

Atonement and Thanksgiving

Greetings to you on this October 5, 2022, Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement in the Jewish Calendar. This holiest of all days for Jewish people is celebrated around the world: forgiving sins and being forgiven as sins against God are forgiven; dressing in white and fasting and prayers in the synagogue, sounding the shofar (ram's horn trumpet) as the sun sets on the holy day. At the root of Atonement is a sacrifice that unites, makes people one in heart and mind.

Christian spirituality grows out of this root too. "At-one-ment" is accomplished in the sacrifice of Jesus, the one anointed by God for the forgiveness of sins by his death on the cross. Luke's gospel records Jesus' atoning prayer from the cross: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." This holds true for us far beyond the Good Friday deeds! How often have we repented with the words, "If I had only known..."? Almost every Sunday Zion practices a kind of atonement in the Confession and Absolution. For Jesus' sake, God forgives all our sins! We are united in God's grace through Jesus Christ.

Forgiveness is connected to gratitude. It sets the heart free to feel grateful! We have a beautiful chorus that expresses so well this connection between gratitude and forgiving grace:

Give thanks with a grateful heart, Give thanks to the Holy One,
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, the Son!
And now let the weak say I am strong, let the poor say I am rich
Because of what the Lord has done for us.
Give thanks.

May we all celebrate a blessed Thanksgiving. Amen

THE SECOND ALL AGES YOUTH NIGHT is being planned for Sunday, October 16, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. All ages are welcome! This event is the Large Group gathering for RRAGSZ+ Confirmation for October (That's everyone involved in Confirmation from Redeemer, Resurrection, Augustana, Good Shepherd, Zion, Trinity, and King of Glory Lutheran Churches!) We had a blast at All-Ages Youth Night #1 in September—All Ages Youth Night #2 is looking just as good! The theme is "Honouring Creation"—the food is BBQ and monster cookies—the story is the Parable of the Sower and the Seed—and the social justice activity involves a small kitchen garbage bag.... You won't want to be taking it home! Based on feedback from the first event, the planning group is breaking the Bible Study in age-level discussion groups so everyone can dig deep according to their ability. Warm ups and icebreakers in Zion Lutheran Church Gym starting at 5:30!

MID-WEEK PRAYER GROUP is ready to start again this Fall. We loosely follow Morning Prayer (Evangelical Lutheran Worship), with Bible discussion based on the Daily Lectionary and Prayers offered both formal and informal. We met by Zoom on Wednesday mornings from 10:00-10:45 but are ready to meet in-person as well. Contact Kaylyn in the office (306-653-2442) or Pastor Ron (306-229-5982) to express your interest and get the Zoom link.