

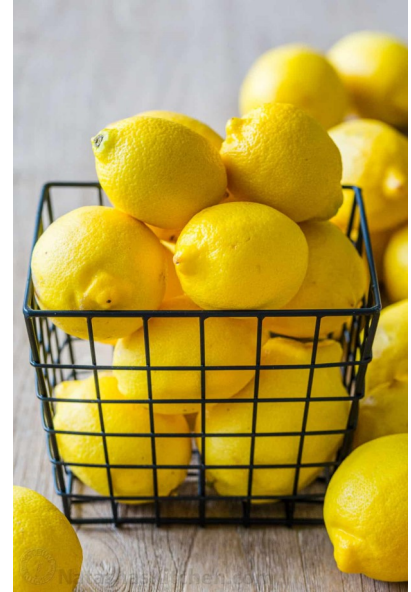
THE SPIRIT

August 2021



Small Kindnesses

I've been thinking about the way, when you walk down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs to let you by. Or how strangers still say "bless you" when someone sneezes, a leftover from the Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying. And sometimes, when you spill lemons from your grocery bag, someone else will help you pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other. We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot, and to say thank you to the person handing it. To smile at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress to call us honey when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder, and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass. We have so little of each other, now. So far from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange. What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these fleeting temples we make together when we say, "Here, have my seat," "Go ahead — you first," "I like your hat." Copyright 2019 Danusha Laméris.



I have been living with (and struggling with) the assigned readings for these weeks of summer 2021, weeks in which it feels as if we are living a liminal life. Liminal in the sense of already, but not yet, on the verge of something unrealized: vaccinated but still living with the threat of 'variants'; unmasked but maybe not for long; enjoying the beauty of a warm summer but lamenting that it is probably a foretaste of climate change effects to come, and so on and so on and so on...

Liminal life may be a way to understand what John offers us in chapter 6, the extended story of Jesus feeding the 5000 and the aftermath of it: after multiplying 5 loaves and 2 fish he walks on water, runs from the crowd that wants to forcibly crown him and he advises us to look deeper into our hungers and see that it's not really bread we hunger for; that flour, water, and salt keep us alive, but once that need is met we still hunger for that deeper thing, that more profound need - God.

In the face of that hunger, Jesus promises us: You already have what you long for! **I am** the bread of life. Partake of me. Draw so close to me that it's as if you are filled with me and I will give you true life now and into eternity.

It's a lot to process in these days. It pushes us to ask, "What am I doing to satisfy that true hunger?" Am I drawing closer to Jesus or do I fear being that close, that committed to Jesus? Are there ways I'm trying to fill that hunger with things other than Jesus? For me, those things might be: staying busy, seeking entertainment, focusing on other things like ministry and ways to "love my neighbor"; fine pursuits in themselves. But, if they are used as ways to avoid communing with Jesus, they will never satisfy.

Jesus offers us life, true life and we are tempted to translate that into things we need to DO rather than just BEING with Jesus in prayer, contemplation, quiet.

It's pretty well established that our 'doing' should flow out of our 'being' with Jesus. Then it makes sense. Then loving our neighbor becomes possible in every act of kindness and every act is multiplied to feed the people.

Small kindnesses. From dust to dust. That simple. And that hard.

Pastor Val

On Sunday, June 13th, Bishop Jaech blessed us with the Gospel message. After worship he offered more information about how the Synod is partnering with us in the effort to make affordable housing available throughout the Synod.

Submitted by Diane Hanson



Southwestern Washington Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

A LITTLE INHIBITION IS A GOOD THING

Bishop Jaech offers this insightful information from Julie Diamond to encourage us in these days.

Here in Oregon, just over half the population has been vaccinated. California and New York officially opened up for business this week. For many of us, starting to come out of isolation can be awkward. Conversations that used to start with, "How are you?" now start with, "How has it been for you?"

I surprised myself by how truthfully I've answered this question: In this past year I've had to focus more intentionally on my emotional health than I ever have before. I'm not alone. The mental toll the pandemic exacted was considerable, and ongoing. A study published in JAMA Network Open found depression rates had more than tripled since the pandemic.

But the pandemic didn't assault our mental well-being so much as tip it over. It was already reeling from the stress and strain of four, tumultuous years

of the Trump presidency, a combative, polarized political climate, police shootings of Black Americans, as well as wildfires, floods, and storms of biblical proportions.

In truth, though, our emotional and mental well-being has been slowly and steadily eroding for years. The culprit? Well, many things, but it's hard not to point a finger at the internet, particularly what was once called Web 2.0, the user generated era of the internet. Consider this. Since the advent of smartphones, teenagers who reported symptoms of major depression, grew by 52%. And among young adults aged 18-25, it grew by 63%. We don't watch the news anymore, rather, we consume content designed to feed our outrage and solidify and justify our beliefs—driving us deeper and deeper into our tribes. We're swimming in a sea of social comparison, which is not good at all. Especially for young people. There's a correlation between the amount of

time young teenage girls spend on social media, and their long-term risk for suicide. Study after study finds that the more time we spend on social media, the lonelier, more isolated, and less self-confident we feel.

We're in a state of 24/7 reactivity. Our nerves are frazzled, our patience worn thin. Aggression and incivility are the norm. The age of the internet has unleashed tremendous power. Power we don't yet know how to wield responsibly. The power the internet gives diminishes our inhibition—people are freer to act without filters. It removes the guard rails of social norms, allowing us a freedom never before available on such a scale: the freedom to behave anti-socially without repercussion. Face-to-face interaction holds us accountable because the repercussions of violating social norms are considerable. It is an inhibiting force. Being seen, being known, and being in close proximity to others imposes a self-correcting mechanism or restraint that results in (mostly) civil behavior.

But the internet removes those social norms and customs:

- It removes visibility (it affords us the protection of anonymity)
- It removes proximity (we can't be physically threatened)
- It reduces response time (we don't have to consider and reflect on the consequences of our responses)
- It removes the need to justify your opinion (we do not have to validate or prove our opinions through research or facts)

In the wake of the constant trolling, trending topics of outrage, and click bait disguised as news, I've come to appreciate a little inhibition. I don't have to react to everything. I can let some things go. I can repress my response. Why? Well, it's in my own best interest. I don't agree with what a friend posts on Facebook. Or, my neighbors on their politics. But I depend on them, to pick something up at the store if

my car breaks down, watch my children if I get sick, jump start the car if needed.

