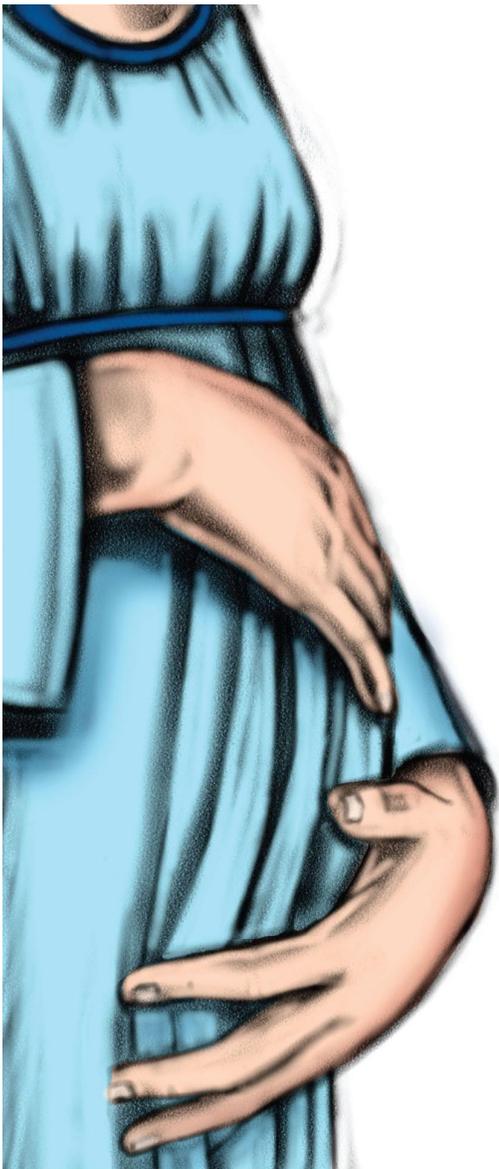


## @The Intersection <sup>+</sup> by Pastor Julie Wright

### *A Season of Waiting*



Christmas has, for many, lost its sizzle...its flare...its childlike wonderment. Is it the frenetic pace of things, or that with the rise of commercialism at this time of year, it's easy to lose Christ in the Christmas season? I have another theory – that we lose something special when we jump immediately from Thanksgiving to Christmas. We miss out on Advent, the season of waiting, the season of longing for the Christ child to come among us. This reminds me of a passage from Romans:

*All around us we observe a pregnant creation. The difficult times of pain throughout the world are simply birth pangs. But it's not only around us; it's within us. The Spirit of God is arousing us within. We're also feeling the birth pangs. These sterile and barren bodies of ours are yearning for full deliverance. That is why waiting does not diminish us, any more than waiting diminishes a pregnant mother. We are enlarged in the waiting. We, of course, don't see what is enlarging us. But the longer we wait, the larger we become, and the more joyful our expectancy. - Romans 8:22-25 (The Message)*

Waiting is hard. Being patient in the waiting is even harder, but there's beauty in slowing down long enough to notice the small signs of life emerging from Jesus' own story. It's the story of a world, so long ago, that was in much the same situation as we are today. We wait for deliverance. We wait for healing. We lean into the joy that comes in the form of a savior who is a newborn babe – the embodiment of hope and possibility.

This Advent, stay with me in the season of waiting. I know, it's tempting to jump right to Christmas, but there's something beautiful growing in the darkness of the night. Its name is Hope. Joy. Peace. Love. Its name is Jesus.

Be *still* & know *I am God*

# Worship and Music Ministry Notes

## We Want to Hear From YOU!

By Louise Lentz, Worship and Music Chair

The purpose of the Worship and Music Ministry Team is to create services that are meaningful, relevant, Spirit-filled, and grounded in God's word. In order to make sure we are doing that, we need your feedback. A survey was sent to all members by email and by regular mail for those who do not have email. The survey focuses on your worship experience – what is relevant, what inspires you, what could we do differently to create more meaningful worship. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey. If you not received it or have questions, please connect with any one of the team members. Louise Lentz, chair; Trish Ebensteiner, Barb Forthun, Laurel Oseth, Brad Pipal, Nancy Pollock, and Susan Young.




