

The Commentator

What's INSIDE?

- 2 Adopt-A-Plot
- 2 Evangelism
- 2 Christikon Updates
- 2 Finance
- 3 From the Council
- 4 Preschool
- 5 July Calendar
- 6 Youth & Family News

FROM YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL

UPDATE - ON-SITE WORSHIP SERVICES

As you know, we have resumed on-site worship at Atonement on June 7th. Kristin La Ve' led the service with communion on the 7th and it was very well received. All in attendance were very glad to participate in worship, see some familiar faces (even if masked) and a chance to exchange some conversation or greetings before and after the service. So far, the attendance at services has been around 40 people. We hope to see more attend as time goes on and that we are able to continue with on-site services without interruption in the future. We also encourage you to continue to connect with Atonement by viewing the services live on Facebook at 9:15 am Sunday morning or on YouTube at your convenience.

We have been having a Zoom coffee hour. It has been lightly attended (3 or 4 households so far), but has led to some nice interaction and conversation with Atonement family that we have not seen for a few months. We encourage you all to join the Zoom coffee or feel free to form a group coffee hour with some of your Atonement friends that you would often visit during normal coffee hour time. We may be trying an outdoor coffee fellowship after the 9:15 service. Possibly as soon as June 28th. It will probably involve social/physical distancing and bringing your own coffee and lawn chairs. This is the current safe health guideline for coffee fellowship. Watch for further information.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

On paper, our financial standing looks very positive right now. However, if you look

closely at the financial report table, you can see that our member giving YTD has not met our expenses. Our current good standing is the result of receiving the \$61,545 in government assistance through the Small Business Association Payroll Protection Plan program.

We have been tracking the use of those SBI-PPP funds for payroll, utilities and mortgage interest through June 9th. We are confident that the way in which those funds have been disbursed will lead to 100% forgiveness of this loan. However, the loan funds were used up on schedule as of June, 9th and now we will be relying solely on member giving to meet our expenses through the rest of this uncertain time. Atonement will need your help.

During the summer months we usually see a drop in giving. The Finance Committee and Council is concerned about the health of the church income in these crucial months ahead. As a means of continuing to communicate our financial concerns, in the coming months there will be a cork board in the Commons Area with slips of paper attached detailing some of the church expenses we feel may need some extra help. If you feel like you could help, please take one or two of the slips that addresses an area you would like to help. Return it with your donation. The slips of paper will resemble a \$20 Bill and note the specific need such as "\$20.00 for Pastoral Help" or "\$20.00 for Utilities/Water" or "\$20.00 for Utilities/Internet". Any contributions made in this way will be directed toward that particular expense. Even if you are not attending services due to COVID-19 currently, you can come in and visit the church and say hello to staff anytime during office hours and possibly participate in this challenge to meet our financial needs.

HOW you can
HELP

- ❖ **Billings Food Pantry Needs** – **See list posted in the Commons at the Food Bank shelf.
- ❖ Hospitality Ministry – Ushers
- ❖ Sanitation Team



EVANGELISM

The Evangelism Committee will meet at 6:30pm the second Tuesday of July, July 14th, to begin planning for fall.

Vivian Beals

CHRISTIKON UPDATES

COVID-19 changed much in our lives and world. As we prepare to welcome you to camp this summer, we need your help to minimize the risk of infection by following the recommendations below prior to and while attending camp. If you have any illness symptoms before departing for camp, please do not board the bus or travel up to camp until they clear and you have spoken with me.

For 2 weeks prior to arriving at camp: Please take and record your temperature daily, and bring that log with you to camp. Minimize your exposure to others by staying at home as much as possible and avoiding large group activities (more than 10), and wearing a facemask when you do go out. While at camp and/or riding the bus: Wear a facemask, and bring another with you. We do have a good supply up here, but not enough for all guests all summer.

If you can, please bring your own bottle of hand sanitizer.

Summer staff have followed the same process before they arrived, and commit to spending the entire summer up at camp and not heading to town during breaks.

Our Park County Health Department and camp physician believe that having both

ADOPT-A-PLOT THANK YOU

The Property Committee would like to thank all of the participants of the Adopt-a-Plot program for their responses to the request to clean up their adopted areas in May and June (and also anyone who simply came by and groomed an area). Although there are still a few areas yet to be completed and several areas yet to be adopted, **the grounds are looking awesome due to all your hard work!** With the opening of Worship services on Sundays in June, all attendees were welcomed back to well cared for landscaping and well-manicured lawns. The mowing teams have been working very hard to keep lawns groomed and green. Several unassigned areas still need foster families to adopt and care for

landscaping. The rock by the new Black Hills spruce donated by Jake Ketterling remains open, with the intent to downsize the area that another family has been managing. The two ditch drains need reassigning. The “V” area of rock close to the roundabout needs a volunteer family to weed as needed. The area around the archery range could use some TLC, if a family is willing. The island closest to the mailbox also needs reassigning. And the grass and bush corner area just outside the youth room is up for grabs. If you are unable to continue to take care of your assigned areas, please contact Todd Koepf. And again, **a BIG THANK you to all Adopt-A-Plot volunteers!**

Todd Koepf – Property Committee

staff and guests follow these protocols will greatly minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission, and will help all campers to arrive at camp healthy and ready to go. We understand they involve some sacrifice on your part, and may affect other summer plans or activities.

