

# The Spirit of Atonement

AUGUST 2022

## Remembering Pastor John Schmidtke

Many of us at Atonement got to know Pastor John Schmidtke when, for roughly ten years, he coached our boys basketball team. His three sons graduated from our school, and last year his granddaughter was enrolled. He led chapel at least once a semester. Others may have gotten to know Pastor Schmidtke by volunteering at the Arch Community School located at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, where he served for over 30 years.

To say that Pastor Schmidtke had an extraordinary ministry in one of the most economically-challenged communities in St. Louis, namely Hyde Park, would be an understatement. I could begin by pointing to the hundreds of new houses he was re-



sponsible for bringing to the Hyde Park neighborhood, to the two charter schools he helped establish, to his “Taking Jesus to the Streets” Vacation Bible School, approach (which he “exported” to several cities on the east coast), to his basketball ministry which touched the lives of hundreds of young men in his community, to his outreach ministries in other neighborhoods such as Walnut Park

and Baden, and to his innovative summer programming at Bethlehem and other north city churches.

I could literally fill the page and not begin to touch all John’s accomplishments — but that would not be the point of this article. I could also mention that John was one of my closest clergy friends in St. Louis. I will treasure the time we spent together, not only coaching basketball but talking “church” on the phone, everything from sermon texts to encouraging volunteers — but that, too, would not be the point of this article. Nor would the sadness so many of us experienced when John died suddenly at his desk in May.

No, the point of this article is that Pastor John Schmidtke served in that “other” Lutheran church, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The point is the antipathy (almost hostility) between the two major Lutheran churchbodies in the country that seems only to be growing. I find that nothing short of tragic.

I cannot help but remember the time when all of the (then) three major churchbodies co-operated nationally through the Lutheran Council/USA. Together we worked on ministries from campus and military chaplaincies and new mission starts to world hunger and theological dialogues with other Christian traditions.

Routinely, in the various districts and synods, bishops and district presidents would invite their counterparts from the other churchbodies to bring greetings. In the 1970s, we came tantalizing close to having one hymnal for virtually all the Lutherans in the U.S. and Canada. All that is “ancient history.”

*(continued on page 5)*



## Seniors Alive

(subject to change or cancellation)

### Monthly Meetings

Vaccinated seniors (age 50 and over/proof of vaccination required) are invited to monthly meetings in Fellowship Hall.

The next meeting will be on Monday, Aug. 22. and will begin at 1:30 p.m. Come, hear the musical sounds of member Gene Tisius, featuring guitar and vocals with songs made famous by Elvis Presley, Hank Williams, Johnny Cash and more! There will be a brief business meeting, and dessert will be served.

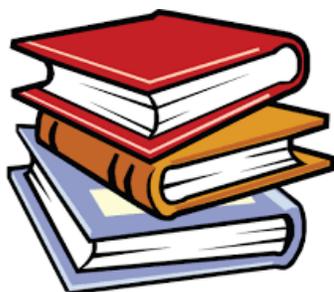
### 2022 Tours

- Aug. 24, Taste of St. Louis, - Goopy Butter Cake, Dad's Cookies, Ices Plain and Fancy, and more. Bus departs at 8:15 a.m. and returns at 5:00 p.m. Cost is \$99 per person.

- Sept. 21, St. Louis historic church tour. Bus departs at 8:30 a.m. and returns at 3:45 p.m. Cost is \$81 per person.
- Oct. 11, Wine Country Highway 94. Augusta Winery and luncheon cruise on the "Miss Augusta." Bus departs at 8:45 a.m. and returns at 4:30 p.m. Cost is \$105 per person.

For more information on these tours, please contact Don Kuethe at (314) 831-8478 or at [dthekey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dthekey@sbcglobal.net).

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



## Atonement Book Club...

Atonement Book Club meets in the Multi-Purpose Room on the second Sunday of the month at 1:30 p.m. Current Covid safety guidelines are followed. If we are unable to meet in person due to changes in Covid numbers and guidelines, we will schedule a Zoom meeting for the same time and date. We welcome new members.

The next meeting will be on Sunday, Aug. 14, beginning at 1:30. We will be discussing *The Reading List*, by Sara Nisha Adams. This is an unforgettable and heartwarming debut about how a chance encounter with a list of library books helps forge an unlikely friendship between two very different people in a London suburb.

Please join us. For more information or questions, please contact Jan Koch at (314) 921-5434 or [njkoch@aol.com](mailto:njkoch@aol.com).



