

Celebrating Epiphany at Augustana



You're invited to an Epiphany Party!

Sunday, January 7, 9:30–10:15 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

Augustana's Children, Youth and Family Ministry hosts an Epiphany Party the first Sunday in January! All are invited to attend this cross-generational event! Learn about Epiphany, sample some King Cake, and make stars and crowns! All Pre-K kids through 12th grade youth will gather in Fellowship Hall on this Sunday during Faith Formation. No matter your age, you come too!

January 6 is the Epiphany of our Lord.

While we Lutherans (and really, most Americans) haven't made a big deal of the day, I've learned to appreciate and enjoy it over the years and through different cultures. My husband and I enjoyed the tradition of keeping the Magi (aka Wise Men or Kings) at a distance from the manger. For in Matthew 2, we read, "On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him." So, the thought is that Jesus was a toddler when the Wise Ones came to visit, hence keeping the camels and the "Kings" away from the Christmas nativity sets.

Epiphany means "manifestation." There is so much interesting history about this scripture and culture.

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Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

5000 E. Alameda Ave.
Denver, CO 80246

Augustana
LUTHERAN CHURCH

PHONE: 303-388-4678

FAX: 303-388-1338

WEB: augustanadenver.org

EMAIL: info@augustanadenver.org

FACEBOOK: augustanadenver.com

Mission Statement: Celebrating God's grace, we welcome everyone to worship Jesus, grow in faith, and go serve in the world.

Worship

- **In-Person Worship**, Sundays, 8 a.m.
- **In-Person/Streamed Worship**, Sundays, 10:30 a.m.
- [Watch on Facebook](#)
- [Watch on YouTube](#)

The Tower is published monthly for Augustana Lutheran Church, 5000 E. Alameda Ave., Denver, CO, 80246-8104. There is no subscription fee.

Thursday, January 11, 4:30 p.m. is the deadline for the February edition. Email **Lyn Goodrum** (goodrum@augustanadenver.org).

Congregation Council:

President: Lisa Boe-Sims

Vice President: Michael Zumwalt

Secretary: Karen Lambert

Treasurer: Michael Gentes

Betty Boyd	Heather Nelson
Janet Flesch	Nancy Nyhus
Jayne Howard	Inez Smith
Heidi Johnson	Pr. Caitlin Trussell
Max Johnson	Karen Yeager
Roger Lipker	Finley Zumwalt
Pr. Gail Mundt	

Staff:

- **Caitlin Trussell**, Pastor
- **Gail Mundt**, Bridge Pastor
- **William Crossen**, Finance Administrator
- **Christine Peters**, Building Systems Administrator
- **Shanna VanderWel**, Director of Youth and Family Ministry
- **Andrew Peters**, Director of Music and Organist
- **Kevin Padworski**, Chancel Choir Director
- **Angela Howard**, Choristers and Cantabile Director
- **Sue Ann Glusenkamp**, Faith Community Nurse
- **Lyn Goodrum**, Publications Administrator
- **Julie MacDougall**, Volunteer Ministry and Building Use
- **Alice Alistair** and **Jesse Crone**, AV Technicians
- **Craig Tamminga**, Facility Manager
- **Asmir Hodzic**, Building and Grounds Manager
- **Ellen Kastens**, **Amy Tamminga**, **Erin Saboe Willoughby**, Wedding Coordinators
- **Kisanet Yohannes**, Director, Augustana Early Learning Center

Recently lifted up in prayer

For hope and healing:

- Jean Apple
- George Cross
- Dolly Lager
- Samantha Langston
- Holly Massie
- Pam Ninke
- Marilyn Stember
- Farrel Vikman
- Carol Wernecke
- Leila Elizabeth Zarlengo

For comfort and courage:

- Laura Libby in the death of her grandfather, Travis Allen
- Dane Vierow in the death of his friend, Carl Fisher

- Family and friends of Bev Garvin in her death
- Paula Pace in the death of her husband, Don Pace
- Family and friends of Maria Pierce in her death
- Carrie Wernecke in the death of her aunt and uncle, Virginia and Harold Robinson
- Family and friends of Diane Dehnert Hammerberg in her death

The Tower online

Download the full color edition of this Tower newsletter with clickable links at augustanadenver.org. Click on the About page and select Newsletters/Communications.

Thank you for the gifts!

Augustana Early Learning Center Scholarships

- in memory of Doug Boyd

Augustana Foundation

- in memory of Tammy Mohs

Music Ministry

- in memory of Doug Boyd

Special Gifts

- in memory of Genevieve Bucklin, Jerry Peters

Warren Village Thanksgiving Baskets

- in memory of Julie Beeman

Welcome Augustana's new Audio/Visual Technicians!

Jesse Crone and **Alice Alister** will be sharing the role of AV Tech! Please give them a warm welcome as you see them helping with sound and projection, or in the livestream booth.

Alice Alister

Alice (they/them) moved from Colorado Springs to Denver in 2009 to study jazz bass performance and audio engineering at DU. Since then, they've performed in musical theatre pit orchestras, and a variety of bands. Behind the scenes, they run AV for several of their own musical projects, Wash Park United Church of Christ, and House for All Sinners and Saints. They also maintain an educational practice, offering bass, guitar, keyboard, and drum lessons.

Outside of this kind of work, Alice is pursuing inter-disciplinary studies in a variety of natural and social sciences, humanities, mathematics, and visual arts with a specific interest in exploring questions of spirituality, healing and social transformation.

Jesse Crone

Originally from Rescue, California, Jesse moved to Denver in the fall of 2020, to attend the University of Colorado Denver. Jesse will be graduating in

the spring of 2024 with a Bachelor of Science in Recording Arts Technology with a minor in Film and Television Production.

He is a lifelong musician and audio nerd, having started on drums at 5 years old, and guitar at 12. Through his childhood, he served on the worship team of Foothills Church in Cameron Park for seven years, until he graduated high school and left for college. He also spent time working with the sound team. He has spent his time in Denver as a member of numerous local bands, from indie rock groups to jazz trios, and as a freelance Audio Engineer, working on multiple records, and as a composer and audio post-production engineer on multiple student and non-student film projects.



