

Atonement in Action

Volume 11, Issue 4

April, 2011

Worship Service times

Sundays

8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School

9:45 a.m.

Wednesdays in Lent

12:15 & 7:30 p.m.



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Lent, Holy Week and Easter

Faith Stories

Wednesdays in Lent, **April 6 and 13**

12:15 p.m. Lenten worship
 5:45 p.m. Pizza dinner in Lundin Hall
 6:15 p.m. Youth Choristers rehearsal
 6:30 p.m. Family worship in the nave
 (Please bring coins for the offering.)
 6:30 p.m. "Faith Stories" in the Bible in F.125
 7:30 p.m. Worship in Lundin Hall with candle-
 light, contemplative music led by Youth Choris-
 ters, prayer, faith stories from Atonement mem-
 bers: **April 6** - Doug Tieman- Common Ground;
April 13 - Martha Hafer

Maundy Thursday, April 21

12:15 p.m. - Service of Holy Communion
 7:30 p.m. - Service of Holy Communion, foot-
 washing, stripping the altar.

Good Friday, April 22

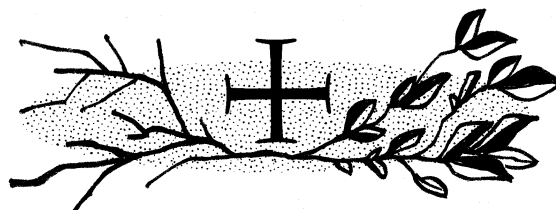
12:15 p.m. - Service of Word and Prayer
 7:30 p.m. - Tenebrae (Service of Shadows) with
 Youth Drama

Saturday, April 23

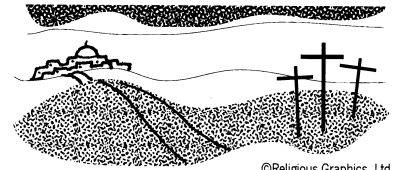
7:30 p.m. - Common Ground Easter Vigil
 (see page 7 for details)

Easter Sunday, April 24

8:30 and 11:00 a.m. - Festival Holy Communion
 celebrating the Resurrection of Our Lord with
 Atonement Choir, Youth Choristers, Basic'ly
 Brass and timpani. There will be no Sunday
 School classes on Easter morning.



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Holy Week Worship Participants

Sign-up in the narthex throughout the season of Lent to participate in some of the unique moments that set Holy Week worship services apart from the rest of the year.

Maundy Thursday, April 21: We need three volunteers to participate in the ritual of foot-washing during our Maundy Thursday evening worship at 7:30 p.m. Please prayerfully consider becoming a vital part of this ancient and meaningful tradition.

Good Friday, April 22: We will use congregation members to read the Passion according to St. John. For this reading we need seven readers at each service: 12:15 p.m. and at 7:30 p.m. Each part is about the length of a Sunday morning reading.

Please volunteer to help make our Holy Week filled with drama and inspiration.

Atonement Lutheran Church

5 Wyomissing Blvd., Wyomissing, PA 19610

Phone: 610-375-3512; Fax 610-375-3511; www.atonementwyo.org

From Pastor Summy: Lent - It's Never Too Late

On the day before Ash Wednesday a few weeks ago, I emailed a brief message to the congregation regarding the importance of getting Lent off to a good start. As you read this, we are probably just about smack in the middle of Lent.

So it is time to say this: while it is important to get off to a good start (and maybe you did!) it is also, when it comes to the life of faith, when it comes to taking a close look at who we are and how we act and how that lines up with who we believe God meant us to be and act, when it comes to waking up and responding to a God who loves us beyond measure, it's never too late.

For those who do not receive our regular emails (and if you would like to, simply call the church office and share your email address with us), this is some of what I wrote in that pre-Lenten message.