## From the Parish Nurse **LIVING AS THE SANDWICH GENERATION!**

Joyce Pingel, L.P.N.

Let me share some thoughts with you about Living as the Sandwich Generation.

We are blessed that “God sets the lonely in families...” (Psalm 68:6). We are also blessed that the Lord will not give us more than He and we can carry (First Corinthians 10:13). St. Paul encourages us to “...put religion into practice by caring for (your) own family” (First Timothy 5:4).

Caring for children and aging parents can be a profound blessing and also very difficult. As we are blessed with longer life, many of us also live with more chronic health problems associated with disability and difficulties in providing for our daily needs. “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” (Exodus 20:12, and Ephesians 6:1-3). At the same time, the needs of our spouse and children also call out to us. God’s word encourages us to care, nurture, and discipline our children out of love for them. “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6:4 and Mark 10:13-14). Currently in the U.S., almost 50 percent of all marriages end in divorce. Child abuse and neglect have risen astronomically. On the average, children ages 8 to 12 in the U.S. spend 4 to 6 hours a day watching or using screens, and teens spend up to 9 hours. The vast majority of this time, exposed to language, values, relationships and actions, is not consistent with our faith. Most families are able to spend very little time in quality communication or in doing things together.

How can we live our family commitments in a God-pleasing way? Scripture encourages us to provide what is needed for our families directly or more often indirectly. “But if someone does not provide for his own, especially his own family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (First Timothy 5:8). God’s word also promises that He won’t give us more than we can carry (with His help), and that as pressured as we feel, with the resources of our faith, we are not overwhelmed or destroyed (Second Corinthians 4:8-9).

God’s Word give us guidance, support and hope as we live out our days in His Grace. First, we need to continue to develop our faith, so that God can use us in our relationships with others. Living a balanced life provides benefits for this life and the life to come. With our fast-paced lives, it is very easy to neglect our own physical, emotional, and spiritual self-care, but this is a dangerous path to take. Second, we can trust the Lord to provide for all of our needs and concerns for ourselves, parents and children.



We are excited to announce a health fair, which will include a blood drive and a flu shot clinic to be held on Saturday, Sept. 17, in Fellowship Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Details coming in the News & Notes and the weekly e-mail.

Flu shots will also be administered in the small meeting room (next to the nursery in the Family Room) on Sunday, Sept. 18, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



**News from  
Atonement  
Lutheran  
School, Principal  
Kim Kern**

We pray that your family is having a fantastic summer.

Thank you all so much for your kind words and patience through so much transition this school year. We are immensely grateful! Now, with the beginning of the new school year right around the corner, there are a few changes and updates.

Back-to-School Day will now be held on Sunday, Aug. 14. Pre-K and K families will meet from 9:30 to 10:10 a.m. The installation of teachers will be held during the 10:15 a.m. worship service. Then 1st through 8th Grade and their families will meet from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Thank you for your patience and flexibility.

Registration is open and classes are filling up fast! Please register as soon as you can.

Aside from the wonderful new staff (see below), there is another good change. School lunch is back! We are pleased to be able to offer school lunch in the cafeteria again. It will be provided by Food Service Consultants. A hot, nutritious lunch will be served, as well as cold “grab and go” and ala carte options.

Atonement welcomes new staff members!

Joyce Walls, 3rd Grade

Rebecca Gardner, 4th Grade

Alaina Schumann, 8th Grade, Science and P.E.

Tanya Scott, Child Care Liaison/Kindergarten Aide

Theodore Jander, Music/Technology

Call now to schedule a tour or for information or visit the website.

<https://www.alcs-web.com/school>

(314) 837-1252



**Atonement Creation Care Tip**

Have you seen the price of gasoline? Who can miss it? What are we going to do about it? What about an all-electric car?

And our electric bills are crazy paying for air conditioning in this summer heat. So, what are we going to do about that?

We know about solar energy, but is it cost-effective for our homes here in Florissant? And if we buy that all-electric car what will happen to our electric bills? Is it time to consider solar energy? There are many people and agencies that say “Yes!”, and to that end have made incentives available.

Is solar energy right for us? Can we afford not to consider the issue carefully? To make the research a little easier, below is a link to the Ameren website that may help answer questions. There are other “solar” websites, but they want phone numbers so they can call individuals directly to sell their products.

If you have personal experience or have more information regarding the installation of solar collectors, please call or e-mail Jaimy Suydam at (314) 497-9110 or [jaimy19@hotmail.com](mailto:jaimy19@hotmail.com) so the Atonement Creation Care team can get the information to the rest of us. Watch this newsletter for more information about customer owned [solar] generation.

