



Amazing Grace
Lutheran Church

January 2019 NEWSLETTER



Sundays:
8:30 am Worship Service
10:00 am Children and Adult Sunday School
11:00 am Worship Service
Wednesdays: 5:30 pm Homework Help

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One never experiences a joyous and blessed Advent or Christmas in isolation. There is always someone, chiefly God, but then also members of our family and our church family that we have to thank for helping us to have the experience we long for at Christmas. Last year in December of 2017, I thought I had only one Advent and Christmas to spend with the people of Amazing Grace, but I thank God and all of you who voted for the term call that I had the opportunity to be with you for at least one more Advent and Christmas!

Once again this year I believe the Advent and Christmas seasons at Amazing Grace were exceptional, and there are many people I wish to thank personally for the help and the gifts they contributed to make my celebration of Christmas blessed as ever. As I proceed I know there is always the danger of leaving someone out, and if I do I pray in advance that you will forgive me. But my heart overflows with gratitude for the blessings you have brought to the church this season and to me personally, thus I feel compelled to thank each of you by name.

At the head of the list, of course, I want to thank our wonderful Church staff. Levi Think Tran for the work he does to anchor everything in the office. This includes putting out our newsletter, the weekly email, preparing and printing the paper bulletins, sending out correspondence. And especially through the last month, as he was finishing his semester, handling the special demands this time of year places on the office with efficiency and accuracy. Christmas is a time of joyous singing, therefore we all owe Lois Simon and Charles Anschuetz, a huge thank you for the music planning and leadership they provided throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons. We are especially grateful for the many hours devoted to preparing the wonderful cantata we enjoyed in worship on Sunday, December 16. That thanks of course is extended to include all the members of our choir who gave up many hours for rehearsal to prepare for the performance. Charles remains the common denominator in every occasion of worship at Amazing Grace. He played for all of our Advent services, including our Mid-week Grace services, and both services on Christmas Eve.

I want to thank both Kathy Berfield and Judy Lee for coordinating the gifts from the Angel Tree for the needy children of Chesney Elementary School and Homework Help respectively. They took the information on the gift requests and made sure the tags were placed on the tree, as well as matching up the gifts when they came in. Of course, thanks goes to the many members of Amazing Grace who took the tags from the tree and fulfilled the requests on

them. This yearly ministry could not be accomplished without the generosity of our members who provided the gifts. In connection with this I thank Louise Radloff, who put me in touch with Carla who operates a Christmas gift ministry through her church. She and her group provided roughly half of the Homework Help gifts this year.

Additionally, need to thank my wife Deb, not just for the joy and the pleasure she brings to our celebration of Christmas at home, but for all the work she did in helping the children of our congregation to be ready to present the Christmas pageant on Sunday, December 23 this year. Let me also thank the children, Marlen, Christopher, Dylan and Wuilver Rodela-Palma, Sabastian and Helen Miranda-Reyes, Lawson Connor, and Savannah Calabrese for starring in our pageant. An honorable mention goes to Sabrina and Sarah Calabrese who, though they are older, stepped in and accepted roles when we learned that some of the children we planned to give roles to were going to be out of town when the pageant was performed. I again want to thank Wendy MacKinnon, Lud, David Berfield, Lisa Larsen-Moss, and Grace O'Brien for helping me present the scripts for our Mid-Week Grace services during Advent. It was a joy for me to write the scripts for the services, but I needed considerable help to present them. Also thank you to Bob Schwartz, Lisa Larson-Moss, Jimmy Herchek, and Dave Linke who served as our song leaders for the Mid-Week Grace services.

I wish to thank Debbie Teal, our Worship and Music Chair, who recruited the members of our Hospitality Team who served on Christmas Eve, setting out Christmas cookies and other goodies, as well as Apple Cider for worshipers following the services. Hospitality served as ushers and Communion Assistants on Christmas Eve as well. And Debbie also deserves thanks for serving as the Worship Assistant at both the 5:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve services, in spite of the fact that her foot was still in a boot from her foot surgery of a few weeks before. Thanks also to the choir members who took time away from their family celebrations on Christmas Eve to sing for the congregation and to play in the brass quartet. This includes Debbie Brady who played her guitar and sang a solo at the Family service.

I want to thank Connie Ferguson the members of the Altar Guild, and other volunteers who decorated our worship space for Advent and Christmas, including setting out the poinsettias for Christmas Eve. And a very personal thank you from Deb and myself to all the folks of Amazing Grace who sent cards and gifts to us for Christmas. This does not take the place of individual thank you cards we will be sending out to all of these folks.

Finally, thanks be to God for the incomparable gift of his Son's birth, life, death and resurrection, and for the extraordinary church community that is Amazing Grace, for the life we share together, and for our mission in Christ's name.

Have a blessed New Year! Pastor Mike

CELEBRATING THE NEW YEAR AT AMAZING GRACE!

