

Atonement
Lutheran
Church

voice of Atonement

August 2020

IN THIS ISSUE

From the President	2
From the Vice President	3
Outdoor Worship	4
In Our Prayers	5
Stewardship	5
Outreach Ministry	6
Youth Ministry	6
Faith In Action	7
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry	9
Rocky Mountain Synod	10
Condolences for Dr. Rabenorolahy Benjamin	11
Giving Options	12
Shop With Scrip	13
Financial Reporting Update	14
2020 Census	14

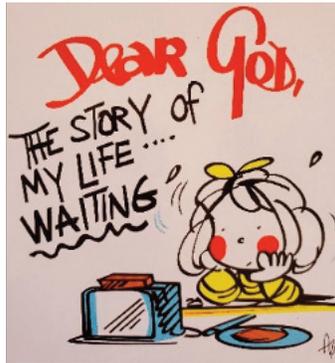
ATONEMENT STAFF

Senior Pastor
Pastor Kristi Beebe
Music Director
Brandon Bill
Office Manager
Linda Neslund
Choir Accompanist
Carol Ott
Organists
Gayle Gunderson
Carol Ott

Pastor's Message

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

There's a cute little "prayer picture" in the children's book *"My Little Book of Dear God Letters: This One Is Just For You!"* that sums up life sometimes. Do you ever feel this way?



I've got to say, after almost pressing the "Make Reservation" key to fly out to Washington for a couple days to celebrate my Mom's 90th birthday on September 24th, I hesitated, and I'm still hesitating, as I hovered over the Southwest Airlines Reservation Page on the computer at the same time Governor Inslee said he might put Washington back to Phase I "Stay at Home" Orders! "Say What?" I thought. Yikes! It was also around the same time Governor Polis said, and I paraphrase, "I tried to do the right thing and trust the citizens of Colorado ... but that didn't work, so now I'll have to make a State Order: Wear your *#@)!#% masks!"

We wait for lots of things in life ... a much needed vacation; the work day to get over; school to begin; college acceptance letters to arrive; a new baby or grandbaby to come; a new job; retirement; the ice cream truck to drive by; and on and on. But holy cow, the waiting for this Covid-19 Virus to be done with is just about to make a person crazy, isn't it? How many months now are we on? Ok, let's not talk in months ... we're at what, half a year? I repeat ~ Holy Cow! "Dear God, the story of all of our lives these days is waiting!!! When will it end?" Answer: "No one knows."

I can tell you this though, there are many people who, after about six months, are still not able to even get out and about due to all kinds of circumstances in their lives, including being afraid of those who refuse to actually wear their masks as they need to do! Please friends, wear them when in public as it will help us end this waiting time. But even more importantly, let's do something in the midst of this waiting time that will be a GIFT to one another in our church community, and in our civic community about us. Let's reach out in a social distancing way. How about in the month ahead, each one of us challenge ourselves to pick up the church directory and our phones and CALL 10 people that you think might not be getting out much just to check in and say "Hi." Or, CALL someone on our prayer list and ask how they are doing. Additionally, let's be a GIFT to our surrounding community and help with Westgate School when we announce what their needs will be this coming school year, or with Community Ministry.

Together, we can make the waiting into something positive and life-giving. May we build up our faith community and surrounding community during this time by fruitful and sincere conversation and prayer with one another.

Peace and joy to you all,



—Pastor Kristi

Romans 8:25 ~ "But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."

ONLINE GIVING CHALLENGE

We have the totals for the May challenge that was “thrown down” by Carol Farr! We had 39 households share their gifts and 2 that signed up for automatic giving. Comparing it to May 2019, 20 households used online giving. That is nearly double last year and the previous months January - April 2020. Thank you to all that participated. Don't be shy to use online giving again. You can download the app Give Plus +, go on the website atonementdenver.org, or text to 720-513-1562. Easy and convenient. (See directions in this newsletter.) Thanks, Carol, for the challenge.

Eileen Koppenhaver
Congregation President

From the president

“LIVE GENEROUSLY”

As I was wondering what I should write about for the newsletter, I was talking to my husband and noticed the saying on the T-Shirt he was wearing – Live Generously with a heart and cross logo. Many of you have a shirt like this because Mitchell Lynn from Thrivent handed these out at several of our events. So, I have seen this shirt many times but this time it really struck me. What a good saying to wear on all our clothes right now. Live Generously. This is such an historic time for our country: A pandemic, recognizing the importance to respect ALL people and social justice, economic ups and downs. What a special time to establish some new norms. Live Generously.

One of the guidelines of Thrivent we can also embrace is SERVICE – COMMUNITY – RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS. As we have progressed through January – July, changing methods of worship, educating, meeting, and ministry I think we have lived these guidelines. I am so proud of our members and friends. We have truly come together to support each other, to embrace our new online ministry, and now some are attending in-person worship outdoors.

To minister to our community, we are gathering food (and boys' underwear) for Community Ministry and backpacks and school supplies for Westgate Elementary School. School supplies will be needed for learning at home or classroom. Don't forget to gather your old shoes for Soles for Souls. These needs continue no matter what is happening around us.



Another part of church business is the election of church leadership. The Nominating Committee met and is contacting folks to fill some positions that have come open. The pandemic interfered with the timing of selecting and electing officers. We did not have a Congregation

Meeting in the spring. We will have to figure out how to vote remotely, like some states, but the work of Council goes on. Audrey Brach-Banks, Wendy Brown, and Howie Folz have served as Council-at-large positions for the past 4 years. Two terms each. Jan Sweeney has served as Council Secretary for 4 years. Thank you to all for your dedication and hard work. If you get a call, please prayerfully consider sharing your gifts and join Church Council to provide SERVICE and COMMUNITY.

