

# The Spirit Of Atonement

AUGUST 2021

## One Thing that Can't Come to Us 'Wherever We Are'

"We used to go to school, to work, to entertainment, to shop. Now everything comes to us, wherever we are." So, writes Michael S. Dell in his annual letter to shareholders.

These changes to our routine of life were accelerating, even before the Covid-19 pandemic kicked them into overdrive. Suddenly, working remotely, virtual learning, on-line shopping, and streaming services moved from interesting innovations and alternative options to "the new normal" for many of us. Most of us learned new ways to do things we thought we already knew how to do.

As I am sure the founder of Dell Technologies would remind us, "We are not going back." We are not unlearning what we learned in 2020.

And yet, there was a sense of loss, as well. Office workers missed the morning camaraderie of talking over the activities of the previous evening or weekend. Students and teachers missed the face-to-face interaction which communicates, not only information, but also care and concern. Shoppers missed the personal attention of a favorite salesclerk. Movie or sports fans missed the energy of being in a crowd with others who shared their interest or passion.

In other words, we missed "community." And, we missed the blessings that community offers: the teacher who notices that a student seems uninvolved; the clerk that appreciates your style; the co-worker who offers help and encouragement; the fan who high-fives you after a goal.

Mr. Dell's list might also add: "We used to go...to church. Now everything comes to us,

wherever we are." Would Atonement have begun livestreaming and recording our services, except for the Covid shutdowns? Probably not. And, frankly, it was exciting when Atonement's Easter 2020 service received over 350 "hits," as well as countless favorable comments. Even in the year since we have reopened for public worship, folks have expressed appreciation for the opportunity to worship at home, "even in our pajamas." That's a blessing!

But, what we risk losing is "community." For, our church communities not only provide Christian socialization, they also help nurture and strengthen faith.

Faith is strengthened, not only by listening to the sermon, but by discussing it after the service;...not only by listening to a hymn, but by singing it with lustily and by listening to others sing it with conviction;...not only by praying the prayers in the service, but by holding hands and praying quietly with a fellow parishioner in distress;... not only by donating on-line, but by serving side-by-side with fellow believers;...not only by observing the service, but by receiving the Body and Blood of Christ with others in the Sacrament, in the Holy "Communion."

"Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together, as some are now doing," the writer to the Hebrews enjoins. Apparently, already by the middle of the First Century, there were those believers who were losing sight of the faith-strengthening value of community.

And, almost without exception, the more folks

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## Seniors Alive

### Monthly Meetings

In-person meetings have resumed. Vaccinated seniors (age 50 and over) are invited to monthly meetings at 1:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. The next meeting will be on Monday, Aug. 23. It will be "An Afternoon with Marge," a humorous look at life as we know it. Refreshments will be served.

### 2021 Tours

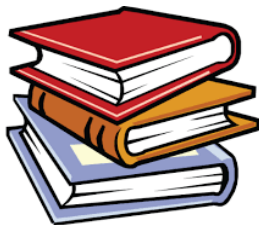
All vaccinated seniors (age 50 and over) are invited to join the tours.

- Aug. 18-20, Iowa/Mississippi: Travel to Dubuque, Iowa and cruise on a paddle-wheel boat to the Quad Cities. Includes 2

nights at a hotel, meals and entertainment. Bus departs Wednesday at 9:00 a.m. and returns Friday at 2:00 p.m. Cost is \$475 double/\$525 single.

- September 16, Union Station Aquarium and the Wheel. Includes lunch. Bus departs at 9:30 a.m. and returns at 5:00 p.m. Cost is \$90 per person.
- October 5-7, Branson. The Showboat, Titanic, "Jesus" and more. Bus departs Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. and returns Thursday at 8:00 p.m. Cost is \$550 double/\$650 single.
- November 10, Veterans Memorial, Downtown and Lanterns on Locust. Bus departs at 11:15 a.m. and returns at 4:30 p.m. Cost is \$69 per person.

For more information on tours, please contact Don Kuethe at (314) 831-8478 or [dthekey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dthekey@sbcglobal.net).



