deputy appointed by the synod. Pastor Krych spoke for a few minutes about his fond memories of his time at Reformation as bridge pastor and his amazement at the strong attendance for a special meeting on New Year's Day.
- D. Dick then presented the following resolution: RESOLVED, that Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church, Media, PA, call Deacon Beth Ann Barkhau as part-time Director of Faith Engagement for a three-year term effective January 15, 2017.
- E. Dick discussed the background to the position; he recounted the plans for an Outreach Coordinator and a Connections Coordinator from the Always in Mission Campaign. Parts of these positions along with the Director of Lay Ministry position, were combined into the job description for the Director of Faith Engagement.
- F. He highlighted Deacon Beth's strong credentials in a variety of different areas, making her more than qualified for the position. Her interest in the position presented a unique opportunity for Reformation.
- G. Because Deacon Beth is a Minister of Word and Service in the ELCA (formerly a Rostered Lay Leader), a Call Committee needed to be formed. This committee consisted of Dick, Kate Fernandez (Council Vice President), Andrew Marcus (Council Secretary), Tom Conroy (Treasurer), and Pastors Wayne and Alina. The committee recommended Deacon Beth to Council, who approved the committee's recommendation. The congregation would now need to approve the call by a 2/3 majority.
- H. Tom Conroy discussed the financials surrounding Deacon Beth's call. He noted that we were in our third consecutive year of a budget surplus (partly due to staff openings that had not been filled, but partly due to increased giving from the congregation). Tom noted that he would endorse Deacon Beth's call even if we weren't in such a good financial position, but because we are, he endorsed her in the strongest possible terms.
- I. No questions were asked during the Q & A portion of the meeting.
- J. Ballots were distributed and collected. The final tally, of 89 votes cast, was 82 yes, 3 no, and 4 abstentions, easily clearing the 2/3 majority required for approval. Deacon Beth accepted the results of the vote.
- K. Pastor Wayne thanked the congregation for their time and their support.
- L. Pastor Krych delivered a prayer to close the meeting.
- M. Dick Hughey entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Marcus
Secretary

CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS & PASTORAL ACTS

MEMBERSHIP 2011-2016

	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Baptized	791	782	760	740	741	739
Confirmed	673	664	633	617	619	614
Voting Members	398	361	516	500	502	497
Average Sunday Worship Attendance	207	201	201	199	213	225
Members Received						
Baptism	6	6	10	2	2	10
Transfer/ELCA	7	10	5	3	2	12
Transfer/Other	0	0	1	0	2	2
Affirmation of Faith	2	8	11	5	7	8
Other	0					4
Members Removed						
Death	6	2	6	4	11	9
Transfer	0	0	1	3	0	4
Other	0	0	0	4	0	105

BAPTISMS

May 15, 2016 Shae Lynn Horan
 May 15, 2016 Tate Martin Horan
 May 15, 2016 Michael David Horan, Jr.
 July 31, 2016 Torbjorn Hans Scherer
 August 28, 2016 Bryson Alan Lesser

DEATHS

January 18, 2016 The Rev. Edward Treichel
 January 21, 2016 Ann Spielman
 February 13, 2016 Neil Gilmour
 February 14, 2016 John O'Brien
 March 5, 2016 Sonia Fantau
 June 5, 2016 Florence Brooks
 August 17, 2016 Bill Bianco
 November 12, 2016 The Rev. Daniel Shook

Reformation also ministered to families by providing funeral services for non-members:

April 10, 2016 Carol Antal
 October 29, 2016 Millie Gamlin

Reformation also ministered to families by providing funeral services for Elwyn residents:

February 20, 2016 Karlene Donahue
April 26, 2016 Edward Burr
June 8, 2016 Shirley Talley
August 16, 2016 Joann Feysa
September 7, 2016 Kevin Smith
October 4, 2016 Leonard Kodan
December 6, 2016 Carol Stehley

RECEIVED INTO MEMBERSHIP

December 18, 2016 Jamie Anderson and Joseph Smith, Jr. (and children Adelaide and Anderson)
Terrie Lynn Bryan
Elizabeth and Scott Kilpatrick (and children Hudson and Piper)
Judy Whalen

CONFIRMATION

October 23, 2016 Olivia Rose Biordi
Lindsay Ann Gamlin
Miranda Grace Polito
Joseph Timothy Reitano
William Hall Skarbek
John Patrick Walters

FIRST COMMUNION

March 20, 2016 Abigail Rose Ciarmella
Katelyn Grace Snyder
Scott Donald Snyder
Luke Thomas Merino
Anderson Joseph Smith

March 27, 2016 Kaylee Lillian Troutman

REPORT OF PASTOR WAYNE MATTHIAS-LONG

“**And this shall be a SIGN to you . . .**” the angel said to the shepherds, announcing the good news of the birth of Jesus the Messiah. (*Luke 2:12*)

SIGNS of GOOD NEWS – that’s you! Members of Reformation are individually and collectively signs of the good news of God’s love for this world in Jesus Christ as we Invite our Neighbors, Serve All People, and Build a Living Faith.

Perhaps the most prominent sign among us in 2016 is the long-anticipated new church sign which was installed at the intersection of Rose Tree Road and Providence Road. That sign will help us share good news with the world around us. Our heartfelt thanks go to Warren and the late Jean Given for their generous contribution which made possible the sign as well as Ron Bingeman and Dick Hughey whose steadfast efforts made it possible to accomplish this project.

The signs of God’s Good News among us are far too numerous to discuss in detail here. You will find many of them described in the reports of the Ministry Teams which follow.

But I would be remiss if I did not mention the overwhelming generosity of this congregation which is certainly one of the signs of good news among us. Reformation members share abundantly their God-given gifts of time, talent, and treasure. I give thanks to God constantly for the powerful witness of your generosity which is shown in so many ways as we strive to serve all people. As our stewardship theme reminded us, God is always faithful and, by the grace of God, we seek to respond to God’s faithfulness by being always faithful.

One of the many signs of good news among us is our partnership with the Pangani Lutheran Parish. In August Jennifer Breen, John Chesters, and Connie Richardson travelled to visit the Northeast Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and our partners in the Pangani Lutheran Parish. Their eyewitness testimony to us upon their return was inspiring and informative. We thank them for being such outstanding ambassadors.

It is a joy and a blessing for me to be part of the outstanding staff team at Reformation. Anna Guy joined the staff in January 2016 as Administrative Assistant for Communications and has served very well in that position. Christine Corson, Administrative Assistant for Finance, celebrated her first anniversary of employment here in July and

she continues to serve with excellence. Parish Nurse Pat Woerheide, Director of Music Valerie Rozek, and Children’s Choir Director Liz Hazlett continue to provide outstanding service and ministry. Words are inadequate to express the deep appreciation and gratitude I feel for the privilege of serving in partnership with Pastor Alina Gayeuskis whose ministry is a tremendous blessing to us all.

We bid farewell and godspeed to Bill Lafty in September with gratitude for his ministry among us. As 2016 drew to a close and 2017 dawned we rejoiced that our staff team has been brought to full strength with the hiring of Erik Flaten as Director of Music for the late service and the calling of Deacon Beth Barkhau as Director of Faith Engagement.

This staff team, together with the outstanding leadership team, the mighty mass of volunteers, and the whole company of the congregation, make it possible for Reformation to be a powerful sign and force for God’s work of healing and hope in this world.

I am grateful for the outstanding leadership provided by Marian Filtz, whose term as president concluded in May, and for that of Dick Hughey, whose term as president began in June. Our Treasurer Tom Conroy continues to work tirelessly to assure that our finances are in good order.

Reformation received a very significant bequest from 1517 Society members William and Beatrice Moser in the amount of nearly \$866,000. This transformational gift along with the generous support of the *Always in Mission* Campaign makes it possible for Reformation to move forward with strength and vigor as a sign of God’s love for this world. Thanks be to God for the powerful witness of this gift!

October 31, 2017, will be the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation which began when Martin Luther nailed 95 Theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. There will be many opportunities to reflect on, commemorate, and learn from that seminal event in the history of the Christian Church. This is an occasion both to look back and to look forward as the logo “Reformation 500+” suggests. The legacy we have inherited from those who came before us helps sustain us as we face the challenges and opportunities of our day to be **Always Reforming** and **Always Faithful**.



Yours in Christ,
Pastor Wayne Matthias-Long

REPORT OF PASTOR ALINA GAYEUSKI

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified **in all things** through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen*

– 1 Peter 4:10-11

At Reformation, 2016 was another year filled with incredible opportunities to see God at work in this place and through all of us here. Our mission to invite, serve, and build has been evident in so many ways throughout these past twelve months and it amazing to look back over this time and catch glimpses of the wonder of God at work even now.

