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The Benefits of Generosity

By Pastor Chris Becker and Cam Kruse

Do you look for ways to live a less stressful life? Would you like to live with less anxiety and fear and more hope and confidence?

We at Amazing Grace hope that together, we can grow in our understanding of what it means to be **generous**. This is more than “how much are you going to give to church”. Too often this is how people have perceived what the church is all about. But what if we listen differently to what St. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

⁶The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

What if we begin to learn that even within our faith system God is guiding us to a healthier life; life with reduced stress and anxiety, a life rich in hope and confidence?

In preparing for what would be meaningful for us in our work to strengthen our culture of generosity I found the following on the internet on the PsychAlive website.

The Dalai Lama famously said, “If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion.” The same is certainly

true for generosity! Generosity — the quality of being kind and understanding, the willingness to give others things that have value — is often defined as an act of selflessness; however, studies are now showing that generosity is actually (selfishly) in your best interest. Practicing generosity is a mental health principle, and it could be the very key to a happy and healthy life.

Year after year, more and more studies are highlighting the benefits of generosity on both our physical and mental health. Not only does generosity reduce stress, support one's physical health, enhance one's sense of purpose, and naturally fight depression, it is also shown to increase one's lifespan.

If a longer, less stressful and more meaningful life is not enough to inspire you to rev up your practice of generosity, consider that generosity also promotes a

Generosity Workshop
Thursday
November 19
6:00—8:00 p.m.



social connection and improves relationships. According to Jason Marsh and Jill Suttie of the Greater Good Science Center, "When we give to others, we don't only make them feel closer to us; we also feel closer to them." This is because being generous and kind encourages us to perceive others in a more positive light and fosters a sense of community, a feeling of interconnectedness.

Being generous also makes us feel better about ourselves. Generosity is both a natural confidence builder and a natural repellent of self-hatred. By focusing on what we are giving rather than on what we are receiving, we create a more outward orientation toward the world, which shifts our focus away from ourselves. While maintaining a healthy level of self-awareness and sensitivity to oneself is important, too often we narrow in on ourselves with a negative lens. We spend too much time listening to the "critical inner voice" in our heads, which scrutinizes our every move and nags at us with negative thoughts towards ourselves and others. These negative thoughts undermine our confidence and can lead to self-sabotage. Being generous distracts us from the critical inner voice's barrage of nasty thoughts and creates a strong argument against it as well. When we see someone else benefiting from our kind actions, for instance, it is hard for the inner voice to argue that we are worthless.

Four Steps to Fully Practicing Generosity

Give something that is sensitive to the other person.

Generosity is most effective when the gift you offer is sensitive. Think about what the other person wants or needs. It's not always about material things; it's about being giving of yourself. Sometimes just being present and available to a loved one who is having a hard time is the greatest gift you could possibly give.

Accept appreciation.

It is important to be open to the people who express appreciation toward you. Generosity is a two-way street, allowing someone to express their gratitude is an important aspect of generosity and part of what makes you feel closer to them. As researchers in the Department of Psychology at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have discovered, "The emotion of gratitude uniquely functions to build a high-quality relationship between a grateful person and the target of his or her gratitude, that is, the person who performed a kind action." So it is important to not brush off a "thank you" with comments like "Oh, it was nothing."

Accept the generosity of others.

Some people have a much easier time being giving than receiving. However, it is important to let others do things for you. I call this the generosity of acceptance. Being pseudo-independent or self-denying robs your loved ones of the opportunity to feel the joy of giving. Accepting the generosity of others may make you uncomfortable if you felt unlovable or unworthy in your early life. Generosity is often an act of love, and, though it may seem counterintuitive, many people respond negatively to being loved.

Show appreciation.

Remember that gratitude is an important part of the equation. Show your appreciation for the generosity that is directed toward you, even if you feel shy or uncomfortable. Resist the temptation to

say things like "This is too much," or "You shouldn't have." Instead just say "Thank you!" Or, better yet, let the person know what their generosity meant to you.

Generosity is truly the gift that keeps on giving. Each day life presents us with hundreds of opportunities to be generous; by making a lifestyle out of generosity, we can do ourselves and others a world of good.

On Thursday evening from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. (light supper included) we will host a workshop on "Generosity". At this time we will think through what it means to not only be generous but what it means to be the recipient of generosity. We will explore what our faith values say about being generous and how those values connect with our passions and then lead us to take action.

In the survey on generosity we did in September, 97 percent of those answering considered themselves to be generous people. That is good! In the workshop we will consider our personal journey to our generous life and our philanthropic attitudes. We will think consciously about our involvement with giving, volunteering, and all our charitable activities. How does that involvement fit with our values?

This workshop will help us all to take another step in living out a healthier life which God intends for all of us.

Please respond to the church office your intention to join others on this journey of generosity or look for the Blue sheet in our Sunday bulletin to sign up. Our goal is to have 30 to 40 people in the room for a powerful, energizing conversation.

