

**Atonement  
Lutheran  
Church**

*Living in God's love ~  
Reaching out with hope*



March 2026

# Voice of Atonement

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## Pastor's Message

Greetings to all!

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, amidst what *should* be a season of lingering cold and snow, while out on a walk, Jasmine and I spotted a beautiful little purple crocus that had already pushed through the dirt to, in essence say, "*Spring is coming.*" Honestly, seems to me spring has been here ever since autumn ended last year! I keep expecting the bears to come out of hibernation early.

Nonetheless, this little bloom mirrors our Lenten journey ~ a quiet, resilient, determined push through the winter of our souls toward the glory of the resurrection.

The crocus ~ a purple and white beacon, pushing through late winter soil, not waiting for perfect warmth or until after February 5<sup>th</sup> to break through the ground; it simply appears. The beautiful little crocus sends forth earth's message that spring is coming, that everything will soon be new and green again.

Lent is a time in the life of the church which isn't merely about giving up chocolate and sweet tarts. It's an invitation to grow our relationship with God. It's a time to focus on the "springtime of our souls;" a time to bloom despite everything else going on in our lives and all around us.

This is a time when we focus on 1) praying fervently, dedicating time for conversation and communication with God; 2) Fasting; not necessarily from sweets, but definitely from things that draw us away from God and

what God's calling us to do; and 3) Giving generously, also called giving "alms" in the Bible. Pope Francis once said, "*Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty.*"

So how about we let this season be our own "crocus," defying the darkness of sin and apathy through the disciples of Lent:

Prayer (conversation with Jesus),  
rFasting (giving up food or something else, or, as I like to say, maybe giving to something), and  
Almsgiving (charitable giving).

Isaiah ...35:1 ~ "*The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting.*"

The crocus is a mini resurrection story happening right before our eyes, promising that death does *not* have the final word. So let this season of Lent and Holy Week be one of intentional reflections, where, like the crocus, we let our faith push through the hard, cold ground of our lives and of the world to show signs of new life in Christ.

Can we, by our words and deeds bloom gloriously? Can we be like that resilient little crocus popping up out of the dirt, bearing witness to the good news of the resurrection?

We know spring is coming ... quite early this year it appears. We know the story. We know the "*green blade rises from the buried grain.*" We know Jesus comes forth, rising



## ATONEMENT STAFF

Senior Pastor

**Pastor Kristi Beebe**

Youth Leader

**Erik Williams**

Office Manager

**Audrey Brack-Banks**

Choir Accompanist

**Carol Ott**

Music Accompanists

**Gayle Gunderson, Carol Ott**

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## IN OUR PRAYERS

### Current

Iris Mckenzie Ford (sister of Carmen Cohn); Pio Zambrano (friend of Trish Sanders); Mary Alice McDougal; Eileen Koppenhaver; Whitney Wisdom (Julie Strasser's cousin); Randy Updike; Donna Zentner; Scott Beebe; Melanie; Marjorie Sandoval; Walter Beekman; Nancy Henning; Grace Gillette; the family and friends of Mary Eckberg; the family and friends of Jacque Bland

### Ongoing

Kelly Amedee (Ruth Zartman's son-in-law); Sonja Buzard; Guy and Carol Markle (Barb Krug's brother and sister-in-law); Sharon Krebs; Marin, (Charles and Annie Adkisson's daughter); Jeff (Charlotte Updike's son); Jean (Mary Campe's friend); Jean Viste; Pastor Kristi

### PLEASE NOTE;

Names on the Prayer List will be included for two weeks, if needed. If you desire someone to remain on the Prayer List longer than two weeks, please email or call the church office near the end of the two weeks to ask to have the person remain on for another two weeks.

\* If someone's name is removed, and should remain on the Prayers, please call the Office Staff to put them back on the list.

\*\* We also encourage all members and visitors to daily pray for these people and/or situations.

Thank you!

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from the tomb. But it doesn't always look that way in our crazy, mixed up, unfair, inhumane world.

So maybe it's time we each, as Christian people, start to bloom early, and to bloom often ... showing the world another way ~ Jesus' way. Can we be a crocus in March, April, May and all the other months of the year? I pray so!

Isaiah 43:19 ~ "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" It's so true: Hope springs eternal!"

Bloom daily for Jesus!

—Pastor Kristi Beebe



## From the President

Good March to ya! Dia duit (DEE-ah gwit): Irish Hello (Literally: "God be with you")

That's a simple Irish greeting for what many people know March for - St Patrick's Day. On the other side of March, this year, will be an entire month of Lent. While we at Atonement are always trying to bring something special or new understanding of the Lenten message, I hope you will take advantage of a new relationship we are forging in our community.

