

February 2019
Volume 63 · Issue 2

The Commentator

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A publication of Atonement Lutheran

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2019
BOUNTY OF THE FIELD
Event & Fundraiser



5:00pm Hors d'oeuvres | 6:00pm Dinner
7:30pm Presentation

Speaker: **Steve Sorenson, writer**
"The Everyday Hunter"

Food Fellowship Silent Auction Raffles
\$25/tickets



Atonement Lutheran Church
1290 Sierra Granda Blvd | Billings, MT | 406.245.7004

The Outdoor Ministry Committee is looking for volunteers to help with serving, raffle ticket sales, setup, food preparation, and teardown. Proceeds are currently earmarked to help with Youth Activities, Outdoor Ministry, and Christikon.

Please contact Gene Arneson or any of the Outdoor Ministry Committee to get signed up. This event is scheduled for the evening of Saturday, February 2, 2019 with setup and food prep activities taking place the last week of January. We would appreciate your assistance.

Atonement Lutheran Church

ENDOWMENT TRUST

It seems to be that time of year that we are preparing to file taxes for the previous year. When you meet with your "Tax preparer" it might be a good time to ask the question? What is the tax benefit to me if I contributed money to my church endowment fund? Will it help my State Taxes?

Please feel free to call one of our Trustees from our Endowment Trust.

Donna Newell, Trustee 406-690-6164

Gary Amundson, Trustee 406-861-1313

HOW you can HELP

- ❖ **Billings Food Pantry Needs** –
**See list posted in foyer above food bank barrel.
- ❖ Hospitality Ministry – Ushers
- ❖ Worship Assistants 8am Service
- ❖ Lector's 8am & 10:30am Services

**Wonderful Wednesday
& Marvelous Monday**



Wednesday, February 13th
Guadalajara
Monday, February 25th
Applebee's
6PM



FRIENDSHIP GROUP

(ages 50+Older)

Friendship Group will meet Wednesday February 6th at noon for our monthly potluck. Feel free to bring a friend. Our possible guest speaker will be from the Montana Rescue Mission. All are welcome, please call with any questions Sandi Gonzalez 348-3707.

ATONEMENT LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

A loving greeting is sent your way from Atonement Lutheran Preschool! We have enjoyed the warmth of Africa in our Dramatic play in January as we had it set up as an African safari. We will continue on our travels as we head to the continent of Europe. We will start off in France and United Kingdom, then go to Italy, Russia, and Spain. If you have anything from your travels or if you are

willing to come speak with the class about your experiences we welcome all your tales! We have opened enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year! Please encourage people to register early! Thank you for your thoughts, prayers, and support!

Blessings from your Director of Atonement Lutheran Preschool,
Sara Westrope

CHRISTIKON CLIPS



Information for our Congregations

Christikon Youth Camp Brochures have been mailed to every young person in your congregation who are completing grades 4-12. Save by registering before March 15. Additional brochures are available from your church office.

Family Adult Brochures will be out soon. Watch for yours in the mail or at your church.

Do it online! You can use the Internet to register for all camp sessions at Christikon, or to make a gift, or to find out more about this special ministry. Go to www.christikon.org.

SAVE THE DATES: The Annual Christikon Benefit Auction at the Billings Depot is coming on Sunday, April 7th. Early this year!

Too few young people (not to mention adults) have significant outdoor experience. Christikon combines spirited outdoor experience with focused community experience, helping to open people to the deeper realities of the life of faith. Think about joining the Christikon life this coming summer. It can do a world of good...

It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ — exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.

CHRISTIKON • 1108 24th Street West • Billings, MT 59102 • 406 656-1969 • christikon@aol.com
www.christikon.org

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ATONEMENT FINANCE THIS MONTH

General Fund December 2018		Building Fund December 2018		Building Reserve	
Income:	\$ 42,329.08	Income:	\$ 9,564.00	08/18	\$36,989.99
Expense:	\$ 32,154.40	Expense:	\$ 8,150.00	09/18	\$39,340.47
Net Income:	\$ 10,174.65	Net Income:	\$1,414.00	10/18	\$36,894.45
Net Income YTD:	\$ (1,626.87)	Net Income YTD:	\$ (29,685.00)*	11/18	\$33,817.46
Budget Expense:	\$ 36,450.77	Budget Expense:	\$ 8,150.00	12/18	\$35,280.73

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

FROM THE PASTOR

I'm excited! This last month, we had a series of New Member classes with 8 households with age groups ranging from preschoolers to retirees. It's a wonderfully diverse group of folks from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and interests. I find it a pleasure hearing their stories, responding to their questions, and praying that we may be good partners with them in their faith journey.

