



In this issue...

Worship & Music

- Worship and Music 3
Notes
- January Worship 4

Christian Education

- Thank You 4
- Confirmation 4
- Bible Study 4
- VBS 4
- Talk-a-Latté 4
- Sunday School 5
- Faithful Readers 5

Youth and Family

- Youth Events 6
- Fundraiser 6
- Overnight/MLK 6
- Parent Education 6
- WAPO 7
- Faith at Home 7
- Family Service 7

Fellowship Events

- Wine Tasting 8

Evangelism and Stewardship

- Thank You Sundays 8

Missions Update

- Neighbors Inc. 8
- Hospitality House 9
- Tanzania 9

Business

Management

- Cell Tower 10
- Treasury Update 10

Council Corner

- President Message 10
- Annual Meeting 11
- Strategic Planning 12
- Use of Church 13
- Family Emergency Fund 13

Connections

- Birthdays 14
- Anniversaries 14
- Prayer Chain 14
- Servant Ministry 14

Insert

- Calendar
- Ministry Leaders
- Youth Page
- Simply Giving

Blessed to be a Blessing

By Pastor Chris Becker

¹⁸But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today. Deuteronomy 8: 18

When first reading this there are some interesting things that jump out from the verse. First, it speaks of wealth. Now we do not like to speak about this publically and many of us would not necessarily say that we are wealthy no matter what website we go to figure out our place in the list of where we stand with our wealth. That is because, I believe, we only see wealth as money. But what if we heard it as it was intended— everything we have/own. What if we recognize wealth as our house and car (s) and all of our clothes and knick knacks and trips we have taken, etc.?

Second, the text says that God has given us the ability or the power to have such wealth. So now we too become part of the equation. God has given us the ability to listen, or be open to other people, to have math ability, communication skills, or organizational skills. God has given us patience to deal with crises, or intuitive thinking to solve problems, or mechanical ability to fix things. These and more are the attributes or talents that God has blessed us with so we can live healthy and productive lives.

But there is one more thing to this verse. The idea that all the power to achieve wealth is given so that we may be connected to the covenant God made with us. That covenant is found in Genesis 21:1-3.

Especially in the verse that says, “I will bless you so that you will be a blessing”. Here we learn that our wealth (possessions, money, ideas, etc.) has a purpose, a focus. We have everything we have so that we may use those gifts to bless others.

The folks at Inver Glen Senior Home helped me understand this again. They gathered their resources together and purchased a whole bunch of turkeys to give away. These seniors, with limited income and much to worry about, found it important to share

Annual Meeting January 31, 2016

We will begin the morning with **one worship service only at 9:30 a.m.** The meeting will immediately follow worship. A potluck lunch will follow the meeting. Please bring a dish to share based on the first letter of your last name.

A-H Salad
I-L Dessert
M-Z Hot Dish

If you wish to have an annual report mailed to you, please call the church office, otherwise you may pick one up in the entryway once they are finished.

what little they had so that others might be blessed.

This way of living separates us from how the world typically performs. We are not “dog- eat- dog” people. We are people who remember that we have been given a blessing so that we can be a blessing for others.

Yet we are all influenced by this growing attitude of scarcity. Scarcity sounds like this: I do not have enough, or I am not good enough, or I am afraid of what might happen. Scarcity is lifted up before us each day. Every time we hear the news about the economy it is filled with scarcity thoughts. Our political leaders know how to use this in order to create fear in us, and it is fear that produces the grip of scarcity in our lives. Scarcity dissolves trust and trust is what our faith is based on. We pray many times, “Give us this day our daily bread”, trusting that God can deliver on this request. We hear that God will provide, yet fear causes that word to be buried under the rubble of uncertainty.

But it is not just individuals who are affected by the grip of scarcity, institutions and organizations are as well. The church has for years, even as she has proclaimed God’s blessings, acted out of scarcity. Fear is behind thoughts like: we are not big enough, we do not have enough people, we do not have enough money. Those fears dominate our thoughts and actions. They make our witness weak and diminish our impact to make a different world.

As a member of this faith community I ask that you and I begin this year with a different attitude that leads us away from fear. I would ask that you and I focus on life through the lens of abundance. This doesn’t mean we will have everything we want. It does mean that we would see possibility and potential, especially within our community. In abundance we will no longer look at changes and chances of life alone. We are connected to people and those people are filled with resources. Collectively we can work better. Collectively we can resist the temptations that scarcity brings. We can build a stronger life on values like sharing, helping, caring, loving, contentment, and joy.