I also want to acknowledge the SERVICE to our community by our Worship and Music Ministry Team. Thank you for every Sunday and thank you for Wednesday Music Time on Facebook Live and the website. Music lifts spirits, brings back memories and leads us on. Thank you to Pastor Kristi for challenging us and herself to new ministries, open to the challenges of leading and serving. Join Pastor Kristi for online Bible Study and Children's Story Time. All our staff and volunteers have stepped up and embraced creative thinking. Led by the Spirit.

RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS. Those are the things we do from our heart and soul. Linda has received many masks to protect her as she continues working in our business office through this health crisis. Dawn goes above and beyond caring for all of us. I feel very safe when I enter the church facilities. Probably the most sanitary place in Lakewood! I remember eating at the Long Beach Airport while waiting for my flight home after my mother had passed away. When I went to pay my bill the wait staff said it had already been taken care of by a person that had been sitting nearby. What a kindness!

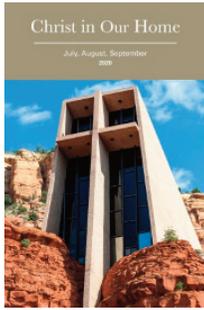
You know folks, kindness and love is all around us. Easy to see the problems but I believe there is far more of us Living Generously.

—Eileen Koppenhaver

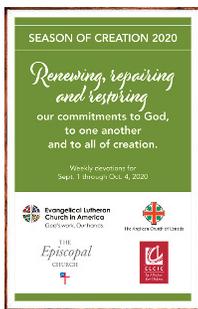
DEAR ATONEMENT,

Thank you for giving me \$20 for Panera. my family loves going there! Thank you so much for being a good environment for me and for supporting me in my journey through life! I cannot wait to see where life takes me next!

Thank you, Jasmine



July, August, September **Daily Devotionals, Christ in our Home**, is available at the church office entrance Tuesday – Friday. Questions, please contact the office at 303-985-1122.



Season of Creation 2020 (September 1st – October 4th) devotions offered by four heads of communion

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), and leaders from The Episcopal Church, the Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada have prepared a series of devotions to observe the Season of Creation 2020, Sept. 1–Oct. 4.

The season, which begins with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, is a time to join with the global Christian community in renewing, repairing and restoring commitments to God, to one another and to all of creation. "We pray that our actions as stewards of God's good creation will continue to deepen not only in this season, but for all time," said Eaton. "Even as our relations as churches are not bound by national or ecclesiastical borders, neither is our witness to the One who came to redeem all of creation."

From the vice-president

On March 24, 2020 my life changed in a way that I'm sure many of you can appreciate. That was the birthdate of my granddaughter, Max Elizabeth Dub, my first, and so far only, grandchild. There was a fair amount of anxiety about giving birth at a time of rising Covid-19 infections especially in NY state which was on a very scary trajectory. Laurie and I were unable to visit right away and it was only when things began to settle down and my daughter and son-in-law began to experience parenthood for the first time that we could all agree that a trip to NY was needed for everyone. Even so, we quarantined ourselves for two weeks in a remote cabin on a riverbank before we were allowed to enter our daughter's home and hold Max.



Well, it was love at first sight and Laurie and I decided immediately to move to Potsdam, NY to be close to Max and help take care of her when our daughter and son-in-law return to teaching in the fall. This doesn't mean we're leaving for good. We put our house in Lakewood up for rent rather than for sale, leaving an escape route in case we get homesick for Colorado. I've agreed to continue on as vice-president of the congregation as long as that continues to make sense. Since I haven't set foot in the church building since February, worshipping and carrying out my responsibilities remotely, Potsdam isn't really any further away than Green Mountain. I'm not going to be interested in finding a new church home if I can't interact in person with prospective congregations, so don't feel bad, I'm not really going anywhere.

The *Drop in the Bucket* Program has continued to be a great success despite social distancing, thanks to the generosity of Atonement members. Giving has been higher in 2020 than it was at this same point in 2019, though we started a month earlier this year. In July we will be lifting up Christ Church International

School, the school run by Beth-Marie Miller-Bicknell and her husband, Vance Bicknell. Beth-Marie is the daughter of Atonement members Marcia and Randy Cunningham, and she and Vance would have been visiting Colorado in July if it weren't for Covid-19. As it is, they will be preaching remotely this month. I hope you're able to open your hearts and your wallets for this worthy ministry. In August we will lift up Westgate School. Please take a moment to say a prayer for the teachers, administrators, students, and parents of Westgate and schools everywhere. Never in the history of the world has education been so important, and never has it been so difficult.

Ministry	Month	2020 Bucket	2019 Bucket
New Beginnings	February	\$1,467	Not applicable
ELCA World Hunger	March	\$947	\$1,155
Community Ministry	Lent	\$1,568	\$682
Lutheran Disaster Relief	April	\$1,060	\$1,391
Cristo Rey	May	\$1,245	\$2,049
Urban Servants Corps	June	\$380	\$553
Christ Church School	July		\$300
Westgate School	August		\$649
Rainbow Trail	September		\$828
Holiday Baskets/Habitat for Humanity	October		Not applicable
Sky Ranch	November		\$768
Pastor's Assistance Fund	December		\$2,316
Year to date total		\$6,677	\$5,830

I have been continuing in my role as congregational coordinator with Boy Scout Troop 808. You may know that they have been helping out at Atonement at our cleanup day and again at our first July outdoor service. I'm trying to get some volunteers for outdoor service for the rest of the summer and for VBS. I've let them know that we consider them members of our Atonement community and that our relationship extends beyond our letting them meet in our parking lot. If you see scouts helping out at Atonement, please thank them and make them feel as welcome as you would any visitor.

