



The monthly Newsletter of:

January 2021

Agnus Dei Lutheran Church

Gather in Grace

Grow in Faith

Go in Service



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

The congregation of Agnus Dei Lutheran Church celebrates the amazing diversity of God's beloved children. We welcome all, regardless of age, ethnicity, abilities, faith background, race, family configuration, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. We enthusiastically invite you into this worshiping congregation as we strive to share God's inclusive love with everyone in our community and in our world.



Pastor's Message

I think I can safely say that most—if not all—of us are happy to have 2020 behind us. We are ready to look forward to the opportunities and hopes of a new year. But of course, the page on the calendar doesn't make a lot of difference. 2021 finds us still gripped by a pandemic, still sheltering in our homes, still wondering what will happen next.



Pastor Seth Novak

Over this last year, we've had to make a lot of changes, and very quickly. As much as this has been true in our personal lives—learning how to Zoom, canceling vacations, sewing masks, etc—it has also been true of our life together as a congregation as we've moved to digital worship, digital fellowship, and digital ministry. We've gone from normal to temporary inconvenience to prolonged disturbance to new normal, whether or not we're completely comfortable with it yet.

As we think about the new year's resolutions and where we hope to go over these next 12 months, we are looking at a new world, a post-COVID world. We hope and expect some things to return to the way they were before we'd ever heard of the "novel coronavirus" once the vaccine starts becoming widely available, but some toothpaste just can't be put back in the tube. Who's to say which of the many COVID contingencies to which we've had to become accustomed will stick around?

I, for one, think that some of these changes were necessary for the Church even before the virus came along. For too long, we've been quietly content with "the way we've always done it," and we haven't felt the need to reflect on how we worship or do ministry or think about God, and that has caused us to leave some people out. I think that some of these adaptations we've made, while for terrible reasons of pandemic, may continue to serve us well as we move into this brave, new world; or, at very least, they've helped us to let go of what we were so that we can be ready to grow into what we need to become.

I think 2021 is going to be a time of discernment for Agnus Dei, and I intend to help make it such. This is our opportunity to think about who we are going to be in this new future, and how this congregation can best worship and serve in a post-COVID world. This is a conversation that the entire Church has been trying to have for several years, but up until now, we've never had the need to consider it. Now, our moment has come.

This will likely be a long and ongoing process. It will undoubtedly come with some discomfort and disagreement, but, hopefully, all the changes we've had to make in 2020 will prepare us to move forward. Now is the time when we look to the Holy Spirit to guide us from where we've been to where we're going next.

There is still a long road to walk together, Beloveds, but we remember two things as we travel. First, that we are on the way together; not just as our congregation, but with many other congregations and denominations. This is new
Continued

territory for all of us, and we can all support and encourage one another along the way. The Church has been traveling this road together for a very, very long time—from the very beginning, in fact. Long before we were called Christians, we were called “the Way,” and for just this reason. The second is that, as we travel, we are not walking blindly, but always being led by God, who is calling us forward. We may not know our destination, but because we trust the One who leads us, we know that we are in good hands.

Yours in Christ,

Pr. Seth

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer from ELW p.304



Please let Pastor Seth know if you are in need of pastoral care. If you would like to be contacted please call the office at 253-851-6222 or email pastorseth@agnusdeilutheran.org In an emergency, you can reach Pastor Seth at 253-448-3481.

Greetings from the Church Council-



December 8, 2020, the Council met via Zoom at 7:30 pm (weeknight Advent Devotions are 7:00-7:15)

The Stewardship Committee reports a 50% response so far, to the letter of intent sent to members November 22, 2020. 65 members have not yet responded. Historically, the response was 30% or less. The Council is grateful for this timely, gracious response and look forward to more responses.

November offerings were \$10,000 less than the last two years.

10% of the income was sent to the Synod Benevolence fund.

The bills were paid, but Above and Beyond Funds were accessed for \$3,675.00. Now interest-only payments on the mortgage (approved by the September special congregational meeting). Current deficit is \$23,494.00.