## Readers IN THE Spotlight

By Laurel Oseth, Reader Coordinator

The reading of the Sunday Lessons is an important part of our Church Service. This is a time when members of our congregation can actively participate in our worship service. Our youth and adult members have been faithful in their participation. Here are some personal testimonies:

*“Every Sunday morning, our Amazing Grace family gathers for a meaningful worship experience. We are blessed in having a wonderful pastoral, music and office staff who make this happen, but it also requires a number of volunteers each week. There are many volunteer opportunities available and the one that I am involved with is being a “reader.” Typically, the pastor reads the gospel lesson, and the reader reads the old and new testament scriptures for the day. What a privilege it is to be able to share God’s word and serve in this way.” ~Darlene Wold*

*“I like reading at church because I get a chance to practice reading in front of a group who are loving and who won’t judge how good I am. Reading at church gives me confidence and gets me ready for future experiences.” ~Hope B.*

A commonly asked question is, “How can we make it easier to hear the Scriptures that are read?” Each reader is encouraged to:

- Try out the pulpit first and use the stool to stand on if necessary.
- Move the microphone to their level at about 6 inches from their mouth.
- Practice reading the Scripture Lesson so they can pronounce all of the words and read with clarity.

If you would like to be a reader, please contact the church office or sign up on the blue sheet found in your bulletin.





# December Worship

**Sunday, December 3**

**8:00 and 10:30 am**

**Advent Worship with Holy Communion**

**Sunday, December 10**

**8:00 and 10:30 am** Christmas Choral  
Worship with Holy Communion  
(10:30 am Worship followed by Potluck)

**Sunday, December 17**

**8:00 am** Advent Worship  
with Holy Communion

**10:30 am** Worship with  
Sunday School Christmas Program  
and Holy Communion

**Sunday, December 24**

**10:30 am** Advent Worship  
with Holy Communion

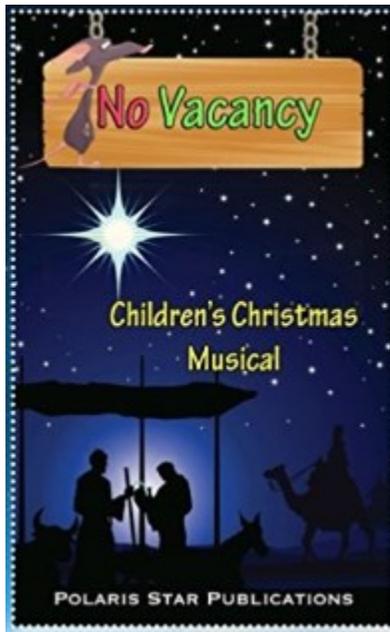
**4:00 pm** Candlelight Worship  
with Holy Communion

**10:00 pm** Candlelight Worship  
with Holy Communion

**Sunday, December 31**

**10:30 am** Lessons and Carols  
with Holy Communion

# From the Christian Education Ministry Team



## Sunday School Presents

### “NO Vacancy”

**Sunday, December 17th at 10:30 a.m.**

Join us Sunday December 17<sup>th</sup> during the 10:30 Service as the Sunday School Children present the Christmas program, “No Vacancy”. Bethlehem is about to be over-run by “tourists”, coming into town for the tax. This is bad news for a stable full of animals. Seth the sheep is concerned the visitors will want sweaters. Claude the cow lost ten pounds last time, making milkshakes. Micah the mouse, a grouchy rodent, realizes the Bethlehem visitors will leave tasty leftovers but fears the extra mouse-traps. Together, the animals scheme ways to keep the “tourists” out of Bethlehem. However, before they know it, a young couple expecting a baby, has taken up residence in their stable!