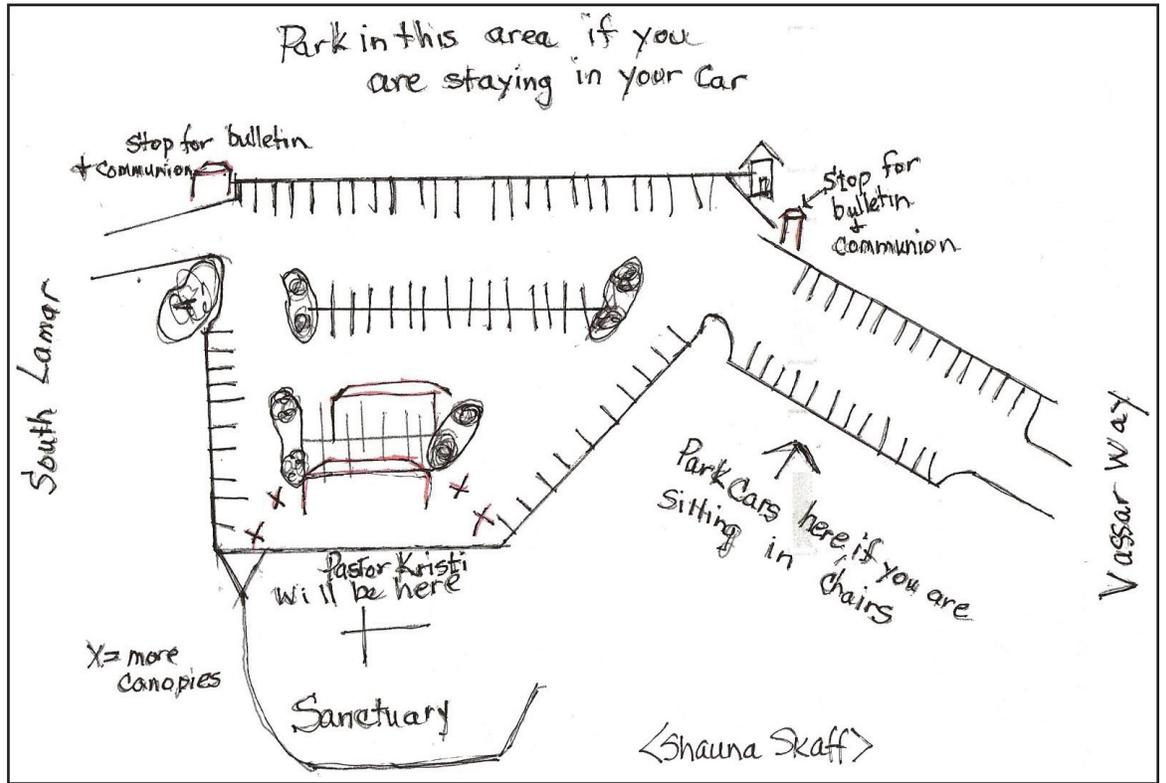
May the peace of the Lord that passes all understanding be with you all.

—Phil Pienkos

PARKING LOT AND LAWN CHAIR WORSHIP!

Every Sunday in July & August at 10:00 a.m.

Grab your lawn chair (or stay in your car and listen on the radio) as Atonement "gathers" for worship from our church parking lot. Social distancing and Safer at Home precautions will be in effect. So bring your masks and your lawn chairs to sit under our two large canopies, or bring your own umbrellas, or park in your car. Areas will be marked for appropriate social distancing.





IN OUR PRAYERS

Recent Prayers

Sean Anderson
 Leslie Cowe
 Ralph Hill
 Jane Hoeft
 Denise Loos
 Jason Robinson
 Shiloh Guiment
 Lisa S.
 Family and Friends of J.C.
 Sparkman

Ongoing Prayers

Kristen Adkisson
 Annette Brackeen
 Charlotte Pienkos
 Craig Poore
 Oscar Otto
 Carl Sandoval

stewardship

STEWARD OUR FUTURE CHURCH

For clarifying our thoughts and helping us to reset priorities, there's nothing like a crisis – whether it's a job layoff, a death in the family, social upheaval or a health emergency.

With Covid-19 we've witnessed plenty of all of these, and more! Despite our natural resistance to change, we're learning new ways to live. *As a disciple of Christ, what thoughts have clarified for you? As a follower of Jesus, what personal priorities have you reset?*

The questions arise because you are the church, we are the church together and stewards of the church. We will pray the Holy Spirit will guide us to a "new normal" of holy living as both disciples and community that will be different – and better – than what we've known.

What might that look like? Here are some questions to pray over and discuss:

- When your church suspended in-person worship, what ways did you find to stay

connected to God? To one another? What did this teach you about holy living? About being church together?

- Covid-19 forced us to "be church" without buildings. What has this revealed about the nature of community? About the value of buildings? As we go back into our buildings, how can things be different? Why must they be?
- In light of what we've learned, what values, ideas, traditions, habits should we let go of? Which should we keep? What really matters? And why?
- How can your insights, strengths and gifts help to shape the future of your life as a disciple and follower of Jesus? Of your congregation? What can you give to the future church in time, talent and treasure?

Covid-19's crises are still teaching us. As stewards of God's church, we can renew and restructure our church to fulfill God's mission. With God's guidance, we will.

—Rob Blezard

UPDATE on *Growing in Faith - Growing in Generosity*

Thanks to all of our Atonement households for your ongoing generosity! We are pursuing the ministry objectives announced last fall, but the specific spending proposals have changed as a result of changes in our programs and facility use due to the pandemic. We hope to achieve the original proposals, but those facility updates are likely to be postponed until well after 2020.

• Youth and Outreach Coordinator

Brandon has embraced his new responsibilities to the best of his ability considering the recent distancing guidelines! Meanwhile, as choir activities have been suspended since March, Brandon has helped to coordinate online streaming of worship using Facebook Live, and soon, YouTube! We are fortunate and thankful for his skills in "orchestrating" this new ministry, continuing to improve it, and working to reach as many families as possible.

• Worship Enhancements (Projector)

Since proposing a projector for the rear of the sanctuary – which many of us haven't been in for a while! – one of the existing projectors has failed and will require replacement before we use the sanctuary again. Meanwhile, necessary investments for our new online streaming worship experience include a mixer for better sound, a video camera with tripod, a portable projector and screen suitable for outdoor use, and a computer suitable for streaming Online Worship.

