

The Spirit of Atonement

DEC 24/JAN 25

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS *Worship Schedule*

Wednesdays, Dec. 4, 11, 18 at 7:00 p.m.

Holden Evening Prayer at Atonement
Cookies, Cocoa, Coffee and Fellowship to follow

Sunday, December 15 at 6:00 p.m.

Blue Christmas service ** see page 6 for details!

Thursday, Dec. 19, at 7:00 p.m.

School Christmas Program in the Sanctuary

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, at 6 and 10 p.m.

Join us as we welcome Christ in worship.
Holy Communion and candle lighting at both services.

Christmas Day, Dec. 25, at 10:00 a.m.

Welcome the day of our Savior's birth!

New Year's Eve, Dec. 31, at 5:00 p.m., Devotional worship

Followed by Family Fun Night until 8:00 p.m.

Other Activities

Church Decorating

Saturday, Dec. 14, Time to be announced

**Please watch the News & Notes and weekly email
for church office holiday hours/closures.**





—*Pastor's Note*

The cookie baking day is on the calendar, the tickets for Garden Glow have been reserved, the Advent and Christmas services are planned, and the curriculum for our school children has been created and distributed. It's that time of year, after all, when Karen Carpenter's beautiful alto resonates through Target as you sift through racks of clothing and aisles of gifts looking for just the right thing for just the right person.

I'm the first to admit, this is my favorite time of year. I love the glow of Christmas lights, the familiar tunes at home and church, and the extra magic that seems to float through the air this time of year. I love the cookies, the Hallmark movies, and the anticipation on all our faces as we prepare for the coming of Jesus—or the arrival of Santa Claus.

But as I sat down to write my December newsletter article this year, the words of one of my favorite Christmas hymns popped into my head. In the old Christmas carol, "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," we sing these words:

*For lo! The days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.*

This, along with all the other things, is what Christmas is all about. This hymn, with its gorgeous melody and haunting lyrics gets to the heart of what God is really doing in this season. Jesus, God incarnate, has come, and the world will never be the same. The song the angels sing, announcing his arrival, was not just a song of praise, It was not simply the angelic version of "Extra! Extra! Read all about it!" Instead, this angelic chorus was the beginning of a song that God is teaching our world to sing—the song of peace and joy, the song that announces God's arrival, the baby in the manger, and lets us know that hope is born for us.

I pray that this season is filled with hope, peace, joy, and love for every one of us, and I trust that God will continue to form us into people of the manger, so that eventually all the world will truly give back the song which now the angels sing.

-*Pastor Delaney*





Seniors Alive

(subject to change or cancellation)

Monthly Meetings

Seniors (age 50 and over) are invited to monthly meetings in Fellowship Hall. The next meeting will be on

Monday, Nov. 24, 28, at 1:30 p.m. Come listen to speaker.

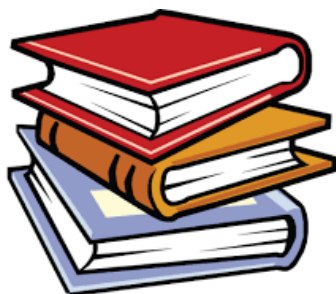
Tours

Dec 18 (Wed) - Million Dollar Quartet Christmas

Brunch/Lunch at First Watch in Clayton and enjoy the Repertory Theatre production of Million Dollar Quartet Christmas. Bus leaves at 10:30 am and returns at 5:30 pm. Cost is \$125 per person.

For more information on tours contact Pat Furlong at (636) 447-5040.

<https://www.alcs-web.com/seniors-alive>



Atonement Book Club 2025

We would like to welcome you to our group of book lovers for fun and interesting discussions of a new book each month. We have just selected a new group of varied and interesting books to read and discuss throughout 2025.

We meet on the second Sunday of the month—in the Family Room beginning at 1:30 p.m. Please enter through the back parking lot door.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, January 12, 2025. We will discuss *Funny Farm: My Unexpected Life With 600 Rescue Animals* by Laurie Zaleski, an inspiring and moving memoir of the author's turbulent life with 600 rescue animals.

Please join us! For more information or questions, please contact Jan Koch at njkoch@aol.com.



From the Parish Nurse
“Keeping a Handle on Holiday Stress”
Cathie Lehr, R.N.

