

January

Atonement Newsletter 2021

Annual Meeting/ Budget Review Meeting

Atonement Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on **January 24th** at 10:30am.



Budget Review Meetings will take place on **January 10th and 17th** at 10:30am.

ANNUAL
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

Both meetings will be in person and online via zoom, links can be found in the Atonement Weekly emails or on the Atonement Website. If you have any questions feel free to contact the office for more information.



A WORD
FROM THE
PASTOR

Welcome to 2021, Atonement! For our first newsletter of the new year, your pastors would like to thank you for your support of and sharing in our congregation's mission and ministry over a very, very challenging 2020.

We wish that we could promise a speedy return to something that resembles normal this year, but we don't know when, or if that will happen. What we do know is that God is with us and our congregation starts a new calendar year in a very good position to follow our mission in 2021.

Thanks to your generosity and the Council's careful management of expenses, we are in a strong financial position. We also maintained our commitment to give generously to our neighbors and partners in ministry around the world. Thanks to the hard work and creativity of our staff and volunteers, we have continued to worship and serve our God and our neighbors. We've done this in our building, online, and in the community. Two great examples are

- ❖ The covid-safe Christmas Eve services at the Park Event Center that allowed us to welcome people from inside and outside of our congregation for a safe evening of worship; and
- ❖ A tutoring program started by members of our partner congregation, City of Grace, supported by the United Way and St. Cloud Schools, for children and families to get support during distance learning in our building!

The pandemic may not be finished, but neither are we! God is at work among us and through us and will never leave us.

As we enter into 2021, we ask you to consider how you can join in your congregation's work, now and in the future. We have opportunities for volunteers to serve in person (we will need additional help in the sanctuary as we start livestreaming) and from home, any day of the week and in any of our ministries.

We're willing to experiment. If you have an idea, your pastors want to help you give it a try and we won't be upset if it fails. In fact, some of our best stuff is born in the crucible of failure! The riskiest thing we can do is nothing.

Hint - Here's an easy experiment: invite someone to worship with you, or to watch our online service at home and then talk to you about it.

A Word on Our Life Together in Times of Political Turmoil.

Over the coming days, weeks, and months, America's legal and legislative systems will investigate the insurrection that occurred at our nation's capital on January 6, 2021. The investigation will surely come to some determinations about the facts of that day, what led to its events, and what changes and/or consequences shall be its legacy. We expect these to be consequential and probably controversial. As all of these things unfold, we invite you to remember the 8th commandment: "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" and Martin Luther's explanation thereof: that "We are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light." (Luther, "Small Catechism: The Eighth Commandment", ELW, p. 1161).

This may prove hard to do. It is easier to give the benefit of the doubt to someone with whom we agree, or whom we want to believe, than to someone who challenges or disagrees with us. But in our congregations, as in our families and communities, we hold a variety of opinions and commitments. It is your pastors' hope that we will keep our shared commitment to Christ and the truth and mercy He brings first and foremost.

If you wish to have a conversation with one of us about how to apply the 8th commandment in our lives today, we would welcome a phone call, email, or physically-distanced visit with you.



Chalking the Door at Epiphany

This year Atonement celebrated Epiphany on January 6th & 10th during worship. (The actual date of Epiphany is always January 6th). It is a time to gather with family and friends (**C** is for “community”) at the main entrances to homes or apartments (nursing home quarters, extended care facility, or hospital rooms!, etc.), and ask God's blessing on dwellings and on all who live or visit there.

Leadership may be shared with a change of voice at each Leader's part (**L**).

L: Peace be to this house and to all who enter here.

L: A reading from Proverbs 24:3-4: “By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.”

L: Let us pray: Gracious God, as a shining star once guided the magi to the birthplace of the infant Jesus, so enable those who dwell here to be your light in the world; through Jesus Christ we pray.

C: Amen.

Using chalk (hence, “Chalking the Door”), people are invited to inscribe the lintel of the home (the horizontal frame above the door) with the inscription shown below. The letters C M B come from the traditional (9th century) names for the “three kings” -- Caspar, Melchior & Balthazar. Some also suggest “Christus Mansionem Benedicat” which means “May Christ bless this dwelling!” Each person is given a turn to make one or more of the marks:

20 + C + M + B + 21

L: A reading from Isaiah 32:17-18: “The effect of righteousness is peace and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and quiet places.”

M: Let us pray: Sovereign God, we pray that you will bless this home and all who live here with your gracious presence, that your love may be our inspiration, your wisdom our guide, your truth our light, and your peace our benediction; through Jesus Christ we pray.

C: Amen.

L: Lord, remember your children and teach us to pray:

C: Our Father... (People may make the sign of the cross in remembrance of their baptism)

L: May the Lord watch + over our going out and our coming in, from this time forth and forevermore.

C: Amen.



Wednesday at 6:30pm & Sunday at 9:00am

Register for Luther Crest Bible Camp Now for Next Summer!

Luther Crest Bible Camp is located just an hour away near Alexandria. It offers campers new ways to dive into the Bible, make crafts, play crazy games, hang out at the beach and praise God through meaningful worship and campfires. Youth from grade 2 through 12 can choose from a variety of classic camp programming: Leapers, Witnesses, Blazers, and Onsite Day Camp. In addition, Luther Crest will be offering summer camp safely in 2021 by regions. Surely there is something which will interest your child(ren)? Forms are available on-line at www.luthercrest.org. Early Bird discount of \$150 is offered for registration before Feb 14th and discount of \$75 if registered by April 25th. Assistance with camp fees is available through Luther Crest scholarships from Atonement and Luther Crest.



