

Atonement in Action

Volume 11, Issue 2

February, 2011

Worship Service times

Sundays

8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

**Sunday School
9:45 a.m.**



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New Financial Secretary

As some of you may know, our financial secretary, Matt Simmons, resigned at the end of December so that he can work full-time at Habitat for Humanity (he had been splitting his time between the two of us). We are grateful to Matt for his considerable and skillful help in getting our financial house organized after the position was vacant for some time. He also helped us to streamline and simplify our accounting and budgeting processes.

We have been fortunate to discover Scott Gruver and hire him as our new financial secretary. Scott is a native of West Lawn and currently lives in Shillington. He does similar work for our sister congregation, Christ Mertz Lutheran Church in Fleetwood, and has a number of other part-time clients. He received his B.A. from Eastern University and earned some masters degree credits at Penn State. Scott is also credentialed and licensed to preach through the Assemblies of God!

He spent the last two weeks of December learning the ropes from Matt and has hit the road running. While there will be times when Scott's schedule will be somewhat flexible, for the most part his hours will be as follows:

Monday: 8:00 a.m. - noon, and then 2:30 – 5:30 p.m.

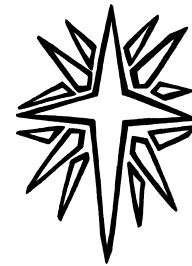
Tuesday: 7:30 - 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday: 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. and then 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday: 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Friday: 7:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Please remember that the church phones are not answered before 8:30 a.m. If you are in the church during those hours, please take the time to say hello.



Special Worship Opportunities in the Epiphany Season

**Sunday, February 6, 11:00 a.m.
Arise and Shine!**

On Saturday, January 29, members of Atonement's Treble Choir will join other area children's choir members for a workshop and worship service at Allegheny Lutheran Church. On Sunday, February 6, at 11:00 a.m., we will present much of this music in worship here at Atonement. The service will feature music by Treble Choir, Atonement Choir and Atonement Ringers. The theme is "Arise and Shine." Christ is our light, and with the light of Christ in us, we can become a light to the world.

**Sunday, March 6, 11:00 a.m.
Hymns for Brass and Timpani**

On the Sunday of the Transfiguration of our Lord, the last Sunday before the season of Lent begins, we will "pull out all the stops" with a service featuring festival hymn settings for brass, timpani, organ, choir and congregation. Joining the Atonement Choir will be the Basic'ly Brass quintet and Sean McCrae on timpani.

Atonement Lutheran Church

5 Wyomissing Blvd., Wyomissing, PA 19610

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

From Pastor Summy: Reading Books

It's winter. We've had two snowstorms already and I doubt that Mother Nature is done with us yet. It's cold all the time and it still gets dark early. Football—at least for the teams that matter—is over. Basketball isn't interesting until March. Baseball season is a quarter of a year away. There is virtually nothing to watch on TV.

So why not read a book?

I recently purchased a book entitled *The Top Ten*, which is a collection of top ten book lists from all kinds of writers. It got me to thinking about some of my favorite books. Context is always important, so, since this is a pastor's column in a congregational newsletter, I decided to list five books that caused me to reflect on my faith. None of these books (three novels, a collection of short stories and a memoir) are "religious" per se. They made my list because they are wonderfully written *and* because they touch on the life of faith in some significant way that, in my opinion, begs you to consider your own.

I hope that some of you will take the bait and read one or more of these books. If you do, let me know which you are reading. Perhaps we will have a chance to have a few book discussions! Also, if you have your own similar list, let me know. Winter is just getting underway and it is best for me to have books to read in order to stay out of trouble.

One caveat. It has been a while since I read a few of these books. I have a sneaking suspicion that a couple of them include some racy bits. You are an adult. Read at your own risk.

So, in no particular order, here are my five books to read this winter:

- *A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving (novel)
- *Self-consciousness* by John Updike (memoir)
- *Wheat that Springeth Green* by J.F. Powers (novel)
- *Godric* by Frederick Buechner (novel narrated in a creative sort of ancient English voice)
- *Everything that Rises Must Converge* by Flannery O'Connor (short stories)

Courtesy of Tom Yenser, I have just started reading *The Year of Living Biblically*. It seems like it is going

to be a lot of fun to read and is also going to be cause for some fresh thoughts about faith. It didn't make the list because I haven't finished it yet. Maybe some of you will read it along with me.

