

MARCH 2019

## **Revolutionary Love**

Learning to love more fully, more deeply, is to walk the path toward Jesus. The kind of love that Jesus taught and lived was much more courageous than I think we give him credit. The love of Jesus was, and still is, revolutionary, in part because he was able to move past fear into a deeper practice of love.

The season of Lent is often a time of self-reflection as a way of taking seriously the faith that sustained Jesus to the cross. *I want that kind of faith. I hope you do, too.* That's why we're going to sink our teeth into LOVE for the season of Lent because being a Christian is not about love in the sense of cheesy romantic-comedy (although I do love a good Rom-Com) as much as it is about loving as a daily <u>practice</u>. Ed Bacon is an Episcopal priest who wrote the book, "8 Habits of Love". Work with his congregation has led him to embrace the messiness and joy of love.

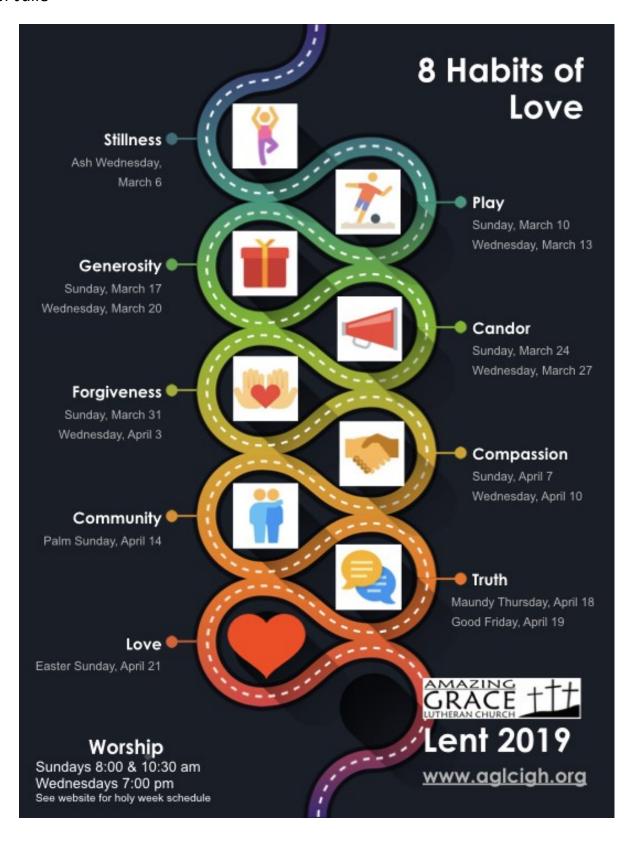
Bacon says that there are three ways we can approach the world: as a victim, as a hero, or as a learner. A victim may feel that they have been wronged and therefore need to be vindicated. A hero may approach life in need of validation of their ability to do it all and rescue everyone around them. And a learner – well, a learner opens herself up to discovering something new in every situation.

Each week we will approach one of these eight habits of love with a learner's mindset. There will be time for stillness and joy, playfulness and reflection. We will together ask questions like this:

- ★ How can you live the most meaningful life you possibly can?
- ★ What does that life look like for you and for this community?
- ★ How does a family or business, nation or church leave behind fear and enter into love?
- ★ How can we learn to play, as children do so well, to love more joyfully?
- ★ What if I tell the truth in love and find that my relationships suffer as a result?

Follow the roadmap on this page to see each of the steps on this path toward Easter – when Jesus died and rose again so that we might have life and love – in abundance!

With Love, Pastor Julie



# GOD'S GREAT EARTH VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JUNE 17-20, 2019

Registration is now open for Vacation Bible School 2019: God's Great Earth. We are excited to bring you another year of fantastic learning and experiences! This year we will be embracing God's Creations and learning what God has told us about how he wants us to care for them. Our activities will center around caring for God's People, God's Animals, God's Land, and God's Waters. We will have two field trips again this year: Como Zoo and Feed My Starving Children (older kids), park and splash pad (younger kids).