Jesse Crone

Contact Jesse (530-558-1316 or jcrone122@gmail.com). You can learn more about his film work on his website (jessecrone.com).



Augustana is texting!

In the spirit of connection, your cell phone number will be added to our new texting list. You can easily opt out following the directions on the first test. **If we don't have your cell phone number, please text 251-276-5085 with Signup in the text message to subscribe.** We'll make every attempt to be thoughtful about how and when we text. Texts will include reminders, RSVPs, schedule changes, and encouragement. Members and friends under 18 years old may be added to the list with your parents' permission.

For questions or information, please email **Deacon Shanna** (shanna@augustanadenver.org).

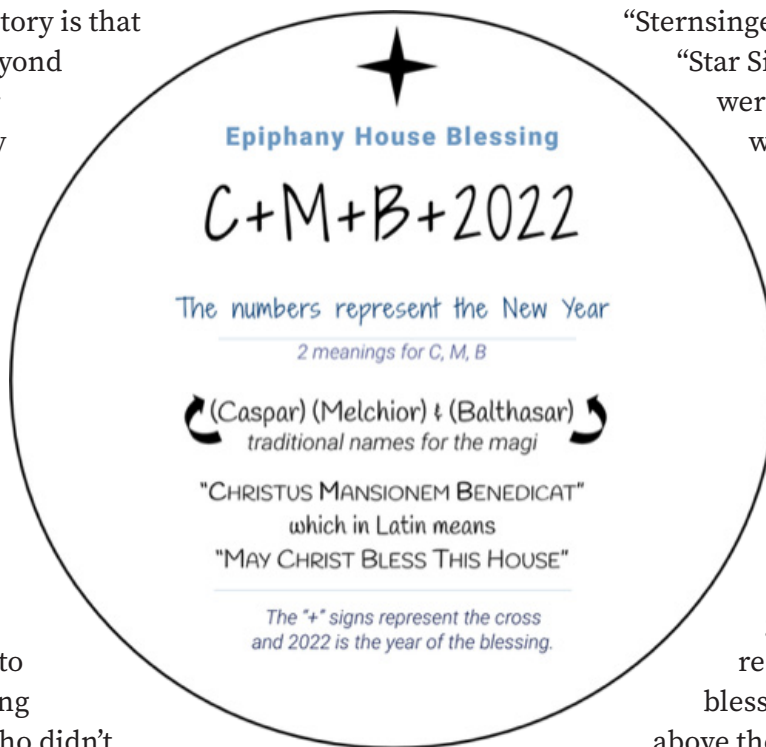
January 6, The Epiphany of Our Lord

continued from cover

A unique feature of this story is that these men came from beyond Bethlehem, Jerusalem or even the Holy Land! They came from “the east,” from a foreign land. Some scholars think they were from Persia, which is modern day Iran—or southern Arabia (currently Yemen). Differing opinions also name Turkey, Ethiopia, and Syria. Matthew wrote this (including the drama with King Herod) to show that these fascinating and note-worthy magi, who didn’t fit into the Jewish traditions, and in fact, were outside of the preservers of the Jewish religion, were who God used to meet Christ!

While living in Tampa, I learned about nearby Tarpon Springs, a Greek community. Their Epiphany festivities date back to 1906. A special mass is held at St. Nicholas Cathedral, followed by a procession down to the water. Here, the Archbishop blesses a cross and approximately 50 boys, ages 16–18, are chosen to participate in this ritual. He then throws the cross into the water and the boys dive into the water, each vying to come up with the cross. The one who successfully retrieves it is given a special blessing, has his name engraved on the statue outside of the cathedral, is supposed to experience good luck through the next year—and, of course, bragging rights!

When we lived in Vienna, Austria, we were surprised and excited to see and experience



“Sternsingers,” which translates “Star Singers.” Those we saw were children and youth who traveled door to door, carrying a star on a broom handle, and singing songs, like Christmas caroling. They would knock on doors and collect donations for children’s charities. The resident would provide a monetary donation as well as give them sweets. If the resident gave a donation, a blessing was written in chalk above the doorway to the home:

20+C+M+B+24. The three letters in the inscription either stand for the traditional names of the three Wise Ones: Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar; or the Latin phrase for “Christ bless this house.”

On Sunday, January 7, we will observe Epiphany at Augustana. Blessings will be prayed at the entrances of the church building. Blessing bags will be available for the children’s sermon so that

homes might be blessed in the same manner. Plan to join us on this special day!

Pastor Gail Mundt



LITURGY

Music Ministry

When and why Augustana's worship settings change

On January 7 we celebrate Epiphany in worship. In this service the liturgy setting will change and be used through Transfiguration of Our Lord on February 11. Augustana traditionally sings these texts from the liturgy in its weekly services: Kyrie ("Lord, have mercy"), Canticle of Praise ("This is the Feast" or "Glory to God in the Highest"), Gospel Acclamation ("Alleluia" or "Lord, to whom shall we go?"), Communion ("Holy, Holy, Holy" and "Lamb of God").

The current Lutheran hymnal has ten settings of the liturgy with completely different music in each setting. One can also select liturgy settings from the Service Music section of the hymnal. During Advent when services are full we don't follow one of the official settings. Hymns or service music fill these liturgy portions in the service. While the Offering Response is not part of the liturgical settings, the Offering Response changes to match different liturgy settings.

With the exception of summer and fall, all other liturgy changes match variations in the church

year. The liturgy settings are changed for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and the Time after Epiphany, Lent, Easter, summer, and fall. These changes in worship keep the services from getting dull and highlight the particular feel of each season.

Grace and peace,

Andy Peters

Director of Music and Organist

Play an instrument? Join the Augustana Instrumental Ensemble!

