

The Spirit of Atonement

FEBRUARY 2025

TOWN HALL SUMMARY—*from January 26*

Where are we, and where are we going? Or better yet, what is God leading us to do in North County? The Town Hall meeting on January 26, led by the Rev. Dave Whetter (Central States Synod) and Congregation President, Keith Tomazi, focused on the next steps on that journey.

As we re-enter a transition period, we will have supply pastors at least through March 2. Rev. Whetter has identified a potential interim pastor to work with us after that date as we get our finances in order, confirm our mission, and find a sustainable path forward. The Council and potential interim will meet soon and, if agreeable to both, will enter into a covenant describing the interim work.

Keith also reported that:

- Our new Interim Principal, Ted Jander, was in attendance and introduced to the assembly. He has filled open faculty positions and made great progress on getting a school nurse. He has accomplished a great deal in his first days as principal. (Mr. Jander is very familiar with Atonement School as he has been teaching music, technology, and art here at Atonement.) We anticipate many good things from him.
- The School Board has worked hard to get the school on a secure financial footing. In the short run, it has adjusted the budget and cut expenses to finish this school year and maintain cash flow to cover payroll and other expenditures through July 2025. It has also modified the registration process for the 2025-26 school year to make planning easier.
- The church has also focused on financial sustainability. It has substantially decreased spending and received additional revenue from those within and outside Atonement. (Thank you to all who responded!) The Council and Finance Committee are working diligently on improving processes related to cash-flow analysis, reporting and forecasting. The Council should have more information within a few weeks. Similarly, Dave Cole, Howard Nimmons, and Brenda Blight are updating related “back-office” processes to further improve reporting and forecasting.
- We are actively engaged in Great River Collaborative discussions with other Lutheran churches in north St. Louis city and county about how to do mission differently. Discussions include sharing resources and facilities, among other things.
- The Council is back to full capacity as Nelson Minter accepted Council’s appointment as congregation Treasurer, and Greg Viehman has chosen to complete his term as Vice-President. Nelson brings energy, skill, and a keen analytical ability to help us through our financial troubles, and Greg’s leadership skills will continue to benefit the congregation.
- The Atonement Past Presidents (“the APPs”) have joined forces with the Council to provide additional support as we navigate through these times. Past presidents participating include Dave Fellwock, Cathy Hohl, Norm Koch, Chuck Luebke, Bill Meyerkord, Jane Meyerkord and Howard Nimmons.

In the question-and-answer period after Keith’s report, members expressed concern about our current finances and the longer-term sustainability of both the church and school. Members also expressed substantial optimism about Atonement’s future if we faithfully work together.

In the next few weeks, there will be formal opportunities for you to discuss Atonement’s future. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact President Keith Tomazi.

—*Past Presidents Cathy Hohl and Jane Meyerkord*



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, Feb. 24, at 1:30 p.m. Come listen to entertaining ventriloquist, Mike Coleman, speaking and singing with his small friends.

Tours

No tours are planned for February due to possible bad weather. Future tours are subject to interest generated by the group and people willing to help plan the tour. Please let us know if you have any thoughts about tour locations or interest in being part of the planning.

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



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 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, February 9, 2025. We will discuss *Black Cake*, by Charmaine Wilkerson. Charmaine Wilkerson's debut novel is a story of how the inheritance of betrayals, secrets, memories, and even names can shape relationships and history. Deeply evocative and beautifully written, *Black Cake* is an extraordinary journey through the life of a family changed forever by the choices of its matriarch. (From *goodreads*)

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



From the Parish Nurse “Caring for the Caregiver” Joyce Pingel, L.P.N.

Caring for a loved one strains even the most resilient people. If you're a caregiver, take steps to preserve your own health and well-being.

As our population ages, more people are doing caregiving. About 1 in 3 adults in the United States is an informal or family caregiver.

A caregiver is anyone who helps another person in need. A person in need might be an ill spouse or partner, a child with a disability, or an aging friend or relative.

Caregivers report higher levels of stress than do people who are not caregivers. It's important for caregivers to know that they, too, need help and support.

Caregiving can have many rewards. For most caregivers, caring for a loved one feels good. And it can make your relationship stronger.

But the demands of caregiving also cause emotional and physical stress. It's common to feel angry, frustrated, worn out or sad. And it's common to feel alone.

Caregiver stress can put caregivers at risk of changes in their own health. Factors that can increase caregiver stress include:

- Caring for a spouse.
- Living with the person who needs care.
- Caring for someone who needs constant care.
- Feeling alone.
- Feeling helpless or depressed.
- Having money problems.
- Spending many hours caregiving.
- Having too little guidance from health care professionals.
- Having no choice about being a caregiver.
- Not having good coping or problem-solving skills.
- Feeling the need to give care at all times.

As a caregiver, you may be so focused on your loved one that you don't see how caregiving affects your own health and well-being. The signs of caregiver stress include:

- Feeling burdened or worrying all the time.
- Feeling tired often.
- Sleeping too much or not enough.
- Gaining or losing weight.
- Becoming easily irked or angry.
- Losing interest in activities you used to enjoy.
- Feeling sad.
- Having frequent headaches or other pains or health problems.
- Misusing alcohol or drugs, including prescription medicines.
- Missing your own medical appointments.

Too much stress over time can harm your health. As a caregiver, you might feel depressed or anxious. You might not get enough sleep or physical activity. Or you might not eat a balanced diet. All of these increase your risk of health conditions, such as heart disease and diabetes. The emotional and physical demands of caregiving can strain even the strongest person. Many resources and tools can help you care for your loved one, and yourself. Make use of them. If you don't take care of yourself, you won't be able to care for anyone else.