Members of Atonement, Eric Muhle and Cheri Kruger, introduced Pastor Kristi to Father Andre, who lives in the Thraemoor neighborhood around us. Pastor Kristi and I were invited to a "cappuccino" and breakfast with Father Andre and "The Mission of Hope and Mercy" family. We had great conversations sharing concerns, beliefs, and learning of their international concerns that are right at home in Colorado and the US.

I copied the mission statement from their website [missionofhopeandmercy.org](http://missionofhopeandmercy.org).

### Our Mission and Vision

**Like the Good Samaritan, Our mission is to save lives from all kinds of persecution, rejection, or neglect and to confirm them in God's image, the Author of all Goodness.**

*We are the Mission of Hope and Mercy, consecrated under the intercession of Saint Rafka (Rebecca), the Lebanese Catholic Maronite nun and saint who died March 23, 1914, and the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and*



*Mary, the source of Divine Mercy and Divine Grace. The Mission of Hope and Mercy acts as a prophet who warns and educates, a soldier who protects and saves, a Good Samaritan who ministers and restores, and an apostle of Christ who is a peacemaker and herald of the Good News. Every year we touch the lives of many who just long for a safe place to live and the opportunity to care for their family. Mission of Hope and Mercy is on the front lines providing food, shelter, education, and safety, tending to the sick and vulnerable and ministering to those in desperate need.*

What resulted from our meeting with Father Andre was the desire to worship together for Wednesday Lent Services. We will begin with Holden Evening Prayer and Father Andre will give a short homily. The theme is *Faith & Heritage: A Lenten Journey*. We are providing two worship and fellowship opportunities each Wednesday. At noon we will have the service and then a light lunch following. The evening service will be

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## LENT

*Lent is a time to take the time to let the power of our faith story take hold of us, a time to let the events get up and walk around in us, a time to intensify our living unto Christ, a time to hover over the thoughts of our hearts, a time to place our feet in the streets of Jerusalem or to walk along the sea and listen to his word, a time to touch his robe and feel the healing surge through us, a time to ponder and a time to wonder... Lent is a time to allow a fresh new taste of God!*

*Weems, Ann. Kneeling in Jerusalem (p. 22). Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.*

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**preceded** by a meal at 6:00 PM and then the service at 6:45 PM. The evening meal will be prepared by the Mission family following the traditions of the Christians in Lebanon. Please make every effort to join us at one of the services. Let's welcome our neighbors and share our common calling in FAITH; HOPE; LOVE; JOY; and PEACE.



**Father Andre YS Mahanna,  
President, Mission  
of Hope and Mercy**

*Father Andre YS Mahanna is uniquely qualified to speak on the topic of religious freedom in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and the United States. A friend of freedom, Fr. Andre has informed and advised the U.S. Administration and members of Congress on these issues at home and abroad. He was an honored guest of President Donald J. Trump for the signing of the executive order on religious freedom at the White House on the National Day of Prayer, May 4, 2017, and has been invited back to this event as one of 40 select religious leaders every year since then.*

*In November 2017, Fr. Andre was elected the North American Councilor of the Apostolic Union of Clergy, a Vatican-associated office, and continues to serve as U.S. president. Fr. Andre is also the Founder and President of the Apostolate of Our Lady of Hope/St. Rafka Mission of Hope and Mercy. He served on the Vatican's 2010 Synod on the Middle East, helping deliver the document "Ecclesia in Medio Oriente".*

*He grew up in war-torn Lebanon. As a boy accompanying his father on government trips to Muslim and Christian regions, he heard stories of religion-based crimes by both groups. At 10, his family with other families escaped Christian massacres by living in caves in Mount Lebanon. His bed was a Phoenician tomb. By age 12, he had decided to become a Maronite Catholic monk. It was then that concern for precisely what the world is experiencing now – famine and massacre of women and children – gave him the resolve to address ecumenism and inter-faith understanding and to devote his life's work to be an instrument of peace.*

*A citizen of the United States, Fr. Andre is fluent in seven languages and understands twelve. Educated in Rome, France, and the U.S.A., he addresses the hard realities of genocide, persecution, and violence in the Middle East. He is a popular speaker and has authored many articles focused on the unity of Christians, religious freedom, and the biblical foundation of Judeo-Christian values and traditions.*

*An opera-trained vocalist, Fr. Andre, known simply as "Abouna", is a recognized thought-leader on the historical, religious, social, and cultural complexities of the many regions that comprise the Middle East and North Africa. He is a trusted friend of many international faith leaders including Orthodox and Catholic bishops, cardinals, patriarchs, and popes as well as Protestant pastors, Jewish rabbis, and Muslim imams. He works tirelessly to encourage American leaders to keep God in the public square and to defend religious freedom at home and abroad so that all might live in peace, love, and conviviality for the glory and honor of God.*

Source the website [missionofhopeandmercy.org](http://missionofhopeandmercy.org).