#### Sunday School Contacts:

Kami Burgess, Sunday School Co-coordinator: [kburgess@aglcigh.org](mailto:kburgess@aglcigh.org)

Trish Ebensteiner, Sunday School Co-coordinator: [tebensteiner@aglcigh.org](mailto:tebensteiner@aglcigh.org)

## Can You Help?

### February GO! Day Donations Needed

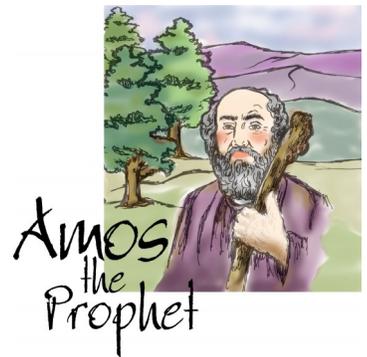
This February we are partnering up with Open Hands Ministry to package laundry detergent and hygiene kits for distribution to people in need. We will be collecting donations of dry laundry detergent and travel size toiletries (shampoo, bar soap, etc.) There will be a bin in the entryway starting in December. Any questions? Contact Abby G.



## Adult Education Hour—9:15-10:15 a.m.

### December 3 and 10

Amos was a grumpy, yet some would say, well-to-do shepherd. He came from the south of Israel to be God's prophet to the Northern Kingdom. His message was one of chastisement—the rich and powerful were abusing the “system” and not only taking advantage of the poor and the middle class but turning their back on God's covenant. Come join the social justice team as we explore the message Amos brings to us in present day. Sunday's December 3rd and 10th adult education hour will be a lively discussion meant to help us understand the role of the church in society.



### December 17

Praying Mary's Magnificat with Pastor Julie.

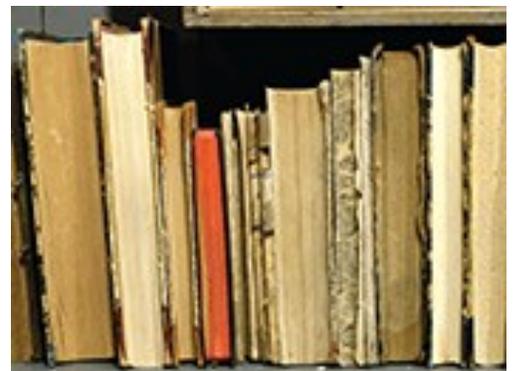


## Faithful Readers

Submitted by Barb Malamen

There is no specific book or meeting in December for all you faithful readers. Please share a favorite book with a friend or special child in your life. 2018 introduces us to more books on a variety of topics. The group gathers for discussion at Barnes & Noble Booksellers Cafe on Promenade in Eagan the third Sunday of the month at 6:30 pm. All are welcome. Contact person: Barb Malamen Let's read... faithfully!

- Jan 21 Same Kind of Different as Me by Ron Hall, Denver Moore, & Deborah Hall (Books in Bag)  
This is a true story about a modern-day slave, an international art dealer, and the unlikely woman who bound them together.
- Feb 18 Black Man in a White Coat: a doctor's reflection on race and medicine by Damon Tweedy  
One doctor's passionate memoir of his experience struggling with race, bias, and the unique health problems of Black Americans.
- Mar 18 Fates & Traitors: a novel of John Wilkes Booth by Jennifer Chiaverini  
This is a riveting work of historical fiction following John Wilkes Booth and the four women who kept his confidences.
- April 15 The Nightingale by Kristin Hannah (Books in Bag)  
In WWII France, two sisters face frightening situations and respond in ways they never thought possible as bravery and resistance take different forms in each of their actions.
- May 20 The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane by Lisa See  
This novel explores the lives of a Chinese mother and her daughter, who has been adopted by an American couple. It traces the different cultural factors that compel them, a rare native tea that has shaped their family's destiny for generations.
- June 17 The Stars are Fire by Anita Shreve  
This is a novel based on the true story of the largest fire in Maine's history. It follows a young mother on her own during and after the devastation.



# Children and Youth

Submitted by Children and Youth Minister, Tim Marburger

Five years ago, I was preparing to head to Israel with the group from LCCR (my former congregation). I recall the dread of having never been out of the country and going to a place that often is thought of as volatile. I remember arriving to strict security, but after resting a bit in Tel Aviv, we were off to the Sea of Galilee. This whirlwind trip was amazing in so many ways as a person of faith; as one who has grown up with the Biblical stories, and now I was here right after Christmas in the place where Jesus was born.