• Ministry of Welcome

A remodel of the narthex is on hold; instead, Atonement now has large tents to shelter us from sun and rain as we now can come together for worship outdoors on the Atonement parking lot! We'll continue to think of ways that we can assemble – safely – as a worshipping community. Attention is being devoted to keeping the facility clean and safe for our families and visitors.

Please pray for your Atonement community of faith and its leadership as we continue to minister to one another and to support the worthy ministries that rely on us.

**BIBLE STUDY
VIA FACEBOOK LIVE ...
"The Bible's Wild Women!"**

Tuesday Evenings,

7:00 -7:30 pm (or 7:40 p.m.,
depending on how long-winded
the pastor is that evening!)

This year we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Ordination of Women in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, so let's also celebrate women mentioned in the Bible, because compared to men, there aren't all that many! And, why not check out some of the ones that relate a bit more to you and I ... the ones that aren't all that perfect ... the ones that have a few flaws ... the ones that sin here and there ... the ones that maybe have a hidden past ... the ones that goof up once in a while! These are also the ones God comes to and says, "It's alright, I love you and forgive you!" These are the ones like you and I! Come on Tuesday evenings and join Pastor Kristi to see if any of the wild women in the scriptures speak to you like they speak to Pastor Kristi.

**CHILDRENS TIME VIA
FACEBOOK LIVE**

Join Pastor Kristi on Wednesday mornings at 8:30 a.m. the **FIRST TWO WEDNESDAYS IN AUGUST** (because after that school begins) so we'll be **MOVING OUR CHILDRENS TIME** to 5:00pm Wednesdays. Mark your calendar! Instead of just stories, we'll be including music and other exciting children's "stuff"! Join us!

outreach ministry



STAMP OUT HUNGER FOOD DRIVE

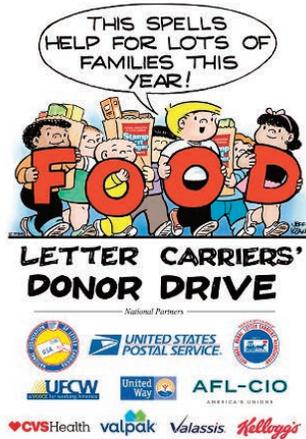
Due to the virus stay-at-home policies, the letter carriers were unable to do the annual Stamp Out Hunger food drive and pickup. Instead they and we are asking you to consider donating through the virtual food drive.

Please donate what you can to a food bank in your community.

1. Go to nalc.org/food
2. Select your state
3. Choose "Community Ministries" and click on the link (to Colorado Gives)
4. Make a contribution

It's that easy. All collections stay in the local community.

#NALC #stampouthunger #donordrive
#lettercarriers #heroesdelivering



SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE AND DISTRIBUTION

Each year
Community Ministry

helps more than 300 children prepare for school by providing school supplies. Member churches and individuals donate items. Collection of supplies takes place May-July. The backpack packing day is in early August. Check our calendar for the exact date and time if you would like to participate.

Purpose: School supplies are provided for children entering 1st grade through 5th grade that have pre-registered with Community Ministry to receive this benefit.

Requirements: Pre-registration occurs during July and the supplies are distributed in August. Parents must provide the child's birth certificate to register. If children are not living with the parent, the guardian must provide proof of custody.

Supplies Provided: Each child receives a backpack containing many of the generic school supplies needed.

Resources: Supplies are donated by private individuals, supporting churches, community businesses and targeted grants.

youth ministry

Good day to all!!!

As I am writing this note we are prepping and gearing up for VBS....I can't wait to see how it all goes amidst these unusual times. We pray it proves to be a blessing to kids and families alike.

We hope that your families are safe and healthy and that as you are gradually getting back to a new "normal" that you continue to stay safe.

With no new updates regarding Covid19 and indoor worship and Sunday School at the writing of this note we would ask that you look for updates on the church website for any changes.

Please remember that Eileen has put out some great resources on the church website for kids and families to share so don't forget to check them out at: atonementdenver.org then click on the Children's Page link in the left corner for all of the great activities to enjoy.

We pray you continue to have a safe and healthy summer and pray with much longing for the opportunity to worship together again face to face.

May God's riches blessings be yours today and each new day to come!!

Faith in Action

**NEXT MEETING: August 4th, 6:30pm,
Cathy Bajcsi's Backyard**



CARE FOR CREATION IDEA: WE DON'T WASTE: UPDATES!

Over the past few months we have seen an increase in need from the communities we serve, and support from our amazing volunteers has helped us meet that need. In April 2020, we distributed 700,000 more servings than we did in April 2019. We have also formed new relationships with 16 additional recipient agencies serving hungry people around the city since the beginning of April, expanding our reach into the community. At our eight Drive-Thru Food Distributions the past two months, we have served 1,500 families – a total of 7,800 individuals! We hope to continue to meet the growing needs of the community with help from supportive volunteers!

Do Your Part! If you are doing your part during this pandemic by staying home, you can also do your part by reducing food waste in your own home! Small ways to make a big difference include:

Proper Storage

- Storing your food properly can prolong the shelf life of food
- Save the Food is a great resource for creative recipes and proper storage tips

Smarter Planning

- Make lists when grocery shopping
- Plan your meals so you don't buy extra food that you don't need
- Write dates on leftovers, so you eat the oldest item first



Get creative!

- Experiment with new recipes

- Use foods in a new way - for example with stale bread you can make bread crumbs or croutons

Be wary of 'Best by' Dates

- Not every date you see on food products is an expiration date. Most dates are not expiration dates nor do they indicate whether food is safe to eat or not. The FDA allows manufacturers to sell almost any food past these dates, with the one exception being baby formula. Manufacturers aren't required to put any of these dates on their food, and most of them focus their dates on "best if used by," meaning the date is based on optimal freshness, not food safety
- If your food tastes or smells off, it probably is; use your senses to determine what is still safe to eat
- If you are unsure, use the internet to help you find out if something is still good to eat. Unless it has visible mold, rot, or an off smell or taste, it is probably still safe to eat!

