

# The Commentator

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## HOW you can HELP

- ❖ Teen Pantry
- ❖ Worship: ushers, assisting ministers, readers, transportation drivers.
- ❖ Sunday School, helpers, and teachers.

### MENU



No Wonderful Wednesday  
Due to Lent Season

Marvelous Monday  
March 24th 6:00 pm  
Pizza Ranch

**Planning to Attend?** To ensure we have enough seating, please let Debbie know **at least two days in advance** if you can attend. You can text or call her to confirm. Thank you for helping us plan!

(Any questions call Debbie  
406-248-5313 or 406-696-7029.)



Dear church family,

I'm excited to share in celebrating my ordination with all of you on **March 15<sup>th</sup>** at **10:30 am**. I was entranced into the candidacy journey in November of 2018 to become ordained and I finished my Master of Divinity degree last summer receiving approval for ordination in November of 2024.

My ordination will be into Word and Service as a deacon and minister of specialized ministry. What in the world does that mean? In the ELCA, people ordained into Word and Sacrament are called to lead congregations and the ministries connected to that congregation, like Pr. Ryan. The Word and Service roster calls people into specialized ministry such as chaplaincy, music, church camp, prisons, homeless organizations, sports, and even ministry doing tech support for the synod as Deacon Colter McCarty will be doing.

The Word and Service roster will allow me to continue my work at Atonement as the Worship Director and to preach and preside when needed. It also allows me to grow in my call as a chaplain and Spiritual Care Manager at St. Vincent Hospital.

My great joy is to love God's people and to show up for them and all of you as a follower of Jesus. I'm blessed beyond measure to continue to serve on staff at Atonement and at the piano on Sunday mornings. I'm excited and energized serving the patients and staff at St. Vincent Hospital. God has been so good and so have all of you, dear friends. Thank you for supporting and encouraging me on my journey.

Much love,  
Kristin La Ve', Worship Director



## FAMILY PROMISE SUCCESS IN 2024 BANKING ON DONATIONS FOR DIAPERS



Have you ever had to stay home from work because you didn't have diapers for your baby?

For those of us who haven't regularly purchased baby diapers in years, this may seem like an odd question. But today, nearly half of American families with children in diapers report struggling to cover the diaper cost of \$80 to more than \$100 per month.

Babies who don't get clean diapers when needed are at risk for health problems, including rashes and infections. Most child care facilities require parents to bring a supply of diapers when they arrive for the day.

Family Promise of Yellowstone Valley started the Community Diaper Bank to help fill the local diaper gap. The bank doesn't provide all the diapers a child needs, but offers enough diapers free of charge to help parents get to the next pay day. The Community Diaper Bank works with other local resources to avoid duplication of services and to stretch its donations to help as many needy families as possible.

The bank also provides wipes and infant formula. It refers parents to the WIC (Women, Infants and Children nutrition) program for ongoing help with formula and support for breastfeeding moms.

The FPYV Community Diaper Bank depends on donations and volunteers.

Donations of diapers and wipes are welcome, especially larger size diapers for toddlers.

If you choose to support the Diaper Bank with a cash donation, your money will buy more diapers. The FPYV is the only Montana member of the National Diaper Bank Network. Membership allows FPYV to purchase diapers in bulk at a discount.

In 2024, FPYV distributed more than 100,000 diapers.

Some diapers helped families in the Family Promise church shelter program and in its transitional apartments.

Other families can receive diapers at no cost from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays by stopping by the Family Promise Day, Center, South 26th St. and Minnesota Ave.

Please consider visiting the Family Promise website at [familypromiseyv.org](http://familypromiseyv.org) to make a cash donation designated for the Diaper Bank or to volunteer for Tuesday diaper distributions.

Thanks to generous Atonement family members for your support of Family Promise with diaper donations, monetary donations and volunteering when families are sheltered at our church. You are helping to meet basic needs of children and parents in our community.

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## COUNCIL

During our February council meeting, we welcomed newly elected members **Susie Barbero, Janice Van Alstine, DJ Groshans (Alternate) and Kiera Westrope (Youth Representative)** and conducted officer elections. We are pleased to announce our 2025 Executive Council:

**Tara Bolte**, President  
**Mike Noland**, Vice President

**Sara Wald**, Secretary  
**Julie Andersen**, Treasurer

We are incredibly grateful for their leadership and commitment to serving our congregation. A heartfelt thank you also goes to our outgoing members, **Michel Poodry, Marilyn Franklin, Ryan Kapperud and Ellery Bolte-Guerechit**, for their years of dedicated service. Your contributions have made a lasting impact! Please keep our council in your prayers as they guide us in faith and mission throughout the year.