The Augustana Instrumental Ensemble will rehearse on Sundays, January 7 and 14, noon–12:45 p.m. The ensemble will play at 10:30 a.m. worship on January 21. This group, directed by **Kirsten Daniel**, is open to children, youth, and adults who play an instrument. If you are interested in playing, or for more information about this fun ensemble, please contact **Andy** (303-388-4678 or peters@augustanadenver.org).

Worship



Honor or remember with flowers for worship

Consider honoring a birthday, anniversary, baptism, marriage, or the memory of a loved one by sponsoring flowers for worship. You may purchase three bouquets each week which you may either take home or request to be delivered to Augustana's hospitalized and home-centered folks after worship. You may sponsor one or two bouquets for the Sanctuary at \$60 each, one bouquet for Christ Chapel for \$35, or all three bouquets for \$155.

For details, contact Augustana's office (303-388-4678 or info@augustanadenver.org).

... or with candles for Augustana's altar lamps

You may make a donation to the altar lamp fund, either in memory of a loved one or in honor of friends, family, or a special occasion. The cost for a whole month of candles for the Christ Chapel altar lamp is \$27, while a month of candles for the Sanctuary altar lamp is \$15. Your gift will be acknowledged in the Sunday bulletin the first Sunday of the month you sponsor. To sign up, contact Augustana's office (303-388-4678 or info@augustanadenver.org).

What Happened at the Multifaith Service of Quiet, Music, and Candlelight held at Augustana?

Between Thanksgiving and Advent, a service was held to hold a sacred space together in our shared humanity as we grieved and prayed silently. This service developed from conversations with faith leaders and lay people—Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Their feedback supported the attempt of such a service, recognizing that any effort to hold space for everyone's grief and humanity would be partial and insufficient.

Total attendance for all of us at the service was 113. Included in that attendance were Sunni, Shia, and Ismaili Muslims, a variety of Christians, Palestinians, and several rabbis and a few of their congregants. We were quite a mix of humanity. Watching people of so many different backgrounds light candles and place them next to each other in the same sand was both hopeful and precarious. The response following the service was largely about people's gratitude for being part of this unique experience, although we learned a lot about what could be done differently if there were a next time.

Many, many Augustana members and staff made this service possible as we hosted the community. Thank you, one and all!

Please direct any feedback or questions to **Pastor Caitlin** (trussell@augustanadenver.org).



Spiritual Arts Ministry invites your participation

Greetings to everyone from the Spiritual Arts Ministry!

Have you wondered who helps to create the special touches in the Sanctuary and Christ Chapel? Or maybe you have had a few “wishes” on how our worship time can be enriched as you are sitting in the pews. We would love to hear your ideas and/or have you join our team, whether it might be for one specific time or throughout the year! This ministry is great for couples and even families as well as individuals—everyone is welcome to help beautify our sacred worship spaces.

Contact Julie in Augustana’s office (303-388-4678 or maccdougall@augustanadenver.org) if you would like to join the fun and share ideas!

About the ornaments on Augustana’s Christmas trees

During the Advent and Christmas seasons, the Spiritual Arts Ministry uses special, hand-made white and gold ornaments called crismos on our trees. These ornaments were made by previous Spiritual Arts members many, many years ago. Crismos are decorations that help Christians remember that Christmas is Jesus’ birthday. Traditionally made using the liturgical Christmas colors of white and gold, each style has its own meaning. Here are two you can see on our trees.



The Triumphant Cross represents the earth with the cross on top. It symbolizes that Jesus is triumphant over anything we can face in the world.



The Dove is the symbol of peace and the Holy Spirit. It is shown pointing down to represent the Holy Spirit that appeared as a Dove when Jesus was baptized.



REMEMBERING

Martin Luther King Jr.

Professor Harry Waters Jr. to preach Martin Luther King Jr. sermon at Augustana

Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend

Sunday, January 14

8 a.m. Worship/Communion - Christ Chapel

9:15 a.m. Adult Forum - Anna Paulson Room

10:30 a.m. Worship/Communion - Sanctuary

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave the third address for Denver Area Council of Churches Holy Week Services in April 1962 from Augustana's pulpit. In that spirit, on Sunday, January 14, come and hear an excerpt of one of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s sermons preached at both worship services by **Professor Harry Waters Jr.** Professor



Professor Harry Waters Jr.

Waters will also lead a discussion about Rev. Dr. King's speeches and sermons and what they teach us in Adult Forum, 9:15–10:15 a.m., in the Anna Paulson Room.

Professor Harry Waters Jr.

Professor Harry Waters Jr. is recently retired from the Theater and Dance Department of

Macalester College, and he was also the Associate Dean of the Kofi Annan Institute for Global Citizenship—an entity that fosters the values of

internationalism, multiculturalism and service to society. A relevant aside, his parents **Harry and Betty Waters** are Augustana members.

He portrayed Marvin Berry in the movie *Back to the Future* which earned him a Gold Record for his rendition of “Earth Angel,” guest-starred in many television roles, worked as an actor on and off Broadway, and directed productions in the Twin Cities and nationally as well as Macalester College. Mr. Waters received his MFA in Directing from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and holds a Meisner Acting Technique Teacher Certification with Larry Silverberg.

Waters is in the process of creating an immersive theater piece called *Hi5ve*. It celebrates Glenn Burke, an out gay Black baseball player with the Dodgers who is credited with creating the High Five in 1977. In addition, he is on the lookout for his work with his son, Jordon Waters, creating a new work about fathers and sons based on the story of Daedalus and Icarus. *Wing It* will be coming out in late 2025.

Plan now to be a part of this special presentation at worship and Adult Forum, Sunday, January 14!

Pastor Caitlin

Welcoming the New Year . . . and Visitors, Lots of Visitors



We're welcoming more than the new year. Visitors continue to find their way to worship with Augustana by happenstance and the Holy Spirit working in and through our congregation's invitation to all. We're

welcoming visitors in the pews and in line with the pastors. Visitors return most often when welcomed by way of individual greetings and by way of a worship service that includes them in the good news of Jesus.

