



Augustana News

January 2026

10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1...HAPPY NEW YEAR!

I always appreciate a new year's eve celebration. Perhaps that's just because it's one of the few holidays I consistently have off from church work! But I think it's more than that. There's something about intentionally marking the passage of time that strums a chord in my heart. Pausing to feel time slip from one year to the next is a practice that resonates deeply for me.

If you don't take time to intentionally pause every once in a while, life rushes by in a mad torrent. The events of our lives come and go and we don't even notice what happens, reflect on what we'd like to be different, recognize what we have to be grateful for, or see how God has been at work in our lives. Study after study shows that pausing for this type of reflection helps people lead lives that are more meaningful, intentional, and grounded. New year's eve gives us the opportunity for this. We might choose to look back reflecting on what has been, or to look forward with the chance for a fresh start and another chance. Both are wonderful things to do from the perspective of life and faith.

And so in this first month of a new year, I'd like to offer you some of the practices that I have found helpful in facilitating this type of reflection. You don't need to do these on new year's eve (though I have, and that can be very meaningful!). Set aside some time this month and take up one or more of the following practices. Most of the ideas and the prayer below are adapted from *Faithful Families for Advent and Christmas* by Rev. Traci Smith.

Happy new year!

Pastor Emily

(Ding! Ding!—Continued from Page 1)

Make a 2025 time capsule. My family did this practice together for the first time last new year's eve for 2024, and I'm so looking forward to getting it out this year to see what we put in! We had each member of the family (who was old enough to do so) select one thing that reminded them of the year or of a particular memory from that year. We talked about what we picked and why, and put all the items in a used Christmas bag and shoved it in the top of a closet. If you do this on your own, you could choose a few items. Or do it with friends you see around the holidays and you'll have a built-in conversation starter for next year's Christmas or new year's eve party!

Reflect with family or friends! If you will get together with family or friends on or around new year's eve, take a moment to reflect on the year that's passed and look forward to the year to come. Use some of these questions to get the conversation going.

Looking back:

What are 3 memories from the last year that make you smile?

What are 3 things you are grateful for that happened last year?

What's a challenge you faced last year?

Looking forward:

What new thing would you like to try this year?

What skill or habit might you like to work on?

How can we show kindness to others in the year to come?

Jump start your reflection for next year with a memory jar for 2026. All you need for this one is a big mason jar (or a box) and scraps of paper and something to write with that are easily available throughout the year. Throughout 2026, jot down tiny moments of your everyday life and faith. It can be simple as: *Made waffles for breakfast!* Or *Visited my sister today.* Or *Had lunch with my church friends.* Then add the date and drop the scrap in your box or jar. Perhaps you even want to play off of our Advent theme, and add in little surprising ways you sense God showing up for you. You can also put in ticket stubs, programs, or other mementos. On new year's day or new year's eve next year, pull out the jar and take time enjoying the memories and reflecting on the past year.

Christmas all year—leave yourself a reminder. If you are someone who feels sad letting go of the holiday season at the start of the new year, then this practice is for you! The message that God came to earth as a baby to show the world just how much God loves us isn't a message limited to the Christmas season. So find one small decoration or Christmas item from your home to leave out as a reminder all year long. Perhaps one figure from your nativity set, or a small ornament. I have a couple of small nativity scenes and for the past few years I have chosen one to leave on my dresser all year long.

Christmas THANK YOUS from Pastor Emily!

I have some big thank yous to give out for all of the hard work and support in our congregations that made this a beautiful Advent and Christmas season.

To our Altar Guild members at Augustana and Grace. THANK YOU for the hard work you put in decorating, changing paraments, setting out poinsettias, and setting up for extra services.

To our church secretaries/office managers/ladies extraordinaire, Katie at Augustana and Sharon at Grace. THANK YOU for the extra hours you put in compiling, editing, and printing bulletins, for extra mailings, for handling last minute phone calls and questions, for guiding this pastor in her first Christmas in new congregations. Your patience and grace mean the world to me and to many!

To our office volunteers at Augustana and Grace. THANK YOU for coming in to prep extra bulletins, mailings, Christmas Eve candles, and more.

To our food pantry volunteers. THANK YOU for showing up for our guests in what is a busy time of year for everyone.

To our building volunteers. THANK YOU for making sure things are neat, tidy, and in good repair, especially this month and always.

