

January 2010

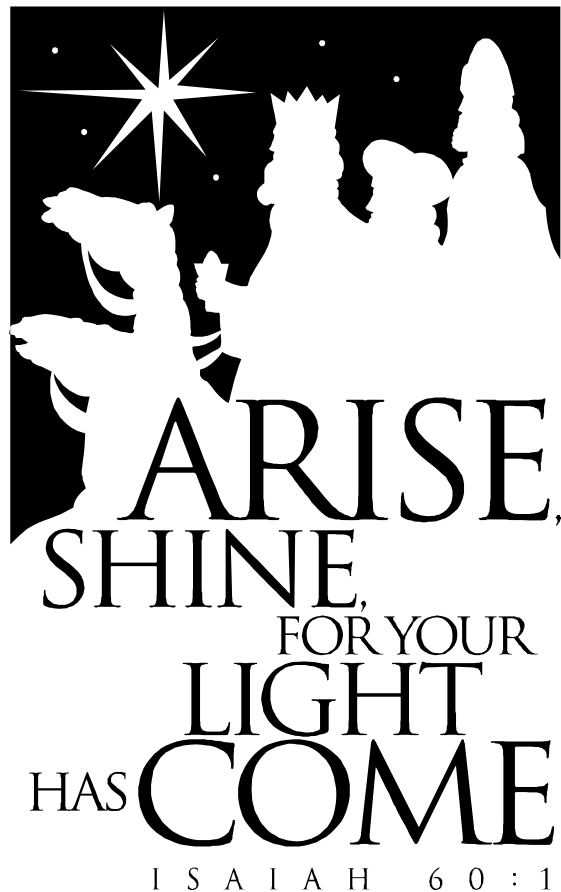
Celebration of ATONEMENT †

Newsletter of Atonement Lutheran Church,
Rev. Tina Koenig Ray, BCC, Pastor

"Called by God to serve and witness to all in response to God's grace."

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From the Pastor...

The New Year is almost here. Actually we're somewhere between Advent 3 and Advent 4. I'm sitting at Starbucks waiting for a new pot of decaf, when I notice a book on the coffee table (imagine finding that at Starbucks! LOL) beside me. I read through the first 20 pages or so of "*The Art of Racing in the Rain*" by Garth Stein. (Note to self, get this book.)

Two thoughts grabbed my attention in those 20 pages. Allow me to quote, "...I don't understand why people insist on pitting the concept of evolution and creation against each other. Why can't they see that spiritualism and science are one? That bodies evolve and souls evolve and the universe is a fluid place that marries them both in a wonderful package called a human being?" As I read this profound thought that springs from Enzo's mind I am mindful that I received an email discussing whether or not dogs have souls. You see Enzo is a dog. The debate regarding dogs and souls occurred between two churches on their outdoor sign boards. But I digress.

Anyhoo, back to topic....Very often people do pit the two against each other: science and spirituality. My question for you all to chew on is, "Why would we dissect the Great Mystery by splitting science from spirituality and spirituality from science?" The two are intertwined like ying and yang; like hand and glove; like moon and sun; like, well you get the idea.

We as wonderful human being packages often do that, pull things apart, get the microscope out and dissect the mystery out of things. In high school and college I loved dissecting frogs and worms and fetal pigs. But there comes a point when we need to leave a little mystery in our lives. We need to behold awesomeness and be confounded by the wonders of God the Great Mystery. I like that name for God. After all, we really

don't know what God is like; we just have descriptions of God's attributes and abilities, etc. So the term that us Native folk use is apt, the Great Mystery. Or if you want Latin, *Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans*. (R. Otto)

You've just had an insight into how my brain jumps from one thought to another. Billy often had trouble keeping up. Amazing, huh?

As we begin this New Year 2010, I will leave you with another quote from Enzo: "...memory is time folding back on itself. To remember is to disengage from the present."

I encourage you this New Year to stay engaged with the present and look for signs in your life of the Mysterious God that we love and who loves us back. Wow.

Pastor Tina 

**The Annual Meeting is scheduled for
January 24, 2010 after the service.**

The Annual Report will be available on
January 17, 2010,
which means reports need to be turned in to
the office **ASAP!**

They can be emailed to atonement@jvl.net or dropped off to the office. For the sake of consistency, please use Ariel 12 font or some close approximation.

