

News & Notes

Lutheran Church of the Atonement

November 26-27, 2022



PASTOR MUELLER INFORMS COUNCIL OF HIS PLAN TO RETIRE

At Monday evening's Congregation Council meeting, *Pastor Rick Mueller* announced his intention to retire in approximately six months, following completion of the current school year. He explains his decision in the letter which follows.

The Council responded by expressing sincere appreciation for his years of pastoral leadership at Atonement.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

"I love what I do, and I love the people I work with."

For roughly a decade, that has been my standard response whenever someone has asked whether I was considering retirement. The statement is as true today as the first day that I uttered it. I still love pastoral ministry, and still love the people I work with. And, I cannot put into words the joy it continues to be to preach and teach the Gospel and to serve at Atonement.

Nevertheless, I need to acknowledge several realities. One is that earlier this month I celebrated my 74th birthday. A second is that Atonement's Reflect and Revive Team has begun a series of small group meetings to help shape the congregation's long-term future ministry. A decision on my part now will allow some clarity as to where that process will need to lead.

I am, therefore, announcing my decision to retire at the end of the current school year. I believe announcing a decision at this time will allow both our church and our school leadership time to prepare for a transition and to work with our Synod on future pastoral leadership.

I have shared this decision with our Congregation Council and with our synodical bishop and will do everything I can to facilitate a smooth transition.

I cannot help but reflect that my father served faithfully for 33 years in his final parish and that I am now in my 33rd year here at Atonement. I will continue to serve out that 33rd year to the best of my ability, as God gives wisdom and guidance, always grateful for the privilege of serving among you. As we approach our observance of Thanksgiving, I will remain forever thankful for your friendship, your support, and your love.

Your Servant, in Christ,
Pastor Rick Mueller



All fully-vaccinated seniors (50+/proof of vaccination required) are invited to our next meeting on Monday, November 28, at 1:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Channel 5 Chief Meteorologist Scott Connell will talk about the ins-and-outs of weather forecasting. There will be a brief business meeting, and dessert will be served.

2022 Tour Schedule (Tours are all-inclusive):

- Dec. 7 *Sheldon Theatre Coffee Concert - "That Time of Year" with Tim Schall.* Bus departs at 8:15 a.m. and returns at 2:30 p.m. Cost is \$78 per person.
- Dec. 16 *St. Louis Symphony Mercy Holiday Celebration -* Bus departs at 11:00 a.m. and returns at 4:00 p.m. Cost is \$99 per person.
- Dec. 22 *Fox Theatre - "Elf the Musical" -* Includes lunch. Bus departs at 12:00 p.m. and returns by 6:00 p.m. Cost is \$100 per person.

Contact Don Kuethe at (314) 831-8478 or at dthekey@sbcglobal.net for details.



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO JOIN THE FOOTBALL POOL

Your \$10 entry fee gets you into the pool and it supports the Atonement Endowment Fund – and another worthy charity chosen by the final winner.

You may leave your \$10 entry fee in the Men's Club mailbox; put *Steve Rosenfeld's* name on the envelope.

Here are our leaders at week 11:

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Kurt Lahnar | 79.5 |
| Clark Cornejo | 78.5 |
| Greg Viehman | 78 |
| Eric Schafermeyer | 73.5 |
| Tom Blight | 72.5 |
| Paula Viehman | 72 |
| Pastor Mueller | 71 |
| Steve Rosenfeld | 70 |



POINSETTIAS: LAST WEEKEND

Please help to beautify the sanctuary with poinsettias for the Christmas services. Pick up an ordering envelope from the narthex and place in the box provided along with payment. The cost is \$9 each. No orders can be placed until payment has been received. The deadline is this Sunday.



ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT TAKE ME TO THE MANGER'

Atonement ladies, next Sunday, Dec. 4, at 6:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall will be transformed by candlelight for a program of Advent reflections, music, fellowship and, of course, dessert! Sign up on the attendance form to attend as our guest, or contact *Jane Meyerkord* at (314) 731-2658 or *Betty Luebke* at (314) 630-1682.



MIDWEEK ADVENT WORSHIP, WEDNESDAYS AT 7:00 P.M.

Once again, Atonement will share our midweek Advent services with our sisters and brothers at Florissant Valley Christian Church, reviving a tradition from pre-Covid Advents and Lents. Services will be preceded by dessert, served at 6:30 p.m., with worship at 7:00.

Wednesdays at Atonement will be November 30 and December 14 and will incorporate "Holden Evening Prayer." FVCC will host on December 7. All services will include Holy Communion.



**FACILITIES TO CLOSE
TOTALLY, DEC. 2
TO PERMIT SAFE DELIVERY
OF H.V.A.C.**

After being on back-order for months, the new HVAC units for Kretzmann Hall will be delivered on Friday, Dec. 2. Because of the inherent dangers in the use of a large crane to position the units on the roof of Kretzmann Hall, the entire church/school campus will be closed for the day. School students will have a “virtual learning” day, and the church and school offices will be closed.

Please take care of all church and school business prior to that Friday. Beginning Wednesday, Nov. 30, please park only at the north (DeSmet) end of the parking lot.