In the meantime, I will look forward to the conversation.

Your Financial Response to the 2011 Stewardship Campaign

Thank you for your gracious response to this fall's stewardship campaign. To date, 324 giving units have pledged a total of \$650,087 to Atonement for 2011. Although this total represents a slight decrease from last year's pledge response, we are confident that overall giving will be similar to last year (unpledged giving was \$108,000 in 2010) and we're grateful for your generosity during this time of continued economic uncertainty and hardship. If, by chance, you overlooked your pledge in the midst of the Christmas season, we would still be glad to receive it. We also thank you for the many other gifts you bring to the church; Atonement's vitality depends on your involvement and support. Please note that you may submit a new pledge or change your current pledge at any time during the year by contacting our new financial secretary, Scott Gruver, in the church office.

Finally, it's come to our attention that some members did not receive stewardship packets this fall. (Note that to reduce costs, we mailed one packet per household this year.) If you were omitted from our mailing, please contact the church office. We apologize and would appreciate the information.

**Annual Meeting—Sunday, January 30
Follows the 11:00 a.m. service
Budget meeting at 9:45 a.m.
in Lundin Hall**



Common Ground Recovery Worship

The next Common Ground Recovery worship service will take place in **Lundin Hall on Wednesday, February 2 at 7:30 pm**. Come for an informal service of Holy Communion that includes sharing, singing, and praying that is also surely holy. If you've been to Common Ground before, why not bring a friend this time? If this is your first time, what the heck, you could bring a friend too.

Common Ground is a gathering of people, some directly connected to 12-step recovery, others indirectly so, and still others who seek wholeness and who have discovered others who seek the same. All of it starts with God, depends on God, calls on us to respond with lives that are true to God and others. It is about caring for one another, honestly, without pretense, with love.

Join us. We believe you will be glad you did.

Processional Cross

You will notice over the next several weeks that we have moved the processional cross from its place beneath the feet of our central Christ figure (a Christus Victor, technically) to a raised holder at the back of the pulpit. Several things led to the decision to move the cross. First, as some have already noticed, in its current position it competes with the large figure of Christ, which is itself cruciform (cross-like) in shape. The former position in front of the pulpit put the cross in the way of movement around the altar, so that does not work. But we also want the cross to be prominent in its placement. So, several of us talked to a Lutheran worship consultant, who suggested the placement you will see shortly. We believe it will work well because it is traditional to have the cross located by the place where the Word is preached—and what we preach is Christ crucified and risen!

We will not be surprised if there are a variety of opinions about whether this was a good idea or a bad one. Such is the way of community. We ask only that you consider the reasons we have made the change and give it a chance. Over time we will probably forget that we had it anywhere else!

Who Does the Healing?

Join Common Ground on Wednesday, February 16, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. for the fourth lecture in Common Ground's "Healing Power of Spirituality" lecture series. Our speaker will be the Reverend Carl Andrews, chaplain at Caron and pastor of the Bridge to New Life Christian Fellowship in Leesport. Reverend Andrews is a warm, committed Christian in recovery from addiction, and his message, "Who Does the Healing?" is sure to resonate with all who have experienced, or who long to receive, God's gracious and merciful healing. Come and see why more than 300 friends bless us with their presence each month for these wonderful lectures.

Awaken Your Creative Spirit

"Art is not an end in itself. It introduces the soul into a higher spiritual order, which it expresses and in some sense explains."

Thomas Merton

Interested in exploring the link between art and your spirituality? Looking for something fresh and different to do on a surely cold Saturday morning in March? Then register (quickly) for Common Ground's lecture and hands-on art workshop, entitled "Awakening the Creative Spirit," on Saturday, March 5, 2011. The morning will begin in the nave with a lecture on art and spirituality, from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m., given by Cheryl Knepper, Board Certified Art Therapist and Executive Director of Adult Services and Family Program for Caron Treatment Centers. Following the lecture, registered participants will spend two hours in Lundin Hall creating one of three, hands-on projects specifically designed to connect creativity and spirituality.

