



2014

Atonement's News

A Monthly Publication of Atonement Lutheran Church

MISSION

Atonement Lutheran Church is a Christ-centered congregation that cares for the whole person with the Good News of Jesus Christ

VISION

To be a strong leader of our community in caring for its needs with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

CORE VALUES

Witness

We are God's redeemed people who bear witness to Jesus Christ

Mercy

We are God's redeemed people who show mercy to those who have physical needs

Life Together

We are God's Redeemed people who gather together around the life giving Word and Sacraments and have fellowship with one another.



Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We live in a restless world. The evidence is all around us. We hurry from one project and activity to another. We may wake up at six or seven in the morning only to be thinking about what we have to do at work or what we have to do to get the kids ready for school. Once work or school is over then it is off to soccer practice or piano lessons, stopping at McDonald's for a quick bite to eat in between. If we are retired we often still find ourselves thinking of the next project we should be doing. Even when there is finally downtime in the evenings or the weekends we may still feel restless and anxious. Rather than enjoying the quiet and truly resting, we may turn on the television or spend hours on our iPhones and iPads checking out Facebook, Pinterest, or YouTube. It seems that we always need to be doing something.

In his article, "God's Rest In A Restless World," Dr. Charles Arand attempts to diagnose the problem. He suggests that our focus is too inward. We focus too much on ourselves, our activities, and our worries. He then points us to God's gift of Sabbath.

The Sabbath, as the Bible speaks of it, directs us to look past ourselves to the works of our God. In this way, we truly receive rest that inspires and refreshes us. Then, we as creatures, receive the rest that our Creator has intended for us from the beginning of creation (Arand 4).

In Genesis 2 we learn about God resting on the seventh day after he called his creation "very good." Yet, we read nothing about God's creatures resting on the seventh day. We find that in the Third Commandment in Exodus 20:8: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

Two reasons are given in the Scriptures for the Third Commandment. First, in Exodus 20:11 it says, "For in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." It was important for the Creator and so it is important for his creatures. Second, Deuteronomy 5 places the Third Commandment in God's work of redeeming creation: "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day" (Dt. 5:15).

As Arand observes, "So the Sabbath is connected to the two great works of God: creation and the renewal of His creation. The one looked back to Eden,

BOARD OF LAY MINISTRY

and the other looked forward to a new Eden, namely, the land of Canaan. Together they comprise God's epic story. Israel was to stop working, rest, and celebrate both of God's achievements. In the process, Israel would be refreshed, renewed, confident of God's provision" (Arand, 6).

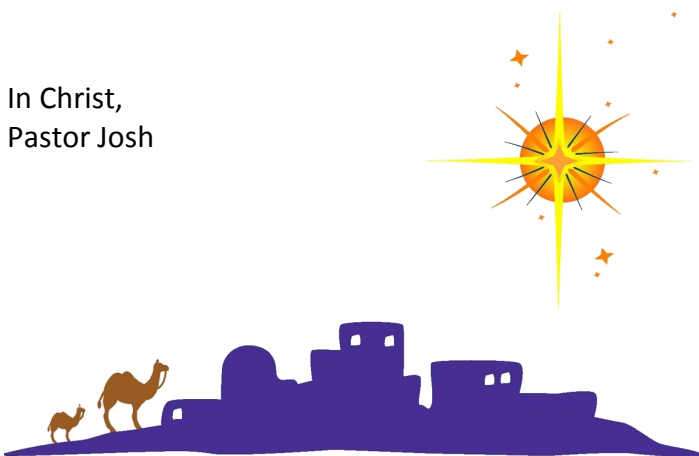
God's works of creation and redemption in the Old Testament look forward to God's final renewal of creation accomplished in Christ. Through God's work in Christ he gives us, his re-created and redeemed people, rest.

In our Sunday Morning Divine Services, God gives us rest in the work of Christ. Rest from our Sins. Renewal in the Spirit of God so that we are empowered and enabled to truly live as God's people in a restless world. No other rest that we manufacture from our own hands will work. Only receiving and resting in the work of God's hands, our Creator and redeemer truly works.

