



# Midweek Message

## **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.**

Worship with us Livestream on our Atonement Facebook page as we “light three candles to watch for the Messiah...”

## **THIS SUNDAY: OUTDOOR, DRIVE-THROUGH CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 3:00-3:30 p.m.**

Feeling homebound? Take a drive to Atonement this Sunday afternoon for some Christmas cheer! Arrive any time between 3:00 – 3:30 pm and drive through our parking lot to see and hear the story of the Annunciation... Innkeeper...Mary and Joseph...Angels and Shepherds...and Three Wise Girls...as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.



\*Special Music \*Cast members include Sunday School children, Middle School, High School and College youth \*A Camel (not real, but close enough!)

*For the health and well-being of all, please wear a face mask as you roll down your car window to listen to our cast members share the story of Christmas.*



Joe Manthey purchased his unique, hand crafted nativity set on the way to Nova Scotia years ago.



## **Atonement Lutheran Church**

### **All Are Welcome**

*Livestream Advent worship via our Atonement Facebook page.*

Join Pastor Gail and David McCarthy for music and hymns, scripture, a sermon, prayers, and a Children’s Moment.

*You can follow us on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. by going to our Atonement Facebook page at [fb.com/atonementlutheranchurch/](https://www.facebook.com/atonementlutheranchurch/)*

A worship bulletin with hymns will be Emailed to our Atonement families, and posted weekly on our web site.

## A Note of Thanks

### *Habitat Clothing Drive*

Thank you to all who brought items for the Thanksgiving Habitat Clothing Drive, and to Bob Touhsaent for making the delivery.

One and a half SUV's full of clothing were delivered to the Habitat Shed!

## **END OF DECEMBER OFFERING**

Thank you for your faithful giving and financial support of Atonement during this past year. Please know that all end of year offerings are still being gratefully received! In order to have your financial contribution included as part of your 2020 giving statement from Atonement, *please make sure it arrives at the church office by December 30<sup>th</sup>.*

## **CONGREGATIONAL BUDGET MEETING**

### **Sunday, December 13th at 10:30 a.m.**

Be sure to join us as we discuss the 2021 Church Budget.

This meeting will be conducted virtually via Zoom. A Zoom link will be Emailed to Atonement members prior to the meeting.

## **NO STORY TIME SUNDAY SCHOOL THIS WEEK**

Our Sunday School will NOT meet this Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, due to the Congregational Budget Meeting. Join us next Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:45 a.m. for a special "Christmas Carol Sing-Along" led by David McCarthy, for our Atonement Sunday School children.

## **ADVENT GIVING OUTREACH ~ DEC 6<sup>TH</sup>-DEC 20<sup>TH</sup>**

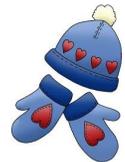
### **"Warm Hands/Warm Heads/Warm Feet"**

Help us help our neighbors in need by donating to this year's Advent Giving Outreach.

- Donate NEW socks, gloves, mittens or winter hats.
- All sizes for men, women and children.
- Other winter clothing will also be accepted (Must be new or clean and very gently used.)
- Donations will be received Wednesdays and Sundays in the bin placed outdoors by the Sanctuary (East) entrance.



- All donations will be given to Saint's Place, Rochester, whose mission is to "Welcome the Stranger," by providing needed items to newly-arriving refugees in Rochester.



## **NO MATTER HOW LONG THE NIGHT HAS BEEN**

**By Pastor Gail Swanson**

Dear God,

*The days are so short right now. And night keeps getting longer. And the death toll is rising. And I miss who I am when I am with my friends. So I find myself wanting to cash in my chips and just go to bed at basically 6:30pm each night since it's already been dark for two hours.*

*Lord, then I'm up impossibly early each day and I resent it. But yesterday... yesterday I caught a glimpse of that stunning sunrise...*

*I want to say thank you, God. No matter how impossibly long the nights are right now, thank you that the sun rises without me being prepared for it. Without my having to understand it. Without me making myself worthy of its warmth.*

*And today God, I ask you to help us hold on to hope for the next 15 days, as the night continues to lengthen. Help us remember that 15 days from now, imperceptibly, the reverse will happen. With or without us noticing, the day and not the night will lengthen. Help us hold on to the hope that the death toll, too, will turn; that the dawn will break from on high. Turn our heads to see the sunrise, no matter how long the night has been. I mean, we're probably already up. Amen.*

Nadia Bolz-Weber's prayer reminds me of my own struggle with darkness this time of the year. Not only the darkness of the sky at the bewildering hour of 4:30 in the afternoon, but the works of darkness around us; all that is uncertain, unfair, and unjust. A cold darkness that can make things seem worse than ever – and yet - light still shines and it does indeed, burn. It burns with the fire of justice and the hope of God for a truly harmonious and equitable world. It shines with the light of healing and mercy, and a warmth that does not require our preparation, understanding or worthiness. A bright star blazing in the midnight sky and there, at the darkest moment, will come the birth of wonder. More light. Glorious light. Which causes me to sing and pray one of my favorite parts of the Christmas story, the Song of Zechariah:

*By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Luke 1:78-79)*

Lord, help us to remember that no matter how long the night has been, light will break upon us; without the need to make ourselves worthy of its warmth.

## **2021 Calendars**

*For St. Joseph's  
Neighborhood Center*

If you have any 2021 calendars that you won't be using, please drop them off at church. As we have done in the past, we will donate the calendars to St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center. A great way to recycle!

## Love Came Down

*By Christina Rossetti*

“Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love Divine;  
Love was born at Christmas;  
Star and angels gave the sign.”

## BE A PART OF #MyNativityScene

Take a photo of your Nativity Scene at home, and Email it to the church office with the subject heading “My Nativity Scene,” along with your name and anything unique about your Nativity scene.

Whether your Nativity Scene is ceramic or glass; made from wood, pottery or origami; purchased locally or delivered from across the globe, we would love to feature your photos for the next three weeks in our Midweek Message! Even though we may not be able to be physically together in worship during this holy season, we can still share in the wonder and beauty of the Christ Child and his Holy Family.

*Vi Price enjoys a lovely stained glass window nativity scene made by her sister.*



*The Stovers appreciate their Hummel® crèche, just like the one Suzanne's mother had in her home growing up.*

*This pretty pastel nativity set with dancing angels was sent in by Amy Irish.*



## **CLICK ON OUR MUSIC LINKS!**

### **“Next to the Word of God, Music Deserves the Highest Praise”**

This quote by Martin Luther reminds of the gift of music in our worship life, and in our life of faith. Our Director of Music, David McCarthy, will be providing weekly music links of sacred music to offer inspiration, solace and peace. Click on a title to hear the song.

[Cantata Nun kimm, der Heiden Heiland BWV61](http://www.uvm.edu/~classics/faculty/bach/BWV61.html) Bach really brings out some of the drama of waiting in this cantata, based on the same hymn as “Savior of the Nations, Come.” You might want to follow along with the lyrics here: <http://www.uvm.edu/~classics/faculty/bach/BWV61.html> If you only have time for a few minutes of this, listen to the recitative and beginning of the next aria, starting at 9:30, while reading the words – the orchestra simulates the knocking of Jesus at the door of our hearts, fading away at the end as if he’s about to leave.

[Psalm 126](#) The Orchardist is a group of young people in Nashville, who perform songs written by their guitarist, Drew Miller. Apparently they’ve got another song that’s “emo pop-punk,” so I’m glad this was the first one I found. I love the bluegrass sound, and wish I could play a string instrument! Psalm 126 is read in Advent, and this song combines words from that source with, after a couple of minutes, a favorite hymn which most people associate with Christmas, though it’s in our hymnal in the Advent section at no. 267.

## **WE LIFT UP IN PRAYER**

- Atonement members in skilled nursing facilities: Betty Browne and Nancy Petrich
- Those facing the first Christmas since the loss of a spouse, parent, sibling, child
- All who will celebrate this Christmas alone in their homes
- Those anxiously seeking jobs in the midst of Christmas preparations and pandemic
- Families staying apart in this holy season, waiting to see one another again



*“The glory of Lebanon shall come to you, the cypress, the plane, and the pine, to beautify the place of my sanctuary...”* Isaiah 60:13

## **Our Sympathy**

### *And Prayers*

Our sympathy and prayers to David McCarthy upon the death of his mother, Martha, on December 8<sup>th</sup> in Manitoba, Canada.

*“Rest eternal grant her, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon her.”*

***Atonement  
Lutheran Church***  
1900 Westfall Road  
Rochester NY 14618  
(585) 442-1018

***Email:***  
office@atonementrochester.org

***Website:***  
www.atonementrochester.org

***Facebook***  
fb.com/  
atonementlutheranchurch

***Livestream Worship***  
9:30 a.m. via the  
Atonement Facebook page.

***Church Office Hours***  
9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.  
Tuesday  
Wednesday  
Thursday

## **POINSETTIA DISPLAY FOR CHRISTMAS**

A new look this Christmas! Instead of numerous poinsettias, a display of a few LARGE white poinsettias will adorn the altar area.

If you would like to make a donation toward the total cost of this display, please fill out the form below and return it to the church office by December 21<sup>st</sup>.



### **POINSETTIA DISPLAY DONATION FORM**

Given by (full name): \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

OR

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation: \$10.<sup>00</sup>

*Please return completed form and payment, checks made payable to Atonement Lutheran Church) to the church office by December 21<sup>st</sup>.*



## **GREETINGS FROM KATHY JENSEN**

Kathy Jensen sends Christmas greetings from Minnesota, where she has relocated near her daughter Sonja and family. She is well and writes, "I hope you are all staying safe and healthy through Covid, and I look forward to hearing from you. Getting letters or phone calls is the highlight of my day!"

Her new address:

Kathy Jensen  
Minneota Manor  
700 N. Monroe St.  
Minneota, MN 56264  
724-714-9726