But it's much more than that. It's about mental well-being. The more we react, the more we feed the addiction to outrage and anger, and the less we give ourselves pause, time to reflect and think and 'think again.' The more time we spend in a hyper-aroused state, the worse our health, the unhappier we become, and the less intelligent our actions and choices.

With great power comes great responsibility. If the social guardrails have been removed, then it's up to us to self-regulate. But that's not enough. This is not just an individual problem. It's a societal one. I often look to history for parallels. The industrial revolution unleashed tremendous and equally upsetting social turmoil. And it took almost 200 years, from the late 18th century to the early 20th century, for governments to enact the first labor protection laws.

There's always a lag between what humans can create and what humans know how to live with. We aren't designed to be in a state of emotional arousal for hours at a time. We aren't designed to stare at a screen for 8 hours a day. And society won't work if we're being primed to make enemies out of people who disagree with us.

We're living with this newfound power, but we're not living *well* with it. It's going to take quite a while to learn how to live well with it. Perhaps the toll it's taking on our mental health and our social health will be a wakeup call and help us get there sooner.

by Dr. Julie Diamond





Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

A DEEPLY SPIRITUAL ACT

The first-century church in [Corinth](#) must have been a lively place. Its members were competitive, jealous, divided into factions and litigious. The congregation was diverse. There were Jews and gentiles, rich and poor, men and women, young and old, those brand new to the faith and those with more maturity.

Paul spent over 18 months establishing the church in Corinth. He worked with, lived with and loved these people. Paul wanted them to know the risen Christ and the life of love and freedom found in Christ.

While the Corinthians were enthusiastic, they weren't very disciplined. They argued about which of them had the superior spiritual pedigree—those baptized by Paul or those baptized by Apollos. They took each other to court. And when they gathered for the Lord's Supper—neither decently nor in good order—Paul wrote, “When you come together, it is not really to eat the Lord's supper. For when the time comes to eat, each of you goes ahead with your own supper, and one goes hungry and another becomes drunk” (1 Corinthians 11:20-21).

At his [ascension](#), Jesus told his disciples that they would “receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The church in Jerusalem was the foundation of the Christian movement. It became the parent of the churches founded by the apostles throughout the world.

The decision had been taken at the Council at Jerusalem to welcome gentiles into the way of Jesus. This was a critically important decision and a difficult one. It wasn't universally embraced by everyone. And the saints in Jerusalem had fallen on hard times. Famine threatened the city. Paul organized a massive stewardship campaign among the gentile churches to send aid to the church in Jerusalem.

Paul would have done well as a development officer. He urged the believers to give generously and cheerfully. He set them up to compete with each other to see which church could be most generous. The enthusiastic Corinthians jumped at the chance, espe-

cially if they could do better than the Macedonians! But their lack of discipline was stronger than their zeal, and their stewardship campaign faltered.

Paul wasn't going to have it. In his second letter to the Corinthians, he laid out the spiritual basis for giving: it was about opening the self and the community, it was about glorifying God, it was a new way of thinking about sufficiency.

“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8).

The concept of sufficiency had changed over the centuries. In Cynic and Stoic philosophy, true self-sufficiency was attained when a person became completely independent, with no need of anyone or anything else. **By the time Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, self-sufficiency meant not just having enough for oneself but having enough to give away to others. One could have all the wealth and power and status in the world, but if one didn't share with others, that person was not self-sufficient.** Contrast the rich young man who could give nothing away with the poor widow who gave everything. The rich young man went away grieving. The widow gave freely.

Stewardship is a deeply spiritual act. It moves us out of ourselves and toward the neighbor in need. It glorifies God. It brings freedom from wealth and status. It unclenches our hands and hearts. It lets us rest in the promise of God's abundance. We become cheerful givers.



WE ARE ENTRUSTED WITH THE MINISTRY OF PRAYER

Poet God,

We are your Poem. What a gift that is. For a poem can hold everything: contradictions, unanswered questions, raw wounds and beautiful scars—all with spaciousness.

When a poet begins a poem they do not know what the end will be, rather they follow each image given, each metaphor and line trusting the *leap*, trusting what flows from the pen, marveling at what emerges. I picture you marveling, Poet God, observing with curiosity what has flowed after you first put your pen to paper entrusting us with the unfolding Poem of our lives.

You cry with us, your tears, salt-roses blooming on the page of the collective Poem, because the Poem writes the bare truth of the pain.

We know you are with us, reading every agony.

The Poem of planet Earth is hurting. We pray for the communities, human and non-human, that are intensely experiencing the way we have negatively impacted our home with our resource-affecting choices. In the Western **United States** as oppressive heat and fires rage on for a third week. In **India** where monsoon season lightning strikes, killed dozens and injured many this weekend. In the **United States** where Florida manatees are dying of starvation in record numbers due to polluted waters killing off their food source of seagrass.

May we feel your presence in our grief, in our longing, in our fear. You weep with us. We have the collective creativity to rewrite a way of living upon the Earth as healers. May we have the courage to live into the creativity you have given us, to make real the Poem we want to see. We give thanks for conservation efforts in **Kazakhstan** where there has been restoration of the population of the once critically endangered Saigaa Antelope. We give thanks for the **European Union's** sweeping raft of climate change proposals aimed at carbon neutrality by 2050.

All through the COVID-19 pandemic we have seen the disparity between nations and within nations in access to healthcare, we see so clearly which communities are most impacted and now who has access to the vaccine. We are not meant to live in a Poem that is so out of balance. We pray for vaccine access where needed, especially for the 11 eleven countries that only have 1% percent of the population vaccinated including; **Chad, Burkina Faso and Papua New Guinea**. We pray for places around the world experiencing second, third, fourth and fifth waves. We pray for **Iraq** where a fire caused by faulty wiring on an oxygen tank in the COVID isolation ward killed 92 and injured many. In this anguish on top of anguish we do not have words, but know you are with us in our speechlessness.

We are daily invited to pick up the pen of our lives and co-create with You, Poet God. How do we live as the Poem we are created to be?

We write the Poem by living fully in love, in curiosity, in compassion, in connection, and in creativity allowing all that is to be felt, expressed and honored.

We thank you Poet God for writing us into being and continuing to co-create with us. May we see that we are given all we need in your Love for the composition of our lives.

Amen.