Here are just a few some of the places where I saw that:

- Our year started with our Sermon on the Steps featuring a special Epiphany Bingo! game.
- During Lent the artwork of John August Swanson led us on a journey to the cross and the empty tomb.
- After Easter, we collected 113 care kits and 8 backpacks that were distributed to the homeless in Philadelphia through the synod's Helping Hands Day.
- Our Vacation Bible School students completed 240 water bottle care kits that were distributed to the people served at the Life Center in Upper Darby.
- Once again our Appalachia Service Project (ASP) team worked to make much needed repairs on two homes in Bland County, VA.
- Our Eco Ministry team completed our butterfly waystation with a bird bath given and dedicated in memory of Bill Bianco.
- In celebration of St. Francis' love for God's creatures, we had a Blessing of the Animals service and were surrounded by a chorus of furry friends as we gave thanks to God for the companionship of these animals.
- In the fall six of our young members affirmed the promises made at their baptisms and shared with us a profound message about living lives in faithful response to God's beautiful gift of forgiveness.
- After Thanksgiving our new sign was installed at the corner of our property and is truly shining a light in this world.

- Bishop Nicholas' visit once again filled the chancel, overflowing with gifts for several organizations throughout our area that work to serve those in need.

And between all of these things, meals were served, clothes were collected, lessons were taught, hope was shared, lives were blessed, and **in all things** God was praised. What a joyous year we shared! And there is certainly much excitement to see where God will lead us next!

On a personal note, I want to thank you all again for sharing in my joy this past year. You surrounded Dan and me with much love and light as we celebrated our marriage. Your well-wishes, gifts, and recipes are most certainly things that we will cherish as we give thanks to God for being able to share this part of our life together with all of you.

Blessings!
Pastor Alina Gayeuski

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

The end of 2016 marks my second full year as Director of Music for the traditional service at Reformation. My primary responsibilities are leading rehearsals for and directing the Chancel choir as well as playing the organ or piano for the 8:30 Sunday morning service and any other special services at Reformation. The Chancel Choir is made up this year of 8 choir members and 3 Choral Scholars from West Chester University. The Scholars are Jared Stuftt, Sara Munson, and Zoe Jones. This is their first year with the Chancel choir. I was unable to recruit a tenor so that will be a priority in 2017. Scholars are again a welcomed addition to the choir and available for solo work at special services, especially during Lent. This year, we are fortunate to have a flute soloist, Sara Munson. A new search effort will begin shortly if the current Scholars do not wish to continue for another year. Recruiting choir members from the congregation is also a priority.

Another successful Patriotic Concert was hosted at Reformation on June 28, 2016. Many members of Reformation and volunteers from the Media community participated in a combined choir, under my direction, that performed patriotic choral anthems during the event. Joe Smith and his Dixieland band also entertained everyone with favorite selections and his signature enthusiasm.

Planning will begin soon for the 2017 Patriotic Concert.

My other responsibilities are maintenance of the organ and pianos in the sanctuary and choir room. There are no known issues with any of the instruments at this time. The choral library is kept in good order and music is purchased to keep current with what is new in traditional church music. I am available for weddings and funerals and supplied music for both during the past year. I have worked closely with both Pastors during the year and maintain a very good relationship with each of them. I feel fortunate to have such good pastoral leadership.

Thank you for the opportunity to be your organist and choir director for the 8:30 service. It is a joy for me to use my talents to lead the congregation as we praise the Lord through music.

Soli Deo Gloria
Valerie Rozek

REPORT OF THE PARISH NURSE

I am honored to continue to serve Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Parish Nurse Ministry. While reflecting on 2016, I remembered the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 12 where he states there is one body of the church but many parts. In Verse 28 he states ...”God appointed those...having gifts of healing, those able to help others” and in verse 26”If one part suffers, every part suffers with it” I am humbled to have God and the Membership use me and all of you to lighten the suffering of our church members.

As a Certified Faith Community Nurse and a Registered Nurse, I serve our membership with the tools of health assessment, education and advocacy. These tools promote the recognition of the healing grace available to everyone through Jesus Christ. This healing grace enters our bodies and our souls, and helps us as mortal human beings walk through life. This ministry would be impossible without the generous support of the Pastors and congregation.

I thank God and you as members of this congregation for support and volunteer work so that we could accomplish these healing activities:

- Home and hospital visiting was provided as needed.
- Phone advocacy was provided as needed.

- Emergency care during church activities was provided with the help of members trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).
- Maintenance of AED’s (automated electronic defibrillator) and education in the use of them was provided.
- Newsletter articles on health topics were provided monthly
- Emergency transportation was provided with the use of member volunteers.
- Meal preparation in crisis situations was provided whenever needed.
- Communion was faithfully delivered to homebound members monthly.
- Friendly visiting was provided to homebound.
- Individual Prayer was provided monthly in each service.
- Eighty-four Prayer shawls were made by volunteers, 112 were delivered to members to give comfort in illness, bereavement, and joy in new births and marriage. This includes 20 shawls given to members of Second Time Around Grandparents at Thanksgiving.
- Soft warm hats were knitted or crocheted by volunteers for chemotherapy patients at Chester Cozier Hospital, and hats and scarves were made for the homeless in shelters.
- Two blood drives were hosted by RELC, resulting in the collection of 47 blood donations with the direction and support of Kirk Simmet.
- Christmas Caroling was provided by enthusiastic volunteers to the homebound members. Cookie packages and Christmas Cards were given out to these members. These were provided by our church school students and the generous bakers through the Jean Roberts Cookie Drive.

I am very grateful for this wonderful work provided by church members to our members and community. Thank you everyone, for your time, effort and support of the Parish Nurse ministry as bakers, drivers, crafters, and visitors.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Woerheide RN, BSN, FCN

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

I am proud to be a member of Reformation Lutheran Church. The reports contained in this 2016 summary provide an excellent review of what was made possible this year with the support of so many. To be involved with an organization that is

committed to truly living its mission statement is inspiring. The outreach that was accomplished this year is a result of your willingness to give, to share a talent, to follow a passion. What we have done as a faith community cannot be duplicated by an individual acting alone.

We are witnessing the dreams of our “Always in Mission” campaign become reality. Our financial situation is solid, our staff is positioned and trained to help us serve our community and improvements to our physical plant will enhance our worship experience while helping us conserve energy. And yes, we did get a new sign which will help us invite, inform and light the way for visitors. But the Light of this Christian community has always burned bright with good works.

Thank you for everything you have done to make this exciting time at Reformation possible.

Respectfully submitted,
Dick Hughey, Council President

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY ACTION MINISTRY

*Called by Christ, Serving our Neighbors to Build a
Living Faith*

The Community Action Ministry provides opportunities for outreach to our neighbors throughout the year. In 2016, our Congregation’s generosity included:

HOLIDAY FOOD BASKETS: At Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas, with the help of Congregation members, we provided bags of groceries, fresh hams or turkeys, eggs, bread, and butter to 45 families through local organizations. These holiday meals are looked forward to and very much appreciated by the recipients who are struggling to provide for their families. We thank all who provided the bags of food; cash or checks to cover purchase of the fresh food; donations of turkeys; and help to deliver the food. We would also like to thank the Youth Group for providing homemade cookies for the Thanksgiving bags and the Confirmation Students for providing bread-making kits for the Christmas bags. We thank Sav-A-Lot in Brookhaven for donating the reusable grocery bags we used.

CHRISTMAS “ST. NICHOLAS” PROJECT: This annual project provided the opportunity for Congregation members to give gifts to children, REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH, MEDIA, PA

families, and the elderly who are served by various organizations: Silver Springs/Martin Luther School, Chester Eastside Ministries, Aid For Friends, Chester County Migrant Ministries, and Lutheran Settlement House. This year’s response was again overwhelming. Thanks to all who donated and/or helped with the distribution of the gifts to the agencies. An excerpt from the thank you letter from the Lutheran Settlement House: “... your congregants have made a direct impact on the life of moms and families at Jane Addams Place.” All that you do helps others who need help so much. Thanks.

AID FOR FRIENDS: We provided over 550 meals and soups for distribution to elderly and frail shut-ins through this agency – an increase of over 100 from last year. These meals and soups were anonymously provided by members of the congregation and members of the community, Sunday School and Confirmation students, the various Ministries who coordinated the weekly Lenten Soup Suppers, and others who shared the bounty of food from Reformation sponsored events. You can help by filling trays and containers at home using the 5-packs that are available in the Narthex. Please feel free to take a pack of meal trays or soup containers home. Instructions are included in the packs.

FEEDING THE HOMELESS: This ministry of preparing, delivering, and serving meals at the Life Center in Upper Darby, had been going on for over 25 years at Messiah Church. Now that Messiah Church has closed, we are continuing this ministry here at Reformation. We provided twelve to fourteen casseroles in January, March, May, and September. In July, we provided a chicken dinner. Helpers of all ages made casseroles at home, packaged meals here at church, and served them at the Life Center. Volunteers are always needed for this valuable ministry. Look for information in the Newsletter or Reformation Lite in the Bulletin.