I've been pondering the nature of a church lately. Partly because of the New Members. Partly because of the ministries we offer. Some, because of the many in our membership that we regularly don't see. But mostly, because of some Bible devotions that I've been doing recently. It's always interesting listening deeply to scripture's description of the church. There's always an "otherness" to it. We gather not solely to "get our spiritual fill," but to serve the other, encourage the other, inspire the other, work with the other, pray for the other. From the teachings of Jesus to the Letters of Paul to the Old Testament community of Israel... every time I read the Bible, I can't escape the "otherness" that scripture talks about again and again.

It struck me hard this last month. Two funerals. One for an older adult who's death was expected. The other, a tragic loss of a young man that no one expected, himself included. In both these instances, I was reminded of our common task of bringing support and comfort, hope and healing, compassion and love. It has long been the calling of the church to (as the Apostle Paul describes in Romans 12) offer ourselves for one another, bear one another's burdens, think of others before our own needs, extend hospitality to the strangers, rejoice with those who rejoice... and weep with those who weep. There it is again... that otherness.

There are all kinds of people in the church. Folks who show up about every Sunday. Some, only when they feel their "cup is empty" and need a refill. Believe it or not, some think of the church only as "consumers" – you know... not really thinking they have anything to give, but just in terms of getting what they need: the compulsory baptism, education for the kids, be on call for their crisis. For others, Christmas and Easter is about it. It's my prayer that the folks who only come on rare occasion might discover the true joy and community that this place offers – and perhaps those who approach the church as "consumers" might discover the spiritual joy and transformational power when they truly learn to be "givers."

But here's the reality (that is borne from the Good News), every time we come to church... no matter what our agenda for showing up... we serve as an inspiration for others who find their way through these doors. Just by showing up, we embody the presence of God in this world. We offer words of comfort and healing for those who need it. We sing the songs that others don't have the strength or heart to sing. We lift each other to new heights. We draw each other up from great depths.

And... we prepare ourselves to be those who will one day receive consolation. Because one day, we will receive "bad news." One day, we will grieve. One day, it will only be by the strength of the church surrounding us that we'll have the strength to stand. One day, we will need the very support that we ourselves have been offering to others. And having shared that love, hope and mercy to others – we will receive tenfold. That's it. That's what I've been learning about the nature of the church lately. If you've been thinking about it lately yourself, I'd love to have us ponder and learn about it together. Peace in Christ,

✝ Pastor Darren

WEDNESDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Lower level of the Little White Church 10am. In January, we'll begin a new study on the Pastoral Epistles of the New Testament. They were authored as words of encouragement and guidance to the early Christian communities struggling to embrace their identity as a faith community unified by the grace of God, yet comprised of a diversity of ethnicities, cultures, values, and practices. Nevertheless, it was the diversity of this church community, empowered by the Holy Spirit that propelled the evangelical message into the world!

Feb 6

NO STUDY

Pastor at Continuing Education

Feb 13

II Timothy 2-3

Feb 20

II Timothy 4

Feb 27

Titus



ADULT FORUM

Sunday mornings at 9:15am. Grab a cup of something hot and join us in the Jerusalem Rm.

Places Along the Way:

Reflections on the Holy Land

Each Sunday in February, we'll be sharing experiences and reflections of our journey to Israel in November/December. Come to see pictures, hear stories, ask questions, and discover new insights about the Land of the Bible.



1290 Sierra Granda Blvd.
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 atonementbillings.org

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

Happy Valentine's Day. Thursday. February 14th!



FEBRUARY 2019

- ☞ Feb 1 Men's Square Breakfast
- ☞ Feb 2 Bounty of The Field Event
- ☞ Feb 3 New Members Reception
- ☞ Property Committee
- ☞ Feb 6 Friendship Club 12pm
- ☞ Feb 10 Women's Sunday
- ☞ Feb 19 Church Council Meeting
- ☞ Feb 21 Hope Circle Ladies Bible Study
- ☞ Feb 27 WELCA Blood Drive

YOUTH & FAMILY NEWS

Atonement Youth & Families!

We are looking for your input on what you would like to see happening at Atonement!

Please tell us what you think...

Should we have more family activities? Young adult activities? Youth Group Events? And if so, what?

We are looking ahead to the Spring and Summer and want your opinion!
 Thank you!

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

Coffee Servers for February 2019

Janie Fitch-Danielsen - Stewardship

THANK YOU FROM THE HEART...

Dear members of Atonement Lutheran Church, Thank you for your everlasting support and generous contribution of the wonderful children's items to Young Families Early Head Start. Hope, possibility, education, opportunity. Child and family development. This is what we are so grateful to do. We couldn't do it without you! Sincerely, thank you!

Kathy Olson – Interim Executive Director, Young Families Early Head Start

This month's Tip & Helpful reminder:

Check the expiration dates on your Driver's License, and Passport today! Don't get caught off guard tomorrow.