As you know all too well, this is no ordinary time. We take these steps in addition to following all other reopening guidelines (local, state, American Camping Association, etc.) as we prepare for the season. Our hope is that by all doing these things we can feel confident everyone is healthy and ready for camp.

Remember to pray for the staff and campers.

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



CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT MAY 2020

General Fund May 2020		Building Fund May 2020		Building Reserve	
Budget Expense:	\$ 38,542.61	Budget Expense:	\$ 7,925.00	01/20	\$15,848.52
Income Member:	\$ 27,228.78	Income Member:	\$ 6,607.00	02/20	\$25,680.52
PPP Federal Money:	\$ 28,339.61	PPP Federal Money:	\$ 4,246.20	03/20	\$23,858.00
Actual Expense:	\$ 35,182.02	Actual Expense: **	\$ 4,246.20	04/20	\$23,268.60
Actual Net Member Income:	\$(-7,953.24)	** (interest only, principle payment deferred by MIF)		05/20	\$29,875.60
YTD PPP Federal Money:	\$ 47,285.01	YTD PPP Federal Money:	\$ 4,246.20		
YTD Member Income:	\$(-9,680.09)	YTD Member Income:	\$ 12,975.60		

FROM YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL (*cont.*)

STRATEGIC PLAN MEETING

The council met on Saturday morning, June 20th at 9:00 am to resume work on the Strategic Plan. Unfortunately, our attention has been centered on our response to the COVID-19 pandemic for the last 3 months. It is time to work on this plan again, and give our various committees and groups some direction as we approach Phase 3 of “reopening” and activities increase around the Church. The purpose of this meeting will be to review and update the Strategic Plan for Atonement and then communicate that information out for committees to address/include in their activity and planning.

UPDATE ON GROUPS USING ATONEMENT FOR MEETINGS/ACTIVITIES

Some groups that use the Atonement facilities are considered essential. These are primarily two AA groups. Right now, our direction to those groups is to use the commons area and commons restroom only, bring in their own chairs and then clean/disinfect before they leave. The facilities are open for all Atonement groups or committees to meet. We ask that you let the office know if your committee/group has not been meeting and is ready to starting again. Please do not meet in the Sanctuary between Thursday Evening and Sunday Noon for cleaning/sanitation for the Sunday service. The Kitchen should be off limits after 11 AM Saturday until Sunday at 9 AM. Meetings on Saturday in the church are appropriate if completed by 2 PM. Your group can meet on-site, by zoom or a combination of zoom and on-site. If/when you meet, please remember to submit your committee meeting minutes to Jan Westrope.

We have two out of state groups that are scheduled to stay overnight at Atonement on their way to Christikon. Two other groups that had scheduled an overnight stay have cancelled their plans to do so. The group that still plans to stay is from Ellsworth WI and is scheduled to stay on Friday, July 10th and the other is from Cold Spring, MN staying on Saturday, July 18th. Since they are small groups (6 students and 2 adults) and were scheduled before the COVID -19 pandemic began, Council approved their overnight stay, limiting their use of the building to the Jerusalem Room, Youth Room and bathrooms. Cleaning of these rooms will take place prior to Sunday service.

INVITATION TO HELP WITH NOON PRAYERS

There is a need that we can all help with. All members of the congregation are invited to help with the daily devotions. All members of the council have been challenged to submit at least one devotion that could be used in the daily noon devotions that we started at the beginning of this pandemic period. Thank you to all who have contributed to the Noon Prayers. We extend this invitation to anyone who may be so moved to share any favorite devotions. You can submit your devotions to Nancy at the church office by email office@atonementbillings.com.

Blessings and best wishes for a wonderful summer.

Atonement Lutheran Council

MEET OUR GUESTS PREACHERS VISITING ATONEMENT THIS SUMMER

Charles Bott

Charles is a native Oklahoman, born in Ponca City and raised and educated in Stillwater and Tulsa. He attended Oklahoma State University and graduated from the University of Tulsa with a BA in Industrial Psychology.

He retired in 2013 after a 45 year career in real estate mortgage lending and brokerage. He received his license as a Lay Pastoral Associate (LPA) in 2004, and completed his on-campus seminary studies at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, CA and Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN in 2012. He elected not to pursue formal ordination thereafter. He retired again in 2019 after 11 years as Presiding Minister at First American Lutheran Church in Hardin, MT. He has been a member of Atonement since 1994.

