

REFORMATION TIMES

January 2023

SOUPer Bowl Sunday



The Souper Bowl of Caring is coming! This year, the Souper Bowl of Caring is Sunday, **February 12**.

This year, once again, Reformation will be collecting most needed items to support those in need. The donations will be delivered to the Media Food Bank and Chester Eastside.

This year, we will be collecting:

Cooking oil (vegetable and olive oil)
Honey
Pasta of all shapes
Macaroni and cheese
Dried beans

Items will be collected between **January 22** and **February 12**, and may be placed on the tables in the hallway. Thank you for your support!

Lead a CONNECTION Group

CONNECTION Groups will be starting the week of **February 19** and gathering for 7 weeks. If you have an idea for a CONNECTION Group and would like to be one of our leaders, please contact Pastor Alina or Pastor Eileen by **January 15**. Past groups have included Faith and Fitness, Book Discussions, Labyrinth Visits, Cheeseburger Adventures, Local History, Old Movies, Art, and more! Share your interests with others and make some new connections!

Helping Hands Para Support Grants Available

Reformation has recently created the Helping Hands Para Support Fund. Grants are available to offset the cost of paraprofessionals or aids needed for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities to attend our education programs or other Reformation activities. Contact Pastor Eileen with questions or to apply.

SAVE THE DATE

Pastor Eileen's Ordination

Pastor Eileen will be ordained into the ministry of Word and Sacrament on **January 28**, at 11:00 am at Reformation. The service will be both in person and live streamed. Reception to follow. Please RSVP at: relcmedia.org/ordination.

Celebrate RIC Sunday

Both worship services on Sunday, **January 29** will participate in the annual Reconciling in Christ Sunday to celebrate our commitment to welcome and affirm the LGBTQIA+ community and all God's people. For more information or to be part of the leadership on this day, contact Pastor Eileen.



Annual Meeting January 29



Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, **January 29** at 12:00 noon in the sanctuary. The meeting will be livestreamed, but only members who are physically present may speak or vote.

The presentation on church finances with Treasurer Tom Conroy, will be on Sunday, **January 22**, at 9:45 am in the Choir Room. Members can attend in-person or participate via Zoom.

January ECO Tip



Now that Christmas is over and new items have replaced older ones, you should think about donating or selling your unwanted items. Plan a garage sale or donate to a charity organization (think tax write off!) Throwing something away should always be your last resort!



If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

1 Corinthians 12:26

Izzy Merkins received her First Communion on **November 27** at Reformation.

Keaton and Bryson Lesser received their First Communion on **December 11** at Reformation.

Sunday School Dates

All children from birth to grade 6 are invited to



join us for Sunday School. Children's Choir is for children age 4 to grade 5. Special Sunday celebrations are for

all children and youth at Reformation. Contact Pastor Eileen with any questions.

Sunday School will be held on:

January 8
January 15 (*MLK Day of Service*)
January 22
January 29
February 5
February 12 (*Souper Bowl of Caring*)

Children's Choir schedule:

January 22
February 26

Small Stars Update

The Small Stars Sunday School class for children from birth through age 2 is currently on hold until the Spring. The nursery continues to be open for families to use during education hour especially for those who have older children in Sunday School classes. Please reach out to Pastor Eileen with questions, and we hope to see our youngest disciples back soon!

Prepare for First Communion



It is our practice at Reformation that children receive their first communion at the desire of their parents. This can be done for any age (or ages if you wish for siblings to receive first

communion together).

First communion instruction is an at-home lesson set that can be completed at your own time and pace. Any time we celebrate communion as a congregation is a date that can be chosen.

Families desiring for their child to receive their first communion should contact Pastor Eileen.

Thank you!

Dear RELC Family,
Words cannot convey the depth of my gratitude for the love and support Jess and I received during his

hospitalization, and the care and compassion shared with me after his heavenly journey. While I've sent a number of thank you notes, I'm not able to respond to every card, but wanted to acknowledge them here. I was also touched by those of you that took time out of your busy lives to come to Jess' memorial, given that we only joined in the "Covid spring." That blessing is beyond measure. From the depths of my heart, I thank you. May God bless you all for your kindness. - Marie Allsman



REFORMATION TIMES

Published Monthly by

Reformation Lutheran Church

Deadline: Noon the 15th of every month
Materials to: newsletter@relcmedia.org

Congregation Council and Officers

John Grantland, *President*; Debbie Conley, *Vice President*; Laura Reiter, *Secretary*; Tom Conroy, *Treasurer*; Jamie Anderson, Rachel Bingeman, Kristen Chorney, Eric Hathaway, Marian Filtz, Mike Polito, Tyler Troutman, Pastor Alina Gayeuski and Pastor Eileen Ruppel-Doan.