"2019." It sounds so strange to be saying that. But it is here. 2019 has arrived! We begin the New Year often hoping that it will be better, brighter, more hopeful than the year passed. And we make New Year's resolutions, most of which we don't honor, or if we do only temporarily. This article clues you in on some of the things we will have to look forward to as a congregation in January of 2019; and the hope is that you will view these as exciting evidence of renewal in our congregation.

During the season after Epiphany, we will be celebrating Baptism of the Lord Sunday on Sunday, January 13. This is an annual celebration on the Christian Calendar, but we do not always have the opportunity to celebrate baptisms on Baptism of the Lord Sunday. This year we will have two, and what will make these baptisms unique and special for us is that they will both be adult baptisms.

Pastor Mike recently taught a membership class and prepared four people for membership at Amazing Grace. Thanks be to God for granting us a small amount of growth at the beginning of the New Year. One of the person's who will be joining is Chad Boyd, a member of Wayne Linke's family, who has been very faithful in attendance at Amazing Grace for a number of months now. He discovered that he was not baptized as a child. Thus, he will have to be baptized before formally joining our congregation. In anticipation of this baptism, it came to light that his sister Jodie, who also attends worship at Amazing Grace frequently has not been baptized either.

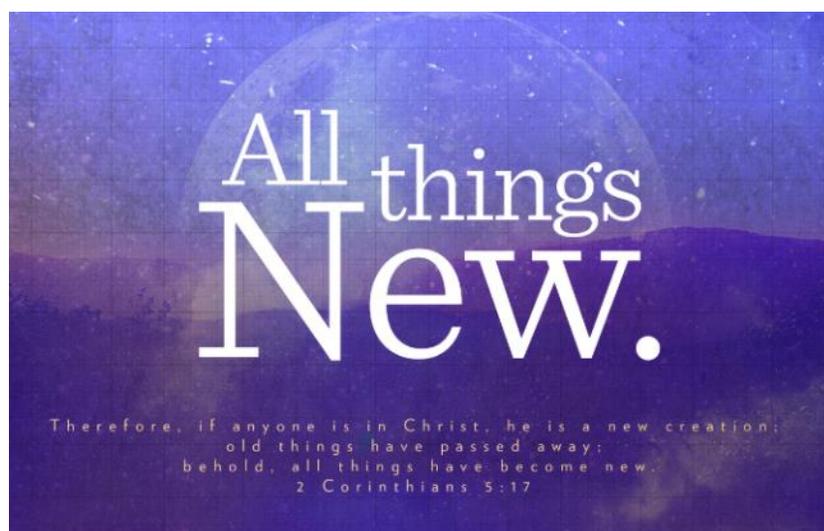
Thus we will celebrate both of their baptisms on January 13; and the hope is that the congregation will turn out in force to celebrate this occasion with both of them. They have found a home at Amazing Grace, and have experienced the transformational love and grace of Christ in our small church family. The least we all can do is be present on January 13 to support them and celebrate this choice they have both made. In addition to the baptisms, Pastor Mike has been asked to teach a special First Communion Class for three grandchildren of one our congregation members. Pastor Mike will give the instruction on Saturday, January 12, and those three children will receive their First Holy Communion on January 13 as well. So there is much for us to celebrate on Baptism of the Lord Sunday this year, evidence of the renewing power of God's presence in our congregation!

Then the following Sunday, January 20 we will welcome four new members into the life of our congregation: **Robin Clavijo** who in addition to her regular presence in worship has already begun sharing her musical gifts by singing with our choir, and by leading our budding children's choir. **Chad Boyd**, previously mentioned, who has a string of consecutive Sundays in which he has been present in worship. Since he started attending in the fall, he has not missed a Sunday in worship. **Marisol Lopez-Vazquez** has come to our congregation through our Homework Help ministry, and has been worshipping with us for a number of months. Her son Ismael received his First Holy Communion back in the fall, and her older daughter Marylin is an active member of our Youth Fellowship and has been attending Confirmation classes as well.

Finally Deb Millum will be transferring her membership from St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Connecticut to Amazing Grace. It is equally important for the congregation to turn out in force on Sunday, January 20 as we welcome four new adult members into our congregation.

These are occasions we must latch onto as a congregation and revel in, because they are proof of God's ever renewing grace in our midst!

Thanks be to God! Have a Blessed New Year!!