Register early and get the early bird discount! You can find the registration form at: http://bit.ly/2019VBS

Questions? Contact Zella Vandervort at mnhomebug@gmail.com or 651-769-7864

## Vacation Bible School 2019 Volunteers Needed

The dates for VBS 2019 are set, June 17-20, and registration for students has opened http://bit.ly/2019VBS

The VBS committee has been hard at work planning for a fun filled learning experience. In order for the week to run smoothly, many volunteers are needed! The needs are varied from classroom teachers and assistants (8:30 am - noon), craft time leader and assistant (noon - 3:30 pm), field trip supervisors (Tues & Thurs afternoons), as well as volunteers for early morning (7 - 9 am) and late afternoons (3 - 5 pm).

Check your schedule and see where you can plug into this experience.

For more information or to volunteer see Linda Erickson or Barb Malamen.

### Sunday Adult & Youth Education 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. in the Upper Room

March 3: By Heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism

March 10: GO DAY! Intergenerational Education and Activities

March 17: By Heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism

March 24: By Heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism

March 31:By Heart: Conversations with Martin Luther's Small Catechism



Donuts and coffee provided!

## Are You Holding Up?

Ash Wednesday and Lent are right around the corner and I'd like to begin our "Prayer Warrior Ministry" at the beginning of this contemplative and introspective season of the church year. Last month I described what a "40-day experiment" is in which, I will pray and provide a "40-day experience!" Prayer Warriors are those who "hold up" before the Lord the petitions of the people.

Prayer Warriors will commit to spending time in prayer at a certain time each day (agreed upon by participants). The Scriptures indicate that the "fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous avails much" and "where two on earth agree (in prayer) about anything, it will be done for them." There is power in prayer – especially corporate prayer – because prayer addresses the One Who alone is able to answer prayer and to send power and provision to answer our petitions.

I challenge each of you to participate in this 40 day experiment experience. It will cost you nothing but 15-30 minutes out of each day's 24 hours. You can pray at church, in the car, (don't close your eyes!), at the kitchen table, in the office, even in your bed! As we long for the Spirit of God to be released in and through us—personally and as a congregation — let's join together in prayer and watch God open the floodgates of heaven and pour out on us blessings in such measure that we cannot contain it! Then, renewed, refreshed, and confident in faith, we can go out from here and spread the news of our unconditionally loving, all-embracing, unrestrictedly welcoming Savior and Lord.

For those interested in gathering at church, I have scheduled the following times for the sanctuary to be available: Wednesdays 9:30 AM-10:00 AM and Thursdays 6:30 PM-7:00 PM. Please call Leanne at church or email me if you're up for the challenge and ready to see God's power in action!

Pastor Tess tpanamarow@aglcigh.org

## From the Children and Youth Minister

Submitted by Tim Marburger

### Re-Imagining Christian Education at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church

We are two months into the experiment of Sunday School reimagining. We've had some successful GO Days and now we begin the next phase. What are your thoughts on this experiment thus far? Give us your feedback as we progress through the season of Lent. You can speak with Pastor Julie, Kami Burgess, Barb Forthun, Trish Ebensteiner or Tim Marburger.

#### **March Music Madness**

Wednesday evenings during Lent join us for *March Music Madness* following Lenten Suppers for children age 3 – Grade 5. Barb Forthun will lead children in interactive and fun music and activities which will replace King's Kids Choir and Sunday School during Lent.