We will make some major decisions on January 31 at our annual meeting. We will make decisions about how we will work together to impact lives. We want to strengthen people’s relationship with Jesus. We want to create a safe and loving life for our children and youth. We want to assure those who are going through major changes in their life that they have the support they need. We want to make sure “at risk” youth in north Minneapolis and those living in poverty, as far away as China and Africa

and Guatemala, will have food and a place to sleep and an education for them to improve their life. We want to provide creative, imaginative and meaningful worship for all who seek assurance and hope in their life. We want to walk alongside those whose voice is not heard because of all the forces against them.

This will take the efforts of each and every one of us. I can’t say this enough. The time, skills and money each of us has matters as we take this journey of faith together. There will be times when each of us will need to be supported and there will be times when each of us will need to support the other. Our willingness to share our time, money and skills will be crucial as we move forward as witnesses of Jesus in the world.

One way to live out of abundance is to think in terms of regular giving, regularly giving of your time, money and skills. Being intentional goes a long way in helping to create an attitude of abundance. Being intentional encourages commitment toward something outside of us and that is where abundance leads. Blessed to be a blessing.

Included in this newsletter is information on what is called “Simply Giving”. Please read it and see if this could be a tool for you to participate more regularly in the mission of Amazing Grace.



Blessed
to Be a
Blessing

Worship and Music Ministry Notes

by Louise Lentz
Worship and Music Ministry Team Chair

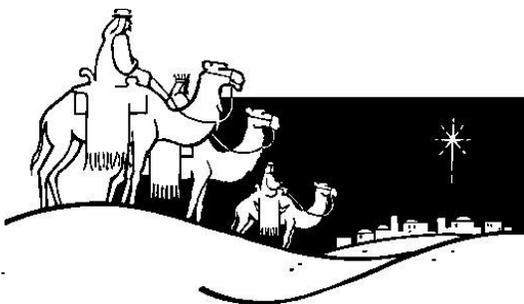
Christmas and a New Year

Once again our Sanctuary has been transformed. The royal blue paraments have been replaced with white, which calls to mind the purity of the newborn Christ, and to our light and joy in him. White is used during Christmas. It represents The Holy Trinity as an expression of joy in the mystery of the Triune God.

It is the beginning of a New Year and time for the annual "New Year's Resolutions." The Worship & Music Ministry Team is committed to developing worship opportunities that will assure you in the coming months that God is walking with you throughout this New Year.

The Lenten Planning Team is working on creating inspirational services with a relevant message during Lent. Along with each Wednesday night service, we will again appreciate the musical talents of our members during preludes for each service.

Here are a couple of great opportunities to engage in our worship in a different way:



Acolyte Coordinator

Here's your chance to work with some fantastic kids who serve as acolytes. We need someone to train new acolytes, keep an updated list of trained acolytes, and make sure the candle lighters are working properly. To volunteer or learn more, please contact Louise Lentz, Worship & Music Ministry Team Chair, or sign up on the blue sheet.

Musicians for Wednesday Lenten Services

Attention instrumentalists and singers: We will carry on the tradition of asking children (and adults) who wish to play or sing a prelude for our Wednesday evening Lenten services to contact Brad Pipal to be placed on the calendar. The dates available are February 17th and 24th, and March 2nd, 9th and 16th. The services begin at 7 pm. **Your music should be either sacred or classical.** If you are looking for appropriate music for the piano, contact Susan Young who has quite a collection of piano music for beginners through advanced musicians. Both Brad and Susan are available as accompanists.

We value your feedback. We meet the first Thursday of each month 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. You can help us achieve that goal in 2016 by sharing your ideas and thoughts on our worship experiences.

January Worship

Sunday	Theme	Lessons	Worship Services
January 3	Will this ever end?	Psalm 103:1-5 Mark 1:21-45	8:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion
January 10	Getting Carried Away	Psalm 103:6-14 Mark 2:1-22	8:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion
January 17	Head's Up!	Psalm 126 Mark 4:1-34	8:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion
January 24	On the Fringes	Psalm 131 Mark 5:21-43	8:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30 am Worship with Holy Communion
January 31 Annual Meeting	So Much Done with So Little	Psalm 122 Mark 6:1-29	ONE SERVICE ONLY 9:30 am Worship with Holy Communion

From the Christian Education Ministry Team

By Trish Ebensteiner
 Christian Education Ministry Team Chair

Thank you so much to everyone who has dedicated their time and talents to help educate our kids. We appreciate all of you so much. A special thank you to the Christian Ed Team – Merri Guggisberg, Linda Becker, Barb Malamen and Lynn Waska. You have such big hearts for this ministry and it's incredible how much time and effort you put into what you do and it does not go unnoticed! Thank you for all you do and all the help you have given me in this ministry. God bless you all!!!!



