Midweek Message

August 19, 2026 Volume 26, Issue 8.3

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Sunday, August 23rd at 9:30 a.m.

Join us in person or livestream via our Facebook page. God's word of reconciliation and his mercy are keys to the church's mission. We offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, using our individual gifts to build up the body of Christ.

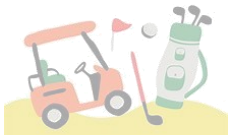
Please help our Transitional Pastor Doug Stewart and other guest Pastors in learning the names of our members & friends by wearing your name tag each Sunday in worship.

RESERVE YOUR PLACE TODAY!...
the BMGLF Golf Classic & dinner is just a few weeks away!

Gather your foursome and invite your friends and neighbors for a day of golf at the Sycamore Golf Club in Macedon, NY on ***September 12th***. (*www.sycamoregolfclub.com)*

Golf Registration Includes:

- 18 holes of golf with a cart
- Swag bag
- Lunch at the turn
- Full dinner reception



Not a golfer? ...Not a problem! We would love to have you *join us for our dinner* reception to help support this meaningful cause.

Looking for another way to make an impact?

~ Sponsorship opportunities are available and are a wonderful way to support the Legacy Fund while receiving recognition at the event through signage and program acknowledgements. We are incredibly grateful for the businesses and individuals who make this event possible. Every registration and sponsorship helps continue Barbara's legacy and supports the mission of the Barbara Macholz Grimaldi Legacy Fund.

~ We are accepting donations of lottery tickets for our basket raffle.

~ Early Registration helps us to plan a successful event! Register for golf, dinner, or become a sponsor today:**https://bmglegacyfund.org/registration-and-sponsorship**

SEPTEMBER BBQ FUNDRAISER

Our next BBQ fundraiser is scheduled for Saturday, September 19th from 4:30 p.m. until sold out. Watch for details in the coming weeks!

Atonement Lutheran Church

PASTOR'S PAGE: And Yet She Persisted, by Pr. Doug Stewart

(Matthew 15:21-29)

I have to admit: I don't particularly like Jesus in this story. At least, not at first.

The Canaanite woman comes to Jesus desperate for healing for her daughter, and his initial response is, essentially, *No. This isn't for you. She keeps pleading. What parent wouldn't? The disciples want her sent away. And then Jesus lands an insult about the children's bread not being thrown to the dogs. It is hard to make that sound gentle. Hard to make it sound like the Jesus we usually want to talk about.*

And I'm not sure we should try too hard.

My discomfort with this passage comes from taking Jesus seriously enough to notice that, in this moment, he gets it wrong. This desperate mother does not need to pass a test. She does not need to prove that she has sufficient faith. She is not a prop in some carefully scripted lesson designed to show us how wonderful Jesus already knew she was.

She pushes back because Jesus' answer is not good enough. And somehow, wonderfully, Jesus listens. Through her persistence, she changes the conversation. She changes Jesus' mind. The boundaries of his mission become wider because this woman refuses to accept a response that leaves her daughter outside the reach of mercy. Jesus encounters her persistence and recognizes something true in it. He changes course. That is a startling thing to say about Jesus; and I think it is precisely why this story matters.

We sometimes imagine faithfulness as obediently accepting the first answer we receive: *This is just the way things are. This is what we've always believed. This door is closed. These people are outside. This is the limit of what is possible.*

But the Canaanite woman will have none of it. Her faith is not passive. It is persistent, disruptive, even argumentative. She loves her daughter enough to argue with Jesus. And Jesus is not threatened by her argument. He allows himself to be moved by her. There is something liberating about that.

Perhaps our own discernment requires the same kind of holy stubbornness. Perhaps being faithful sometimes means saying, *I don't think this answer is good enough. It means staying in the conversation when we would rather walk away. It means listening for the voice that challenges our assumptions, especially when that voice comes from someone we have already decided belongs outside the circle.*

The Canaanite woman reminds us that mercy can be enlarged, that boundaries can be crossed, and that even a "no" from Jesus can become a "yes."