Volunteers will be needed late in the afternoon on Friday, January 15 to assemble the reports. If you're interested, please contact Pattye in the office.



From the Council President

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

Norbert's matching Fund is up to \$3,889.00. We have 2 weeks to match \$1,111.00 to bring it up to the \$5,000.00 goal.

We're still working on the budget and could use your pledge sheets if you still haven't turned them in yet. We're still looking for volunteers to run for the Council at the Annual Meeting on January 24.

Other than that, all's going well. So far. We appreciate getting the amount of pledge sheets that we have, but if you haven't turned yours in yet please do so as soon as possible.

Hands of Faith will be here the week of January 31st, so we need volunteers.

Yours in Christ,

Nate Anderson
Council President

All members of the congregation have an invitation to attend the Church Council meetings to see and hear how the business of Atonement is conducted. The Council meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30 PM in the Klingberg Chapel. Please join us.

November/December Worship

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Maint.</u>	<u>Cans</u>
<u>November</u> adults/youth				
22	70/2	\$1168.00	\$ 8.00	\$42.80
29	58/3	\$ 974.00	\$ 8.00	\$42.10
<u>December</u>				
6	48/5	\$2089.00	\$ 8.00	\$34.89
13	48/3	\$1831.00	\$38.00	\$30.54

Financial update as of 11/30/09

Total income Jan-Nov. 09	\$103,806.47
<u>Total expenses Jan-Nov. 09</u>	<u>- \$107,528.17</u>
Net income (Jan-Nov. 2009)	\$ -3,721.70

Due to the new privacy laws regarding health information, the hospital will not release the names of patients. So if you are going into the hospital, or know someone who is hospitalized, please call the church office or let Pastor Tina know.

Don't forget to send in your pledge or offering even if you're on vacation or we have a snow day.

Have you caught up?

January Flower & Fellowship Schedule

Eternal Candle: The Eternal Candle for January is from Carole Doubleday in memory of grandchildren John & Rachel

Altar Guild: Dick & Janice Mitchell

Weekly Beloit Daily News ad: no sponsor

January 3

Flowers: Duane & Bonnie Ottow in honor of their 37th anniversary

Bread of Heaven: Dick Mitchell

Fellowship: no sponsor

January 10

Flowers: Bob Kristianson in memory of his Mother

Bread of Heaven: Jan Mitchell

Fellowship: TMO's (Time Marches On)

January 17

Flowers: Arlene Ruegger in memory of Richard

Bread of Heaven: no sponsor

Fellowship: no sponsor

January 24

Flowers: Maggie Janke for her Mom's birthday

Bread of Heaven: no sponsor

Fellowship: no sponsor

January 31

Flowers: no sponsor

Bread of Heaven: no sponsor

Fellowship: no sponsor

The Crocheted Tablecloth

The brand new pastor and his wife, newly assigned to their first ministry, to reopen a church in suburban Brooklyn , arrived in early October excited about their opportunities. When they saw their church, it was very run down and needed much work. They set a goal to have everything done in time to have their first service on Christmas Eve.

They worked hard, repairing pews, plastering walls, painting, etc, and on December 18 were ahead of schedule and just about finished. On December 19 a terrible tempest - a driving rainstorm hit the area and lasted for two days.

On the 21st, the pastor went over to the church. His heart sank when he saw that the roof had leaked, causing a large area of plaster about 20 feet by 8 feet to fall off the front wall of the sanctuary just behind the pulpit, beginning about head high.

The pastor cleaned up the mess on the floor, and not knowing what else to do but postpone the Christmas Eve service, headed home. On the way he noticed that a local business was having a flea market type sale for charity so he stopped in. One of the items was a beautiful, handmade, ivory colored, crocheted tablecloth with exquisite work, fine colors and a Cross embroidered right in the center. It was just the right size to cover up the hole in the front wall. He bought it and headed back to the church.

By this time it had started to snow. An older woman running from the opposite direction was trying to catch the bus. She missed it. The pastor invited her to wait in the warm church for the next bus 45 minutes later. She sat in a pew and paid no attention to the pastor while he got a ladder, hangers, etc., to put up the tablecloth as a wall tapestry. The pastor could hardly believe how beautiful it looked and it covered up the entire problem area.

Then he noticed the woman walking down the center aisle. Her face was like a sheet.. "Pastor," she asked, "where did you get that tablecloth?" The pastor explained. The woman asked him to check the lower right corner to see if the initials, EBG were crocheted into it there. They were. These were the initials of the woman, and she had made this tablecloth 35 years before, in Austria.