He was set up with a blind date in New Orleans, LA in July of 1979. That turned out to be his last, and best, date ever. He and Jo celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary this past April, 2020. Their celebratory trip to Scotland and Ireland was wiped out by COVID-19, but hope springs eternal for a do-over next year. He and Jo have a son, James, and daughter-in-law, Maggie, living in Peyton, CO, and a daughter, Angela, and grandson, Caleb, in Billings. Their daughter, Tiffany, passed away in 2010.

He is presently a substitute teacher at the middle school and high school level in Billings, continues to be available as a substitute minister, and still pursues his favorite avocation as a baseball and softball umpire, an addiction he has enjoyed since 1977.



JULY 2020

- ☞ July 3 Church Office Closed!
- ☞ July 4 Independence Day
- ☞ July 5 Communion
- ☞ July 11-17 Confirmation Camp
Christikon
- ☞ July 16 Church Council
Meeting
- ☞ July 17 Deadline for August
Newsletter

OPEN HOUSE INVITATION

Pastor Darren & Trudi Paulson cordially invite you to the High School Graduation Open House in honor of Noah Paulson on Sunday, July 5th from 2:00 – 4:00pm. Wearing of masks is optional, so feel free to bring yours along if you choose. We will have the Crepe Cart catering the event. Please RSVP by Friday, July 3rd to carpaulson@gmail.com.

Congratulations!

ATONEMENT LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL



The 2020-2021 preschool year is right around the corner! We are excited for next year and taking enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year!

We are gearing up for the fall by organizing COVID-19 procedures for students and their families. The preschool board believes we have come to a solution that will offer the best educational experience for the students enrolled in our program by decreasing the enrollment numbers to allow social distancing in the classroom and personal supplies for each student. We will again have a wish list of preschool supplies. This year we might need extras, so please consider donating to our preschool by looking up our Target Registry. (tgt.gifts/ALCPreschool)

If you know of any children preschool age, 3-5, word of mouth is the best advertisement! Thank you for your thoughts, prayers, and support! Blessings from your Director of Atonement Lutheran Preschool,

Sara Westrope

ATONEMENT NOON PRAYERS

During the month of July there will be a change in frequency of the "Noon Prayers". We will be publishing them on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the noon hour. Pastor Martin Mock and Kristin La Ve` have graciously agreed to provide these words of encouragement to the body. Your help is still welcome if you would like to contribute a devotion. Pastor Mock is in the church office offering Pastoral care each Thursday morning from 10:00am-noon.

YOUR WORD IS A
Lamp unto my feet
and a LIGHT
UNTO
my path
PSALM 119:105

GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS 9.13.20



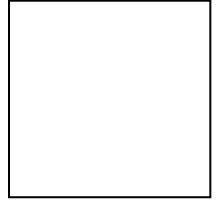
Sunday, September 13, 2020 Atonement will participate in the ELCA's Day of Service Community outreach "God's Work, Our Hands". There is a bulletin board setup in the Commons where you can submit "work project ideas" and then teams and individuals can sign up to help. This has become a tradition here at Atonement and we have had a wide range of projects in the past. The challenge this year is to think outside the box to find new ways to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community.

July 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3 Church Office Closed	4 ★ Independence Day
5 8:30 am Cantor Practice 9:15 am Worship Service/ Communion Guest— John Goodheart	6 6:30 am WELCA Board 7:00 pm Property 7:00 pm Al-Anon/Alateen	7 8:00 pm Heights AA	8	9	10	11
12 8:30 am Cantor Practice 9:15 am Worship Service Guest— Bishop Laurie Jungling	13 7:00 pm Al-Anon/Alateen	14 6:00 pm Finance 6:30 pm Evangelism 8:00 pm Heights AA	15	16	17	18
Confirmation Camp Christikon 7/11-17th						
19 8:30 am Cantor Practice 9:15 am Worship Service Guest— Paul Seastrand	20 ★ Commentator Deadline 7:00 pm Al-Anon/Alateen	21 7:00 pm Church Council 8:00 pm Heights AA	22	23	24	25
26 8:30 am Cantor Practice 9:15 am Worship Service Guest— Elizabeth Daniels	27 7:00 pm Al-Anon/Alateen	28 8:00 pm Heights AA	29	30	31	



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



YOUTH & FAMILY NEWS . . .

The Atonement youth will be holding a Youth Yard Sale on September 12th to raise money for the 2021 ELCA National Youth Gathering. If you have any smaller items or boxes of items you would like to donate please feel free to bring them into my office anytime leading up to the sale. We will also be taking donations of larger items like furniture, but due to lack of storage for these items I ask that you hold onto them until the weekend of the sale. This will be a donation only sale so no need to price any items prior to donating. Thank you for your support!

Nikki Groshans - Director of Youth and Family
 doyfam@atonementbillings.org