We celebrate open communion during worship which means that anyone of any age may receive bread and wine or grape juice. Behind the scenes, this means a host of volunteers who greet, usher, prepare communion, and distribute it during worship. I invite you to volunteer in these vital positions. Grace abounds, and, as with any ministry, presence is the main thing (not perfection). You might be reassured by the weekly surprises in the communion line. Our humanity is part of the charm and the mystery of God showing up no matter how we show up. Take a turn in communion preparation and distribution or as a worship greeter or usher.

Members and visitors alike remark on the welcome they feel because of the invitation and experience of Holy Communion. Jesus' real presence in the sacrament of bread and wine is moved from hands to hands. Indeed, we are instruments of God's grace much like the plate or the chalice that holds the bread and wine—imperfect and needed.

The power of the Holy Spirit makes us new each week as we receive Holy Communion and as we welcome new people and grow as a congregation. Thank you for all that you do as recipients and messengers of God's grace. Happy New Year!

Peace, **Pastor Caitlin**



Volunteering makes it easier to get to know people.

To learn more or to give volunteering a try as a worship greeter, usher, communion preparation or assistant, call or email **Julie MacDougall**, Volunteer Coordinator, (303-388-4678 or macdougall@augustanadenver.org) OR **Pastor Caitlin** (trussell@augustanadenver.org).

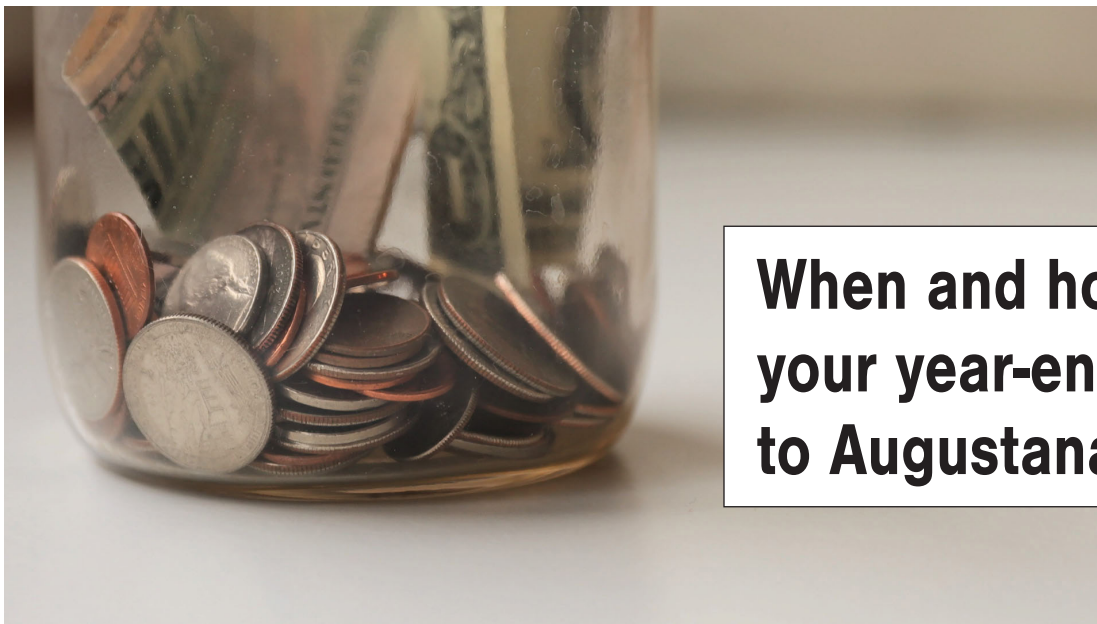
Welcome Connection

Welcome Connection Challenge!

Some folks resolve to join a gym, others resolve to look for a church. We have a lot of visitors on Christmas Eve who will return in the new year. Whether they are visitors or members, we challenge you to learn two new names every Sunday in January! Get used to the phrase, "**Tell me your name again.**" ❖❖ Of course, all of this isn't necessary if we all have a name tag!!

Scan here to order an Augustana name tag.





When and how to get your year-end gift to Augustana

In order to deduct your charitable contributions for 2023, gifts given by check or cash must be postmarked by US Mail or be included in the offering before Saturday, December 30. For electronic givers, be sure to initiate your gift on or before Tuesday, December 26 so that it is posted by your credit card issuer or bank electronic funds department before year end. Only gifts deposited by December 29 (the church is not open on December 30 and banks are not open on December 31, so no deposits will be made on those days) will appear on your 2023 giving statement. Your support of Augustana's mission and ministry is greatly appreciated.

Questions about your 2023 giving may be directed to **Bill Crossen**, Finance Administrator (303-388-4678 ext. 103 or crossen@augustanadenver.org).

Consider electronic giving!

The end of one year is an excellent time to plan for the year that is about to begin. How you make your offerings to the church is a good example of where this kind of planning can make a difference.

At Augustana, we offer two avenues for giving: electronic and through envelopes. While envelope giving is the tradition, it is becoming the more

expensive and less reliable option. Postage rates are going up again in 2024 and, unfortunately, the mail service is becoming increasingly unreliable. In addition, many of our members mail in their envelope offerings and, while we are happy to receive them, the incidence of mail theft is rapidly rising. Accordingly, you may wish to consider electronic giving.

When you do this using your checking account as the payment mechanism, the cost is about the same as envelope giving and it eliminates the need (and the expense) to write checks. About 1/3 of our members use electronic giving. It is an efficient, reliable and very secure way to make certain that your gifts to the church are regularly received and deployed quickly to support the ministries we enjoy.

If you have any questions about this or want assistance to set it up, contact **Bill Crossen**, Finance Administrator (crossen@augustanadenver.org).



In November, your offerings supported Thanksgiving Eve Community Worship, Andy's "Can Any Bozo Play a Hymn?" Adult Forum class, and CAN Ministry's "Stock the Shelves" project.