God's people join in prayer for:

Christian, Liz Massey, The Torrez family, Leslie Prasch, Bob Parker, Barb Stensgard, Jordan, Betty Mitchell, Tom, Cheron and Tanner Stanley, Tanya Anderson-Bowers, Monica Wilson, Tiffany Powell, Fred Thurman, Joseph, Ray & Jean Hodge, Courtney, Adrienne, Carl and June Bender, Ginny Clark, Philip, Matthew Green and his family, Don Rabung, Whitney Morean and for friends and family mourning the death of Kevin Hodge. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

4F meal delivery to John and Doris





August BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES

BIRTHDAYS:

Annette Biornstad, August 2
Arvid Iverson, August 4
Nathan Gundersen, August 10
Ray Hodge, August 10
Jeff Gundersen, August 13
Erin Burns, August 17
Emily Penttila, August 18
Maggi Kupka, August 23
Gary Morean, August 23
Lynette Lile, August 29
Charles Scamman, August 31

ANNIVERSARIES:

Gary & Annette Biornstad, August 3
Hank & Gloria Bilderback, August 5
Val Metropoulos & Steve Swanson, August 11
Darrell & Elaine Lokken, August 12
Mike & Moonbeam Kupka, August 14
Rob & Kristine Burns, August 16
Ken & Vicki Mitchell, August 18
Gene & Eileen Schermer, August 23
Mike & Arlene O'Connor, August 24



Judi Hubbard and Kristine Finazzo for delivering newsletters and for doing weekly depositing.

Everyone who contributes to the Food Bank.

Bishop Jaech for leading worship and providing information on how the Synod is partnering with us to make affordable housing available throughout the Synod.

Everyone who continues to serve at Sunday ser-

vices.

Dee Erickson for jumping in to host a funeral and lead coffee service during July.

Mike Hubbard & Roger Shaw for their continued work on the church building.

4F Team for another successful dinner in June.

Carrie Erwin for spearheading meals to those who are grieving.

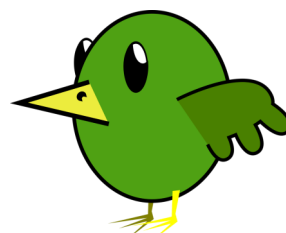
THANKS WE'VE RECEIVED

- **Dear Amazing Grace,**

Thank you so much for your generous support of Altrusa of Central Grays Harbor. We are so thankful and are working hard to get this money back into our community!

Thanks again, Altrusa of Central Grays Harbor

- **Pacific Lutheran University** thanks Amazing Grace for donations of \$143.74 and \$101.79
- **Union Gospel Mission** thanks Amazing Grace for a donation of \$101.79



MANY THANKS FROM HIEDI

On March 3, I graduated from Ashworth College. I completed a dual degree program where I earned a Bachelor's Degree in General Studies and a Masters Degree in Healthcare Management. I have so many of you to thank, I'm not sure where to begin. I do want to thank the endowment committee for providing me with a scholarship over the last 4 years-it made a HUGE difference and meant a lot to me.

To those of you who helped me (or tried!) to help me with the master's level Statistical Analysis class- Thank you. I'm not sure who was more surprised I passed the course- my family, my advisor or myself. Bless your hearts



Much Thanks to everyone! Hiedi

for having so much patience with me.

To those of you who helped me with my other courses-everything from HIPPA and compliance law, to the various Psychology classes, Financial and managerial accounting and a whole assortment of other course work- Thank you so much for your patience, helping me grasp concepts I wasn't understanding or seeing the material I was learning from a new perspective, or even one I hadn't considered before.

4-F DINNER THANK YOUS

Well not even 92 degree weather can keep the 4-F dinner crew down!

Our June 26th dinner was a success even on a smaller scale. We served 62 dinners of pork loin/chicken. Mike and Karen knocked it out of the park again with their cooking talents. Mike Hubbard assisted Mike with the grills. Kristine, Jill and Judi made Raspberry and Toffee bars. Joan and Dee enjoyed shopping for the door prizes.

Beate provided one of her bags for them to fill. Madison is our great youth helper--she loves to wrap the rolls as that will include a taste test. The delicious rolls were made by the Teveliet ladies-Jane, Darci and Sarah.

The winners of the door prizes were, Ken and Vicki Mitchell, Mary Ellen Salmon, their neighbor the Windell home, Beate, and Judi. Melanie Bickar pro-

vided a festive 4th of July decoration.

We raised \$1450 this even included a couple tips! The 10% tithe will be divided between LDR, Altrusa and The Salvation Army food bank. Of the remaining funds 70% will go to the stained-glass fund and 30 % to the maintenance .

Thank you Joe Fernandez for providing the Grace that was included with each meal.

Thank you Beate for stepping up and helping with your first pick up event. Your help was truly appreciated!

AND thank you Dee for offering to bring us a fan and water, your offer was graciously appreciated !!

We enjoy providing these meals and working together! Until we are able to sit and enjoy fellowship we will to continue drive by greetings!!!

Your 4-F team

SERVING AT AMAZING GRACE

LITURGISTS

Hank Bilderback, 8/1
Laura Carle, 8/8
Curtis Steinhauer, 8/15
Keith Lile, 8/22
Curtis Steinhauer, 8/29

STREAM TEAM

Hiedi, 8/1
Keith, 8/8
Amy, 8/15
Joe, 8/22
Steve, 8/29

USHERS

Michelle & Jim, 8/1
Dee & Arlene, 8/8
Phil & Suzan, 8/15
Joelle & Carmon, 8/22
Michelle & Jim, 8/29

FELLOWSHIP HOSTS

August 1, Team 9	Barkstrom, Hildreth, Buckman
August 8, Team 8	Finazzo, Evanson, Hubbard, Waite, Winter
August 15, Team 10	Beeman, Kraiger, Debandt
August 22, Team 11	Weiberg, Leithold, Channel, Teveliet, Jewitt, Steinhauer
August 29, Team 12	White, Elder, Stephens

**Madison delivering
Gary Morean's meal.**



UNION GOSPEL MISSION DINNER CALENDAR NEWS!!

Hello Folks:

Welcome back!! Yep, that's what we said – *Welcome back to all of the churches and other Gospel speakers* involved in the Mission's Dinner Calendar.

