



AMAZING
GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

MARCH 2016

@The Intersection by Pastor Julie Wright

Welcome to my corner of the monthly Amazing Grace newsletter, which I have named “@ The Intersection”. **@ The Intersection** examines the joys and challenges of following in the way of Jesus at all the intersections of our lives. God meets us in all our roles and relationships, challenges, hopes and failures. God meets us “in life, in death, in life beyond death”¹ and everywhere in between. As your pastor, I enjoy coming along for the ride as together we discover the life of faith, remembering that the love of God will see us through anything (absolutely anything!) that comes our way. This is the life of faith: living in a way that honors God, serves our neighbors, and invites enemies to become friends. Welcome to **@ The Intersection**.

Too Busy To Help?

In a famous study in the 1970s by Princeton Theological Seminary, students who were studying to become pastors and church leaders were invited to give a speech about either a) careers; or b) the story of the Good Samaritan (**Luke 10:25-37**). Before their appointment to speak, students met at Building “A” and were told what they were going to speak about and then were told either they were a.) in a huge hurry – going to be late; b.) in a little bit of a hurry; c.) not in a hurry at all.

“I’m Late, I’m Late for a very important date,
No time to say hello. Goodbye.
I’m late, I’m late, I’m late, and when I wave,
I lose the time I save.”

—White Rabbit in the Disney
Musical “Alice in Wonderland” (1951)



Walking from Building A to Building B, each participant noticed a person laying in the alley who was in need (sick? injured? intoxicated?). What happened next was shocking. What the study found is that the more hurried the participants, the least likely they were to help the stranger in the alley. There was no difference between participants’ responses based on the topic of their speech. But the most hurried students, only 10% helped the stranger. (And these are seminary students!) Of the least hurried students, 63% stopped to help.

Hurried ↑ likelihood of helping ↓

This Lent as we continue our series, “Busy: Reconnecting with an Unhurried God” I think about our busy, often over-scheduled lives. And I think about our American propensity for being “on time” for everything. (I’m always early for everything, but as my daughter reminds me – it’s good to relax *a little*.)

On Ash Wednesday, while working out, I fractured my wrist. It was not expected, that’s for sure! But I must say, it has slowed me down a bit. It has forced me to be still and to be more compassionate with those who have limited mobility. As we make our way through Lent, consider with me:

- What might it feel like to slow down a bit -- to look around and truly see one another, listen carefully, and be present?
- How much joy might we notice?



- How much more compassion might we have for one another, our families, maybe even ourselves?
- As Lent continues, what helps you to slow down and reconnect with our un-hurried God?
- What spiritual practices allow you to pause > reflect > repeat?

This month, we will travel with Jesus to the cross. It is there, at the foot of the cross that we will meet Jesus as he breathes his last breath. It is in the garden that we will welcome Easter, when God breathes new life into all of creation. If we pause, what might God help us to see?

¹Canadian Creed (1968)

Worship and Music Ministry Team

by Louise Lentz, Worship and Music Chair



PRAYER VIGIL

Easter!! A joyous worship celebration of resurrection and new life. We focus on the empty cross and look forward to spring flowers popping up from the cold ground. To help prepare our hearts and minds for the powerful celebration, we are again holding a Prayer Vigil on Saturday morning before Easter from 9:00 am to 12 noon. The Vigil offers quiet time to lift your hearts to God, reflect and pray in our Sanctuary. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board listing 30 minute prayer slots.

EASTER SINGERS

With the coming of Easter, we are also planning additional music as part of our joyous worship celebration. Singers are invited to be a part of Sanctuary Choir for Easter. Connect with Barb Forthun, or just show up at Wednesday choir rehearsal right after worship and join in.



SANCTUARY REFRESH

As we move into a new season we change paraments, which serve to adorn the worship space and call attention to the nature of the season or festival being celebrated. At our April meeting the Worship & Music Ministry Team will be discussing recruiting a team of folks who enjoy interior decorating to enhance our worship by "refreshing" our worship space. This might include re-arranging the plants, using fabrics, decorating for the seasons, etc. If you are interested in this creative opportunity, please connect with Louise Lentz.