Financial Statement through November

	November 2023		November 2022	2023 Year-to-Date Period		YTD 2022
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual
Revenue	\$122,878	\$140,870	\$123,961	\$1,058,699	\$1,091,201	\$1,114,024
Expenditures	121,291	105,520	125,576	1,154,012	1,145,324	1,092,668
Net Income (loss)	\$1,587	\$35,350	\$97,724	\$(95,313)	\$(54,123)	\$21,356

- For the month of November 2023, offering income was significantly lower than budgeted due to reversal of a timing difference that arose in October. Expenses were higher than budget due to a \$15k expenditure to restore depleted glycol levels in the HVAC system.
- For the year-to-date period, offering income exceeds budget by \$5,000. Special gifts (amounts left to the church in honor of or in memory of other) are lower than budgeted by (\$37,000). Expenses are higher than budgeted because property costs exceed budget by (\$59,000). A significant favorable variance due to open positions during the early part of the year is no longer sufficient to offset the variance in property expense.

Thrivent gives money to Augustana

At the November 4, meeting of Augustana Thrivent Financial members, the following disbursements were approved from the Thrivent Choice Dollars designated for Augustana Lutheran Church:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> \$1,000 for Shanna VanderWel's request to assist the people going to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> summer 2024. \$600 for a Sunday lunch, date to be determined. \$60 for CAN ministry's request for a heater for the outside food pantry. \$300 for Welcome Committee's request for interior sanctuary light timer. Up to \$2,975 for Welcome Committee's request for exterior | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> lighting for the west side cross and two signs (Alameda and Fairfax). \$1,000 for Adult Forum and Worship January 14, 2024, for Harry Waters, Jr. honoraria and travel expenses to teach and preach. \$168 to clean folding chairs in classroom 1. \$264 to clean Anna | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Paulson Room stacking chairs. \$720 to clean Anna Paulson room upholstered chairs. <p>Total disbursements: \$7,087.</p> |
|--|--|---|--|

Congregation President

Reflecting on the Past and Embracing the Future

Congregational Meeting



Sunday, January 21, 11:45 a.m., Sanctuary

- Adopt a 2024 budget
- Elect Congregation Council, Nominating Committee, and Synod Assembly members
- Vote on changes to Augustana's constitution
- Hear updates on the Habitat for Humanity Augustana Homes project

As we welcome the new year with joy and anticipation, January becomes a pivotal month for us at Augustana—a time for both reflection on our past and excitement for what lies ahead. We want to share some important updates and invite you to actively participate in shaping the future of our faith community.

Congregational Meeting

Mark your calendars for our annual congregational meeting on Sunday, January 21, following 10:30 a.m. worship. Your presence is vital, and we have much to cover with significant discussions and decisions. The meeting will include updates on our ongoing transition, progress on the Habitat project, the election of new members to the Congregation Council, Nominating Committee, and Synod Assembly, as well as a review and vote on the 2024 budget.

Transition update

We are looking forward to the next steps with hope, gratitude, and confidence in the new season that awaits Augustana. The Transition Team, led by Pastor Dominic and Jordan Ourada, is drafting their report, and it should be finished in early January, and then we can hand off the next phase to the Call Committee. That process could take some time as they diligently work on the Ministry Site Profile that will explain our congregation's demographics and many other pieces of important information that a prospective pastor would want to know in their decision.

A legacy of giving

Our community's momentum and commitment to so many varied ministries are a good reason for our optimism for the future. Whether longstanding or recently initiated, these ministries thrive because of the dedication of our members. Some contribute time, some donate money, and others generously give both. Your involvement and support create a vibrant church. We are making a difference.

Reflecting on the past, we acknowledge the immense support we've received over the years. Generations of members have blessed us with their contributions, sustaining Augustana through various challenges. As we continue to grow, we invite you to consider including Augustana in your will, ensuring that our legacy of service endures for generations.

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, let's move forward together with enthusiasm, unity, and a shared commitment to making 2024 the best year yet in the story of Augustana.

Wishing you all a blessed and joyful New Year!

Lisa Boe-Sims

Congregation President 2023



Study and Fellowship

Lunch & Learn: Augustana's Budget

Sunday, January 14, noon–1 p.m.,
Anna Paulson Room

Michael Gentes, Treasurer, and **Pastor Caitlin**, will lead a conversation about Augustana's 2024 Budget in preparation for the following Sunday's Congregational Meeting. **Bill Crossen**, Finance Administrator, will also attend as a resource. Pick up a Sunday lunch and bring it to the Anna Paulson Room along with your curiosity and questions.

Adult Forum: Learn and Connect with Other People

Sundays, 9:15 a.m., Anna Paulson Room

- **January 7:** Please plan to attend Cross-Generational Epiphany Activity in the Fellowship Hall led by **Elizabeth and Paul Frank**.
- **January 14: Professor Harry Waters Jr.** will lead a discussion about Rev. Dr. King's speeches and sermons and what they teach us.
- **January 21: "Why Camp?" Dave and Nellie Jarvis** will lead a conversation about the wonders of Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp. Augustana has a long history of mutual ministry with Rainbow Trail, and many pastors speak about their experience there as a key building block in their faith and vocation. Everyone is welcome to come and learn about what they do.
- **January 28: Operation Pantry** in Fellowship Hall. All ages and all hands are welcome to repackage rice and beans for Metro Caring's grocery clients.

Breadbreakers

Food, Fun, and Fellowship

Have you been looking for a fun way to get to know other Augustana members and friends? Breadbreakers is kicking off another session soon, and you're invited to participate. Groups of eight Augustana members and friends gather for a potluck meal at one another's homes to share food, fun, and conversation. The groups will meet once per month, with each group determining its own schedule.

We had some hiccups getting things off the ground in the fall, so now that we have worked through those, we hope that it will go smoothly this time! Your patience and understanding are appreciated.

Sign up with Augustana's office (303-388-4678 or macdougall@augustanadenver.org) by Sunday, January 14.

Women, Wine and Word will meet Thursday, January 18, 7–8 p.m. in the Youth Room. **Peter Severson**, Director of Rocky Mountain Synod Colorado Advocacy, will be with us to discuss the new social message on Gun Related Violence and Trauma. Here is a link where you can learn about the draft message and download a copy: <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects>.