March 6– April: 5:30 pm Lenten Supper 6:00 pm March Music Madness 7:00 pm Lenten Worship



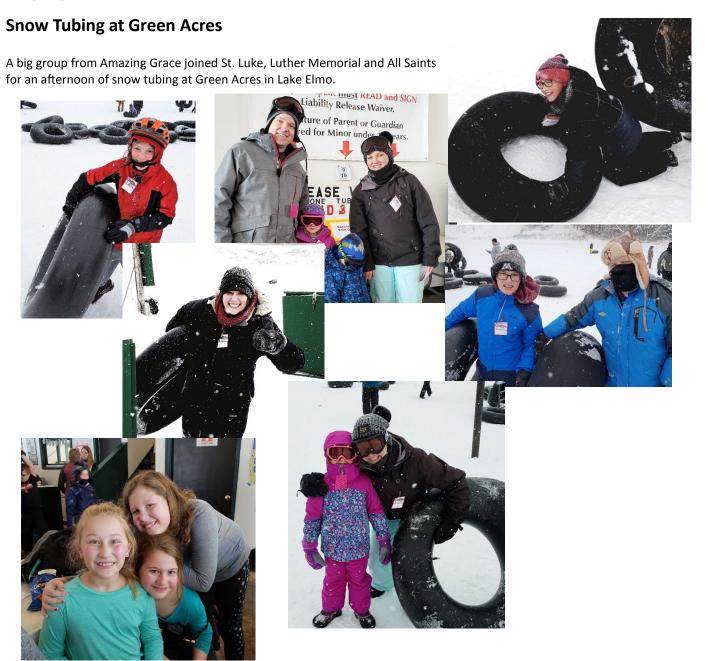
#### **February GO Day**

What a FUN experience!! The Minnesota Zoomobile was with us to show us some of God's creature. When not viewing the various animals, families made bird feeders using the many bottle caps you provided.









### **Family Camp Out**

Family weekend hosted by the Morgan/Ingalsbe families has been scheduled for Friday, August 16 – Sunday, August 18. This was very popular last year. See page 10 of this newsletter for more details.

### Camp WAPO Registration: http://lwlbci.com/amazinggrace

Registration is nearly over! Our preferred registration ends **March 15.** This annual camping experience has been enjoyed by many of our kids each year. The SEEDS weekend (Grades 2 & 3) is \$175 will be July 12 - 14. Youth Camp (Grades 4 - 8) and Senior High Camp (Grades 9 - 12) will be July 14 - 19 (cost \$455)

## **UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS**

March 3: Gertens spring plant/flower sales begin

March 6 at 5:30pm: Lenten Supper hosted by youth

March 10: GO Day (Intergenerational activity)

March 13 at 5:30pm: Lenten Supper

March 16: Grades 3-6 movies (time TBD)

March 20 at 5:30pm: Lenten Supper

March 27 at 5:30pm: Lenten Supper

March 31: Gertens spring sale deadline

April 3 at 5:30pm: Lenten Supper

April 6 at 10am: First Communion Class

### MARCH FOOD DRIVE—NEIGHBOR'S INC.

Neighbor's Inc.: The March food drive is here! With the government shut down, Neighbor's has seen an increase in the number of people visiting the food shelf. Our goal for this year is to collect **5,000 pounds** of food during the month of March. I would like to challenge each family to bring 10 pounds of food each week during the month of March to help restock Neighbor's food shelf. I will be delivering food weekly to Neighbor's, and I will keep everyone updated on our progress throughout the month. Thank you in advance for helping those in need in our community!

Neighbor's is also in need of paper bags. Please bring in any bags you have and place them in the Neighbor's bin. Thank you!



Contact: Lisa Barnhart

## **OWLS Gathering –Thursday March 21**

Hello Outstanding/Older Lutherans! Please note the date change for the March gathering. We will gather on <u>Thursday, March 21 at 11 am.</u> The change has been made to avoid gathering on the same day as Lenten supper. Come for potluck lunch, conversation, laughter, and a little competition. We will finish by 1 pm.

OWLS will not meet in April because our regularly scheduled meeting would fall during Holy Week. You can however put May 15, 11 am on your schedule.

Contact: Barb Malamen or Laurel Oseth.