<https://www.ameren.com/missouri/company/environment-and-sustainability/solar/community-solar>

*(Pastor Schmidtke...continued from page 1)*

Locally, we had a Council of Lutheran Churches which published *The St. Louis Lutheran* and encouraged collaborative ministries. The Council shut its doors about 20 years ago. If it weren't for a handful of social service agencies, there would be no co-operation at all. Local inter-Lutheran clergy gatherings ended, when recent seminary graduates simply wanted nothing to do with each other. This, too, is tragic.

To be sure, there are several theological issues on which our two churchbodies do not have total agreement: ordaining women, ecumenism, and certain methods of Biblical interpretation. Likewise for several current social issues, notably abortion and issues of sexual orientation. Yet, I suspect that in the pews of most of our churches, there is a variety of opinions across the spectrum of those matters.

But, on concerns that should matter to churches: proclaiming Christ, administering the Sacraments, teaching the Faith, engaging the young, serving the ill and aged, doing works of mercy, there is no disagreement. We share the Scriptures and the same Lutheran Confessions.

As my admiration of Pastor John Schmidtke underscores, there is extraordinary faithful Gospel ministry being carried out, often sacrificially, in both of our churchbodies. And, I long for the day, when we can move beyond fault-finding and finger-pointing in order to celebrate and support each other's ministries, nationally, regionally, and locally.

In many ways, Pastor Schmidtke supported our ministry at Atonement. I hope in some small ways we supported his. And, I have no doubt, the Lord was pleased — as the Lord is always pleased when we “maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:3)

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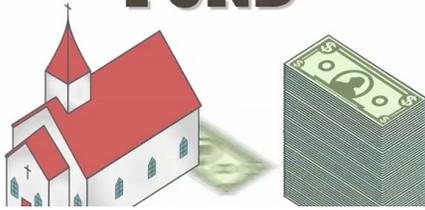
## *Atonement Endowment Fund = Future, Fun, Food*

The August Mission of the Month is different from our other monthly missions because your giving is not put to work right away. Instead, just as seeds are planted to grow into something useful in the future, funds designated for the Atonement Endowment Fund are invested to grow over time and to support mission and ministry at Atonement in the future.

You can contribute to the Endowment Fund through your estate, and the Endowment Committee will share ways to do that soon. You can also make immediate gifts to the fund in several ways, including participation in the August Mission of the Month. Before you seal your offering envelope, add the additional amount you want to give to the Endowment Fund. On the front indicate how much your total giving is for “One Fund” and under “Other” write “Endowment” and the amount.

As they have for the past seven years, Atonement's Men's Club is providing incentives to anyone who makes a gift to the fund from August 2 through September 4. Men's Club will match donations through a graduated formula up to \$100. After your donation is posted, Steve Rosenfeld will contact you 1) to thank you for your donation; 2) to discuss the matching fund program and give you information about entry into a fun football pool, “God's Chosen Pool”; and 3) to arrange to give you a Men's Club barbecue certificate.

## **ENDOWMENT FUND**



## *ATONEMENT'S MISSION OF THE MONTH— AUGUST*

We've come a long way, baby! Now it's time to stay the course!

The Endowment Fund exists to help us prepare for the worst by giving our church a financial cushion. Now that the Endowment Committee has completed its foundational work—that's where we are today—a small safety net. With your continued support, we can broaden that net.

For the past seven years Men's Club has sponsored a campaign to help grow the Endowment Fund. In 2020, the Church Council approved the Endowment Fund as a Mission of the Month. Despite the pandemic, both the 2020 and 2021 campaigns were successful:

- The gifts designated increased the Endowment Fund by almost \$3,000.
- The awareness of the Endowment Fund led to additional gifts through the Memorial Fund and from a generous bequest.

The Endowment Fund is our only mission of the month that does not distribute the funds immediately. The funds are held for future use and should the Endowment Fund reach a significant size (we're not there yet), a portion of the fund would be invested to earn additional returns.

The Men's Club invites you to join in the campaign simply by using your regular offering envelope. Please be aware that if you only put a dollar amount on the mission of the month line, the funds are grouped and divided among all missions of the month for the year. However, if you go to the next line on the envelope and write in "Endowment," all the funds that you indicate on that line will be channeled to the Endowment Fund.