### Atonement Book Club...

Atonement Book Club has moved back to in-person meetings at Atonement. We meet in the Multi-Purpose Room on the second Sunday of the month at 1:30 p.m. Current Covid safety guidelines will be followed. We welcome new members.

The next meeting will be on August 8. We will discuss *The Day the World Came to Town: 9/11 in Gander Newfoundland*, by Jim DeFede. This is the true story behind the events on 9/11 that inspired Broadway's smash hit musical *Come from Away*. When 38 jetliners bound for the United States were forced to land in Canada by the closing of U.S. airspace on September 11, the citizens of Gander met the stranded passengers with an overwhelming display of friendship and goodwill.

Please consider joining us. For more information or questions, please contact Jan Koch at (314) 921-9534 or [njkoch@aol.com](mailto:njkoch@aol.com).



## **From the Parish Nurse**

### **Suffering and Caring**

Joyce Pingel, L.P.N.

I hope you are able to take some time to enjoy the summer that remains before autumn and its busy schedule. Suffering seems to be a human experience that we all share at one time or another, and yet, it remains a disturbing and perplexing situation for both the person suffering and those around him/her.

The Bible contains many references to human suffering. We are all familiar with the account of Job. We especially remember his suffering. "Man born of woman is of a few days and full of trouble. He springs up like a flower and wither away" (Job 14:1,2). This powerful book also contains words of comfort, "But God teaches people through suffering and uses distress to open their eyes" (Job 36:15).

#### What do we mean by the word "suffering"?

All of us experience suffering, yet we may not mean the same thing when we use this term. I consider suffering to be a general situation of distress which affects all of a person. Suffering is different from pain, in that suffering (1) does not have an immediate remedy, (2) floods the whole of a person, and (3) impacts our sense of meaning and drives us toward God (adopted from Amato, 1990).

#### What can the church do for people who are suffering?

Jesus' healing life empowers the Church to do healing ministry with a hurting and broken world. As children of God, all of us are called to share these gifts of healing with one another. There are several specific things we can do when we confront suffering. First, we can offer a ministry of presence, or sharing with a suffering person our gifts of time, selves, and compassion. Second, we can help people to discover meaning in the midst of their suffering. Third, we can take action directed at alleviating suffering (adapted from Johnstone, 1989). May the revelation of Jesus' suffering evermore challenge us to do healing ministry in our hurting world.

Editor's Note: A new booklet on "The Compassion of Jesus" is available on the table in the narthex.



## **HEALTH FAIR COMING**

### **SEPTEMBER 18**

Atonement's annual Health Fair will be Saturday, Sept. 18, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. featuring flu shots, mammograms, and a blood drive. Flu shots will also be offered on Sunday, Sept. 19, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



## Atonement Lutheran School -

As we move forward to the 2021-2022 school year, we do so with thanks and optimism.

First of all, thank you to Tiffany McClenton, to Kimberly Kern, and to Mosha Clyma for accepting the offers to join our excellent faculty.

Ms. Tiffany McClenton has been serving as the part-time music teacher and now will be joining us full-time, continuing work in the music program and also serving as the media center co-ordinator, computer teacher, and assisting with after school clubs. Ms. McClenton has over 20 years experience in Early Childhood Education and in Administrative Assistance among many other skills.

Ms. Mosha Clyma will be serving as our full-time school nurse. Ms. Clyma is currently providing patient care in the neuroscience department at St. Louis Children's Hospital. She comes to us, also, with experience as summer camp counselor and as director at Belton Parks Recreation Department. Her experience and skills will definitely be a plus for our staff.

Ms. Kimberly Kern has served at Special School District serving at all grade levels meeting the needs of children in all subject areas. She is currently serving as teacher assistant and varsity basketball coach at Gateway STEM High School in the city. She will be joining our middle school team replacing Ms. Ellie Smith who took a position at Lutheran High School St. Charles.