Weekly Ministries at Amazing Grace:

Prayer Discernment Group, meets on the 2nd & the 4th Mondays of the month in the Sanctuary @ 7 pm

Piano Class, meets on every Friday @ 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

Good Old Guys Group, meets every Tuesday at the Bethesda Park Senior Center @ 11 am

Pastor-led Bible Study, meets on the 1st, 3rd & 4th Tuesdays of the month in the Fellowship Hall @ 6:30 pm

Alleluia Girls Bible Study, will resume every Wednesday starting on September 29 @ 9:30 am

Homework Help, meets every Wednesday in the Fellowship Hall @ 5:30 pm

Men's Barnabas Reunion Group, meets every Thursday in the Youth Room @ 7 pm

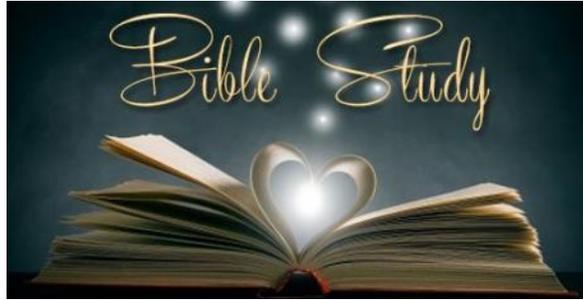
NA Group, meets every Thursday in the Fellowship Hall @ 7:30 pm

Men's Breakfast, meets every Friday @ the IHOP on Hwy 29 @ 8:00 am



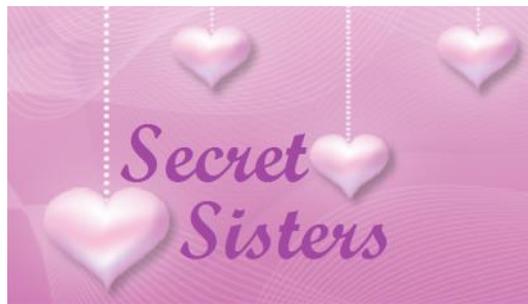
BIBLE STUDY

Pastor led Bible Study will meet on Tuesday night @ 6:30 pm except January 8 due to our monthly Council Meeting.



SECRET SISTERS NEW YEAR!

This ministry will continue this coming year of 2019, there will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex to register. Nannette Stariha is the new coordinator for this ministry for next year, please contact her if you have any question.



MEN'S WINTER RETREAT

This year we will celebrate our 10th year at Lutheranch for our men's retreat. We will again have a weekend of fellowship, music, food, games, hiking, fishing, devotions, and worship. We will be led in devotions and worship by Bishop H. Julian Gordy, bishop of the Southeastern Synod of the ELCA. We have devotions on Friday evening, and Saturday morning usually lasting 1-1/2 hours and worship with communion on Sunday morning. Jacob Crowe will also be doing a presentation on his trip to Israel earlier this year. We will gather at holy Trinity House, Lutheranch in Tallapoosa, Ga. Jan. 25-27, 2019 The cost of the retreat is \$75.00. There is a signup sheet on the bulletin board in the church narthex.