3RD THROUGH 7TH GRADE WORSHIP TEAM

In January we held a listening session with parents of children age 3 through 7th grade to gather feedback on our children's choir. As a result of that discussion, it was decided to establish a team to generate ideas and create experiences for 3rd through 7th graders to build friendships, connect with each other, and work together by participating in worship. The team will develop and explore ideas for opportunities to be involved in worship services through music, drama, and other activities; for example, ushering, leading prayers, communion helpers, etc. We anticipate two to three 60 minute meetings in the Spring and early Summer to generate ideas that can be carried out in the Fall of 2017. At that point the focus would shift to planning and scheduling events. We need parents of 3rd through 7th graders to join the team. If you are interested in participating in this way, please contact Louise Lentz, Pastor Julie, or Angy Thelemann in the Church office (651-455-0093).





HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday: April 9—Shout Hosanna!

8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday: April 13—We Remember...

7:00 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion and Individual Forgiveness

Good Friday: April 14—The Cross...

7:00 p.m. Tenebrae Worship

Prayer Vigil: Saturday, April 15—We Wait...

9:00 a.m.—12 noon

(Sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex.)

Easter Sunday: April 16—He is Risen! Alleluia!

8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Celebration Worship with Holy Communion



APRIL WORSHIP

DATE	THEME	LESSONS	WORSHIP SERVICES
April 2 <i>Lent 5</i> <i>AGLC 10th Anniversary</i>	Jesus— the Resurrection and Life	Ezekiel 37:1-14 Psalm 130 John 11:1-45	8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion
Wednesday—April 5 <i>Midweek Lenten Service</i>	Courage	Ecclesiastes 3:9-13	7:00 pm Worship
April 9 <i>Palm Sunday</i>	Symbols of our New Hero—a Cross, a Towel and a Basin of Water	Isaiah 50:4-9a Philippians 2:1-11 Matthew 27:11-14, 24-26, 45-54	8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion
Thursday—April 13 <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	A Passover Meal	Matthew 26:17-35 Psalm 22	7:00 pm Worship with Holy Communion
Friday—April 14 <i>Good Friday</i>	Into the Tomb	Isaiah 52:13-53:12 Mark 14:66-72 Mark 15:16-39 John 18:1-19:42	7:00 pm Worship
April 16 <i>Easter Sunday</i>	Go and Tell!	Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 28:1-10	8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion
April 23 <i>Easter 2</i>	Seeing and Believing	Acts 2:14a, 22-32 Psalm 16 John 20:19-31	8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion
April 30 <i>Easter 3</i>	Along “The Way”	Acts 2:14a, 36-41 Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 Luke 24:13-35	8:00 and 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion

Holy Week? What is that all about?

The week before Easter is an important time in the life of Jesus. The drama and the intensity mount as we find ourselves right in the middle of some powerful moments in Jesus' life.

Palm Sunday or what is sometimes called Passion Sunday has us revisit the time when the crowds gathered to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem right before the Passover. They had heard about Jesus and wanted to make him their new leader. We gather with palm branches as a reenactment of the branches laid down on the ground to welcome Jesus. But the tone changes as we realize that Jesus is going to die.

Maundy Thursday takes us to that Upper room where Jesus took bread and broke it and shared wine with his disciples. We hear the story of Jesus washing his disciples' feet and realize that again he is giving us a new commandment (Maundy means new command) to be a servant – that is what Jesus demonstrates even while he knows he will be arrested and killed.

During the Maundy Thursday worship service we come together to confess our sins and receive forgiveness as a community. We are then invited to come forward if we wish to receive individual forgiveness. For those who choose not to come forward for individual forgiveness, it can be a quiet time for self-reflection and prayer. We began on Ash Wednesday hearing of our sins and throughout the 40 days of Lent have acknowledged those sins – now we hear God's verdict – "You are forgiven".