## March Birthdays

Katy Brackeen	3/2
Susan Cunningham-Hammond	3/2
Tom Rupprecht	3/2
Larry Koppenhaver	3/5
Jason Propp	3/5
Sharon Wink	3/6
Donna DeBell	3/6
Edward Laurson	3/6
Mike Brack	3/7
Bishop Jim Gonia	3/13
Nicholas Eden	3/17
Charlotte Updike	3/17
Rodger Kruger	3/18
Gail Laurson	3/21
Sue Siegal	3/22
Jeanette Hill	3/27

## In and Out Reach Committee

March brings us looking forward through our Lenten journey to the Resurrection of our Lord and Atonement is seeing many activities as Easter approaches. The coffee cafe continues and we are very grateful for all the donations of coffee and goodies that so many enjoy each Sunday. Please, if you are able to bring something to be shared or are able to help with set up and clean up, please sign up to do so in the sheets provided. It is a perfect opportunity to visit with members and also to chat with visitors who are attending worship services.

We are looking for Greeters to be present as folks arrive for the worship services - greeters are asked to be in place about a half hour before services begin and hand out the announcement sheets and any other information for a given Sunday. Who doesn't like to be greeted with a smile as you enter

the building! It is very important to ask folks who are visiting for the first time to sign the guest book on the Greeter's table so that the church may follow up on any visit. Greeters are also to give a welcoming gift to visitor and they are wrapped and available in the basket on the table.

By the end of February 2026, 23 birthday cards have been mailed to members. Please, if you have not received a card on your special day, please let me or the church office know as your birthdate may not be in the computer database and we would love to fix that. We are still collecting gently used eyeglasses for donating to the Lions Club for repurposing to those without available eye care.....so please bring them to the designated box in the narthex.

—Barbara Krug





## THE CORNER DESK

In March, the days grow longer, the air begins to soften, and we are reminded that God is always at work—bringing light out of darkness and life out of what once seemed dormant.

Looking Forward: On March 8th, we “spring forward” as Daylight Saving Time begins. We have St. Patrick’s Day on the 17th, and Spring begins on March 20th.

We will continue to enjoy light Lenten lunch afternoon Lenten services each Wednesday. Don’t miss Father Andre’s weekly homily, he is working with us on ecumenical Lenten services, as he comes from a Catholic community in our area. His church will be making wonderful Lenten suppers for us as well at 6:00 pm, before 6:45 services on Wednesday evenings.

There are many service opportunities available during the season of Lent—make sure to sign up to help with Lenten meals, and Easter festivities like the Easter Breakfast or the Easter Egg Hunt. It’s a great opportunity to work with others in our church, meet new friends, and contribute to our community!

Audrey Brack-Banks  
Atonement Office Manager

## Women’s Ministry News

Make sure and join us for future meetings—it’s a fun and informative time!

Our previous meeting was on Saturday, January 31st. Thank you to those in attendance!

We had a great discussion and Bible Study reviewing Rev. Liv Larson Andrews “Embodied Prayer,” that was published in the Gather Magazine. This article is easily found online if you would like to read it also.

**STUDY** – Scripture can be our guide for praying - even if we carry some baggage or heavy questions around prayer.

We learned how the Spirit meets us in our BREATHING. Each of us can recall times of anxiety and fear when we are shallow breathing or the feeling of joy with singing breaths. And even the primal sounds of groaning with mourning.

**POSTURES OF PRAYER** – Our surroundings and experiences can shape the ways we listen to and call out to God.

We are often taught as children to kneel at our bedside to say our evening prayers. We need not be in a stationary posture to pray. We can be dancing or driving, for instance. We may have an ongoing conversation as a prayer.

## Drop in the Bucket Benevolence Ministry

### Foresight Ski with the Blind

This Non-Profit Organization is near and dear to Pastor Kristi’s heart. (So much so that she and her husband volunteer as a sighted guide for blind skiers!) Foresight helps Visually Impaired People (VIP’s) ski, at no, or very low cost. The VIP’s aren’t connected to the Guides via any ropes, but ski freely, following only the Guide’s verbal directions. Guides “help personal limits disappear as we literally conquer mountains, and it literally transforms lives.” Although located in Vail, Foresight serves people of all ages throughout the nation,

**A ROSARY OR PRAYER BRACELET** – Many Catholics and others use the beads or knots of a bracelet to slip through their fingers to help quiet the mind.