Additionally, we will be selecting our material for the remainder of spring 2024. Join Women, Wine, and Word on the third Thursday of each month January through April 2024.

For additional information or to be added to the email list, contact **Katy Lunsford** (katy.p.lunsford@gmail.com).

January Book Group features Denver author

Our January book selection is *Sabrina & Corina* by Denver author Kali Fajardo-Anstine. Fajardo-Anstine's magnetic story collection breathes life into her Latina characters of indigenous ancestry and the land they inhabit in the American West. Against the remarkable backdrop of Denver, Colorado—a place that is as fierce as it is exquisite—these women navigate the land the way they navigate their lives: with caution, grace, and quiet force.

In “Sugar Babies,” ancestry and heritage are hidden inside the earth but tend to rise during land disputes. In “Tomi,” a woman leaves prison and finds herself in a gentrified city that is a shadow of the one she remembers from her childhood. And in the title story, “Sabrina & Corina,” a Denver family falls into a cycle of violence against women, coming together only through ritual. *Sabrina & Corina* is a moving narrative of unrelenting feminine power and an exploration of the universal experiences of abandonment, heritage, and an eternal sense of home (Goodreads).

Join us Monday, January 15, at 1 p.m. in the Youth Room to discuss this book of short stories. For information, contact **Ellen Kastens** (303-475-7877 or ekkastens@gmail.com). All are welcome.



Children, Youth, Family

Youth Ski Trip: Sign up by January 2

All youth in grades 5–12 are invited to a ski trip, at Granby Mountain, February 23–25! Sign up by January 2 with your payment of \$50 (online or check), and let Shanna know you are going (shanna@augustanadenver.org). Cost will be \$100 which includes housing, food, tubing, and gas. (This will be subsidized by about \$100 per person with our fundraising money.) Tickets, lessons and rentals will vary based on a person's needs. If you are in need of a scholarship for any of the amount or to cover lift/rentals, just ask Shanna. You are also welcome to come along and hang out in the lodge and play games if you prefer not to ski.

Save the dates for Summer Church Day Camp

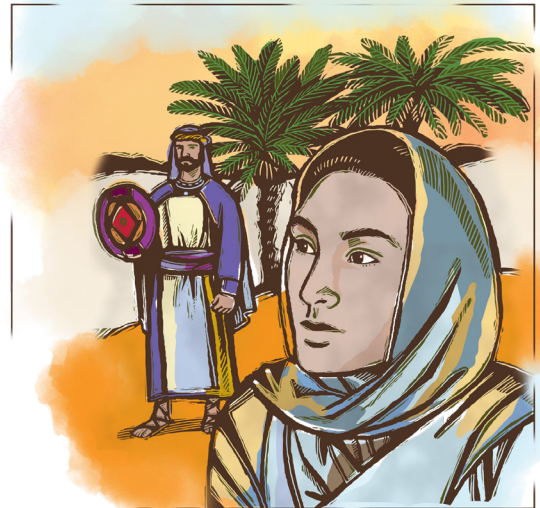
Along with counselors from Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp, Augustana will host Day Camp July 8–11. This camp is for kids entering Kindergarten through 5th grade as of fall 2024 and will run 9 a.m.–4 p.m. each day. Cost will be \$80 per camper with a \$160 family maximum cost. Total participants will be limited to 40.

Bible Quiz

In the book of Judges, the warrior Barak would go to battle only if a certain female leader went with him. Who was she?

- A. Rebekah
- B. Jael
- C. Michal
- D. Deborah

Answer: D (See Judges 4:1-10.)



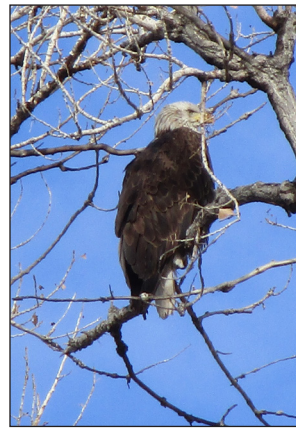
60+ Ministry



60+ Ministry invites you to join and add your voice to Coffee Talk: **“Examining Faith and Citizenship,”** a timely discussion to take us into the election season. Jointly led by **Karen Ullestad** and **Judy Peters**, Coffee Talk will meet on four consecutive Thursdays, January 11, 18, 25 and February 1, 10–11:30 a.m. in the Youth Room at Augustana. Hope to see you there!

60+ Hiking

The Eagles have landed!



This time each year, Barr Lake State Park becomes the winter breeding ground for migrating bald eagles. We are planning an easy hike at the park on Tuesday, January 23 (or the 30th if inclement weather). We will meet in Augustana’s south parking lot at

8:30 a.m. and leave by 9 a.m. for the park, which is located in Brighton. There is a nice visitor center, and the trail around the lake is broad, graveled and flat. The out-and-back distance from the visitor center to the viewing gazebo boardwalk is about 3 miles. Definitely bring some binoculars if you have them.

If you plan to attend, contact **Don Troike** (don.troike@gmail.com).



aloaserves.org

EncourAGING & Equipping
Congregations
for Older Adult Ministry

Health Ministry and 60+ Ministry

LIFE LONG LEARNING!

What a wonderful New Year's Resolution!

Learning EVERY DAY!

Educators talk about the need to be lifelong learners. This is true especially as we age, for new challenges continually emerge. For older adults, the learning curve goes up in unexpected ways and at inopportune times. Technology is rapidly changing as our world moves forward each day.

Does ALOA sound familiar? NO, not Aloha! ALOA is the acronym for **Adult Lutherans Organized for Action**. This resource for continuing education for older adults is recommended by our 60+ Ministry Team.

You are encouraged to explore this website. There are many options for continued learning such as Faith Stories and Webinar Resources. There are webinars on spirituality, grand parenting, aging resources, wellness topics, and many more. A wealth of learning opportunities!