Confirmation News
 By Pastor Chris Becker

In January the confirmation class will spend time unpacking the power of love. This love is at the heart of the Good News of Jesus and demonstrates itself in both the routine and extraordinary moments of life. Though there are tough questions we need to ask: Will God's love ever run out? How does one love your enemies? Are there people or things you will never love?



What do Christians, Jews, and Muslims have in common?

By Pastor Christopher Becker

The answer can be heard on **Tuesday, January 12th at 7:00 p.m.** here at Amazing Grace. We will host a panel of a Christian Theologian from Luther Seminary, a Rabbi from Beth Jacob Synagogue in Mendota Heights and a leader of the American Muslim Association here in Inver Grove Heights. This panel will share how Abraham and Sarah are received and understood from each faith tradition. All are welcome as we learn from each other the importance of these two ancestors of faith. We will meet in the church sanctuary as part of our Bible study series on the book of Genesis. Invite a friend.



Save the Dates!

VBS 2016, *Kickin' Up Kindness*, will be held June 20-23, 2016. Registration materials and early registration will be available in February.

Three months into having this get together, it has been really fun getting to know others without any agenda. We have had great conversations and insight into those we surround ourselves with at Amazing Grace. Please feel free to join us anytime! We meet the first Sunday of the month at 6:30pm, in the Starbucks at the IGH Target store. Everyone is welcome!!!!



Talk a Latté

Sunday School NEWS

By Linda Becker, Sunday School Coordinator

Sunday School will be hopping with great classes in January.

Welcome back to the new year with **Game Day on January 3**. We will play Bible Bingo, run a variety of relay games, and end with a rousing competition of Go Fish. Let's celebrate the end of our Christmas break together with grateful hearts and a prayerful back to school send off. Activities will be appropriate for all age groups.

Spirited Feet, with teacher Heidi Crist, comes to Amazing Grace on **January 10**. Dance, stretch, jump, feel the rhythms of Christian music for an hour of joyful praise. All ages will join in the fun together. Heidi has taught classes for afternoon sessions of Vacation Bible School for several years. What a treat to welcome her back to our church under our theme of "Faith Fitness!" She will return for another class on February 7.

Thank you to the many dedicated volunteers who helped put together our Christmas program, "The First Leon." Thank you to the brave children who sang and danced their hearts out, and to those who acted the character roles and spoken narration. Thank you to the parents who supported their children with faithful attendance throughout the month, including a special Saturday practice. A special word of thanks to Sara Liegl who stepped up to take the leadership role for the program. God bless the message, there is room in the inn... room in our hearts for the baby Jesus.



FAITHFUL READERS

By Barb Malamen

So many books... Here are the books selected for the first six months of 2016. Our group gathers for discussion at Barnes & Noble Booksellers Café on Promenade in Eagan the third Sunday of the month at 6:30 pm. All are welcome. Contact person: Barb Malamen. Let's all read faithfully.

January 17—The Lawgiver by Herman Wouk The story of a diverse group of people making a movie about Moses in the present time.

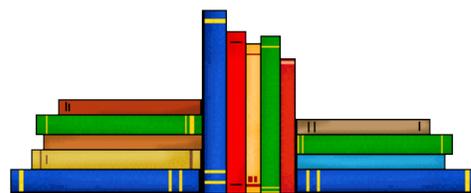
February 21—Back to Mississippi by Mary Winstead (Book in a Bag) The author's personal journey through the events that changed America in 1964.

March 20—The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawkins Rachel takes the same commuter train every morning and sees the same couple eating breakfast on their deck as she passes. Their life seems perfect until one day she sees something shocking. The train moves on immediately, but she feels she must inform the police. Was she right?

April 17—The Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown Nine Americans and their epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

May 15—Miss Hazel and the Rosa Parks League by Jonathan Odell Two women, one white, one black, and both damaged by loss of a child are drawn to each other in spite of their differences. Together they work to conquer fear and discrimination. Set in Mississippi in the 1950's.