I, for one, have never been a very strong proponent of "giving something up" for Lent. If it is good to give it up, should you be doing it in the first place? And yet many find it to be a helpful discipline, so far be it from me to criticize. For me, taking on a special Lenten discipline, one that, perhaps simply by force of good habit, may last, is a better choice. This year, I will be reading a book that I hope might help me to follow more faithfully and lead more effectively. And I will attempt to keep a daily prayer journal that is an exercise suggested by that book. I'll let you know how it works out. What are your plans?

One of my favorite authors, Frederick Buechner, has written a little piece that might help you reflect on your potential Lenten discipline(s). He writes: "In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year's income to some holy use. For Christians, to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year's days. After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask one way or another what it means to be themselves.

- If you had to bet everything you have on whether there is a God or whether there isn't, which side would get your money and why?
- When you look at your face in the mirror, what do you see in it that you most like and what do you see

in it that you most deplore?

- If you had only one last message to leave to the handful of people who are most important to you, what would it be in twenty-five words or less?
- Of all the things you have done in your life, which is the one you would most like to undo? Which is the one that makes you happiest to remember?
- Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that, if circumstances called for it, you would be willing to die for?
- If this were the last day of your life, what would you do with it?

To hear yourself try to answer questions like these is to begin to hear something not only of who you are but of both what you are becoming and what you are failing to become. It can be pretty depressing business all in all, but if sackcloth and ashes are at the start of it, something like Easter may be at the end." (Frederick Buechner, *Listening to Your Life*, pp. 56-57)

Whatever you are doing or are, perhaps, just now deciding to do, may you have a prayerfully-reflective, insight-sprinkled, soul-searching Lent, one that is filled with spring-time hope in the Lord. And, may it be a Lent that, never mind the success or failure of our respective disciplines, trusts that something exactly like Easter will come in the end.

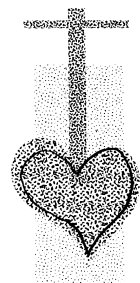
Memorials

We are grateful to acknowledge the following gifts to the glory of God and:

In memory of Lois Ahner, by Robert Ahner.

In memory of Marguerite Veil, by Fred and Dee Hiehle.

In memory of Neil Hill, by John and Marian Connelly
Arthur and Vicki Espinoza
Fred and Dee Hiehle
Charles and Barbara Kerper
Bill and Cindy Laubach
John and Lesley Shimp
Don and Joanne van Roden



Council Corner

At our March Congregation Council meeting we did the following:

- Tony Setley, a prospective seminary candidate was introduced to Council. He talked about who he is, what he has done in life and why he wishes to become a pastor. He answered a variety of questions.
- At the start of the meeting we spent a few minutes hearing from each other concerning what we learned about our prayer partner. Each Council member has been teamed with another member to pray for each other and to meet over lunch to learn more about that person. Everybody thought it was informative and inspirational. Each month we will be paired with another council member for the month.
- The first of our monthly, in-depth reports was given by Sean McCrae, Chairperson of the Arts Committee. He summarized the events the Arts Committee is working on. Next month, Kate Harenza will give us a report on the Evangelism Committee.
- In Ed Kern's (Finance) absence, Pastor Summy gave a brief overview of the church's finances and the finance report. Income is coming in as expected and expenses are manageable, although seasonal highs have been reported in utilities and maintenance.
- It was announced that Jace Wandrisco, Property Chairman, will be leaving the Council this summer to take a new job out of town. A replacement Council member will be recruited. Carl Botterbusch will become Property Chairman. A Stewardship Chairperson will be recruited. The council extended our thanks to Jace for all his work and wished him God's blessings.
- In the past, Atonement has provided financial support for its members who attend seminary. Potentially, next year, there may be two seminary students. It was proposed and supported that we have a special Seminarian Sunday to obtain additional support.
- Recent security problems in our church building were discussed. It was recommended that the Executive Council review all the proposals and make a recommendation to Council next month.
- Staff and committee reports were reviewed.

Next meeting Monday, April 11 at 7:00 p.m..

