

The Spirit of Atonement

MARCH 2026

From Your Pastor...

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ,

I'm writing this on the morning of Monday March 2nd. I say that because, yesterday March 1st, was the beginning of a six month phase 3 of my Internship at Atonement. And that is a phase, that if the timing continues as planned, will include a Congregational Meeting on the 17th of May that will elect a Call Committee to begin the process of calling a pastor. That means we have a lot of things to do between now and the 17th of May.

I also want to begin this message by including the last paragraph of my February Newsletter ... *"I want to thank all of you for 'just being who you are!' And I want to go one step past that ... we are not there yet, and we have more to do. We will all be given opportunities in lots of different ways to use our time, talents and treasures in 2026. This is becoming my favorite saying, "Give everyone an opportunity to be part of Jesus' future'. **We are Jesus' future!"***

And all of that sets the stage for what I want to say about this time between now and the 17th of May. A couple of Sunday's ago, after our Worship Service, our President Cathy Hohl reviewed our proposed Constitution and Scott Negwer presented where our Strategic Planning Team is with our Strategic Plan (SP). The Constitution is basically finished and the SP is still a work in process but has identified four Goals, yet to be clearly defined, but would be School, Finances, Community Outreach, and Lay Leadership Development. Total Leadership of those four goals is yet to be identified but we already have started work on all of them.

We also have identified other activity such as our Third Source Funding Team working on all kinds of activity and Grants that have already produced funding for various activities such as the school. And we have also had donations from members and others that have significantly helped us with our present 25/26 budget as well as our future 26/27 budget.

Having said all that good news, we still have lots to do and be prepared for calling a new pastor. Remember, a new pastor being interested in Atonement will be looking at every part of who we are. That means we have to have a plan and answers to who we are and where we are planning to be in the future. Contrary to what some folks have thought in the past, pastors need to understand everything that is going on in the congregation. I have been a Lutheran Lay person all of my life, a congregational President, a School Board Chairperson, and a Property Management Chairperson. I have also been an Interim Pastor at other congregations, as well as at Atonement, and a Called Pastor. We need to be transparent!

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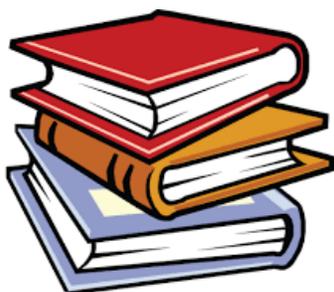
Seniors Alive

Monthly Meeting

Seniors (age 50 and over) are invited to monthly meetings in Fellowship Hall. The next meeting will be on Monday, March 23 beginning at 1:30 p.m.

The guest will be Lamar Pilsing with musical entertainment featuring songs made famous by Sinatra, Dean Martin and others. Lamar has pleased a wide spectrum of audiences over the years - come and enjoy!

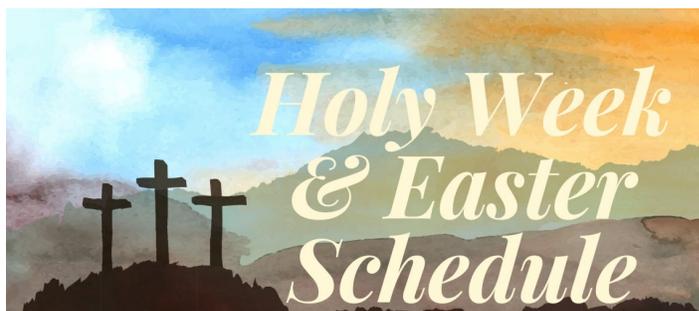
<https://www.alcs-web.com/seniors-alive>



Atonement Book Club

Atonement Book Club meets again on March 8, 2026. We would like to welcome you to our group of book lovers for fun and interesting discussions of a new book each month. 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.

We will be discussing "The Dutch House" by Ann Patchett, a rich moving story that explores the indelible bond between two siblings, the house of their childhood, and a past that will not let them go. Sound interesting?? Please join us! Contact Jan Koch at njkoch@aol.com with any questions.



Mid-Week Lent, Wednesdays through March 25, 7:00 p.m.