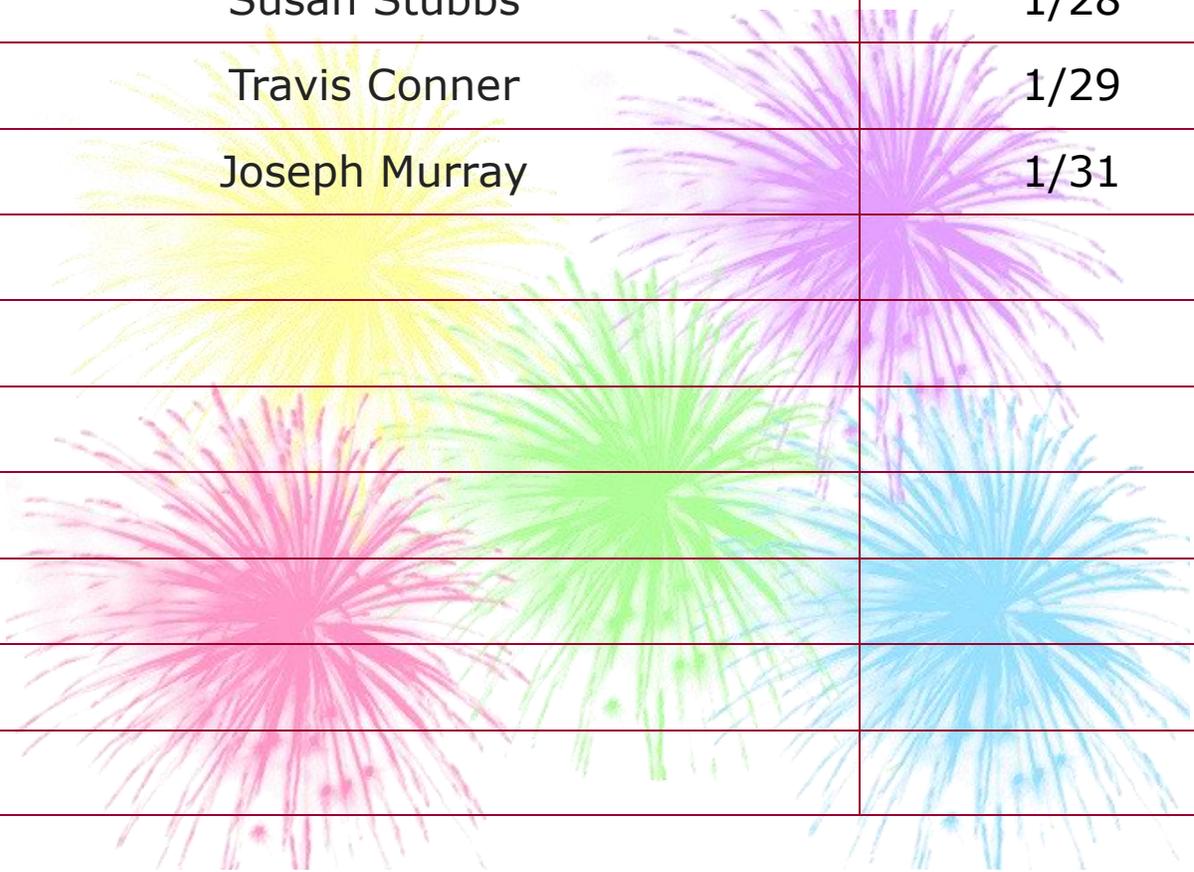
DECEMBER RECAP

This December, during the Advent season, we were very blessed as a congregation to be able to enjoy the cantata directed by Lois Simon and performed by our choir entitled, "Come Ye Faithful." Many told Lois that in their opinion this was the best cantata the choir had ever performed. In addition to the talents of our Director and our choir, it should be noted that our pianist/organist Charles Anschuetz along with many other fine instrumentalists accompanied the choir that Sunday. The other remarkable thing is that this cantata attracted a standing room only audience on Sunday, December 16. There were more in worship for the cantata than at any of the Easter services or the Christmas Eve services this year. What a blessing! In addition, AGLC was blessed again this year with a children's Christmas pageant on December 23 directed by Deb Millum. The play was entitled, "Pepita's Poinsettia," and featured many of our elementary age children of AGLC. Please enjoy the photos below provided by Ana Reyes. The new children's choir also performed as part of the Pageant.





Name	Birthday
Beverly Upton	1/4
Jack Templeton	1/13
Lois Simon	1/14
Joyce Hlavka	1/18
Suanne Murray	1/24
Jan Pichetto	1/25
Susan Stubbs	1/28
Travis Conner	1/29
Joseph Murray	1/31



Amazing Grace Host Activities Update October, 2018

Draft 10-16-18

This article is based on a presentation given by Rudy Beilfuss to All saints Lutheran Church on August 12, 2018.

The Hispanic Outreach Strategy Team (HOST) represents an outreach ministry formalized in 2016 reflecting the Amazing Grace mission statement to "Grow in Love, and Love by Serving." It is the largest outreach program we have ever had. The primary goal of HOST is to provide input to Amazing Grace on how we can effectively integrate the Hispanic community into our church. Also, the HOST Team oversees three programs 1) Homework Help 2) Vacation Bible School, and 3) Lutheridge Camp. The current team members are Rudy Beilfuss, Becky O'Brien, Judie Lee, Debbie Linke, and Ana Reyes. Although most of the participants in these programs are Hispanic, we welcome all students. We also have volunteers from the church that we count on to assist with specific tasks each week, and we get support from church staff. We also get significant help from the Hispanic community – especially "The Mamas".

Homework Help

Homework Help is an evolving program and changes somewhat each year. Our goal is to maximize our time with Homework, Math, English Skills, and Reading. The parents of our Homework Help students are mostly comprised of individuals for which English is a second language and their limited English knowledge makes it difficult for them to help their children with homework. The parents stay at church while their children receive the much-needed help. The parents generally bring food and help with food service and cleaning up after we eat and at the end of the evening.

The Homework Help program is designed to provide help to elementary, middle, and high school students. Every Wednesday evening during the school year we meet for a potluck dinner, we have time for fellowship, and then we proceed to help with homework. We generally have 15 to 25 students.

We start the evening at 5:30 with a prayer and potluck dinner. At 6:00 we start with Homework which lasts to 7:00. Upon completion of Homework, or if a student does not have any homework, elementary school students can read, or work on grade level sheets we provide, and older students can read or participate in some music training. We have provided our students with school supplies costing over \$1,000 each of the last two years.

We try to be flexible in our approach. We emphasize to volunteers that they do not need to be there or bring food every week, or have expertise in the subjects - we will provide help if they have problems of any kind.

Vacation Bible School

Most of the children that go to our Vacation Bible School (VBS) program also attend Homework Help. VBS is held on six Wednesdays during the summer from about 5:00 to about 7:00. Our focus for the last two years has been God's Grace in Action. Each week we have a bible story and use that message by doing service projects for the community. For example, this year we made cards and tissue paper flowers for the sick and elderly, made Grace Bags to give to the poor, baked cookies for our cookie ministry, and we contributed food to the Lawrenceville co-op. The kids learn not only about the different ministries at Amazing Grace but also learn how to reach out and

make a difference in our community. We experimented this year with the addition of some art and music, which we hope to add in 2019.