**THE MAGNIFICAT** – Mary’s words are a proclamation of prayer.

We made our own individual cross artwork in anticipation of Ash Wednesday. We plan to make our prayer bracelets very soon, as there was a great interest in doing this.

**SERVICE – Wednesday** LENTEN services will be at noon and 6:45 Wednesdays through March 25th. Come for lunch after the noon service and Lenten supper after the 6:45 service.

Lenten lunches will be provided after the noon service. We still need a volunteer to bring lunch on the 25th of March. Please contact the office if you are interested.

**SUPPORT and SOCIAL- NEXT MEETING WILL BE AT 1:00 PM, 3/18 AT THE MAD GREEN’S RESTAURANT, 150 S. UNION BLVD. We will be celebrating Charlotte Updike’s Birthday!** 🎂🥳

including students in Denver Metro Area Schools, such as Jeffco and Denver.

Pastor will tell you, “*With faith you can move mountains, or at least ski them! The joy on the face of a VIP skiing down a mountain makes me join with Isaiah in saying, ‘I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them ... I will not forsake them.’*” Foresight relies solely on donations; all Guides and Shadows are volunteers. Please consider donating to this exciting and worthy program!



## 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.*

## Looking Ahead: Lenten/Easter Week events

- **Lenten Services** continue through to March 25th. We have Wednesday services at noon with a light lunch afterwards, or join us for a Lenten Supper at 6:00 PM followed by a 6:45 PM Lenten services.
- **Palm Sunday** services will be on March 29th at both 9:00 AM and 10:45 AM.
- **Maundy Thursday Services** will be on April 2nd at 6:45 PM
- **Good Friday Services** will be on April 3rd at 6:45 PM
- **Easter Sunday Services** will be on April 5th at 9:00 AM and 10:45 AM

## Stewardship

### Lenten Thoughts About Wealth

*Jesus taught, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."*

—**Luke 12:15 (NIV)**

For centuries, Christians have observed the season of Lent by taking on new spiritual practices (such as special prayer or bible reading) or abstaining from things that are enjoyable or extravagant (such as tobacco, chocolate or alcohol).

Lenten disciplines assist us in looking inward, seeing ourselves for who we really are, and with God's help, identifying things that keep us from drawing closer to God. With these awarenesses, and with God's help, we can then do something about them.

It's only fitting that Christians look at their relationship with wealth. Jesus had no problem with wealth, per se, but he repeatedly warns that wealth can distort our values and put a wedge between us and God. Or, worse, that money can supplant God as ruler in our hearts.

For those of us who are comfortable in our incomes and possessions, Lent invites us to look at our relationship with wealth. Here are some ideas for thought and prayer:

- Jesus says, "Life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." How is that

different from the relentless message our consumer culture gives us? In what, then, would Jesus say our life consists? In what does your life consist?

- For Lent, keep a journal of everything you buy. At the end of Lent, analyze what your purchases say about your values, identity, and relationship with wealth.
- For Lent, buy only things you need, and NOT things you merely want. What do you learn in the process.
- For Lent, double your regular giving to charity. Or simply give to the point where it is a sacrifice.
- If you dare, try tithing – giving 10 percent of your income to God's work. What do you learn about yourself?

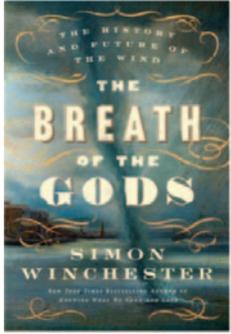
May this Lent be a time when you draw close to the Lord your God.

—*Rob Blezard*

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**Next Faith in Action Meeting will be Thursday, March 5 at 7:00 at church.**

## FIA Picks



**For our next discussion: A Book**  
**Simon Winchester** attempts to answer the new question: “What is going on with our atmosphere?”

Recent headlines were filled with news of devastating hurricanes, murderous tornadoes, and cataclysmic fires affecting large swaths of America. Here, in Colorado, we note anniversaries of the Marshall, Troublesome and Hayman fires.

In 2022, a report was released by atmospheric scientists at the University of Northern Illinois, warning that winds—the force at the center of all these dangerous natural events—are expected to steadily increase in the years ahead, strengthening in power, speed, and frequency.

Between two poles—wind as a malevolent force, and wind as savior of our planet—lies a world of fascination, history, literature, science, poetry, and engineering which Simon Winchester explores with the curiosity and vigor that are the hallmarks of his bestselling works. In *The Breath of the Gods*, he explains how wind plays a part in our everyday lives, from airplane or car travel to the “natural disasters” that are becoming more frequent and regular.

