

MARCH 2018

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The Commentator

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A publication of Atonement Lutheran

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HOW you can HELP

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

ATONEMENT FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Friendship Group will meet March 14th with a potluck at noon. We will have a guest speaker, speaking on Elder Abuse. Hope to see you all there. Questions: Sandi Gonzalez 406-671-7199.

Wonderful Wednesday

Mar 14 – Atonement Lenten Soup Supper

Marvelous Monday

Mar 26 – Applebee's 6PM

Atonement Lutheran Chapel Choir Presents a

Good Friday Cantata - My Savior's Love

For Christians, there are no more significant events than those of Holy Week. Reflecting on the life, death, and miraculous resurrection of Jesus Christ is over-whelming – but true! The significance of a final meal with his disciples, the painful thorns and subsequent crucifixion, the promise of eternal life for those who accept and believe these difficult truths, all encompass a long and grueling week – still, a Holy Week. Please join us and invite your families and friends Friday, March 30 at 8:00pm as Atonement Lutheran Chapel Choir presents "My Savior's Love".

My Savior's Love breathes musical breath into this incredible story. It embraces the love Jesus expressed to us on Calvary through me and familiar texts and tunes. Its purpose is to give pause to those dreadful occurrences but, more importantly, to share the hope and love of our Savior to all who seek him. All he did, he did for

us! We all need reminders, but in scripture after scripture God asks us to remember. "Remember your Creator." "Remember how I led you." "Remember what I did for you – my body, given for you." It's pretty clear that remembering is important to God.

So when Jesus came to his last earthly week, he made sure to set everything in place for us to remember this incredible new covenant that he made. He instituted the practice of communion so we would remember his sacrifice and his love. He knows us so well, doesn't he? He knows our weakness. In fact, he knows everything there is to know about us yet he came anyway. Romans 5:8, "God demonstrated his love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." What a powerful display of Love!

Mary McDonald/Rose M. Aspinall

Holy Week 2018 Atonement Lutheran Church

March 25th - Palm Sunday Worship at 8:00 and 10:30 AM

March 29th - Maundy Thursday Worship and 1st Communion 7:00 PM

March 30th - Good Friday Cantata - "My Savior's Love" 8:00 PM

April 1st – Sunrise Service Little White Church 6:30 AM

Easter Pancake Breakfast Atonement 7:15 AM

Resurrection Celebration in Worship 8:00 and 10:30 AM

Kids Easter Egg Hunt Following the second service!

atonementbillings.org





FAMILY PROMISE OF YELLOWSTONE VALLEY

Atonement Lutheran has been affiliated with Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley (formerly known as Interfaith Hospitality Network) since its inception in 2003. We were one of the 13 original congregations, and now have 29 local congregations, with over 1400 volunteers who care for homeless families. The case managers and staff at FP have been able to expand the services, and the success rate of homeless families finding stable housing for a year or more after graduation has risen from 84% to 87% over the past year.

The FP families will again be our guests from March 18th to March 25th this spring. We need Atonement members to help with hosting suppers, sleeping overnight, preparing meals, doing laundry and setting up/tearing down the bedrooms. Please consider helping in one of these ways. If you've never been a part of this, we can pair you with some of our "veteran" hosts. We offer warm beds, warm meals, and warm hearts to families who otherwise may be sleeping in cars. Please consider serving one of the most important ministries at Atonement. Gods work. Our Hands. Please Call Janie Fitch-Danielsen for further details 861-9349.

Special Guests - Lectures, Dialogue & Moderators

The Wheatley Lectures focusing on the theme of "*Creating Community in Fracturing Times: Returning Civility to Civil Dialogue*" will take place on March 8-9, 2018 on the campus of Rocky Mountain College. At a time when various political, religious and societal issues are particularly divisive, this event hopes to provide opportunities for engaging in dialogue, cultivating civility in the midst of conflict, and finding common ground. Thursday, March 8th 4:00 p.m. Thursday, March 8th 7:00 p.m. Friday, March 9th Noon. Location: Taylor Auditorium in Losekamp Hall, RMC campus.