Year Round Stewardship Team

Generosity Workshop Thursday November 19 6:00—8:00 p.m.



Worship and Music Ministry Notes

Opportunities for Social Fitness

By Louise Lentz

Worship and Music Ministry Team Chair

Our faith fitness theme for November is Social. One way to build new relationships or enhance existing relationships is by working with others. The Worship & Music Ministry Team is offering you two opportunities to do that.



Decorate the Sanctuary for Advent Party

Everybody loves a party!! Join us for the Annual Decorating the Sanctuary for Advent Party on Saturday, November 28, from 10:00 -12:00 noon. Pizza and beverage will be served after the decorating is finished. All ages are welcome and we are in need of some younger people who are able to climb ladders and hang banners.

Worship Leader Training

We are conducting training for all of the Worship Leader Roles in November and December. The training is designed to inform you of the goals for each role and reinforce the important duties of each role. This includes altar care, greeters, readers, ushers, worship assistants, sound system, nursery care and a new role of personal prayer ministry. The schedule for the training is below. We encourage all current worship leaders and anyone who would like to explore taking on one of these roles to attend the training. Come, share your ideas and participate in this training. What better way to get to know others in your faith community than to work with them serving God during our worship services.



| Date | Time | Worship Leader Group | Coordinator |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sunday, November 8 | 9:15 – 9:45 | Greeters | Tom Thompson |
| | 9:45 – 10:15 | Readers | Laurel Oseth |
| Sunday, November 15 | 9:15 – 9:45 | Altar Care | Nancy Pollock |
| | 9:45 – 10:15 | Worship Assistants | Louise Lentz |
| Sunday, November 22 | 9:15 – 9:45 | Ushers | Trish & Korky Ebensteiner |
| | 9:45 – 10:15 | Sound System | Norm Goetzke, Larry Kinney |
| Sunday, December 6 | 9:15 – 9:45 | Nursery | Molly Olson |
| | 9:45 – 10:15 | Personal Prayer Ministry | Judy Thompson |

Personal Prayers Return

Beginning in November we will again offer personal prayers during communion. A variety of individuals will be available to hear your prayers of joys and concerns. This does not replace prayers of intercession which we pray together, but offers another opportunity for calling out to our Lord. Prayers will be offered in the back left corner of the sanctuary. The presiding pastor will announce the availability of a prayer companion at the beginning of the service. Please come to the prayer station after you have received communion.

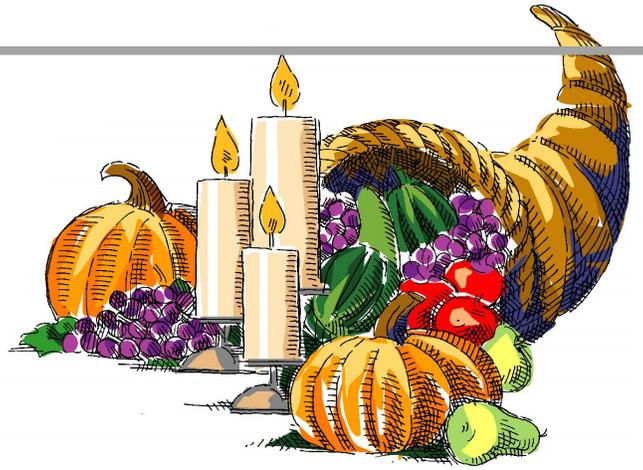
If you are interested in being a personal prayer companion, please contact Judy Thompson.

Our next Worship & Music Ministry Team meeting is Thursday, November 5, at 7 pm. If you have suggestions, comments or just want to see what we do, feel free to join us. Our goal is to provide worship experiences that are meaningful, relevant, Spirit-filled, and grounded in God's Word. We welcome your feedback to help us achieve that goal.



Thanksgiving Eve Worship

A worship service of thanksgiving to our Lord will be held on Wednesday, November 25th at 7:00 p.m. A time for fellowship will follow the service with pie being served. Bring your family and friends for this special time to reflect on the many blessings we have received and give thanks to our Creator.



THANKSGIVING FELLOWSHIP AND PIE

There will be a time for fellowship and pie after the Thanksgiving service on Wednesday, November 25 at 7:00 p.m. You may bring or make your favorite pie so others can savor the taste. Invite neighbors and friends to join us for a celebration of thanksgiving.



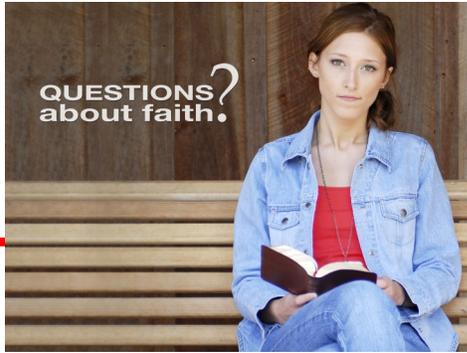
If you would like to contribute a pie, please bring it before worship and leave it in the kitchen.

November Worship

| Sunday | Theme | Lessons | Worship Services |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| November 1 <i>All Saints</i> | Divided Household | 1 Kings 12:1-17, 25-29 Mark 10:42-45 | 8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion in Sanctuary |
| November 8 <i>Pentecost 24</i> | Lean On Me | 1 Kings 18:20-39 Mark 9:2-4 | 8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion in Sanctuary |
| November 15 <i>Pentecost 25</i> | A Parent's Cry | Hosea 11:1-9 Mark 10:13-14 | 8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion in Sanctuary |
| November 22 <i>Christ the King</i> | Renewed | Isaiah 5:1-7; 11:1-5 Mark 12:1-3 | 8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion in Sanctuary |
| Wednesday November 25 <i>Thanksgiving Eve</i> | TBD | TBD | 7:00 pm Worship Pie and Fellowship to Follow |
| November 29 <i>Advent 1</i> | Reformed | 2 Kings 22:1-10, (14-20); 23:1-3 Luke 24:30-32 | 8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion in Sanctuary |



From the Christian Education Ministry Team



Faith Formation: What is faith and from where does it come?

By Pastor Julie Wright

*The excitement of learning separates youth from old age.
As long as you're learning you're not old.*
-Rosalyn S. Yalow

It was Jesus who taught me to love, but it was Martin Luther who taught me to ask *why*. Martin Luther created the Small Catechism as a way for parents to teach the Christian faith to their children. Luther laid out the tenets of our faith in a simple way by teaching us to ask: **“What is this?” “What does this mean?”**

Luther has taught us to ask questions – to be students of our faith in a way that opens the door to being curious about this life and this world. In this way, our faith is not some boring (bland, lame, cookie-cutter, zzzzz...) way of being in this world – instead, it is adventurous! (check out Romans 8:15-17)

At Amazing Grace, there are plenty of opportunities to participate in Christian education – and it's not just for children. There are two kinds of learning that we aspire to gain throughout our lives – information and wisdom. Our faith can grow deep and wide only as we engage in these questions together – as a community. So as a part of our 'faith fitness' theme this year, please check out these educational opportunities (below) and find ways in which you would like to grow, learn and find adventure in this life of faith. Ultimately, faith is a gift of the Holy Spirit, which is passed along through our commitment to share the Good News with others. So come, Holy Spirit, come.

Sunday School ♦ Vacation Bible School ♦ Confirmation
Splash! ♦ Sunday Morning Adult Education
Tuesday Evening Bible Study ♦ Talk a Latté
Women's Morning Bible Study
New Member Class ♦ Faithful Readers
Parent Education ♦ First Communion Class ♦ Worship



By Linda Becker, Sunday School Coordinator

New month, new theme, new teachers... Sunday School welcomes Dre Noble, Martha Hoepfner, Annie Morgan, and Trudy and Vic Johnson to the teaching rotation in November. Using the story of “David, Shepherd King,” students will learn that kids can do great things, serving God with their gifts. David was brave enough to slay a giant, and children will explore how brave they can be too.

Kindergarten and grade 1 will begin with Bible Skills and Games with Dre on November 1. Grades 2 and 3 will begin with cooking science with Martha. Grades 4 and 5 will learn with computers, taught by the Johnson family. Grades 6 and 7 will be in Creative Drama with Annie. Let's see if we can beat our Rally Day attendance of 45 children.

With great appreciation we thank Pam Rutten, Anna Hahnfeldt, Jon and Amanda Vesta, and Michael and Sara Liegl for teaching during October. They inspired our classes with wonderful lessons taken from the life of Ruth.

Much help is needed for the Christmas program. We will reprise “The First Leon,” a children's Christmas musical. Practices will run from November 22 through December 20. Helpers are needed for small group rehearsals, costuming, stage props, and treats. Contact Linda Becker to sign on.



VBS UPDATE

For the past 2 years the VBS program has been fortunate to have Lisa Barnhart as a co-coordinator, specifically around volunteer recruitment. Lisa recently stepped down from her role. We are pleased to announce that Amanda Vesta has agreed to fill the co-coordinator role. Please join us in thanking Lisa for a job well done and welcoming Amanda to the VBS program. VBS 2016 will be held June 20-23rd.

From the Youth and Family Ministry Team

FREE Parent Education Session



The New Self-Esteem: Create a Mindset for Success in Your Child

**Wednesday, November 4, 2015
6:30-7:30PM**

*Guest Speaker: Toni Schutta,
Parent Coach, M.A., L.P. Families First Coaching*

In this class, you'll learn: the secret to helping your child be more successful in school, athletics and life; how your words of praise may be harming your child; and two critical life skills your child must have. This presentation explores the ground-breaking work of world-renowned Stanford psychologist, Carol Dweck. In decades of research, Dweck studied factors that help kids succeed or fail. Her research found that creating a "mindset" for success, which she calls a growth mindset, is the foundation for motivating kids in school, attaining their goals and becoming successful in life. Using real-life examples, you'll receive eight concrete ways to create a growth mindset in your child. Two other mindsets: "I am Responsible for My Behavior" and "I Can Name and Claim My Feelings" are also explored along with teaching you a problem-solving method and goal setting strategy so your kids can learn these valuable life skills, too.

To register call Merri Guggisberg at 651-455-0093 or email her at mguggisberg@aglcigh.org.

Worship Experience~ Temple of Aaron

November 20, 2015 6:00-10:00pm

All are welcome to join in this tour, worship experience and fellowship. Sign up on youth bulletin board by November 15, 2015



YOUTH FUNDRAISER



HEGGIES PIZZA

**Sale Dates—
November 1-15, 2015**

Samples on November 8~ Yum!

AGLC youth will be selling on
Sundays November 1, 8 & 15

See youth for order information.

YOUTH SPONSORED CHILDCARE AT AGLC ANNUAL PARENT'S DAY OUT!!

Parents are invited to enjoy a few hours off!
AGLC youth (Grades 6-12) invite you to share
your children for games, crafts, and organized play time.
This is a great opportunity to work on your Christmas shopping
and give your children a chance to play with their church friends.

Saturday, November 14 10:00 am—2:00 pm

FREE of charge!

Bring a home lunch—snack will be provided.

Register on the Community Events Bulletin Board



November Family Service Project

Each month we invite you to pursue your interests as well as help others in need. Some projects are done by one person; others involve family members or friends. If you have service opportunities to share with our faith community, please email Merri at muggisberg@aglcigh.org.

AGLC GIVING TREES

You are invited to stop by the Christmas Trees that are set up in the church narthex and select a gift tag for the outside ministry of AGLC that you wish to support.

Date/Time: Mid-November — December

Location: Amazing Grace Lutheran Church Narthex

Ages: EVERYONE



Teaching Prayer at Home

Submitted by Merri Guggisberg, Youth and Young Adult Coordinator



Looking for ways to teach prayer at home to your children and hopefully learn more about them? How about trying this during the month of November, before goodnight prayers and hugs or at dinner time, ask your children (any age) these three questions:

What is something that made you smile today?

What is something that made you cry (frustrated) today?

What is something that you learned today?

May seem very simple yet hopefully will help our children trust us, trust that we care about them and we are interested in their daily experiences. Hold the celebrations and challenges in prayer each day.

Suggestions on how to start your prayer:

Dear God, today I thank you for... forgive me for... help me to... I praise you for... Amen.

Evangelism/Stewardship Team Happenings

Workshop on Generosity November 19 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, November 19 at 6:00 the Year-Round Stewardship team will host a workshop on generosity. The purpose of the workshop is to help people explore how they can acknowledge and utilize God's gifts in their lives.

In the survey on generosity we did in September 97 percent of those answering considered themselves to be generous people. That is good! In the workshop we will consider our personal journey to our generous life and our philanthropic attitudes. We will think consciously about our involvement with giving, volunteering, and all our charitable activities. How does that involvement fit with our values?

Do you want to strengthen your personal relationship with God? One of the best ways is to grow in your generosity. This workshop will give you the opportunity to consider your decisions on how you will use your time, talents and resources (financial and other) to make this a better world for all people. In James 2:17 we read "So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." This seems to be a good indication that we can make our faith stronger by doing more "works," or being more generous with our time, talents and resources.

We will start at 6:00 with food and beverages. We will be done by 8:00. Child care will be provided.

Look for the sign-up sheets in the Narthex and in the Bulletins.

Submitted by Year-Round Stewardship Team

Anne DePalma, Diane Feely, Brooke Hovick, Cathy Jeyachandran, Kirsten Hoven, Cam Kruse



The Giving Trees

Submitted by Pastor Chris Becker

Ecclesiastes 11:1-2 Give generously, for your gifts will return to you later. Divide your gifts among many, for in the days ahead you yourself may need much help.

This Advent and Christmas season we will again host a number of Christmas trees in the Narthex of the church. Each one invites us to participate in the lives of people whom we call our brothers and sisters in Christ.

We continue to provide support for a number of ministries outside our congregation. It is one way we extend God's love as a community so that those in need are not alone.

Walk through the narthex, look at the trees closely, see what others need, and be open to the opportunity to provide for those who have little to nothing.

Each one has something unique to offer. Many of the gifts are small to us, but will be greatly appreciated.

Take an ornament with a request. Bring the gift back to church, and place it under the tree. (If it is a monetary gift please turn it in to the office.)

Thank you for sharing God's love!



Results of Congregational Survey of Generosity

Taken August 30, 2015

Submitted by Cam Kruse

The Year-round Stewardship team is happy to present the results of the survey of a sample of our members about "Generosity." This survey was taken as part of a study by the ELCA on generosity and how it might change over the course of a year with a year-long periodic discussion of the ways in which we can be generous. The results are very interesting and support that we are a generous community of believers. This survey will be repeated next summer to evaluate if there have been changes.

| QUESTION | RESPONSE (Frequency) | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|-------|----------------|---------------|---------|
| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | I am not sure | Missing |
| 1. I believe everything I have comes from God. | 0 | 2 | 12 | 45 | 2 | 8 |
| 2. I believe everything I have belongs to God. | 0 | 2 | 15 | 41 | 2 | 9 |
| 3. I have made a personal commitment to give of my time, talents and treasures. | 1 | 2 | 28 | 26 | 3 | 9 |
| 4. I am a generous person. | 0 | 1 | 40 | 20 | 1 | 7 |
| 5. I understand the mission and priorities of my congregation. | 0 | 1 | 27 | 36 | 1 | 4 |
| 6. I believe my congregation is fulfilling its vision and mission. | 0 | 2 | 24 | 38 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. I understand where the offerings I my congregation go. | 0 | 1 | 26 | 34 | 5 | 3 |
| 8. I can connect the mission of my congregation with the mission of the ELCA. | 0 | 3 | 27 | 24 | 11 | 4 |
| 9. I believe growing toward a tithe (giving 10 percent of income) is a basic faith practice. | 1 | 9 | 31 | 20 | 4 | 4 |
| 10. I am striving toward tithing or beyond. | 1 | 13 | 28 | 19 | 4 | 4 |
| 11. I give freely of what God has first given to me. | 0 | 6 | 42 | 17 | 1 | 3 |
| 12. My gratitude for God's blessings in my life continues to grow. | 0 | 0 | 20 | 45 | 1 | 3 |
| 13. I believe my sharing of God's blessings is a privilege. | 0 | 1 | 24 | 41 | 0 | 3 |
| 14. I regularly experience "abundant joy" in my role as a steward of God's blessings. | 0 | 7 | 33 | 21 | 4 | 4 |
| 15. I am comfortable talking with others about my financial giving. | 3 | 38 | 14 | 3 | 8 | 3 |
| 16. I am comfortable talking with others about their financial giving. | 5 | 44 | 8 | 1 | 8 | 3 |
| 17. I see a spirit of gratitude and generosity in my congregation. | 0 | 0 | 18 | 47 | 1 | 3 |
| 18. I am comfortable telling others about my congregation's mission. | 1 | 5 | 30 | 27 | 3 | 3 |
| 19. I understand my giving is part of my response to God's call for mission. | 1 | 1 | 32 | 30 | 2 | 3 |
| 20. I support my congregation's efforts to grow Mission Support to the synod. | 0 | 2 | 39 | 21 | 4 | 3 |
| 21. Are you an active leader in this congregation? | Yes = 34 | | No=31 | | Missing=6 | |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 22. For how many years have you worshiped regularly at this congregation? | Less than 1 year = 1, 1 to 3 years = 13, 4 to 6 years = 7, 7 to 9 years = 4, 10 years or more = 41, Missing = 3 |
| 23. How often do you attend worship? | Usually every week = 44, 2 or 3 times a month = 18, Once a month = 2, Less than once a month = 2, Special occasions only = 0, Missing = 3 |
| 24. Please indicate your gender. | Female = 43 Male = 20 |
| 25. Please indicate your age. | Under 18 yrs. = 1, 18-30 yrs. = 3, 31-45 yrs. = 11, 46-60 yrs. = 18 61-75 yrs. = 20, Over 75 yrs. = 11 |
| 26. In the past year, in what ways do you think you have grown as a steward? | <p>More contributions to local charities, i.e.. "Neighbors." -- Have been giving more of myself and financially to organizations that the church supports. -- I have not changed. -- IDEK -- Mindful awareness. -- Member of Church Council and supported our missions. -- Increased giving. Been more active in church related activities. - I have become more aware of the impact my giving makes. -- I have started to lead the Stewardship and Evangelism ministry teams as a co-chair. -- A stronger willingness to be a committed giver. -- For joy and in thankfulness. -- Being more aware of others needs and ways to support. -- My giving was established years ago - fairly generous. -- Expanded the amount of time I spend on social justice issues, particularly working with State legislators to improve our laws. -- Increased financial giving and sharing of my time. -- Watching and participating in changes within my faith community. -- Continuing to be generous, even when life's circumstances change. -- Some of my childhood traumas are fading. Seeing other people struggle - reaching out to them - helps me forgive the me I used to hate myself for being. Reaching out to other strugglers heals me. -- I see God in everything way easier than I used to.</p> |

Missions Update

SOCKS & TOPS

By Tom and Judy Thompson



Several members have asked if we are taking socks to Arizona and Mexico this winter: the answer is Yes! We will also take gently used "ball caps". Socks should be smaller adult male sizes, a cotton blend is best. The socks should be new as worn socks wear out in a few hours in harsh desert conditions. Caps need to be in dark colors. Knit caps are okay, too, as desert nights are very cold in the winter, with immigrants needing care for hypothermia. (By afternoon, it will be the opposite.)

Whatever your beliefs are about immigration policy, the people we met last winter were desperate for a safer life for their families. Many are fleeing abject poverty, others, fear of kidnapping and extortion.

The humanitarian groups in Arizona, led by UCC and Presbyterian churches, do several types of work: rescue, advocacy, policy, and reuniting remains with family. We are grateful for your prayers and contributions. If you have questions we are more than happy to discuss this work with you.



ELCA WORLD HUNGER

By Zella Vandervort

Nearly 1 billion of our neighbors – one in eight people in our world today – live in poverty. As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), we are called to respond. Working with our neighbors in the United States and in nearly 60 countries around the world, ELCA World Hunger starts by listening to the needs of our neighbors and getting their ideas to break the cycle of hunger and poverty. Then we work alongside them to make those dreams a reality. From microloans to health clinics, water wells to animal husbandry programs, your gifts to ELCA World Hunger support innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger. And they don't stop there. We engage Lutherans in advocacy and hunger education to act and speak in ways that can make a difference. In 2015, our goal is to raise \$22.5 million to support programs in the United States and those identified by our global partners.

Here at Amazing Grace, between services starting Sunday, November 21st through December 20th, we will be selling Fair Trade Chocolate, Coffee, and other gift items in support of Fair Trade and ELCA World Hunger.

NEIGHBORS INC.

Love Your Neighbor Holiday Program

Submitted by Lisa Barnhart

Love Your Neighbor supplements the resources of families whose holiday might otherwise be meager and serve as a clearinghouse, bringing together the generosity of the community and directing it in an orderly way to assist area families. Love Your Neighbor is made possible by community support and thousands of volunteer hours. Activity in the program starts in early November. The Neighbors' holiday program responds to the needs of the season with new toys and clothing for children. Our Love Your Neighbor holiday program is a unique opportunity to share in a meaningful way. As a community-based program all gifts remain in the community to brighten the holiday of our neighbors. Donations can be dropped off in the collection bins at church and will be delivered to Neighbors, Inc. for you!

Suggested gift items:

New clothing items are needed: Socks, Underwear –boxers, Hats, Waterproof mittens, Scarves

~~~ Infant to adult sizes ~~~

Common requests for toys are: Lego's- both boys and girls (all building blocks), art supplies for older kids, action figures, iTunes cards, craft kits, remote control cars/planes, basketballs, soccer balls, footballs, earrings, science kits, anything princess and/or Dora, Elmo toys, learning toys

Gifts for teens include: hair supplies, billfold, cosmetics, bath/body products, grooming items, gift certificates, basketball, soccer and football. Gifts certificates for teens.

### Adopt A Family and Adopt A Senior

You are assigned a specific family for which you will shop, and will be given each person's first name, age, gender, size and most needed clothing items, colors they like and games or toys they are excited about. We provide the number of family members for those who wish to include a holiday meal. Even though you will not actually meet the family involved, many have found this to be a particularly personal and meaningful way of sharing Christmas.

For more information on these programs, please call 651-272-1101

## Fair Trade Coffee and Chocolate for Sale!

November 21 — December 20

100% of all profits go to  
World Hunger



## Concert Opportunity

Neighbors, Inc: The Woodbury Chorus and Orchestra will present "Te Deum -- We Praise Thee O God" at 4:00 pm on November 8, 2015 at St Stephen's Lutheran Church, 1575 Charlton, West St. Paul, MN. This concert of orchestral and choral music will feature songs of Praise to God in a variety of settings. The concert is free and no tickets are required. There will be a free will offering during the program to benefit Neighbors, Inc.

# Business Management Ministry Update

## AGLC Treasury Update

### AGLC Financial Summary through September 2015

Prepared by Tim Sanborn, Treasurer

- ❖ September 2015 Income was -\$6,885 under budget, and the last 2 months are a combined -\$16,136 under budget. For the year, Income is -\$21,472.
- ❖ Expenses are \$26,072 under budget, largely because each Ministry Team is curbing their expenses.

|                   |                 |               |                  |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| Sept. Income:     | \$27,415        | YTD Income:   | \$296,928        |
| Sept. Expense:    | <u>\$35,268</u> | YTD Expense:  | <u>\$295,824</u> |
| Sept. Net Income: | -\$7,853        | YTD Net Inc.: | \$1,104          |

Monthly financial fluctuations are not unusual, and are to be expected in our homes, our organizations, and in our churches. Unfortunately, ours are trending down at the end of the year as our window of opportunity to rectify the situation is quickly closing. To address this challenge of meeting the budget goals we set as a congregation less than a year ago, it will require our collective efforts.

## Properties Management News

### Did You Know?

Submitted by Norm Goetzke

Did you know that the cross on the roof has been cleaned and protected? The process began on Outside Clean Up Day with Stef Bailis. A huge thank you to the Bob and Chris Hunter family for completing the cleaning of the bird droppings off the cross and installing bird spikes to keep the crows off! This is the type of generosity and action that makes Amazing Grace so exciting! Bob and his sons worked the better part of a Saturday to accomplish the task. You will see some shiny copper areas on the cross, but over time, those areas will disappear to match the dark patina on the cross. Since the crows can no longer perch on the cross, it is recommended that you do not park your cars under the parking lot lights! A huge thank you as well to all those who helped take care the gardens and prepare them for winter.



# Council Corner

By Jim Zentner  
Council President

In this issue of the newsletter you are going to be reading quite a bit of news about the budget and some things we are doing to make giving easier and doing it in different and unique ways. I want to share with you something we have done or are proposing to do budget wise that we have not done since I have been part of this faith community.

In my work life, it was not unusual for the organization I was working for to revise its budget as the year went along. It was a way to reflect what was happening with reflect to the income and expense we were experiencing. At the October meeting of the Church Council, I suggested that we need to do this at AGLC. For a variety of reasons this year, our income and our expenses are running below what we originally budgeted. Because of this, I believe that we need to reflect this. So what you will begin to see is a new number for our anticipated income and therefore our expenses for 2015. As far as I know, this has not been done at AGLC. The past couple of years we have not had to do this. But whether we are ahead or behind with respect to income and expenses, I believe this process is a good one to adopt and practice.

What you will see going forward as the 2016 budget is being prepared and proposed is a budget that may be either less than what was adopted for this current year or fairly close to the same budget. That does not mean that there is not an increase in our request for income and expense. There will in fact be an increase proposed. We will be trying to make our staff pay closer to what the recommendations of the ELCA are for similar staff. These recommendations unfortunately are at the low end of the scale but we believe we should at least be on

the scale. The ministry teams will be wrestling with how to carry out their priorities with about the same amount of resources at a time when costs are always rising.

What does this mean for each of us? It means that we need to think and reflect deeply on the importance our faith community plays in our lives. What do each of us receive when we are part of a faith community like Amazing Grace and equally important, what does God ask of us with respect to our generosity toward each other and to our neighbors? The one thing none of us on Council or any of the Ministry Teams likes to do is set a budget and then have to begin to reduce it. But that is the reality for this year. My hope and prayer is that we don't have to do this again. I am also reminded by Sue Grundhoffer of the Stewardship/Evangelism Team that while our financial giving may not be up, the time all of you are giving is up and for that we need to say a big AMEN. That is how we make this faith community work and how we Join God At Work in the World.

God's Blessing to Each of You,  
Jim Zentner



## Be the Change You Want to See in Other People

By Pastor Chris Becker

Conflict is inevitable, right? We face it every day. Conflict with others and conflict within ourselves. Sometimes it is so strong that it causes us to see the other as evil and moves us to want to punish the other person. Most likely it causes us to take the attitude of "We are not going to talk about it anymore."

Pastor Julie and I attended the annual Bishop's Theological Conference where the theme of conflict was the source of our Bible study time and the topic of the main speaker Susan Nienaber. As the church we have lived through and are even

still living through times in conflict. Like I said earlier, conflict is inevitable. The question remains, “How will we deal with the conflict in our life?”

If you are like me you choose to avoid it as much as possible and even suppress it. So how does that work for you? It certainly doesn't reduce my anxiety or stress. So what other ways can we find and choose to use that are more positive in addressing conflict in our lives? Susan Nienaber gave us three steps to take.

First, learn to manage your own anxiety. “Practice being present in the room.” Many times I have been more in tune with my emotions during a conflictual situation. I get mad. I get upset. I get angry. This causes me to stop listening and to become more and more entrenched into thinking only about me. In order to be “present in the room”, I rehearse in my mind what the issue really is and how I might get in the way of addressing this in a healthy way. I take an inventory of my own reaction. It allows me to walk into conflict rather than avoid it.

Second, sometimes things get better and we do not know why. Now this is hard for me as a person who is always searching for the “why”. I figure that if I can only find the answer to that question I can regulate, even control, the next situation and all conflict will be eliminated. As a person of faith I am in awe of how the Spirit of God shows up and brings healing and reconciliation, even at those times I have no clue how it happened. I am simply humbled and grateful. Stop over analyzing and give thanks to God.

Third, realize that the very gift of self is making a difference. Our natural tendency is to avoid conflict. That means we run to our isolation mode. But what if we are willing to remain close to the individual or situation that causes us conflict? I am not saying that we not address the issues around the conflict, but what if, by simply offering our presence, we tell the other person, “I am not afraid of this. I am not going to run away from this.” You may not have the solutions or even any idea of what the next step should be, but you are willing to be present.

Susan Nienaber gave an illustration that helped me understand the impact of conflict on our relationships. She spoke of two people who

were in conflict with each other. Their choice was to avoid the issue. This caused them to pull apart (“We don't want to talk about it”). That gap created from their choice was filled with negative beliefs, assumptions, and finally conclusions about the other.

Each week we confess that we have done things and have not done things which have caused harm in our relationship with God and with others. We hear some powerful words that God is willing to forgive all of that. May that forgiveness lead each of us to lives that are able to address the conflicts we are experiencing and to trust in the healing power of God's Spirit.

## SERMON PODCASTS NOW AVAILABLE!

By Pastor Julie Wright

### *Missed Church? At the Cabin? Bad Weather?*

If you missed church but still want to connect with the community at Amazing Grace, there are now two ways to connect – through a DVD of the service or by podcast!



**What is a podcast?** It's an audio recording of the sermon that's in a digital, downloadable format.

On the website, look for this podcast symbol. If you click on this symbol, you can download podcasts to your Apple iTunes account or you can go to the Sermon Archive page and click the headphones icon to listen.



To find a podcast, go to our website at [aglcigh.org](http://aglcigh.org) and then scroll down to **Recent Sermons**.

**Welcome to Amazing Grace Lutheran Church**

Mission: Joining God at Work in the World!

Worship: Join us for worship

Calendar: What's going on

New here?: About us...

**Recent Sermons**

**Photo Galleries**

**I Never Expected This**  
September 20, 2015  
by Pastor Christopher Becker

Summer Servants 2015

Vacation Bible School 2015

View older sermons by scrolling all the way to the bottom of the home page and clicking on **Sermons**.

If you prefer a DVD of the entire worship service, they are now available each week on the welcome table in the entryway. Arrangements can also be made to deliver a DVD to members or “snowbirds”. If interested in a DVD, please contact Norm Goetzke.

## Fellowship Events



### Women's Christmas Brunch

Saturday, December 12th  
10:30—12:30 p.m.

We'll soon be busy with preparations for the Christmas season. It can get hectic! Take time out to recharge yourself and gather for good food, conversation, and carols at the annual Women's Christmas Brunch. The date is December 12 from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm. There will be an ornament exchange and gifts will be collected for Neighbors Inc. A \$5 donation will be collected to help cover expenses with the surplus gifted to Neighbors Inc. Watch for a sign-up sheet. If you're willing to help with food and/or preparations for the brunch or have questions, please contact Barb Malamen at.

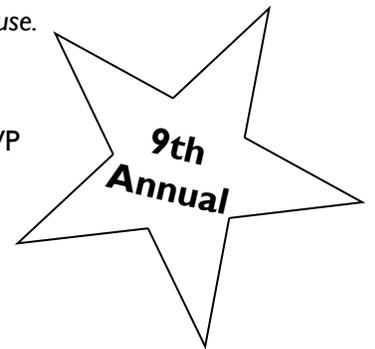
### Holiday Brunch for those 55 and older

Sunday, December 6th  
12 noon at the Pool and Yacht Club

Includes: Brunch, Coffee, Tax, and Gratuity  
\$20 payable in advance

*(Make checks out to Pool and Yacht Club and give to Barb Henke or Nancy Kruse. Additional purchases made that day are payable then.)*

Deadline for payment and RSVP  
is November 29th!  
Contact: Barb Henke at or  
Nancy Kruse.



## Save the Dates and Join Us!!



# DEADLINE

Just a reminder that annual  
reports are due on  
December 15th!

**AMAZING  
GRACE**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

7160 South Robert Trail  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077  
Phone: 651-455-0093  
Address Service Requested



Amazing Grace Lutheran Church  
Joining God at Work in the World!  
All are welcome!!



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[www.aglcigh.org](http://www.aglcigh.org)

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Administrator—Angy Thelemann:  
[athelemann@aglcigh.org](mailto:athelemann@aglcigh.org)

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Building Supervisor—  
Norm Goetzke: [ngoetzke@aglcigh.org](mailto:ngoetzke@aglcigh.org)

Worship Musician: Brad Pipal  
Sanctuary Choir Director: Susan Young  
His Harmony Choir Director: Susan Young  
Pianist: Linda Kleven  
King's Kids Choir Director: Angy Thelemann

Sunday School Coordinator—  
Linda Becker: [lbecker@aglcigh.org](mailto:lbecker@aglcigh.org)

Vacation Bible School Co-Coordinators—  
Lynn Waska: [lwaska@aglcigh.org](mailto:lwaska@aglcigh.org)  
Amanda Vesta

**Main Office Hours:**

(Typically)  
Monday: Working Offsite  
Tuesday—Friday: 8:30 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

**Deadlines:**

The newsletter article deadline  
is always on the 15th of the month. Bulletin  
announcements or additions are due on  
Wednesdays.