So we continue to rest in God's work in Christ as he offers it in Word, Sacrament, Song, and Prayer in our Divine Services on Sunday Mornings. We come and rest with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

I also encourage you to come and rest with God's people and in God's work in Christ during Wednesday evenings this Advent season. What a wonderful way to prepare for Christmas this year! Our midweek Advent Worship Services take place at 7pm on Wednesdays, December 3, 10, 17. Each Service is preceded by a Potluck supper at 6pm. So come, bring a dish to pass, join together in community and conversation. Come as God's child and rest in his Word and work for you.

In Christ,
Pastor Josh



Faith, Hope and Charity

This trio is found in 1 Corinthians 13:13, and the end of Paul's famous statement on the nature of genuine love. In this chapter Paul defined the nature of unselfish love (the Greek word *agape*), stating that it was more desirable than any other "spiritual gifts". At the end of the chapter, Paul says, "Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

Older translations of the Bible (the King James, for example) use "charity" instead of "love". This has an advantage, since people today assume that any discussion of "love" involves romance. "Charity", when the King James was written, did not mean "giving to the poor," but caring, nurturing, looking after someone's best interests.

Christians have sometimes referred to faith, hope, and charity as the "the three holy virtues."

Christmas

The word does not occur in the Bible, and it wasn't celebrated until about AD 450, called the Feast of the Nativity.

Matthew and Luke give us a lot of information about Jesus' birth-but no hint of what time of year it was. Frankly, we have no idea. The Romans celebrated December 25 as the festival of *Sol Invictus*, the unconquered sun. This was a winter holiday celebrating the lengthening of days. Even as Christianity spread, the old holiday persisted, so the church adopted it, claiming it as the birthday of the Sun of Righteousness, Christ. The Romans had the practice of exchanging gifts during their *Saturnalia* (December 17-24), and the church chose to connect this with the gifts of the magi to Jesus.



FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT



For the month of October receipts totaled \$9,688.35. To meet the approved budget, we need \$10,768. Fiscal year to date, receipts total \$49,180 vs. budget of \$59,224 which puts us \$10,044 behind budget. - Ann Duggan

BOARD OF FELLOWSHIP

Please remember that donations to the 'kitty' help fund our Sunday morning fellowship snacks and coffee.



BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). God became man; he took on human flesh, so that men would once again dwell with God. In the fullness of time, the Son of God from eternity became a part of history to be born under the law in order to redeem those under the law. Christ came from heaven above to earth below for us men and for our salvation. He who knew no sin became sin so that we would be declared righteous in God's sight.

He was defiled so that we would be cleansed. He was born so that we would not die, and He died for us so that we would live in Him. He took upon Himself everything that rightfully belongs to us—sin and death—and in exchange gave to us everything that rightfully belongs to Him—righteousness, life, and the status as the sons of God.

This is what we celebrate in Advent and at Christmas. We celebrate the coming of our Lord to save us from sin, death, and hell. We celebrate that God in Christ cared for us in body and soul, for He came not only to reconcile us to the Father by taking away our sin, but also to redeem us from death and hell so

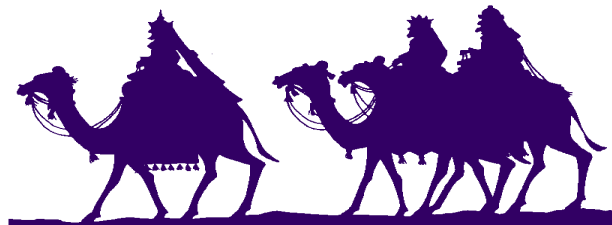
that we would live with Him in His kingdom, which has no end.

In a sermon on Acts 6 for St. Stephen's Day, preached on December 26, 1522, Martin Luther said this: "From this story we learn in the first place how a Christian community should be constituted. In addition, we have a true pattern of spiritual government that the apostles here provide. They care for souls, occupy themselves with preaching and prayer, and yet also see to it that the body is cared for; for they suggest several men who are to distribute the goods, as you have heard. Thus the Christian rule is concerned for the people in body and soul, so that no one suffers want . . . that all were richly fed and well cared for in both body and soul."