“FOR I
know the plans
 I HAVE FOR YOU,”
DECLARES THE LORD,
 “PLANS TO
prosper you
AND NOT TO HARM YOU,
 PLANS TO GIVE YOU
hope AND a future.”
Jeremiah 29:11

If you find that you are feeling a little more stressed than usual right now, you’re definitely not alone. [The American Psychological Association](#) reports that nearly 9 in10 (89%) Americans are experiencing stress or feeling overwhelmed during this holiday season.

When we are stressed, we need to be sure we are coping with it in the best ways possible. When stress gets the best of us, we may turn to less healthy means of coping. Here are some ways to [make the season less stressful](#) and more fun.

1. Plan ahead.

Between co-workers, friends and family, it's inevitable that some commitments will end up on the same day. Make sure to plan on what you can attend in person or virtually. If you're hosting the holidays, create a menu and holiday decoration plan to help you stay organized and make grocery shopping easier. Try sharing your to-do list with family and friends.

2. Remember you can respectfully say NO thank you.

With holiday commitments, give yourself permission to say no to a few or all of them. It’s OK to prioritize commitments to participating in those that will bring you the most peace and joy.

3. Plan spending.

The holidays may mean spending money. This can be a lot of fun but can also be financially stressful. Make a budget and stick to it. Spending money on your loved ones may be important, but it's also imperative to pay respect to your budget plans. Don’t buy gifts that you'll be paying off for the rest of the year. Consider making meal planning using discounts provided by local markets.

4. Create relaxing surroundings.

Turn on some music, light some candles, consider opening a window (even on a cold day) for 5-10 minutes to welcome some invigorating fresh air. Research has found that listening to music and the scent of citrus can boost feelings of well-being, and vitamin D has been considered a happiness booster.

5. Maintain healthy habits.

For many, the holidays are notorious for ruining healthy habits. Maintain your usual exercise routine. A short workout each morning will help your decision-making throughout the day. Consider consistently parking farther away from the entrance of your destination. Every day, try something new: put on stimulating music and dance in the hallway, participate in chair exercise, intentionally stretch your body, your arms, and your legs. Eat fresh fruit or vegetables throughout the season. Fill up with healthy snacks before a dinner party or celebration offering tempting but unhealthy menu choices. Be responsible about food and alcohol consumption.

6. Respect Differences.

During the holiday, spending time with family and friends may accentuate the challenges of accepting the diversity of other’s opinions or lifestyle. Consider planning a method to clarify and manage your feelings to forgive or forget. Practice deep breathing. Focus on your similarities and replace tension with something productive.

(continued on page 5)

(Holiday Stress, continued from page 4)

7. Dealing with the loss of old (considered sacred) traditions.

Change can be stressful. Family dynamics change. You feel the holidays are not the same as they used to be or everything is different. Numerous challenges occur when facing the holiday seasons after the loss of a family member or friend. Accept your feelings and open up about them to others. It may make you feel better to share. Consider trying out new traditions to ease the loss.

8. Take a break.

Be realistic, you are only one person, and you can only do so much. Don't forget about your own needs. Take a nap, read a book, watch a funny movie. Laughing relaxes the whole body and can relieve physical stress. Be kind to yourself and acknowledge that it's okay to not achieve everything you set out to do. Forget about perfection and relax and enjoy the company surrounding you.

Creation Care Tip



As Christians, we are taught to treat others as we want to be treated. During the holidays, we find ourselves wanting to be our best, so taking on more and more until the holidays turn into a grind, but we never want to say “no”. The Creation Care team reminds you not to waste, and you are one of God's creations.

In this season of Peace on Earth, Good Will toward men (and women), take care of yourself, too. Keep a calendar where the family can see it and add necessary dates; the basketball tournament, the boss' invitation to his/her holiday open-house, Junior's band concert, etc. (Surprises like “Oh, did I mention that my mother is coming to stay for the week before Christmas?” are rarely appreciated.)

Put yourself on that calendar: shopping day, haircut, car maintenance, Advent by Candlelight (The perfect way to keep Christ in Christmas).

Say “No” as needed. Postpone activities until the new year, if possible. Try to anticipate those activities that you know you want to do and put them on the calendar, Now.

And need I remind you to get rest and eat right? If you are sick, all that work will be for nothing, and what a waste.