June 19—The Secret Chord by Geraldine Brooks From shepherd to tyrant bringing the Old Testament's King David to life.



From the Youth and Family Ministry Team

Youth events? How do you know what is happening?

Stay in touch with what's happening with our youth by:

1. Checking the Youth Bulletin board (near the elevator on the main level)
2. AGLC monthly newsletter
3. Youth Room white board
4. Checking the website at agligh.org (calendar & youth tab)



Youth Mission Trip Service / Fundraiser

Kowalski's Woodbury – Carryout Fundraiser
Sunday, January 10, 2016
10am-4pm
Hope you can stop by!



Annual Overnight / MLK Day of Service

Youth (6-12th Grade) invite your elementary (3-5th) grader to join us for our Annual overnight / MLK Day of Service!

January 17-18

Sunday, 7:00 pm—Monday, 4 pm

\$25.00

Sign up on Youth Event Bulletin Board by January 10, 2016!
Service projects at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church, sleep overnight at church and Monday travel to Second Harvest and other service sites.

Invitation for adults – drivers needed for Monday!

FREE Parent Education Session

Wednesday, January 6, 2016

Log-on to Social Media

Guest Speaker; Sarah Holmboe from Youth Services Bureau

Come and learn about popular social media platforms and how to help your kids use them safely. You'll also learn strategies for managing online time and how to respond to sexting and cyberbullying.





JULY 2016 Camp Wapo Dates

(prior dates posted were incorrect)

Seeds Weekend: July 15-17, 2016

(completed 2nd & 3rd grades)

Youth Weeklong : July 17-22, 2016

(completed 4-6th grades and 7th-9th grades)

TIM Team: July 17-22, 2016

(completed 9th-12th grades)

Registration opens 1/15/2106—Your child **MUST** be registered before 3/15/16 to guarantee a spot with AGLC Youth! Watch your mailbox for additional information.

Additional Summer Youth Opportunities~

June 20-23, 2016 ~ Youth student leaders for AGLC Vacation Bible School (completed 6th-12th grades)

June 25-July 3, 2016 ~ Youth Mission Trip / Idaho Servant Adventures (completed 8th-12th grades)

August 1-4, 2016 ~New youth adventure opportunity – more info to come!

Faith at Home: God Pause

Submitted by Merri Guggisberg,
Youth and Young Adult Coordinator

Looking for spiritual refreshment directly to your inbox? Sign up for God Pause devotions that are sent daily via email sign up at <https://www.luthersem.edu/email/email.aspx?listid=7>



January Family Service Ideas

submitted by Merri Guggisberg,
Youth and Young Adult Coordinator

MLK Day of Service

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)

Date/Time:

Monday, January 18, 2016

Location:

Meet at AGLC to travel to service sites.

What:

Adult leaders are welcome to join our youth (3rd -12th grades) for a day of service. We will leave AGLC at 8:15 am and return around 3:30 pm. Our group will be serving at two locations. We are in need of adult leaders to drive and build relationships with our youth.

Ages:

Service sites – grades 3-12 and adults

Register:

Sign up on Youth Event Bulletin board by 1/10. Questions- please see Merri Guggisberg



TOGETHER

Fellowship Events



Wine Tasting Social Event

Submitted by Craig Yotter

Mark your calendars for an adult social event being held Saturday, January 30th at 7:00 p.m. Come enjoy an informal wine tasting event hosted at the home of Cam and Nancy Kruse. Information will be shared on different wines that will be available for tasting by Sunfish Cellars. Come enjoy the evening with your AGLC friends and meet some new ones! Light hors d'oeuvres will be served. A free will offering will be taken to defray the costs. A sign-up sheet will be posted in the Narthex. Co-hosted by the Henkes, Kruses, Steinke/Zimmer and Yotters. Contact Craig Yotter with questions.

Notes from Evangelism/Stewardship Team

Thank you—Gracias—Asante—谢谢 (Xièxiè)

On January 3 we will begin a new tradition at Amazing Grace. We will use the first Sunday of the month to say “thank you” to different people, to God, and for different things in our life. Our first step toward being a “thank full” person is on January 3. We will each identify someone for which we are grateful (teacher, employer, co-worker, nurse, doctor, police officer, etc.). Our hope is that each of us would think of someone who has helped us or guided us in life.

On the first Sunday the rest of the year we will express our thankfulness in a variety of ways so if you have any ideas for future Sundays please let us know by writing it down and sending it to the church office at info@aglcigh.org.