FOOD COLLECTION: As part of the *God’s Work -- Our Hands* ELCA initiative, we again collected food in front of Trader Joes’s in Media in September. The food was donated to the Media Food Bank and Chester Eastside Ministries. Working in shifts, volunteers helped with this project. Karen Chorney headed up the effort this year.

COLLECTIONS: We collected 377 items of new underwear for men, women, and children for the Needleworkers Guild of America (NGA) who

distributed them to various agencies in the area. There is an ongoing collection of food for the church food pantry and for donation to the Media Food Bank. Thank you to all who donated.

CHESTER EASTSIDE MINISTRY: We helped this organization in the past year in various ways. We provided art supplies, toys, and books during the Saint Nicholas project. Members of the Congregation purchased Macy's shopping passes, the proceeds of which were matched by the Holiday Fund. Over \$1500 was sent to Chester Eastside to continue their mission with children and families in Chester. In addition, the Giant supermarket offered us bread and baked goods that they were taking off of their shelves. Each week, Christel Badey picked up the donations and delivered them to Chester Eastside for their food pantry. This donation totaled at least \$12,500 of food this year.

If you would like to join the Community Action Ministry, have outreach ideas, or can provide a few hours to help bring our church to our neighbors, please contact any of the Ministry members.

Ministry Members: Christel Badey; Keith Bocian (Council Rep); Edna Bogert; Ron Brzowski; Sally Burkam; Sandy Coll; Linda Lorino (Chair); Dave Smith.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Lorino

REPORT OF THE ECOLOGY MINISTRY

Eco-Ministry mission statement: We are charged with overseeing the congregation's recycling program, finding ways to inform and educate Reformation members on ecology issues, and publicizing opportunities to serve our community with cleanup and conservation projects. During the past year, the committee developed and participated in various activities. A few of the highlights are listed below.

- **Paper recycling program:** The program continues to be an effective means to recycle paper for the congregation and community. This program saves energy and prevents tons of paper from going to a landfill.
- **Road cleanups** along Rose Tree Road were held in the spring and fall of 2016.
- The ministry hosted an **Eco-movie night** and pot luck supper on February 5. This year the attendees saw four short films about

sustainability followed by a lively discussion. In the fall, we hosted a **second Eco movie night** with a thought-provoking documentary about the great Pacific garbage patch which has resulted from massive amounts of plastic reaching the ocean.

- The annual **Eco Sunday event**, held on April 24th, was well attended and offered programs for all age groups. The focus of this year's event was Water. The program also included informative tables on various Eco topics.
- The Eco Ministry members added more plants to Reformation's garden areas to support butterflies and other pollinators. We also installed a birdbath and dedicated it in memory of Bill Bianco, a long time Eco ministry member.
- We hosted our annual **Eagle watching trip** to the Conowingo Dam on the Susquehanna River to see Bald Eagles. This year we went "Tailgating with the Eagles", complete with apple cider and doughnuts, on November 19. Our resident naturalist, Tom Reeves, led the group.
- We initiated a new recycling program this year in cooperation with the firm Terracycle. This provides a means to recycle used writing instruments such as pens, markers, and mechanical pencils.

Our plans and goals for 2017 are to continue to find ways to increase energy efficiency in our church, increase eco-friendly practices and conservation and provide thought-provoking events such as Eco Sunday, movies, trips and book/bible studies.

Ministry members: Marilyn and John Berberich, Keith Bowman, Kristen Chorney, Kris Hughey, Tom Reeves, Toini Scherer, Kathy Schmick, Marti Millington, Pastor Alina Gayeuski, Kate Fernandez (council rep), and Deb Felton (chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Felton

REPORT OF THE EDUCATION MINISTRY

The Ministry oversees the operation and the promotion of all of Reformation's Christian Education programs. This includes continuous programs: Adult Education (including Adult Forum, Bible Study, and Women's Connection); Confirmation Class; Library; Stepping Stones; Sunday Nursery; Sunday School. It also includes special programs: Scholar in Residence; Vacation Bible School. We also interact with Community Action (food drives and Aid for Friends) and Eco

(Earth Day events), as well as the Reformation Schools Board.

Each member of the Ministry is a liaison with a particular facet of the educational program. Our communication with other ministries is enhanced with cross-membership. This year's members are: Sue Bianco (chair, Library); Emily Black (Sunday School); Sarah Bocian (Women's Connection); Jennifer Breen (Adult Education, Adult Forum, Reformation Schools; Scholar in Residence); Karen Chorney (Church Council, Youth); Nancy Clark (Adult Bible Study); Talitha D'Italia (Stepping Stones); Pastor Alina Gayeusk (Confirmation, Vacation Bible School, Sunday Nursery, and Staff).

--Sue Bianco, Chairperson

Adult Education

Adult Education opportunities at Reformation are designed to help members and others in the community to grow in the spiritual dimension of their lives and to build a living faith.

Adult Forums are held approximately once a month, with many ministries planning lessons and activities relevant to their ministries; Bible Study and Women's Connection are held on weeks when there is no Adult Forum. In the 2016-17 year scheduling is such that forums could be in addition to Bible Study and Women's Connection. Attendance for Adult Forum this year averaged 30-50 people. Topics for Adult Forum in 2016 included:

- Presentation by Margaret Gibson: "Everyday Miracles"
- Budget Presentation (Financial Management Ministry)
- Getting to Know New Members (Marketing Ministry)
- Presentation by Sarah Bocian and Patty Erdos on their trip to Antarctica
- Scholar in Residence: "Art Serving Faith", Rev. John B Hougen, Ph.D. (Christian Education)
- Presentations (two parts) by John Chesters about his interfaith trip to Israel, Palestine and Turkey
- Earth Day (Eco Ministry)
- Presentation about their visit to Pangani: John Chesters, Connie Richardson and Jennifer Breen
- Appalachia Service Project (Youth Ministry)
- Advent Family Festival (Lay Ministry)
- Lutheran Charities, Barbara Steichert

Adult Bible Study is an informal discussion led by Nancy Clark. It meets in the choir room on Sundays

at 9:45. The goal of the class is to study the history and culture of Israel in order to enhance understanding of the Bible passages being discussed. All adults are welcome to come when able. Bibles are available. In the spring of 2016 we completed our study of the Gospel from Handel's Messiah. During VBS last summer, a well-attended adult group met to consider the same Bible stories being studied by the children. We studied the "Minor Prophets" during the 2016 fall session.

Women's Connection is an informal discussion and study group. The goal is to provide an opportunity to explore our faith through Biblical and non-Biblical texts and to discuss living out our faith in an often too-secular world. Its official meeting place is the Women's Connection room at 9:45 on Sunday mornings. Leadership is rotated among the participants. Women's Connection participated in the Lenten small group study of the book *What Wondrous Love: Holy Week in Word and Art*, with artwork by John August. Beginning in the fall of 2016 we commenced reading and discussing *The Liturgical Year*, by Joan Chittister.

Scholar In Residence in 2016 featured Dr. John Hougen, who presented workshops on "Art Serving Faith," in which he guided us to explore how art serves our faith, how it can be used in prayer, how it illustrates our Bible, and how it is used in other faiths. Dr. Hougen preached at both services that Sunday and led the Adult Forum as well.

--Jennifer Breen, Nancy Clark, and Sarah Bocian

Confirmation

Confirmation Sunday

On October 23, we celebrated the Rite of Confirmation with six young members: Olivia Biordi, Lindsay Gamlin, Miranda Polito, Joey Reitano, Will Skarbek, and Jack Walters. The worship was designed and led by the Confirmands. Their skit, *A Rainbow of Forgiveness*, reminded us of the incredible gift of forgiveness that God gives us and the way that shapes our lives of faith.

Confirmation Class

The Confirmation Class meets every Sunday morning and gathers our 7th and 8th grade students to actively engage their faith. This program year, the curriculum is focusing on The Lord's Prayer, The Apostles' Creed, Worship, and The Bible. The expectations of the Confirmation program continue to engage the students with a life of faith within our congregation and in the world. We are also excited to have parents with us in class four times during

the year. Kristin Gress and Rob Schaub are faithful in their service as Confirmation Guides.

Confirmation Mentors

Our Mentor program continues to be an exciting and positive aspect of our Confirmation program. Mentors attend class with our students six times during the year. The mentors also have two meetings as an introduction and one mid-way through the year. Through these meetings the mentors have given invaluable feedback that has continued to shape our program. We also have Mentor Breakfasts twice during the year. These pre-class gatherings offer some time for more casual conversation as mentors and students share breakfast before class officially starts on a Sunday. These opportunities for our youth to grow in relationship with adult members of the congregation are a vital and exciting part of our Confirmation program. Jen Troutman and Sarah Bocian provide meaningful and important guidance and organization to this program.