Starting with a “Feeling for the Wind”, then “Light Airs, Gentle Breezes”, to “Something is in the Air”, then, “Robust and Working Winds” and ending with “Inclement Winds” we learn not only about wind but how history and our

future are revealed through them. Just released this year it is in high demand.

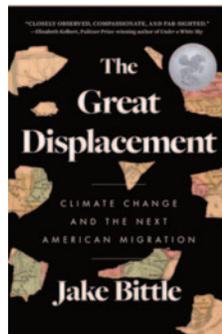
**A Video to ponder:** A fascinating take on the shift in world alliances and priorities from the Prime Minister of Canada, Mark Carney. Go to: <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2026/01/davos-2026-special-address-by-mark-carney-prime-minister-of-canada/>

**A Documentary to absorb:** Join us March 25th at The O for a special screening of *What the River Knows*, presented by Glen Canyon Institute, a powerful documentary from Good Intentions Paving Co. exploring the reemergence of Glen Canyon as the waters of Lake Powell recede. As the West faces critical water challenges, the film reflects on history, restoration, and what a new future for the Colorado River could look like.

Stick around after the screening for a panel discussion and audience Q&A diving deeper into the film’s themes. Don’t miss this thought-provoking evening of film and conversation.

Tickets on sale NOW:  
<https://theorientaltheater.holdmyticket.com/tickets/458206>

FIA hosted a book discussion on February 1, here are key take-aways:



**Introduction and Chapter 1 of “The Great Displacement: Climate Change and the Next American Migration**

Author Jake Bittle describes some major weather and climate related events from recent years and questions how market forces, displacement and dislocation trauma and government

policies will impact decisions about our communities.

In “The End of the Earth” chapter 1 of this book, Bittle looks at the effects of Hurricane Irma in 2017 on the Florida island of Big Pine Key. The near-total devastation of this community is a harbinger of the new category of tropical storms that are stronger, wetter and less predictable than last century. Coastal towns that were always vulnerable will face the agonizing decisions of what or whether to rebuild. In an area where road construction can be prohibitively expensive, the roads are not rebuilt can mean the end of neighborhoods.

## **Chapter 2, After the Flood, Kinston, North Carolina**

Lincoln City was a historic Black neighborhood in the city of Kinston, North Carolina, “deep in the swamps of eastern North Carolina”. The neighborhood had been like one big family; grandkids of enslaved people and sharecroppers owned this property. This was a source of pride. But in 1999, a massive hurricane called Floyd caused dramatic flooding. Lincoln City was drowned beneath almost 5 feet of water. A few weeks later FEMA came and bought out the neighborhood; each homeowner received a check as long as the owner agreed to vacate the floodplain. Then the government knocked down all the homes. Lincoln City was almost gone. In a nearby town that also experienced flooding, Princeville, FEMA offered them a buyout, but the residents said no. It was the oldest town in the U. S. to be chartered by Black people. In 2016 Hurricane Matthew dumped on eastern North Carolina; the Tar River broke through the town’s levee. The town filled with water; the whole process began anew. That flood-prone tract of land had been ceded to freedmen by white landowners. *(continued on next page)* 7

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The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers built one dam on the Neuse River, by Raleigh, but never built the second dam by Kinston. (NOTE: The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers built Chatfield Reservoir after Denver's devastating floods in 1965). Although not reviewed in depth in this brief review of Chapter 2, the prime culprit in Lincoln City's and Princeville's destruction "is not nature or even climate change, but the....racism of American society, the silent hierarchy that divides land along lines of race and class". (p. 65). (Barbara Kaare-Lopez)

### **Chapters 3 and 8.**

In this third chapter Brittle reports on the devastating Tubbs Fire in northern California, specifically its impact on Santa Rosa. We learn that 5000 homes near and IN Santa Rosa were destroyed and we follow several families as they confront the question: "when we are forced to leave the places that have long defined us, what will we encounter on the other side?" One rebuilds, and stands alone in the destroyed forest foothills, one rebuilds their home and neighborhood, one leaves to be with relatives (Louisville, KY). Total destruction and underinsured, survivors face an overpriced, low-inventory market compounding their loss. Santa Rosa, we come to learn, is located on the edge of the Wildlife Urban Interface, separated by a six-lane highway that no one thought could be breached. It's impossible not to think of Jefferson County, us, similarly located. What would you do, what could you do?