Atonement Lutheran Preschool

The Atonement Lutheran Preschool is now taking enrollment for the 2018-2019 school year! If you know of any children preschool age, 3-5, word of mouth is the best advertisement. It is never too soon to register!

We are blessed to welcome three new students to our preschool since the beginning of the New Year. All our students are a blessing and we welcome their excited smiles as

they come in each morning. We are thankful for our friends at WyndStone, letting us come over and visit and read with us. It is a joy to have friends so close!

We wish to thank you for your support at our Valentine's Day Fundraiser.

Blessings from your Director of Atonement Lutheran Preschool,
Sara Westrope

WELCA Spring Luncheon 2018

Mark your calendars! Women of all ages are invited to a WELCA Spring Luncheon Saturday, April 7th, 11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M. at Atonement.

This is an event where we will be hosting women from other area churches, so all attending

Atonement women are asked to bring a large salad. A free will offering will be taken. Come, join us! We will have a guest speaker, eat great food, visit with our neighbors and maybe win a door prize! Bring a friend!

Judy Belden - WELCA

Christikon Clips

Bus Attendants needed for 2018 – Would you or someone you know be willing to ride with youth on their way to Christikon? Yes? Please call Kerry in the office at 406-656-1969 or secretary@christikon.org. Don't miss out on the Early Registration Discount for youth campers: Register by March 15 and save \$25 in any youth session. If you don't have the camp brochure mailed to you, pick one up at the church, or register online. Christikon is an extension your congregation's ministry Adults and

families: Check out the special focus for each of the family/adult weekends next summer at Christikon: work projects, faith formation, and Bible study will be woven together with worship, meal fellowship, re-creation, folk dancing, and much more. Family/adult brochures are available at churches in early March, or check out camping for adults and families online at www.christikon.org.



From The Stewardship Committee

Last month at our Congregation Annual Meeting, our congregation affirmed the importance of youth and family ministry to, not only our current members, but our growing mission to our growing neighborhood, by funding the Youth Ministry Director position in our annual budget. Staff leadership for our program ministry is vital to our intergenerational approach to the faith formation of our congregation – think of our church staff as the engine that keeps us moving forward... and right now we are underpowered!

At the end of 2017, our financial situation gave indication that we could not be able to support the salary for this position in the 2018 budget. Your generosity in December allowed us to finish “in the black,” however if we still had Jon Bates, our previous youth director with us, we would have finished the year behind budget. At the meeting last week, we heard quite clearly from the congregation both an affirmation for this position by keeping it in the budget... and the financial challenge that “Yes – we can do this!”

To accomplish this, we are encouraging you, as members of the church, to consider three things:

1. Take a step forward in your giving. Perhaps 1%... or 2%... or whatever you feel the Spirit calling you to do. For some, because of your financial situation, you can't give any more because your generosity is already stretched thin and it is already an act of faith. For that, we say “thank you!” You are a witness to faithful, sacrificial giving – and an inspiration to others! May the rest of us be inspired today! We feel we

need to see a monthly surplus in giving of \$4,000 to ensure we'll be able to honor our commitment of supporting this salary.

2. Adjust your current giving distribution percentage between the General Fund and the Building Fund. Currently, our Building Fund has a healthy reserve – and once monies are donated for that purpose, they are restricted in their use. We can't borrow from them or redirect them. But when you redirect a portion of your contributions to the General Fund, you have freed up funds – put “gas in the tank” – for ministry while we gradually draw down the reserves on the Building Fund.

3. Sign up for Simply Giving – which is an option for an electronic transfer of funds which you can control to guarantee consistent, steady support for the ministries of our church. It ensures that our church receives your intended contribution every week, or month, or however you choose, so you don't need to worry about missing the offering plate if the weather is bad, or you're on summer vacation, or forget your envelope on the counter as you head out the door! Currently, we have 49 households, or 17% of giving members in our congregation using Simply Giving. It's our challenge today to increase that percentage to 25% (or 35% ...double?) of our households to get signed up. If you would like more information about this opportunity, there will be members of our newly formed Stewardship Committee at a table in the Commons Area.