—Laura Buhs



ADVOCACY TOOLS FOR LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR

This webinar was sponsored by the ELCA Advocacy Network and the Episcopalian Public Policy Network, on July 9th via Zoom. Presenting were Bishop Elizabeth Eaton (Presiding Bishop, ELCA), and Bishop Michael B. Curry (Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church), and their respective advocacy teams. Moderated by John B Johnson, Program Director, Domestic Policy ELCA (and a lifelong Episcopalian), the webinar considered why we advocate, key principles for advocacy as Christians, and several policies and issues that are current foci for their work.

Takeaways from Bishop Curry's opening remarks: "To advocate is to do the work of God and to do it in this place." "Advocacy is the practical work of love." "We are reminded that the Great Advocate is the Spirit of God." "We are facing multiple pandemics: one biological,

another deeply social and economic" "Time to make the parable of the Samaritan a living reality." "The face mask may be the great sign of love in our time."

Takeaways from Bishop Eaton's opening remarks: What is the role of the church in the public square? She quoted the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," The intention was to keep the state out of religion, but it makes no prohibition regarding the role of churches in the business of the state. She also noted that Luther saw "Give us this day our daily bread" to include advocating for health care, education, and a community chest provided by the government. "Good government is a gift of God, intended to promote human flourishing and the good for our neighbor."

Members of the two teams then spoke to key principles for advocacy, the lead one is Civil Discourse, to listen and to learn while pursuing justice. To listen with curiosity, to move from the goals of movements to the actuality of policy. There is an assumption that we want to be in relationship, about crossing boundaries, for the common good of our neighbor.

The entire webinar is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7XXNZCdUF4&feature=youtu.be> or on the ELCA website, using the search box and typing is "Advocacy Tools". I encourage you to watch and learn even more, especially the major thrusts for policy and resolution now the work of these advocacy teams.

—Suzanne Rousso

FIA Picks:

Movies/TV/Streaming:

➤ **Linda Ronstadt; *The Sound of My Voice*.** For Rent on Prime Video (Amazon) Linda Ronstadt had an accomplished career as a talented, diverse singer in a male-dominated industry. The interviews of other entertainers like Dolly Parton, Jackson Browne, Don Henley and Emmylou Harris help make this documentary quite interesting. The film traces her life, from



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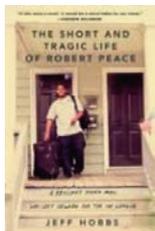
her childhood in Tucson through her decades-long career and to her retirement in 2011 due to Parkinson's disease. Learning about her childhood roots, made me reflect upon how music has played an important role in the development of civilization, in every culture, on every continent.

—Michelle Healey

➤ Join PBS's summer-long **celebration of women trailblazers** in honor of the **women's vote centennial**, featuring multi-platform content commemorating U.S. women's suffrage, the feminist movement and modern-day change makers. *American Masters* is participating in the initiative with three exciting projects: *Unladylike2020*, a multimedia series which features pioneering, diverse and little-known American heroines from the turn of the 20th century and looks at how their work resonates today (be sure to see the Hedy Lamar story); the new documentary on the Nobel Prize-winning author, **Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am**; and a film on the entertainment legend who "climbed the ladder of success wrong by wrong," **Mae West: Dirty Blonde!** Watching them brings back the memories of women's work here in Denver in the early 70s.

—Suzanne Rouso

Books/ Articles/ Blogs



✓ *The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace*, **Jeff Hobbs**.

A compelling and honest portrait of Robert's life and relationships—with his struggling mother, with his incarcerated father, with his teachers and friends. It

exposes the most enduring conflicts in America: race, class, drugs, community, imprisonment, education, family, friendship, and love. It's about the collision of two fiercely insular worlds—the ivy-covered campus of Yale and the slums of Newark, New Jersey. But most all it is about the tragic life of one singularly brilliant young man. His end, a violent one, is heartbreaking and powerful. On so many levels reading this is a challenge, a close look at the intercity culture that formed Robert and the Yale work in molecular biology that challenged him. I could not put it down.

—Suzanne Rouso

✓ Written for the Atlantic in June of 2020, *The American Nightmare* by Ibram Kendi talks to being Black in America. "To be black and conscious of anti-black racism is to stare into the mirror of your own extinction." An excerpt: "A nightmare is essentially a horror story of danger, but it is not wholly a horror story. Black people experience joy, love, peace, safety. But as in any horror story, those unforgettable moments of toil, terror and trauma have made danger essential to the black experience in racist America. What one black American experiences, many black American experience." Read it in full: <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/06/american-nightmare/612457/>

—Suzanne Rouso

✓ *Towards Right Relationships with Native Peoples*, a Boulder organization that promotes education about and advocacy for indigenous peoples, included this link in their recent newsletter <https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2019/06/19/reparations-truth-and-reconciliation-united-states/>. The article describes efforts in Maine to heal the trauma of child removals from Native families. It also refers to Truth and Reconciliation Commissions in other places like South Africa and Canada and whether they were viewed as successful. This is a timely topic since many people feel that the protests about policing in Black communities are fostering conversations about race in America and whether it's time for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission here around slavery, Jim Crow and systemic racism.