May we have her tenacity in our continued discernment and in our efforts to be relevant here in Brighton. May we be willing to push back when compassion demands it, to listen when someone challenges us, and to trust that sometimes the most faithful thing we can do is refuse to take no for an answer.

ATONEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS: Best of Rochester

Please contribute to *Atonement's Best Recommendations*. We are looking for your help in creating a list of local recommendations for Pastor Ken and Kevin to use as they settle into their new home in Rochester.

Add your ideas to one or more of the recommendation sheets in the Narthex or call the church office at (585) 442-1018 or Email your ideas to office@atonementrochester.org by Wednesday, September 9th.

CLICK ON OUR MUSIC LINKS

"Next to the Word of God, Music Deserves the Highest Praise" -Martin Luther

Ravel: Ma Mère l'Oye - Lucas & Arthur Jussen Maurice Ravel was a French composer at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. He never had a family, but loved children and children's stories. This is the first movement from a suite of fairy-tale pieces he wrote in 1910 for a pair of siblings (who were 6 and 7) to play. It's a depiction of Sleeping Beauty in the forest, in his typical rather dry but pretty style. The two players here are also siblings!

Pavane de la belle au bois dormant - extrait des Contes de ma mère l'Oye - M. Ravel Here's the same piece arranged for orchestra (by Ravel). He keeps everything simple and clear. Stravinsky didn't always like Ravel's technical, cool way of writing, calling him a "Swiss watchmaker." But his fans find the restraint heightens the effect of the little emotional flashes.

VEGETABLE GARDEN BOUNTY

Our vegetable garden is still growing and is harvested to benefit the Pittsford Food Cupboard. Many thanks to the volunteers who spend time in the summer sun to water and care for our garden. Our friendly garden gnome keeps watch for us.

Come Worship With Us … Everyone Is Welcome!

9:30 a.m. Sunday Morning Worship *Or Livestream on our Facebook Page*

Website: www.atonementrochester.org *Facebook*: fb.com/atonementlutheranchurch

KIDS' PAGE: WHAT IS AN AUGUST MOON?

The next full moon in August will be on Friday, August 28th. If there are no clouds, you can see it when the sky gets dark at bed time. Did you know that this month's full moon has a lot of names? Sometimes it is called a *Sturgeon* (pronounced 'stir-jun') Moon. Many *Native Americans* gave the August full moon a name connected to the season. Around the Great Lakes, which is where we live, late summer was an important time for catching lake sturgeon and other fish. Some kinds of sturgeon can grow several yards long, and live for over 100 years!

Different cultures call the August full moon by other names, like the Flying Up Moon (a *Cree* name for when birds learn to fly), the Mountain Shadows Moon (A *Tlingit* name for the shadows cast by mountains when the season is changing), the Wort Moon (an *Anglo-Saxon* name for the time when herbs are gathered), or the Blueberry Moon (when the *Ojibwe* collected the blueberry harvest).

In the Southern Hemisphere, hot and cold seasons are the opposite of what we are used to, so August is in the winter! Some August moon names from that area are the Snow Moon, Hunger Moon, and Wolf Moon.

Make a moon you can eat! Have you ever looked at the moon through a *telescope* or *binoculars*? There are lots of bumps and craters all over the moon from meteors crashing into its surface. Do you think it would be fun to walk on the moon? The moon has less *gravity*, so if you jumped, you would float much higher before you came back down to the surface. Did you ever hear of *Moon Bread*? You can click on the link below to find a recipe to make with your favorite grown-up. You could bake a moon made with cheese! It sounds delicious!

Recipe for Moon Bread

"He made the moon for the seasons; the sun knows the place of its setting." -Psalm 104:19

Looking Ahead

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location
Sunday	August 23rd	9:30 a.m.	Worship	Sanctuary
Sunday	August 23rd	10:30 a.m.	Fellowship Hour	Reissig Hall
Thursday	August 27th	6:00 p.m.	Board of Ministries Meeting	Conference Room
Sunday	August 30th	9:30 a.m.	Worship	Sanctuary
Sunday	August 30th	10:30 a.m.	Fellowship Hour	Reissig Hall

1900 Westfall Road, Rochester NY 14618

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

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The Rev. Doug Stewart, Transitional Pastor