

December 2018
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MIDWEEK ADVENT, CHILDREN'S PAGEANT & CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES 2018

**Dec. 5th, 12th, 19th
6:30pm Weekly at the
Little White Church**

Using Holden Evening Prayer as our worship setting, we will boldly proclaim "The Light Shines in the Darkness – and the darkness shall not overcome it!" The darkness in our world can sometimes feel oppressively undefeatable. It envelops us – giving the illusion of isolation, despair and hopelessness. However, we proclaim with all the saints who have gone before us that God's Light in Christ dispels the darkness of every age.



**December 24th
4:30 and 6:30pm.
Atonement Lutheran**

You and your families are invited to join us for our Christmas Eve Candlelight Services to be offered Monday, December 24th the first at 4:30pm and a second one at 6:30pm.

Sunday School Children's Christmas Pageant

Dress rehearsal for the Sunday School Christmas program will be December 15th from 1-2:30pm in the church sanctuary. The Christmas program will be directly following the 10:30 service on December 16th. All are welcome and encouraged to attend.

HOW you can
HELP

- ❖ **Billings Food Pantry Needs** –**See list posted in foyer above food bank barrel.
- ❖ Funeral Luncheon Help
- ❖ Hospitality Ministry – Ushers



WELCA CHRISTMAS DESSERT

"It's All About Christ!" WELCA Christmas Dessert. Monday, December 3rd, 7:00 PM at Atonement Lutheran Church. Come join us for wonderful sweets and great fellowship and entertainment. An offering will be taken for Christikon scholarships. Join us! Bring a friend and perhaps win a door prize!

CPR TRAINING

We will be scheduling CPR training/recertification after the first of the year. All those interested please call the church office @ 245-7004 to save your spot! More info to come.

NEW MEMBERS CLASSES

New Members classes are being offered in January. Monday evenings, Jan. 14th, 21st, and 28th beginning at 6:30pm. New Members Reception is scheduled for Sunday, February 3rd. Please call the church office at 245-7004 or email office@atonementbillings.org to get registered! Childcare will be provided upon request.

PHOTO'S WITH SANTA @ WYNDSTONE



Bring your camera and family to visit with Santa and snap a picture! Santa's making a special stop at the **Little White Church** on **Saturday, December 8th!** We'll have hot chocolate and cookies too! Santa's busy schedule allows him time to be there from 11:00am to 1:00pm. Free and open to all ages.

ATONEMENT LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Merry Christmas, Feliz Navidad, "traveling" to Antarctica and Joyeux Noel, God Jul, Fröhliche Weihnachten, Vrolijk kerstfeest, and Mele Kalikimaka and a few working in Santa's Workshop. Thank you for all of your prayers and time you share with us; you are a blessing to our preschool. May the peace, love, and joy of Christmas fill your home this year and into the New Year!

Please join us on Wednesday, December 19th at 10:45 am for our preschool Christmas program. In December, our preschool will be

Blessings from your Director of Atonement Lutheran Preschool,
Sara Westrope

FRIENDSHIP GROUP (ages 50+Older)

Friendship Group will meet at 1130 Dec.5th at the Little White Church. A Skyview choir group will entertain us with Special Christmas music. After the program we will move over to Atonement for our Christmas Potluck & a short meeting. All are welcome. Please contact Sandi Gonzalez with any questions 406-348 -3707.

STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Thanks to the members of Atonement for supporting our mission and ministries. Our goal is to help God's people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of the time, talents, and finances God had entrusted to us. In summary, we had 85 families return the Time, Talent and Estimate of giving forms on Celebration Sunday, November 11, 2018, with 80 of those choosing to give an estimate of giving. Forms were sent to the remaining 206 family units. From that follow up letter we received an additional 13 responses. We are thankful for what our congregation has accomplished in the past year, and ask for God's guidance as we meet the opportunities of the coming year.

Janie Fitch-Danielsen, Atonement Stewardship Team

Bounty of the Field, Wild Game Dinner is scheduled for Saturday evening, February 2, 2019. With special guest speaker "The Everyday Hunter" Steve Sorensen. Tickets go on sale soon, contact Gene Arneson to find out more.

ATONEMENT FINANCE THIS MONTH

| General Fund October 2018 | | Building Fund October 2018 | | Building Reserve |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Income: | \$ 32,352.39 | Income: | \$ 5,339.00 | 06/18 \$43,841.17 |
| Expense: | \$ 41,622.22 | Expense: | \$ 8,150.00 | 07/18 \$39,974.86 |
| Net Income: | \$ (9,269.83) | Net Income: | \$ (2,811.00) | 08/18 \$36,989.99 |
| Net Income YTD: | \$ (7,346.17) | Net Income YTD: | \$ (28,008.00)* | 09/18 \$39,340.47 |
| Budget Expense: | \$ 44,066.63 | Budget Expense: | \$ 8,150.00 | 10/18 \$36,894.45 |

*Reminder: The negative amounts indicate the amount we are drawing down on the surplus in our Building Fund.

FROM THE PASTOR

As you receive this newsletter, I will be in Israel with 36 other travelers from Billings. This will be my second tour. I look forward to returning to places previously visited – and going to some for the first time. There will be something learned that I have missed previously. I've got a feeling that I could spend the rest of my life traveling there and always discover something anew.