Upcoming Youth Group Events



- **January 22** – Disney Virtual Escape Room and Games
7:00 PM at Reformation
- **February 12** – College Care Kit Making
12:00 noon – 2:00 pm at Reformation
Lunch will be provided
- **March 24-26** – Tuscarora Lutheran Youth Retreat
See additional mailing for more information.

Winter Connect Weekends



CONNECT is a fun-filled weekend at Bear Creek Camp to share with camp friends and returning summer counselors in activities unique to BCC in the winter! The weekends kick off on Friday night and run until Sunday after lunch. Cost for the weekend is \$130/person.

9th - 12th Grade - **January 6th-8th**

4th -8th Grade - **January 13th-15th**

Learn more at bearcreekcamp.org/connect-winter-camp.

Tuscarora Retreat Registration is Open!

Registration is now open for the Tuscarora Lutheran Youth Retreat, **March 24-26**. Blank forms are available at church and must be returned with payment by **January 22**. Scholarships are available. Contact Pastor Eileen with questions.

Christ In Our Home Booklets

The January/February/March issue of the *Christ in Our Home* devotional booklets are now available for pick up at the church. If you would like to have one mailed to you, please contact the church office.

Library Book Club



You are invited to join our next book club meeting on **January 17, 2023**, at 7:00 pm. We are turning to mystery and murder with our book selection, ***The Lost Apothecary*** by Sarah Penner. Karen Chorney will

lead our discussion via Zoom. Contact Laura Reiter for more information at longreiter@gmail.com.

About our book selection:

"*The Lost Apothecary* is a poisonously good read... An enthralling work of mystery, murder, trust, and betrayal. Set in an atmospheric London, Penner's immersive story flows skillfully from past to present, revealing the heartaches and lost dreams of three captivating main characters in a page-turningly tense drama that surprises right up until the final paragraph."

- NPR

Join the Lunch Bunch

This month, the lunch bunch will be meeting at The Painted Teacup in Upper Darby on Thursday, **January 5**. You can also join their Zoom meetings if you prefer. For more information, please contact Sue Bianco or Edna Bogert. All are welcome!



The Lunch Bunch had a festive get together on December 1 at Ashley's Restaurant in Glen Mills.

Blood Drive



Reformation will be hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive on Saturday, **February 4** from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please go to redcrossblood.org.

Student Addresses Needed

Have a student in college? Please email your student's address to the church office at rlc@relcmedia.org by **January 15**. Students can expect a surprise in the mail next semester!



Interfaith Philadelphia

See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love Book Club

From January to March, in preparation for Valarie Kaur's receipt of the 2023 *Dare to Understand* Awards, we will read and discuss her book *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love* in three sections:

- Love for Others (wonder, grieve, fight)
January 8 at 5pm
- Love for Opponents (rage, listen, reimagine)
- **February 12** at 5pm
- Love for Ourselves (breathe, push, transition) and Epilogue (joy)
March 12 at 5pm

While we recommend joining us for all three sections, we welcome your participation if you can only attend one or two. We do recommend, however, that you read all previous sections before attending, as each section builds on the earlier parts of the book. For more information and to register, please go to interfaithphiladelphia.org/events.

Mark E. Davis Scholarship

The Mark E. Davis Scholarship was established by The Rev. William and Irene Davis, following the death of their son, Mark. The scholarship is a one-year scholarship to a four-year college or university awarded to a member(s) of Reformation Lutheran Church. Applicants can be high school seniors or currently attending a college or university. The scholarship is awarded to an applicant(s) who demonstrates a high level of academic, religious, and community-oriented commitment and achievement. The scholarship is awarded annually in July.



Applications for the 2023-2024 academic year may be obtained by downloading from the church website, a printed copy by contacting the church office, or electronically by contacting Ellen Davis Conroy by email at DavisScholarship@relcmedia.org. All applications and support materials must be received or postmarked by the May 1, 2023 deadline.

Applicants should be aware that requesting transcripts and letters of recommendation can take extra time and should plan accordingly in order to meet the deadline.

Applications can be left at the church office c/o Mark E. Davis Scholarship Committee to the attention of Ellen Davis Conroy, or emailed to DavisScholarship@relcmedia.org, or mailed and postmarked by May 1, 2023. Applications not received by this deadline will not be considered.