Although the budget is still in progress at this report, there is a projected shortage of \$80,000 - 100,000 for the January budget planning. This shortage is for the projected increase in expenses for pandemic cleaning protocols, such as when the building and Little Lambs reopen, and other expenses versus income. The council had a lengthy conversation on possible ways to help this situation and how we all can work together.

The Budget will be presented on January 17, 2021 @ 10:30 am via Zoom, for the Congregation to review, modify and approve. A budget preview question and answer Zoom session will be held on Saturday, January 16, the day before the Congregation meeting. Your input is encouraged.

Denny Sapp and real estate attorney Paul Alvestad are researching the church's future potential to sell the rental property.

Dave Marquardt, President of Little Lambs Board of Directors, reported the Board Members and director continue to discuss options for reopening Little Lambs in the fall.

Sister Ann reported online Faith Formation is not working well, but that the Grab and Go Sunday School kits are being picked up and experienced by all ages.

Sherry Stava reported that all the Worship Advent plans are going forward.

Building closures/Staff Holidays were approved for 2021. Friday, July 2; Monday, July 5; Monday, December 27; and Friday, December 31, 2021. The Council accepted the Personnel Committee's recommendation to permit staff members to select their own floating holidays for 2021.

Pastor Seth declared his annual housing allowance to be recorded in the minutes.

The February 2021 Council meeting will begin to address a property tax exemption letter sent to churches and other non-profit organizations regarding restrictions on use of the building. The mission of Agnus Dei is to be a community-oriented church. Resource:

https://dor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/Docs/Pubs/Prop_Tax/PropertyTaxExmptChurch.pdf

The next meeting is January 12, 2017 @ 7:00 pm.

Peace and thank you to all -
Beverly Buster (253-686-1919)
Church Council President

Council Members: Vice President Denny Sapp, Secretary Susan Whitney, Treasurer Julie Bell, Immediate Past President Gene Kuest, Richard Ohme, Deb Brueckner, Sherry Stava, Charlene Franz, Bob Nussbaum, Pastor Seth Novak, Sister Ann Shultz

Congregational Budget Meeting

All voting ADLC members are encouraged to attend the Congregational budget meeting on January 17 at 10:30 am via Zoom, where we will vote on the 2020 budget. For an in-depth preview of the budget before the meeting there will be a meeting on Saturday, January 16. The links for these meetings will be in the weekly emails.



Faith Formation Programs

- **Forum:** Sunday mornings at 8:30 am via Zoom ~ For content, see below
- **Sunday School:** Sunday mornings at 10:30 am via Zoom
- **Grab and Go:** Age-appropriate bags of Sunday School activities are available for independent/family use at home. These are available in the blue bin at the church entrance for children in PreK – 6th grade.

Faith For the Journey is a multi-generational, mid-week Faith Formation program. All meetings and activities will be conducted via Zoom. It will resume again in January.

Forum Schedule

Forums for January start with Pastor Seth walking us through a review of the Gospel of Mark - our lectionary Gospel for the year. This will give us a foundation for our Gospel lessons for the year. Both January 3rd and 10th are set aside for this introduction.

Several weeks ago, in his sermon on God's Eminent Domain, Pastor Seth challenged us with some questions. Who is God calling you to be in these days? To what is God inviting you? We encourage you to take time to reflect and pray to discern how to answer God's call. On the 17th we will share our own personal answers to these questions. We all have a different walk with God and our answers will thus vary based on our circumstances and leanings. Let's encourage each other to discern and fulfil our individual calls. On the 24th we will answer these same questions based on our Agnus Dei congregation. Where does God call and invite us as a congregation? Where are we heading post COVID? Pastor Seth will lead us in discerning our path forward. With a new year there are new opportunities. Come and explore these together.