In Chapter 8, Brittle offers an overview: Over the next fifty years, millions of Americans will be caught up in this churn of displacement, forced inland and northward in what will be the largest migration in our country's history. Climate change will transform radically our lives—erasing historic towns and villages, pushing people toward new areas, and reshaping the

geography of the United States. The book ends on a hopeful note, but still recognizes the extent of the damage already done: "When a community disappears, so does a map that orients us in the world." And, finishes with the argument that The future demands a universal guarantee of shelter. As climate change threatens millions with displacement, ensuring universal access to safe housing becomes a moral and practical imperative.

### **Chapter 4 The Story of the Verdins, Coastal Erosion and Cultural Extinction**

This chapter relates the story of the Verdins, an indigenous family that settled at a bayou called Pointe au Chien, where they farmed the fertile soil, raised animals, fished and trapped. It is not known when the indigenous tribe came to this area, but in the 1750's French men from Acadia arrived, married indigenous women and became known as Cajuns. They had a sustainable way of life, interrupted when Texaco began drilling for oil. The land was owned by the Louisiana Fur Trading Company which began buying up more property in the bayous, demanding leases to farm, fish and hunt. Exxon, Mobil and Conoco joined the oil boom and carved out canals, destroyed islands, barriers that held back the water and extracted oil from subterranean salt domes that caused marshes to slide into the water,. The gradual process of erosion forced people to move away from their homes and seek jobs elsewhere. Louisiana lost around 2000 square miles of land, and indigenous people lost their cultural way of life.

### **Chapter 5 Frankenstein City**

Houston, Texas became the center of the petroleum boom of the 1970's. As thousands of people arrived to secure jobs, developers swarmed the area to buy land on the outskirts of town. There was no city planning involved, so there were

no zoning laws and no restrictions nor permits for building. As a result, houses were built in bayou areas which drained into the Gulf of Mexico, and creeks and low areas where flooding would occur. When flooding from heavy rains and hurricanes began, the local government razed trees and built channels lined with concrete, and developers built homes right to the edges of these channels. In 1968 the government began the National Flood Insurance program which mandated insurance in areas within the 100 year flood zone. The hundred year flood designation meant that a flood has a one per cent chance of flooding each year. This designation was later changed . FEMA money was used to buy out homes in the flood areas, but some people sold their homes privately to others and moved to better areas. Others decided to stay because they could not afford to move anywhere else with the money they would get from FEMA. Investors bought the homes to rent to people who were unaware of the flooding problems. By 2000 "white flight" had occurred. The people who could least afford to buy or rent homes in these areas were the ones who suffered the most. They were usually minorities and recent immigrants who were trying to buy first homes they thought they could afford. This became a churn of migration, new owners, flooding sales, rentals, and the consequences of haphazard building in places where building should never have occurred.

### **Chapter 6: Why Should This Desert Be?**

This chapter is about Pinal County, Arizona and the impacts on farming and ranching in the face of severe and prolonged drought, an issue with resonance for Colorado. Reading this brought echos of previous books on water use and water rights in the west. Brittle points out some of the consequences of drought like wildfires

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and spikes in water use. Largely due to agriculture, Pinal County water use is 300 billion gallons a year, 800,000 gallons per resident. Some of the most water-needy crops are grown here, like cotton and alfalfa. Water distribution is wrapped up in the convoluted law around senior water rights, reservation claims of indigenous people, development, and federal involvement. Decisions about how much water flows and where it flows impacts the livelihoods of families and businesses, some which have been in the area for generations. Scrambling to preserve crops and herds, not only is river water and its diversions affected, but groundwater and aquifers are tapped. The question of whether farming of water thirsty crops and the sprawling developments of city suburbs are sustainable in the face of climate change is woven through this chapter.

### Chapter 7 Bailout

This chapter is titled “Bailout” and discusses the rising seas and falling markets in Norfolk, Virginia.

Along with rising sea levels of coastal areas is the mounting anxiety about the impact of climate change. The real estate market has begun to destabilize in towns and cities along the Eastern Seaboard. When coastal property values fall, they will not come back up. Norfolk, Virginia is about 5 feet above sea level. Thirty percent of the country’s population is living along a coastline. A downturn in the market would jeopardize millions of dollars that are held by homeowners, insurers, banks, and all levels of government. Property owners are being faced with either the cost of raising their homes to decrease their flood insurance premiums or to raze the property to cut their losses. Norfolk is on the Chesapeake Bay, once favored by colony

settlers. The US NAVY built its headquarters on the city’s western edge. If FEMA still exists, who should hold the responsibility of the costs to renovate or rebuild properties damaged by rising seas? The Chesterfield Heights and the Ohio Creek Watershed Project costs \$115 million, the most expensive “resilient” project in the country. There are many different ideas and definitions of climate resilience and whose responsibility should it be. One dollar of resilience spending can save at least six dollars of recovery spending after a disaster. Of course, those in more affluent areas get precedence in these “bailout” projects. A.R. Siders, a foremost scholar, developed the “managed retreat” concept. As property values decrease, so does the tax base. What debt do we owe people, and can we pay it? How do you relocate whole communities?



