

The Commentator

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HOW you can HELP

- ❖ **Billings Food Pantry Needs –**
**See list posted in the Commons at the Food Bank shelf.
- ❖ Hospitality Ministry – Ushers
- ❖ Worship – Assistants
- ❖ Christian Education – Teachers

BLESSING BACKPACKS

Blessing of the Backpacks will be Sunday the 22nd. All students, from preschool to college, are welcome to bring their backpack and receive a blessing for the new school year. Each student will receive a fun accessory for their backpack.



NATIONAL NIGHT OUT
2021
POLICE-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Tuesday, August 3, 2021

LOOKING AHEAD!

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



STAFF APPRECIATION

The Council, on behalf of all of the members of Atonement, would like to express our thanks for the sacrifices our staff have made to help our Congregation through the uncertain time of the COVID-19 Pandemic to this point. They have accepted the burden of reduced hours and compensation since November of last year. They have done a marvelous job of keeping the programs and ministries of Atonement as vibrant as they could possibly be

under the circumstances. We are hopeful that the worst of this pandemic is behind us, but anticipate more challenges going forward. As our staff returns to regular hours and compensation on August 1st and begins to prepare for a full schedule of activities this fall, please keep them all in your prayers and offer them your own expression of thanks for their dedication to Atonement and its mission.

THANK YOU!

Thank you to our Atonement family for the loving support we received after the loss our Loved One (Duncan). For the comforting words, thoughts & prayers, and most of all, the hugs!! We would like to say a special thank you, to all who helped in any way with the Memorial Service. Your loving care and concern is deeply appreciated.

The McLean Family

WE BRING THE HOPE WE SHARE IN CHRIST TO ALL!



ATONEMENT LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL

Summer Greetings from Atonement Lutheran Preschool!

The 2021-2022 school year is right around the corner! We are in search of a new preschool teacher! We are looking for someone who loves little ones. Hours are Monday/Wednesday/Friday 8:30 – 12:30 plus 1 hour for staff meeting (13 hours/week). Please contact us to find out more information.

We are making a Wish List for supplies needed for the preschool. If you would like to donate supplies, please take a look at the list. Thank you for your prayers and support! Blessings,

Sara Westrope-Atonement Lutheran Preschool Director

FAMILY PROMISE

Atonement Lutheran Church is scheduled to help with Family Promise families the week of August 1st through August 7th. While FP is hopeful that we will be able to resume our usual rotation in the churches in 2022, currently families continue to stay in the FP Transitional Housing and the Day Center. We are only responsible at this time for nightly suppers for one family (mom and 5 yr. old daughter) who are staying in the Day Center for this week in August. Exact information will be given to those who volunteer to deliver an evening meal to the FP Day Center, involving going through the locked door to the kitchen and putting the food in the fridge/counter. Please contact Lorraine Theurer if you can share a meal. Work continues on the areas in First United Methodist Church for a static site (meaning families will stay there all the time and volunteers will go to First United Methodist to help), [but it is not](#)

but it is not yet up and running. Our next opportunity to work with FP will be November 7th-13th. We will share details as they become available.

COLUMBARIUM

The Atonement Columbarium, which will be a place to inurn ashes of loved ones, will be delivered in just 2-3 months. The foundations have been put in place for both the Columbarium and the Memorial Wall and three granite benches have been donated by the McLean Family, WELCA and the Memorial Committee. We thank these people for their generous gifts to our Atonement Memorial Garden. The niche prices will remain at the low price of \$1,700 for now but prices will go up soon. Call the church if you are interested in buying a niche at \$1,700 a committee members will contact you with more information.

please re-engage in the life and ministry of your congregation and prayerfully continue to support Atonement, not only with financial resources, but also your time and talents. Additionally, the **Building Fund** is getting healthier with the assistance of the “Growing the Seeds of Faith” Capital Campaign as we are annually able to reduce our monthly mortgage payment, gradually closing the “gap” between monthly contributions and monthly mortgage payment. The financial shortfall is being drawn from our Building Fund reserve, however we are below our “comfortable reserve” goal amount.

CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT JUNE 2021

General Fund June 2021		Building Fund June 2021		Building Reserve	
June Expenses:	\$28,645.20	June Monthly Mortgage:	\$7,240.00	5/31/21	\$22,794.05
June Income:	\$27,202.87	June Income:	\$5,493.00	6/30/21	\$21,047.05
June Net Income:	(\$1,442.33)	June Net Income:	(\$1,747.00)		
Net Income YTD:	\$12,235.97	Net Income YTD:	(\$5,891.00)		

LWR SCHOOL KITS

We currently have some supplies to complete 107 LWR school kits.

To complete these kits we need:

85 - 24 Box Crayons

37 - (30 cm.) Ruler (inches may be on one side)

90 - New # 2 Pencils with erasers

370 - New ball point pens (blue or black ink no gel pens please)

14 - Blunt Tip Scissors

428 - 70 sheet Spiral Notebooks of ruled paper (approx. 8X10 1/2" NO loose leaf paper).

If you would like to make a contribution, but do not like to shop, just drop your donation marked for this project in the offering collection or the office and we will shop for you.

Thanks Atonement for everything you do!

Julie Leno

FINANCE THANK YOU

Thank you for your faithful giving and support of our church family in 2021! We can celebrate that the **General Fund** is currently healthy – in part by your consistent financial support, but additionally, due to a 10% reduction in hours/compensation for our staff over the past 10 months. In August, our staff will be resuming full time hours/compensation as we recommence ministry activities after a year of disruption. As we do so,

FROM THE PASTOR

We grabbed the key for the Little White Church to check on a podium for our National Night Out event on Tuesday, August 3rd (hope to see many of you there!). Once Vivian and I made our trek across the lawn, we discovered a new doorknob and lock in place on the main entrance. It didn't take long to realize that the old key in our possession wouldn't work! That was a frustrating experience... until later that day I saw a signboard out on Main Street that read "Old keys don't open new locks." The wisdom of that parable started churning in my heart and mind immediately!

I expect many of us have encountered "new locks" at one time or another. Perhaps some obstacle in this past year due to COVID, maybe a roadblock in our relationship with another, a new challenge or novel adversity has arisen. And quickly we discover that our "old keys" – our habits or solutions or strategies that we have used in the past to move beyond them – no longer work. As a result, we need to discover a new key, learn a new set of skills, or adapt our approach in order to get beyond that which we have encountered. Because we know that to remain stuck isn't healthy for ourselves or our relationship with others.

This also applies to our life of faith – and life in community as a church. This past year has convinced me that this recent parable applies to us. Our world is quickly changing, and for us to gain access to the mission into which God is calling us... we need a "new key." Mind you, the Good News of God in Jesus Christ is timeless and eternal! But occasionally we are called to a new approach, a new strategy, a new way of being relevant in mission to this world. After all, it's part of our Lutheran "DNA" to reform, renew, revitalize!

So, change is coming – embrace it! Perhaps this past year of pandemic crisis is an opportunity for us to redefine who we are called to be as God's people at Atonement! As much as we feel it would just be easier, don't waste this opportunity by moving back to the church we used to be. Move forward to the Church God is calling us to become.

To that end, please participate in the ongoing Thriving Beyond COVID conversations we will be having following worship. The next ones will be Sunday, Aug. 8 & 15 at 10:15 in the Sanctuary. Consider postponing that habitual brunch with friends for these days. Invite a friend to join you. Continue the conversation among your circles of friends or groups you are involved with. Allow these discussions to open up richer meanings in parables old and new – that it may become "yeast that leavens" or the "salt that enriches" or the "light in the darkness" ...or the new key for this new lock that will open the door to the brilliant future that God is calling us to!