I often think of this trip, especially at this time of the year, taking communion on a boat in the middle of the Sea of Galilee, or walking the path to his crucifixion. I am reminded that we are called daily to remember and live our faith – even without the actual reminder of seeing his grave or the stable. We are to believe and serve. How will you serve in 2018?



## We made a difference with our two Family Opportunities!

These events were awesome! On November 16, about 50 people came together to prepare Thanksgiving bags for families in need. We had 7 people from Amazing Grace attend. This was one of the joint events we're involved with other congregations – St. Luke's Lutheran, Luther Memorial and Good Shepherd joined us that night to pack bags for 757 families in the Twin Cities. Check out the video on Facebook of 2 of our youth packing a family bag. They really worked that evening.



## We gave back thanks before we gave thanks!

At the printing of this newsletter our congregation had raised over \$1,458.00 for our mission partner – Neighbors Inc. food shelf. That will help many families in Dakota County. Our team consisted of 15 walkers (including young Lamar in his very first service project). Every \$25 raised paid for groceries for a family for a week.





- **December 22** — Caroling and Mario Bros tournament hosted by All Saint's. 6 – 9:30 pm. Grades 6 - 12 We will meet at AGLC and drive to All Saints.
- **January 14** — Family Snow tubing at Green Acres. 1-3 pm. All AGLC participants will stay after church for free lunch, and then we will leave AGLC at 12:30. Cost: \$8 per person.
- **February 23 – 24** — Hunger retreat hosted by AGLC from 7:00 pm—7:00 am. Grades 6 – 12

## SAFEGUARDING GOD'S CHILDREN

Saturday, February 3, 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Amazing Grace Lutheran, along with Pastor Mary Kaye Ashley, will be holding a workshop on Safeguarding God's Children. This is a comprehensive training workshop to help parents and people in all levels of ministry protect our children from sexual abuse. With awareness and diligence, we can make our homes and ministries safer.

Mary Kaye Ashley is bi-vocational. She is a pastor of First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Taylors Falls with a passion for children, youth, family and intergenerational ministry and living that all may know God's love. She is also a parent/family educator in ISD #191's (Burnsville/Eagan/Savage) Early Childhood/Family Education program.



Cost will be \$10 which covers lunch and program. Watch for registration details to come.



### HUGE THANK YOU GIVEN

A HUGE thanks to Jeff Waska and A Tree Service (Minneapolis) for their help in making the wood discs for our Advent wreaths.

Thanks to all who participated as well.



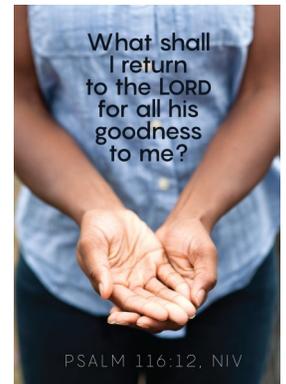
all is  
\* calm \*  
all is  
bright!

# Stewardship Ministry Team

Submitted by Joleen Ketterling and Todd Erickson,  
Co-Chairs Stewardship Ministry Team

God takes all that is hurting in this world and creates in us the capacity to notice, to care and to respond in kind. God creates in us the ability to build a blessed community that shines a light in the darkness, a beacon for hope, healing and belonging. That is why we give.

Thank you to all who participated in our Generosity Moment in October and November. It is a powerful message for all when we reflect and share stories about acts of generosity with one another. We also want to thank you for turning in your pledge cards. (If you haven't already done so it is not too late, please turn them in to the attention of the Financial Secretary at your earliest convenience.) We are excited to start planning for 2018 and appreciate your prayerful consideration in how you can help support our education programs, worship services, outreach opportunities, community building, staff and facilities improvements, etc. Imagine the possibilities when we work together!



## Missions Update



### Mission Partners Giving Trees

Submitted by Joleen Ketterling

The holiday season has begun. We ask you to please take a look at our Giving Trees in the Narthex and consider bringing in something to help make the holidays special for others. A couple of our Mission Partners have a deadline of December 3 so shop early! Of course gifts brought later in December are still welcome and will either be used during the year or stored until Christmas 2018. We thank you in advance for participating."