## YogaDevotion

The new session of Yoga Devotions begins Monday, March 4. Class is held Monday at 5:30 pm in the church narthex for 60 minutes. This is a great way to begin one's week for body, mind and spirit. This is an 8 week session at a cost of \$64. Checks can be written to Amazing Grace with Yoga Devotion in the memo line. The sign up sheet is on the community bulletin board.

Contact: Barb Malamen 651-454-1858

## WOMEN'S RETREAT APRIL 29—MAY 3, 2019

Do you have a project you've wanted to work on? Do you have a book you want to read? Do you want to hang out with a fun group of women? Do you just want to relax? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, this retreat is for you!

This is a relaxing, do what you enjoy, women's retreat. We stay at Pheasant Run Retreat Center in Hutchinson, MN and the cost is approximately \$140 per person. All are welcome! You can even bring a friend. Contact Zella Vandervort (<a href="mailto:mnhomebug@gmail.com">mnhomebug@gmail.com</a> or 651-769-7864).



## **SHOE DRIVE**

Feb 15- MAR 15 Old shoes with no where to go?

The Serving Smiles organization is looking to take them off your hands! We are collecting gently worn, used, and new shoes in the hopes to raise funds to support our up coming Dental Mission Trip to Jamaica.







Got shoes?

Want to support a great cause?

Gently used or new shoes with no where to go?

How can you give:

Place in any of our collection boxes

Contact Karen at
Servingsmiles@outloo
k.com to arrange a pick
-up!

Be a good sole!



A 501c3 non-profit organization

Follow us on Instagram: Serving.Smiles

## SAVE THE DATE: August 16-18 AGLC Family Camp-out!

If you're getting sick of winter, start looking forward to summer!

Please mark your calendars to reserve the weekend of August 16-18 for our second annual AGLC Family Camp-Out! We will be at Baker Park Reserve again this year, at the exact same site as last year. Everyone who is a part of the AGLC community is welcome to join regardless of household type. For any questions, please contact Adam Ingalsbe or Mark Morgan.



## **Calling All Computer Gee**ks

Amazing Grace is currently looking for an IT support specialist who would volunteer to help keep the church's network and computers operating efficiently, safely, and securely. Weekly support required is on average less than an hour, but on occasion it can spike to 4-5 hours.

Monthly maintenance is normally done after Microsoft releases their monthly updates, almost always the second Wednesday of the month. This is normally about 4 hours monthly for the 6 laptops we have for staff. Additionally, the 10 laptops for Sunday School require updating twice yearly, before and after the Sunday School season.

In addition, setting up a new computer or reconfiguring an old one when staff changes over takes 2-3 hours each. Maintaining the online accounts for new and existing staff can take an additional hour or two monthly.

Anyone interested in finding out more information on providing the necessary IT support can contact Russ Barnhart @ <a href="mailto:rebarnhart@hennenassociates.com">rebarnhart@hennenassociates.com</a> or the church office.

## **JOIN US ON GO DAY! MARCH 10**

The Food Drive Carnival is Back by popular demand! Join us March 10th at 9:15 am for a fun-filled hour of Carnival games. We will have food trivia, a duck pond, and many other exciting games for all ages. Tickets will be given based on the number of food items you donate to the monthly food drive and all food items collected will go to Neighbors Inc. **Two** 

non-perishable food items = Ten tickets!

Save the date:

Next Go Day!-April 28, 2019- Year End Celebration

**Sunday school Coordinators:** 

Kami Burgess

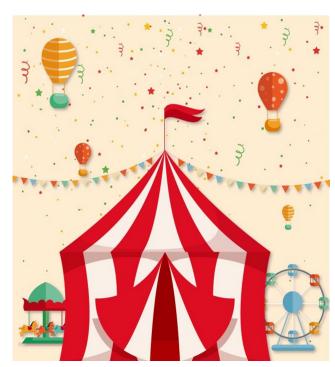
kburgess@aglcigh.org

cell: 701-550-9807

Trish Ebensteiner

tandkgophernuts@comcast.net

cell: 612-719-9548



## **Good News from Henan, China**

### **Submitted by Charlotte Gronseth**

China Service Ventures has just received good news from Henan authorities: CSV will now be <u>permitted to resume its Summer Camp Program</u>. Three years ago it had been informed—one week before the camp was to open—that these camps were forbidden. Needless to say, it was a huge disappointment to the campers and counselors. We thank God for this change.