As of AUGUST 1, 2021, those that were involved in sharing the Gospel during our dinner meal can now come back and start again – this hasn't been open since Covid began! We are looking forward to having you back in and ministering to those in need with the food of God's Word. (P.S. We know some churches were not able to provide the meal during the Covid mandates, and we understand that – it's been a very strange time. For those who did, *thank you.*)

UNION GOSPEL MISSION

August 3

Carmon Shaw, Leader

Theresa Kaufman, Eileen Schermer, Arlene O'Connor, Cynthia Johnstone, Joe Fernandez, Chrissie Kincaid

Substitutes: Hiedi Seelke, Carmon Shaw 360-532-

Only one issue to be aware of – Governor Inslee still has homeless shelters under the mask mandate. Masks are required by everyone within our doors, fully vaccinated or not. The only time you are not required to wear a mask is when you are eating or sharing from the pulpit.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Laurel, at 360-533-1064. An August calendar is enclosed for your information. Service once again starts at 7 p.m. If you have meal questions, please contact Doug, our Kitchen Manager at the same number.

Thank you for partnering with us in reaching the lost! *We appreciate you and this can't be done without you.*

Laurel

2940

The director of UGM says that we can expect to serve about 35-45 people. They need food delivered before 6pm so that they know what is coming. If you are serving or delivering you have to wear a mask. If you deliver to the back alley, call 360-533-1064 and they will come and pick up the food.



Mike & Mike load up dinners

BELL RINGERS NEEDED

"RINGERS NEEDED!!! With some of our long-time members hanging up their performance gloves after many, many years of faithful service, there is a great need for new ringers. We know that time commitment can be a precious commodity, practice times for the upcoming year will only be twice (2) times a

month on Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:30 tops. If interested, please talk to Kris or any bell member (they'll be glad you did), or just show up for at get together/first rehearsal on Wednesday, August 25th at 6:00. Come and give the bells a try. We know you will find it ap-PEAL-ing."

QUILTER'S NEWS

The quilters are planning to send 150 school kits to Lutheran World Relief with our November shipment of quilts. This is the time to buy school supplies as the stores are having some great sales! We have a display in the parish hall if you want to pick up a bag and fill it. Or if you would like to just purchase some items from the list below that would be wonderful. If you are unable to get out and buy items, we will gladly take donations and do the shopping for you! The following list has the items needed for each school bag.

- Four 70-80 sheet notebooks (280-300 sheets total) of wide or college ruled paper approximately 8" x 10 1/2" NO LOOSE-LEAF PAPER
- One 30-centimeter ruler, or a ruler with centime-

- ters on one side and inches on the other
- One pencil sharpener
- One pair of blunt scissors
- Five UNSHARPENED #2 pencils with erasers; secure with a rubber band
- Five black or blue ballpoint pens (NO GEL INK); secure with a rubber band
- One box of 16 or 24 crayons (Crayola is best)
- One 2 1/2" eraser
- One sturdy drawstring cloth bag. (available in parish hall)

We would appreciate receiving all donations by Sept. 1st. THANK YOU in advance for your

GENEROSITY!!

FAMILY PROMISE

The family is doing well, setting goals and meeting them. Mom and Dad are both working and the search for housing continues. There are significant obstacles in finding an appropriate home due to landlords requiring monthly income that is 5-6 times the rent payment. They appreciate the support of Family Promise and all the volunteers supplying meals. Please visit meal train to schedule a meal if you are able to provide that: <https://mealtrain.com/26oemq>
Please remember when delivering meals please to

wear masks and knock loudly on the door of the 4th St entrance. Food should be delivered in disposable packaging. *Please note that one person has a life-threatening, airborne allergy to crustaceans, mollusks, and squid. We ask that meals do not contain any of these items: crab, lobster, crayfish, shrimp, prawns, squid, snails, clams, oysters, or scallops.*

Darci Jewitt, Case Manager

Family Promise of Grays Harbor

Phone: 360-986-3948

Email: fpghcasemanager@gmail.com

TASK FORCE UPDATE

We welcome everyone to worship. Due to the in-

crease of numbers and following the guidance of the County Health Director and the **CDC MASKS ARE**

REQUIRED IN THE SANCTUARY. We will maintain social distancing as much as possible. Everyone is encouraged to wear a mask if you choose to do so. **Full fellowship FOR THOSE WHO ARE VACCINATED begins this week.** We will have more distance between tables and good ventilation in the room. We do not want to make distinctions be-

tween any groups of people so please get vaccinated as soon as possible!

It is a good time to remember that fellowship is about sitting together sharing our lives. It does NOT require fancy or abundant food. Fellowship hosts should feel free to offer purchased cookies, or crackers or simply beverages.



THE FOOD BANK WORKING HARD!

The new address is 2120 Commerce St. in Aberdeen. Drop off day is Tuesday from 8:30 – 3. You may drop off donations at the new address Tuesdays from 8:30-3 or at the church.

Amy Ostwald and Mike and Joni Hildreth transport donations left at the church. If you'd

like to help with that, please let Amy or Pastor Val know. Food bank is especially in need of baby wipes, peanut butter, mac & cheese and diapers sizes 4,5, & 6. If you prefer to send a monetary donation, it may be sent to: P.O. Box 444 Aberdeen, WA 98520

GROWING AT AMAZING GRACE

UNDERGROUND MINISTRIES ON THE COAST

Living Stones ministry at the prison in Shelton is partnering with Underground Ministries on a project they call, "One Parish, One Prisoner" While Living Stones focuses especially on the "tomb" part of incarceration, UM (and OPOP) focuses on the resurrection of reentry! Over the past year or so, our organizations have come to realize the advantages to working more closely together to ensure that those who have experienced incarceration can be given the supportive and

transformative opportunities they need, both inside and outside the walls.

OPOP is dedicated to forming, training, and stewarding groups of people who can walk with and support recently released individuals as they reenter society.

An individual is preparing to return to the Aberdeen/Hoquiam area, and so Amazing Grace is being asked to consider getting involved in this person's successful return.



THE 4F TEAM

Beate, Kristine, Madison, Mike H, Judi, Karen and Mike B

FLOWERS IN WORSHIP

Please sign up in the skybridge to bring flowers to adorn our worship space or just bring them and we

will find a place for them. There are vases in the back room of the fellowship hall.