Palm Sunday, March 29, 9:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 2, 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, April 3, 7:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 5, 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

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And transparency means that any issues we have, need to be investigated, and a plan of action available, so that an interested candidate to become our pastor clearly knows what she or he might be doing in accepting a call. Accepting a call is not like "being hired", as I've heard some people expressing the process. This is God and Atonement calling this person to become Atonements' Pastor. By definition of the job of an Interim, I will not be involved in the process of calling Atonements' Pastor.

I want to close by telling you how much I appreciate what you have accomplished preparing for where we are in this process.

Blessings and Peace Pastor Larry



From Our Parish Nurse Cathie Lehr, R.N.

National Nutrition Month

Discover the Power of Nutrition is the 2026 National Nutrition Month theme. It emphasizes that informed, daily food choices are vital for thriving, preventing chronic disease, and fueling long-term health. By prioritizing whole foods, maintaining hydration, and balancing nutrients, individuals can transform their energy, mental focus, and overall well-being.

Core Pillars of Nutritional Power:

Fuel and Performance: Proper nutrition maximizes energy, improves athletic performance, and assists in recovering from injury.

Disease Prevention: A balanced diet reduces the risk of chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers.

Physical & Mental Vitality: Nutrients support cognitive function, immune health, and enhance skin, hair, and nail health.

Long-Term Well-being: Consistent, nutrient-dense eating habits build a foundation for a longer, healthier, and more vibrant life.

Action Steps for Daily Nutrition:

Eat the Rainbow: Incorporate a wide variety of colorful fruits and vegetables to ensure diverse nutrient intake.

Prioritize Whole Foods: Focus on whole grains, lean proteins, healthy fats, and limit processed sugary foods.

Stay Hydrated: Drink plenty of water to support digestion and circulation.

Mindful Eating: Control Portion Size. The amount of food actually consumed is critical for monitoring calorie intake, weight management, chronic disease risk, and is essential for a balanced diet.

Individualized Approach

While core principles apply to everyone, personalized nutrition is essential, particularly regarding gender-specific needs and individual health goals.

- **Fruits:** Focus on whole fruits like fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Buy fruits to have them available to add to your

meal or to eat as a snack. When you buy juice, select 100% fruit juice.

Daily Portion Size: (2 cups). 1 cup counts as: 1 small apple, 1 large banana, 1 cup grapes, 1 cup sliced mango, ½ cup raisins. 1 cup 100% fruit juice

- **Vegetables:** Use a variety – fresh, frozen, and canned. Add them to mixed dishes like casseroles, sandwiches, and

wraps. Look for “reduced sodium” or “no-salt-added” on the label.

Daily Portion Size: (2½ cups). 1 cup counts as: 2 cups raw spinach, 1 cup cooked collard, kale, or turnip greens. 1 small avocado, 1 large sweet potato. 1 cup cooked beans, peas, lentils, 1 cup cut cauliflower.

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...Nurses, continued from page 3

- **Carbohydrates:** Choose whole-grain versions of common foods such as bread, pasta, and tortillas. Check the ingredient list for the words “whole” or “whole wheat”.
Daily Portion Size: (6 ounces). 1 ounce counts as: 1 slice of bread, ½ cup cooked oatmeal, 1 small tortilla, ½ cup cooked brown rice, ½ cup cooked couscous, ½ cup cooked grits.
- **Protein Foods:** Eat a variety of protein foods such as beans, soy, seafood, lean meats, poultry, and unsalted nuts and seeds.
Daily Portion Size: 1 ounce counts as: 1-ounce cooked lean chicken, pork, or beef, ¼ cup cooked beans, peas, lentils, 1 Tbsp peanut butter, 2 Tbsp hummus. Seafood 3-4 ounces cooked (roughly the size of a palm or a deck of cards) or 4-6 ounces raw. Adults should aim for at least two servings (totaling 8 ounces) per week. Eggs - 7 eggs a week for healthy adults. Those with heart disease or diabetes limit yolks to 3 per week. Choose lean cuts of meat and ground beef that is at least 93% lean.
- **Dairy:** Choose low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) dairy. Get the same amount of calcium and other nutrients as whole milk, but with less saturated fat and calories. Lactose intolerant? Try lactose-free milk or a fortified soy beverage.
Portion Size: (3 cups). 1 cup dairy milk or yogurt, 1 cup milk.

Choose foods and beverages with less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.

Don't forget physical activity! Being active can help you prevent disease and manage your weight.