Because of China's religious laws, especially the most recent ones, Bible classes are not allowed. However, important Christian values will be shared, and among these, LOVE. Thank you to those here at Amazing Grace who are crocheting pretty red hearts (for bookmarks or decorations) to give to these children. We expect that many, as in the past, will ask questions, which then may be answered. That is the opening for sharing God's wonderful love. Thank you!

## Where is God leading us?

Submitted by: Stef Bailis, President

The title of this article is inspired by one of the questions put to the congregation at the "Conversations with the Council" meetings in December. Another key question from the "Conversations" was "What are some opportunities for improvement?" In addition to eliciting input from the members of the congregation, the ministry teams were asked to provide their recommendations on the following questions: What should we keep? What should we drop? What should we add? What should we improve?

The underlying theme is "change." Change is a necessary feature in the development of any entity—whether it be a child, a business, or a church, etc. Healthy change is necessary for survival; but unwarranted change is more likely to be harmful.

If we set as a goal of Amazing Grace mere "survival," we can probably do so. After all, as the results of the Conversations with the Council have indicated, many value the fellowship and social aspect of Amazing Grace, and will continue to support the church enough for it survive. But if all we are willing to do is survive, would we be acting faithfully to the will of God? I think not. I believe that God calls us to not just survive but to thrive.

Too often I hear of the decline of the church in America, but this is not universally true. Yes, the ELCA and other mainline protestant denominations are in decline. But must they inevitably decline? Some parts of the church in America are indeed thriving. It seems those churches that are thriving tend to be non-denominational or semi-denominational. What makes some churches thrive? What features of a church are necessary for a church to thrive? Are we willing to consider adopting those features? I propose that if these church-thriving features are compatible with what Jesus has taught us, and if they are feasible, then at least we should try them out. But we should not "throw out the baby with the bath water" either. Amazing Grace has features which some of the thriving churches might not have, features that clearly are in the spirit of what Jesus has taught us. These we should retain.

I am very blessed to be part of a capable, conscientious, and dedicated team at the Council. We shall endeavor to fulfill our duty, but we cannot do it effectively without your involvement. Council meetings are "open meetings"; all members are welcome to attend. We are also very approachable; feel free to communicate your questions, suggestions, concerns, etc.

Where is God leading us? Let us pray for discernment of God's will and, when a consensus is formed, may we boldly proceed ahead!

Faithfully yours, Stef

## **Care for This Congregation Continues!**

Your Amazing Grace ministry staff works together to provide prayer, visits, phone calls, and provide Holy

Communion, in order to facilitate connections with God and the Amazing Grace

community.



### Pastor Julie Wright, Lead Pastor

I am your first point of contact for any urgent need of care, connection or prayer. This includes, but is not limited to: Mental or physical illness, hospitalization, or diagnosis, in

need of prayer, problems with relationships, or any other crisis that might arise. Life can be messy and things come up all the time, so I am on-call and ready to respond to your

need to connect, to be joined in prayed, and surrounded by a community that cares for you. God does not intend for anyone to be alone in their joys and concerns, so it is with that in mind that we become a community united in Jesus. Due to HIPPA privacy laws, healthcare providers/hospitals can not notify the church when you are hospitalized, but you can always call or text me. Cell phone: 651.271.1427.