MITCHELL GALLERY

The Mitchell's have generously donated the paintings you see in the hallway to the parish hall. If you would like to purchase one of these paintings, proceeds will benefit the stained-glass repair effort. The

suggested price is located on the back of each painting. Checks can be made to Amazing Grace with memo "window fund". **New pictures have been put up.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursdays Master Quilters: 8/5, 8/12, 8/19, 8/26 Time: 9-3

Scrapbookers: 8/6, 8/20 Time: 6pm

AA: 8/7, 8/14, 8/21, 8/28 Time: 7-8:30

Hand Sewers: 8/10, 8/24 Time: 9-3

Council Meeting August 24 at 6pm

Bells: 8/25 Time: 6pm

OFFICE HOURS

Church office is open: **Tuesday & Thursday 8-2, Wednesday 8-1 & Friday 8-11.** AGLC Office
360.532.8250 Amazing111@comcast.net

Pastor Val is in the office Wednesdays from 10-2 unless I'm meeting one of you away from the building.

Please call, text, or email if you want to set up a different time to get together

Pastor Val 360.580.8977 ymetropoulos001@luthersem.edu

Pastor Val will be on vacation Aug. 5-11. In a pastoral emergency contact Joelle.

Joelle_buckman@email.com or 360-589-6111



Pastor Val welcomes Bishop Jaech to AG on Sunday, June 13th. They continue the discussion on affordable housing.

Submitted by Diane Hanson

HEALTHY COMMUNICATION IN TOUGH TIMES

Healthy communication is important in the best of times. Throw in a pandemic and political turmoil and things can get messy. In the church we are especially careful to express our love for each other and for all our neighbors by practicing healthy communication skills. Some basics that are helpful in all relationships include the following.

- Everyone speaks for themselves. Each of us needs to take responsibility for expressing our own feelings or concerns.
- When there is a concern, we go directly to the person involved. Honest, direct, loving com-

munication is the basis of all healthy relationships.

- If the concern is not resolved after direct communication, we ask a neutral person to join us in that conversation for the sake of understanding and healing.
- We avoid triangulation. Triangulation occurs when one person does not communicate directly with another person, instead using a third person to relay communication to the second. Triangulation distorts relationships and makes clear communication difficult.
- We pray for each other trusting that God loves us all and in prayer can heal our hurts and restore relationships.

**Amazing Grace Lutheran Church
Administrative Council Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2021**

Vision: A welcoming place where grace happens.

Mission: To Experience and share God's love through worship, education, and community.

Values: Radical Hospitality; Passionate worship; Intentional faith development; Risk-taking mission and service; Extravagant Generosity.

As Church Council, we 1. Ensure that the mission of the church is fulfilled (Love God and Love Neighbor) and 2. Manage the property and finances of the congregation so that purpose #1 can be fulfilled.

Attendance: Joelle Buckman, Dee Erickson, Curtis Steinhauer, Theresa Kaufman, Phil Stegemoeller, Amy Ostwald, Pastor Val

- I. Call to order by Pres. Joelle Buckman 6:00
- II. Review & approve minutes of last meeting – April 13 & April 27 M/S/P
- III. **Financial Reports - 30 minutes** (30 min)
 - a. Treasurer's Report – Theresa Kaufman
 - The balance of the Pie Auction funds will be moved to Friends in Need as was planned.
 - Family Promise account will be in next month's Budget Analysis report.
 - Motion for Bills to be Paid M/S/P
 - b. Financial Secretary's Report – Phil Stegemoeller
 - Thank you, Judi, and Kristine, for being depositors during this time.
 - New Program for financial secretary
 - No update, more to follow.
- IV. **Task Assignments**
 - Phil will make correction to his Financial report that he received from Theresa
 - Theresa and Amy will discuss any reimbursement issues.
 - Joelle and Pastor Val will discuss where the money for the platform in the Sanctuary will come from.
 - Joelle, Phil, and Theresa will continue to work on the new program for Financial Secretary.
 - Pastor will work on forming a committee for gift policy.
 - Theresa will move the left-over money from the pie auction to Friends in Need.
- V. **Adjournment and closing prayer 6:20**

**Amazing Grace Lutheran Church
Mission Council Meeting Minutes
June 8, 2021**

Vision: A welcoming place where grace happens.

Mission: To Experience and share God's love through worship, education, and community.

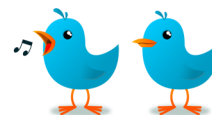
Values: Radical Hospitality; Passionate worship; Intentional faith development; Risk-taking mission and service; Extravagant Generosity.

As Church Council, we 1. Ensure that the mission of the church is fulfilled (Love God and Love Neighbor) and 2. Manage the property and finances of the congregation so that purpose #1 can be fulfilled.

Attendance: Joelle Buckman, Dee Erickson, Pastor Val, Mike Barkstrom, Curtis Steinhauer, Carrie Erwin, Amy Ostwald

President: Joelle Buckman; VP: 1st qtr. Amy, 2nd qtr. Dee; 3rd qtr. Carrie; 4th qtr. Phil

- I. Bible Study – It's attached. (This was in the May newsletter) (15 min)
- II. Call to Order by Pres. Joelle Buckman 6pm
- III. Establish Quorum
- IV. Review and Approve Agenda (II-IV: 5 min)
- V. **Business items** (these are generally items that are beyond any one ministry or don't fit under any ministry, special requests from the community) (20min)



- A. Mutual Ministry Update – Joelle
-Finished The Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations book.
- B. Synod Affordable Housing Initiative
 - a. Bishop presenting Synod's role 6/13 after worship
-Bishop Jaech will be delivering the sermon and after worship will present information about the Synod's involvement with the Synod Affordable Housing initiative.
 - b. July 11 will be an informational meeting for congregation to present information about how the congregation can be involved in the Synod's Affordable Housing initiative.
- C. Information on property sale and proposed use of funds.
 - a. Council discussed the use of the money from the sale of the Bel Aire property.
Council had asked a committee of people to make a recommendation about the sale of the property and use of the funds from that sale. That committee recommended to council that the property be sold and the proceeds put in a savings account until the congregation could vote on whether or not to use that money to be involved in the Synod Affordable Housing Initiative. After much discussion it was M/S/P that most of the money from the sale of the Bel Aire property go to the endowment fund so it can accrue interest and the remainder to benevolences, as was voted on by the congregation in 2015. The congregation will have an opportunity to be involved in the Synod Initiative if it decides to.
- D. Memorial guidelines – committee forming to write this policy
-Council directed Pastor Val to form this committee. Beth Adams from the ELCA foundation helps congregations write policies regarding gifts and endowments so she will guide the policy writing process.
- E. Endowment Committee requested that council look at the Endowment Committee bylaws.