--Pastor Alina Gayeuski

Stepping Stones

The aim of this program is to follow the children of the congregation throughout their religious milestones and to commemorate each event. This typically includes a blessing during the worship service and gift from the congregation. Depending on the milestone, the child or family may also receive education preparing them for the event. We recognize the stepping stones of Baptism, entry into Sunday School, receiving their First Bible, making First Communion, beginning Confirmation preparation, Confirmation, and High School graduation. Our newest program aims to more involve congregational baptism representatives in the newly baptized child's life. They send out quarterly faith-based newsletters to the parents for the baby's first three years and also take a more direct role in that baby's religious and daily life. Through all these programs we hope to provide our families and youth with a tangible feeling of support from our congregation to encourage them to fulfill the promises they make in baptism and confirmation.

--Talitha D'Italia

Sunday Nursery

Patty Boccella continues to serve as our Nursery Attendant, providing care for children during both Sunday morning worship services. She also provided Nursery Care for the week of summer Vacation Bible School. In September, Patty began serving as a Sunday School Attendant, working

with our teaching staff to provide classroom assistance.

Sunday School

Reformation Sunday School provides classes for students ages 3 through 11. On Sunday mornings, classes meet in the classrooms on the lower level from 9:45 to 10:45. The Small Stars, children who are under three years old, meet from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. in the Church Nursery.

Sing-Along Time for all classes begins in Room 142 from 9:45 to 10:00 a.m. when the children enjoy singing together. Sing-Along time is led by Jared and Sarah who are two of our choir scholars. At 10:00 a.m., students go to their own classrooms where lessons are presented and shared.

Bible stories are read and reenacted, pictures are colored, projects are completed and games are played. A weekly offering is collected. The annual special activities are: participating in Rally Day and Christmas Eve program, being worship usher assistants, filling food trays for Aid for Friends and donating food for City Team.

SPARK/Activate Faith has sparked our Sunday School classes with lively lesson materials and suggested activities since September 2011. This curriculum is very teacher and student friendly. A DVD and a bonus CD--ROM assist teachers in preparing for each week's lesson. We follow a lectionary style when it comes to our lessons. This means we teach the children the same lessons they will hear at church that same day.

Students earn a point for each class and worship service they attend. Those with the most points each month are recognized as Star Students of the Month. Students may also earn certificates for cumulative points as well as gift cards.

Sunday School Staff 2015-2016

Superintendent, Jen Troutman

Lead teachers, Marilyn Gilroy and Emily Black

Small Stars, under age 3, Andy Benzing

Pre K & K, Beth Benzing, Lisa Kilpatrick, and Jill Storey

1st & 2nd Grade, Marilyn Gilroy, Emily Black

3rd & 4th Pat Hacik and Kristin Snyder

5th & 6th Grade, Joe Mirarchi and Sally Helms

Helper: Patricia Boccella

--Emily Black

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

VBS was held July 10-14. More than 60 children and youth participated in our Deep Sea Discovery! - The successful VBS week was led by many teachers, site leaders, and classroom assistants. Our mission site enabled the students to work on creating 240 water bottle care kits for the people we serve at the Life Center in Upper Darby.

--**Pastor Alina Gayeusk**

Library Committee

The Reformation Library serves our congregation and its ministries with our self-serve library collection that includes books, periodicals, videos, and audio cd's in collections for children, teens, and adults. We established an optimal size of our library to be approximately 1,600 items due to the shelf capacity. Thanks to the many members who donate items to the Library as they play a large role in our collection's growth and diversity

Members:

Sue Bianco and Laura Reiter (Co-Chairpersons), Debra Besch, Edna Bogert, Erika Brooks, and Sally Burkam. Nancy Clark has expressed a need to resign from serving on the Committee, but she has graciously offered to continue to assist in processing books; we are grateful for the time she devotes to the Library.

Outreach and Programs:

This was our 16th year of operation, and we continue to reach out to ministries and groups with our library resources. Sunday School Superintendent Jennifer Troutman occasionally takes the "Bookmobile" to give the younger children an opportunity to check out library material. Items are displayed and a book list prepared for the Eco Ministry's Earth Day program. The quarterly Library Book Club featured the following titles: *Secret Chord*, by Geraldine Brooks; *Gray Mountain*, by John Grisham; *A Man Called Ove*, by Fredrik Backman; *Me before You*, by JoJo Moyes. Several book clubbers also went to see the movie *Me before You*. The meetings have been well attended and the discussions, lively and thought provoking.

Library Operations:

Routine duties for library committee members include: processing library loans and returns and following up on overdue items; purchasing, cataloging and labeling new acquisitions; maintaining the organization of the collection; planning and executing displays; and reviewing donated items. The bulletin board is changed

quarterly. Sunday School children were invited to submit drawings of animals in keeping with the theme of last 2016 bulletin board display featuring God's creatures; prizes were awarded. Monthly items are submitted to *Reformation Times* to keep church members abreast of library activities. The Library continues to maintain membership in the Church and Synagogue Library Association. We are extremely grateful for the faithfulness of the Library Committee members and for the support of church members.

Library Statistics in Brief:

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Total Collection	292	1388	1605	1656
Reference Books	34	75	96	96
Children and Teens	50	331	403	425

Respectfully submitted

Sue Bianco and Laura Reiter, Co-Chairs

REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT MINISTRY

Our Annual Fund Stewardship theme for 2016 was *Always Faithful*. We chose that theme because God is faithful in the midst of our ever-changing world and our "Always Reforming" (*Semper Reformanda*) faith life and congregational life. This theme was certainly fitting for all of 2016 as Reformation members were once again generous in their faithful support and our always faithful God has guided us as we grow in our congregational life.

Over the past few years, Reformation has been involved with a number of planning initiatives to position the congregation for growth. In 2016, we began to see the fruits of our labor and it was only possible with the broad participation of the congregation. Members of the congregation participated in the planning phases through the visioning process and feasibility studies, and then executed the plan by following through on their pledges. Members of Reformation have faithfully provided support through three areas of giving:

1.) Annual Fund: Contributions support the church operations including the building, the many ministries and the church staff. There was a strong response to Annual Fund giving in 2016.

2.) Always in Mission Campaign: We are in the beginning of the second year of the three year campaign focused on paying off the mortgage, shifting mortgage funds towards mission programs,

and adding resources and staff. Members have continued to fulfill their pledges to the campaign.

3.) 1517 Society: We give thanks for the members who have designated Reformation as a beneficiary in their estate plans. This past year, we were blessed to receive a generous bequest from William and Beatrice Moser. We give thanks for their lives and plan to find ways to honor the legacy they have created.

Our momentum is strong and our future is bright in our life together at Reformation. The year ahead will be a special time, not only because it will be the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, but also because new possibilities will be presented to us as at Reformation Lutheran Church made possible by the gifts of each member of our congregation.

Thank you for all you do to make Reformation a strong and giving church that lifts up our church family and the community. Our ministry is looking to add new members in 2017. If you are interested in sharing your time and talents please contact any of the members listed below.

Ministry Members: John Chesters (Chair), Walt Woerheide (Council Liaison), Adam Fernandez, Deb Felton, Tom Conroy, Pastor Wayne Matthias-Long, Pastor Alina Gayeuski

Respectfully submitted,
John Chesters

REPORT OF THE HOSPITALITY MINISTRY

We continued our mission of inviting and welcoming all, especially visitors by having refreshments after both services. This year we used our resources to purchase snacks for our ministry members and volunteers to use, to ensure we have snacks to serve. We'll continue this in 2017. Please consider and continue volunteering for this opportunity to help make Reformation an inviting and welcoming place to worship, sign up in on the shelf in the narthex (our gathering spot).

The ministries activities in 2016 were:

- Serving lunch before annual meeting
- Ice cream social following the Patriotic Concert
- Special fellowship time for Reformation Sunday
- Coffee prepared for fellowship time so the volunteers just have to plug it in

- Serve lunch for the Carolers and volunteers
- Hanging the greens
- Purchase snacks for fellowship time
- Reception for the installation of Marion Filtz as CEO of Kencrest
- Newlywed reception for Pastor Alina and Dan Smith
- Served Fast Naughts to celebrate Mardi Gras

If you would like to join our ministry please contact any of our ministry members. They are: Carol Bingman, Phyllis Brady, Marilyn Christine, Linda Corsi, Rachel Irvine, Bonnie Gane, Joanne Riess, Diane Black(chair person), Kristen Gress(council rep).