## MERRY CHINESE CHRISTMAS!

Submitted by Charlotte Gronseth

When I taught in Shanghai many years ago there was great curiosity about Christmas, and in general about Christianity. The current huge focus on materialistic pursuits has dimmed this curiosity. However, on Christmas Day—not a vacation day in China--Christian teachers of English in universities throughout the country usually use class hours to focus on Christmas, as part of an introduction to Western culture. This will, of course, include Santa Clause, Christmas trees, etc. But they will then also share the meaning of Christmas for Christians, saying that is what they believe. Often individual students will ask the teacher afterwards why they believe in God and much more.

Christmas has become quite big in China's large cities. Christmas Eve, called "Ping an yeh" (meaning "peaceful night") is one of the two busiest shopping days of the year, with huge sales and great deals. So of course there are decorations—Santas predominate, as well as artificial Christmas trees. Now and then there may be a stable scene, but this, like Santa, is viewed as fairy tale.

However, Christians throughout the country will be celebrating Christmas Eve in their churches and small groups.



For them, Christmas signifies God's giving, loving presence—Immanuel.

**PLEASE PRAY** for Chinese Christians who still work or attend classes on Christmas Day. Many of these are marginalized because of their faith. Pray that they may experience the deep joy of God's great love and the "peace beyond understanding"—His gift to all his children.

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## TANZANIA SCHOLARSHIPS

Submitted by Helen Yotter

### *Do you want to change a life? Tanzania Scholarship Opportunity*

Hello Amazing Grace friends. As students in the United States are well into the new school year, it is also a time of year to renew and consider additional pledges of support toward education scholarships for students in our partner congregation in Magulilwa, Tanzania. The average annual cost of secondary school for a student in the Iringa Area Diocese is **\$400/year**. Many AGLC members have supported students over the past years. It is a gift that keeps on giving back to their community... One of the students previously sponsored, Jenipher Mbilinyi, went on to a post-secondary education and is now a school teacher herself in a nearby village. Do you want to make a significant impact for a youth and their entire family too? What better gift to give that person who has everything or to honor family members with this Christmas. **Please make a contribution in any amount or for a full \$400 scholarship directly to AGLC with 'Tanzania Scholarship' in the memo line by Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.** Any questions – please ask Helen Yotter. Asante Sana and Mungu Anawa Bariki! (Thank you very much and God Bless You!)



## LYNGBLOMSTEN

Submitted by Barb Malamen

Congratulations! Lyngblomsten Community Services has won the 2017 Rose Dobrof Award from the Brookdale Foundation Group. This national award honors an organization that has demonstrated leadership and commitment to excellence in the delivery of supportive services to people with dementia and their caregivers. Lyngblomsten received the award in recognition of *The Gathering*, a group respite program offered through 2nd Half with Lyngblomsten which has helped older adults living in the community with early- to mid-stage memory loss and their caregivers for 17 years. The award comes with a gift of \$10,000 that will contribute to the Lyngblomsten Foundation's fund-

raising efforts to provide ongoing financial support for the continued offering of dignified, enriching programming through *The Gathering*. Lyngblomsten: *The Gathering* is a sanctioned mission of Amazing Grace Lutheran Church.

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# Fellowship Events



## OWLS – Outstanding, Wise, Lutherans

The O.W.L.S. are taking a Christmas vacation. We wish all a blessed holiday season. We will gather once again January 17, 2018 at 11 am for good food, conversation, fun and games. Mark your calendars and plan to attend!!

Submitted by Barb Malamen

## Women's Christmas Brunch

Saturday, December 9th 10:00—12:00 p.m.

Preparations for the Christmas season 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 9, 10:00am to 12pm, in the upper room. There will be an ornament exchange for those who wish to participate. A \$5 donation is asked to cover expenses with any excess money going to Neighbors Inc. We will not be collecting gifts this year since we will be gathering after the collection deadline. Be sure to check the Giving Trees to make donations. Sign up on the bulletin board or blue sheet. If you are willing to help with food and/or preparations for the brunch or have any questions, contact Barb Malamen.