We remember in prayer:

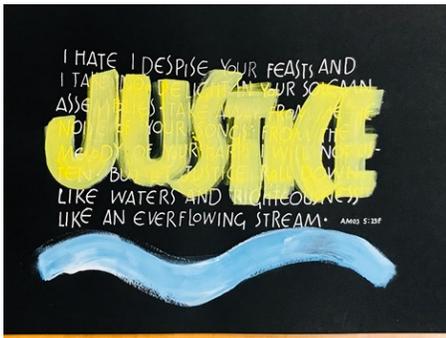


For comfort and for healing:

- * Marian Ano
- * Barbara Ausich
- * Deb Brueckner
- * Audrey Clinton
- * Alynne Gootkin
- * Richard and Marilyn Hermstad
- * Dave Kulman
- * Sonja Miller
- * Jack Oakes
- * George Mitchell
- * Toni Ortenzo
- * Joannah Powers
- * Anne Sapp
- * Myra Snider
- * Johnny Tierny
- * Rose VanderKlomp
- * Trudy Wagner
- * Dick and Eunice Werner

In service to our country:

- * CAPT. Jenny Nussbaum, US Public Health Service



RACIAL JUSTICE – STEPS IN UNDERSTANDING

On Thursday, January 28, at 7:00 pm, the Racial Justice Committee is hosting a presentation on the book 'The Color Of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America' by Richard Rothstein. Rothstein extensively researched racially explicit and implicit policies by government entities that intentionally created racial segregation in the United States. Racial Zoning, IRS tax codes, Private Real Estate Agreements, State-

Sanctioned Violence and more. Many of his topics will be presented for our discussion. Come and be enlightened by how laws were established specifically to instill racial segregation. For those with ears to hear and eyes to see. Please join us.

Stewardship Report

Building a Culture of Generosity

Last month, I asked everyone to think about the most generous thing you have ever witnessed. When I was asking Debbie about a friend of ours that I wanted to write about, she said that she had been planning on writing something but had not gotten around to it. This what Debbie wrote:

When I think about generosity, I think of people that not only give money but also give of their time and friendship. My mom is 82 and lives alone. She is quite capable, although she does need help with things as she slows down or when she is ill or has surgery. Mom has an amazing group of friends that we feel very fortunate to have in our mom's life. These wonderful people help my sister, brother, and me take care of her when it is needed. They are always there to give her a ride when she feels like she can't drive.

During the many months of the pandemic they have often grocery shopped for her as well as run other errands. These wonderful friends have even gone to doctor's appointments with her to be the second set of ears when we have not been available. One friend often says, "I am getting us dinner, and I will be over in an hour." Another friend often brings her homemade soup or some other delicious dinner. Mom enjoys not having to cook when these things are offered. Another neighbor is always there to see that she is not taken advantage of when she has work done on her house or car.

Just today, one of them brought her a beautiful Christmas flower arrangement. Our family is forever grateful for these wonderful angels that are so kind and generous to our mom.

Debbie Snowden

Please send me your own stories of generosity so that I can share them.