“May the Lord Bless you and keep you...and Give you Peace.”
Merry Christmas from Atonement's Creation Care team.



***News from
Atonement
Lutheran School,
Principal
Becca Gardner***

“Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light!” Romans 13:12

Hello Atonement family,

We had a very relaxing Thanksgiving break. We are back in school in December with a nice two week Christmas break before the end of 2024. November was filled with many fun-filled activities such as Anything but a Backpack day and Bingo night! In December, we hope to end the second quarter with success before Christmas break. As we come back to school in January, we look forward to starting fresh in a new quarter. I am hoping that you will join me in prayer for our staff, students, and school families. Thank you all for your support in these last few months, and I will see you in the NEW YEAR OF 2025!

In Christ,

Principal G

***School Office Holiday
No school, office closed—
Dec 20 through Jan.3
Return to school Monday, Jan.6***

Save the Dates !!

**Wednesday Night Advent Services,
Dec. 4, 11, 18, 7:00 p.m., Followed by cookies, cocoa, coffee and fellowship!**

Advent By Candlelight, Sunday, Dec. 8

****Blue Christmas**

Join us on Sunday, December 15 at 6:00 p.m. for a Blue Christmas service here at Atonement. This service is designed to create space for people for whom this time of year bring grief or challenge. Bring your whole self, and join us in Blue Christmas worship.

Church office holiday hours to be announced.

Christmas Eve Worship, Dec. 24, 6 & 10 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship, Dec. 25, 10:00 am

Watch for details on all these events in future N&N and weekly emails.

Confirmation

Confirmation will meet:

December 1-22 at 9:30am on Sundays. We will take a break for the holidays and resume on Sunday, January 5 at 9:30am in the Multipurpose Room.



***MEN'S CLUB CHRISTMAS
TREE LOT***

Operating hours:

Monday - Friday 3:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Sunday 12 - 8:30 p.m.

MUSIC MINISTRY REPORT

Atonement hosted the June 14 Hymn Fest celebrating the 50th year of Seminex. It was a big musical undertaking as well as all the other aspects of the event. We coordinated a combined vocal choir as well as combined bell choir, three organists, and two violinists. We also led the music which included a combined choir for the Oct. 29 Reformation service held at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church.

Music ministry staff and participants:

Organist - Cindy Vantine

Choir director - Bruce Vantine

Choir members:

SOPRANOS - ClaireBrown, Lynn Grames, Darlene Johnson Sharon Love, Vicki Minter, Rachel Moore.

ALTOS - Cathy Hohl, Verina Ruiz, Delaney Schlake-Kruse, Cindy Steinbruegge.

TENORS - Rick Brown, Ron Grames, Jim Shoemaker, Matt Schlake-Kruse, Jaimy Sudyam, Linda Tomazi.

BASSES - Clark Burton, Dave Fellwock, Chuck Luebke, Tim Prince, Keith Tomaz

Bell choir director - Sharon Carter Eichenberger

Bell choir members: Tom Beckermann, Cari Bickel, Brenda Blight, Emily Buis, Jan Koch, Norm Koch, Lisa Moravec, Paula Viehman, Nancy Wall, Richard Wall

Joyful Noiz Director - Jim Baumgartner

Joyful Noiz members: Dave Cole, Bob Kemper, Gene Tisius, Sharon Carter Eichenberger, Darlene Johnson, Barb Wishon, Jeri Dietz.



Giving back . . . to the Lord.

Your continued regular offering is essential to Atonement's mission of serving God's people in the future. You may mail it to the church office or use the donate button below or on our website to use your credit card. You can also scan the QR code and you will be connected to Tithe.ly, our online giving program.

Thank you!
www.alcs-web.com/donate



Lutheran Church of the Atonement
 1285 North New Florissant Road
 Florissant, MO 63031
 314-837-1224
church.office@alcs-web.com

We are currently projecting a **significant budget deficit** for the fiscal year ending in June 2025. Making a special gift to Atonement before December 31, 2024 can help prevent that shortfall.

Give back to keep Atonement's ministry alive! THANK YOU!

*Lutheran Church of the Atonement
1285 North New Florissant Road
Florissant, MO 63031*

Return Service Requested

Dec. Jan 2025

Newsletter

Deadline for the

Feb. issue

12:00 Noon

Tuesday, Jan. 7