## From the President

By Annie Morgan, Council President

Did you attend the October congregational meeting when the budget for 2018 was presented? The council team was eager to share a look back on some of the successes, challenges, and investments we saw in 2017, and we were equally excited to share our ideas and thinking about the year ahead. Each of the ministry teams has grown in members and this year and as a council, we've put a good deal of energy into ensuring our decisions and planning are representative of the whole congregation.

We do that as ministry leaders by meeting regularly with our lay ministry teams who are focused on Christian education, worship & music, business management and properties, evangelism and social justice, and stewardship.

The end of my term as president is in sight. Despite the normal challenges that come with being a part of the life of the church, it's clear to me that being an active part of the council for the past two years has been a gift to me. As one body in Christ and one congregation, the joys and celebrations as well as the loss and grieving are felt and shared by all of us. While we experience all these things as individuals differently, experiencing the life of the church with the council team, doing intentional and on-going work focused on ensuring we have a sustainable, adaptable, healthy congregation that can Join God at Work in the World.

AGLC tradition or protocol has been that the past President moves into the role of leading the nominating committee for the next year. I'm excited about encouraging new leadership and discovering talents and strengths within our membership. Learn more about joining the council or attend a council meeting or lay ministry team meeting. All are welcome!





## PASTORAL CARE

Please call or text Pastor Julie Wright or call the church office when you or a loved one is in need of care:

- Sick or injured
- In the hospital
- Having surgery
- In crisis
- Having trouble with marriage, family or other relationships
- In need of prayer

Remember that due to HIPAA privacy rules, hospitals do not inform us when you're in the hospital. God is with you, but we want to be there for you too.

Church office 651-455-0093  
Pastor Julie Wright 651-271-1427 (cell)



### JOIN US FOR A POTLUCK LUNCH SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 FOLLOWING 10:30 WORSHIP

Please bring a dish to share based on the first letter of your last name:



**A-G Main Dish**

**H-N Salad**

**O-Z Dessert**

## DEADLINE

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

## Prayer Chain



Prayer Concerns can be called in to Mary Garfield.

*Servant*  
MINISTRY



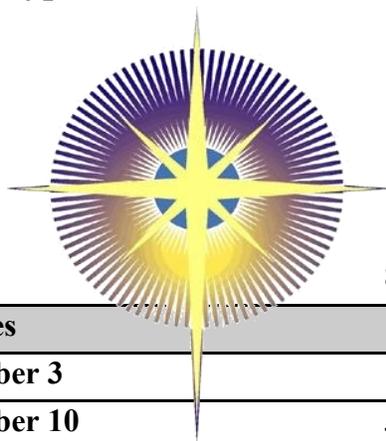
### Pastoral Care—Focused Outreach

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



# December Ministers

8:00 am

10:30 am

Acolytes			
December 3		Lou M.	Hope B.
December 10		Jakob L.	Caleigh T.
December 17		Joseph W.	Karli G.
December 24	10:30 AM	Zach R.	4:00 PM Natalie D. 10:00 PM Joseph W.
December 31			10:30 AM TBD

Greeters			
December 3		Gordon and Sandra Johnson	Mattson Family
December 10		Doug and Connie Nelson	Matt and Carolyn Oleson
December 17		Al and Jan Stein	Don and Laurel Oseth
December 24	10:30 AM	Teri Santema	4:00 PM Todd and Zella Vandervort 10:00 PM Susan Young
December 31			10:30 AM Dave and Darlene Wold

Nursery			
December 3		Alison Hild/Bailey Johnson	Bartlette Family
December 10		Carole McIntyre/Lou M.	Pam Rутten/Vin M.
December 17		Anne DePalma and Natalie D.	Louise Lentz/Eli M.
December 24	10:30 AM	Robyn and Dre Noble	4:00 PM NA 10:00 PM NA
December 31			10:30 AM Eric and Molly Olson

PA System			
December 3		Clayton M.	Abby G.
December 10		Duane Skar	Pete Malamen
December 17		Alex G.	Larry Kinney
December 24	10:30 AM	Gary Garfield	4:00 PM Larry Kinney 10:00 PM Duane Skar
December 31			10:30 AM Pete Malamen