Missions Updates...

Neighbors Inc.

Submitted by Lisa Barnhart

A note of thanks for the Giving Tree gifts....

To say that we thank you is hardly enough
We're leaping with joy to see all of the stuff
That neighbors like you have been sharing with others
with toddlers and teens, fathers and mothers.

Santa's delighted - he's summoned his crew
He asked us to send his thanks out to you!
Meanwhile he's working his elves day and night
they check that each gift is labeled just right.

There are soccer balls, dollies, puzzles and games
toys that just beep - they come without names -
there are mittens and sox, pj's and caps
There's no time for breaks, much less for naps!

Though we're busy and tired by end of the day
We pause with a smile to view the display.
Of all of the gifts that are ready to go
to neighbors and friends we don't even know.

As we look back on the day and all of our labors
We pause to thank you, our generous neighbors
Who reached in your pockets, took time to remember
the season we celebrate every December.

The season to love, to give and to share
to show all our neighbors how much we do care.
You've shared of yourself and that is the reason
We're pausing to wish you the best of the season!

-Neighbors, Inc. Staff and Board of Directors

There is always a need for donations.
The current food shelf needs are:

Tuna/canned meat, pancake mix and syrup, Hamburger Helper, Shampoo, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, canned fruit, jelly, toilet paper, hygiene products, Spaghetti and canned pasta.



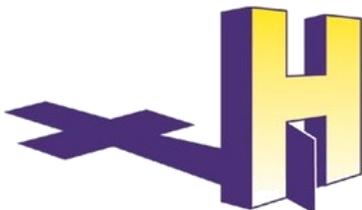
Hospitality House

Submitted by Annie Morgan

2014-15 Fiscal Year Highlights

Thanks to your support, Hospitality House has experienced continued growth in our ability to meet the needs of our youth and families.

- **Contractual partner with Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) for 14th year in a row**, providing academic, after-school assistance. Teachers created curriculum that integrates state requirements and Christian values.
- **Athletic teams increased 28%** from the previous year to include 10 basketball teams and 4 baseball teams.
- **Teen leadership program expanded** to include both boys and girls.
- Achieved **5th straight year of a balanced operating budget**.
- **Enriched learning programs** through partnerships including: MacPhail Center for Music (choir), Pillsbury United Communities (video training for teens), Children's Theatre Company (acting).



Tanzania

Submitted by Linda Becker

Dearest Pastor and Mrs Chris Becker,
I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ the king and our savior.

I feel honored to share with you the blessings we received through the seminar you have facilitated. The seminar was took place from 3rd to 4th December, 2015. Magulilwa Parish invited church leaders from Ndiwili Parish to participate in that seminar.

We thank you for facilitating us and paying the facilitator Dr. Kimondo from the University of Iringa. May the living God fill where you have taken and bless you abundantly.

I am also pleased to share with you the blessings expected to take place in our parish at the beginning of 2016. We expect to to receive guests from Iringa diocese from 14th - 17 January, 2016 for seminar and ordination of pastors. Lets join hands to pray for this great event of our church.

I wish you Merry Christmas and happy new year 2016.

Yours,
Pastor Yohana Chengula



Business Management Ministry Update

By Todd Vandervort, Business Management Chair



Many have approached me inquiring where we are at as it relates to the Cellular Tower. With the assistance of an attorney who has extensive experience in cell tower industry, we are very close to executing an agreement with Crown Castle. While we do not have a definitive dollar amount, the agreement will result in a long term funding stream for the church. Once the agreement is executed and other approvals have been received (i.e. City of Inver Grove) more detailed conversations will occur with Crown Castle and the cell provider as it relates to the design and construction. So – more to come but we continue to move forward. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

AGLC Treasury Update

AGLC Financial Summary through November 2015

Prepared by Tim Sanborn, Treasurer

- ❖ November Income was **-\$1,415** under budget, and the last 5 months are a combined **-\$25,323** under budget. For the year, Income is **-\$30,568**.
- ❖ Expenses are **\$38,979** under budget (favorable).