Congregation Council
Ed Hein, MD
President

Women of Atonement News



The Women of Atonement are planning some exciting things this spring, including our third annual plant sale and our spring luncheon.

The Hannah Circle will meet on April 5, 7:00 p.m., at the home of Marion Mattes. Mary and Esther Circle will meet on April 6 in the privacy room at church, directly following the 12:15 p.m. Lenten service. Lunch will be served prior to our meeting. Our fourth annual plant sale will take place on Saturday, April 30, from 9:00 a.m. to noon at Sue Harenza's barn, across from Wyomissing High School's baseball field in Wyomissing. Please call Sue (610-376-8545) or Eva (610-376-9521) if you have plants or items to donate. Finally, our spring luncheon will take place at noon on May 14 in Lundin Hall. Our May business meeting will take place prior to the luncheon.

In recent news: Our Mary and Esther Circle started off the Lenten season by moving our meeting back one week to coincide with Ash Wednesday. We attended the 12:15 p.m. service and had our meeting immediately following the service. Pastors Summy and Lee joined us for lunch. After lunch we had a spirited question and answer period. Our Hannah circle continued with our study, "The People of God; Unity in the Midst of Diversity," in March. Thanks to everyone who made these meetings so successful. We look forward to seeing you at our April and May events.

We are still collecting linens for Children and Youth Services. You may place them in the wooden boxes in the narthex.

Eva Eisenbrown

New Members Orientation

The next orientation sessions for those interested in joining Atonement will take place Sundays, May 8, 15, and 22, and two weeknight evenings to be announced. If you or someone you know is interested in joining, please contact Pastor Summy at the church office or by email (rsummy@atonementwyo.org).

Save the Date! Atonement's Big Fall Weekend

Celebration of the Arts/Historical Society Tour/A Concert to Benefit Atonement's Arts Fund

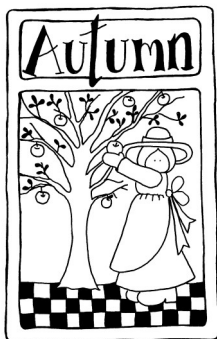
Things will be hopping at Atonement on the weekend from Friday, September 30 through Sunday, October 2 this fall. Plan to be a part of it!

First, our Celebration of the Arts festival returns from a 2-year hiatus. Artists from around the area (and from Atonement, too) will be displaying and selling their works. It all starts with a showing on Friday evening at 7:00 p.m., includes Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and concludes Sunday evening at 7:00 p.m. with a gala concert, a benefit for the Atonement Arts Fund, "Night of the Divas."

On Saturday, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., the Historical Society of Berks County will be holding its annual tour. This year it is in Wyomissing and that means Atonement is a stop along the way. In addition to the art we will have to show off, we will be offering lunch, historical tours of our own buildings, and hospitality to those who come through.

All of this means we will need a lot of volunteers. Assistance for the art exhibit and concert is needed in many ways, including: setting up Lundin Hall with display boards and lighting, intake of artwork and hanging of the exhibit, sales and monitoring of art, reception volunteers for both Friday and Saturday evenings, taking artwork down and supervision of pick-up. No experience is necessary, just enthusiasm and your willingness to give a little time and effort. Contact Sarah Smith at 610.378.9820 or sjs0716@comcast.net if you would like to help in any way, or have any questions about ways to volunteer. One more note about the art exhibit: if you are an artist and a relatively new member at Atonement and would like to be included in the exhibit, just let us know. If you were in the last show (2008), you will automatically be invited to the 2011 show.

Volunteers will also be needed for the Historical Society tour. Tom Endy is chairing this committee. Please let him know if you are willing to help. More details will follow.



Preschool News

On April 3, Atonement Christian Preschool families will join us for the 11:00 a.m. worship service. This will be a child-friendly worship service with nursery for younger siblings. Preschool children will listen to the children's sermon and sing their favorite chapel song, "Only a Boy Named David." There will be a power point display of preschool adventures in our narthex before and after the service. Refreshments will be served. Please come to church and support us in this important ministry of our church.