Readers			
December 3		Sue Grundhoffer	Sanjia Restorff
December 10		Mark Morgan	Hailee W.
December 17		Barb Malamen	David Wold
December 24	10:30 AM	Kristin Gallagher	4:00 PM Hope B. 10:00 PM Carolyn Oleson
December 31			10:30 AM Susan Young

Ushers		
December 3	Russ Rau/Jean Jantzen/Kirsten Hoven	Matt Oleson/Luke O./Carter H.
December 10	Gary Garfield/Evan J./John Henke	Rick Berg/Kami Burgess/James Jeyachandran
December 17	Vic Johnson/Al and Jan Stein	Korky/Trish Ebensteiner/Cameron H.
December 24	<b>10:30 AM</b> Mark and Kristin Gallagher/Tim Grundhoffer <b>4:00 PM</b> Matt Oleson/Luke O./Jean Jantzen/Todd Erickson <b>10:00 PM</b> Gary Garfield/Evan J./Russ Rau	
December 31	<b>10:30 AM</b> Al and Jan Stein/Vic Johnson	

Altar Care		
December 3	Carol Sachs	Nancy Pollock
December 10	Kirsten Hoven	Zella Vandervort
December 17	Carole McIntyre	Betty Frid
December 24	<b>10:30 AM</b> Carol Sachs	<b>4:00 PM</b> Nancy Pollock <b>10:00 PM</b> Lisa Barnhart
December 31	<b>10:30 AM</b> Carole McIntyre	

Counters		
December 3	Helen Yotter/TBD	
December 10	Pete Malamen/Mary Garfield	
December 17	Craig Yotter/Jan Stein	
December 24	<b>10:30 AM</b> Zella Vandervort/TBD <b>4:00 PM</b> Craig Yotter/Pete Malamen <b>10:00 PM</b> Craig Yotter/Mary Garfield	
December 31	<b>10:30 AM</b> Zella Vandervort	

Worship Assistant		
December 3	Judy Thompson	Tim Marburger
December 10	Mark/Annie Morgan	Dre Noble
December 17	Cyndi Berg	Heather Tautges
December 24	<b>10:30 AM</b> Louise Lentz	<b>4:00 PM</b> NA <b>10:00 PM</b> NA
December 31	<b>10:30 AM</b> Alison Hild	

Individual Prayer Partner		
December 3	Judy Thompson	Louise Lentz
December 10	Jim Zentner	Cyndi Berg
December 17	Judy Thompson	Darlene Wold
December 24	<b>10:30 AM</b> Elizabeth Anderson	<b>4:00 PM</b> TBD <b>10:00 PM</b> TBD
December 31	<b>10:30 AM</b> Cyndi Berg	





## **Website:**

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

## **Staff:**

Lead Pastor—Pastor Julie Wright  
[jwright@aglcigh.org](mailto:jwright@aglcigh.org)

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

Children and Youth Minister—Tim Marburger  
[tmarburger@aglcigh.org](mailto:tmarburger@aglcigh.org)

Finance Assistant—Craig Yotter  
[cyotter@aglcigh.org](mailto:cgotter@aglcigh.org)

Building Supervisor—Larry Kinney  
[lkinney@aglcigh.org](mailto:lkinney@aglcigh.org)

Worship Musician: Brad Pipal

Sanctuary Choir Director—Barbara Forthun  
[bforthun@aglcigh.org](mailto:bforthun@aglcigh.org)

King's Kids Choir Director—Angy Thelemann  
[athelemann@aglcigh.org](mailto:athelemann@aglcigh.org)

Sunday School Co-Coordinator—  
Kami Burgess: [kburgess@aglcigh.org](mailto:kburgess@aglcigh.org)  
Trish Ebensteiner: [tebensteiner@aglcigh.org](mailto:tebensteiner@aglcigh.org)

Vacation Bible School Co-Coordinator—  
Zella Vandervort: [zvandervort@aglcigh.org](mailto:zvandervort@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.

## AMAZING GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

7160 South Robert Trail  
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077  
651-455-003  
Address Service Requested



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