—Cathy Bajsci

✓ Another article the *Right Relationships* promoted was about reorienting our economy to be regenerative; with a focus on how to protect, repair, invest and transform it to serve all people. <https://www.mynewsletterbuilder.com/email/newsletter/1414563100>

—Cathy Bajsci

✓ In a recent New York Times article, "*My Body is a Confederate Monument*", Caroline Randall Williams described her Black body as a Confederate monument. Ms. Williams is the great-great-granddaughter of Edmund Pettis, a Grand Dragon of the KKK and the man for whom the bridge in Selma is named. She defiantly acknowledges her history:

"It is an extraordinary truth of my life that I am biologically more than half white, and yet I

have no white people in my genealogy in living memory. No. Voluntary. Whiteness. I am more than half white, and none of it was consensual. White Southern men — my ancestors — took what they wanted from women they did not love, over whom they had extraordinary power, and then failed to claim their children." <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/26/opinion/confederate-monuments-racism.html?searchResultPosition=1>

Ms. Williams then challenges apologists for the preservation of Confederate statues to consider "Either you have been blind to a truth that my body's story forces you to see, or you really do mean to honor the oppressors at the expense of the oppressed, and you must at last acknowledge your emotional investment in a legacy of hate."

—Cathy Bajsci



HAVE YOU CONSIDERED:

White Men got the right to vote in 1776; they gave it to themselves.

Black Men got the right to vote by the 15th Amendment, if women were included the fear was they would vote, 1870.

Women, black and white, got the right to vote by the 19th Amendment, ratified 1920.

Celebrate the achievement and vow not to forget to exercise this right in November, 2020!

Our Closing Thought:

Any one's death diminishes me
Because I am involved in Humankind
And therefore never send to know
for whom the bell tolls,
It tolls for thee.
(With apologies to Donne)

**Upward,
Faith In Action Ministry Team**

Did you wonder what happened when the Legislature reconvened this year? Here is the Lutheran Advocacy Ministry answer.

Legislature Adjourns After Major Budget Changes

The Colorado General Assembly came back in session on May 27 and adjourned on June 15, after taking a recess in the middle of March due to the coronavirus pandemic. Legislators faced an enormous uphill climb to balance the state budget in the face of major revenue shortfalls. We advocated with a broad coalition called Recover Colorado to ask the legislature to raise new revenue, rather than focus exclusively on making cuts. You can read our letter to lawmakers and Governor Jared Polis here.

To that end, we supported the successful passage of House Bill 20-1420, The Fair Tax Act. Section 4 of the bill eliminates a corporate tax loophole that will fund part of the estimated \$84 million in supplemental funds for state education in the next fiscal year. These funds, while meaningful, are unfortunately not nearly enough to make up for the nearly \$600 million in cuts made to the state K-12 education budget, which was \$4.6 billion last year. However, lawmakers also elected to send a nicotine tax increase to the fall ballot, giving voters a chance to approve a tax to raise an estimated \$83 million next year for education projects, including rural school initiatives and expanding preschool.

Overall, Colorado's state budget was \$32.5 billion last year, of which about \$12.2 billion came from the General Fund (the rest comes from federal funds and government fees). This year, lawmakers were forced to cut nearly \$3.3 billion, or around 25%, from General Fund expenditures to balance the budget with estimated revenue shortfalls.

ELCA Engagement in Racial Justice and Demonstrations

"As persons called to love one another as God has loved us, we therefore proclaim our commitment to speak with one voice against racism and white supremacy. We stand with



those who are targets of racist ideologies and actions." - 2019 ELCA Social Policy Resolution, "Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric"

As the church, we are called to work together to condemn white supremacy in all forms and recommit ourselves to confront and exorcise the sins of injustice, racism and white supremacy in church and society and within ourselves as individuals and households.

ELCA churches across the country have responded to racial justice demonstrations in a variety of ways: joining the peaceful protests, providing aid stations for protesters, cleaning up damage from riots in local neighborhoods, praying for God's justice to be delivered, giving money and supplies, and more. We encourage all these efforts to enact a vision of God's justice for the world. Deconstructing the sins of systemic injustice is a principle that guides our 2020 LAM-CO Policy Agenda and anti-racism is an important lens through which we view our entire public policy advocacy in the ELCA.

Additionally, we signed on to support and advocate for Senate Bill 20-217, Enhance Law Enforcement Integrity, a bill to make significant changes to policing practices in our communities statewide. Most of the provisions in the bill went into effect immediately when the Governor signed it, while a few will take effect on September 1 of this year.

Support Fair Tax and Family Leave Ballot Measures!

Lutheran Advocacy has taken a support position on two initiatives that are attempting to make the statewide ballot in the fall:

- **Initiative #271, also known as Fair Tax Colorado**, would give 95% of Coloradans a tax cut while raising significant funds for education through a more progressive state income tax
- **Initiative #283, Paid Family Leave**, supported by the Colorado Families First coalition, would create up to 12 weeks of paid leave for Colorado workers

Paid family and medical leave insurance, championed by our FAMILI Coalition, was never introduced as a bill this year, as sponsors were in negotiations at the time the pandemic hit. Now, the sponsors have pivoted to supporting a ballot measure campaign. We are supporting the Families First Coalition, which will take the lead in the effort to get this policy on the ballot.

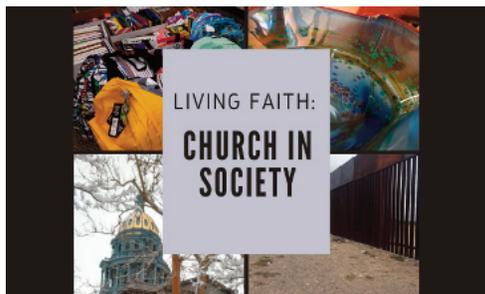
Both measures need to collect enough signatures by the first week of August. If you haven't had a chance to sign either petition, visit the website and find a petition carrier near you. In most cases, petition carriers will come to you! We need your support to get these equity measures on the ballot for voters.