Greetings from Atonement Lutheran Preschool!

Our March starts with our Preschool's Spring Break; there will be no preschool from March 3<sup>rd</sup> – March 7<sup>th</sup>. During this time we, the preschool along with the Youth & Family Committee will be hosting a Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper! We will be serving Pancakes from 5:45 – 7:00! All are welcome as we have a wonderful time celebrating together!

Our enrollment for the 2025-2026 preschool year is still open and we do have so openings available with the early registration fee until April 1st! The registration fee goes up after that. We offer three different classes for parents to choose from: a Tuesday/Thursday 3–4-year-old preschool class; a Monday/Wednesday/Friday 3.5-5-year-old preschool class; and a Monday/ Tuesday/ Thursday/ Friday 4-5 year old K-Prep class. We want our ministry to thrive and continue to serve all these special young children as they learn and explore at preschool! If you know of anyone wanting to register, please let them know soon!

We could use your help with some of the supplies we will be working with in the coming month. If you can find and donate these items, it would help us are great deal!

- ♥ Multi-colored Pom Poms
- ♥ Cotton balls
- ♥ Ribbons
- ♥ Green Tissue Paper
- ♥ Nilla Wafers
- ♥ Cheese Sticks
- ♥ Walmart/Target/Albertsons Gift Card
- ♥ Clorox Disinfecting Wipes
- ♥ Tissues

Our preschool is so blessed to have the wonderful support of our congregation for this special ministry we offer at Atonement Lutheran Preschool! Thank you to those that were able to help and thank you for your support and please keep us all in your prayers as we learn together!

Blessings,

Sara Westrope Atonement Lutheran Preschool Director

## HOPE CIRCLE BIBLE STUDY

This circle/bible study meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in the month, 9:30 AM, at the church. We meet for fellowship and study God's word. Our meeting this month will be March 20<sup>th</sup> and you and your bible are welcome to join us. For more info call Bette, 406-245-5054.



## J.O.Y. BIBLE STUDY

Coffee, tea, laughter, and scripture with fun thoughtful life discussions. Meeting at 6:30 am every Wednesday morning at Montana Jack's on Hansen Lane. Contact Michel Poodry at 406-855-8446 for more information.



# FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Church Family,

As we step into this sacred season of Lent, I just want to invite all of us on a transformative journey—a time to reflect on not just what sustains our physical lives but also what nourishes our souls. Our new worship series, “All We Need,” challenges us to go beyond mere survival and explore the deeper needs that help us truly thrive.

## What Does It Mean to Need?

Beyond air, food, water, and shelter, we all crave things that sustain and enrich our lives—things like sleep, connection, purpose, and moments of awe. This season, we’ll dive into these questions through scripture, sermons, children’s messages, and a robust devotional guide, discovering fresh perspectives on what it means to live fully as God’s people.

## Lenten Schedule & Engagement Opportunities:

- **Daily Devotional:** Starting on Transfiguration Sunday, March 2, pick up your devotional in the commons or at the office.
- **Ash Wednesday:** March 5 marks a day of solemn reflection and renewal as we begin Lent.
- **Midweek Gatherings:** Every week, enjoy a warm Soup Supper at 6:00 PM, followed by an immersive Midweek Service starting around 6:30 PM. Expect music, prayers, inspiring messages, and interactive prayer stations designed to speak to your heart.
- **Maundy Thursday:** On April 17 at 6:30 PM, we’ll come together to honor Christ’s example of service and love.
- **Good Friday Tenebrae:** On April 18, as the sun sets, join us for a reflective Tenebrae service—a time for deep prayer and meditation.
- And of course, Sunday morning worship service at 9:15am.

## An Invitation to Share and Grow

One of the best parts of being in the Atonement community is the space we create to share our personal stories and needs. By opening up and supporting one another, we build a community that cares for every need—both seen and unseen. We hope you’ll be part of this season of reflection and renewal. Together, we’ll explore what it means to be fully nourished—in body, mind, and spirit—and, borrowing a line from the Beatles, perhaps rediscover that all we really need is (God’s) love. (Do you hear the horn section every time too?)  
"Love, love...love is all ya need.....love is all ya need...."

In Christ’s grace, Pastor Ryan

## REQUEST FOR ALL THRIVENT MEMBERS:

Evangelism will be hosting an exciting and special event, **Wine to Water**, in May. To help out we are hoping to have several Water Filter Builds on display. Each Thrivent member can order by logging in to your Thrivent account. From there click on the tab Generosity, click on Thrivent Cause Kit and scroll down to Water Filter Build. Click on submit, and they will send you the three kits. We will have a work session to complete the kits (you may or may not be there as you desire) and have them on display at the May event. After that we will return them to Thrivent. Please let Vivian Beals know if you plan to participate. Thank you for taking the time to help with this opportunity.

## CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT JANUARY 2025

QR Code for easy giving!



Scan with a Device

Ministry Budget			
Income	\$50,011.35	Expenses	\$51,183.67
Profit/Loss	\$(1,172.32)	Net Income YTD	\$(1,172.32)
Mortgage Fund			
Income	\$4,544.23	Mortgage	\$5,163.00
Profit/Loss	\$(618.77)	Net Income YTD	\$(618.77)

Julie Andersen – Treasurer, Atonement Lutheran Church Council





# Christikon Clips



March, 2025

Information for our Congregations

Christikon is an extension of your congregation's ministry.

**Come and meet our new Executive Director Heather Wigdahl** on March 4<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:00pm at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. We will have an ice cream social in her honor!

**Annual Benefit Auction is on April 27<sup>th</sup>** at the Billings Depot. We are looking for items for the auction such as: fishing trip, weekend getaway, dinner out, themed baskets, artisan items. Have an idea? Let us know! Watch for more details as they become available on our website.

**Are you registered for camp, yet?** Registration is online at [www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org).

We are excited about our new registration process! We believe you will be, too!

**Adults and families: Work Weekend** is a great time to get to camp and help us prepare for the 2025 campers. Our Continuing Ed Retreat and Mountain Weekend speaker is Dr Dave Ellingsen and the program: Go Outside and Play. Come play at Christikon this summer!

Register for camping for adults and families online at [www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org).

**Bus Attendants needed for 2025** – Would you or someone you know be willing to ride with youth on their way to Christikon? Yes? Please call Kerry in the office at 406-656-1969 or email at [secretary@christikon.org](mailto:secretary@christikon.org) for details. It pays a daily rate as well!

**It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ— exploring God’s creation and the adventure of life together.**

**CHRISTIKON • 1108 24<sup>th</sup> Street West • Billings, MT 59102**  
**406 656-1969 • [secretary@christikon.org](mailto:secretary@christikon.org) • [www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org)**

## YOUTH NEWS



Youth group and confirmation will not be meeting on Wednesday evenings during lent, from March 5<sup>th</sup> to April 16<sup>th</sup>.



We will start back up at our normal time of 6:00-8:00 pm on Wednesday April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Students and their families are encouraged to regularly attend Wednesday Lent Soup Suppers at 6:00 pm with service immediately following.

Frappe and Friends will be meeting at the new 105 Brewing coffee shop in the heights from 2:30-3:30 on March 16<sup>th</sup>. This is for all youth in middle school to high school. Come visit, play board games, and have a coffee or treat on us. Reach out to Nikki with any questions.





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**Council Member's**

President.....Tara Bolte  
 Vice President.....Mike Noland  
 Secretary.....Sara Wald  
 Treasurer.....Julie Andersen

Russell Bender (2026)  
 Tara Bolte (2026)  
 Frank Rodemer (2026)  
 Lane Severson (2026)  
 Kiera Westrope Youth Rep. (2026)  
 DJ Groshans Alternate (2026)

Julie Andersen (2027)  
 Diane Erickson Olson (2027)  
 Mike Noland (2027)  
 Dennis Roseleip (2027)

Susie Barbero (2028)  
 Janice Van Alstein (2028)  
 Sara Wald (2028)  
 Clint Westrope (2028)



**WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Join us Wednesday mornings starting at 10 am in the Jerusalem room  
 as we engage in a Bible study.

**SAVE THE DATES**

April 6<sup>th</sup> New Members Meeting/Brunch  
 April 13<sup>th</sup> New Members Reception  
 April 27<sup>th</sup> Constitution and Bylaws Meeting



**BRINGING THE HOPE WE SHARE IN CHRIST TO ALL!**