### Pastor Tess Panamarow, **Pastor of Congregational Care**

For the last 8 months, Pastor Tess Panamarow has been serving as Amazing Grace's Pastor of Congregational Care. She works for us only 10 hours a week, but in those hours are filled with sharing the love of Christ with those who need a kind smile, an encouraging word, a

reminder of God's promise and Presence, and, sometimes a good belly laugh! Pastor Tess also:

- Coordinates the "Hands and Feet" ministries
- Leads a worship service with communion at Inver Glen (the senior living residence next door to the church) the first Thursday of every month at 10:00-10:30 am. (Everyone is invited, even if they are not residents of Inver Glen.)
- Provides back-up and assistance for Pastor Julie as needed and requested, such as: covering emergency calls, assisting in Sunday worship, and filling in when Pastor Julie is away, including preaching about once a month.

Amazing Grace's staff works with many other committed ministries of this church:

Funerals: Barb Malamen has a knack for hospitality! She coordinates funeral hospitality at Amazing Grace by providing food and beverages for those in grief.

Hands and Feet: Ministers with a love of God's people visit others in need of connection and prayer.

Meals: When meals for those in crisis or grief are needed, Lynda Bartlette does a great job coordinating volunteers to provide (comfort) food.

Rides: Norm Beckman, in his generosity, locates volunteer drivers to provide rides on a short-term basis.

Personal Prayers: Linda Erickson coordinates personal prayer leaders who, during most worship services, provide one-to-one prayer during Holy Communion.

**Prayer Chain**: Mary Garfield helps us pray for all those with prayer requests through email alerts. These prayers are a key element to healing.

Prayer Shawls: Gifted knitters make prayer shawls, stitched with prayers of love which are then delivered to those in need of comfort.

Conducts visits, connecting with members who are home-bound, shut-in and in care facilities. Stops in to visit and participate with various ministry groups - "Knit & Chat," "OWLS," Vacation Bible School and others.

Continued on next page...

The most important ministry that Pastor Tess provides for Amazing Grace Lutheran Church is PRAYER. She regularly and faithfully prays for those whose names cross her desk or are called to mind by the Spirit. Prayer is the hub of Pastoral Care ministry. Nothing is (or should be) designed, developed, or begun without prayer.



### Tim Marburger, Children and Youth Minister

Tim, as our Children and Youth Minister, works with Pastor Julie and Pastor Tess on various pastoral duties, especially as they apply to the children, youth and families of the congregation. Tim has made numerous hospital and home visits over the past 2 years at Amazing Grace. In addition, Tim spends time out in the community at events that impact our youth – their concerts, sports games, volunteering, school events, fundraisers – letting the kids and their families know that the church is not just in the church building, but in the world with them.



10-Salim and Jennifer Omari 22-Dale and Julie Hammons

28—Jim and Diane Feely



*If we have missed your birthday* or anniversary please contact the church office so that we can add it to the list!

- 2-Jared Hovick
- 3-Korky Ebensteiner
- 7-Gary Garfield
- 8-Maggie Jo McIntyre
- 10-Luke Oleson
- 10-Gordie Johnson
- 15-Sara Liegl
- 16-Tanner
- 18-Paul Portz
- 20-Adam Johnson
- 21- Jessica Barnhart
- 22-AJ
- 23-Carmel Skar
- 24-Mike Garfield
- 25-Susan Young
- 28-Joyce Reimers
- 30-Cole
- 31-Helen Yotter



#### Pastoral Care—Focused Outreach

Servant Ministry Coordinator: Pastor Julie Wright

- •Meal Coordinator: Lynda Bartlette
- •Ride Coordinator: Norm Beckman
- •Funeral Support Coordinator: Barb Malamen
- •Personal Prayer Coordinator for Worship: Linda Erickson