—continued on page 5



Creation Care Tip

17 Things You Should Never Donate

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|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Broken Electronics | Used Personal Care | Worn-Out Shoes |
| Stained or Torn | Products | VHS Tapes and Cas- |
| Clothing | Large Appliances | sette Players |
| Used Mattresses | That Don't Work | Household Cleaners |
| Outdated Textbooks | Prescription Medica- | Cracked Dishes and |
| Expired Food | tions | Glassware |
| Damaged Toys | Old Car Seats | Used Underwear or |
| | Outdated Electronics | Socks |
| | Accessories | Old Paint |

What to Do with Them Instead (see the URL below)

www.msn.com/en-us/lifestyle/lifestyle-buzz/17-things-you-should-never-donate-and-what-to-do-with-them-instead/ss-AA1wqOBG



DONATE WHILE YOU DINE

Visit Culver's of Florissant on Wednesday, February 26th, from 5pm-8pm to support **Atonement Lutheran School!**

Enjoy a delicious meal, benefit a great cause, and feel good all over.

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!




Come on in to your local Culver's restaurant:
Culver's of Florissant
975 US-67, Florissant, MO
314-801-7939

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Texas Hold'em
Fundraiser for
Atonement Men's Club

**Saturday
February 22, 2025**

Join us for a night of fellowship, fun and Texas Hold'em

- Where:** Atonement Lutheran Church – Fellowship Hall
- Date:** Saturday February 22, 2025
- Time:** Doors Open at 5:00 pm, game starts at 6:00 pm
- Cost:** \$40 buy-in
- Hosted by:** Atonement Men's Club



Reserve your spot by contacting

Greg Viehman
314-422-2657
gtviehman@gmail.com



We will have some drinks as well as food. Please BYOB.

Atonement Lutheran Church
1285 N New Florissant Road
Florissant, MO 63031

**Please notice the date has been rescheduled from when originally announced.*



News from Atonement Lutheran School

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” -Ephesians 4:3

What an absolutely brilliant, inspiring, engaging, unexpected-events-occurring, overwhelming-in-a-good-way, quick-thinking-on-your-feet beginning it has been to the second semester with energetic students, a spectacular staff, welcoming parents/families, and Principal J now at the helm as interim principal!

As you may know, many changes occurred since the last newsletter. Besides my stepping into the role as interim principal, we are absolutely thrilled to announce that all our teacher positions are filled. We welcome the following individuals onto the ALCS team: Ms. Jada James, 2nd grade; Abigail Mayan, 4th grade; and Brett Klaus, MTA Teacher (Music, Technology, and Art). Our second quarter offering collection for TEAM was a brilliant success with 2,619 cans and pre-packaged items amassed along with \$521.⁰⁰ God is good!

As part of my solution-forward-focused call-to-action, I have started a working Substitute Teacher List, with the goal of 20 people. Currently, we have four substitute teachers. Your help in recommending folks to us as substitute teachers is most welcome. Please pass their names along to me at principal@alcs-web.com.

We ask that you keep our students, staff, families, and church community in your prayers as we begin 2025 together. May God’s love and shalom wrap around us all as we step forward in faith and as a community in unity grounded in Christ Jesus our Light, Comforter, and Savior.

Blessings and unity in Christ,
Principal J

Parish Nurses—continued from page 3

To help manage caregiver stress:

- **Ask for and accept help.** Make a list of ways in which others can help you. Then let them choose how to help. Ideas include taking regular walks with the person you care for, cooking a meal for you and helping with medical appointments.
- **Focus on what you can do.** At times, you might feel like you’re not doing enough. But no one is a perfect caregiver. Believe that you’re doing the best you can.
- **Set goals you can reach.** Break large tasks into smaller steps that you can do one at a time. Make lists of what’s most important. Follow a daily routine. Say no to requests that are draining, such as hosting meals for holidays or other occasions.
- **Get connected.** Learn about caregiving resources in your area. Ask your parish nurse! There might be classes you can take. You might find caregiving services such as rides, meal delivery or house cleaning.
- **Join Atonement’s Support Group.** People in support groups know what you’re dealing with. They can cheer you on and help solve problems. A support group also can be a place to make new friends.
- **Seek social support.** Stay connected to family and friends who support you. Make time each week to visit with someone, even if it’s just a walk or a quick cup of coffee.
- **Take care of your health.** Find ways to sleep better. Move more on most days. Eat a healthy diet. Drink plenty of water.

Many caregivers have trouble sleeping. Good sleep is important to health. If you have trouble getting a good night’s sleep, talk to your health care professional.

It may be hard to leave your loved one in someone else’s care. But taking a break can be one of the best things you do for yourself and the person you’re caring for. Types of respite care include:

- **In-home respite.** Health care aides come to your home to spend time with your loved one or give nursing services or both.
- **Adult care centers and programs.** There are centers that give day care for older adults. Some also care for young children. The two groups might spend time together.
- **Short-term nursing homes.** Some assisted living homes, memory care homes and nursing homes accept people who need care for short stays while caregivers are away.

Caregivers who work outside the home can feel burdened. If this describes you, think about taking a leave from your job for a time if you can afford to do so.

“He will provide all that you need for your caregiving responsibilities, and then will let you rest in the green meadows of His abundance.” Psalm 23:1-3, NIV

For any further questions, please call Joyce or Cathie, your Parish Nurses!

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

Return Service Requested

Feb. 2025 Newsletter

Deadline for the

March issue

12:00 Noon

Thursday, Feb. 6