Mike Snowden msnowden000@centurytel.net

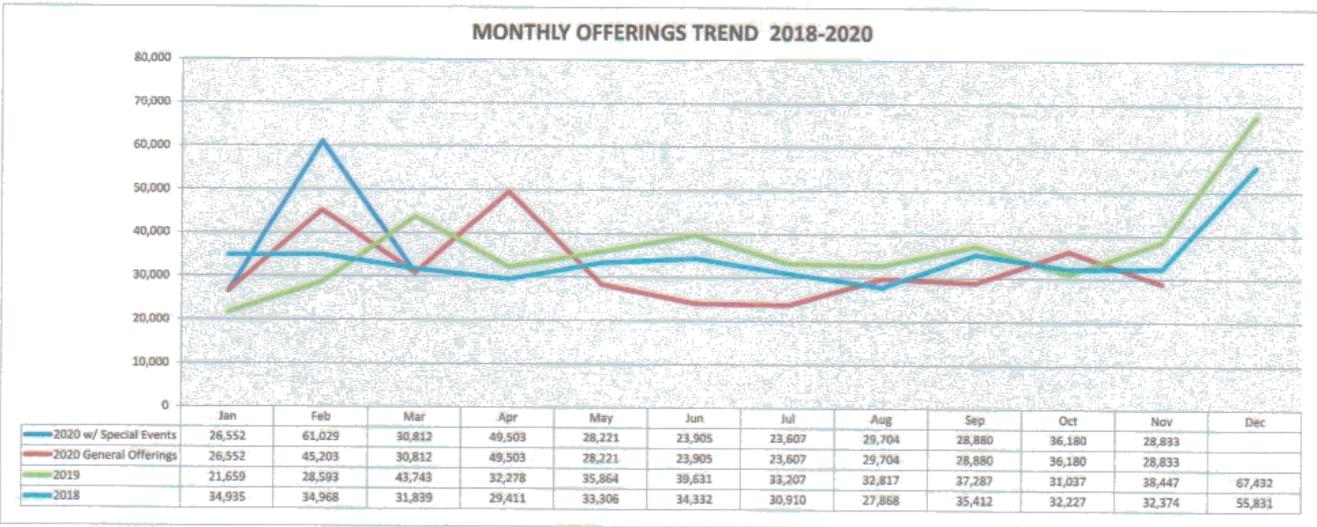
FINANCIAL REPORT AS OF November 30, 2020

(prepared December 8 2020)

RESULTS:

COMMENTS:

	Jan - Nov Actual	Jan - Nov Budget	% of YTD Budget	2020 Budget	
OPERATING INCOME:					* YTD as of Nov 30, 2020: * Total Unrestricted Offerings are at 78% of goal. (with Special Event income, Offerings are at 81.4% of goal) * Total Income is 86.1% of goal, with \$19,247 offset by specific new expense. * Total Expenses are 89.7% of target. * Net Operating Loss is \$23,494 (see note at bottom of page)
General Offering	351,578	372,481	94.4%	439,400	
Growth in Giving - G.O.	-	78,870	0.0%	86,000	
Special Event Offerings	15,949	-	-	-	
Other Income	39,615	21,300	186.0%	23,900	
TOTAL INCOME	407,142	472,651	86.1%	549,300	
OPERATING EXPENSES & LIABILITIES:					* Nov 30, 2020 Balance Sheet * Current Assets (checking, savings, Accts Rec.) 130,122 * Fixed Assets (land, building, rental property) 3,213,901 * TOTAL ASSETS 3,344,024 * Current Liabilities 1,768 * LongTerm Liabilities 1,329,571 (Mortgage & Organ Loans) * TOTAL LIABILITIES 1,331,339 * Equity * Retriected Net Assets (Designated) 101,356 * Unrestricted Net Assets 1,911,329 * TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 3,344,024 * Detail financial reports are available upon request. Contact the Administrative Assistant to request a copy.
Ministry of Education	2,570	9,374	27.4%	9,750	
Ministry of Mission	36,947	45,135	81.9%	54,540	
Ministry of Programs	3,474	7,100	48.9%	8,850	
Administrative Expenses	135,738	175,073	77.5%	193,630	
Staff and Services	251,906	243,258	103.6%	281,747	
TOTAL EXPENSE/LIABILITIES	430,636	479,940	89.7%	548,517	
NET OPERATING INCOME	(23,494)	(7,289)		783	
Total Reserves on Deposit at MIF					
			<u>Balance</u>		
Building Fund			28,504		
Above & Beyond			29,208		
Rental House Reserve			27,753		
Total Reserves on Deposit at MIF			85,466		



Operating Cash on Hand in Checking
Account as of Nov 30, 2019 \$11,568

Operating Cash on Hand in Checking
Account as of Nov 30, 2020 \$10,342 *

Operating Reserve Funds \$0

* Current balance in Checking Account includes \$3,675 from Above & Beyond Funds and \$7,082 owed to pay down mortgage loan principal, along with Operating Cash on Hand

NOTE: The current \$23,494 deficit does not reflect the deferral of mortgage payments for Sept, Oct and Nov 2020. Without that deferral, the deficit would be \$53,602.