We are currently still in need of someone to teach in our combined second/third grade classroom. If you know of someone who may be interested, contact Mr. Biesendorfer at [rbiesendorfer@alcs-web.com](mailto:rbiesendorfer@alcs-web.com). If you know of anyone looking for a super Christian education, please have that person reach out to me, and we will be happy to schedule a tour. - - Rob Biesendorfer, Principal

### ACCTIPS—Atonement Creation Care Tips



1. Fix leaky faucets and shower-heads.
2. Run your dishwasher only when it's full to save water and energy.
3. Wash your clothes only when necessary, use cold water and line dry.
4. Lower the temperature on your water heater.
5. Take a shorter shower and use a water-saving shower head (and turn off the water when you are soaping; use the water for rinsing).

All of these tips can save money and water. [https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-tips/?gclid=CjwKCAiAt9z-BRBCEiwA\\_bWv-E4z76\\_-4ollmbwO8yrDYfhLDFIHhOXPuYnE\\_4Q6g-SOxXbkFBduBoCVkAQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-tips/?gclid=CjwKCAiAt9z-BRBCEiwA_bWv-E4z76_-4ollmbwO8yrDYfhLDFIHhOXPuYnE_4Q6g-SOxXbkFBduBoCVkAQAvD_BwE)

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drift away from Christian community, the less engaged in their faith they become.

To be sure, Covid-19 is still with us. We need to take every reasonable precaution, for ourselves and for the sake of others. But, in a

world where “now everything comes to us, wherever we are,” we dare not lose sight of the certainty that Jesus not only came to us “wherever we are,” not only saved and redeemed us, He also called us into community.

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## August Mission of the Month—Atonement’s Endowment

If 2020 taught us one lesson, it should be to prepare for the worst and pray for the best. The Endowment Fund exists to help us prepare for the worst by giving our church a financial cushion, and a means to continue and advance our ministries.

For the past six years, Men’s Club has sponsored a campaign to help grow the Endowment Fund. In 2020, the Church Council approved the Endowment Fund as a Mission of the Month. Despite the pandemic, the 2020 campaign was successful.

- The gifts designated increased the Endowment Fund by almost \$3,000.
- The awareness of the Endowment Fund led to additional gifts through the Memorial Funds and a death legacy.

The Endowment Fund is our only Mission of the Month that does not distribute funds immediately. The funds are held for designated use and should the Endowment Fund reach a significant size (we’re not there yet) to begin new ministries. The fund is also invested to earn additional returns.

The Men’s Club invites you to join in the campaign simply by using your regular offering envelope. Please be aware that if you only put a dollar amount on the mission of the month line, the funds are grouped and divided among all missions of the month for the year. If, however, you go to the next line on the envelope and write in “Endowment” then all the funds that you indicate on that line will be channeled to the Endowment Fund.

As in past years, the Men’s Club will be matching donations up to \$100 through a graduated formula. When your offering envelope is posted, Steve Rosenfeld will be informed of the donation and will contact you to thank you for your support and to discuss the matching contribution from Men’s Club. Your gift also entitles you to entry into our football pool (God’s Chosen Pool) and a barbecue gift certificate.

The face masks used by the Men’s Club in response to the pandemic protocols read “Charity never tasted so good!” The tagline for the Endowment Fund campaign should read “Charity was never so much fun!”

## LUTHERANS RESTORING CREATION (LRC)... What's Next?

At the council meeting where the LRC Congregational Care for Creation Covenant was signed, the question was raised, "What's next?" Council members agreed that was to be decided. You can be a part of determining what is next by joining in our efforts with Atonement's Creation Care Team. As we all participate in returning to "normal" activities after Covid changed everything we know, there may be many things Atonement members are already doing and many ideas for "what's next." Let us know your interest by marking the attendance form or calling the church office.

Below are the five areas of focus for LRC congregations along with some actions Atonement members have completed. Some of these were not undertaken specifically for creation care, but they are part of an awareness of the need for leaving the earth a better and more sustainable place for our children and grandchildren.

