

The Commentator

What's INSIDE?

A publication of Atonement Lutheran Church

- 2 **Preschool**
- 2 **Holy Land Journey**
- 2 **Requesting Updated Contact Info**
- 3 **From the Pastor**
- 3 **Thank you notes**
- 3 **Campus Planning Update**
- 4 **Calendar Highlights**
- 4 **Youth news**

HOW you can HELP

- ❖ Transportation Ministry - Drivers
- ❖ Hospitality Ministry – Ushers
- ❖ Worship – Readers & Assistants
- ❖ Christian Education – Teachers
- ❖ Billings Food Pantry Needs – Peanut Butter, One Can Meals, Soups, Mac & Cheese and Lunch items.

ATONEMENT OUTDOOR MINISTRIES



Will be gathering at Superior Archery in Lockwood on Thursday, January 11th at 6:30 pm to practice shooting archery. If you are interested regardless of experience please join us. You can get more information by speaking to Gene Arneson.

A New Year, a New Look, a New Format for the Commentator.

Changes you will see...

As we start the New Year off we have decided this would be a great time to implement a few small changes in our written communication with you our readers. At this time we will continue to send out a paper newsletter but we are also considering offering an electronic version of our newsletter that will be sent out via email. With the new and essentially low cost of this technology, using digital communication, we see the possibility of lowering the printing expenses we incur monthly. Two changes you will see in this first issue will be; no "Servants Schedule" these will now be mailed and emailed out to those who are scheduled for the coming

month. The monthly calendar will be removed and we will have a list of abbreviated special events, with dates and times only. Ministry leaders who want to expand on meetings or submit articles giving additional information regarding their event are welcomed to do so. We truly look forward to hear your comments and feedback as these and other changes will be made over the next few issues. We will be asking for all who would prefer to receive a digital newsletter in lieu of a paper copy to notify the church office via email at office@atonementbillings.org.

Atonement Annual Meeting Date Set

We will be hosting our Annual Meeting here at Atonement on Sunday, January 28th following an All Church Potluck Brunch directly after the second service. We encourage you to make definite plans to be present for this

meeting. We will be voting on new council members, delegates, and social statements, sharing in the vision of future ministry opportunities and so much more.

Worship Leadership Training

If you already or would like to volunteer at Atonement Lutheran as a Lector, Worship Assistant, Usher or Greeter, we will be having a training session on January 14, at 9:15am during the Adult Forum to offer to you some new tools for successful ministry. We will review past policies and procedures and share with you new ways to be consistent from week to week regardless to who is serving and prepared in all aspects of your duties.

MENU



Wonderful Wednesday
Applebee's
Jan 10th
Marvelous Monday
Montana Jack's
Jan 22nd



Atonement Lutheran Preschool

Happy New Year from Atonement Lutheran Preschool! December is always such a busy month with all the holiday activities that it seems to be past us with a blink of an eye. Our Christmas program was a huge success, the students performed with smiles and jingles (jingle bells that is!) This past month we really worked with our Fruit of the Spirit Peace. It is sometimes difficult to remember to take a calming breath and reflect on Peace of the season. The students work on the letters J, K and we had lessons on Holiday Traditions, had a special Polar Express Day, and had a birthday party for Jesus. The students had a fun time in the dramatic play room where we

had set up a Santa's Workshop. In January, we will be celebrating the Fruit of the Spirit Joy. We will also be going on an off-site field trip to Wise Wonders Children's Museum. We will also be returning to our regular schedule after our busy Christmas break. Thank you for your loving support of our wonderful ministry at Atonement Lutheran Preschool. If you have any questions about the preschool or would like to help, my door is open to you! Atonement Lutheran Preschool is blessed to be a part of Atonement's ministry!

Blessings from your Director of Atonement Lutheran Preschool,

Sara Westrope

11 Day Pilgrimage to the Holy Land from Billings, Montana November 26 - December 06, 2018.

In approximately 50 weeks a group of travelers will be departing Billings on an adventure of a life time, you will not want to miss out. Pastor Darren Paulson of Atonement Lutheran Church and Pastor Steve Loy of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd will lead a group of people to "Walk Where Jesus Walked" on a Holy Land Journey. Visiting Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Jericho, Nazareth and walking along the shores of the Sea of Galilee are a few of the points of interest you experience. Enjoying time of fellowship and biblical devotions in some of the very places where these bible stories are said to have taken place. Reservation applications are available at both Atonement Lutheran Church, and Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd and also can be completed online at www.goodshepherdtravel.com.