December Outreach

- ♥ Thank you for supporting the Food Backpacks 4 Kids program with your Reverse Advent Calendar donations. We hope to make this an annual tradition!
- ♥ Knitters have done a great job making warm hats for area school children, they were distributed through the Food Backpacks 4 Kids program

Plans for January– The Great Toilet Paper Wall of 2021

- ♥ Our tradition in past years is to hold a Toilet Paper Drive for the FISH Food Bank and the folks there have come to depend on us to fill their shelves. Toilet paper has been a scarce commodity at times this past year, so let's hope that Santa delivers a lot of it this Christmas season, because we need to get ready for the Great 2021 Wall of TP in January. We can do it! Bring your donations to the church through January. If the office is closed, just leave it on the bench by the door and we will bring it in to add it to the wall.
- ♥ We have gotten word that there is a family relocating to Gig Harbor next month in need of help from the generous members of Agnus Dei. They will be arriving with nothing more than a few suitcases of clothing and we will be seeking household items and furniture to help them set up their apartment. We will publish a list of specific needs soon so if you can donate any of the items we can arrange to get them to the family.

Ronnie Kulman, for the Agnus Dei Community Outreach Team



Circle of Welcome Update

Just a short time ago, Agnus Dei and Peninsula Lutheran partnered up with Lutheran Community Services NW Circle of Welcome Program to co-sponsor a refugee family from El Salvador as they began their new lives here in our area. We recently received this update from our friends at Peninsula Lutheran about the family we co-sponsored:



I'm happy to tell you that our family has bought a house! It's in a great location for them – right behind Diana's (the younger daughter's) school. It's also very close to the apartment complex where they've been living and Eduardo and Gloria still work.

I was also very happy that during the brief time Peninsula church had reopened, the family came to the service. It was wonderful to get to see and talk to them – the first time I had seen them since the pandemic. They had planned on coming back the next Sunday, but then church closed again after the governor's new restrictions. However, we have been keeping in touch throughout the pandemic by text.