### 1. WORSHIP

- a. Annual worship service focusing on Creation Care, including special bell choir music
- b. Donuts in the Garden," introducing members to our community garden
- c. Highlighting creation care in school chapel services

### 2. EDUCATION

- a. Introducing students to single stream recycling with a video by the school Green Team
- b. Lunchroom and classroom visits highlighting recyclables vs. trash
- c. Programming for "Green Week" in Atonement Summer Camp 2021
- d. Students digging sweet potatoes in the garden for donation to TEAM and other food assistance groups
- e. Adult Forum by Dr. Clint McCann of Eden Seminary on "greening the Bible," Biblical foundations for our stewardship of the environment

### 3. BUILDING AND GROUNDS

- a. Community garden (organic)
- b. Former rose bed replanted with many native plants
- c. Energy audit obtained with the help of IPL (Interfaith Power and Light)
- d. Water bottle fillers in drinking fountain
- e. Conversion to LED lights (ongoing)
- f. Auto off/on switches in frequently used rooms
- g. Awareness of need for energy efficiency when replacing HVAC and other equipment

### 4. DICIPLESHIP AT HOME AND WORK

- a. Initiating single stream recycling
- b. Creation care/energy use tips in monthly newsletter
- c. Movie Night in co-operation with IPL "Chasing Ice"
- d. Thrivent Action Grants providing supplies that are better choices for the environment
- e. Using reusable cups instead of disposables for Sunday morning hospitality

### 5. PUBLIC MINISTRY

- a. Planning "Creation Care for Congregations" with Bethel Lutheran where resources and ideas were shared by featured speakers and participants
- b. Working with Central States Synod Mission Table to plan a one-day workshop at the Pallottine Center

At the Central States Synod Assembly in 2015, the Synod approved working with Lutherans Restoring Creation and formed a Mission Table (team) to introduce congregations and individuals to Creation Care. Jan Koch and Jane Meyerjord joined this Mission Table. The group met in retreats at Camp Tomah Shinga in Junction City, Kansas, and planned mini-retreats with congregations in the Synod. Two events were held



in St. Louis, one at the Pallottine Center in August 2016, and one in co-operation with Bethel Lutheran Church, “Creation Care for Congregations,” with 30 people in attendance representing 11 different congregations and faith groups. The Mission Table also held breakout sessions at Synod Assemblies. We were able to share what congregations are doing, big and small, to work toward our goal of leaving earth a better and more sustainable place for our children and grandchildren. Members of the Mission Table are still working together to foster care for creation in our synod, keeping in touch by a monthly conference call.

Although Atonement had an active group and a school green team leading the way for creation care and many members were helping in different ways to improve our stewardship of the environment, we had not officially joined Lutherans Restoring Creation. At its June meeting, the council signed the Congregation Care-for-Creation Covenant. In acknowledging our covenant, LRC wrote “Congratulations on affirming a Covenant with Creation and joining a national cohort of ELCA churches who are inspiring each other to cultivate a community of dedicated stewards of earth and neighbor who proclaim God’s promise of hope and healing for all.”



**Congratulations to the Church Council**  
**of Lutheran Church of the Atonement in Florissant, MO**  
 for affirming the ELCA’s Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice Social Statement by  
 making their own

### **Covenant with Creation**

in the month of June during the year of 2021.

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**Lutherans Restoring Creation is a grassroots movement promoting care for creation in the  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.**  
 This is accomplished by cultivating a community of dedicated stewards of earth and neighbor who proclaim  
 God’s promise of hope and healing for all.

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*[www.LutheransRestoringCreation.org](http://www.LutheransRestoringCreation.org)*

*Lutheran Church of the Atonement  
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Florissant, MO 63031*