Lutheridge Camp

Lutheridge is a camp facility in North Carolina owned by the ELCA. The participants attending our summer family centered camp are primarily the same people that participate in our Homework Help and VBS programs. In the last two years we averaged about 9 families and 40 participants. The feedback from the family members attending indicate they have an unforgettable experience in a spiritually enriching environment. They have told us they come home feeling blessed to be part of a congregation that supports them and the needs of their families. The Hispanic community provides significant financial support for the program through the sales of tamales to congregation members and friends. The Hispanic community has told us that they have experienced and seen the teamwork operating between the families as they worked together to raise funds for this program. In 2018 for example, with the funds generated from tamale sales and contributions from Amazing Grace we were able to pay the full camp fees for a needy family, as well as half the camp fees for each of the rest of the families.

Resources

How do we do all this? We have two primary resources – Time and Money. First, people volunteer their time, which is our biggest resource, People bring and/or buy food - we eat a lot of Pizza. We receive Individual contributions of money. The Church has a small budget for outreach. In the last two years we used \$ 3,000 of designated outreach money we received from St. James. Fund raisers from the sale of tamales made by the Hispanic parents raised around \$ 3,700 in the last two years. We used these funds for the cost of Lutheridge attendance. We also use Thrivent Action Team Projects for Homework Help and Vacation Bible School. I estimate that we will have received a total of about \$5,000 in 2017 and 2018 combined.

Churches Working Together and Sharing

We have all read about, seen and experienced the decline in church membership, especially with the younger generation. The world is changing, and the need to change and do things differently is always with us. We understand that there are concerns about [how well two churches will be able to work together. It will be different. However, I believe we can all benefit from sharing, learning from each other, and working together.](#) As a member of Amazing Grace for 27 years I have experienced a willingness for our church to share whatever we have, and I would expect to hear the same from members of All Saints. Although we are all concerned about the future of our own individual churches, ultimately, we are all on the same team. I hope we can move forward and learn more about how we can better leverage the biggest, and possibly most underused resource we have – working together.

We invite you to come see what we are doing at Amazing Grace, and join in the fun.

ANGEL TREE UPDATE

Amazing Grace members, friends and family along with Thrivent Financial teamed up to make Christmas special for (32) children from Chesney Elementary and all the children from the Homework Help program. Many thanks for your generosity and love.

Kathy Berfield



LAWRENCEVILLE CO-OP

In the meantime, we are running low on our food donations and the number of clients being served is continuing to rise. If you already have a Food Drive planned, please let us know that date. Also, it would be helpful, if you could add something in your communications asking for food donations to the Co-Op. Our website is updated weekly with the most needed items.

Current Needed Food Items

- Canned Chicken and Tuna
- Chili
- Plain Rice
- Saltine Crackers

Most Needed Personal Care Items

- Bar Soap
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Laundry Detergent
- Feminine Needs



BLOOD DRIVE

Blood Drive will be here again @ Amazing Grace Lutheran Church on Sunday, January 13 from 9 am to 1 pm.

All Donors will receive a free movie ticket!



SHOE SOME LOVE

THE SOUL PROJECT

This program is designed show support and help others who happen to be less fortunate than we are. Helping people in Africa by donating shoes because shoes can prevent serious injury, parasitic infections, Disease and Death. There will be boxes under the table in the Narthex for you to place your donation.

In Attendance: Lisa Larsen-Moss, Pam Rink, Liz Linke,
Bob MacKinnon, Wayne Linke, Lee Bennett, Pastor Mike Millum
Absent: Trish Ladd-Thomas, Vicki Speddon, Bob Lee, Debbie Teal
Guests:

Opening devotional: Pastor Mike
Spiritual Autobiography: Wayne Linke

Secretary's Report: The November minutes were approved via email by consensus on November 29 2018.

Combined Treasurer and Financial Administrator's Report for November

November 2018 Regular Giving was \$14,709.00, which is \$5,891.00 under budget. Expenses were \$17,898.88, which was \$565.12 over budget. November was not a good month, giving was down and expenses were above normal as the Pastors Pension and Insurance was not deducted in October, so November took a double hit; hopefully December will be better.

November 2018 YTD Income was \$17,654.64 less than November 2017 YTD Income.
November 2018 YTD Expenses were \$10,980.60 more than November 2017 YTD Expenses.

2018 Year to Date Giving/Income is \$6,393.31 under budget.
2018 Year to Date Expenses are \$7,548.52 under budget.

Dedicated Accounts – We have a balance of \$34,385.78 in various accounts. There were no added receipts or expenses for November 2018 in dedicated accounts.

November 2018 cash on hand is \$94,508.88 which includes \$34,385.78 in Dedicated funds; therefore, not in reserve/not liquid for general expenses.