The event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. Registration for the lecture is not necessary, but registration is necessary for the art workshop. Space is limited and we expect that we will meet capacity early. So, please don't delay. This is a great event to invite friends or family members to enjoy with you. Anyone 16 years old or older is welcome. Registration forms are available in the narthex and may be submitted to the office, or you may register online at www.atonementwyo.org.

Hymn for the Journey "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright"



As far as we know, Philipp Nicolai composed only two hymns in his lifetime, but these contributions are two of the most magnificent hymns in all of Christendom. The first of his hymns is "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying," the aptly nicknamed, "King of Chorales" and our Hymn for the Journey during Advent. Its companion

is the equally majestic "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright" (ELW 308). This hymn is also known as the "Queen of Chorales." In both cases, Nicolai wrote both the words and the music, another astounding feat.

Possibly written in 1597 (the history here is sketchy), "O Morning Star" quickly became popular in Germany and was used for many occasions, particularly weddings, where it soon became nearly indispensable. Brought to this country by our German forebears, it became associated with the Day of Epiphany, festival of the Transfiguration, and the Epiphany season in general.

Most of the hymn's six stanzas begin with some theological truths posited in complete sentences, but as each stanza continues the words become short bursts of ecstatic proclamation: "Lowly, holy!" "Sing out! Ring out!" "Jubilation!" "Crown of gladness!" These bursts of adoration and praise try to capture the overwhelming awe that comes upon us when we encounter our Lord and Savior, who shines "with God's own truth and light" and glows "with grace and mercy."

Listen for many settings of "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright," as preludes and postludes during the month of February. In addition, we will sing the first stanza of "O Morning Star" as our offering hymn throughout the Epiphany season.

MegaMusicMania

Sunday, February 27, 7:00 p.m.



MegaMusicMania is a concert in the church nave presented by the youth of Atonement to showcase their musical talents. The program features a wide variety of music, from classical to pop and everything in between! Please come out and support our youth. Bring your friends and family!

Attention, All Teens!

All students in Grades 7-12 who are members or friends of Atonement are invited to participate in MegaMusicMania. Singers and instrumentalists are needed; soloists, duos, and small ensembles are all welcome. Sign up by calling or emailing Mr. Yenser at 610-375-3512 or tyenser@atonementwyo.org. Deadline for registrations is Sunday, February 13. Please contact Mr. Yenser for more information.

The Arts at Atonement

Sunday, March 27, 7:00 p.m.
Chris Heslop and Friends

We welcome Chris Heslop and some of his musical friends for an evening of music as part of the Berks Jazz Fest. Admission is free and all are invited to attend. A free will offering will be received to benefit Atonement's Arts Ministry.



Ta Da! Family Concert at Atonement

On Saturday, March 19, at 11:00 a.m. in the nave, Atonement Arts Ministry and Atonement Christian Preschool are co-sponsoring a musical concert for the whole family. Children of all ages and their families will enjoy singing and moving to the music of **Ta Da!**, a high-energy quartet of children's educators and musicians who will entertain us with an eclectic program of Broadway, folk, rock, pop and everything in between. There will be lots of opportunities for audience participation. What can you expect? Only costumes, props, wigs, a steel drum, a xylophone, a tuba, rhythm instruments, boomwhackers (you'll have to wait and see!) and a general atmosphere of zaniness and silly fun. Admission is free. **Ta Da!** is Dave Himes, Tama McConnell, Amy Stewart-Himes, and Tom Yenser.

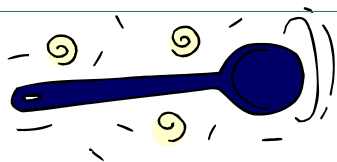
First Communion Dates

This year, First Communion will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. worship on Sunday, May 22, 2011. Typically all children in second grade and those older who have not yet received communion will prepare to receive the Lord's meal on this day. 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.

First Communion preparation includes:

- 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.

Reserve these dates on your calendar. We look forward to working with all our First Communion families as they celebrate this faith milestone in their child's life. A letter and registration form for First Communion will be mailed by the end of February to all families with children in second grade and older who are not yet communing.