As always, thank you for your partnership in advocacy. It is critically needed in this time, now and always. The peace of the Lord be with you this day,

—Peter Severson

Director, Lutheran Advocacy
Ministry-Colorado

7375 Samuel Drive, Denver, CO 80221
www.lam-co.org • 303-777-6700
Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA
A Reconciling in Christ synod
Christ's Church, Better Together



FROM THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD:

“This moment is ripe for reclaiming the Christian practice of moral deliberation, which is just another way of saying “talking together.” It’s a critical time for us to learn and practice the art of public conversation about social issues. We, all, are in dire need of examples of how to undertake respectful, healthy, and holistic conversations about major issues. The church, too, is ever in need of refreshing its own understanding of how to have these discussions in a way that doesn’t divide, but instead builds up, the body of Christ.

Living Faith: Church in Society is a revitalized curriculum to offer current and insightful perspectives on seven of our Social Statements, with rich resources to help anyone in a ministry setting lead a teaching and discussion series about them.” Both Carol Farr and Suzanne Rousso of Atonement are participating.

The six social statements and one social message are:

- Caring for Creation
- Economic Life
- Immigration (Social Message)
- Health and Health Care
- Race, Ethnicity and Culture
- The Church and Criminal Justice
- Faith/Sexism/Justice

God calls us into community, and through God’s active guidance we can build that community into one that extends God’s hands and feet into the world. We are activated - through Scripture, personal experience, church tradition and the gift of reason - to exercise the art of compassionate conversation about real issues that matter to our lives today. Living Faith seeks to foster that art. (Rocky Mountain Synod website.)

What are Social Statements? ELCA social statements are teaching and policy documents that provide broad frameworks to assist us in thinking about and discussing social issues in the context of faith and life. They are meant to help communities and individuals with moral formation, discernment and thoughtful engagement with current social issues as we participate in God’s work in the world. Social statements also set policy for the ELCA and guide its advocacy and work as a publicly engaged church. They result from an extensive process of participation and deliberation and are adopted by a two-thirds vote of an ELCA churchwide assembly.

(ELCA website)

What are Social Messages? Social messages of the ELCA are topical documents adopted by the ELCA Church Council to focus attention and action on timely, pressing matters of social concern to the church and society. They are used to address pressing contemporary concerns in light of the prophetic and compassionate traditions of Scripture and do not establish new teaching or policy. Rather, they build upon previously adopted teaching and policy positions, especially from social statements. Each message is reviewed by the Conference of Bishops and adopted by the ELCA Church Council, and expresses the convictions of the leadership of this church.

(ELCA website)

What are Social Policy Statements? Social policy resolutions are actions on matters of social concern, in addition to social statements and social messages. They are adopted either by an ELCA Churchwide Assembly or the ELCA Church Council to address the need for special resolutions or actions related to specific social concerns. As a consequence, social policy resolutions normally are brief and limited in scope. They present timely resolutions that commit this church to particular actions that are derived from and consistent with the teachings and policy of the ELCA.

(ELCA website)

This Social Statement, **Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice**, says: “Humans, in service to God, have special roles on behalf of the whole of creation. Made In the image of

God, we are called to care for the earth as God cares for the earth. God’s command to have dominion and subdue the earth is not a license to dominate and exploit. Human dominion (Genesis 1:28, Psalm 8), a special responsibility, should reflect God’s way of ruling as a shepherd king who takes the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7) wearing a crown of thorns.”

Even though it was written in 1993, little has changed. One of the questions raised was the move from the terms recycle, re-use, renew which focused on personal habits that would conserve resources, reduce pollution and waste, etc. to the term environmental justice. Environmental justice is more focused on caring for and creating healthy environments

Discussions focused on how congregations might demonstrate their care by use of recycling, reducing waste, and encouraging congregants to do the same. One congregation had a no waste pot luck near Earth Day in which everyone brought their own plates, utensils, fabric napkins, etc. and brought everything home after the event. Everyone felt trying to raise awareness and encourage conservation in their congregations more often is a good idea.

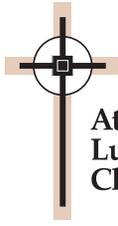
(Carol Farr, Adult Education/ Stewardship)

Ruth Hoffman, retired Director, Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in New Mexico was our guest speaker on July 8th when we discussed this social statement **Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All**. Ruth told us “This is the meatiest of all of our social statements.”

This social statement was adopted in August of 1999. It responds to God’s commandment to “Love God and Love Neighbor” It speaks specifically, prophetically, and urgently about what the church and we, as followers of Jesus, should and can do to carry out the moral imperative to address economic life locally, nationally, and globally.

The title “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for all” describes our goals in the work to bring about justice in our economic life. Even though it was written over twenty years ago, it still applies to us today. Ten ELCA

(continued on next page)



**Atonement
Lutheran
Church**

The mission of Atonement Lutheran Church is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ - birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. This is a shared ministry of staff and laity. We are a community that provides time and space for worship, learning and administration of the sacraments. We witness by reaching out with God's love. We accept responsibility for ministry to the spiritual and physical needs of our congregation, community and people of the world.

(continued from previous page)

resolutions were developed as a result of this Social Statement. I highly recommend you read this Social Statement which is available on the ELCA website.

(Carol Farr, Adult Education/ Stewardship)

The **Social Message On Immigration** was written in 1998, a social policy statement was issued in 2009, and the ELCA AMMPARO Strategy adopted in 2016. All speak to the position of our church to welcome the newcomer, the immigrant, the refugee, the asylum-seeker. And each outlines the context and rationale as well as actions steps for individual congregations to take to make our welcome known. As participants in this Living Faith series we are provided links to these documents and other illuminating articles.

Our conversation on the July 15th was enriched with the addition of written reflections and Zoom participation of Jaen Ugalde and Stephanie Gonzalez and Kari Lenander of the Border Servant Corps. Jaen spoke of his personal history of emigrating from Mexico to LA over 20 years ago. Stephanie and Kari

spoke of their on-going work in the Borderlands of El Paso. Each also provided discussion questions that formed our conversation.