To our wonderful congregations. THANK YOU for your understanding when I don't know how things are "always done," for making room to try some new things, and for bringing me and my family into old traditions with kindness.

THANK YOU!!!



January 4 - Epiphany Sunday Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12	January 11 - Baptism of our Lord Isaiah 42:1-9 Psalm 29 Acts 10:34-43	January 18 - 2nd Sunday of Epiphany Isaiah 49:1-7 Psalm 40:1-11 1 Corinthians 1:1-9	January 25- 3rd Sunday of Epiphany Isaiah 9:1-4 Psalm 27:1, 4-9 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 Matthew 4:12-23
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A prayer for new year's eve:

As the clock turns from one year to the next,
We say thank you, God.
Thank you for the year that has passed.
Thank you for the year to come.
Each new year brings new joys and new challenges.
Make us ready for whatever will come this year,
Amen.



PRAYER LIST

*Please contact us with updates,
praises, & requests.*



Health Concerns

Ken Davis
Sister Nora Frost
Barbara Hillyer
Joel—Barbara's son-in-law —cancer

Other concerns

Military Service Members

Upcoming dates to remember:

NO THURSDAY SERVICE at Grace on January 1.

January 4: Epiphany Sunday with the story of “The Other Wiseman.”

January 5: Confirmation Class at St. John’s resumes after Christmas break.

January 6: Faith is Fun resumes at Grace.

January 11: Sister Nora will be our guest preacher!

Children’s Church resumes after Christmas break.

January 13: Augustana Council

January 19: Grace Council

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 18, and we’re going *All In*.



Have you ever decided to go all in on something?

Maybe it was when you chose your profession or decided to get married. Perhaps you made the exciting but terrifying decision to become a homeowner. Maybe it was when you joined our congregation, or if you came to faith later in life, when you decided to be baptized.

When it comes to our faith, Jesus shows what it is like to be all in for the reign of God. It means being fully invested, deeply committed. There are no backup options. Everything is on the line.

Before we can go all in, though, God shows us the way. God knows that going all in for this beautiful broken world is a challenge, so God goes all in on our behalf first, revealing what it is like to bet it all on love.

God tends broken relationships. God goes all in on all the highs and lows that life brings, from moments of transcendent beauty to the deepest hopelessness. And in Jesus, God pours out every last drop of love, all of it for the sake of a world that may never fully understand.

This Lent, God is all in for us. Let’s go all in for God’s love, too.

Look for more about our Lenten plans in the February newsletter and on social media.

January Fellowship Opportunities

FIRST WEDNESDAY BREAKFAST CLUB

Wednesday, January 7 ~ 9 AM

Meet at Perkins on Cassopolis Street.
Call Deb Rowland for reservations.

LAST THURSDAY LUNCH BUNCH

**Thursday, January 29 ~
Noon**

Come and join your Augustana
friends for lunch at:

**Baker's Nook Café
127 Easy Shopping Place,
Elkhart**

Bring a friend or neighbor with
you. *Phone your reservation and
the number coming to the church
office by Monday, January 26.*

*** God's Gifts Pantry
2nd & 4th Thursdays ~
10-11 AM**

*** Join us each
Sunday morning
for Fellowship in
the Narthex before
& after worship.**

January HAPPENINGS

Thursday, January 1-

New Years Day—Office Closed

Sunday, January 4 -

Epiphany Sunday

Monday, January 5 -

Confirmation Class at St. John's

Tuesday, January 6 -

Faith is Fun—@ Grace

Thursday, January 8 -

God's Gifts Pantry

Sunday, January 11 -

Sister Nora—Guest preacher!

Tuesday, January 13-

Augustana Church Council Meeting

Monday, January 19-

Grace Church Council Meeting

Thursday, January 22-

God's Gifts Pantry

Thursday, January 29-

Lunch Brunch @ Baker's Nook Cafe

JANUARY 2026 SERVER SCHEDULE

January 4 – Epiphany Sunday

Assisting Minister: Ed Williams
Lector: Diane Erickson
Server: Leah Moyer
Technology Server: Randy Tinder
Ushers: Ed & Janie Williams

January 11 – Baptism of the Lord

Assisting Minister: Mark Moyer
Lector: Mark Moyer
Server: George Scupham
Technology Server: Cayden Abner
Ushers: Gunnar & Diane Erickson

January 18– Advent 3

Assisting Minister: Nancy Tinder
Lector: Nancy Tinder
Server: Cayden Abner
Technology Server: Mark Moyer
Ushers: Deb Rowland & Janet Moyer

January 25 – Christ the King

Assisting Minister: Maralee Macumber
Lector: Mark Moyer
Server: George Scupham
Technology Server: Randy Tinder
Ushers: Deb Rowland & Emily Moyer

January Altar Guild

Jerry & Doris Koontz

Please let the office know of any changes.