Festival of Trees 2018

Now that the Festival of Trees 2017 is over for another year. It is time to start thinking ahead for the "Festival of Trees 2018". During the months of January, February and March local department stores offer sales pricing on gloves, hats, scarves and mittens. Anyone

wishing to donate towards the 2018 "Festival of Trees" this is a great opportunity to pick these items up. Thank you again for your generous giving. Contact Cindy Dunmeyer if you have any questions at 724-986-2973.

Christikon Clips

Watch this month for Christikon brochures on opportunities for youth. It's not too early to start thinking about this summer. Youth brochures will be mailed to every young person in grades 4-12 in our congregations this month. Those brochures will detail some very special deals for registering early for camp. We hope to serve even more people from our member congregations in 2018!

Save the date: Christikon Benefit Auction at the Billings Depot is scheduled for April 29. Too few of our nation's young people (not to mention adults) have significant outdoor experience. Christikon combines spirited outdoor experience with a community experience that helps open people to the life of faith. Think about joining the Christikon life this coming summer. It can do a world of good...

Friendship Group

Friendship Group will meet on Wednesday, January 10th at noon for their monthly potluck lunch. Plan to stay after the potluck for an afternoon of cards. All are welcome, if you have any question or suggestions call Sandi Gonzalez at 406-348-3707.

Do you have new . . . ?

If you have moved in the last six months and would like us to have your new mailing address, phone number or email address please send it to the church office via email to office@atonementbillings.org or drop it off at the church office! We will be printing an updated Church Directory this month so please don't delay.



From The Pastor

"Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy." - Proverbs 31:8-9

There is a lively debate in our country about the First Amendment. Can Nazis be kept off college campuses? When does intolerant speech become an incitement to violence? Should hate speech be protected at all?

Some believe in an absolute right to speak, even if hate is what gets said. They fear that anything less gives those with power the leverage to silence those without. Others say that speech that advocates for violence is violence and should never be protected. It's an important debate to have.

But I am a Christian. So, whatever we as Americans decide our Constitution means, I know that my freedom of speech has already been constrained by the God made known in Jesus. Words of discrimination and hate and violence

are out. Likewise, silence in the face of injustice is unacceptable.

Proverbs tells me I have to speak out for those who cannot speak and defend the rights of the poor and needy. James cautions us to not use our words for selfish ambition or deceit, but to speak wisdom which brings about peace, gentleness, mercy and good fruits. Philippians demands I focus on "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable..."

There are so many scripture passages that teach me how to speak! And others that teach me to be silent. It feels like there's a lot I cannot say – or rather, choose not to waste my energy saying. To make this choice frees me to share a gospel of grace, love and salvation.

As we enter a new year – and this season of Epiphany – let your choice of words declare Emmanuel – God is with us!

Pastor Darren

WE BRING THE HOPE WE SHARE IN CHRIST TO ALL!

Campus Planning moving forward

The Campus Planning Team had a busy year with the planning, coordination and construction of a shared walking path between the campuses of Atonement and WyndStone. Thanks to all that offered their time and support! As the CPT moves forward, the main outstanding item is final grading and native grass revegetation around the new walk areas. After this effort is

complete, there are no scheduled and financed campus-wide projects. However, if you wish to nominate and champion a project, please contact me at the information below. Thank you to all the members of the CPT. If you wish to join the CPT, please contact me. Thank you. Tyler Westrope 406-670-3878. tk_westrope@hotmail.com.



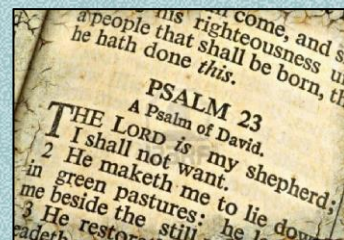
Sign up Today!