Thank you for your support!

WE BRING THE HOPE WE SHARE IN CHRIST TO ALL!

Youth Ministry Staffing Update

At the Annual Meeting, the congregation approved funding for a full-time Director of Youth and Family Ministries in the 2018 Annual Budget. However, Church Council wanted to see financial strength to ensure we will be able to sustain the additional salary. (Think of it as somewhere between a “leap of faith” and the Parable of the Wise Builder who must calculate the costs!) Church Council aspires to see a consistent giving surplus of \$4,000/mo. for a few months to ensure we will be able to support this position. In January, we had a wonderful start with a surplus of \$3,440. Thank you for your support – and keep up the good work – we're getting closer to our goal!

Wednesday's Adult Bible Study

Mar 7 John 6:25-59
Mar 14 (No Study)
Mar 21 John 9:1-41
Mar 28 John 11:1-44

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

Sunday's Adult Forum 9:15am

“Making Sense of the Cross”
Mar 4 Ransom and Victory
Mar 11 Substitution, Satisfaction, and Sacrifice
Mar 18 Example and Encouragement
Mar 25 Event and Experience

Grab a quick cup of coffee and join us every Sunday morning during the Sunday School hour for our Adult Forum.



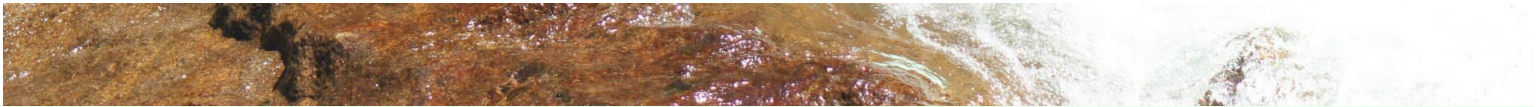
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Youth & Family Updates

March 2018

- ☞ Mar 2 - Men's Square 6:30am
- ☞ Mar 7 - Soup Supper 6:00pm
- ☞ Mar 7 - Lenten Mid-Week 6:45pm
- ☞ Mar 8 - Archery 6:30pm
- ☞ Mar 14 - Friendship Club 12pm
- ☞ Mar 14 - Soup Supper 6:00pm
- ☞ Mar 14 - Lenten Mid-Week 6:45pm
- ☞ Mar 15 - HOPE Circle 9:30am
- ☞ Mar 18 - Host Family Promise (18th - 24th)
- ☞ Mar 20 - Church Council Meeting 7pm
- ☞ Mar 21 - Soup Supper 6:00pm
- ☞ Mar 21 - Lenten Mid-Week 6:45pm
- ☞ Mar 26 - Marvelous Monday Meal 6pm
- ☞ Mar 29 - Maundy Thursday Service 7pm
- ☞ Mar 30 - Good Friday Service 8pm

Coffee Servers for March 2018
Outdoor Ministry - Gene Arneson
 Hospital Visitation for March 2018
Erin Koeppe

The snow may be on the ground now and we wonder if the temps will ever get above 40 degrees....so let's talk about SUMMER @ CHRISTIKON!! Check out the schedule at www.christikon.org and make plans for a youth and/or family camp session! If you want to go when there is someone you know at camp, consider **Pathfinders Session (July 26-29), Mountaineers Session III (July 30-Aug 5) or Mountain Weekend II (Aug 3-5)**. ALC youth and families have those dates on their calendars already. JOIN US! You will be glad you did!

So, you know that thing that you do when you think you are alone? Or that thing that your family is SO TIRED of hearing you talk about? Bring your singing out of the shower or share your favorite hobby with a new crowd at the **ALC TALENT SHOW, Sat. April 14th**. It could be singing, dancing, comedy, playing an instrument. But think differently! How about your pottery? Wood turning? Painting? Memorization skills? Sleight of hand? You have talent...we want to see it! It's gonna be fun!! PS - we also need an audience, so come ready to be amazed and cheer on your Atonement Family! Questions? Contact Shyla Best (406-591-3545)

The Youth & Family Committee meeting will be held **Thursday March 15, 6:30pm**.

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