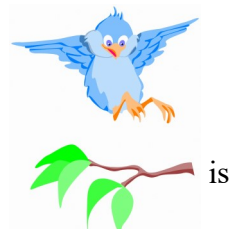
VI. **Ministry Reports** (25 min)

- a. Worship – Dee Erickson and Pastor Val
 - i. Resuming in-person worship Task Force – report; requesting council's input regarding Task Force recommendations.
-Task Force meets weekly to discuss the situation, taking this responsibility seriously. At this point the Task Force recommends no limit to number of people in worship.
Using CDC, State and Synod guidelines we will continue to require masks, distancing, and communion in the pews. More people are needed to serve as ushers.
 - ii. Report on audio/video status – Grant application – ELCA & Endowment; donation toward platform costs
-Pastor Val has not heard back yet on ELCA grant. Keith and Joe have requested money from the Endowment committee to be used for the next steps for improvements so people attending in-person and watching online are seeing the same thing. Endowment committee awaits final cost for improvements from Keith and Joe.
 - iii. Request was made for there to be space for people who want to be in person but not on FB live. Space will be available in the four back pews for those people as well as stream team being asked to limit video to the middle of the pews and forward.

Outreach, Y & F, and Fellowship will be covered at the Administrative meeting June 22

- b. Outreach – Amy Ostwald-
 - i. Family Promise
 - ii. Chaplain's dinner
 - iii. Synod Affordable Housing Initiative – Pastor Val/Curtis
- C. Youth & Family – Curtis Steinhauer
 - i. Sunday School – last class for summer 6/13
 - ii. Confirmation – finished until Confirmation Camp to be schedule in July/Aug.
 - iii. Adult group study- PSALM group doing a study that they will then lead for the congregation in the fall
- d. Fellowship – Carrie Erwin
- e. Property – Mike Barkstrom – Chaplain's dinner – clean up is less than perfect. Since this part of our mission, can we direct custodian to clean up while working with Chaplains to do better?

-Council discussed the Chaplain's dinner's role in fulfilling the mission of Amazing Grace and decided to extend grace to them and to all who use our facility for the work of God's mission, in matters of clean up



when they occasionally fall short of our standards.

VII. Pastor's Report

VIII. Task Assignments

- Joelle will find original wording of the vote in 2015 to sell the Bel-Aire property that designated what portion goes to Endowment and what goes to benevolence.
- Pastor Val will be in contact with Beth Adams tomorrow about a good time for committee to meet.
- Pastor Val will include an announcement in bulletin about sitting out of the viewing area.
- Mike will speak with Judi about janitorial duties

IX. Adjournment and closing prayer 7:10pm

**Amazing Grace Lutheran Church
Administrative Council Meeting Minutes
June 22, 2021**

Vision: A welcoming place where grace happens.

Mission: To Experience and share God's love through worship, education, and community.

Values: Radical Hospitality; Passionate worship; Intentional faith development; Risk-taking mission and service; Extravagant Generosity.

As Church Council, we 1. Ensure that the mission of the church is fulfilled (Love God and Love Neighbor) and 2. Manage the property and finances of the congregation so that purpose #1 can be fulfilled.

Attendance: Joelle Buckman, Pastor Val, Phil Stegemoeller, Dee Erickson, Amy Ostwald, Theresa Kaufman
Curtis Steinhauer, Carrie Erwin

President: Joelle Buckman; VP: 1st qtr. Amy, 2nd qtr. Dee; 3rd qtr. Carrie; 4th qtr. Phil

I. Prayer

II. Call to Order by Pres. Joelle Buckman 6:00

III. Review & approve minutes of last meeting – May 25 M/S/P, June 8 we'll look at next meeting.

IV. Review and Approve Agenda

- Added under Financial Reports B. 2. Jim Erickson Estate
- Added under Ministry Reports VI. a. Outreach, b. Youth & Family, c. Fellowship
- Added under Business items VII. a. August meeting

V. Financial Reports - 30 minutes

A. Treasurer's Report – Theresa Kaufman

1. Approve May Bills Paid M/S/P

B. Financial Secretary's Report – Phil Stegemoeller

1. New Program for financial secretary

-Joelle and Phil met and talked about the new program. More to follow in the next couple of weeks.

2. Jim Erickson Estate

-Received bequests from Jim Erickson from his annuity accounts, which are not part of the estate probate process. The legal estate process is dealing with the estate, so we will not make decisions about any money received from it at this time. The Gift Policy is being worked out by the committee formed to do that.

VI. Ministry Reports

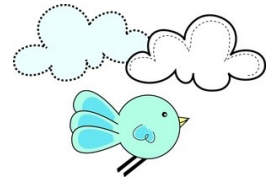
(30 min)

a. Outreach – Amy Ostwald-

i. Family Promise-

-A family of five has moved in. Announcement in the bulletin this week will be asking to provide meals for every night and volunteers to spend the night. Night volunteers are on hold until we have state covid guidelines to follow. There is no coordinator for Family Promise from our congregation and looking for volunteers.

ii. Habitat for Humanity-



- Pastor Val and Amy met with Tony Inzler from Habitat for Humanity. They have received funding from the county for three small homes (400 sq ft) for this year and renewable for two future years. They are looking for partners to work on these homes.
- iii. Chaplain's dinner-
 - Will be cooking again in July and looking for volunteers.
- iv. Synod Affordable Housing Initiative – Pastor Val/Curtis – process continues
- b. Youth & Family – Curtis Steinhauer
 - i. Sunday School – last class for summer 6/13-
 - Will be taking the summer off. Will meet in July to talk about what Youth & Family ministry will look like in the coming year. Might do something like VBS but it will depend on where we are on social distancing.
 - ii. Confirmation – finished until Confirmation Camp to be schedule in July/Aug.
 - iii. Adult group study- PSALM group doing a study that they will then lead for the congregation in the fall
 - The group will be involved in the Just Faith program for eight weeks and two retreats. In October two PSALM participants will team up to lead a group from the congregation in this study. Just Faith looks at the biblical roots for mission and outreach.
- C. Fellowship – Carrie Erwin
 - No new news to report. Reiterated about celebrating the missed milestones during covid.