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Black

REPORT OF THE MARKETING & GROWTH MINISTRY

At the beginning of 2016 the team included Sue Pritchard & Betsy Kamin, Co-Chairs, Jen Troutman, Website, Caron Kamin, Ron Bingeman, Council Liaison, Kathi Burke, Lida Hoffman, Ellen Conroy, Uli Neubert.

The installation of the new Church Sign at the corner of Providence and Rose Tree Roads was the culmination of many years of discussion and efforts. We thank Ron Bingeman for being a vigilant shepherd of this process on behalf of our ministry.

In February we held a breakfast to welcome our newest members.

This ministry oversees the Welcome Center which helps connect with visitors. Volunteers are needed to staff the Welcome Center after each service.

This ministry oversees advertising for special events and holiday worship in local media.

Thanks to all who help with the ministry of welcome – greeters, welcome center volunteers, care program, friendship pad monitors, cookie angels, etc. The efforts of each member of the team help us continue to be an inviting and welcoming congregation.

A special thank you to Sue Pritchard, Betsy Kamin, Lida Hoffman, and Kathi Burke who concluded their tenure on this ministry team in 2016.

We welcome the participation of anyone with an interest in helping Reformation continue to reach out with the Good News to all people.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Wayne Matthias-Long

REPORT OF THE PROPERTY MINISTRY

The following is a synopsis of the property committee's actions throughout 2016. Thank you to all volunteers who help with the upkeep of our beautiful facility!

- Procured ice melt for walkways and placed at doors for general use.
- Monitored walkways and parking areas all though last winter for icing and re-freezing. Salted parking lots as needed after initial plowing services.
- Dave Black and John Hess on call throughout the year for maintenance issues, alarm calls, etc.
- Provided e-mail address and cell phone number to Nursery School and Stay and Play for any issues or concerns in or around the building.
- Reviewed and responded to Reformation Schools Summer Maintenance list.
- Met with and supervised Boy Scout Troop to help with Reformation Schools Summer Maintenance list and grounds clean up.
- Responded to numerous and varied maintenance calls from Reformation Schools.
- Coordinated and participated in spring, summer, and fall cleanups on church grounds.
- Procured and facilitated sub-contractors to do various repair jobs including plumbing, electrical, and grounds keeping work.
- Provided task force with names of HVAC contractors to interview regarding the new heating system.

Respectfully Submitted,
Emily Black

REPORT OF THE WORSHIP & MUSIC MINISTRY

2016 was another year of spirit-filled worship at Reformation. In addition to our regular weekly worship we had special weekday Lenten services leading up to the tridium of Holy Week and culminating in a joyous Easter celebration. We had

special music to honor Martin Luther King, for Music Sunday, Reformation Sunday and Christmas Eve. And we have fostered music in the community through the Patriotic Concert and our support of the Chester Children's Chorus.

It takes an army to carry out all these moments of worship. I would like to thank all contributors including ushers, alcolytes, crucifers, altar guild, musicians, singers, choral scholars, pastors, decorators and undecorators, lectors, communion assistants, music directors, pentecost readers, advent readers, and everyone who has participated in and contributed to our worship. Our worship is truly the work and epression of the people.

I would like to express a special thank you to Marie Moffet who concluded her years as chair of worship and music. Other members serving include Andrew Marcus, Kathy Fantau, Barb Williams, Valerie Rozek, Pastor Alina and Pastor Wayne.

It was with great sadness that we bid farewell to our Director of Contemporary Music, Bill Lafty. Bill served God and us wonderfully with his great musical talent, his fun personality, and his ability to draw people, old and young alike, into active worship.

We look forward now to the next chapter in our musical expression and to another great year of inspirational worship.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Fantau

DAVID LEIBIG MEMORIAL FUND

The David Leibig Memorial Fund was initiated in 1994 when the concept of awarding yearly music grants in David's honor was approved by Reformation's Church Council. David Leibig was the organist and choir director at Reformation for 29 years. After his death in 1992, memorial gifts totaling \$3,760.00 became the seed money for the Fund.

After approval by Church Council, the Leibig Grant Committee was formed, and fund raising efforts resulted in an increase in the Fund to \$12,000.00 in 1995. The first grants were awarded at the Leibig Concert in May 1996.

For twenty years, the Leibig Grant Committee received applications for the grants, screened and

interviewed the candidates, and selected the recipients. Successful recipients performed at the Leibig Concert, held at Reformation in May of each year. The Leibig Memorial Fund has paid for grants in excess of \$35,000.00.

In 2016, the management of the Leibig Fund was transferred to the Reformation Endowment Committee. The funds are held in a separate Vanguard account whose balance as of September 30, 2016 was \$30,358.17.

The Leibig Concert has been a special event that has introduced us to many talented musicians and has opened the doors of Reformation to our community for free concerts (and refreshments). In recent years, attendance has declined and the Committee has recommended that a new use for the Leibig Fund be determined.

The Leibig Committee recommends the following:

- The Leibig Concert be discontinued;
- The Worship and Music Ministry work with the Leibig Committee to provide music for special events and church services;
- The musicians who provide special music be compensated from the Leibig Fund;
- Recognition of David Leibig and his service to Reformation be included in the bulletin or program;
- The Leibig Fund be used only for special events that enhance the worship experience for members of Reformation and other interested community members, and not as a supplement for existing music programs.

The Leibig Committee: Dave Helms, Dick Hughey, Kris Hughey, Andrew Marcus, Valerie Rozek, Mildred Royer, Barbara Williams

REPORT OF THE YOUTH MINISTRY

Youth Ministry Members: Debbie Conley (Chair), Pastor Alina Gayeuski, Karen Chorney, Emily Black, Rob Schaub

Youth Ministry Mission Statement

The Youth Ministry team seeks to continue to encourage the growth of the Youth Ministry through helping our youth:

- Experience God's love and peace in a personal way
- Build relationships with God, each other, their community and the Church

Youth Mission Trip with Appalachia Service Project

In our seventh straight summer of youth mission work, 14 Reformation sponsored youth and adult members, traveled to Bland, Virginia to serve with Appalachia Service Project to make homes warmer, safer and drier in one of the most impoverished counties in the nation. Our team, ably led by Dave Chorney, Dave and Dianne Smith, Dave Robertson, Ron and Alexis Bingeman, Grace Brooks, Matt and Joey Reitano, Will Skarbek, Layla Phillips, Megan Gress, Brett Conley and Pastor Alina Gayeuski made much needed repairs; roofing, drywall, painting, new flooring, repairing a water damaged wall, etc. to a family home. The Youth Ministry Committee is planning a new mission trip opportunity next year through YouthWorks, Philadelphia. YouthWorks focus for the summer 2017 program will be on food insecurities/urban gardening.

Youth Group Activities

Youth Group meets about once a month during the school year for our 6-12th grade youth with a programming emphasis on service to others. Attendance ranged from 18-40 students. We had a Haunted Hayride at Arasapha Farms, made cookies for Thanksgiving Baskets and had a Holiday Hayride at Arasapha Farms. Marian Filtz continued **Breakfast Club** for high school youth on Sunday mornings between the two services.

Youth Involvement in Vacation Bible School

Over a dozen youth and college students were involved in assisting with the **Vacation Bible School** including assisting in classrooms, building sets, helping with crafts and games, serving snacks, performing skits and much more!

Spring Retreat at Harvey Cedars

Reformation Youth along with Pastor Alina Gayeuski, Rob Schaub, Lisa Squires and Steve Niss attended the **Harvey Cedars Youth Retreat** on Long Beach Island, NJ. In all, three hundred synod youth attended the spring retreat and our 20 members had a great opportunity to connect and collaborate with youth from across the synod. Retreat highlights included worship services, small group discussions, beach walking, sand football, pizza parties and the beauty of the mid-Atlantic shore.

Walking the Walk

Through the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia, high school youth from diverse

religious and cultural backgrounds have meaningful conversations, develop friendships, develop a stronger sense of identity, appreciate, respect, and embrace differences, put values into action through community service and learn to stand up for people being put down for their religion. Three students and one adult mentor are participating.

"Growing in Serving" Campaign

The Youth Ministry Committee again sponsored a successful event to fund our youth scholarships and mission trips. This year, our "Growing in Serving" campaign raised \$10,074 to help fund trips with the Appalachia Service Project.

