

MARTIN LUTHER SERVICE AWARD
GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

October 31, 2017 marks 500 years since Martin Luther nailed 95 theses on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg. He intended them as a basis of discussion concerning questionable practices of the Roman Church, including the popular buying of indulgences. Members of the parishes could "buy" salvation for themselves or loved ones. While it was an interesting fundraising technique, Luther disagreed with this practice, arguing that God doesn't work that way! His concern was for all people, but particularly the poor peasants he served who spent all their meager earnings on these indulgences.

Luther was 34 years old. He had struggled to understand and follow Christ, exploring many branches of service to the church. Bibles were few. Luther first saw and read one at age 20, in the library of the University of Erfurt, and considered himself fortunate if he could one day own such a book. Luther became a Reformer of public education, as did other reformers that arose. Few children had parents that could afford schooling, yet the Bible had passages urging parents to teach their children. Luther believed that God wanted all people to be able to read the Bible and understand what they were hearing in worship. Access to the Bible, Luther believed, opened God's Word to everyone.

Translating the Bible into the common tongue (German) and making it widely available was part of Luther's ministry to the people. And, he argued that all members of the body of Christ are ministers, having different talents and gifts to share with the world. Each and every job is a Christian vocation when done in faith. This means that each of us are ministers too, simply by doing what we do in Christian faith and love.

The Martin Luther Service Award is given to a member of Atonement Lutheran Church graduating from high school who is pursuing some kind of secondary education (college or vocational training). The well-qualified applicant has served in and through Atonement Lutheran Church, testifying commitment to his/her Christian faith. We encourage all our youth to continue to use their gifts and talents to serve all people of our Creator.

The Award. The recipient will receive \$1,000 to be used for tuition, books (paper or electronic), computers/software, or other required materials needed for courses. The award will be given in June.

Eligibility. Applicants must:

- Be a permanent resident of the U.S.
- Be a member of Atonement Lutheran Church during grades 9-12.
- Be a graduating high school senior.
- Be accepted by a regionally or nationally recognized accredited institution.

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Applying, Selection, Notification.

Applicants will submit the application (next two pages) with required information, essays, copies of acceptance notifications, and recommendations by May 1. Applications may be printed off the website of Atonement Lutheran Church (www.atonementwyo.org) or obtained from the church secretary. Recommendations should be sealed by the writer, and mailed or delivered to the church. Applicants may include them with their application. Please use a 9" x 12" or larger envelope or a file folder for application materials.

An interview committee of Atonement Church members will review applications and arrange interviews for applicants. Questions may be directed to the Committee Chair. Relatives of applicants may not serve on the committee.

The Committee will notify the recipient and the applicants a week following the completion of interviews. An Atonement Pastor will telephone the recipient.

Recommendations. Please request 2 letters of recommendations from unrelated members of the congregation and one from a member of the church staff. These persons should be familiar with your activities at Atonement Church. Request each write their names over the seal of the envelope.

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5. GOD'S CALL TO SERVICE. Choose Prompt A or B to reflect upon living as a Christian in the 21st century. Read the entire section for context; use the verses for application.

- A. Verses – Mark 10:43-45. “...whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve...” (Context – Mark 10: 35-45). Society would have us believe that we have to step on others to get to the top; what Jesus says here contradicts this notion. How should this inform how we live as Christians in the 21st Century?

- B. Verses –I Peter 4:10-11 “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received....whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ.” (Context—1 Peter 4:8-11) The service we do in the whole of our lives (not just at church) is a gift and call from God to share God’s grace. God equips us for that service, and it is for God’s glory, not our own. Viewing all of what we do as Christian service, how does this affect how we work and live in the world?