### Our Elections: What’s coming? More importantly, can you vote?

February 12th the US House of Representatives passed what is called “the SAVE America Act” (Safeguard American Voter Eligibility) HR 22; a

new system for determining who can vote in our federal elections. It will move now to the Senate and then, if passed, to the President’s desk for signature. *The changes are dramatic:* it proposes a transition from an attestation-based voter registration system—where applicants swear to their citizenship

under penalty of perjury—to a strict documentary-based system.

**H.R. 22 fundamentally changes the definition of what constitutes an acceptable application to register to vote.** The bill creates an exhaustive list of “documentary proof of United States citizenship” (DPOC).

Table 2: Hierarchy of Acceptable Documentary Proof under H.R. 22

Document Type	Specific Requirements	Notes on Accessibility
REAL ID (Citizenship Marker)	Must explicitly indicate U.S. citizenship.	Not all REAL IDs indicate citizenship.
U.S. Passport	Valid and unexpired.	Only 48% of citizens possess one. Cost to date: \$130
Certified Birth Certificate	Issued by State/Local/Tribal gov; must have seal/signature.	Often requires fees and separate ID to obtain.
Naturalization Papers	Issued by DHS/Secretary of State.	Critical for naturalized citizens.
Government Photo ID (Birthplace)	Must show applicant was born in the U.S.	Standard driver’s licenses often fail this.
American Indian Card	Classification ‘KIC’ issued by DHS.	Vital for Tribal citizenship verification.

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**It excludes standard identification.**

Standard driver's licenses and state-issued ID cards, which are the most common forms of identification used by Americans, would no longer be sufficient for registration because many states issue these documents to non-citizens who are legal residents and the ID may not include a birthplace. (Colorado Real ID do not meet the test.)

**Furthermore, the bill imposes a rigorous "in-person" requirement.**

It stipulates that states shall not process an application unless DPOC is presented with the application. In practice, this means that while an individual might submit a registration form by mail, the registration remains "incomplete" and the individual "shall not be registered" until they physically present their birth certificate or passport to an election official.

Source:  
(<https://www.knowyourcongress.org/articles/federalism-verification-and-the-electorate-a-policy-analysis-of-the-safeguard-american-voter-eligibility-save-act>, February 6, 2026)

**Impacts: From League of Women Voters of Colorado to Everyone:**

<https://www.lwv.org/take-action/tell-your-members-congress-oppose-save-act>

“Republicans in Congress have introduced (House passed) the extreme anti-voter Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) America Act (H.R. 22/ S.128 and declared it among their top priorities. This bill would hinder millions of eligible Americans from registering to vote by **requiring citizens to present a birth certificate or passport in person to register.**

- More than 21.3 million Americans lack immediate access to documentary proof of citizenship.
- More than 140 million Americans do not have a passport, and elderly Americans are one of the demographic groups least likely to have one.
- 69 million women who have taken their spouse's last name do not have a birth certificate that matches their legal name.
- Disabled people are already much more likely to encounter a difficulty while voting compared to a nondisabled voter; more stringent requirements will just make this worse.
- Citizens of color are three times more likely than white citizens to lack documents such as birth certificates, passports, naturalization certificates, or certificates of citizenship.”

**Faith In Action's Take:**

Laws are often written with one objective in mind, but after implementation, unintended consequences may arise. Depending on the timing of its passage and becoming law, and its immediate activation, FIA thinks it wise to **prepare now** to ensure we can vote and have the correct documents to prove eligibility and a clear path to do so. To that end Faith In Action is exploring the possibility of holding a workshop on the steps necessary to comply with this new legislation should it become law.

As we have learned from the new ELCA Social Statement, “Faith And Civic Life, The Relationship Of Religious Organizations And Political Authority”, “civic service is a valued and dignified way to carry out God's calling” and “vigorous civic engagement for the public good as a responsibility of all U.S. residents and as one of our Christian callings.” To us, voting is both vigorous and responsible.