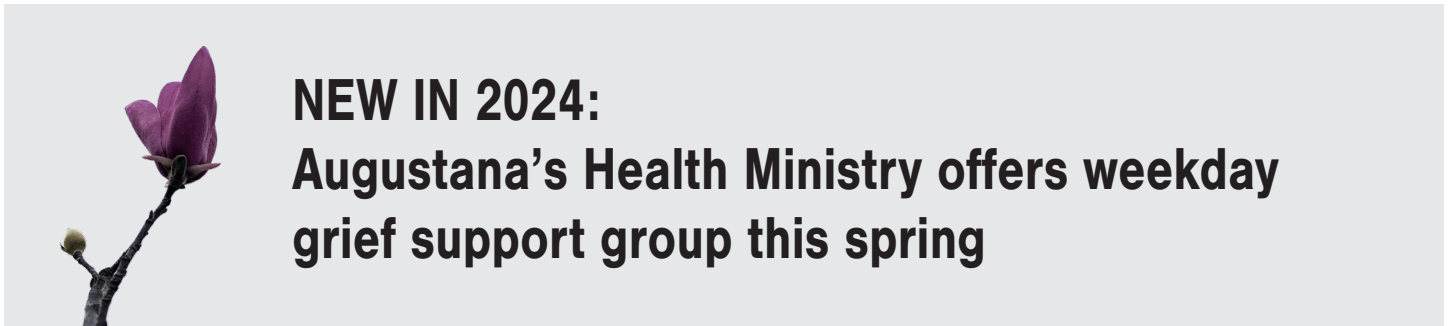
HAPPY NEW YEAR! Let us toast to a year full of learning and growing in our faith, kindness and knowledge.

CHEERS from your Faith Community Nurse, **Sue Ann** and your **60+ Older Adult Ministry Team: Judy Peters, Karen Lambert, Emmett Cruson, Jayme Howard, Don Troike, Barbara Chesebro, and Ellen Kastens!**

A toast to new growth and learning in the New Year 2024

A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves.

Quote by Frederick William Faber, a noted British theologian and hymn writer in the 1800s.



NEW IN 2024: Augustana's Health Ministry offers weekday grief support group this spring

"My experience in the group was like a large flower opening in the sun!"

"I learned a tremendous amount about the grieving and mourning process during our time together. What I learned has helped me through a difficult time of grieving."

—Augustana Grief Group Participants

Understanding Your Grief

Bereavement Support Group

- Midweek daytime grief group on Tuesdays!
- Ten Sessions starting Tuesday, February 13 (Just in time for a Lenten journey.)
- 10:30 a.m.–noon
- Facilitators: **Sue Ann Glusenkamp**, FCN, and **Pastor Ron Glusenkamp**
- Cost: 90 minutes each session and \$30 to cover cost of books
- Scholarships are available
- Registration required by Sunday, February 4
- Limited group size to first ten registrants
- Each participant will receive two books to guide the journey

To register, contact **Sue Ann** (glusenkamp@augustanadenver.org or 303-388-4678).

Registration forms are also available at Augustana's entrance tables.

Saying goodbye to a loved one is never easy. You are invited to join this group and learn ten essential touchstones for finding hope and healing your heart. We will use the curriculum written by Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt of the Center for Loss and Transition in Fort Collins (<https://www.centerforloss.com/>).

Comments from past participants:

"I would definitely encourage someone considering attending the grief support group to give it a try!"

"The ability to share my story with others in the group was very much a healing process for me. Further, the interaction with others and sharing their grief helped me to realize that we all have the same feelings and issues that only a group like this can help with."

"I was encouraged to talk and share on a weekly basis which gave me permission to keep bringing my feelings and emotions to the surface. This allowed me to honor whatever grief I was feeling at the time and to be open to a lot of different paths to mourning."

"Sharing my thoughts and feelings and listening to others sometimes gave me a new perspective on a variety of situations. I felt supported by the group and this experience has given me the courage to go forward and to trust that I am going to be okay."

"Grief can feel very lonely and it helped to be with others experiencing similar things."

"It was helpful to hear others expressing their grief and to know I was not alone."

Join Sue Ann and Pastor Ron on Tuesdays in the Anna Paulson Room. If you are in need of a Zoom connection with the group, that will also be available as required for any illness, exposure, or travel needs.

Please contact Faith Community Nurse Sue Ann with any questions or concerns (303-388-4678 ext. 106).

Compassion and Action with Our Neighbors (CAN) Ministry

CAN Ministry highlights from 2023 and hopes for 2024

The CAN Ministry Team thanks those who organized and generously supported our Ministry during 2023. Here are just a few examples of our activities:

Food

- Provided cash donations to “Buy the Farm” and Warren Village.
- Donated canned food for the Sanctuary Soup Shelf and George Washington High School Pantry.
- Repackaged 8,245 pounds of rice and beans for Metro Caring.

Community Service

- Volunteered 1,485 hours during Summer of Service.

Families

- Donated backpacks, school supplies, and undies to children.

Refugee Support

- Filled refugee apartment bins.
- Donated Refugee Personal Care Kits.

Human Dignity Delegates

- Served the underserved by supporting critical human rights legislation and writing letters to our legislative representatives.
- Partnered with Together Colorado, a faith-based action organization.
- Gained civil rights and human dignity knowledge by reading books, attending museum exhibits, and participating in the Montgomery trip.

Creation Care

- Implemented a composting program.



Looking ahead to 2024

Now that 2024 is (almost) here, it's time to think about strategies to continue the 2023 momentum.

To start the year, we will collect food for Metro Caring Fishes and Loaves and repackage rice and beans. January also marks Colorado's Legislative Kickoff activities and the MLK Parade. As in previous years during Lent we will be collecting funds for gift cards for Warren Village Easter Baskets.

This spring and summer, a large portion of our time will be spent supporting the Augustana Home build. As the structure takes form, the CAN Team

looks forward to exciting new challenges. Hope you will join us by volunteering.

Check out the ePistle, Tower, and Augustana bulletin announcements for detailed information regarding these activities and all CAN's initiatives.