Hands and Feet Ministry—

Coordinator: Pastor Tess Panamarow



Prayer Concerns can be called in to Mary Garfield at 612-834-2955

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 10:30am Mobile Meals Cleaning	2
3—TRANSFIGURATION (white) 8am Worship with Communion 9:15-10:15am Adult Ed. NO Sunday School 10:30am Worship with Communion Gerten's Spring Sale Starts	4 5:30pm Yogadevotion 6:30 pm Executive Team	5 NO BIBLE STUDY at Inver Glen	6 ASH WEDNESDAY (purple) 8:00 am Bulletin Announcements Due to Leanne 5:30pm Lenten Meal provided 5:30pm Confirmation-Mentor/ Mentee Faith Conversations; Worship 6:00pm March Music Madness 7pm Worship with Holy Communion/ Imposition of Ashes/Sanctuary Choir	7 10:00 am 10:40 am Inver Glen Worship Service at Inver Glen	Φ	υ
10—LENT 1 (purple) 8am Worship with Communion 9:15-10:15am Adult Ed GO DAY! 9:15am Sunday School - GO DAY! 10:30am Worship with Communion 10:30 Sanctuary Choir 6:30pm Men's Group	11 5:30pm Yogadevotion 6:30pm Council	12 9:30am Women's Bible Study 10am-3pm <i>The Gathering</i> at Salem 6:00-8:00 pm Garden Club meeting in Upper Room NO Bible Study at Inver Glen during Lent	13 8:00 am Bulletin Announcements Due to Leanne 11:30 am Staff Meeting 4:30-6:00 pm Girl Scouts 5:30 pm Lenten Meal provided 5:30 pm Confirmation-Mentor/ Mentee Faith Conversations; Worship NO King's Kids Chair	14	15 Newsletter Deadline	16 1:00-3:00 pm Grades 3-6 Movies w/Luther Memorial 8:30-11:30 am Council Retreat
17—LENT 2 (purple) 8am Worship with Communion 9:15-10:15am Adult Ed. NO Sunday School 10:30am Worship with Communion 6:30pm Faithful Readers (off site) Gerten's Easter Lily Order Deadline	18 5:30pm Yogadevotion 6:30 pm All Ministry Teams Meeting— Gathering Space lower level	19 10:00am Knit and Chat 12:00pm SE Conference Gathering (off site) NO Bible Study at Inver Glen during Lent	20 8:00 am Bulletin Announcements Due to Leanne 5:30 pm Lenten Meal provided 5:30pm Confirmation-Mentor/ Mentee Faith Conversations; Worship NO King's Kids Choir	21	22	23
24—LENT 3 (purple) 8am Worship with Communion 8am Sanctuary Choir 9:15-10:15am Adult Ed. NO Sunday School 10:30am Worship with Communion 6:30pm Men's Group	25 10:30am Mobile Meals 5:30pm Yogadevotion	26 10am-3pm <i>The Gathering</i> at Salem NO Bible Study at Inver Glen during Lent	27 8:00 am Bulletin Announcements Due to Leanne 11:30 am Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Lenten Meal provided 5:30pm Confirmation-Mentor/ Mentee Faith Conversations; Worship NO King's Kids Cboir	28	10:30am Mobile Meals	30
31—LENT 4 (purple) 8am Worship with Communion 9:15-10:15am Adult Ed. NO Sunday School 10:30am Worship with Communion Gerten's Spring Sale Deadline						



### Website:

www.aglcigh.org

### **Staff:**

Lead Pastor—Pastor Julie Wright jwright@aglcigh.org

Pastor of Congregational Care—Pastor Tess Panamarow TPanamarow@aglcign.org

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

Administrator—Leanne Kojetin *lkojetin@aglcigh.org* 

Communications Coordinator—Sarah Bjorklund sbjorklund@aglcigh.org

Finance Assistant—Craig Yotter cyotter@aglcigh.org

Building Supervisor—Larry Kinney lkinney@aglcigh.org

Worship Musician: Brad Pipal

Sanctuary Choir Director—Barbara Forthun bforthun@aglcigh.org

King's Kids Choir Director—Barbara Forthun bforthun@aglcigh.org

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

Vacation Bible School Coordinator— Zella Vandervort: mnhomebug@gmail.com

### **Main Office Hours:**

Tuesday—Thursday 9:00 a.m.—3:40 p.m.

### **Deadlines:**

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



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





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