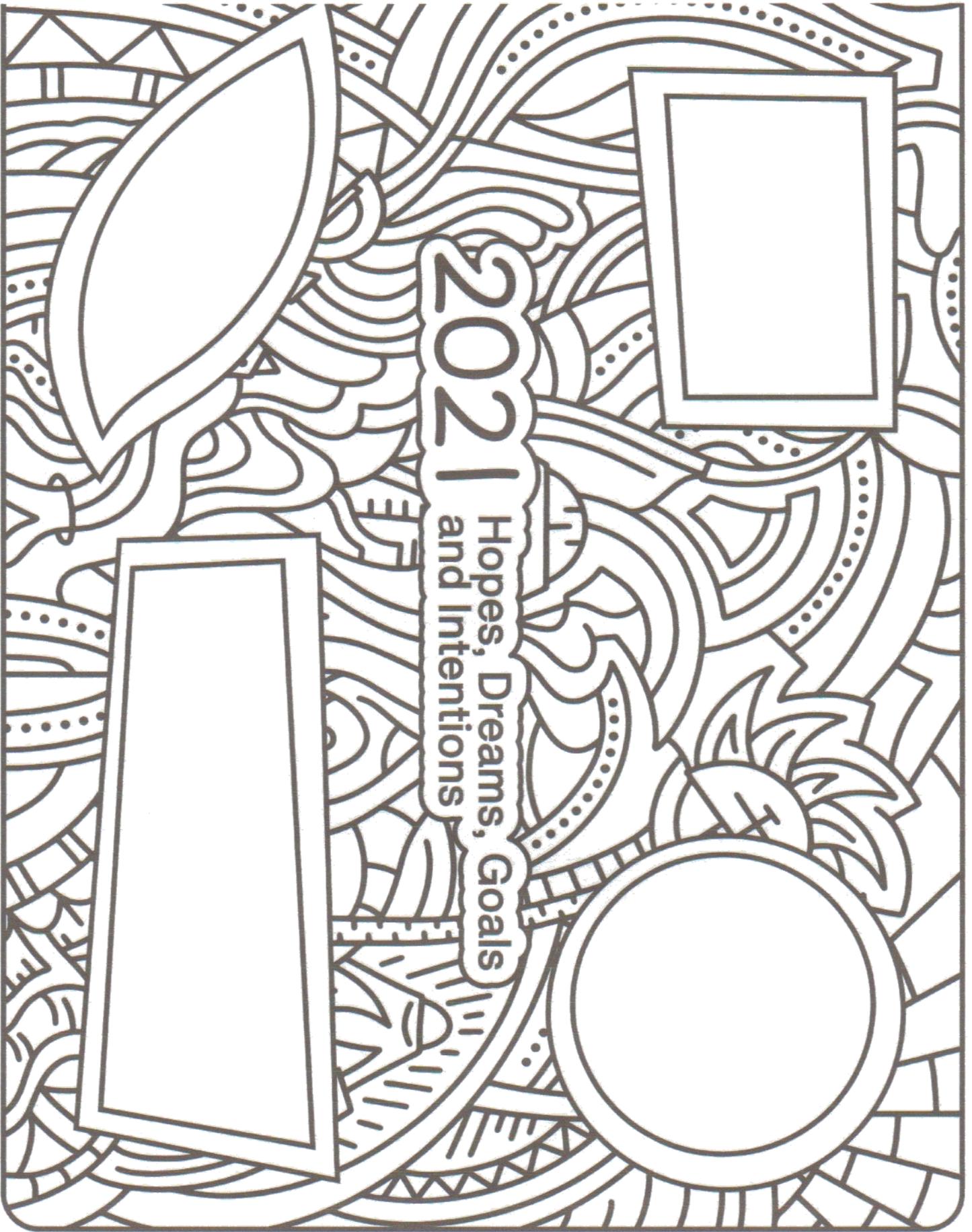
Eduardo has been working toward getting a job as a police officer. He took a test in Lynnwood, but didn't score well because there were too many English words that he didn't know. But that is his ultimate goal, and I am confident that he will achieve it in time. He is such a hard worker.

Antonia (the older daughter) has been working as a cashier in the Mexican restaurant where Gloria still works part-time. She likes it, and it's an improvement over her previous job.

That's all the news I can think of for now. I wish you all a wonderful Christmas season and hope you can spend it with family and friends safely.

Blessings,

Nancy Ellickson



Stay Connected

**“Our building may be closed
but the church is open”**

We may not be able to gather in person but there are plenty of opportunities to stay connected. Virtual Worship takes place on Sundays at 9:45 am preceded by forum at 8:30 AM and followed by Zoom fellowship at 10:30 am. All services can be viewed live at the appointed time by clicking the livestream link on our webpage. The recordings will be left for viewing at any later time. All Zoom meetings, Bible studies, and fellowship opportunities can be accessed from our church website’s events page.

A personal message from Cindy

I want to thank everyone for reaching out to me at the death of my father last month. Your many calls, prayers, cards and well wishes are so appreciated. I feel blessed to be surrounded by such a caring and supportive church family.

*Sincerely,
Cindy Beals*



Serving in Worship, January

	Jan 3	Jan 10	Jan 17	Jan 24	Jan 31
Assisting Minister	B Shull	M Colyar	D Schinkel	D Page	A Ortenzo
Lector	C Carlson	M Duncan	D Snowden	L Brentin	D Daus
Audio-Visual Production	J Beaudette				

Hymnal Check Out

Would you like a copy of our ELW Hymnal for home use while we are worshiping from home? Copies are now available for check-out. Come to the church on Thursdays between 3:00 and 5:00 pm to sign one out.



We Celebrate...