Nov. Income:	\$32,885	YTD Income:	\$356,432
Nov. Expense:	<u>\$30,202</u>	YTD Expense:	<u>\$349,942</u>
Nov. Net Income:	\$2,683	YTD Net Inc.:	\$6,490

“A Tale of Two Cities” or ‘two sides of the same coin’? Whichever literary reference or idiom you wish to use to describe AGLC’s 2015 Budget would probably apply. In retrospect, “Aggressive” is probably how I would best summarize our Income and Expense goals set out last January; and “Responsible” in regards to how the Ministry Teams and Congregation have adjusted those goals based on financial fluctuations. While we are unlikely to meet our end of year Budget numbers for this year in income, we have also made very good use of what we have had available to meet our commitments and further our mission. A better description of what we have accomplished, and plan to achieve in 2016 will be further explained at the January 31st Annual Meeting. Hope to see you there!!

Council Corner

By Jim Zentner
Council President

This is my final column to be writing as President of the Council. First, I wish to say that it has been a privilege for me to serve as the President for two years. I don’t know if this two year service has broken any new ground for length of service but the leaders over the past two years have been wonderful and dedicated to the work assignments they accepted. I feel very good about the leadership team for the coming year and while I did not accomplish my one goal of starting some type of leadership training, I pray that what we have done the past two years has served in some small way as training

for the current group of leaders.

Now, on to business for the near term. Lest you think that the up-coming annual meeting at the end of January is only about budget, I want to alert you to a couple of very important votes you will need to make. Some of you know about these opportunities and many of you may read about this for the first time. Our first opportunity was presented to us by a company named Crown Castle last year when they approached us about leasing some of our property for the purpose of erecting a cell tower. During this past year, the discussion has taken a more serious tone as they have presented us with a contract for consideration. The Business Management Team

has secured legal counsel to help us in a negotiation with Crown Castle regarding the terms of a prospective lease. We are nearing the point where this lease agreement can be signed by us and them but it is going to take a vote of the congregation to finalize whether or not we do this. The positive of all this is Crown Castle will pay to Amazing Grace an annual fee. Part of the negotiation relates to what the final fee amount will be. That will be known prior to your vote. Also, we will have input as to the design of the tower which will make a huge difference as to the aesthetics of the tower. Questions at this point should be directed to Todd Vandervoort who is the Business Management Team chair.

The second opportunity to be presented is sharing our church worship space with a small Latino Apostolic church named Piedra Preciosa ecclesia (Precious Rock church). This church is currently made up of 40 – 50 men, women and children who are primarily Inver Grove Heights residents looking for a church home. Currently they have been worshipping in church space in Eagan and now need to find a new home. They would like to use our space on Sunday afternoons and Thursday evenings. One of the key elements to the proposal being reviewed by the Worship and Music ministry team and Council is the need for someone(s) from

Amazing Grace who would be present at the times they wish to use our space. This person or persons would be paid for their time. The reason for our presence is to make sure that the agreed upon uses are heeded and to help them do any minor clean-up that would occur. There will be more information coming out on this in the next few weeks but this opportunity also will require a vote of the congregation.

Finally, I want to encourage all of you to attend an introductory session on the strategic planning process that is taking shape under the tutelage of Pastor Julie. The newly elected Vice-President will lead the team. On January 3rd between services, the now forming team will introduce what is to transpire and ask for some much needed input from all of us that will be important as this process goes forward. I want to underscore the importance of your presence and participation in this one hour introduction.

Thanks be to God that we have completed another wonderful year and now embark on a new one.

Official Notice of the Annual Meeting Sunday, January 31, 2016

Notice is hereby given of the Annual Meeting of Amazing Grace Lutheran Church on Sunday, January 31, 2016. Every year we gather to focus on the major issues of our community of faith. We make decisions about the new year together and recommit ourselves to the work of Jesus in the world. The meeting will include the approval of the 2016 budget, the election and installation of the new Council members, discussion of granting use of our building to another congregation, and other essentials to the functioning of the church. This meeting is a vital part of what it means to live and work together. The meeting will begin immediately following the 9:30 a.m. worship service. Childcare will be available. At the conclusion of the meeting we will enjoy a hearty meal and fellowship. Please bring a dish to share based on the first letter of your last name.

A—H Salad I-L Dessert M—Z Hot Dish



If you wish to have an annual report mailed to you, please call the church office, otherwise you may pick one up in the entryway when they are complete.