Teaspoons Mystery

The Hospitality Committee has a mystery on its hands: The Case of the Missing Teaspoons! By actual count there are 23 teaspoons in the two kitchens, hardly enough to meet the needs of any good-sized gathering. If you have any clues regarding the whereabouts of the missing utensils, please contact Committee Chairperson Betty Shirk. In the meantime, we will continue to use the plastic "stirrers" for our Sunday morning coffee.

Preschool News

We all were happy to return from our Christmas break. Our children seem to grow and blossom in the New Year as routines become less hectic. Winter fun, alphabet, and dinosaurs filled our month. Jen Crocona provides great large motor activities in special gym classes. In chapel we learned about David. Parents will confer with our teachers on January 27 and 28 to discuss developmental milestones.



February brings Valentine deliveries, feelings, Presidents' Day, dental hygiene and numbers. Our service project benefits the American Heart Association as Jen features heart healthy exercises. Many new families are touring our preschool as our present students and new students register for next fall. It's a wonderful time of the year.

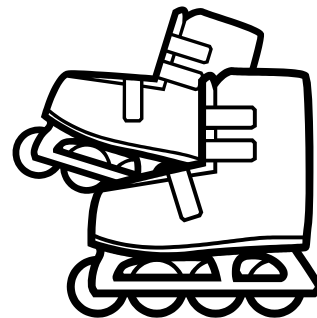
On Wednesday, February 2, at 9:00 a.m. in the nave, BCIU instructors Beth Madaglia and Margaret Ulmer will present a program: "Positive Behavior Support." All church parents are welcome.

LOL Meeting & Parents' Meeting

League of Lutherans (those in grades 4, 5, and 6) will meet on Saturday, February 5 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Skate-away (2275 Lancaster Pike, Shillington). The cost is \$6.00 and includes skates and lunch. Siblings are invited to attend.

Please contact Pastor Lee to RSVP and ask questions. Hope to see you there!

League of Lutheran Parents (parents of those in grades 4, 5, and 6) will meet on Thursday, February 10 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will plan events and volunteers for the next several months and should take less than an hour. Children are welcome to accompany the parents. If you can only make a little bit of the meeting, come to what you are able. If you are unable to make any of this meeting, please contact Pastor Lee.



Make Sunday Mornings Family Time

Join us as a family each Sunday morning, 9:45 – 10:45 a.m., for Sunday school classes for children age 3 through adult. There are children's classes for ages 3 through grade 6 on the ground level of the church building. Here our children explore one of the Bible stories from worship each Sunday morning. A catechetics class for 7th and 8th graders is held in the Parish Center, and there is a youth class for high school students that meets in Room F.126.

While your children are here, why not participate in one of our adult classes and model for your children how important it is to nourish our faith throughout our lives, not just during our childhood years? Each week a group meets in F.104, the glass-enclosed room next to our worship space, to explore the same Bible story that the children age 3 through grade 6 are studying in their classes. The adult group is led by volunteers, and no prior Bible knowledge is required. This is a place to connect with other adults, many with families like yours, and explore how the Bible speaks to us today. There is also an adult Bible study led by Pastor Summy each week that meets in Lundin Hall. On the second Sunday of each month, these two classes are preempted by the Life Passages series that addresses one of the many milestones in an adult's life. The Life Passages series is held in Lundin Hall and led by speakers from outside the congregation.

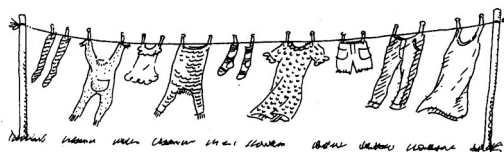
Remember to round out your family time on Sunday mornings by worshipping together at either 8:30 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. Worship is a time when we gather as a community to express our thanks, adoration and awe at the mightiness of God. It is a time for us to respond to God's love and actions in the world. It is a time when we profess that God is most important in our lives. Do not short-change yourself or your family by skipping worship.

Nursery is provided weekly in G.124 during the Sunday school hour for children under age three with parents involved in a Sunday school class. Nursery is also available during worship for children from infant through age 6.

We look forward to spending each Sunday morning with your family. Together we are the church, the body of Christ. How important it is for us to come together regularly as Christ's family!