Goals for 2017

- To send a work team of Reformation youth and adults to YouthWorks in Philadelphia
- To continue the growth of youth attendance at all Youth Group and mission trip events
- To raise additional funds for scholarship and mission trip expenses of our youth through fundraising
- To increase collaboration with other local church and community youth groups
- To continue to integrate youth participation and ministries within the congregation
- To continue the growth of the Youth Ministry Team
- To continue and grow our relationship with the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia

We are grateful to God for the gift of our engaged and supportive network of youth, parents, youth leaders, Pastors and congregation. We look forward to a great 2017 for our Youth.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Conley, Chair, Youth Ministry Team

REPORT OF THE ENDOWMENT MINISTRY

The Endowment Committee would like to report for the fiscal year 2016. During the year, September 30, 2015 to October 1, 2016, a total disbursement of \$15,500 was made from the various sub-accounts of the Endowment Fund. The fund also continues to administrate a relocation loan to Pastor Wayne per the vote of the congregation during the call process. The following are the disbursements:

- (\$3,000) for Chester Youth Choir
- (\$1,000) Interfaith Center

- (\$3,500) Music Summer Camp for ages 3-7
- (\$3,000) Pangani Scholarship
- (\$5,000) Outreach Ministry for Rotary Club

Since the revision of the Endowment Fund By-Laws on January 30, 2000, the Endowment Fund has disbursed a grand total of **\$340,357**. The Trustees are excited about the active role the Endowment Fund has played in support of our church's mission statement.

The total market value of the Endowment Fund as of September 30, 2016 is **\$580,344*** a increase vs 2015 by \$39,222. (*As of Dec 12th, the balance was \$619,847 due to election rally?) We maintained an asset allocation in keeping with the current By-Laws that is conservative by nature. In addition, the Total Return generated from interest, dividends, and realized capital gains and losses (total = \$23,647) for the October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016, was allocated to the various sub-accounts of the Endowment Fund. As a result of the allocation of the Total Return and the distribution of funds from the Accounts, the following balances as of **October 1, 2016** are established for the Endowment Fund Accounts.

Program Account	<u>\$22,630</u>
Capital Improvement Account	<u>\$11,247</u>
Outreach Ministry Account	<u>\$45,501</u>
Investment Account	<u>\$500,966</u>

This allocation makes available a total of **\$79,378** in support of the ministry of Reformation.

Trustees of the Endowment Fund for 2016 were:

Steve Niss, Chairperson
 Andrew Marcus, Vice-Chairperson
 Walt Woerheide, Treasurer
 Gary Kamin, Secretary
 John Pritchard, Trustee

The Trustees for 2017 are:	<u>Term</u>
Pat Burke (Candidate)	
Steve Niss (Term expires 1/18)	2nd
Gary Kamin (Term expires 1/19)	1st
Andrew Marcus (Term expires 1/20)	1st
John Pritchard (Term expires 1/21)	1st

In addition to the Endowment and of note is that this same committee also administers the Reinhard and Leibig funds.

Respectfully submitted,
 Steve Niss, Endowment Fund Chairperson

REPORT OF THE OWLS

We had another enjoyable year of fun and fellowship. The group ranges in size from 15-30 and continues to meet the second Monday of the month at 12:30 p.m. in Creighton Hall, with the exception of July and August. The event normally includes lunch and a program with time for catching up with news about one another. Freewill offerings at each meeting pay for purchased food and table decorations. Time, talent, and desserts are all donated. Coffee is provided by Reformation.

Putting together this monthly event requires a lot of help. We have been blessed once again this year by Joe Mirarchi and John Kulp who set up and take down tables and chairs for our meetings. Sally Phillips is our treasurer, Linda Corsi is the organizer, Sally Burkam chairs the meetings, and Edna Bogert handles publicity, lines up programs, and occasionally cooks as well! Attendees take turns with kitchen duties, providing desserts, leading devotions, setting tables, cleaning up, etc.

Programs and special activities and presenters for 2016 were:

- Reformation members presented programs:
 - John Hess, "Senior Safety"
 - Pat Hacik, "Art Goes to School"
 - Ken Delmar, Bach music on the sanctuary organ and other instruments
 - Sarah Bocian and her mother, pictorial visit to Antarctica
 - Ken Delmar and 17 members of Morton Senior Center Band
- OWLs member Margie Gibson introduced her latest book, *Everyday Miracles*
- Edna Bogert's granddaughters each presented a program:
 - Emily Brooks, "Happiness"
 - Jen Bogert, "Physical Therapy"
- Local singer Patti Garver sang show tunes of Rogers & Hammerstein
- Once again, at our December Christmas gathering, we collected gifts to be used as bingo prizes at Fair Acres. Several OWLs visited Reformation member Jeanette Brown who is a resident at Fair Acres. The gifts were given to Jeanette's unit.

We observe birthdays, celebrate milestone anniversaries, and grieve the loss of loved ones. The OWLs make donations on the passing of members, this year for Neil Gilmour, Bill Bianco, and Dan Shook.

Sue Bianco, Coordinator and Meeting Leader
REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH, MEDIA, PA

REPORT OF REFORMATION NURSERY SCHOOL

Programs Offered:

We continue to offer 2 Day, 3 Day, and 5 Day programs in Early Start, Nursery Classes, Pre-K and After K. We also continue to offer the Extended Lunch program every day of the week.

Enrollment:

We ended the 2015/16 school year in May 2016 with a total enrollment of 82 students which included our After K program. We started the 2016/17 year in September 2016 with an enrollment of 78 students. Additionally, the After K program enrollment is at 18 making our total enrollment 96.

I am happy to report that enrollment has continued to be steady and some of our programs have seen an increase in enrollment, such as, the 2 Day Nursery Class and the After K program. Prospective families have started calling to schedule appointments to visit the school and learn more about our programs. The school website continues to be a valuable resource for parents to learn about our school.

Staff Development:

The Nursery School teachers and I attended a staff development workshop called *Music and Movement* in January 2016. The trainer came directly to Reformation for this workshop. Additionally, in June of 2016, the Nursery staff and I attended *CPR* and *First Aid* training class at Reformation and we all renewed our certifications.

Nursery School Highlights (Jan 2016- Dec 2016):

Early Registration for the 2016/17 started in January 2016.

During February, March, & April 2016, parent conferences for 2015/2016 school year took place. Activities for children included Valentine's, St. Patrick's & Easter celebrations which took place in their classrooms.

We had two fundraisers for Nursery School in the spring. In April 2016, we sold Wawa Hoagie coupons & raised **\$490** for our school. In May 2016, we had Spirit Night at the Chick-fil-A in Lima which raised **\$165**. The money helped us to buy new educational toys and bikes for the school.

In May, some of our Nursery School families and staff members attended the Phillies game as a fun

event. We also made special Mother's Day crafts and we hosted Fun Day for all classes. The children enjoyed fun water activities, playing with bubbles, and sidewalk chalk. Our graduation program was held in the church at the end of May. The children sang songs & recited poetry for the parents. After graduation, we had refreshments in Creighton Hall with all of our graduates and their families.

In June 2016, we offered a 2 week Summer Camp. There were about 33 children that took part in summer camp. A good time was had by all! The themes were Big Top Circus and Summer Fun. Nursery School generated an additional profit of **\$3,500** due to Summer Camp.

In August of 2016, I hired two new teaching assistants: Mrs. Jessica Hall and Mrs. Meghan Martelli to help in our classrooms. Both teaching assistants are a wonderful asset to our teaching staff. In addition to their teaching assistant roles, they also act as substitute teachers for the school when needed.

The 2016/17 school year started in September 2016. We had a great turn out at Back to School Night on September 4. New this year, the optional Chapel Time is now being offered to our Pre-K students once per week. . Pastor Wayne and Pastor Alina meet with the Pre-k classes every Wednesday morning for 10-15 minutes.

We had several special events during the month of October 2016. The students enjoyed a visit from the Rose Tree Fire Co in which they learned about fire safety. We hosted parent coffees for all our Nursery School families on two separate days. On Halloween, we hosted our annual parade outside on the playground area. The Halloween parade continues to be a huge success thanks to a parent volunteer who acts as our Master of Ceremonies and announces every student and teacher by name as they parade through the playground. He also provides us with great Halloween music during the parade.

The fall fundraiser, Claire's Gourmet, raised **\$1,400** for the school.

In November, Nursery school had a special food Thanksgiving Show & Tell. Students were asked to bring in food items instead of a toy for show & tell. The food brought in by the students was used to help fill the church's food closet. Our Thanksgiving Feast was held just before Thanksgiving. The children wore costumes that

they decorated in class. During the program, they sang songs for the parents and then they enjoyed a Thanksgiving feast.

In December, we had our Christmas Program in the Church for the 3 & 5 Day classes. The children sang songs, recited poems & acted out the Nativity. The 2 Day Class students had a Christmas Sing-Along for parents on the last day of school. The children enjoyed Christmas parties in each classroom. For the second year, the children in the 3 & 5 day classes enjoyed a special surprise visit from Santa.

Nursery School participated in 2 service projects for the holidays this year. Both projects benefited homeless shelters in our community. The outpouring of gifts that were purchased to help shelter families was once again, very generous.

Financial: Nursery School ended the Fiscal Year 2015/16 with a Net Profit of **\$7,194.87**.

Nursery School contributes monthly rent payment to Reformation Church. During the 2016/2017 school year, we will contribute \$22,655 annual rent.