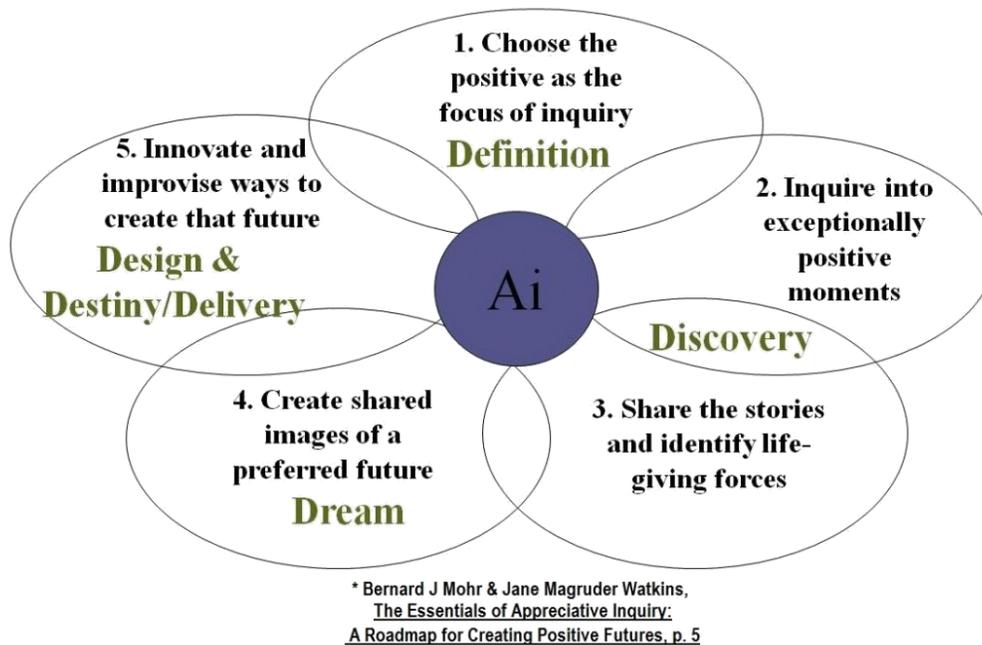


Joining God at work in the world!

Appreciative Strategic Planning – YOU ARE INVITED!

The start of 2016 marks the kick-off of strategic planning at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church that will result in a plan that will lead us into the next 3-5 years. We hope to engage as many people in the process as possible by kicking things off with an-activity packed workshop that gives YOU an opportunity to share your feedback, big ideas, and stories about the life-giving ministries at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church!

The planning process will leverage a technique based in Appreciative Inquiry (Ai). The Appreciative Inquiry process emphasizes values, story-telling, envisioning big ideas, and serving the highest good for individuals and our faith community. For our congregation, this will include activities and conversations in a workshop event that elicit and celebrate the stories of our history and the people and partnerships and community served by Amazing Grace. The process, rooted in prayer, takes into consideration the needs and desires of the congregation and wider community and will be most successful with the participation of a majority of congregants.



The strategic planning process will consist of three phases. Pastor Julie leads as the staff sponsor for the planning process, and Annie Morgan leads as the chairperson for the process. They will work with a core team of approximately ten individuals who will take responsibility for the communication and completion of the strategic plan.

Phase 1
Define and Discover –

January 2016						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January 3, 2016 - The core planning team met on January 3 in the Upper Room during the Sunday School hour for storytelling and discovery activities that helped us celebrate and appreciate the best of Amazing Grace.

January 31, 2016 - Join us again on January 31 for a potluck lunch and afternoon of hands-on, active learning in a workshop from 12-2 p.m. with childcare provided.

Phase 2
Dream and Design – Throughout February and March, the core team will work with the congregation to build upon our core strengths and the best of Amazing Grace to formulate a strategic plan that is rooted in our faith and firm foundation.

Phase 3

The strategic plan (completed in May and June) will be presented to staff, council, and ministry teams for implementation and formulation of a plan for continued measure of the plan's progress and effectiveness.

We are so eager to use a process in strategic planning that relies heavily on the contributions of a majority of our members. We ask you to pray for the team and for the work that it may represent our joining God at work in the world.



Someone has asked to use the church?

An Apostolic Latino Church has approached us and has asked if they would be able to use the sanctuary for worship on Sunday afternoons and on Thursday nights for Bible study. They have 50-60 members and have outgrown their "home" church setting. Currently they are sharing space with a church in Eagan but all of the members are from Inver Grove Heights and they would like to be a church in this community. They have met with Pastor Becker twice and the Worship and Music Ministry team, along with the church council and some key leaders in our education ministry have addressed the possibility for this to take place.