And this is one reason we give to the church. We give so that people will see the church not just as a place that cares for souls, that forgives sins, but also a place that cares for the body. For the church is a place of mercy. It is a place where we inhale God's mercy and loving kindness through the Word and the Sacraments for the forgiveness of our sin. And it's a place where we exhale the mercy we received there in love and service to our neighbor. The church cares for both the body and the soul.

The church is not so heavenly minded that it forgets those in need on earth. In fact, it cares for the needs of this body and life precisely because it is heavenly minded. We seek to do what God has done for us.

The church is so ordered that it does both. Giving to the church is a responsibility given to those who are the church. This can sometimes be difficult. But it is also a great joy. For in giving to the church we are giving back to God for His use for others what He has first given to us. In giving to the church, we participate in God's work here in time for all eternity. In giving to the church, we who are heavenly minded do what God has done for us: dwell with those who live in a fallen world and care for them in both body and soul. Let us, then, in this most joyous season of the church year, dwell not on the struggles in giving, but rather on the joy set before us in caring for body and soul as God in Christ has done for us.



FROM THE PEWS

The name "Bethlehem" means the "house of bread."

This is one of the most remembered and known towns in Judea. It is near where Jacob buried his beloved wife Rachel. Though, at that time it was named Ephrath. It is also called "Bethlehem-Ephratah" or Bethlehem-Judah." The old name lingered in David's time.

This is a city which overlooks the main highway to Hebron and Egypt. The site of the city is on a commanding limestone ridge of the Judean highland. Then there was another conquest and the city fell into the hands of the tribe of Judah. Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel after the reign of Jephthah.

This was the home of Elimelech, the husband of Naomi and father-in-law of Ruth, the Moabite, who later married Boaz. Ruth was also a resident of this city (Ruth 1:19).

David was born in Bethlehem and it was here that he was also anointed as king by the prophet Samuel.

Here is the special well from which David's three heroes brought him

water when he was running from the persecution of King Saul. This well is believed to be in existence to this very day on the north side of the village.

Here is where all the male children were slain by order of King Herod. Bethlehem is about five miles south of Jerusalem at an average elevation of 2,550 feet above sea level,

which is about 100 feet higher than Jerusalem itself.

And of course, most important, Bethlehem is remembered because it was the birthplace, birth-city of Jesus Christ. (Matt.2:5)



Holiday Services

Midweek Advent Services

December 3rd, December 10th, and December 17th, Join us as we prepare for the coming of our Savior!
Potluck starts at 6:00 pm.
Service begins at 7:00 pm.

Christmas Eve Service

December 24th,
Join us at 7:00 pm as we celebrate the birth of our Savior!

New Years Eve Service

December 31st, Help us ring in the New Year! Join us for our New Year's Eve service on December 31st at 7:00 pm.

Holiday Events

Living Nativity

December 5th, Atonement Lutheran Church invites you to experience the first Christmas through our living nativity. Crafts, photo booth, caroling, bells and refreshments begin at 6:00 pm.
The living nativity and message will begin at 7:00 pm.

Christmas Caroling

December 14th

Do you enjoy singing? On Sunday December 14th, beginning at 3:00 pm we will visit our shut-in members and area senior homes to sing Christmas carols for them. Caroling will be followed by a meal.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK!

Interested in keeping up to date with Atonement on a regular basis?



Find us on Facebook for updates, devotional links, and church news.

You can find us at
www.facebook.com/atonementspringalley

iPhone and iPad training!

Todd Martens will be holding a iPhone/iPad training session for anyone in the congregation on Thursday, December 11th, 2014 starting at 6:00 PM in the church basement. Todd will be answering any questions you may have about your device and give direction on how to accomplish the task. This will be very informal but if you wish to learn more about your i-device, this would be a great learning experience for



There is still space to sign up for flowers in 2014. The suggested donation is \$30 and the flower chart is hung

Altar Flowers

**THIS MONTH'S
birthdays**

- 2 John Munnik
- 3 Jan Stalman
Art Puls
- 8 Alex Contreras
- 23 Beth Puls
- 25 Larry Steele
- 29 Zenaida Villa
- 30 Mary Weber
Jennifer Stalman



