



## The James Project†

*“Show me your faith without deeds and I will show you my faith by what I do” (James 2:18).*

Who are we? Who do we want to be? What do we want to be known for?

**“Atonement” is...**

- Caring
- Intentional
- Relational
- Relevant
- Helpful
- Visible and Available
- Inviting and Welcoming

Are we? What if Atonement church had to close its doors? What if Atonement no longer had a school? Would this community miss this congregation and our ministry to them if we were no longer here? Would this community and neighborhood care?

These were some of the questions that were asked at a Voter’s meeting this past fall. And the first one to answer said, “No.” And when asked why this community wouldn’t care if Atonement closed its doors, the response was: “We are not doing anything for them now.”

Jesus doesn’t command us to save the world or even fix it. He commands us to go into it and make disciples by baptizing and teaching. We do that by giving them Jesus’ love. That’s why we are here as a church: to give our communities (church, school, neighborhood) what they need—Jesus’ love.

But that doesn’t mean that we forget the OTHER needs of those around us. We are not just here to tell them Jesus loves them. We are also here to SHOW them that WE love them. What if Atonement was a place that did just that?

What if Atonement was a place where the folks of this neighborhood wanted to come because of our kindness, our love and our ministry, our service, to them and their needs? What would that look like?

What if Atonement was a place to be “at one” with the people around us? What if Atonement was a place where “community” happened? What if Atonement was a destination where members wanted to be other than a Sunday morning or Saturday at 5 p.m.; a place to have a cup of coffee, to meet with other members and the folks of this community just to see what’s going on at Atonement? And what if Atonement was a place where Atonement alumni wanted to come back to, a place that was warm, welcoming, safe and loving--a place where “community” was happening?

Wouldn’t this give us more opportunities to show our love and share Jesus’ love, and not just an hour on a Saturday or a couple of hours on Sunday? Wouldn’t this give our members an opportunity to serve the people of this community in real, meaningful ways--a place where “community” would happen? What would that look like? And where?

This is what The James Project is all about.

What will come from The James Project? Will we have more programs to offer the people of this neighborhood? Most definitely. But what do people really need? People. We need each other. The people of this neighborhood need us--our care, our concern, our love. In fact, we OWE it to them.

Will you join us? Are you willing to accept the challenge of the apostle James? It’s at the top of this page. Read it. Accept the challenge. And let’s show our faith by DOING.



### **Mission**

The mission of Atonement Lutheran church is to: *GO into our neighborhood with the good news of Jesus' atonement and gather around God's Word to GROW in our faith and service.*

### **Vision**

Atonement's vision is *that it will become the spiritual center of its community bringing the light and love of Jesus to families, children and people in need.*

## **The James Project**

### **Committee and Coordinator**

**Purpose:** The purpose of **The James Project** is to **study, discuss, plan and implement ways** that the members of Atonement Lutheran Church can show their love for the communities of Atonement (church, school, neighborhood) with the hope of sharing with them the love of Jesus.

**Rationale:** God commands us to *go, teach, baptize, and make disciples of all nations*, (Matt. 28:19) but he also commands us to *feed, cloth, welcome, care, visit* (Matt. 25: 35) and *love, even as he has loved us.*(John 13: 34)

**But the apostle James puts it this way: *Show me your faith without deeds and I will show you my faith by what I do. (James 2:18)*** Finally, Matt. 5: 16 tells us: *Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

**Project Manager:** The **Ministry Cabinet**, with its chairman, will serve as **manager** of the James Project and its members.

**Project Coordinator:** The James Project will have a **coordinator** who will work together with the Ministry Cabinet and members of The James project who will facilitate the projects and ensure that they have a timeframe, are completed on time, and are within budget.

**Job Description:** Members of The James Project, together with its Coordinator, will:

1. Faithfully attend meetings.
2. Report regularly to the Ministry Cabinet (MC) and Expansion and Enhancement Committee (EEC).
3. Research successful programs for ideas and resources for service and consider partnerships where feasible.
4. Act as a clearing house for ongoing submission of ideas for service.
5. Conduct neighborhood focus groups and community surveys.
6. Attend conferences in areas pertaining to outreach as schedule permits.
7. Generate and discuss projects that show love and provide service
8. Assist in prioritizing service projects and submit recommendations to the MC and EEC for approval.
9. Work with members of the James Project and the MC toward establishing an annual budget.
10. Monitor progress on implementing approved service plans by MC, make new recommendations as programs are developed and send a progress report to the Church Council, through the MC, each year.

**The Ministry Cabinet:** The Ministry Cabinet (MC) has the administrative authority and responsibility, through the Ministry Plan, to implement an outreach plan which will be known as The James Project.

1. The chairman of the MC will attend meetings held by members of The James Project.
2. The chairman of the MC will present the ideas recommended by The James Project to the MC for their approval, and, to the Church Council if necessary.
3. The MC will decide under whose administrative authority the approved project resides and the coordinator will assume the responsibility accordingly.
4. The James Project Coordinator will work with the MC Chairman and members of the James Project to find members who will complete/continue the various projects.

**Immediate Actions:**

1. Recruit and confirm committee members.
2. Study the book of James.
3. Evaluate and discuss past and current programs.
4. Attend Christian Leadership Conference in La Crosse, WI March 15-16.
5. Contact and invite other churches who are planning/doing new and exciting ways to connect with their communities. (Living Word, Waukesha; Gracedowntown/St. John's Hillside.)