The council has recommended that this be approved by the congregation since this is really an agreement between two congregations. Part of the agreement is that the apostolic church pays for someone from our community to be on site when they are in the building. We would be looking for two people to share this role so that there would be a person on site all the time. Their worship would be from 1:00 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. on Sunday and 7:00 p.m. until 9:00p.m. Bible study on Thursdays. If ratified by the congregation on January 31 they would begin worshipping here on the first Sunday in February.

Some of the comments when this was introduced were: Good way to use our building; it connects us with the larger community; especially helps us understand and connect with those from a different culture and language; it uses our building as a servant; and it will mean adjustments.

We are also proposing that a leader or leaders from their church meet each month with our executive team so that we can address any concerns quickly. We also will look at this after 6 months and evaluate how this relationship is working for both congregations.



Family Emergency Fund

Submitted by Pastor Chris Becker

Amazing Grace has a history of walking alongside people in financial need. We have helped pay utility bills, health care costs, car repairs, and rent assistance. Each gift of help comes after assessing the situation and providing as much assurance as possible that this will be the help that gets someone "over the hump". This emergency fund is solely between me and the person seeking help.

Our resources are low at this time. I ask that if you have any more gift giving in you to please consider a gift to the Amazing Grace Family Emergency Fund. Currently we have about \$200 left.

Make your check out to **Amazing Grace Family Emergency Fund** and send it to the church office or place it in the offering basket.

Thank you for providing compassion to those in need.





Pastoral Care—Focused Outreach
 Servant Ministry Coordinator: Pastor Chris Becker
 •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—
 Evangelism/Stewardship Team**
 Coordinator: Pastor Chris Becker

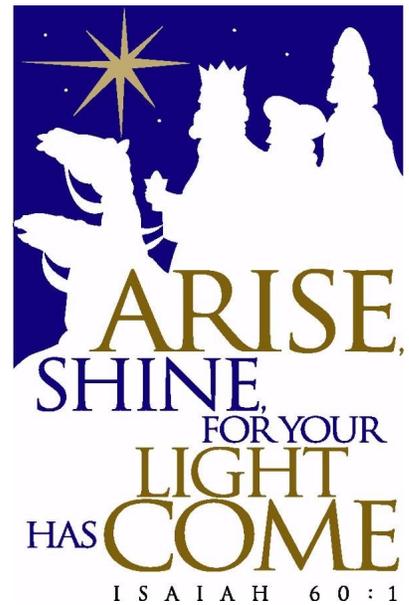
Prayer Chain



Prayer Concerns can be called in
 to Mary Garfield.



God of new beginnings, thank you for this past year—the joyful moments and the growing moments, the celebrations and the defeats. Give to all the strength to entrust this new year to you, knowing that with you there is a future filled with hope. May this new year be filled with blessings and with grace, and may we always have hope for tomorrow. Amen.



**ARISE,
 SHINE,
 FOR YOUR
 LIGHT
 HAS COME**
 ISAIAH 60:1

ABRAHAM & SARAH

through the eyes of

CHRISTIANITY, ISLAM, AND JUDAISM

Tuesday, January 12, 2016

7:00 PM

**Amazing Grace Lutheran Church
7160 S Robert Trail, Inver Grove Heights, MN**

A rare opportunity to learn about Abraham and Sarah and how they play a major role in the faith traditions of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

SPEAKERS:

- **Rabbi Tamar Grimm of Beth Jacob Synagogue in Mendota Heights**
- **Professor Gary Simpson from Luther Seminary in St. Paul**
- **Wafa Qureshi from the Muslim American Society in Inver Grove Heights.**

*Questions? Please call 651-455-0093.
All are welcome.*



**AMAZING
GRACE**
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

Mailed on January 6, 2016



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

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 99
SO. ST. PAUL MN



Website:

www.aglcigh.org

Staff:

Pastor—Pastor Chris Becker:
cbecker@aglcigh.org

Associate Pastor—Pastor Julie Wright:
jwright@aglcigh.org

Administrator—Angy Thelemann:
athelemann@aglcigh.org

Youth and Young Adult Coordinator—
Merri Guggisberg: mguggisberg@aglcigh.org

Finance/Office Assistant—
Craig Yotter: cgotter@aglcigh.org

Building Supervisor—
Norm Goetzke: ngoetzke@aglcigh.org

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

Sunday School Coordinator—
Linda Becker: lbecker@aglcigh.org

Vacation Bible School Co-Coordinators—
Lynn Waska: lwaska@aglcigh.org
Amanda Vesta

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.