The Congregation Council has identified the first Sunday in October, Oct. 2, as a date for Atonement’s annual Service Sunday. Setting the date, however, is “the easy part.” Planning and executing a Service Sunday requires completion of multiple tasks, including:

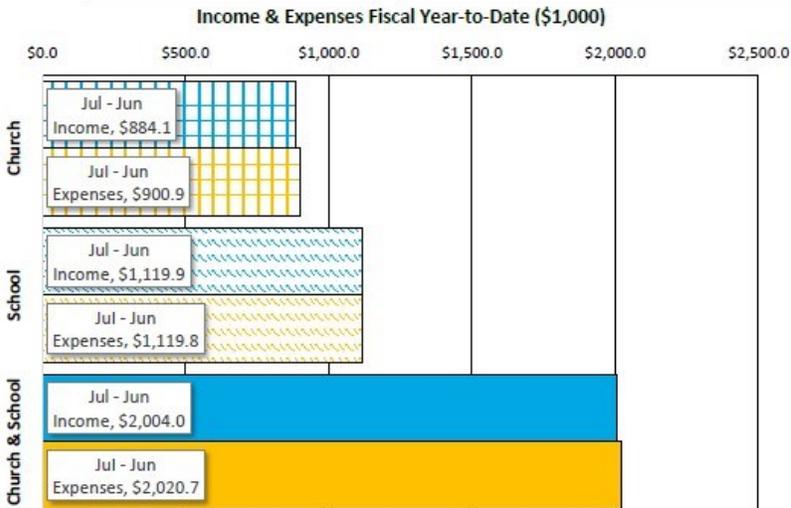
- identifying and preparing for at least a dozen service projects;
- lining up leadership and volunteers for each project;
- maintaining communications with the congregation and the work sites;
- obtaining the supplies needed to complete projects;
- co-ordinating a “sending service” with Holy Communion.

Completing these tasks require a steering committee with general oversight and team leadership for each project. Summer is the time for beginning the organizational process. Completing a successful Service Sunday will require sufficient members and friends of Atonement to help lead the planning stages.

If you could serve in either of these capacities (steering committee or team leadership), please contact Pastor Mueller at the church office or Cathy Hohl at (314) 862-3822. You may also mark the attendance form.

### Financial Position Summary July 2021 thru June 2022

Balances thru June Status: Green		Fiscal Year Surplus / Deficit Status: Yellow				Cash Flow Status: Green	
Mortgage Principal	\$ 2,369,255					Balance on Jul 1, 2021	\$320,674
Checking Account	\$ 327,882					Balance on Jun 30, 2022	\$327,882
Restricted Cash	\$ 188,612						
Operating Cash	\$ 127,823						
Endowment Fund in Thrivent Account	\$ 58,026						
Restricted Cash: Cash set aside for specific purposes such as Capital Improvements, Youth Impact Fund, Room at the Inn, etc. Operating Cash: Cash available for daily operation of the church and school. The minimum needed to operate Atonement is \$100,000.		The 2021-2022 Fiscal Year Ended on 6/30/2022.  The Church Expenses Jul - Jun include a \$91,605 accrual for the Sanctuary Lighting and Kretzmann Hall capital improvement projects which will be paid in the 2022-2023 fiscal year.  The School Income total is preliminary, pending final tuition payments in July and reconciliation of the entire 2021-2022 school year.					
			Income Jul - Jun	Expenses Jul - Jun	Surplus / Deficit		
		Church	\$884,064	\$900,916	-\$16,852		
		School	\$1,119,949	\$1,119,803	-\$146		
		Total	\$2,004,012	\$2,020,719	-\$16,998		



Special & Capital Projects Fund	
Balance on Jul 1, 2021	\$37,996
Gifts Through Jun 30	\$65,431
Expenses Through Jun 30	-\$34,812
Gifts Forecasted Through Jun 30	\$0
Memorial Funds Xfer'ed for HVAC	\$31,338
Expenses Accrued to 2022-2023 FY	-\$91,605
<b>Available Balance on June 30, 2022</b>	<b>\$8,348</b>

The -\$91,605 expenses accrued include the Sanctuary Lighting project balance due (\$11,605) and 100% of the estimated cost for the Kretzmann Hall HVAC project (\$80,000).

Notes: The Church's \$9,375 per month (\$112,500 annual) support for the School is included above as an expense for the Church and income for the School.

Status: Green = Good/At or Above Expectations    Yellow = Caution/Slightly Under Expectations    Red = Danger/Significantly Below Expectations

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

## **Return Service Requested**

*August 2022  
Newsletter*

***Deadline for the  
September issue  
12:00 Noon***

*Feed My Starving Children food pack at Atonement on July 9, 2022. Over 122,000 meals were packed to send to hungry children around the world*