Classes will be offered beginning Sunday, January 14 following the 10:30am worship service. Contact the church office if you will be needing childcare and to sign up. Call 406-245-7004 or email office@atonementbillings.org.

Wednesday's Adult Bible Study

Jan. 3 Psalm 51:1-10
Jan. 10 Psalm 113
Jan. 17 Psalm 146
Jan. 24 Psalm 37:1-9
Jan. 31 Psalm 111

Meet at the Little White Church, begins at 10:00am. Led by Pastor Darren.



Sunday's Adult Forum 9:15am

Jan. 7 Holy Land Travels with Eleanor Andersen
Jan. 14 Worship Leadership Training
Jan. 21 Faith, Sexism and Justice: Part I
Jan. 28 Faith, Sexism and Justice: Part II
Grab a quick cup of coffee and join us every Sunday morning during the Sunday School hour for our Adult Forum.



Thank you from the heart...

Thank you...more than I can say. Thank you so much for putting out the food and cleaning up afterwards.

Rex & Bonnie Lewis Dane's Family

THANK YOU! Thanks to all of you for your words of comfort, cards, memorials and all the hugs in memory of Colin. Thanks especially to Pastor Darren for his visits to Colin in the hospital, his words of comfort at the Memorial Service and his visits with me. Also special thanks to all the ladies for the luncheon, Gary and Kristin for their music.

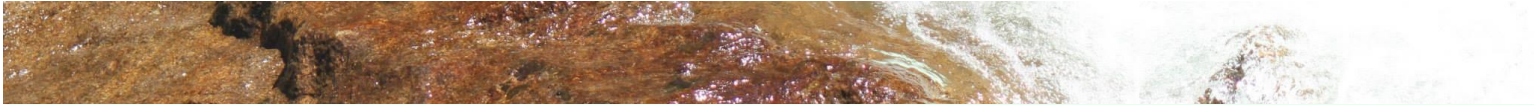
God bless all of you, Mae Glasgow



1290 Sierra Granda Blvd.
 Billings, Montana 59105
 (406) 245-7004
 atonementbillings.org

Non-Profit
 Organization
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Billings, MT
 Permit # 904

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Youth & Family Updates

January 2018

- ☞ Jan 1 – New Year’s Day, Office Closed
- ☞ Jan 5 – Men’s Square
- ☞ Jan 10 – Friendship Club
- ☞ Jan 10 – Wonderful Wednesday Meal
- ☞ Jan 11 – Archery 6:30pm
- ☞ Jan 14 – Worship Leadership Training
- ☞ Jan 16 – Church Council Meeting
- ☞ Jan 20 - BINGO
- ☞ Jan 22 – Marvelous Monday Meal
- ☞ Jan 28 – All Church Potluck
- ☞ Jan 28 – ALC Annual Business Meeting

Love Offering Designation for January 2018
TBA
 Hospital Visitation for January 2018
Shirley Jennings

• Thank you to all who supported the NYG 2018 youth by purchasing delicious treats at the Holiday Bake Sale or a chance to win the Wreath of Gift cards. We appreciate your financial support as well as your prayers and encouragement as we get ready to join thousands of other ELCA youth in Houston this summer for an amazing adventure of faith, learning, service and fun!

• Wednesday evening Youth Group returns to the regular schedule with a shared meal at 6:30pm followed by fellowship and discussion. All youth in grades 7-12...make 2018 the year to join us! You won't regret it! Adults/groups are welcome to provide a meal and dine with the youth (www.atonementbillings.org/get-involved/youth) and click on weekly/sign up here or contact Kim Mangels (670-7878) for more information.

• January 20: Save this Saturday date on your calendar. Tell your friends and neighbors! Join the youth for a game (or 2) of BINGO!! More information coming.

• For ALL: The Youth & Family Committee are planning some winter activities for all youth & families of Atonement (this means everyone!). Get ready for a winter bonfire (hot dogs and s'mores included) and an afternoon of curling.

• The Youth & Family committee will be planning winter/spring/summer activities. Join us for our monthly meeting (2nd Monday, 6:30pm) - next meeting will be Monday, Jan 28!

Any questions or concerns, contact *Trudi Paulson, chair of Y&F committee (690-4351)*