MANY GIFTS . . . ONE BODY

At each Baptism, the congregation promises to support the newly-baptized in their new life in Christ. Beginning January 8, 2023, we will be “Building Our Children’s Faith” by offering Bible lessons and activities from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. each Sunday for children ages 3 through 8th Grade. Working together, we can make this a joyful expression of our faith as we support young ones developing their faith.

Please indicate on the attendance form if you can assist or team-teach at least one Sunday per month. In addition, please indicate whether your child(ren) will join us along with their ages. With questions, contact any member of the organization team: *Cathy Hohl, Wesley Johnson, Jane Meyerkord, Diane Ritchey, Verina Ruiz, and Kristen Thompson.*



CHRISTMAS DECORATING

Join in the fun and fellowship of decorating the Sanctuary for Christmas on Saturday, Dec. 10, beginning at 8:00 a.m. Contact *David Johnson* at (314) 363-8443, or mark the attendance form.



**KEITH TOMAZI TO PRESENT
CHRISTMAS ORGAN CONCERT**

Atonement member *Keith Tomazi* invites you to attend the annual Christmas concert at the Scottish Rite Cathedral, 3633 Lindell Blvd. The concert will be on Tuesday, Dec. 13, at 7:00 p.m. The Cathedral is located between Spring and Grand, just around the corner from the Fox Theatre.

Keith’s program will showcase the glorious Kimball pipe organ, built in 1924 and recently renovated to restore it fully. The Scottish Rite Kimball is one of only three instruments built by Kimball that combine a theatre organ and an orchestral organ in one instrument and is the only one still playable. It is bigger than the Wurlitzer at the Fox Theatre. The Kimball has 53 ranks, four manuals, three pipe chambers, and numerous sound effects and percussion instruments. The deepest stop is a 64-foot Gravissimo.

Following the performance, *Keith* will host an “open console.” Anyone who wishes to do so is welcome to visit the choir loft to get an explanation of the organ’s features and to play it.

Admission is free, and parking in the Scottish Rite parking garage located behind the cathedral is free. Tell the parking attendant that you are with the Scottish Rite. Free-will donations to support the upkeep and maintenance of the instrument are welcome. A skywalk into the Cathedral is located on the third level of the parking garage. The auditorium is immediately to the right on entering from the skywalk.

Questions may be directed to *Keith* at (314) 831-1607 or at ktomazi@sbcglobal.net.

DEVOTIONALS...

...for January through March of *Portals of Prayer* and *Christ in Our Home* are available on the table in the narthex. *Hope-Full Living* to come.

A TIME TO Reflect

A TIME TO REFLECT

After several months of behind-the-scenes work, the Reflect and Revive Team has started the next phase of the congregation-wide self-study process. As team member *Cathy Hohl* explained at the recent Congregation Meeting, the team's purpose is to lead the congregation in discerning God's future mission to Atonement by:

- engaging and motivating members by seeking their thoughts about Atonement's strengths and about their future aspirations for Atonement, and then
- summarizing that information for future congregational action.

This new phase started quietly in late October. It brings small groups together to discuss the themes identified through the Congregational Vitality Survey (which you completed in early spring) and through inter views several members had with our consultant, the Kansas Leadership Center (KLC).

The themes are:

- concerns about and hopes for the future
- relationship between church and school
- style and welcome of worship programs
- relationship with our geographic community
- engaging young families and young people in general, and
- what kind of Lutheran church are we?

The team's process is designed to hear every viewpoint. Consequently, some discussion groups may be "by invitation," while others may be "open invitation." In either case, the team needs you to sign up so you can get the meeting materials in advance. There are no current plans to hold discussions in an always-busy December, but the team will soon announce meeting dates for early 2023.

This is a walk of faith that we are taking together as the community of believers at Atonement, and

God has blessed with a rich variety of gifts. Let's use our gifts to live the Gospel and eagerly seek God's call for us.



'SIGNS OF THE SEASON' ADVENT CHILDREN'S SERMON SERIES

Children's sermons on the four Sundays in Advent will highlight the theme: "Signs of the Season." The "signs" will be a candle, a star, a tree, and a manger. Following each message, each child will receive a small ornament to place on his or her family Christmas tree.



GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP...

...next meets on Saturday, Dec. 10, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in-person at Atonement. Anyone who has suffered the loss of a loved one is invited to join. Call *Shirl Henke* at (314) 831-7032, or *Joyce Pingel* at (314) 740-2137.



ENJOY NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH SOME FAMILY FUN

Celebrate on December 31 with devotional worship at 5:30 p.m. followed by Family Fun Night at 6:00. Please bring your own food and non-alcoholic drinks. There will be free prizes. The festivities last until 8:00 p.m. so the night is still young to enjoy other plans.

Contact *Greg Viehman* at (314) 422-2657, or mark the attendance form.



THANK YOU...

...to those who directed their Thrivent Choice Dollars for September through November to Atonement Church and School: *Anita Cole*, *Wanda Grueneberg*, *Cathy Hohl*, and *Joyce Pingel*. Total year-to-date is \$4,476.