Clothing Collection for Teens

Ninth and tenth grade students at the Reading Intermediate High School have a need for appropriate school clothes. Sometimes the kids come without proper clothes, or just need a clean change of clothes. We would appreciate if you try to match your donations to teen tastes. We will be collecting gently-used clean shirts and sweats during the month of February in the coat room off the narthex. Needed are men's and women's M, L, XL gently-used teeshirts, collartee shirts, and sweatshirts - No hooded sweatshirts as they are not allowed. Shirts should be without inflammatory slogans or language. We can also use solid shorts in the same sizes that can double as gym clothes. Thank you for your kindness to our city kids. If you have questions, call Gail Dawson-White at home, 610-372-1131.



100th Anniversary Booklet

By now we hope you have purchased your copy of the Centennial Booklet and are reminiscing about Atonement's first hundred years. One person who was not officially a member of the Centennial Committee, but without whose expertise in the area of graphic design and production our booklet would not have been published, is Karin Allmendinger. Karin took our information and prepared the layout and design, pulling everything together into a comprehensive history of our church. The 100th Anniversary Committee and the Centennial Committee wish to acknowledge Karin's major contribution to our endeavor. Thank you, Karin!

This wonderful historical review is still available for those who have not had a chance to get a copy. The booklet is on sale in the church office during the week and on Sunday mornings for the modest donation of \$5.00.

Youth News

The youth will again be collecting money for the **Souper Bowl** on February 6 after each worship service. All donations will be given to local food banks. Watch for the youth with the soup pots!

The Youth Ski Trip is planned for February 18-20. Registration packets are on the clip board in the narthex, in the Senior High Youth room (F.126), or in Pastor Lee's office. We ski all weekend and have a blast! Much more information is available in the registration packet, so if you have questions, pick one up or contact Pastor Lee. Please note, a mandatory ski trip meeting will be taking place on Sunday evening, January 30.

Troubling the Waters - This youth event is being held here at Atonement on Saturday, March 12 and is intended specifically for those in 9th and 10th grades. From the website: "The day is a combination of small group experiences, where young theologians will dive into the Word with seminarian small group leaders, large group experiences where seminary faculty and other teachers of the church will help explore what it means to be a theologian in the world, and worship, where youth and adults will come together to engage in the highest act of theology." It will draw youth from all of Berks county and beyond! More information can be found on TEY's website, <http://www.TheologicalEducationWithYouth.com>.

Two teasers for events to come:

Near future - **the lock-in!** All youth, grades 7-12, are welcome to attend. Check next month's newsletter for the date.

Far future - **The ELCA National Youth Gathering** is happening in New Orleans, July 2012 and it will soon be time to sign up and begin planning our trip! Look for the posters going up, and much, much more information to follow. You can read up on it at <http://www.elca.org/gathering>.

Play Ball!

Atonement youth basketball started Tuesday, January 4 for middle school/junior high youth (grades 5-8), 6:00 - 7:30 p.m., and senior high youth (grades 9-12), 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., in the Luther H. Routt Sports Center on the lowest level of the church. The weekly program will run through March 15 and the 8th annual Joe Lewis Basketball Tournament will wrap it up. There is a \$10 fee for the season and an emergency contact form to fill out the first time a youth attends. If the Wyomissing Area school district cancels school or extracurricular activities, Atonement will cancel youth basketball. Adults Jim Anzulewicz, Randy Skokowski, Rich Tetley and Bob Wertz are supervising. Church members & friends are welcome.

Atonement's program is for non-competitive play. Sports without an emphasis on winning and competition allow practicing the values of fairness, concern for others, personal growth, effort, generosity, respect, work, peace and love. The goal of the programs is to strengthen youth in body and spirit, develop their talents, give them the joy of accomplishing things together, and allow them to see God in everyday activities.

Bloodmobile

Atonement's winter blood drive will take place Tuesday, February 8, 1:00-6:00 p.m. in Lundin Hall. Please consider giving blood in February. Inventory is critically low at this time due to the holiday and more traumas. There is a critically ill woman in the hospital right now recently diagnosed with a blood disorder who is using a lot of blood products, so we need donations for her as well as others. The signup sheet is posted in the narthex. If you have any questions, please call the coordinator, Sharon Calder, at 610-796-8728. Thanks!

Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training

Lay Eucharistic Visitor Training will be held at Atonement on Saturday, March 5 from 9:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. It is very important that participants commit themselves to the entire day. You will need to bring a pen and paper, a Bible, and your lunch. The fee for the training is \$25 per person, with checks made payable to Lutheran Congregational Services. For more information or to register, please contact Pastor Kerry Smart at kerry@lutherancongregationalservices.org. A registration sheet is available in the church office, or you may register online at www.lutherancongregationalservices.org.

Memorials

Thanksgiving and Memorial Fund

We are grateful to acknowledge the following gifts to the glory of God and in loving memory of Neil Hill by:
Barbara and Ed Ogden
T.F. and Mildred Clouse
Tom and Betty Shirk

in thanksgiving for Eve Kimball by Varsha Shift.

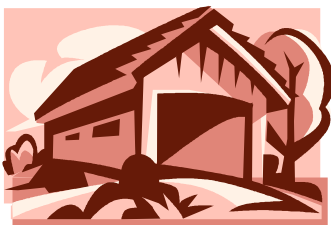
World Hunger

We are grateful to acknowledge a gift to the glory of God and in thanksgiving for Dr. Len A'dessi and Dr. Robert Sutherland, by Steve and Lisa Longenecker.

Life Passages

The Adult Education Committee is pleased to announce that the popular program from January, "Walking Life's Sunset Bridges," with Joyce Christman, chaplain and registered nurse, will reconvene on February 13, 9:45-10:45 a.m. in Lundin Hall. This program will cover the journey of aging and transition from home alone to home with assistance or relocation to an adult care residence, as well as other insights into aging with dignity.

Come and learn about planning for your own bridging transitions or how to walk with your aging parent(s) through their transitions with a guide map, communication, humor and insight as well as how to notice God's abundant grace in the midst. We welcome those who attended the first session in January as well as newcomers. Joyce currently serves as the Congregational Health Ministries Coordinator for Adventist Whole Health Network in Wyomissing.



Thanks from Chris Summy

To all of my dear ones at Atonement,

It is hard to articulate how grateful and overwhelmed I feel for your generous gift to me! I am so grateful for the love and support I have felt both in our journey together and as I discerned a new call to ministry that would separate us. It was an incredible journey! I wonder if you will ever know what a leap of faith it was to call me, along with Rick, and then to support me as you have only four years later as I yearn to follow wherever God calls. Love like that is a rare gift! So thank you, and best wishes to you all and to Atonement as you seek to honor the past, live in the present and lean into the future! God is in this place!

Your sister in Christ,
Chris

Men's Breakfast & Bible Study

The next Men's Breakfast is scheduled for Thursday, February 17, at The Highlands at 7:30 a.m. The speaker will be Dr. Carl F. Constein, who will talk about his experiences as a pilot flying "The Hump" during World War II. Dr. Constein is a retired superintendent of the Wilson school district and the distinguished author of seven books. Join us to learn more about this significant episode in World War II history.



Men's Bible Study will resume on Thursday, February 3 at the church beginning at 9:00 a.m. Source material will come from *The Great Courses* series produced by The Teaching Company, and the first topic will be the Old Testament. A series of thirty-minute lectures will be followed by discussion. The gatherings will take place each Thursday except when a Men's Breakfast is scheduled (the third Thursday of each month). This study group will meet from February 3 until May 31 and will resume in September.

WBMD Ministry Report

All are made possible by your support:

Our Lutheran Pantries, at seven different sites, together serve an average of 3,000 people per month! Sadly, nearly half of these are children. The pantries are hosted by Bethany, West Reading, and St. Luke's, Hope, Incarnation, St. Paul's, Christ-Glenside, and St. John's, in the city of Reading. Many of our congregations are also involved with food ministries in their local communities. Emergency food boxes are available at the WBMD office for social service providers to deliver to their clients. Easter hams and Thanksgiving turkeys were provided to congregations for families in need.