Enrollment for next fall is excellent. We will be remodeling room F.125 upstairs to accommodate new classes.

April curriculum will focus on new life and Easter. Egg hunts will take place outdoors (we hope) on April 14 and 15. When we return from Easter vacation we will instruct our children in the care of our Earth.



Sunday School Lenten Event

Children and their parents, extended families, and friends are invited to participate in our Lenten Event on Sunday, April 10. We will begin in the nave at 9:45 a.m. where we will sing "Jesus is a Rock in a Weary Land" with the Atonement Praise Band and hear the story of the raising of Lazarus. Then we will move to Lundin Hall for refreshments, fellowship, and the painting of river rocks with symbols of new life. The word Lent is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "spring." Lent is springtime for the church. It is during Lent that we recognize the cold and darkness of sin and move toward the gift of everlasting life that we receive through our Lord's resurrection.

April 10 is also our adult Life Passages Sunday when we will have speaker Susan Wambaugh here to talk with the adults during the Sunday School hour about financial advice for people in transition. Any parents who plan on attending the Life Passages event should contact Kathy Yenser. We will gladly make provisions to have your child connect with another family during the Lenten Event so you can participate in Life Passages.



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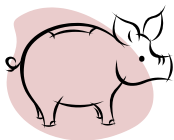
Last Call for First Communion Registrations

April 3 is the deadline for registering to be part of this year's First Communion group. Typically, families with children in grade 2 and older who have not had First Communion instruction participate in our First Communion class. In addition, parents of slightly younger children who are showing much interest in participating in this Holy Meal may want to explore the possibility of including their children in the classes. Please contact Pastor Summy, Pastor Jason, or Kathy Yenser to discuss First Communion for children younger than second grade.

If you have not yet received a letter and registration card, please contact the church office to request one. Following are the requirements for First Communion preparation:

- Children and their parents participating in classes that will be held on Sundays May 1, 8, and 15 during the Sunday school hour, 9:45 to 10:45 a.m.
- First Communion families sharing dinner in Lundin Hall on Saturday, May 21 at 5:30 p.m. A rehearsal in the nave will follow this meal.
- Children arriving in the nave at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday, May 22, for a group photograph and participating in 11:00 a.m. worship where they will share in the Lord's Supper for the first time.

First Communion is a time to celebrate as families come together to be nurtured through the Lord's meal. We look forward to working with you and your child in preparing to receive the Lord's Supper together.



Life Passages

On April 10, the Adult Forum "Life Passages" series is pleased to present Susan Wambaugh, CSLU, ChFC, CASL, who will speak on "Financial Advice for People in Transition." Susan is a financial planner experienced in helping people make sound decisions about money for major life transitions such as saving for retirement or adjusting to divorce. Please join us in Lundin Hall at 9:45 am for this interesting and informative session, with opportunities for questions and answers.

Sunday School Classes

Our final children's Sunday school class prior to the summer will be held on May 22. Please bring your children faithfully to Sunday school each week between now and May 22. Our goal is to see how large our group can grow during April and May. We have just over 100 children registered in our classes. What a gift it would be if most of those registered were here on a Sunday morning! Your child's presence really does make a difference in our Sunday school community.

VBS & Summer Day Camp

Mark your calendars! Vacation Bible School will be held June 20-24 at 8:45-11:30 a.m. Children age 3 through grade 4 are invited to participate in this fun-filled week of Bible stories, songs, games, crafts, and drama activities. Youth from grade 5 on up are invited to serve as helpers throughout the week. VBS is open to all Atonement members, pre-school families, friends and neighbors.



We will again offer our Atonement members the option of expanding the VBS day to include a full-day, summer camp experience. The summer camp will be held the same week as VBS, June 20-24. Children who are completing kindergarten this year through those completing grade 6 are invited to participate in our day camp. Camp days will consist of VBS in the morning followed by lunch and summer activities like swimming, organized games, and off-site outings. We will offer early morning drop-off and late afternoon pick-up for working parents.