The woman could hardly believe it as the pastor told how he had just gotten the tablecloth. The woman explained that before the war she and her husband were well-to-do people in Austria. When the Nazis came, she was forced to leave. Her husband was going to follow her the next week he was captured, sent to prison and never saw her husband or her home again.

The pastor wanted to give her the tablecloth, but she made the pastor keep it for the church. The pastor insisted on driving her home, that was the least he could do.. She lived on the other side of Staten Island and was only in Brooklyn for the day for a housecleaning job.

What a wonderful service they had on Christmas Eve. The church was almost full. The music and the spirit were great. At the end of the service, the pastor and his wife greeted everyone at the door and many said that they would return.

One older man, whom the pastor recognized from the neighborhood continued to sit in one of the pews and stare, and the pastor wondered why he wasn't leaving. The man asked him where he got the tablecloth on the front wall because it was identical to one that his wife had made years ago when they lived in Austria before the war and how could there be two tablecloths so much alike.

He told the pastor how the Nazis came, how he forced his wife to flee for her safety and he was supposed to follow her, but he was arrested and put in a prison. He never saw his wife or his home again all the 35 years in between.

The pastor asked him if he would allow him to take him for a little ride. They drove to Staten Island and to the same house where the pastor had taken the woman three days earlier.

He helped the man climb the three flights of stairs to the woman's apartment, knocked on the door and he saw the greatest Christmas reunion he could ever imagine.

True Story - submitted by Pastor Rob Reid

SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWSLETTER

In the interest of being good stewards of Atonement's resources, we have created an PDF (compatible with both Windows and Macs) edition of the monthly newsletter. Please contact the Church Office with your email address if you would like to sign up. Expect to receive an email each month titled "(name of month) 09 Newsletter" with 3 attachments: the newsletter itself, the calendar, and the Ministers of Welcome schedule. Atonement will not sell or share your email address with anyone. Period. Printed copies will always be available for those who prefer to receive them. Some early test emails were blocked and returned because of the recipient's internet providers spam settings. Please make sure that jvl.net.com is an acceptable domain name to your internet provider. - Pattye Gilmour

NEED A RIDE TO CHURCH ON SUNDAY?

Call the church office by Friday morning. Want to volunteer to give someone a ride to church on Sunday? Leave your name and number with the office and we'll try to make a match!



January Birthdays

1/2	Carole Doubleday	1/15	Justin Reedy
1/5	Bob Brauns	1/26	Norbert Larson
1/7	Mary Wendtland	1/26	Bruce Johnson
1/11	Sue Grade	1/29	David Luety II

January Baptism Anniversaries

1/2	Jennifer Ramczyk	1/11	Peggy Johnson
1/2	Jacinta Ramczyk	1/20	Evelyn Herkis
1/4	Janice Adney		

A New Addition to the Church Family

Noah Riley Dummer Born December 14, 2009
7 lbs., 2 oz 19 inches long

Son of Ty and Lana Dummer, grandson of Beverly Spangenberg

Newsletter Articles

February Newsletter articles are due Monday, January 18.
Newsletters will be assembled on Friday, January 22.

READ THE BIBLE IN ONE YEAR

Starting November 8, 2009, the schedule for the Monday thru Friday readings appeared in the weekly bulletin. If you missed a week, you can find the schedule in the Klingberg Chapel or email the secretary at atonement@jvlnet.com and have the reading schedule emailed to you.

A Christmas letter from Jesus

"Dear children,

It has come to my attention that many of you are upset that folks are taking My name out of the season. Maybe you've forgotten that I wasn't actually born during this time of the year and that it was some of your predecessors who decided to celebrate My birthday on what was actually a time of pagan festival. How I personally feel about this celebration can probably be most easily understood by those of you who have been blessed with children of your own. I don't care what you call the day. If you want to celebrate My birth just GET ALONG AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER. Now, having said that, let Me go on.

If it bothers you that the town in which you live doesn't allow a scene depicting My birth, then just get rid of a couple of your Santas and snowmen and put in a small Nativity scene on your own front lawn. If all My followers did that there wouldn't be any need for such a scene on the town square because there would be many of them all around town. Stop worrying about the fact that people are calling the tree a holiday tree instead of a Christmas tree. It was I who made all trees. You can and may remember Me anytime you see any tree.