At the end of the service we witness the arrest of Jesus. We do so by watching the altar being stripped bare and everything taken away. Jesus is now in the hands of his accuser. The service ends without a benediction and we leave in silence because the Good Friday service is a continuation of the arrest, trial and death of Jesus.

On **Good Friday** our tradition is to hear again the passion story of Jesus' death while the darkness of the worship space encroaches in on us, until the whole sanctuary is in total darkness. We are witnesses of a death that sets us free and we are struck by what love is really all about. As with Maundy Thursday, we leave in silence, in part because *what does one say in light of such sacrifice?*

On **Saturday** this faith community spends time waiting. We hold a prayer vigil in which members sign up for 30 minutes of time in the sanctuary offering prayers on behalf of the whole congregation, for the world, for the church and for individual needs.

This whole week is simply called Holy Week. It is a time which we reduce or eliminate other activities so that we can more fully follow the journey of Jesus to the cross.



Easter Morning Breakfast



EASTER BREAKFAST

Come and celebrate the resurrection Easter morning. Everyone is invited for a light Easter breakfast. Please sign up on the blue sheet in your bulletin so that we can plan for food and seating. Help is needed, please contact Norm Beckman or the church office if you can help. Free will offering will be collected.

Coming Sunday, May 21 Eisenmann Puppeteers—"Follow in Faith"



On Sunday, May 21, we are planning a special treat for all ages. The Eisenmann Puppeteers will be joining us for the children's message at both services and for the Sunday School hour. You won't want to miss this opportunity to hear the word of God in a different format as puppets perform Biblical and other stories.



From the Christian Education Ministry Team

Sunday School Listening Session -- Sunday, April 30 at 9:15 a.m.

Submitted by Kami Burgess and Trish Ebensteiner, Sunday School Co-coordinators

Your new Sunday School co-coordinators, Children and Youth Minister, and Lead Pastor would like to brainstorm with you!

We invite parents, current Sunday School teachers, shepherds, and anyone who is curious or interested in teaching to come on Sunday, April 30th at 9:15 a.m. in the Upper Room to brainstorm with us! Our goal is to listen to your comments and concerns about how we can improve the Sunday School Program.

Topics will include:

- Feedback on the current program
- Future ideas for the program
- Ways to encourage, communicate, and expand the program



Help is still needed!!!

There are still teaching rotations that have not been filled for April and May. Please contact one of us or check out the Sunday school bulletin board and sign up today!!!

Kami Burgess
Trish Ebensteiner

kburgess@aglcigh.org
tebensteiner@aglcigh.org



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Submitted by Dre Noble and Amanda Vesta,
VBS Co-Coordinators

Youth...Parents... Grandparents... Neighbors... Friends!

Come assist and help the children strengthen their faith. Volunteer workers are needed to help run this year's exciting VBS summer program, "Glow in the Dark". Come join the fun for a few hours or a few days!

HELP IS NEEDED IN MANY AREAS:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Classroom Assistants | Breakfast Supervision |
| Afternoon Rotation Help | Morning Supervision |
| Lunch Supervision | Outdoor Supervision |
| Field Trip Supervision | Decorating/Set-up |
| Clean-up/Tear-down | |

Questions? Contact Dre Noble at dnable@aglcigh.org or Amanda Vesta at avesta@aglcigh.org

REGISTER NOW!

Registration and volunteer sign-up forms are available at www.aglcigh.org.

March 19 – April 15: \$60 per child
 April 16 - May 30: \$70 per child
 May 31 - June 19: \$80 per child

**Register by June 3rd to
guarantee your child gets
the correct shirt size.**

From the Youth and Family Ministry Team

EASTER IS UPON US by Tim Marburger, Children and Youth Minister

We've been wading through Lent confessing on a weekly basis, and now Christ will die for our sins. Are we joyful? Do we take it for granted? Are we looking for the Easter eggs and bunnies? Christ came to Earth as we heard in our lessons on March 12 from John chapter 3, verses 16 and 17.