Staff:

Marge Schaefer - Director & 3 Day teacher (15 years at Reformation & 5th year as Director.

Amy Bevan - 2 & 3 Day teacher (4th year at Reformation).

Jean Clarke - 5 Day teacher (27 years at Reformation).

Jessica Hall - 2 Day teaching assistant, lunch day teacher, & substitute (1st year at Reformation).

Kate Kelley - 2 & 3 Day teacher (3rd year at Reformation).

Meghan Martelli - 2 Day teaching assistant, After K teaching assistant, & substitute (1st year at Reformation).

Michele McQuade - 2 & 3 Day teaching assistant, lunch day teacher, & substitute (2nd year at Reformation).

Erin Steffan - 2 & 3 Day teacher (4th year at Reformation).

Amy Taimanglo - 2 Day teacher (2nd year at Reformation).

Respectfully submitted,
Marge Schaefer, Director

REPORT OF STAY AND PLAY BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Stay and Play is operating at almost full capacity. This is my 24th year as Director and we are entering our 27th year of operation. Presently we have 88 children enrolled.

We are part of the Keystone Stars Quality Improvement Program which uses an environmental scale to rate childcare centers with Star levels 1-4. In October, we were awarded a Star 3 level for the 4th year. The Stars program is built on more highly trained staff and better quality programs. The Director has taken a college course to renew the Director Credential which is a requirement of the STARS program. The staff has increased their yearly training hours to meet the Stars standards.

Through the Stars program this year we hope to receive a grant for \$4,872.00 to help us enhance our childcare center and improve safety. We plan on spending the money on classroom furnishings, offset some of the cost of full time staff health benefits, replace fence behind the church shed, purchase new chest freezer and staff development. The teachers with a degree hope to receive an Education & Retention Award from \$875 up to \$3,605 for a total grant award amount of \$10,460.00. This will certainly be a nice added bonus for their hard work.

Registration forms for the 2017/2018 school year will be distributed this month. Our fees for the 2017/2018 school term are \$8.00 per hour. We are maintaining our current rates for upcoming school year. This includes a healthy breakfast in the morning and a sensible snack each afternoon. We serve students in grade K thru 6 in RTMSD.

Stay and Play offers many activities for the children to enjoy and is built on choice. We have homework assistance each afternoon. We follow the Rose Tree Media School District calendar and are open on most teacher staff development and conference days. We operate from September thru June. Some of the activities we offer are basketball, bicycle riding, roller skating/blading, softee polo, street hockey, nerf soccer, volleyball, corn hole toss, daily arts and crafts, cake decorating, science and cooking. We continue the Peacemakers Conflict Resolution Class for 1st and 2nd graders. We offer Writing Club, Building Room, and Scary Stories Club as choices on an alternating basis. Many students volunteer to read to 1st graders, help

with service projects for PA Pathways Shelter and write letters to service members overseas. We continue to offer 5th/6th Power Club two days a month just for these older students who need a little something more to keep them involved that includes a service learning component.

Special Family Activities in 2016 included the May Art & Talent Show, October Parent Breakfast, and November Family Bingo Night. We had a detective come to speak to families of 4th-6th graders about internet safety as well as a program for all the students. We had special Halloween themed activities for younger students with older students setting up and acting in the Haunted Room. We held an annual Easter Egg Hunt and took a walking trip to Rose Tree Park in June for a pizza party and hike. We had special guests and programs visit: Zumba instructor, Upper Providence Police Department, Geography Magic Program and Pedestrian Safety Program. We celebrated diversity with themed weeks on Australia, Brazil and Germany. Theme days such as Pajama Day, Earth Day scavenger hunt & clean up, Hawaiian Week and Water Day were big hits. The students were involved in service projects such as writing letters & collecting needed items for veterans at VA Hospital in Philadelphia, baking cookies for Reformation Church cookie ministry. cooking casseroles for St. John's Hospice, crafting chew toys for local animal shelter and planning and serving as leaders for 1st & 2nd graders holiday party. The kids especially enjoyed purchasing and wrapping 160 gifts for the children and families in PA Pathways Shelter during Christmas. As a civics lesson, the students elected grade level officers and then met with the Director monthly to discuss issues, go over suggestion box responses and plan a weekly menu of their choosing.

Stay and Play contributes 12 monthly rent payments to Reformation Lutheran Church. During the 2016/2017 school year, we will contribute \$33,298.87. Stay and Play and Nursery School paid \$2,825.00 to have Hallway, Room 142 and Restrooms painted over summer. Stay and Play paid \$7,772.00 for fencing in rear of building to enclose playground and outside play area.

Staff Members:

Diane Bullen, Director- 24th year
Rogelinda Barazza Cabarcas, Teacher-1st year
Marion Boas, Asst. Director- 8th year
Sara Dolan, Teacher-7th year
Svitlana Duffy, Teacher-4rd year
Danielle Kandrak, Aide-1st year

Mary Ellen Stack, Aide-2nd year
Sherry Voorhees, Teacher-4th year
Dana Whiteley, Teacher-6th year

Respectfully submitted,
Diane P. Bullen, Director

REPORT OF BOY SCOUT TROOP 430

Boy Scouts of America, Troop 430 currently has over 40 registered Scouts. Dr. Scott Rothman is the Scoutmaster and is helped by Assistant Scoutmasters, Burt Blackburn, Scott Wade, Adam Pflug and Mark Furey, Bill Blosensky, Anthony Randazzo and other new adult leaders. All of the leaders have completed Scoutmaster Essential Training and Youth Protection Training.

The Troop meets every Monday night from September through June and schedules several Troop and Eagle Courts of Honor throughout the year. In addition, the troop tries to schedule an outdoor activity every month that incorporates hiking, cooking, camping, and other Scout Skills. The Troop participates in many volunteer, service and fundraising projects throughout the year.

Summary of 2016 Activities:

January

Owen Patane and Spencer Hespenheide was award an Outstanding Service Award from the Order of the Arrow

Klondike Derby at Smedley Park was canceled due to extreme weather

February

Annual Ski Trip to Elk Mountain.

Robbie Patane awarded Pope Pius XII Medal from the Catholic Committee of Scouting

Trip to Rose Tree Firehouse to complete Fire Safety Merit Badge

March

Goose Creek Pond Pioneering Camp Out

Jack Szipszky Eagle Scout Project at Ridley Creek State Park. Replaced Bridle Trail Markers

April

Ian Wade Eagle Scout Project at Tyler Arboretum. Erected fence along access road to work area.

May

Hawk Mountain Camp out and hike along Appalachian Trail.

Valley Forge Historic Trial Hike.

June

Troop Court of Honor and Family Picnic

Casey Calloway Eagle Scout Project at Sleighton

Field. Build a soccer kick wall for Rose Tree Soccer Club.

Colin Fulmer Eagle Scout Project at Ridley Creek State Park. Scouts helped put together over 30 picnic tables to be used throughout the park. 3 scouts from Troop 430 worked at Resica Falls Scout Camp for the summer.

July

Summer Camp at Byshore Scout Reservation in Lancaster.

Troop 430 sent over 20 boys to camp. Earned over 50 merit badges

Philmont Scout Ranch. 8 scouts and 3 adult leaders spent 9 days hiking and white water rafting in New Mexico.

August

Sent 4 scouts to NYLT at Resica Falls. Three scouts from Troop 430 also worked on staff.

James Hall Eagle Scout Project at Tyler Arboretum. Repainted visitor center building.

September

Musser Madness at Camp Delmont. Over 20 scouts attended a camping weekend with other troops. Competitions and other scout activities.

Welcomed 4 New Eagle Scouts after completing their Eagle Board of Review. Colin Fulmer, James Hall, Jack Szipszky and Ian Wade.

October

Troop Court of Honor

Campout and bike ride along Lehigh River.

November

Family bus trip to West Point. Attended Army vs. Navy football game and tour.

Annual Scout Food Drive

Annual Wreath Sale Fund Raiser

December

Worked on completing various Merit badges.

Chess, Citizenship in the Community and Communications.

**Action Related to
Mission Investment Fund Mortgage,
Always in Mission Campaign,
Building Fund,
and William & Beatrice Moser Bequests**

On December 13, 2016, the Congregation Council of Reformation Evangelical Lutheran Church adopted the following spending plan pending presentation of this plan to the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 29, 2017. Response to the plan made at the Annual Meeting will be considered by Congregation Council. Regular mortgage payments will continue to be made but no additional payment of principal will be made until after the presentation of the spending plan at the Annual Meeting. Final action on the spending plan will be made by the Congregation Council. An accounting of the funds related to these four topics can be found in the Treasurer's Report (p. 31 of this booklet).