It was the consensus of our group that the Social Message written over 20 years ago is still as relevant today as it was then. The addition of more updated positions only served to underline the work that remains ahead...to welcome the newcomer, the stranger, the angel. The 2015 document outlines three interdependent guiding principles: Accompaniment, Awareness-Building; and Advocacy and introduces AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities). This current document (strategy) provides many opportunities for congregational and synodical involvement. The basic themes continue to be grounded in the call to welcome the stranger (Matthew 25:35) together with the commitment to justice that advocates for fair and generous laws.

(Suzanne Rousso, Faith in Action)

Our Prayers for our RMS global companion, The Malagasy Lutheran Church

Some of our ALC members will remember Bishop Benjamin when Bishop Jim was pastor at Atonement. Bishop Benjamin visited us and worshiped with us. He was a gracious, kind man. The Malagasy Church has suffered a great loss with the passing of former Bishop Benjamin and current Bishop David. Below are the announcements that were shared on the E Connection of the Rocky Mountain Synod.



Condolences for passing of Malagasy Lutheran Church's former President (Presiding Bishop), Dr. Rabenorolahy Benjamin

We mourn again with our companions in the Malagasy Lutheran Church as they grieve today's death of their former President (Presiding Bishop), Dr. Rabenorolahy Benjamin - the second death of a major church leader due to COVID-19.

Rest eternal grant him, O Lord. And let light perpetual shine upon him.



The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has conveyed sincere condolences to the Malagasy Lutheran Church (MLC) following the death of the church's president, Rev. Dr. David Rakotonirina.

LWF received information from the MLC leadership that Rakotonirina, 58, had succumbed to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on 11 July in Madagascar's capital Antananarivo. He was laid to rest on Sunday, 12 July.

Thank You for your Generosity during these Challenging Times!!!

James 1:2-4 ²Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Our Mission and Ministry continues, and we thank you for your continued generosity. It is truly “God’s work” that can only be done with “Our Hands”.

Drop in the Bucket focus for August: Westgate School



During the month of August, our “Drop in the Bucket” (DitB) focus brings us closer to home. In fact, it’s right down the street at Westgate School. As you know, Westgate has provided many underserved children with meals from their food pantry, even when school is not actively in session. These DitB funds will assist to fill the shelves of this local food pantry so that they can continue to serve these children in need.

You can continue to give donations using the following methods.

Mail a check to the church

Yes, we still take checks and cash 😊

Giving by TEXT Message- directed to “General Operating”:

- TEXT Giving is directed to “**General Operating**”.
- Simply, Text the {\$ Amount of your Donation} (example: 50) to phone # **720-513-1562**
- For more information about Donating using the Text, please view this YouTube Video:

Give + Text for Members Presentation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nj7AiH6rty0>



Online Donation via our Website:

The donation website can be reached using the following paths:

- 1) Go to the Website:
<https://www.atonementdenver.org/home.html>, then, click the button.
- 2) Use the Barcode Scanner App on your Smart Phone, Scan this QR CODE:



Donation via Mobile App:

This ‘app’ is available using Android or iPhone

- Get the App ‘**Give Plus Church**’ using Google’s Play Store or the Apple Store and install to the IoT Device (Smart Phone/Tablet)
- Find your home church using either address or “Find the Church Near Me” and select “Atonement Lutheran Church 6281 W Yale Ave...”
- Select the “+” PLUS Button to begin the process of submitting your donation

For more information about Donating using the Mobile App, please view this YouTube Video:

‘Give Plus Church’ Mobile App Quick Start Presentation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAjqUxK8YRk>



Submitted by: Mike Skaff – Finance Committee

ShopwithScrip Gift Cards

Get the essentials for “Back to School” and during COVID-19

Shop using gift cards so your dollar goes further

Many businesses are temporarily closing their doors, so it’s hard to know where you can get the things you need. You can still buy all your household essentials, and help support your family and organization, with the brands below.

Grocery stores



Pet supply stores



Gas stations and convenience stores



Take-out or delivery restaurants



Pharmacies



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Go to www.shopwithscrip.com and ‘Join a Program’ using
Enrollment Code: **FFA8723561822**



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Wendy Brown

Stewardship

Randy Cunningham

Women's Ministry Open

Hannah Circle

Betty Moody

Worship & Music

Shauna Skaff

*Graciously serving as interim leaders

update on financial reporting

First, sincere thanks to everyone for your ongoing financial support of Atonement. Our ministry and mission remain strong while we negotiate all the challenges of this pandemic, and your interest in our financial status is, as always, much appreciated. A change we'll be making soon is to discontinue detailed financial reporting in our monthly newsletter. While we are absolutely committed to transparency and having a well-informed congregation, we've decided that alternate methods of providing financial data to



you are more appropriate. Be assured that financial information will be provided to all members at a minimum of twice a year, as well as in the Annual Report. Once we can meet again in person, we may also schedule periodic meetings to discuss financial matters, open to anyone who is interested. You may also request a copy of the current financial reports at any time by contacting the church office.

—Kathy Fletcher, Treasurer



Shape your future.

The 2020 Census is happening now. You can respond online, by phone, or by mail. The absolute deadline is October 31, extended due to COVID-19.

The count is mandated by the Constitution and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, a nonpartisan government agency. The 2020 Census counts the population in the United States and five U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). Each home will receive an invitation to respond to a short questionnaire—online, by phone, or by mail—from March 12 until October 31.

Why? Because we care about our community. The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers, and many others use to provide daily services, products, and support for our community. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data.

You should be counted where you were living and sleeping most of the time as of April 1, 2020. If you are responding for your home, count everyone who was living and sleeping there most of the time as of April 1, 2020. This includes young children, foster children, roommates, and any family members or friends who are living with you, even temporarily.

Please note that if someone was staying with you temporarily on April 1 due to the COVID-19 situation, they should be counted where they usually live. This includes , who should still be counted at school, even if they are home early because of the COVID-19 situation. If they live in student housing, the college will count them. If they live off campus, they should complete the census for their off-campus address and include any roommates or other people living there.



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