That's how it is every time I read the Bible. There's something that I read which reveals a new lesson, a new insight, a new way of thinking about God in this world – and my part in it. This is why I am so convinced that a lifetime commitment to studying scripture is so important. God continue to speak to us – in, with, and under the all-familiar words of the Bible. It's usually when we feel we "know the Bible inside and out" that it most eludes our understanding. We're always learners; and what we learn in the Bible can change our life.

Anyway, perhaps the most surprising thing in my first trip to the Holy Land was the commotion, the busy-ness, the ongoing daily grind of life that occurred when I was there. I was expecting something... different. I was expecting Israel to be somehow frozen in time: serene farms with sowers sowing seeds, wise men commuting around on camels, fishermen in long robes casting nets into the sea, just like what was described in the Bible. You know – the stuff of our Sunday school flannel boards! But I didn't see any of that.

Not only were these the things I wanted to see, but it was a spiritual pilgrimage for me and my traveling companions. So we would gather for prayers along the *Via Dolorosa* on the narrow streets of Jerusalem – but merchants would pass through the middle of our group on their way to open their stores. We had a solemn communion service on the Mount of Beatitudes – but loudspeakers announced that the grounds would be closing, so it was time for us to leave. We huddled around the entrance of the Garden Tomb to hear "He is Risen" shatter the silence – but the roar of the adjacent freeway made it difficult to hear ourselves think. The ancient stories of God's redeeming love were obscured by the frenzy of the modern world.

But... perhaps that's how it was even in Jesus day. As I read the Bible, I am reminded that the world did not stop at the arrival of God's Son. For many, his message of the Kingdom of God couldn't compete with the aspirations of nationalism and empire. The preacher of mercy and grace couldn't catch the attention of those too busy being righteous. His healing miracles went unnoticed by those convinced they needed no cure. As Jesus made his way to Golgotha, the very people he came to redeem were barely delayed in the routines of their life by the mockery of this young man as he carried his cross. The gears of institutions, commerce, power and sin continued to grind. The roar of intolerance, indifference, and hatred numbed their ears to the Good News – "God is Here! He is Alive!"

As we move into Advent – often considered a time of "waiting for God's arrival" – take a moment to read your Bible, or pay attention within this busy world, to discover anew how God is already here. It could change your life.

✝ Pastor Darren

WEDNESDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Lower level of the Little White Church 10am. Philippians addresses the complexities of living out our personal relationship with God in Jesus Christ within a community of flawed people in the faith – and a culture that seems so contrary to the Gospel. Rather than despair, we encounter a message of joy, hope and perseverance in this pastoral letter delivered through the ages to us, today.

Dec. 5

(No Study - Pastor in Israel)

Dec. 12

Free Slave

Philippians 2:1-13

Dec. 19

Downward Ascent

Philippians 3:10-21

Dec. 26

(No Study – Christmas Break)



ADULT FORUM

Sunday mornings at 9:15am. Grab a cup of something hot and join us in the Jerusalem Rm. **Introduction to the New Testament** (*facilitated video series*)

Dec. 2

Introduction to the New Testament: *Part 3*

Dec. 9

Introduction to the New Testament: *Part 4*

Dec. 16

Introduction to the New Testament: *Part 5*

Dec. 23

(No Class – Christmas Break)

Dec. 30

(No Class – Christmas Break)



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 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
 God's work. Our hands.



DECEMBER 2018

- ☞ Dec 3 WELCA Christmas Dessert
- ☞ Dec 5 Friendship Club 12pm
- ☞ Dec 5 Midweek Advent Service
- ☞ Dec 5th, 12th and 19th 6:30pm
- ☞ Dec 7 Men's Square Breakfast
- ☞ Dec 15 Christmas Pageant Rehearsal
- ☞ Dec 16 SS Christmas Pageant
- ☞ Dec 18 Church Council Meeting
- ☞ Dec 19 Preschool Christmas Program
- ☞ Dec 20 Hope Circle Ladies Bible Study
- ☞ Dec 24 Candlelight Services 4:30/6:30
- ☞ Dec 25 Christmas Day Office Closed
- ☞ Dec 31 Annual Reports Due

Coffee Servers for December 2018
Pastor Darren – Confirmation



YOUTH & FAMILY NEWS

Christmas Bake Sale

Atonement Youth will be hosting a Christmas Bake Sale on Sunday, December 16th from 9:00 - 12:00. There will be a variety of homemade baked goods and candy treats for sale! There is something for everyone!

Youth wishing to earn funds for your next youth trip: Please come on Saturday, December 15th @ 10:00 to assemble the plates of goodies. Bring your goodies so we can have a large assortment for sale! Then help with the sale on Sunday!

Please contact Sara Westrope by text or email if you are able to help on Saturday and/or Sunday!

Come & be part of the excitement of ALC Youth Ministry!

THANK YOU FROM THE HEART...

Heartfelt thanks to anyone and everyone who helped in any way with Bazaar 2018! There was no job too small and every one was important and appreciated. Over \$16,000 dollars was raised to help pay for landscaping cost shared with WyndStone, refurbish pictures for the church and reupholster chairs for the entryway. THANK YOU so much! Atonement is truly blessed!

Atonement Lutheran WELCA