Medical Nutrition Therapy – if you have diabetes, kidney disease or a kidney transplant within the last 36 months and it is *ordered by your doctor*, Medicare Part B covers nutrition counseling annually with no out of pocket costs.

Go Fund Me:
[gofund.me/580b1615f](https://gofundme.com/f/580b1615f)

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News from Atonement Lutheran School

"Behold, I [the LORD] make a new thing. It now springs forth. Is it not yet known to you? I will make a way in the wilderness and a river in the desert."
Isaiah 43:19

Everything continues moving along splendidly as we embrace the grace of God, give gratitude to Jesus Christ for His life and love, and pray the Holy Spirit stirs up ** G.R.I.T. in each of us as we continue learning, leading, and loving.

** Growth mindset

Resilience

Initiative

Tenacity



We will be celebrating Lutheran Schools Week March 2nd through 6th, as well as hosting the spring Scholastic Book Fair.



The third quarter is drawing to a close with parent-teacher conferences on March 11th and 12th.



Extended Care is open and will continue to evolve as the semester progresses.



On Thursday, February 5, 2026, we had a terrific visit with Cory Newman, the Executive Director for ELEA (Evangelical Lutheran Education Association). Cory enjoyed learning about Atonement Lutheran School and the direction of growth and development for our school and church community. She has graciously offered support from the ELEA whenever we may need help. I am grateful for the chance to have shared all the new and exciting things going on currently and our hopes for the future. *(see picture below)*



We ask that you keep our students, staff, families, and church community in your prayers as we continue through 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 newness in Christ, Principal J



Celebration of Growth This information will help you keep track of your credit score and help the growth and maintenance of your credit health.

March is National Credit Education Month

National Credit Education Month in March provides opportunities to brush up on your finance skills. First, check your credit score and find out why it's necessary to keep a clear credit report. Even more importantly, find out how to improve it.

Financial institutions use credit reporting agencies to verify you are worth the risk of loaning money or opening a credit card. The three major reporting bureaus are Experian, TransUnion, and Equifax. Scores range from Very Poor (300-579) to Exceptional or Excellent (800-850), depending on the reporting agency.

What Affects Credit Scores

- **Amount of debt you carry** - Paying off the amount you charge to your credit cards each month helps to improve this amount. Showing that you are reducing debt each month gradually increases your score over time.
- **Age of credit history** - The older your credit history (and the longer it is in good standing) shows a trend toward reliable financial status.
- **Reports to collections agencies** - Notify the credit agency immediately if you find any inaccurate reporting on your credit report. The sooner you resolve an inaccuracy, the quicker the agency can correct the report. Obtain a letter from the collection agency once you have been able to confirm the error and submit it to all the credit reporting agencies.
- **Late payments** - Any time you make a late payment, especially on a credit card or loan, will be reflected on your credit report. Pay early, pay on time. If you use your online banking system to make payments, remember to review your bank's turn-around time for payments. Take their delays into account and schedule accordingly to avoid any late payments.
- **The number of hard inquiries for credit** - When considering a loan for a car or house, remember that each inquiry will be registered on your credit report. When your credit is in good standing, these inquiries do not have as significant an impact on your credit report.
- **The number of accounts** - Opening and closing accounts impact your credit score. Depending on the number of accounts, the impact on your score could be huge.

Throughout the month, take steps to learn more about handling credit. Take steps to improve your credit score and gauge how you are doing.

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

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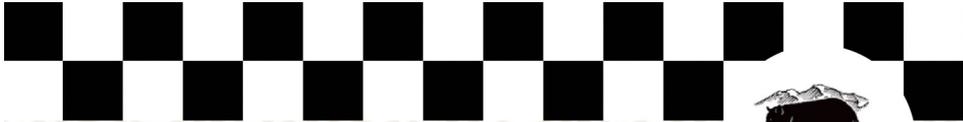
March 2026 Newsletter

Deadline for the

April issue

12:00 Noon

Monday, March 9



Dine & DONATE

FUNDRAISING EVENT

Dine In • Carryout • Delivery*

SUPPORTING

Atonement Lutheran Church

Tuesday MAR 10

From open to close
St Charles Diner | 2865 Veterans Memorial Pkwy

Present this code at the diner or enter the 9-digit number online at BlackBearDiner.com to credit 20% of your food order to this organization. Delivery orders must be placed through BlackBearDiner.com.



533-537-330