THE COMBINED REPORT IS APPROVED BY CONSENSUS VOTE

Pastor's Report for December

- It goes without saying that this is a busy time of year. Really, it has been a busy fall filled with many meaningful activities in the life of the church. However as busy as it is, I simply love this time of year and am looking forward to seeing another Advent journey through to its culmination with Christmas! I am, as ever, grateful to have a place to serve so that I am given the opportunity to provide meaningful worship opportunities for the congregation, and be surrounded by a community to pursue the Advent/Christmas journey with.

- Six worship services/preaching opportunities
- One special service (Thanksgiving Eve 11/21) and one midweek Grace/Advent service.
- 8 Home visits
- 3 homebound/nursing home/retirement home visits
- 1 prospective member visit
- 3 office calls
- 6 hospital visits
- 2 Confirmation classes
- 2 New Member classes
- 1 Youth Event

- One Day of vacation and One Sunday off
- The Thanksgiving Eve Service this year was hosted by the members of our Youth Fellowship. It was certainly a unique service in which the youth served as ushers and led the prayers, etc. The message was provided by way of a skit written by yours truly and presented by the youth. The youth didn't seem to grasp the practice of greeting people as they left the service that evening though. I felt the youth did a surprisingly fine job given that most of them are not used to performing in skits before an audience of any kind. It was raw, and awkward at moments, but I hope the people who worshiped with us on Thanksgiving Eve were blessed by the service. It was a congregation that certainly had a different make-up than Sunday morning. We had a number of parents of the youth, many of whom are not Amazing Grace members, present. It was nice to reach a slightly different group of worshipers with this service. I thought the youth did an excellent job!!
- I feel that the Advent services have gone well to this point. I was particularly pleased with the New Year's themed service on the first Sunday in Advent. I am getting used to the fact that Amazing Grace has an abbreviated Advent season of basically two weeks, considering that the Cantata always occupies the third Sunday in Advent, and it is a Christmas Cantata. The last two years another Advent Sunday has been claimed by the pageant, which is focused on telling the Christmas story. I feel this curtails the period of preparation for Christ's coming. But these are traditions that are well established and looked forward to by many!
- The pageant this year is "Called Pepita's Poinsettia" and is directed by my wife Deb. It is a play based on a legend from Mexico, which we thought would be ideal given the makeup of the children participating. The Poinsettia does come originally from Central America, and the play will tell that background as well as the tale of poor Pepita who brings wild flowers as a gift to the manger in church because she is poor and that is all she can afford. Then the weeds/wildflowers are transformed into Poinsettias. This is a real Mexican legend. In the future however, we are going to have to do something different with the scheduling of the Pageant. This year the pageant is on December 23, and we have found that a number of the children who would have been in the pageant are gone for Christmas, leaving us to have to do some creative casting. We almost didn't have enough children available to do a pageant. Deb is rehearsing with the children, and Robin Clavijo is teaching the children a new song to sing during the pageant. It should be fun!
- I was invited by Louise Radloff to offer the invocation at the dedication of the expansion of a Gwinnett Health building that bears her name. I am learning what a dynamic woman she is, and how involved she has been in her community and in Gwinnett County through the years. Louise also invited me to attend a meeting of the Coalition of Gwinnett County Community Services. I learned a lot about what is available in health and emergency services, and met some people who may be resources we can draw on down the road. In addition I learned about some community services I may want to become involved in. Louise is an amazing resource!
- We have had our first Advent Midweek Grace service, with two more to come. The focus is on the telling of the Christmas story from the perspective of Joseph. I am using a book I read entitled, Faithful by Adam Hamilton to help me prepare the skits that will be presented with the help of some Amazing Grace members who enjoy being theatrical. The first service, focused on Joseph's righteousness which was tempered by mercy in his decision to spare Mary public humiliation when she turns up pregnant. The second one will center on Adoption by juxtaposing a couple who are considering adopting a child with the challenge Joseph must have experienced becoming essentially an adoptive father to Jesus who was not his biological child. The third one will deal with journey's we would rather not undertake. It will juxtapose the journey of a young woman who must confront hardships and challenges she does not want

to face with Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem, which is forced upon Joseph by the emperor's decree. The musical setting is Joyous Light and is being led by volunteers from the congregation.