Pick up your *free* copy of
The Word in Season devotional booklets!

January Altar Flowers



January 4– Available

January 11– Available

January 18– Available

January 25– Available

If the Altar Flowers are not sponsored, there will be no flowers. Two floral bouquets total \$25. That's a real deal! Many slots are available for sponsorship throughout the year. The easel is at the back of the pews. Choose your date, sign your name, and whether the flowers are in honor or memory of someone special. You may pay when you sign up or later. Either way, please use the envelope provided for your \$25. Thank you.

Financial and Attendance Report

[Fiscal Year Runs Jan. 1 thru Dec. 31] **Information thru December 30, 2025	
Fiscal Year-to-Date Budget Requirement	Fiscal Year-to-Date Actual Funds in General Fund
\$143,275.00	\$92,101.04
December Monthly Budget Requirement	December Actual Offering to General Fund
\$11,940.00	\$9,277.28
JANUARY Monthly Amount Needed to meet Budget Requirement	Noisy Offering Fiscal Year-to-Date
\$	\$131.00
December Average Sunday In-Person Attendance	December Average Sunday Facebook Attendance
35	6



Take-Along Page

188 People
Served in November,

220 People
Served in December

Take this page with you to the grocery store to help Augustana serve those in need.

God's Gifts Pantry Needs Your Help

Thursday, January 8 and **Thursday, January 22** will be our next sack distributions. Thank you to all who have brought items! We continue to serve more people each week, so your contributions are very much needed and appreciated! Please bring items to the church Sunday mornings or any time during the week during office hours, placing them in the barrels by the office.

The following items are needed:

Canned chicken or tuna
Canned fruits & vegetables
Cereal & Oatmeal
Ritz or other crackers in sleeves
Pork and Beans
Boxes or bags of rice
Boxed potatoes
Peanut Butter & Jelly
Spaghetti or other pasta
Canned spaghetti sauce (red) - no glass jars
Cake mixes and frosting
Pudding - Jello
Cookies (individually wrapped)
Juice - no glass jars
Shelf stable milk
Cooking oil - butter

Toothpaste & toothbrushes
Shampoo
Toilet Paper & Kleenex
Dish Soap & Laundry Detergent (not pods)
Cleaning supplies

*The following items are found at Dollar Tree:

*Mac & Cheese with foil pack
*Boxed cereals (any size or kind)
*Spaghetti-O's – pull top
*Pork n' Beans & Dogs – pull top
*Canned kid meals
*Bags or boxes of rice
*Dinty Moore Stew
*Bags of beans
*Tuna

Cans with pop-tops are preferred
though we know many cans do not come that way.

NO EXPIRED FOOD

January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 NEW YEARS DAY! Office Closed	2	3
4 11 AM-Worship Epiphany Sunday with the story of "The Other Wiseman"	5 Confirmation Class at St. John's resumes	6 Faith is Fun resumes at Grace	7 9 AM- Breakfast Club @ Perkins	8 10-11 AM-God's Gifts Pantry 4 PM-Holy Communion at Grace	9	10
11 11 AM-Worship Sister Nora will be our guest preacher!	12	13 6:30 PM- Augustana Council Meeting	14	15 4 PM-Holy Communion at Grace	16	17
18 11 AM-Worship	19 * Newsletter Deadline 6:30 PM- Grace Council Meeting	20	21	22 10-11 AM-God's Gifts Pantry 4 PM-Holy Communion at Grace	23	24
25 11 AM-Worship	26	27	28	29 Noon- Lunch Brunch @ Baker's Nook Café 4 PM-Holy Communion at Grace	30	31

Augustana Lutheran Church

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Augustana Mission Statement:

As the Body of Christ,
we are called to Love All, Serve All, Welcome All.

Pastoral Information

Rev. Emily Trubey-Weller

Pastor Emily's Office Hours

9 AM– 3 PM

*Monday, Wednesday at **Augustana***

*Tuesday, Thursday at **Grace***

* Please call for an appointment.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday ~ 9 AM–3 PM

Tuesday & Wednesday
1 PM–4 PM