More than 210 people attended our outdoor worship services in the summer of 2010. Ninety-nine people attended the Annual Lenten Prayer Breakfast. Thirty-five office staff and pastors enjoyed a Parish Office Professional's Appreciation Luncheon. Over 100 youth and chaperones attended the annual WBMD Captive Free weekend event hosted by Grace Lutheran Church in Shillington.

The WBMD "Love for Children" day camp provided a camp opportunity for children at four city and one rural Lutheran church sites. The spring Bowl-a-Thon fundraiser provided a fun activity for folks of all ages, and the money raised allowed low-income children to attend day camp at no charge.

Tutoring/after-school programs continue to meet at six of our Lutheran churches in the city.

Over 600 book bags were filled with school supplies and delivered to eighteen Reading elementary and middle schools in September.

The WBMD Director attends cluster and retired pastors' meetings to maintain communications with district pastors.

We make congregations aware of the opportunity to assist homeless families through Family Promise of Berks County's Interfaith Hospitality Network.

We provided bookkeeping services for the Hospital Visitors program and the Reading Lutheran Parish.

Our office serves as a central communication hub and

resource center. We maintain a website for WBMD congregations to advertise events and open positions. We also provide color copy service to our congregations at minimal cost. The WBMD laptop computer and projector are made available to congregations for special presentations. In addition, we provide computer and office automation assistance.

The 45 Lutheran congregations of the West Berks Mission District are indeed serving our community in Jesus' name. Thanks to you, together we are witnessing boldly and making a difference!

Diakon Women's Retreat

Creating Order, Balance and Peace in Our Lives

Living in balance and having the order and peace we seek can often be so challenging with our busy lives today. As much as we desire the peace and order, it seems to be so elusive and out of reach. In this contemplative retreat, we will identify and explore those areas of life that are out of balance and keeping us from living the full and complete life God created us to live. We will create tools and practices that will guide and support us in discovering God's enriching priorities for us.

Led by social worker and ordained minister Vicki Pendleton, the retreat will be held April 1-3, at Mariawald Renewal Center, Shillington. Cost for the retreat, lodging, and all meals is \$155. Deadline for registration is March 10. For more information or registration materials, contact Diakon Family Life Services at fls@diakon.org, 610-682-1337, 1-888-499-2699 (toll free), or visit the Events section of our website at <http://www.diakon.org/fls/NPEvents.asp>.

Church Women United

Attention, Church Women United! The next meeting is on Friday, March 4, at 1:00 p.m. at the West Lawn United Methodist Church. The theme for World Day of Prayer is "How Many Loaves Have You," written by the Christian Women of Chile. We hope to see you!

From the Prayer Ministry Team: The Answer to a Prayer?

One day a shy, quiet child named Chad came home and told his mother he'd like to make a Valentine for everyone in his class. Her heart sank. She thought, "I wish he wouldn't do that!" She had watched the children walk home from school. Chad was always behind them. They laughed and hung onto each other, but Chad was never included. Nonetheless, she decided she would go along with the idea. She purchased the paper and glue and crayons. For three whole weeks, night after night, Chad painstakingly made 35 Valentines. Valentine's Day dawned and Chad was beside himself with excitement! He carefully put them in a bag and bolted out the door. His mother decided to bake him his favorite cookies and serve them warm with a glass of milk when he came home from school. She knew he would be disappointed...maybe that would ease the pain a little. It hurt her to think that he wouldn't get many Valentines - perhaps none at all. That afternoon she had the cookies and milk on the table. When she heard the children outside, she looked out the window and prayed that his generous spirit had not been crushed. Sure enough, here they came, laughing and having the best time. And, as always, there was Chad in the rear. He walked faster than usual. She fully expected him to burst into tears as soon as he got inside. His arms were empty, she noticed, and when the door opened, she choked back the tears. "Mommy has some warm cookies and milk for you." But he hardly heard her words. He just marched right on by, his face aglow, and all he said was "Not a one...not a one." Her heart sank. And then he added, "I didn't forget a one, not a single one!" So it is with those whose minds are focused on giving to others. A great happiness is reserved for the person with a generous spirit.

Family Promise—Please Help!



Family Promise Host Week February 13-20 is a time to practice Atonement's mission: worship, learn, and serve.