Registration forms for VBS and summer day camp will be available soon.

Adults and Teens: We need your help to staff VBS and the summer camp. Contact Kathy Yenser if you are available a few hours some or all of the days from June 20 to 24. What a great experience for our children to be surrounded by caring adults and teens in a Christian environment. And what a wonderful opportunity for you to interact with our younger members who are filled with energy, excitement and awe!

Relay for Life–May 6 and 7

This year, over 1.4 million Americans will hear the words, “You have cancer.” Atonement’s youth have joined the American Cancer Society on a mission to save lives and create a world with more birthdays by participating in the Relay For Life in our community.

At Relay For Life we celebrate loved ones who have won their battle against cancer, remember those who are no longer with us, and fight back against this disease that touches so many. The youth of Atonement invite all interested to join us in walking for the 2011 Relay for Life in Reading. The event begins at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, May 6, at First Energy Stadium and lasts for 24 hours.

Participants must register by either filling out a registration form or registering online. To register online, you can visit www.relayforlife.org/pareading. From the Home Page look to the right side where it says "Top Team" and select "View All." Atonement is the second team on the list. To the right you can select "Join Team."

Participants are not expected to be present for the entire event. Rather, the goal is for the team to have at least one team member walking at every point during the 24 hour event. Each member should make an effort to collect donations. Every dollar raised brings us one dollar closer to a cure and to a time when the number of people who have to hear the words “you have cancer” is zero. Participants can pick up a Participant Collection Envelope from the church office. We will also have forms and envelopes available after church each Sunday in April.

If you are not able to participate by walking, we encourage you to help support our team by making a donation to any of our team members. You will also have the chance to buy luminaria in honor of or in memory of a loved one who has faced cancer. Luminaria forms will also be available after each church service in April.

The youth of Atonement are excited to be a part of this worthy cause, and we hope that you will consider contributing by donating or becoming a team member!



Easter Plants

Donors are needed for the plants which will decorate the church on Easter. This year we will have tulips and daffodils as well as lilies. We are requesting \$8.50 per plant, but any amount is welcome. (Checks should be made payable to Atone-

ment.) If you wish to order one or more plants, please return the attached form to the church office by Friday, April 15.

I wish to provide ___ plants for Easter.

___ in loving memory of _____

___ in thanksgiving for _____

Name _____

As an alternative to (or in addition to) donating a plant, you are invited to make a donation to the World Hunger Appeal. Donations will be listed in the Easter bulletin, and may be made in memory of or in thanksgiving for a loved one. Please return the form below by March 30 with your donation. Make checks payable to Atonement.

I wish to make a donation of _____ to the World Hunger Appeal.

___ in loving memory of _____

___ in thanksgiving for _____

Name _____

Volunteers are needed to deliver the plants to our shut-ins following the Easter services. To volunteer, please call Joann Pacifico, 610-375-0926 or e-mail Joann at joannpacifico@yahoo.com.

Aluminum Tab Collection

Please help our Girl Scout troop #1944 by collecting soda tabs for Ronald McDonald House during the months of March, April, and May. Bring them to the box in the coatroom off the narthex.

From the Congregational Health Advocate: Pilgrim Walking

Our journey as Christians during the Lenten season takes us in the footsteps of Jesus. We begin with the reminder of walking in our mortal flesh into the darkness of temptation, then we travel along the pathways of learning and relating, into gardens of abundance and gardens of blight, through seasons of wellness into suffering, until finally the hope and joy of resurrection is revealed. Sounds like life to me! In the words of country music singer Darryl Worley, "Isn't it true that we are pilgrims? This is not our final home."

Spiritual direction training at Kairos is offering me the blessing of walking with seven faithful spiritual companions. Once a month we enter into a retreat setting at the Jesuit Center in Wernersville to learn the fine art of holy listening and spiritual direction. We spend time listening and noticing God's voice and movement in our life by implementing spiritual practices of contemplation, reflection, lectio divina, spiritual reading, journaling, prayer, and solitude. Together we search for words to articulate God's presence in and around us.