¹⁶For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

- Do we think of this each day as we head to school or the office or daycare?
- Do we remember this when taking our ACTs or auditioning for a play or building a robot?
- How do we in turn, turn that around to help those around us?
- How are we the "LIGHT?"

Think about it....



AN EXCITING START!

We have started having some youth activities over the past months. First, in January, we had a bowling extravaganza with the middle/high schoolers. We started with pizza and then headed over to Drakula's for several fun games of bowling.



In February, the elementary kids went to a play at SteppingStone Theatre, entitled Ruby Bridges. There were 15 in our group, and it was a fun time.

In addition to these group activities, I've been blessed to be invited to numerous extracurricular activities (4-H, band concerts, choir concerts, a robotic tournament, basketball games) just to name a few. Please let me know when you're involved in activities as I'd like to be there if possible.



Children and Youth Advisory Team

We started a Children/Youth Advisory Team in February. This group of youth/parents and interested adults will help guide our ministry. We anticipate meeting no more than once a month for about one hour. We have met a couple of times now and have begun discussing various topics like Sunday School attendance and is there a "good" time for youth to meet? We will continue to discuss many more issues.

If this is of interest to you, please contact me. My email is tmarburger@aglcigh.org. You can also reach out with your input to the various members who have signed on to help. Presently the members of the group are:

Lynn Waska	Mark Morgan	Pam Rutten	Robyn Noble	Joseph W.
Abby G.	Caleigh T.	Tim Grundhoffer	Hailee W.	

Gerten's Spring Garden Plants

Spring Garden orders started on March 12 and must be completed by April 2. They will be delivered on Friday, May 12.



- **April 2** PIZZA, TRIVIA, AND PRIZES 12 noon – 2 pm
AGLC Grades 9 - 12 will welcome five other congregations (All Saint's, Luther Memorial, Bethesda, Good Shepherd and St. Luke's) for a time of Pizza, Trivia and Prizes.
- **April 28 – 29** MOONLIGHT MADNESS Grade 6 – 9
(in combination with several other congregations)
- **June 19 – 22** VBS
- **June 26 – 29** SUMMER SERVANTS 9 am – 4 pm Grades 5 – 12
(in combination with several other congregations)
- **July 14 – 16** CAMP WAPO SEEDS Completed Grades 2-3
- **July 16 – 21** CAMP WAPO Completed Grades 4-9

Notes from Stewardship Ministry Team



Greetings from the Co-chairs of the Stewardship Ministry Team – Todd Erickson and Joleen Ketterling

As we co-lead the Stewardship Team in the upcoming 24 months, we are excited and blessed to work together to support our call to be faithful, welcoming and generous as we uphold AGLC’s mission to join God at work in the world.

Our committed and talented team includes Lynn Waska, Anne DePalma, Diane Feely and Pastor Julie Wright. As a team, our focus the first half of 2017 will be developing and presenting a stewardship lesson for new members, mission calendar planning, and

developing criteria and a process for evaluating missions as a part of our strategic plan. We will communicate our progress regularly.

We acknowledge we are new to this ministry team, but are excited to grow and learn together. We welcome ideas from you and encourage you to feel free to reach out to anyone on our team at any time.

Missions Updates...



Neighbor’s Inc.

Submitted by Lisa Barnhart

Thank you to all who contributed to the March Food Drive! Totals are not all in yet, so please watch for them in next months newsletter. Donations will be accepted through Sunday, April 2, so there is still time to bring items in!

Notes from Evangelism Ministry Team

Fellowship



~~OWLS~~ – Older Outstanding, Wiser, Lutherans

Submitted by Lynn Zentner

On the third Thursday of each month, you are invited to join us at 11:00 a.m. for a “pot-luck” lunch and some fun together. Coffee, tea, and water will be provided. **Please bring a dish to pass.** We will gather on **April 20** at church in the Upper Room from 11:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Come alone or bring a friend for some fun and relaxation.