Mailing address:

Mark E. Davis Scholarship Committee
c/o Ellen Davis Conroy
Reformation Lutheran Church
102 West Rose Tree Road
Media, PA 19063

Any questions can be addressed to the following committee members: Sandy Coll, Ellen Davis Conroy, Evan Davis or Rebecca Funk.

Leave the Leaves

by Sandy Coll, Toini Scherer, and Carol Stephens

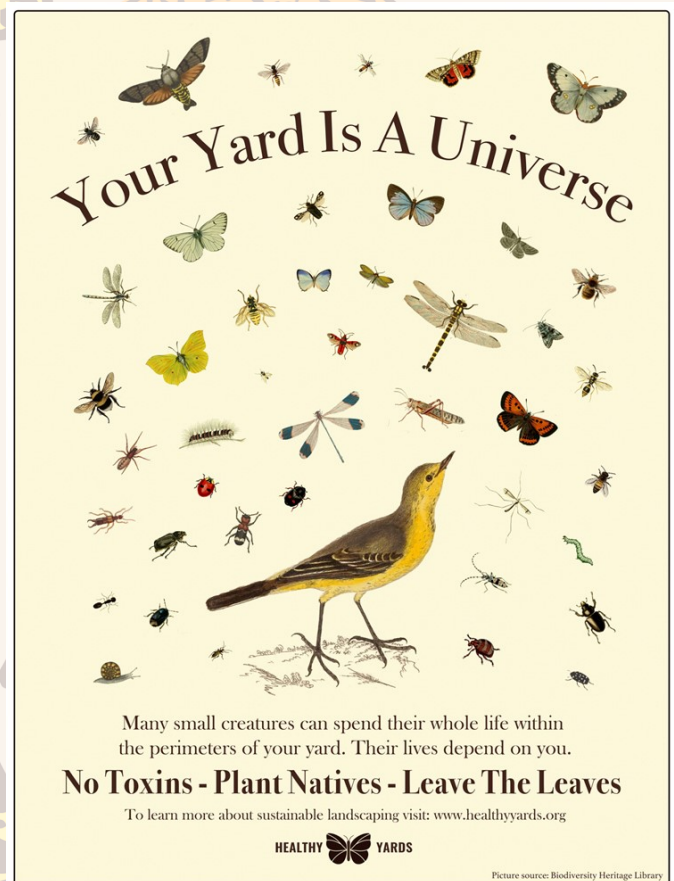
What is going on with the church pollinator garden (located at the front of the parking lot on Rose Tree Road, near the pastor's entrance). We are using one of the most ecologically valuable acts you can do this autumn: to leave the leaves. Leaf litter provides crucial overwintering habitat for wildlife including moths, butterflies, bees, fireflies, and salamanders! If you're worried about piles of leaves damaging grass, rake them into garden beds. Leaves easily break down into important nutrients that will enrich your soil for next season's plants. If possible, leave the flower stalks over the winter until spring green-up. **Our pollinators (native bees, fireflies, butterflies, and moths) live and overwinter in the layers of leaves left behind in the fall.** It provides shelter from the cold and a great habitat for their food sources as well.

If possible, leave the fallen leaves under the trees, in flower beds, or a corner of your yard. Don't shred your leaves as you may be tearing up pollinator eggs or nesting bees.

If you want to see more beautiful butterflies in your yard next spring, here's something to consider with your leaves. If you're going to pick them up, gently blow or rake your leaves into a planting bed or wild space on your property. Spreading them out in a layer of loose leaves that's less than 12 inches deep is best (think of the typical leaf depth in a hardwood forest), but this may not be manageable for all homeowners. The leaf litter will allow any Eastern Tiger Swallowtail pupae (and many others) attached to the underside of the leaves to have a chance at successfully overwintering and then emerging from the leaf litter next spring. In their last act as a caterpillar, Eastern Tiger Swallowtails (*Papilio glaucus*) crawl down to the base of their host tree and pupate in the leaf litter. At this stage, the brown caterpillar and pupa blend in well with the detritus and a light covering of fallen autumn leaves insulate the pupa from cold winter temperatures.

Would you like more information on being a careful steward of God's creation? Two new book donations to our church library: Nature's Best Hope by Douglas W. Tallamy and We are the ARK, Returning our Gardens to Their True Nature with Acts of Restorative Kindness by Mary Reynolds, provide research data and easy recommendations to restore native birds, pollinating insects, and plants to our yards. A native plant is something that was growing in our area prior to the colonists moving in. Native plants will thrive without poisonous chemicals and fertilizers harming the ecosystem as they co-evolved with the wildlife to support each other.