1. The mortgage will be reduced by a principal payment up to the sum of \$150,000.00 during the 1st quarter of 2017. The Mission Investment Fund will accept an adjustment of the amortization schedule each year and after the payment, a new schedule of payments will be issued. If the \$150,000.00 payment was made in January, 2017, the balance of the mortgage would be reduced to \$147,195.87 and the monthly payment would be \$1,586.00. The current balance due on the mortgage (as of 12/13/16) is \$299,427.00. The mortgage would continue to run until March, 2026, with an interest rate review and adjustment on 3/01/2019. Additional payments toward principal can further reduce or satisfy the mortgage.
2. Designate \$86,000.00 as a tithe from the total of \$865,634.00 received from William and Beatrice Moser. It is suggested that a Benevolence Committee be appointed (this has existed in the past) to assist the treasurer in reviewing requests for funding and making recommendations to Council. The future gifts would be significant payments of \$5,000.00 or more to selected beneficiaries.
3. Use \$100,000.00 to establish a new "Moser Education Fund" within the Endowment Fund, the earnings on which are to be used to support educational endeavors such as educational programs, scholarships, and other educational opportunities.
4. Set aside funds in a Capital Improvement Reserve Account to fund building and systems maintenance, repair and replacement as determined by Council. The Facility Assessment Team has compiled a list of improvements and repairs which will be considered by Council. Projects already approved and completed or commenced are:
 - a. Sign completion with \$38,888.00 paid from capital improvement account.
 - b. Contract executed for gas boiler with deposit made and total payment of \$27,902.00 to be paid from capital improvement account.
5. Set aside a total of \$200,000.00 for staffing as envisioned in the Always in Mission campaign (up to three positions for up to three years each, with future funding from the Annual Fund. \$32,000.00 of this total was included in the 2016 Annual Fund budget (but not expended).
6. Continue to use the Building Fund to pay the monthly mortgage expenses.



In 2015, members of 9,300 congregations in the United States and Caribbean gave **\$1.75 billion** in regular offerings to support ELCA ministries in their local communities and worldwide.

When members give through their **congregations**, a percentage of that money is then shared with the local **synod** and the national **churchwide organization**.

Of the \$1.75 billion total, the churchwide organization received **\$47.1 million**, or **2.7 percent** of the total regular offerings to ELCA congregations in 2015. This represents the largest portion of the ELCA churchwide organization's current operating budget of \$69 million, which includes additional income from investments, bequests and trusts, grants, and certain designated offerings.* This unrestricted giving, called Mission Support, gives us both the foundation and the fuel to do God's work in the world.

*Designated offerings included in the operating budget are your gifts to ELCA Vision for Mission and ELCA Global Church Sponsorship. ELCA World Hunger, the ELCA Malaria Campaign and Lutheran Disaster Response operate their own annual budgets exclusively from ELCA members' designated offerings each year.

In 2015, your churchwide offering made it possible to:

Grow the ELCA in the United States



Plant and support
372 new congregations.

- **Enable congregations to renew their ministries** and reach out to their surrounding communities.
- **Work together** with our African Descent, American Indian and Alaska Native, Arab and Middle Eastern, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Latino/Latina members to develop networks and resources for ministry.
- **Develop and share resources** for faith, discipleship, prayer and worship.

Grow the Lutheran church around the world



Send 228 missionaries in more than 40 countries, and more than 73 Young Adults in Global Mission in nine country programs.

- **As a member of The Lutheran World Federation, we're in communion with 144 member churches** and directly connected to 85 companion churches in other countries.
- **Accompany new Lutheran churches**, expand ministries, and train leaders and evangelists.

Provide coordination and support for churchwide ministries



1.1 million
Maintain constituent database, including 1.1 million records of rostered and lay leaders, members, donors and congregations.

- **Preserve and maintain archives and historic records** of the ELCA and its predecessor bodies.
- **Provide office space, equipment and human resources** for staff and operations.
- **Process 150,000 gifts** to ELCA ministries.
- **Equip congregations and synods** with resources to assist in risk management and legal matters.

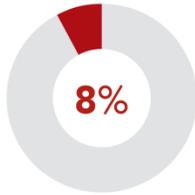
Support and develop current and future leaders in the ELCA



9,500
Recruit, prepare and implement a system for the assignment of 9,500 rostered leaders.

- **Support the work** of eight ELCA seminaries and 26 colleges and universities.
- **Identify, connect and provide** ministry resources and opportunities for networking for lay leaders.
- **Offer events and leadership opportunities** for youth and young adults.

Invest in **technology** and **communications**

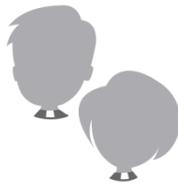


Design and maintain communications tools

to strengthen our Lutheran identity and grow awareness of our church and its mission and ministries.

- **Connect members with one another** through new technology and systems.

Provide **governance** and **leadership**



65

Coordinate meetings and support

for 65 synodical bishops.

- **Organize lay and clergy leaders from across the church to serve** on the governance boards and committees that provide guidance and oversight for ELCA ministries.

Address social issues and **work for justice**



1 in 50

Support social ministry organizations, such as Lutheran Services in America, to impact the lives of **1 in 50** Americans.

- **Engage** in churchwide study and deliberation to create social statements and resources that address social, political, environmental and other public issues.
- **Equip** members and leaders to advocate with lawmakers in order to support policies that promote justice and peace.

Your designated gifts to ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response and the ELCA Malaria Campaign provide an additional \$30 million annually to address hunger, poverty and suffering in more than 65 countries around the world.

Grow and sustain financial resources



Develop and promote efforts related to stewardship education, financial literacy, mission interpretation and growth in giving to all church ministries.

Engage in **research** and **strategic planning**



Research and analyze trends that impact the ELCA and develop innovative strategies to improve mission and ministry in the 21st century.

Sustain **ecumenical** and **interfaith relationships**



Facilitate dialogue and common action among communities of other faiths, including the development of resources and communications for ELCA congregations.

- **Seek unity in faith and life** with all Lutherans and six full communion partners.

A message from
**PRESIDING BISHOP
ELIZABETH EATON**



Dear sisters and
brothers in Christ,

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is a church striving to grow and thrive in a changing world. As you connect with people in your neighborhoods, workplaces and beyond, you have likely discovered some approaches are more effective than others. In your pursuit of growth, it is often necessary to take risks and leave the comfort of being with “people like you.” This means there is an opportunity to offer a radical welcome to all God’s children.

Living with a daring confidence in God’s grace, we are called forward together in Christ as both servants and leaders to welcome others. In these roles we are called to be spiritually grounded, ecumenically minded, responsible, value-driven, accepting of others, nurturing and together in our efforts to do God’s work. These traits help us to be faithful and walk the way of Jesus.

As we accompany each other in this walk, we remember the cross of Christ helps us share our joys, burdens and tears. When your faith community gathers to review progress, you see how God has blessed and challenged your efforts. Through dialogue and discernment, you engage issues that affect your ability to grow and thrive. You make decisions about how to use the gifts entrusted to you to do God’s work in and beyond your community. Hopefully, this is also a time you realize you are not alone. You can find courage and hope in seeing the ways God and the people of the ELCA accompany each other in our walk and our work.

Our prayers are with you as you gather to plan and make decisions about how you are called forward together in Christ. May you remember Jesus, who gave his life that you might live.

Walking together and serving Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

What is missional giving?

One way individuals and congregations participate in missional giving is when their financial contributions, often called offerings or tithes, to and through their congregation, or other charitable organizations, are intended to do God’s work in the world. We believe this work can be done faithfully through ELCA ministries.

Why give?

For some the answer is God first gave to us, thus through our life we have an opportunity to share God’s generosity with others. This understanding demonstrates giving is a spiritual issue, not a financial one. For other Lutherans, the answer is also an identity issue. We are faithful Lutherans and this is what we do – share with others. This is not an individual experience only, for we are church together, and through our unified giving we do God’s work.

What to give?

As the apostle Paul wrote of the Christians in Macedonia, “They first gave themselves to the Lord.” Through baptism, confirmation and our confessional statements, each person first gives of themselves to God. Within each person’s faith walk, they are asked to give of their time, talents and resources. This can take many forms.

How much to give?

We teach to grow toward a tithe (10 percent of household income), to a tithe and beyond a tithe as God has blessed you. This may also apply to one’s time.

When to give?

Individuals and congregations are encouraged to give regularly. The practice of “first fruits” giving, sharing a portion of God’s blessings when they are received, is encouraged. This may be weekly, monthly or quarterly. There are also times for special giving. This is often in response to specific needs or opportunities. There are also times for planned gifts. This is often for major projects or at the end of life. All these forms of giving are encouraged.

What is Mission Support?

This is the portion of your congregation’s regular financial offering that is shared with your synod. The synod then shares a percentage for God’s work that we do together through our ELCA churchwide organizations, both domestically and globally.