- In addition to the Angel Tree which provides gifts for children of Chesney Elementary school and our Homework Help children, we sponsored a coat drive, with the coats being due on the second Sunday in Advent. Although we will continue to collect coats as long as people are bringing them in. Any children's coats will be donated to Bethesda Elementary school, and the adult coats will be given to Step- By- Step Recovery, an organization Wayne Linke, our Outreach Chair, put us in touch with. Thank you Wayne!
- I have added some of my drawings and art work to provide visuals during the Cantata, and have designed a banner that Judy Lee has agreed to sew for the church. The banner features Mary and the child Jesus and hopefully will be ready to display for Christmas and Epiphany!
- Having worked so closely with many undocumented immigrants through Homework Help, we finally had the experience of one of our own families, the Hernandez family, who are members of Amazing Grace, facing the possibility of deportation. Eduardo was pulled over for a traffic violation, and because he didn't have a valid driver's license or any other documentation, was arrested and spent several days around Thanksgiving in ICE custody. His disposition is still undecided. He is home right now, but has a court date set for the end of January. We continue to be in prayer for the Hernandez family, as the legal issue regarding Eduardo is decided.
- The Membership Class I have been talking about in my reports for the last few months was finally held. This has been the most difficult class to arrange that I have ever had. In fact, I had to teach it in two sessions because I couldn't get all three participants together at the same time. The good news is I was able to conduct the class and Amazing Grace will welcome four new members in the near future. They are: Robin Clavijo, who has already become quite active at Amazing Grace working with a children's choir that has been formed; Chad Boyd, who has attended every Sunday faithfully since he started about three and a half months ago; and Marisol Lopez-Vazquez, a woman who has become acquainted with Amazing Grace through Homework Help, and has worshiped with us frequently along with her two children. Her daughter Marylin is a member of our new youth group and her son Ismael went through our First Communion Class. The fourth person joining is my wife Deb, who will finally be transferring her membership from our old parish in CT. My hope is to have the class join the congregation formally on January 6. In addition to the membership vows, Chad Boyd will be baptized, so this will be an exciting event at Amazing Grace when it happens.
- Finally, I have been having a number of challenges with Confirmation in the last few months. The attendance has been very spotty, with a number of Sundays where no one showed up for me to have a class. It has been very difficult to provide the four to five teenagers who make up the class with the instruction they really need to be prepared to be confirmed. John Rhilinger and I will have to talk about this and make an appeal to parents to help their teens be more consistent with attendance.
- I would like to thank the following people for their support and help: Connie Ferguson and her intrepid altar guild folks, who have put up with my weird ideas, and for providing the New Years decorations and for coordinating the Christmas decorating. I want to thank the 10 or 12 folks who showed up to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. The mostly Hispanic families who just pitched in without being asked and cleaned up the mess we made with the confetti on the First Sunday in Advent, and the Youth who did such a fine job hosting the Thanksgiving Service!

COMMISSION REPORTS

Nurture – Vickie Speddon

Many of the groups within Nurture are pretty self-sufficient and never have anything to communicate to my reports. However I am happy to update on some activities such as:

New Members: Pastor has been meeting with several people in connection with interest in becoming new members to our congregational family. We hope to see them as official members sometime in the beginning of the New Year.

Large Group: Lud did a wonderful job getting it together for our low country boil at Thanksgiving time. For all those that were able to help contribute ingredients and those that were out there preparing and cooking it up, as well as any that helped set up and clean up afterwards, thanks we enjoyed it.

As always please continue to consider speaking to Lud about being on his team of large group. Without those who he can turn to in order to plan and help carry out these types of events, we won't have very many of them to enjoy. So I encourage you call, text, email or talk in person to Lud and express your willingness to be on the team that makes these wonderful opportunities for our congregation and we can start planning our next one.

Visitation Group has plans for meeting up on 12/11 to plan on deliveries of Christmas gifts and cards for the homebound. How wonderful and needed this group is to those members who just can't make it to service for one reason or another. Blessings and safe journeys to you all as the winter weather starts to come thru.

Card Ministry has been feeling the loss of Linda MacKinnon. To those who in the past might have received a card from her for some occasion or milestone or just an outreach of thoughts and support but now haven't, please know you aren't forgotten by all. We have 2 ladies that are interested in keeping this wonderful ministry going and there are plans for that transition to take place in the New Year.

Our **Nursery** continues to be available to small children and babies; however children who are able, are encouraged to stay in the sanctuary to participate in worship and praise. Parents are encouraged to keep your school age children, as well as perhaps pre-school age children; with them during the service so that they may become accustomed to learning God's lessons and our praises and prayers to him. This will also then leave the nursery to accommodate those babies and small toddlers that need that space to be fussy and tended to. Most Sunday's there is an attendant available to watch your small children for you should the need arise. Plus we have a couple more people able to volunteer to help in this area as well and so we hope to have any coverage issues worked out soon. However, if there is no one there for your particular need please feel free to still use the room and its resources as you need while you stay with your child.

I continue to encourage any of the other nurture sub groups to fill me in with what is going on with your groups so that those in our congregation can know as well, and those that may be interested in what you have going on and want to join in with your group can have the opportunity.