Outside of the Jesuit Center stands a bronze statue of a man. He is facing forward, his back to the building, a well worn Bible in one hand, his eyes gazing beyond the immediate. I have learned that he is called "The Pilgrim" and depicts St. Ignatius, the father of Ignatian spiritual exercises. I have come to love this statue, because it models the direction I believe God desires for each of us. There is a time to retreat for study, prayer, refreshment and rest, and there is a time to step out from the physical building and share our gifts and blessings with ones we encounter on the journey. This reminds me of our practice of going to church and following the Atonement mission statement to worship, learn and serve. We hear the words ending our Sunday worship, called out by the assisting minister, "Go in peace. Remember the poor." We respond with a heartfelt, "Thanks be to God."

At Atonement we are blessed to have opportunities to journey together toward Easter and throughout the church year, as well as through the seasons of our own lives. We have rich offerings of worshipping, learning and serving. Worshipping on Sunday, Lenten Wednesday services, and Common Ground worship give us opportunities to join together as a community to worship our God. Learning opportunities come in the form of weekly Bible study, Seasons of the Spirit, Sunday School, Life Passages, and Spiritual Formation Groups. Serving opportunities abound in all

sorts of committees and teams focusing on prayer, property, stewardship, and mission beyond the building.

God invites us into relationship, Jesus teaches us to relate, the Holy Spirit empowers us to move where God calls us. We are pilgrims, called by God to be God's love in the world. This is not our final home.

Thanks be to God,
Lois

Common Ground Easter Vigil

Come be a part of the first celebration of the resurrection this Easter season by joining us for an hour-long Common Ground Easter Vigil worship service on Saturday, April 23 at 7:30 p.m. in Lundin Hall. An ancient practice in the church, the Vigil usually takes place after sundown on Saturday, considered the beginning of the next day in ancient times, which is why it is an Easter service. Connecting the recovery tradition with scripture and Christian proclamation, as we do at every Common Ground service, this will be a simple service of fire and candlelight, sharing and Easter proclamation, music and communion. All are welcome!

Many thanks to the many members who graciously donated mountains of crafting supplies for Common Ground's Art and Spirituality Workshop! Almost 75 participants enjoyed the opportunity to express themselves with such wonderful, diverse supplies. The remaining items went back to Caron for art therapy and to Atonement's preschool.

Church Women United Luncheon

Atonement's own Donna Danielski will present the program: "A Vocalist for All Occasions" at the annual Spring Luncheon of Church Women United on Monday, April 11, at 12:00 noon, at West Lawn United Methodist Community Hall. To purchase tickets, or for directions and further information, contact Key Woman Dottie Hill at 610-779-4464.

ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

5 Wyomissing Blvd.
Wyomissing, PA 19610-2081

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Jason M. Lee, *Associate Pastor*
Arthur B. Wyse, *Visitation Pastor*
Tom Yenser, *Director of Music*
Cynthia A. Bickley, *Preschool Director*
Kathy Yenser, *Director of Children's Ministries*
Jo Eileen Sturgis, *Parish Secretary*
Scott Gruver, *Financial Secretary*
Tom Gresh, *Property Manager*
Mick Bryan, *Sexton*
Lois Hein, *Congregational Health Advocate*

rsummy@atonementwyo.org
jlee@atonementwyo.org
arthurbwyse@yahoo.com
tyenser@atonementwyo.org
cbickley@atonementwyo.org
kyenser@atonementwyo.org
jsturgis@atonementwyo.org
sgruver@atonementwyo.org
tgresh@atonementwyo.org
lmb2515@comcast.net
lhein@atonementwyo.org

Our website: www.atonementwyo.org
Church office phone number is 610-375-3512

Our Mission

By God's grace, we strengthen one another in faith and share the good news of Jesus through worshiping, learning, and serving.