"An ARK is a restored native ecosystem- a small, medium, or large rewilding project...An Act of Restorative Kindness to the earth...We are the ARK is a grassroots movement that has spread all around the world, trying to restore as many individual patches of earth as possible." Worried about the planet? Change begins in our own backyards.





"O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by; yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light. The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." — O Little Town of Bethlehem (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Hymn 279)

Dear Reformation,

By the time most of you are reading this message, my husband and I will be with a group of 50 Lutheran clergy on a pilgrimage through the Holy Land! And will be celebrating the Epiphany of our Lord near the "little town of Bethlehem." We are part of a group that will be visiting sites in Palestine, Israel, and Greece as part of this clergy tour. (You will be able to follow along with our adventures on the church Facebook group!)

What an incredible gift it is to be able to start a new year with an adventure and journey in the places that are so central to our faith. While most new years do not start with something so significant as a global trip to visit places of scriptural and historic significance, the start of a new year always bring its own opportunities to find moments in our faith anew.

As you journey through these days ahead in this new year, I invite you to look and see where God is at work in your life. Where are you noticing these new opportunities to see and show God's love? Whether you are close to home or far away, God continues to guide us and accompany us through our days.

Blessings and love to you in this new year!

Pastor Alina Gayeuski

Fostering Hope Delco

Fostering Hope Delco is a volunteer-run organization that serves families and children in foster care in Southeastern PA. They are always in need of volunteers as well as financial support and donations of duffle bags, clothing, and items for care kits. To learn more, go to: <https://fosteringhopepa.com/chapter/delaware-county/> to find links to specific items that they are looking for. Contact Linda Bucher for more information.

Reformation Facebook Group



Did you know we have a Facebook group in addition to our church page? Scan this QR code to join!

Reusable Bags Needed

The Community Action Team can use any reusable grocery bags that you are willing to donate. They will be used for future holiday food bags for our neighbors in need. Please place your extra bags in the collection bin in the lobby. Thank you for your donations!



Epiphany @ Home



On **January 8**, Epiphany @ Home packets will be available for families to take home. The packets will include a litany and instructions for Blessing your

Home and Inscribing your Entryway, a traditional Epiphany practice in the church.

Sermon on the Steps in Epiphany

Beginning on Sunday, **January 8**, and continuing throughout the season of Epiphany, the Sermon on the Steps will be on the move! Held at the regular time, following the reading of the gospel, the Sermon on the Steps will travel around the sanctuary to explore the space where we worship together.



Seen Around Reformation

We have so many photos to share from our busy and festive holiday season! *Please remember to send your photos of recent events to: newsletter@relcmedia.org.*



Edna Bogert and Linda Bucher preparing to deliver Thanksgiving food bags.



Pastor Eileen and Marian Baldini Filtz, President and CEO of KenCrest, sharing their Sermon on the Steps.



Bishop Nicholas, Pastor Eileen and friends bless the gifts donated through our annual St. Nick collection.



Our Sunday School students hard at work making new ornaments for the Reformation Christmas tree!



102 W. Rose Tree Road • Media, PA 19063

relcmedia.org • 610.891.0600

Sunday Worship: 8:30 am Indoor & Online Worship
11:00 am Indoor & Online Worship
Worship services are livestreamed to our virtual church page.

Pastors

The Rev. Alina S. Gayecki
Eileen Ruppel-Doan

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January 2023

MISSION: Called by Christ, we **INVITE** all people,
SERVE our neighbors, and **BUILD** a living faith.

WELCOME: Called by Christ we invite all people, celebrating the diversity of God's creation. Reformation is an affirming congregation for all: rejoicing with the young and old, welcoming people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, working to cultivate an accessible and inclusive community for all abilities, and embracing all races, cultures, and faith traditions.

We serve our neighbors following the teachings of Christ. Reformation responds to the needs of the most vulnerable - providing nourishment and comfort, supporting the work of the local and global church, and protecting God's creation for future generations.

We build a living faith emboldened by the Holy Spirit. Reformation embodies the unconditional love of God through worshiping and learning together and valuing the gifts of everyone. To create the fullness of our community of faith, we nurture relationships, pursue racial equity and gender justice, and advocate for the wellbeing of the marginalized.

Sunday, January 1
10am worship only

Sunday, January 8
Epiphany of Our Lord

Sunday, January 15
Baptism of Our Lord
MLK Day of Service for
Sunday School

Saturday, January 28
11:00 am - Ordination and
Installation of Pastor Eileen

Sunday, January 29
Reconciling in Christ
(RIC) Sunday
12:00 pm - Annual Meeting