Discipleship – Bob MacKinnon

No Report Submitted

Outreach – Wayne Linke

- Last month our Facebook posts reached 926 people, 50 people visited our page, 13 people checked in at our church, and 121 people engaged our page. We have 293 people who are linked to our page. Wayne
- Nothing to report - but 3 of us are working on baby hats...I am getting an announcement ready for the bulletin and newsletter asking for more volunteers. I am also willing to teach knitting and/or crocheting to anyone interested. Debi
- We are putting Good Gifts ornaments on the Christmas tree in the Narthex for anyone that would like to take one and donate as a gift. Wayne

Worship & Music – Debbie Teal

- We continually need more volunteers for Hospitality, Acolytes, Readers, Children Messengers, PowerPoint Operators, Worship Assistants, etc., especially for the 8:30 service.
- Choir rehearsal occurs Wednesday nights starting at 7:15 pm (7:45 pm during Advent Season due to Mid-Week services). We can always use more voices. We're looking forward to the Sunday, December 16th at 11:00 am Cantata.
- All Saints Sunday was remembered on November 4th.
- Christ the King Sunday was celebrated newly this year with Seasonal Church Banners all around the sanctuary on November 25th.
- 1st Sunday of Advent celebrated on December 2nd. The sanctuary looked festive this year as we celebrated the New Church Year's theme.
- Midweek Joyous Light Evening Service at 7pm started Wednesday, December 5th.
- We decorated the trees and sanctuary on Saturday, December 8th starting at 10am.
- Children's Christmas pageant to occur Sunday, December 23rd.
- Christmas Eve Services at 5pm and 10pm.

Property – Lee Bennett

- Valve repaired on urinal in men's room.

COMMISSION REPORTS ARE APPROVED BY CONSENSUS VOTE

Old Business

- Bulletins - we have started (and will continue to) print fewer bulletins each Sunday in an effort to cut down on resources, mainly paper and toner. Pastor will make sure that an announcement is included in the weekly email letting worshipers know that we will be asking folks to take one bulletin per family.

New Business

- HOST \$\$ Request - council approves up to \$2000 out of the great commission fund to be used for camp scholarships for Homework Help children.
- One Service 12/16 for the Christmas Cantata.

Thank You's

- Thank you to all who helped with outreach functions in November.
- Connie Ferguson and her intrepid altar guild folks, who have put up with Pastor's weird ideas, and for providing the New Years decorations and for coordinating the Christmas decorating.

- The mostly Hispanic families who just pitched in without being asked and cleaned up the mess we made with the confetti on the First Sunday in Advent
- The Youth who did such a fine job hosting the Thanksgiving Service!
- Thank you to volunteers for extra Altar Guild work for Christ the King Sunday and the 1st Sunday of Advent.
- A HUGE Thank You to all volunteers who decorated the church on December 8th. Connie, John, Fred, Janet, Pastor, Arlene, Debbie, Bob, Judie.
- Thank you to Wayne Linke for stepping up to give his spiritual autobiography at tonight's council meeting in Debbie's absence.

Spiritual Autobiography for next month: Debbie Teal

Closing Prayer

CONSENSUS TO ADJOURN

Respectfully submitted by Liz Linke.

JANUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Happy New Year!	2 No Ministries	3 7 pm Men's Barnabas Group; 7:30 pm NA Group	4 8:00 am Men's Group	5
6 8:30 Worship Service; 10 am Sunday School Hour; 11 am Worship Service	7 6:30 pm Peachtree Trombone Consort	8 9:30 am Visitation Ministry; 11 am Good Old Guys Meet; 7 pm Council Meeting; 7 pm Peachtree Band of Jazz	9 9:30 am Alleluia Girls; 10 am Staff Meeting; 5:30 pm Homework Help; 7:15 Choir Practice	10 7 pm Men's Barnabas Group; 7:30 pm NA Group	11 8:00 am Men's Group; 5:00 pm Piano Class	12
13 8:30 Worship Service; 9 am—1pm Blood Drive; 10 am Sunday School Hour; 11 am Worship Service with Baptism	14 6:30 pm Peachtree Trombone Consort; 7:00 pm Prayer Discernment Group	15 9:30 am Visitation Ministry; 11 am Good Old Guys Meet; 7:00 pm Council Meeting	16 9:30 am Alleluia Girls; 5:30 pm Homework Help; 7:15 Choir Practice	17 7 pm Men's Barnabas Group; 7:30 pm NA Group	18 8:00 am Men's Group; 5:00 pm Piano Class	19
20 8:30 Worship Service; 10 am Sunday School Hour; 11 am Worship Service with New Members	21 6:30 pm Peachtree Trombone Consort	22 11 am Good Old Guys Meet; 6:30 pm Bible Study; 7 pm Peachtree Band of Jazz	23 9:30 am Alleluia Girls; 10 am Staff Meeting; 5:30 pm Homework Help; 7:15 Choir Practice	24 7 pm Men's Barnabas Group; 7:30 pm NA Group	25 8:00 am Men's Group; 5:00 pm Piano Class; Men's Retreat	26 Men's Retreat
27 8:30 Worship Service; 10 am Sunday School Hour; 11 am Worship Service; Men's Retreat	28 5:00 pm and 6:30 pm Peachtree Trombone Consort; 7:00 pm Prayer Discernment Group	29 11 am Good Old Guys Meet; 6:30 pm Bible Study	30 9:30 am Alleluia Girls; 5:30 pm Homework Help; 7:15 Choir Practice	31 7 pm Men's Barnabas Group; 7:30 pm NA Group		