VII. Business Items

- a. August Meeting
 - Pastor Val will be out of town during the Mission meeting. The Proposal is to combine both meetings on August 24th. No council meeting on August 10th.

VIII. Task Assignments

- Vicky will combine financial reports from Theresa and Phil and send them out each month.
- Phil's reports will show the deposits for the property and the Erickson bequest in the misc. section with a note that says pending decision.
- Amy will provide information about Habitat for Humanity for future newsletters
- Pastor Val asked council to think about who might be a coordinator for Family Promise.
- Joelle and Phil will get together to discuss new program for Financial Secretary.

IX. Adjournment and closing prayer 6:24

Amazing Grace Lutheran Church Mission Council Meeting Minutes July 13, 2021

Vision: A welcoming place where grace happens.

Mission: To Experience and share God's love through worship, education, and community.

Values: Radical Hospitality; Passionate worship; Intentional faith development; Risk-taking mission and service; Extravagant Generosity.

As Church Council, we 1. Ensure that the mission of the church is fulfilled (Love God and Love Neighbor) and 2. Manage the property and finances of the congregation so that purpose #1 can be fulfilled.

President: Joelle Buckman; VP: 1st qtr. Amy, 2nd qtr. Dee; 3rd qtr. Carrie; 4th qtr. Phil

Attendance: Joelle Buckman, Mike Barkstrom, Pastor Val, Dee Erickson, Curtis Steinhauer, Theresa Kaufman, Amy Ostwald, Carrie Erwin

- I. Bible Study – We read this through in June. Talked about the questions it raises and our struggles with Scripture. (15 min)
- II. Call to Order by Pres. Joelle Buckman 6:34
- III. Establish Quorum
- IV. Review and Approve Agenda (II-IV: 5 min)
- V. **Business items** (these are generally items that are beyond any one ministry or don't fit under any ministry, special requests from the community) (20min)
 - A. Mutual Ministry Update – Joelle
 - The Mutual Ministry group will be doing the same bible study.
 - B. July 11 Synod Affordable Housing Initiative -informational meeting for congregation



-A brief meeting with no new updates. Council will discuss forming a subcommittee during the Mission Council Meeting on July 13th.

a. Form subcommittee to study options and make recommendation

C. Memorial guidelines – committee formed to write this policy

-Committee has met several times and waiting to get back with the ELCA representative.

D. Erickson Estate

-Council received an email minutes before council meeting began with a letter regarding the Erickson estate. Council will discuss at a later meeting after everyone has had a chance to read it.

VI. Ministry Reports

A. Worship – Dee Erickson and Pastor Val

i. Resuming in-person worship Task Force – report; requesting council’s input regarding Task Force recommendations.

-The Task Force has decided to open up Sunday worship with no masks (for those vaccinated), no social distance and serving communion. The Task Force will continue to monitor the situation.

ii. Report on audio/video status – ELCA Grant – not funded. Endowment – waiting on cost estimate

-Amazing Grace did not receive the ELCA grant. At this point the audio/video upgrades are unfunded. Endowment is waiting for the total cost for upgrades. Joe and Keith are working on the estimate.

B. Outreach – Amy Ostwald

i. Family Promise

-Amy checked the meal train to see how it is working. The next two weeks are covered by different churches, each church is taking a full week. We hope to have a coordinator for Family Promise soon.

ii. Chaplain’s dinner – report from Rev. Sarah

-Pastor Val met with Sarah today and Chaplain’s dinner is going well. Sarah will be going on sabbatical from August 1 to end of November. Contact persons during this time will be Angela and Pastor Bonnie. They would like to move dinner indoors whenever possible. Council discussed it and decided to postpone that until at least September 1st.

iii. Synod Affordable Housing Initiative – Pastor Val/Curtis – work continues.

C. Youth & Family – Curtis Steinhauer

i. Sunday School

-On break for the summer. Planning to get together with Pastor Val and the Sunday school teachers and plan for next year.

ii. Confirmation – Confirmation Camp scheduling with Winter family

-Pastor Val is coordinating with Winter family about having Madison for a confirmation camp for one or two days.

iii. Adult group study- PSALM group studying Just Faith, a study they will lead for the congregation in the fall

-The first meeting for the PSALM group will be August 12th and will be meeting for 8 weeks every Thursday and will have a couple of retreats in preparation for leading the congregation in that study.

D. Fellowship – Carrie Erwin – Preparing for “Homecoming”

-Coffee hour started last week.

E. Property – Mike Barkstrom

-Blinds were fixed in Pastor Val’s office by Roger and Mike. Roger and Mike will be working on pews this week, and they will be painting the skybridge.

F. Council Meetings-In-person or Zoom

-Discussed about council meeting in person again. In-person Council meetings will start on August 24th. Council meetings will be on the 4th Tuesday of every month. Minutes will be going out in the Grace Notes once they have been finalized.

VII. Pastor’s Report

VIII. Task Assignments

-Council will look for a couple of people to serve on the Affordable Housing subcommittee.

- Pastor Val is looking into the delay with the memorial guidelines from the ELCA rep.
- Pastor Val will look into having another vaccination clinic at the Chaplain's Dinner.
- Council was challenged to talk in worship about stewardship or another topic of interest.

IX. Adjournment and closing prayer 7:21

PASTOR'S REPORT May 2021 - regular activities during pandemic; most meetings on Zoom

WORSHIP/DISCIPLESHP

Sunday worship – Plan and lead
 Plan adult education
 Plan seasonal and special worship services
 Sermons – prayer, study, reading, writing
 Prayer
 Meet with ministry leader as needed
 Liturgical Arts team

ADMINISTRATION

Reports: congregational; synod; ELCA
 Conference Pastors meet with Bishop weekly

Conference deans – meet bi-annually & as needed
 Recordkeeping: updates to documents; church ledger
 Work with office administrator: bulletins, newsletter, etc.
 Council meeting & Exec. Comm. meeting monthly
 Newsletter - writing, editing
 Meet with treasurer as needed
 Mutual Ministry meeting monthly
 Endowment Committee advisor

FELLOWSHIP/PASTORAL CARE/COUNSELING

PSALM – mentor; spiritual direction

Prayer Chain – coordinate w/ Brenda Grant
 Grace notes weekly or as needed
 Pastoral care as needed
 Visits at homes or parks during good weather
 Coordinate with ministry leader as needed