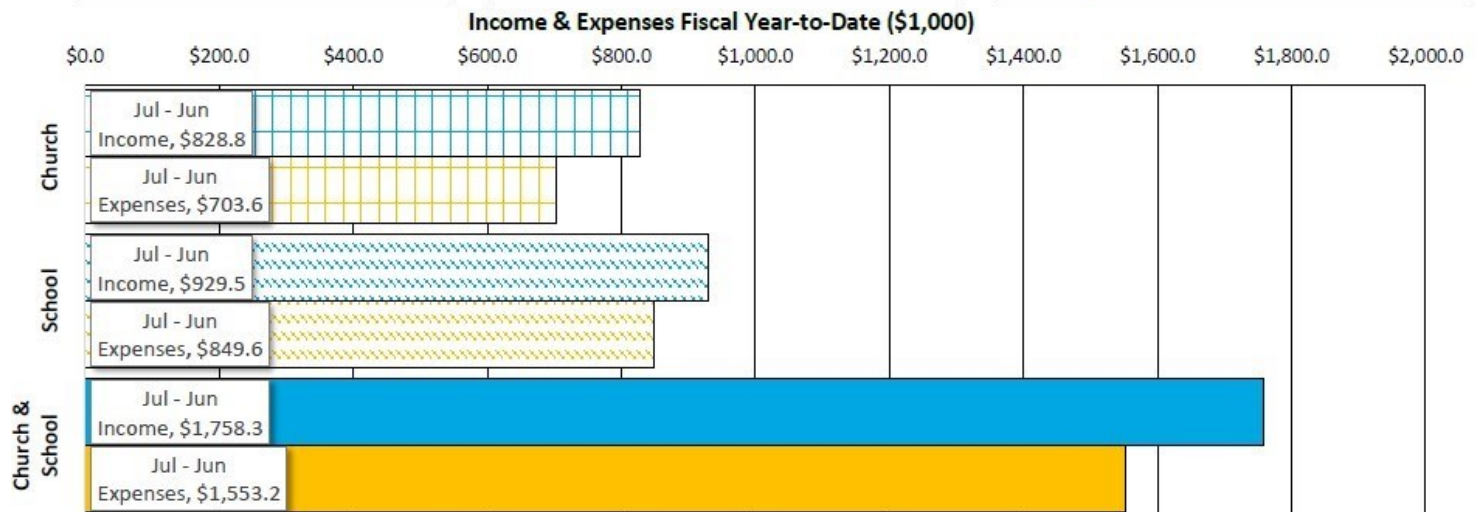
## Return Service Requested

*August 2021 Newsletter*

*Deadline for the Sept.  
issue - 12:00 Noon*

### Financial Position Summary July 2020 thru June 2021

| Balances thru June<br>(Status - Green)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |              | Surplus / Deficit<br>(Status - Green)                                                                                                         |           |           | July 2020 - June 2021 Fiscal Year Summary<br>(Status - Green)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Mortgage Principal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$ 2,382,799 |                                                                                                                                               | Actual    | Actual    | <p>The church and school financials were very good for the 2020 - 2021 fiscal year. The total surplus of \$205,089 allowed us to:</p> <p>a) Place all Endowment Fund assets in our Thrivent investment account instead of having some in our checking account.</p> <p>b) Isolate funds designated for specific purposes in a "Restricted Cash" category to ensure the money is available when needed for the designated purpose such as Capital Improvements, School Financial Aid, Room at the Inn, and Youth Impact Fund.</p> <p>c) Maintain at least \$100,000 in cash beyond the Restricted Cash category for the purpose of operating the church and school.</p> |  |
| Checking Account                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | \$ 315,921   |                                                                                                                                               | Jun       | Jul - Jun |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| Restricted Cash                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | \$ 139,162   | Church                                                                                                                                        | -\$14,819 | \$125,205 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| Operating Cash                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | \$ 176,759   | School                                                                                                                                        | -\$3,067  | \$79,884  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| Endowment Fund in Thrivent Account                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$ 64,864    | Total                                                                                                                                         | -\$17,886 | \$205,089 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
| <p><u>Restricted Cash:</u> Cash set aside for specific purposes such as Capital Improvements, Youth Impact Fund, Room at the Inn, etc.</p> <p><u>Operating Cash:</u> Cash available for daily operation of the church and school. The minimum needed to operate Atonement is \$100,000.</p> |              | <p>Income minus expenses equals the surplus or deficit that Atonement operated at in June, and for the July 2020 - June 2021 Fiscal Year.</p> |           |           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |



Notes: 1) The Church's \$9,375 per month (\$112,500 annual) support for the School is included above as an expense for the Church and income for the School.

Status: Green = Good/At or Above Expectations Yellow = Caution/Slightly Under Expectations Red = Danger/Below Expectations