Family Promise of Berks County is people of faith working together to provide homeless families with help for today and hope for the future. These families are homeless for the first time. Their 'home' while in the program is a different church each week. During the day Family Promise works with the families to find jobs, housing and whatever support they need to get back on an even keel. Atonement is 'home' for families 2-3 times a year and will be 'home' for Sunday evening, February 13, through Sunday morning, February 20.

Serving is the easiest part of Atonement's mission to apply to Family Promise. By volunteering for any of the opportunities on the Family Promise Volunteer Form, you are serving families going through a difficult time. We can learn from the families about how to handle adversity and about resilience, perseverance, and hope. We can worship together as we say grace before dinner and as we play and converse in the evenings. Each volunteer opportunity is a small effort, but taken together they have a great impact. Please add to the impact by sharing your resources and time.

Contact Family Promise volunteer coordinator Dorothy DeLong at 610-372-5265 if you have any questions. I look forward to seeing a flood of forms come in!



Recital, March 13

Atonement's March 13 concert will feature Harriet Rauenzahn on piano and other musical guests. Musical selections include works of Beethoven, Bach, Rachmaninoff, Debussy, Chopin, Jelly Roll Morton and others.

There will also be two young actresses portraying the great-great niece of Frederic Chopin and the great-great granddaughter of Claude Debussy. These young women will talk a bit about their famous ancestors' lives and music.

Be sure to mark your calendar: Sunday, March 13 at 4:00 p.m. An offering benefits the Arts Ministry at Atonement.

Family Promise Registration Form

Financial Contributions: If you cannot serve physically, you can still help!



I wish to offer:

- \$50 to sponsor a person for the week of February 13-20, 2011.
- \$_____ to help with the ongoing costs of breakfast, lunch and sundries.

Financial contributions cover the cost of breakfast food, lunch food for families to pack for work and school for the week, and sundries like shampoo, diapers, toothpaste, etc.

Volunteers for Host Week, February 13-20, 2011

I want to serve as:

- Shopper – Sunday, February 13 afternoon – Shops for breakfast, lunch and sundries.
- Dinner preparer: February 13, 14, 15, 16 only - prepares a hot meal either at home or in the church kitchen. Dinner is served at 6:00 p.m. by Atonement members on these evenings. Our Family Promise partners at Trinity Lutheran, Reading prepare dinner for the other evenings.
- Evening host - February 13, 14, 15, 16 only - 5:30 –8:30 p.m. socializes with guests and assists parents with children’s needs. After supper, evening hosts conduct activities for children, help with homework, or assist guests with other needs. Our Family Promise partners at Trinity Lutheran, Reading are hosts for the other evenings.
- Overnight host - 8:30 p.m. - 7:00 a.m. Spends time with guests, helps with homework, sleeps at church and is available in case of emergency. Hosts wake guests at 6:00 a.m. and may also prepare morning coffee.
- Breakfast preparer - February 14, 15, 16 only - 6:00 - 7:30 a.m. Sets out breakfast foods and helps clean up breakfast. Guests leave by 7:00 a.m. Our Family Promise partners at Trinity Lutheran, Reading prepare breakfast for the other mornings.
- Laundry worker - after host week, washes guests’ and overnight hosts’ towels and sheets and returns them to the church for future host weeks.
- Helper for tear down - Sunday, February 20 morning - tears down beds, loads the trailer. Takes about 30 minutes. A group of about 6 people works great!
- Trailer Driver – Sunday, February 20 - takes the trailer to the next congregation.

Name _____
 Address _____
 Telephone _____ Cell Phone _____
 E-mail address _____

I can help on (please circle dates you are available to help)

Feb. 13 Feb. 14 Feb. 15 Feb. 16 Feb. 17 Feb. 18 Feb. 19 Feb. 20

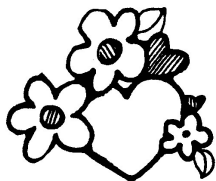
Please return this sheet to the church office. Thank you!

WORSHIP - LEARN - SERVE

ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

5 Wyomissing Blvd.
Wyomissing, PA 19610-2081

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Atonement Staff

Richard H. Summy, *Senior Pastor*
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*

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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.