✝ Pastor Darren

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

We continue our weekly Wednesday study of the Revised Common Lectionary – doing a deeper dig into the prescribed readings for Sunday's worship service. Meeting In-Person in the Jerusalem room. Led by Pastor Darren Paulson

Aug. 4th – 11th Sunday after Pentecost

1 Kings 19:4-8; Psalm 34:1-8;

Ephesians 4:25-5:2; John 6:35, 41-51

Aug. 18th – 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18; Psalm 34:15-22;

Ephesians 6:10-20; John 6:56-69

Aug. 11th – 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Proverbs 9:1-6; Psalm 34:9-14;

Ephesians 5:15-20; John 6:51-58

Aug. 25th – No Study

GROWING THE SEEDS OF FAITH

Thank you, members of Atonement, for your continued support of the Growing the Seeds of Faith Capital Campaign. Your giving to this effort is helping to reduce our mortgage principal and to support our Atonement Youth Director position and other community ministries. As of July 14, we have generated approximately 85% (nearly \$90,000) of the required \$106,000 toward meeting our second mortgage payment reduction goal. By the math, are within about \$16,000 of meeting this goal. With your help, we can do this.....and more!!

We encourage you to continue your pledged and unpledged contributions so that we meet and hopefully exceed this goal. If you have made a pledge, but have not yet contributed to this campaign, please consider joining your fellow members in support of the goals of Growing the Seeds of Faith. If you have not made a pledge and would like to, or would like to review/adjust your pledge, please contact the Church office. Every time we meet a goal in this campaign, we open up opportunities for our congregation to build on existing ministries, to develop new ministries or to reach out and support other important ministries that we identify. We thank you again for any and all forms of support for our Capital Campaign: monetary contributions, prayers or any other means of support. Let's keep the momentum of this campaign going!





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

SAVE THE DATE

Atonement Handyman Ministry will host their Annual Sprinkler Blowout on October 2nd & 3rd.



AUGUST 2021

- ☞ Aug 1-7 Family Promise
- ☞ Aug 3 Preschool Open House
- National Night Out Event**
- ☞ Aug 4 NYG22 Game Night
- ☞ Aug 8 Thriving Discussion Group
- ☞ Aug 11 All Youth Game Night
- ☞ Aug 15 Thriving Discussion Group
- ☞ Aug 17 Church Council Meeting
- ☞ Aug 18 AOM Archery
- ☞ Aug 20-22 AOM Camp Out- Ich-Ke-Pe Park Columbus, MT
- ☞ Aug 22 Blessing of the Backpacks
- ☞ Aug 23 Newsletter Deadline

YOUTH NEWS

Atonement youth attending the 2022 National Youth Gathering will be selling ice cream bars during the National Night Out on August 3rd. Come have fun and grab some ice cream for a good cause!

On August 4th from 7:00 to 8:00, youth registered for the 2022 National Youth Gathering will be gathering to make Tie Dye Shirts for the gathering.

Family Mini Session photo shoots will be held August 8th and 15th from 4:30 to 6:30 at the wildflower mural at Great Harvest Bread, 907 Poly Drive. The cost for a session is \$75 for a 15 minute session and 5 digital photos. These photo shoots are a fundraiser for the 2022 National Youth Gathering and all proceeds will go towards helping send Atonement youth next summer. Email Nikki Groshans at doyfam@atonementbillings.org to reserve your date and preferred time. Flyers with photos and details are available on the Youth News bulletin board as well as online.

OUTDOOR MINISTRY

The August Outdoor Ministries overnight outing is scheduled for August 20th-22nd at Itch-Ke-Pe Park, out of Columbus. We need 2 volunteers to go Thurs. to save spots. Please RSVP Sandi.

On August 11th from 7:00 to 10:30 all Atonement youth going into 6th grade up to 12th grade are invited to bring a friend or two and come play games, followed by a movie night in the sanctuary. Bring a snack (soda and popcorn provided) and a blanket or pillow to get comfy with during the movie.

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