**If you are interested in attending such a workshop, please let Cathy Bajcsi or Toni Jung-Brack know. We will post information as it becomes available.**

***THE DISCIPLES***

*Hurting, they came to him.*

*Healed, they followed him.*

*Grateful, they gave to him*

*what they had and what they were.*

*Blessed, they became a blessing*

*and went out to all the world*

*in his name.*

*Those who are hurt*

*and healed*

*grateful*

*and blessed*

*still move among us*

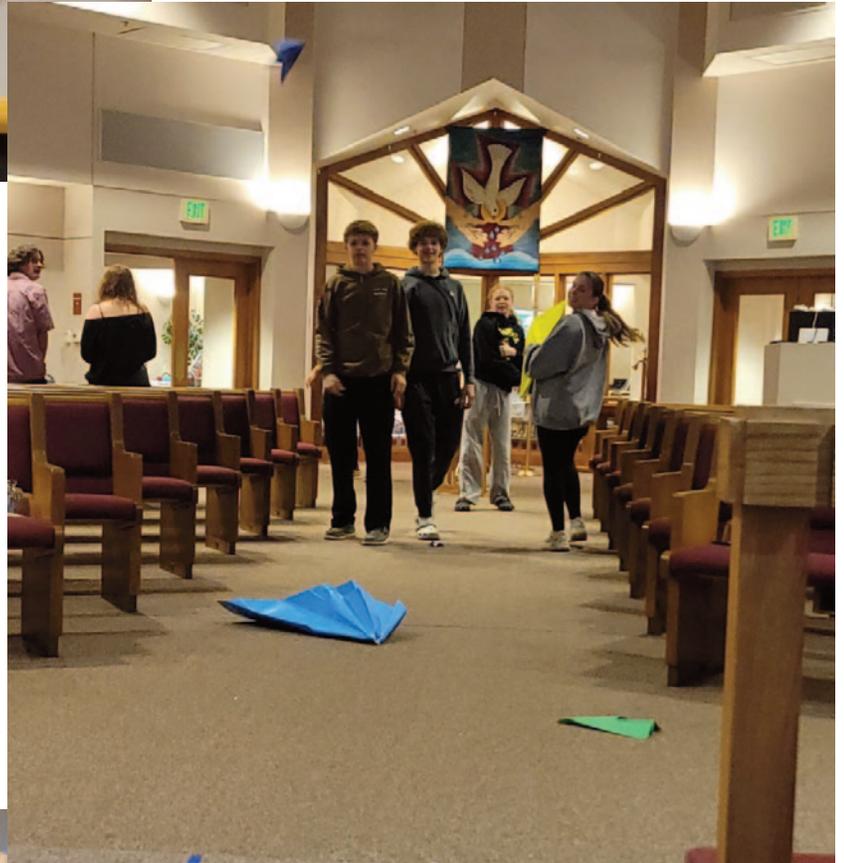
*in his name.*

*Weems, Ann. Kneeling in Jerusalem (p. 30).  
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Kindle Edition.*

# Youth Group Giant Paper Airplanes!



Can your  
airplane and/or  
your faith in  
Jesus be too  
big?



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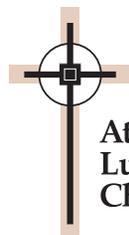


# Servant of the House

**March 2026**

Servant duties are as assigned below. If you are signed up for a date on which you will not be available, please contact someone to replace or trade with you, or call the church office to do so. Thanks so much!

Date	Greeters	9:00 AM	10:45 AM
3/1		Mary Campe	Mary Campe
3/8		Jeanette Hill	Barb and Bernie
3/15		Nate and Laura Blair	Dean and Lily Reinfort
3/22		Mike Brack, Toni Jung-Brack	Margo Crabb
3-29	Palm Sunday	Dan and Tera Malyszko	Katy Brackeen
	<b>Readers</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>10:45 AM</b>
3/1		Jim Ris	Audrey Brack-Banks
3/8/8		Audrey Brack-Banks	Johann Cohn
3/15		Audrey Brack-Banks	Caren Cohn
3/22		Dan Bock	Audrey Brack-Banks
3/29	Palm Sunday	Audrey Brack-Banks	Carmen Cohn
	<b>Ushers</b>	<b>9:00 AM</b>	<b>10:45 AM</b>
3/1		Alan and Tracy Ford	Ed and Gayle Lauerson
3/8		Jeanette Hill	Barb and Bernie
3/15		Nate and Laura Blair	Dean and Lily Reinfort
3/22		Mike Brack, Toni Jung-Brack	Ella Parsons
3/29	Palm Sunday	Dan Bock	Barb and Bernie
	<b>Coffee Café</b>	(Between services only)	
	<b>set up and clean up</b>		
3/1	Mary Campe		
3/8	Barbara Krug		
3/15	Judi Bauer		
3/22	Barbara Krug		
3/29			



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