Seeking Blood Donors



This is a BIG request for Atonement members to donate blood to the Red Cross Bloodmobile on **February 2nd from 1:00 - 8:00 pm** at Atonement. Just one generous gift of blood can help save several lives in this time of need. Call Red Cross at 1-800--RED CROSS (1-800--733-2767) for an appointment. **No Walk-ins**

Operation Baby New Year Summary

This year we collected over 4200 diapers for Operation Baby New Year during the month of December! 1 in 3 families need assistance when it comes to diapering their child. Newborn and toddler diapers are needed most. If you'd still like to help, check out the Operation Baby New Year webpage.

Address Updates for Students and Service Members

We would like to encourage college and military members of Atonement monthly. We are looking for updated address for all our college and military members. This will help our card ministry as well as the church office to keep the database up to date. Please email or call the church office with their addresses: office@atonementlutheran.org or 320-252-6203

Spirit Trek Community Projects

Each month Spirit Trek students grades 6 – 9 do a community project at Atonement on the third Wednesday of the month. For the month of January they will be putting together kits for the homeless. These kits will include personal care items, hand and feet warmers. We want to do 50 kits but depends on funding. The kits cost about \$15 per kit. Hats, gloves and socks will be purchased and also given to Homeless to Homeless shelters to be given out as needed, those will not be going into the kits. The cost for the hats, gloves and socks is roughly around \$350. If you would like to help with the cost of putting these together and providing hats, gloves, and socks, please make out a check to Atonement and on the memo line "Homeless Kits."



This year the students have filled 80 birthday bags which were given to Catholic Charities who then give to families so kids can have a cake, with frosting, candles, plates, napkins and a small gift. The bags were made by women of the two quilting groups. By having a cloth bag kids will have something that will remind them that they are cared about. One hundred and fifty bags (150) Blizzard bags were filled in November. These bags are given to Home Delivered Meals so that if meals can't be delivered due to bad weather, the people will have a meal. Each bag consists of a can of soup, tuna or ham salad kits, fruit, juice, cookie and crackers. For December they rang bells for Salvation Army at different sites around St Cloud.

adult education

Sunday in the Morning Adult Education

The Gospel of Mark Series continues in the Morning Adult Education hour. Retired pastor Jan Nairn will lead us as we explore Callings - Jesus is Baptized, Confronts Satan and Calls the Disciples; What Does This Mean for Us? To join the Zoom meeting. See our weekly emails. For the link. Past classes are posted on our Youtube channel.

Faith Formation

Zoom meetings will resume in January with youth 6-9th grade on Wednesdays at 7:15 p.m. We'll talk about expectations this year and what we'll be doing together. Plan to meet for about 30 minutes. Older youth and parents are welcome too!!





NOVEMBER MINISTRY OF THE MONTH

ELCA World Hunger, and Atonement contributed \$ 1740! Thank you for your generosity!

JANUARY MINISTRY OF THE MONTH

Atonement Lutheran is pleased to help families financially so that young people can have a summer Bible Camp experience. Most Atonement families register their kids for Luther Crest Bible Camp near Alexandria. But sometimes parents find that weekly Bible camp sessions are filled, and another Bible camp must be selected. Your monetary contributions this month help assure that youth can have the summer Bible camp experience. You may use the special MoM envelope sent to you, or write a check to Atonement Lutheran Church with 'MoM-January' in the memo line. Thanks for your generosity.



2021 MoM Schedule (Mision of the Month)

January Bible Camp Scholarships

February Place of Hope

March Minnesota Food Share (contributions are matched) via Salvation Army & Catholic Charities

April Terebinth Refuge

May Habitat for Humanity of Central MN

June Tri-CAP

July School Supplies for Madison and North Junior High Schools

August LUMIN (Lutheran Campus Ministry)

September Pathways 4 Youth

October Lutheran Social Services

November ELCA World Hunger

December To Be Determined



E-giving

Our online church community offers new and easy ways to give financially to support our ministries.

Whether you want to set up a recurring gift or split your donation among different funds. We invite you to browse through the guide located on the **Welcome Stand** as you walk in to learn how to use giving in Realm. Below are instructions to download the Realm Connect App and manage your giving through the app. We hope you take advantage of this convenience. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

1. Download the Realm Connect app from your Android or iOS store
2. Sign in with your Realm login. Don't have an account? Contact the church office.
3. Tap Giving, and tap Make a Gift
4. Give any amount to the fund of your choosing

Text – To -Give Instructions

Text **Atonement (any amount you wish to donate, (Example Atonement50 to give \$50) to 73256** to give to General Fund using your text messaging. Standard text message rates do apply.

QR Code For E-giving:

Scan the QR code and it will bring you automatically to the e-giving form



News for Amazon Customers: Atonement is on AmazonSmile



Atonement has recently registered with the AmazonSmile program. When you designate Atonement as your charity of choice, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchases at smile.amazon.com to Atonement. To select Atonement as your AmazonSmile Charitable Organization follow this link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/41-6121873>. If you are already an Amazon customer, you can select Atonement, while logged in to your customer account at smile.amazon.com by searching for Atonement Lutheran Church in **Saint Cloud, MN**. Please note that there are many Atonement Lutheran Churches registered from other states.

Atonement Lutheran Church
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U.S. POSTAGE PAID
St. Cloud, Minnesota
Permit No. 382



Atonement Lutheran Executive Committee & Staff

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Church Office: (320)-252-6203

Office Hours Monday - Thursday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm

www.atonementlutheran.org

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Office Hours Monday - Thursday 8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Call the church office (320-252-6203) to reach the pastor on-call or (320-310-0822)