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS*

- 2 TK Baxter
- 3 Terri Schinkel, Maria Beaudette
- 4 Denny Sapp, Katie Dobszinski
- 6 Ronnie Kulman
- 7 Linda Olson, Peter Liljengren, Gene Kuest
- 9 Elmer Wagner
- 10 Jessica Bigger, Sue Horton, Shinho Park
- 11 Diana Edelblute
- 12 Robert Beals
- 15 Haley Babare
- 16 David Skeels
- 17 Virginia Kenefick, Stacy Bigger
- 20 Robert Bridgforth
- 21 Mik Moore
- 22 Drew Babare, Teresa McDonald
- 23 Olivia Seames
- 25 Rose VanderKlomp, Jonathon Hogeberg, Cecilia Roark
- 26 Barbara Deák, Jim Ribary, Heinz Malon
- 27 Paula Davis
- 29 Inessa and Bryna Hay Wiren

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Joe and Barbara Ausich
- 17 Kathy and Daryl Higgins
- 29 John and Sherry Stava
- 31 Daryl and Gwen Daus

An Invitation to Join the Agnus Dei Book Group

The Agnus Dei Book Group regularly meets on the third Sunday of each month on Zoom at 11:30 am. We’d love to have you join! Our next Book Group will be meeting on Sunday Jan 24 (the fourth Sunday this month due to the congregational meeting on Jan 17). The January book is “Lost and Found Bookshop” by Susan Wiggs

(<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/48613318-the-lost-and-found-bookshop>)

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 8:30 AM Forum 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion- Livestream 10:30 AM Cross Gen Sunday School 10:30 AM Fellowship	28 Church Office Closed	29 Church Office Closed	30 Church Office Closed 1:30 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry	31 Church Office Closed	1 Church Office Closed New Years Day	2
3 8:30 AM Forum 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion- Livestream 10:30 AM Fellowship	4 3:00 PM Finance Committee Meeting	5	6 Epiphany 10:00 AM Text Study with Zoom 1:30 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:00 PM Holden Evening Prayer 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (Zoom)	7 9:00 AM Church Staff Meeting	8	9
10 8:30 AM Forum 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion- Livestream 10:30 AM Cross Gen Sunday School 10:30 AM Fellowship	11	12 7:00 PM Council Meeting	13 10:00 AM Text Study with Zoom 1:00 PM Worship Committee 1:30 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:00 PM Holden Evening Prayer 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (Zoom)	14 9:00 AM Church Staff Meeting	15	16
17 8:30 AM Forum 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion- Livestream 10:30 AM Congregational Budget Meeting	18 Church Office Closed Martin Luther King Day	19 Bishop's Convocation 1:00 PM Gather Bible Study	20 Bishop's Convocation 10:00 AM Text Study with Zoom 1:30 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:00 PM Holden Evening Prayer 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (Zoom)	21 9:00 AM Church Staff Meeting 5:30 PM Theology on Tap	22	23
24 8:30 AM Forum 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion- Livestream 10:30 AM Cross Gen Sunday School 10:30 AM Fellowship	25	26	27 10:00 AM Text Study with Zoom 1:30 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:00 PM Holden Evening Prayer 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (Zoom)	28 9:00 AM Church Staff Meeting	29	30
31 8:30 AM Forum 9:45 AM Worship with Holy Communion- Livestream 10:30 AM Cross Gen Sunday School 10:30 AM Fellowship	1	2	3 10:00 AM Text Study with Zoom 1:30 PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:00 PM Holden Evening Prayer 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (Zoom)	4 9:00 AM Church Staff Meeting	5	6

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10511 Peacock Hill Ave NW
Gig Harbor, WA 98332

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The monthly newsletter of
Agnus Dei Lutheran Church
10511 Peacock Hill Ave NW
Gig Harbor, WA 98332

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Council Secretary: Susan Whitney
Financial Secretary: Bob Nussbaum
Treasurer: Julie Bell
Faith Community Nurse: Zoe Holmes
Faith Community Nurse: Gwen Daugs

Council

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Little Lambs Board: Margaret Duncan, Dave Marquardt, Nels Peterson, Rob Powers, Maggie Rodgers