Business Management Ministry Team

Cell Tower Update

Submitted by Eric and Heather Tautges, Business Management Co-chairs

Over a year ago, Amazing Grace was approached by a land management company that wished to lease a portion of our land for the purpose of erecting a cell phone tower. We agreed to allow site surveys and to be open to discussing details of such an arrangement.

Remember the “CAUTION” tape staked out on the northwest corner of the building? That was the proposed location of the possible cell tower. We took note of the many comments from the congregation regarding this location. Primarily, we heard that the location was too close to the front of the building. It also would have prevented us from potential expansion of the sanctuary in the future.

In December we were presented with a proposed contract. The Business Management Ministry Team’s review of the contract left many questions that needed clarification, and we responded in January. The greatest concern of the team was if we could have any say in the location of the tower. We have been informed that due to the city’s setback requirements, future right-of-way expansion, and property elevation, this is the only location that would work for a cell tower.

As a result, we are not recommending to continue negotiations regarding a cell tower. We shared this with the Council on 3/13, and they agreed with this decision. If you have questions, please feel free to contact us or any of the BMMT: Cyndi Berg, Norm Goetzke, Larry Kinney, Bruce Klopfleisch, Angy Thelemann, Jim Zentner, and Pastor Julie.



Council Corner



AGLC Financial Summary through February 2017

Prepared by Jared Hovick, Treasurer

Year to date Income:	\$58,379 (\$10,596 under budget – 15.4% unfavorable)
Year to date Expense:	\$67,912 (\$1,063 under budget – 1.5% favorable)
Year to date Net Income:	-\$9,532

- ❖ Through two months of 2017, Amazing Grace is slightly better than budget with its ministry teams, staff and building expenses but is under budget on income.
- ❖ February’s General Offering (online, envelopes and plate offering) was nearly \$12,500 under budget. While it is early in the year, please be mindful of the income shortage as you consider your gifts in the future.
- ❖ The numbers above exclude Other Income (Interest Income, Gain/Loss on Investments) and Other Expenses (Dedicated In/Out and Activity Accounts).

FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Annie Morgan, AGLC President

We installed our new lead pastor. Now what? Using our Gifts to Become a First-Call Congregation

At our recent council retreat, the Amazing Grace Council discussed the great honor we have been given as a congregation. More specifically, we have begun to consider our role as a congregation who has **been called by God to install a first-call pastor as our lead pastor**. We believe this to be a very purposeful call that uses the strengths and gifts of our people in a meaningful way. We may ask ourselves:

What are we called to do/be as members of the Body of Christ calling a first-term lead pastor?

Help, support, offer encouragement and prayer. It might seem like this would be obvious, but let's consider doubling down on offering help, support, encouragement, and prayer to a new lead pastor and to the staff and leaders navigating a transition. Think about a time you were in a new school, beginning a new job, or taking on a new challenge. Especially in the Body of Christ, when one part thrives, the whole system is positively impacted.

Give space for experimentation and trial and error. Every leader seeks to find her or his own voice or style. For a new leader, there is on-going development and discovery. We have an opportunity to gracefully provide feedback. Through this time, we get to experience new things and try them on for ourselves. Amazing Grace has long been a church family that embraces differences. Our diverse thinking, preferences, and desires for the church will help us all continue to adapt and thrive.

Be aware of our grieving. Change can incite stages of grieving like denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance; and they can show up in any order at any time for any one. While, as a council, we continue to discuss every stage of our pastoral transition in order that we can plan and respond in the best interests of the congregation, we also recognize that everyone within this Body of Christ is on her or his own journey through change. We can give ourselves and each other the grace and space we need to take our own journey toward acceptance.



Two years ago, Amazing Grace was blessed to participate and celebrate in the ordination of Pastor Julie, and now she has been called to baptize, teach, and forgive sins; proclaim the good news; and preside at the Lord's supper as a first-call lead pastor. Will we honor our responsibilities as a congregation of a first-call pastor?

Let us say together: YES, with the help of God!

You can probably point to examples of how this works in the workplace or in school. It is often the most dependable, stable, mature, or trustworthy employee that is asked to mentor or participate in orientation of new employees. It is both an honor and a responsibility!

Update from Interim Pastor Roger Hardy

Again, I say 'thank you' for your warm reception of me as your Interim Pastor. Both as a congregation and as individual persons you have been receptive to my presence among you.

I continue to work in the three areas of my purpose here: (1) Care for members of Amazing Grace during this time of transition. I have met individually with some members to listen to your stories, your thoughts, and your concerns. On March 11 at the congregational council retreat I led a study on the book *A DOOR SET OPEN*, by Peter Steinke. This study centered around understanding the congregation as a system among many other systems: (2) Care and support for new lead pastor. I meet weekly with Pastor Julie to listening to her as she processes this new call and I offer at times my observations of what



I think might be helpful to a first call pastor; and (3) Reviewing and assessing the models of leadership through one-on-one interviews with council members, staff, and ministry teams leaders. I have done many of these and I seek to complete my interviews by Easter time.

This position is part-time, based on 24 hours per week. I have averaged many more hours at the beginning, both as a way to enter into the congregation and because I would be gone for 2 weeks. I am still ahead on my hours. So, for my sake and for the sake of the congregation, I will be seeking to average more closely the 24 hours per week. This means that I will be less involved in some aspects of congregational life.

If you want to get in touch with me my contact information is in the Sunday bulletin or you can leave a message at church.

Peace, Pastor Roger Hardy

Meet Our Council



President
Annie Morgan



Vice President
Jennifer Rutschke



Council Secretary
Julie Linscheid



Treasurer
Jared Hovick



Worship and Music
Louise Lentz



Christian Education
Kent Rhein-Medina



Evangelism Co-chair
Kami Burgess



Evangelism Co-chair
Adam Ingalsbe



Business Management
Co-chair
Eric Tautges



Business Management
Co-chair
Heather Tautges



Stewardship Co-chair
Todd Erickson



Stewardship Co-chair
Joleen Ketterling





Let your light scatter
the darkness, and
shine within your
people here.

Prayer Vigil

Saturday, April 15
9 a.m.—12 noon

The sanctuary will be open
for prayers for our congregation,
the community, and the world.

Sign up on the Community
News bulletin board.



Pastoral Care—Focused Outreach

Servant Ministry Coordinator: Pastor Julie Wright

- Meal Coordinator: Lynda Bartlette
- Ride Coordinator: Norm Beckman
- Respite Care Coordinator: Judy Thompson
- Funeral Support Coordinator: Barb Malamen
- Personal Prayer Coordinator for Worship:
Judy Thompson

Hands and Feet Ministry—

Coordinator: Pastor Julie Wright

Prayer Chain



Prayer Concerns can be called in
to Mary Garfield .



Website:

www.aglcigh.org

Staff:

Lead Pastor—Pastor Julie Wright
jwright@aglcigh.org

Interim Pastor—Pastor Roger Hardy:
rhardy@aglcigh.org

Administrator—Angy Thelemann:
athelmann@aglcigh.org

Children and Youth Minister—Tim Marburger:
tmarburger@aglcigh.org

Finance/Office Assistant—Trudy Johnson
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Building Supervisor—Norm Goetzke:
ngoetzke@aglcigh.org

Worship Musician: Brad Pipal

Sanctuary Choir Director: Barbara Forthun
bforthun@aglcigh.org

Joyful Noise Choir Director: Angy Thelemann
athelmann@aglcigh.org

Sunday School Co-Coordinators—
Kami Burgess: kburgess@aglcigh.org
Trish Ebensteiner: tebensteiner@aglcigh.org

Vacation Bible School Co-Coordinators—
Amanda Vesta: avesta@aglcigh.org
Dre Noble: dnable@aglcigh.org

Main Office Hours:

(Typically)

Monday: Working Offsite

Tuesday—Friday: 9:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.

Deadlines:

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

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7160 South Robert Trail
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077
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Address Service Requested



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