- 3 Kurt & Jan Stalman
- 16 Dave & Dee Moody

December

Lay Ministers

- 3 Roberty Bryant
- 7 Don Geisinger
- 10 Robert Bryant
- 14 Robert Bryant
- 17 Manny Cruz
- 21 Larry Betancourt
- 24 Don Geisinger
- 28 Larry Betancourt
- 31 Robert Bryant

Acolytes

- Rebecca Moody
- Philip Brann
- Sheree Moody
- Junior Betancourt
- Rebecca Moody
- Philip Brann
- Junior Betancourt
- Rebecca Moody
- Sheree Moody

Flowers

- Puls December Birthdays
- Dave & Dee Moody's Anniversary
- Larry Steele's Birthday

Usher: Robert Bryant

Asst. Usher: Curtis Duggan

2014—2015

Officers and Board/Committee Members

Executive Board

President	Todd Martens
Secretary	Shenoah Heidtbrink
Financial Secretary	Ann Duggan
Treasurer	Nancy Riley

Board of Lay Ministry

Chairperson	Manny Cruz
Member	Don Geisinger
Member	Jim Dysart
Member	Robert Bryant
Member	Larry Betancourt

Board of Stewardship

Chairperson	Judy Dysart
Member	Lynn Chiaravalle
Member	Kathy Martens
Member	Jenny Moody

Board of Properties

Chairperson	Art and Beth Puls
Member	Manfred Luther
Member	Bobby Riess
Member	Dave Brinchman
Member	Bob Imig

Board of Fellowship

Chairperson	Jennie Green
Member	Donna Hurd
Member	Carol Hernandez

Board of Education

Chairperson	Seth Heidtbrink
Member	Gloria Ollhoff

Board of Outreach

Chairperson	Sandee Boelter
Member	Bob Karo
Member	Remi Tufts

Flowers Carol Hernandez

ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

10245 Loma Rancho Drive
Spring Valley, CA 91978
(619) 670-7174
Rev. Joshua LaFeve, Pastor
atonementspringvalley.org
atonement.sv@gmail.com

Weekly Service

Sunday at 9:00 am

Bible Study

Sunday at 10:30 am

Tuesday at 6:00 pm (Men's)

[On Break in December, resumes January]

Wednesday at 10:00 am

Wednesday at 6:00 pm (Women's)

[On Break in December, resumes January]

Sunday School

Sunday at 10:30 am

Confirmation

Tuesday's at 5:00 pm

Choir Rehearsal

Tuesday's at 7:00 pm

Atoner's Bell Ringers

Tuesday's at 6:00 pm

Hiking Club

Last Saturday of each month. Location and times to be announced



January 2015						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 10:00 am AI Anon 5:00 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm Bells 7:00 pm Choir	3 10:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Potluck 7:00 pm Advent Service	4 11:00 am Lay Ministers 11:30 am Better Life Together	5 6:00 pm Living Nativity	6
7 9:00 am Divine Service 10:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Sunday School	8 6:00 pm Church Council	9 9:00 am AI Anon Christmas Function 5:00 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm Bells 7:00 pm Choir	10 10:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Potluck 7:00 pm Advent Service	11 11:30 am Better Life Together 6:00 pm iPhone/iPad Training	12	13 10:00 am LWML Christmas Brunch
14 9:00 am Prayer/Preaching 10:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Sunday School 3:00 pm Caroling	15	16 10:00 am AI Anon 5:00 pm Confirmation 6:00 pm Bells 7:00 pm Choir	17 10:00 am Bible Study 6:00 pm Potluck 7:00 pm Advent Service	18 11:30 am Better Life Together	19	20
21 9:00 am Divine Service 10:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Sunday School	22	23 10:00 am AI Anon 6:00 pm Bells 7:00 pm Choir	24 10:00 am Bible Study 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service	25 <i>Christmas</i>	26	27 9:00 am Hiking Club 10:00 am AI-Anon Business Meeting
28 9:00 am Prayer/Preaching 10:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Sunday School	29	30 10:00 am AI Anon 6:00 pm Bells 7:00 pm Choir	31 7:00 pm New Years Eve Service			