If you want to give Me a present in remembrance of My birth here is my wish list. Choose something from it.

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way My birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers away from home. They are terribly afraid and lonely this time of year. I know; they tell Me all the time.
2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.
3. Instead of writing John Doe complaining about the wording on the cards his staff sent out this year, why don't you write and tell him that you'll be praying for him and his family this year. Then follow up. It will be nice hearing from you again.

4. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts you can't afford and they don't need, spend time with them. Tell them the story of My birth, and why I came to live with you down here. Hold them in your arms and remind them that I love them.
5. Pick someone that has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.
6. Did you know that someone in your town will attempt to take their own life this season because they feel so alone and hopeless? Since you don't know who that person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile; it could make all the difference. You might also consider supporting the local Suicide Prevention Hot-Line: they talk with people like that every day.
7. Instead of nit picking about what the retailer in your town calls the holiday, be patient with the people who work there. Give them a warm smile and a kind word. *Even if they aren't allowed to wish you a "Merry Christmas" that doesn't keep you from wishing them one!*
8. If you really want to make a difference, support a missionary, especially one who takes My love and Good News to those who have never heard My name. You may already know someone like that.
9. Here's a good one. There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only will have no "Christmas" tree, but neither will they have any presents to give or receive. If you don't know them (and I suspect you don't) buy some food & a few gifts and give them to the Marines, the Salvation Army or some other charity which believes in Me and they will make the delivery for you.
10. Finally if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to Me, then behave like a Christian. Don't do things in secret that you wouldn't do in My presence. Let people know by your actions that you are one of mine.

P.S. Love Me and do what I have told you to do. Check out the list above and get to work; time is short. I'll help you, but the ball is now in your court. And do have a most blessed Christmas with all those whom you love and remember:

I LOVE YOU. Jesus

THANK YOU!

With the Care in Congregations program ending on December 31st, Thrivent would like to recognize Atonement's volunteer coordinators:

Norbert Larson
Bruce Johnson
Lloyd Jero

Thrivent says "Thank you" for your dedicated service.



The Lydia group wants to give a great big "Thank You" to everyone who donated mittens, gloves, hats and socks to the mitten tree this year. 134 items were collected and distributed to Caritas, Sparrow's Nest and the Salvation Army.



To Tina & all who were so nice- I would like to thank you for remembering in prayer and sending me the monthly issue of the newsletter. Also visits of Bob and Florence-not to forget the delicious little snacks. Your friendliness will always be remembered. - Fern Miller

The Secretary's hours are currently 9 AM -Noon on Monday & Tuesday, 1-4 PM on Wednesday, and 9 AM - 1 PM on Thursday & Friday.

The "Matching Gift Fund" is again taking contributions toward our goal of \$5000. Please note on your envelope this amount toward "Matching Gift Fund". -Norbert Larson

The Lydia Group will meet at the church at 1 PM, Tuesday, January 5. Jan Mitchell will be hostess, and Pastor Tina will hold a Bible study.

Hands of Faith guests will be here the week of January 31, 2010. The clothesline of needs will be going up soon, and the sign-up sheets will be in the Klingberg Chapel. Do you know anyone who might be interested in volunteering to stay overnight or provide a meal? Talk to them, and if they would like to help, please forward their name and number to the office.



Some Thoughts for the New Year

A sharp tongue can cut my own throat.

If I want my dreams to come true, I mustn't oversleep.

Of all the things I wear, my expression is the most important.

The best vitamin for making friends..... B1.

The happiness of my life depends on the quality of my thoughts.

The heaviest thing I can carry is a grudge.

One thing I can give and still keep...is my word.

I lie the loudest when I lie to myself.

If I lack the courage to start, I have already finished.

One thing I can't recycle is wasted time.

Ideas won't work unless ' I ' do.

My mind is like a parachute...it functions only when open.

The 10 commandments are not a multiple choice.

The pursuit of happiness is the chase of a lifetime! It is never too late to become what I might have been.

Life is too short to wake up with regrets. So love the people who treat you right.. Forget about the one's who don't. Believe everything happens for a reason. If you get a second chance, grab it with both hands. If it changes your life, let it. Nobody said life would be easy, they just promised it would be worth it.

Celebration is published by Atonement Lutheran Church

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January