OUTREACH

Affordable housing Synod meeting
 Facebook page – outreach through social media.
 Coordinate with others to support homeless and marginalized people
 Meet w/ ministry leader as needed

BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE

Meet w/ ministry leader as needed

YOUTH AND FAMILY

Adult study: plan and participate
 Confirmation: plan and lead
 Sunday School: coordinate with ministry leader

STEWARDSHIP/EVANGELISM

Study and integrate into sermons

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH:

Spiritual Direction Supervision Group

Reading: Born for Love – Perry

Synod Assembly – 2 days

Festival of Homiletics webinar – 3 days

PLU Pastoral Theology Series: *Ministry in a Secular Age: Sharing in the Experience*

of the Ministering God after a Pandemic. May 25

OTHER ACTIVITIES in May

OFFICIAL ACTS: None in May

ADMINISTRATIVE:

Task Force for resuming in person worship

PASTORAL CARE:

Visits, calls, texts, messaging as needed

WORSHIP:

Planning for in-person worship and streaming worship

Planning for Pentecost season

Planning for leadership during vacations: Kris & pastor

Synod conversation about worship protocols in this stage

of pandemic

YOUTH/FAMILY/Education:

Plan adult study for PSALM students; offer to congregation in fall



Sunday School – send lessons to families; coordinate with teachers
Confirmation and Confirmation Camp

OUTREACH: Food Bank meetings
Synod Affordable Housing Initiative meeting
Plan informational meetings for congregation on use of proceeds from sale of property
VACATION: May 29 & 30; June 26 & 27
UPCOMING: PLU Pastoral Theology Series: *Ministry in a Secular Age: Sharing in the Experience of the Ministering God after a Pandemic*. June 1, June 8
Graduation celebration for Kylie Weiberg June 6th

PASTOR'S REPORT June 2021

OTHER ACTIVITIES in June

OFFICIAL ACTS: None in June

ADMINISTRATIVE: Administrative details about bequest
Began committee to develop a gift policy w/ Beth Adams ELCA Foundation
Staffed office while Vicky on vacation
Task Force for resuming in person worship
PASTORAL CARE: Visits, calls, texts, messaging as needed
WORSHIP: Worked with Psalm students to lead worship and preach in my absence
Planning for in-person worship and streaming worship

YOUTH/FAMILY/Education: Confirmation Camp planning

OUTREACH: Food Bank meetings
Synod Affordable Housing Initiative meeting
Plan informational meetings for congregation on Synod Affordable Housing

VACATION: August 5-11

UPCOMING: Return to in-person, full worship July 11th
PSALM students and JustFaith: A Biblical Perspective, a 8 week study, Aug. 12-Sept 30



Pastor Val blesses Kylie Weiberg during the Senior recognition Sunday, June 6th. Kylie was presented a beautiful quilt made by Confirmation member Maddy Winter and Pastor Val. Also present is Kylie's sister Jo-sie and parents, Jim and Michelle Weiberg.

CONGRATULATIONS KYLIE!!
Submitted by Diane Hanson



President	Joelle Buckman	(360) 589-6111	Joelle_buckman@email.com
Treasurer	Theresa Kaufman	(360) 537-1190	Theresamarie4739.3@gmail.com
Financial Secretary	Phil Stegemoeller	(360) 580-9310	phil@willisent.com
Youth & Family	Curtis Steinhauer	(360) 580-2301	turtis21@gmail.com
Outreach	Amy Ostwald	(360)-482-2306	aaostwald@gmail.com
Worship	Dee Erickson	(360) 533-7948	deekaye1@comcast.net
Fellowship	Carrie Erwin	360-500-3767	mcerwin@comcast.net
Property	Mike Barkstrom	(360)532-3319	mkbarks1@gmail.com
Pastor	Val Metropoulos	(360) 580-8977	vmetropoulos001@luthersem.edu
Church Secretary	Vicky Kolb	(360) 532-8250	amazing111@comcast.net
Endowment committee:	Darrell Lokken	(360) 532-0615	delokken@comcast.net

BUILDING REPAIRS/MAINTANCE

Please notify Mike Barkstrom or send a message to the church office if there are any repairs needed at the church. Sometimes members or visitors notice things that need to be fixed that the committee is not aware of. Your input is helpful in these matters.

Mike Barkstrom: mkbarks1@gmail.com - (360) 589-1393

Ministers: The People of Amazing Grace

111 E. 4th Street, (360) 532-8250

amazinggraceaberdeen.org

amazing111@comcast.net

Pastor: Val Metropoulos (360) 580-8977

vmetropoulos001@luthersem.edu

Office Administrator: Vicky Kolb

Liturgists: Hank Bilderback, Keith Lile, Laura Carle,
Curtis Steinhauer

Musicians: Kristine Burns, Heidi Seelke

JUNE BALANCES OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS

Name		Date	Total
Checking			\$ 28,107.20
-PSALM			\$ 100.00
-Technology			\$ (64.55)
-Caring Cupboard			\$ 433.51
-Pastor's Sabbatical Reserve			\$ 2,620.00
-Music			\$ (393.54)
-Bells			\$ 965.95
-Friends in Need			\$ 2,024.23
-Reformation Fund			\$ 1,071.20
-Outreach Funds			\$ 500.00
-Altar Restore			\$ 386.83
-Altar Guild			\$ 367.00
-Noisy Offering			\$ -
-Family Promise Maintenance Holding			\$ 2,144.57
-Chaplain's Dinner			\$ 215.54
-Grace Fund			\$ 340.00
		TOTAL	\$ 38,817.94
			\$ -
Maintenance Checking			\$ 14,598.31
-Windows			\$ 12,401.56
Youth Checking			\$ 295.75
Memorial Savings			\$ 13,850.31
Mikkel Thompson Savings			\$ 1,927.53



Please join us for worship
Sundays at 10am in person or on our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/Amazing-Grace-Lutheran-Church-114570725233786/>

Or anytime at: amazinggraceaberdeen.org
AMAZING GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
of Grays Harbor



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

VISION

A welcoming place where grace happens!

MISSION

To experience and share God's love through worship,
education and community

VALUES

Radical Hospitality
Passionate worship
Intentional faith development
Risk-taking mission and service
Extravagant generosity



Amazing Grace Lutheran Church of
Grays Harbor

111 E. 4th Street

Aberdeen, WA 98520

360.532.8250

amazing111@comcast.net

www.amazinggraceaberdeen.org



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE