



# Midweek Message

## **SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT**

**Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.**

Worship with us Livestream on our Atonement Facebook page as we are challenged to follow the Cross as we witness to Jesus in the places and spaces of least comfort throughout the world.

## **STORY TIME SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:45 a.m.**

Join us each week for a new book! We hope you will join us. The Zoom link will be Emailed to our Sunday School families every Saturday.

## **OUTDOOR FAMILY FUN FEBRUARY 28<sup>TH</sup> 3:00-4:00 pm** **For Children, Youth, and Families of All Ages**

We are hoping to still have lots of snow for our games, but if there isn't, don't worry! There are still plenty of fun activities and games we can play, like Trivia, Super Hero Charades, and more.

A few things to remember to make our day more enjoyable:

- \* Dress warmly with snow boots, snow pants, hats, mittens, scarves
- \* Bring a plastic sled or saucer for some sledding fun on the snowplowed 'mountains' in the parking lot
- \* Bring a flashlight; we want to play a touchless version of snow tag using flashlights
- \* Wear your masks
- \* Snacks will be provided; pre-packaged, individually wrapped items such as cheese sticks, applesauce, and bottled water

We will have some metal chairs outside for seating, and a small hibachi grill for a little bit of heat! If anyone has a portable fire pit they are willing to bring, please give Janeen a call at (936) 494-8348.

*We look forward to seeing you on Sunday— let's have some fun!*



## ***Atonement Lutheran Church***

### **All Are Welcome**

*Livestream 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.

**March  
Celebrations!**

*Birthdays*

- 2 Cecilia Baker  
Jess McGill
- 4 Amy Condemi
- 6 Paul Lazenby
- 16 Barb Sanko
- 17 Ruth Laraby  
Lois Rau
- 18 Lucas Fisher
- 19 Bryan Howe
- 21 Harlan Granger
- 23 Bob Touhsaent
- 25 Sarah Bell
- 28 Karen Grover  
Amy Irish

*If we've missed your  
special day, please  
email the office to let  
us know, so that we can  
update our records.*

## **HANDFULS OF TEARS AND LOSS**

**By Pastor Gail Swanson**

It was on the counter at a gift shop: a clear glass bowl full of smooth silver pebbles, each with a word etched into its surface. One said "Hope", another said "Trust", another said "Gratitude."

I sank my hand into the bowl to see what else I might find. "Tears," said the next pebble. "Loss," said the following one. Well, the world has enough of those things, as I put them back in the bowl and kept searching. I found a "Love," but only by looking hard. Over and over, I brought up whole handfuls of Tears and Loss from the bottom of the bowl, until I decided to add one of each to my collection, holding the pebbles - Hope...Trust...Gratitude...Love...Tears...Loss - together in one hand.

When Christians talk about what the Church has to offer the world, one thing we don't often mention are the things at the bottom of the bowl: tears and loss. Like everyone else, we live in a culture that adores success; that never seems to tire of making straight A's, getting a well-paid job with benefits, raising well-adjusted children, and choosing the right pharmaceuticals to keep us looking young while treating depression, arthritis, and high cholesterol.

This leaves a lot of room for the tears and losses of life. Yet each Sunday, the Lord of suffering, a man acquainted with sorrow, shows up to bless the poor in the spirit, the mournful, the hungry, and those acquainted with failure. And if Jesus is Lord of all this, then we do not need to leave our tears and losses in the bowl; we can hold our pebbles before him.

I go to worship to remember this; not to learn a dozen ways to become a better Christian, not to become a "spiritual success". But to be reminded that there is no failure at the foot of the cross. That my tears, my losses, link my broken self to others. That failure delivers me into the everlasting arms, where I find comfort.

On the Cross, Jesus took on all the tears and loss no one else wanted. And because he did, we can hold out our hands, trusting that when we are feeling our most hurt and fragile, we are not far from Christ. Rather, we are as close as we can get, with hands wide open.

## **LUTHERAN DISASTER RELIEF: TEXAS WINTER STORMS**

Lutheran Disaster Relief is at work with Texas Synods and Lutheran Social Services to provide relief for those affected by recent winter storms; supplying water, food and generators. Long-term recovery for the people of Texas will address water-damaged homes, disaster planning, and support for vulnerable populations.

Please pray for those still suffering, and consider donating by calling: (800) 638 - 3522 or by sending a check made out to: Lutheran Disaster Response (*Memo line*: U.S. Severe Storms) at:

ELCA Gift Processing Center, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009

## **WEDNESDAY SERVICES FOR LENT**

February 24 – March 24: A Joint Lenten Series of the  
Genesee Finger Lakes Conference of Congregations  
7:00pm Worship and 7:30 Prayer Practice via Zoom

This year during Lent, our area Lutheran congregations will live out our connection by joining together for worship, conversation and prayer. Drawing from the Sunday Lectionary, we will reflect together on the various ways we are called to be one community: with *Creation*, with the *Saints*, with our *Neighbor*, with those on the *Margins*, and with *Christ*.

Each Wednesday at 7:00pm we will join in worship together around a different theme, led by pastors across the Conference. At 7:30pm we will offer an opportunity for those who wish, to grow deeper in community, either through conversation or through exploring a prayer practice that expands upon the week's theme.

Please Note: the same link will be used for every week. Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83740220666?pwd=bmgzTolFbGdpToRCZnFZOG1kclZSUT09>

### **Schedule for Wednesdays during Lent**

#### **Feb. 24 *In Community with Creation***

Pastor Aileen Robbins, Pastor Johanna Rehbaum, Seminarian Lisa Frauens  
Prayer Practice: Praying in Color

#### **Mar. 3 *In Community with the Saints***

Pastor Amy Walter-Peterson, Pastor Debbie Johnson, Pastor Andrew Gookin  
Prayer Practice: Praying the Psalms

#### **Mar. 10 *In Community with our Neighbor***

Pastor Eric Madsen, Pastor Korey Finstad, Pastor Steve Meyer  
Prayer Practice: Meditative Virtual Prayer Walk

#### **Mar. 17 *In Community with Those on the Margins***

Pastor Imani Olear, Pastor Gail Swanson, Pastor Craig Swanson  
Prayer Practice: Prayer through (Chair) Yoga

#### **Mar. 24 *In Community with Christ***

Pastor Jonathan Deibler, Pastor Lori Nickoloff, Pastor Matthew Nickoloff  
Prayer Practice: Praying the Examen

### ***Winter Prayer***

*Warm-hearted God: We pray for all who are cold in this  
frigid winter weather, affected by winter storms  
and power outages, whose suffering is known to you.*

*Be with those still without heat, electricity,  
clean water or food. Tend to their needs,  
grant them aid, sustain their spirits,  
and surround them with a community of care.*

***Amen***

## **Christ in our Home**

### ***Now Available***

Christ in our Home devotionals for April/May/June are now available. You can pick one up in the church office or on the narthex table.

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***Livestream Worship***

9:30 a.m. Sundays via the  
Atonement Facebook page.

***Church Office Hours***

9:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

## **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.

[Erhöre mich, wenn ich rufe](#) Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672) is one of the earliest Lutheran composers whose music is still performed, and probably the best German composer before Bach. He studied in Italy with Gabrieli, and a lot of his early music is similar to his teacher's: large mixed groups of singers and instrumentalists, spaced around the church, singing in an “antiphonal” call-and-response manner. During the 30 Years' War (1618-1648), however, there were fewer resources (and people) in Germany, and he wrote a lot of music for small groups like this one based in Sioux Falls, SD. The text in this piece, taken from Psalms 4 and 5, begins “Hear me when I call, O God of righteousness.”

[Pilgrims' Hymn](#) Stephen Paulus was a Twin Cities-based composer, who died in 2014. Not much else to say, but this is a lovely piece!

## **ASH WEDNESDAY RECAP**

Seth Voorhees of Spectrum News came to document our *Ashes to Go* on Ash Wednesday. Pastor Gail offered words of scripture, prayers, and the imposition of ashes using a mask and gloves for health and safety.