If you are wondering how to get involved, attend one of our meetings or contact **Laura Libby** (laura.a.libby@gmail.com) or **Annie Nessa** (amnessa@comcast.net).

Our next meeting is scheduled for January 7, noon–1:30 p.m. in the Anna Paulson Room. Everyone is welcome.

Get in on Operation Pantry 2024!

**Sunday, January 28, 9:15–10:15 a.m.,
Fellowship Hall**

Put on the gloves and get ready to scoop some rice and beans! Our always popular intergenerational activity, repackaging rice and beans for Metro Caring, returns on Sunday, January 28. If you are between 5 and 99, join us in Fellowship Hall, 9–10:15 a.m. to help portion about 4,000 pounds of dried rice and beans into 2-pound packages. This extension of our “God’s work. Our hands.” fall project provides healthy food to alleviate local hunger during the winter months.

You are also invited to participate by way of donating rice, beans, or money to add to available funding to cover additional costs related to zip-bags, gloves, and other supplies for the project. Make checks payable to Augustana and indicate “Operation Food Pantry” in the memo, or [donate online through Augustana’s giving page](#).

If you would like to help with the set up on January 27, contact **Don Troike** (don.troike@gmail.com).



Human Dignity Delegates (HDD) invite you to try a thing or two!

- Be a part of Augustana’s group at the Annual Parade at City Park on January 15, in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Day. Exact times and meeting locations will be in upcoming ePistles.
- Together Colorado will be hosting a Legislative Kick-off virtual statewide meeting Tuesday, January 23 at 6 p.m. Further details will be coming. The Colorado Legislative season begins in January.
- Sign up for action alerts from Together Colorado link (<https://www.togethercolorado.org/legislation/>). Action alerts provide an opportunity to submit feedback to our elected state leaders on bills that affect human dignity coming before the legislature.
- If you need additional information or would like to be added to the email list for HDDs, contact **Katy Lunsford** (katy.p.lunsford@gmail.com) or **Beth Black** (comosh@aol.com).

Augustana’s Human Dignity Delegates are a workgroup who focus on advocacy and antiracism as part of our Compassion and Action with our Neighbors (CAN) Ministry.

Thanks for Warren Village Thanksgiving Donations!

Thank you to all Augustana members and friends who donated so generously to the Warren Village and First Step Thanksgiving “baskets.” Through your kind giving, \$4,040 in \$40 King Soopers gift cards were given to the 101 single-parent families in Warren Village and First Step. In addition, Don Troike and Katherine Cruson each applied for \$250 Thrivent Action Team grants which were used to purchase cans of corn, green beans, mandarin oranges, and boxes of au gratin potatoes and turkey dressing. Thank you for helping make Thanksgiving special for these families.



Farm Report 2023

Augustana members and friends, you demonstrate once again that you take to heart the command to love our neighbors. As of the end of November, you contributed enough funds to buy six farms through the ELCA Good Gifts program. In addition, we were able to participate in a matching funds program that purchased an additional six farms!

Over the ten years we have been buying farms for the ELCA's World Hunger program, we have raised over \$99,000 and provided 172 farms! On behalf of families around the world, who are helped to produce food for themselves and to sell at market, thank you!



Hundreds of cans contributed for “Stock the Shelves”

The response to our CAN Ministry's “Stock the Shelves Thanksgiving Eve” canned food drive was incredible! 750 cans were donated! Thank you, Augustana members and friends, our High School Breakfast Club and Confirmation students, Early Learning Center students and parents, Thrivent, and Hamilton Middle School students, whose fall food drive donations were brought to Augustana by Nancy Nyhus. Because of your generosity, about 200 canned foods and other food donations were given to the George Washington High School food pantry, 500 canned foods filled our Sanctuary Soup Shelf storage to overflowing, and 50 cans went to Metro Caring! Many of our neighbors in need will not go to bed hungry through the holidays because of your generosity!



Are you sure that can be composted??

Anything organic can be composted, and that includes paper. So long as the paper isn't glossy or colored, it can be a great addition to your compost pile. Glossy and colored paper have the potential to contain heavy metals, making them bad candidates for composting.

Composting is a way to recycle organic material and turn it into fertilizer. Composting works by creating an environment that allows bacteria, fungi, and organisms like worms and nematodes to break down organic matter. Once this matter has decomposed, it contains nutrients that help plants grow.

Composting also conserves water, cuts methane emissions, improves soil health, reduces erosion by helping soil retain water, and reduces waste in landfills.

Want to know more? Visit <https://www.webmd.com/balance/what-to-know-about-composting-paper>.

At Augustana, we are composting a LOT of paper. All the paper towels in the restrooms are compostable, just to mention one item. And many colored napkins can be composted, but if you are not sure about paper's color or glossiness, "when in doubt, throw it out." Thank you for all your efforts at using the bins correctly: compost, recycle, landfill.

"So let us live as those who treasure God's costly generosity, by safeguarding God's earth, delighting in its people, and loving our Maker to whom be glory forever."

Quote from *Iona Abbey Worship Book*, Sunday morning communion service.

Resolve to go micro

Most New Year's resolutions are so major they seem made to be broken. Maybe that's why "micro-resolution" is the latest January buzzword. Setting smaller goals is more realistic and helps ensure follow-through, according to experts. People who try setting micro-resolutions say that approach is more positive and leads to longer-lasting change. For example, instead of attempting to lose 30 pounds this year, make a micro-resolution to walk 10 minutes twice per day and to snack on fresh fruit at least once a day.

Micro-resolutions can also be helpful in matters of faith. If aiming to read the entire Bible in one year feels overwhelming, take five minutes each morning and evening to read a brief devotional or pray. If joining your church's missions committee isn't possible, try to talk to one new person each week about your faith or church. May God bless you as you take small steps that add up to big impact this year!

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A decorative header for the January Birthdays section. It features the word "JANUARY" in a large, blue, serif font. Below it, the word "Birthdays" is written in a cursive, grey font. The text is surrounded by blue and white snowflake icons and decorative swirls.

JANUARY Birthdays

- 1** Hank Clambey
Anika Mortenson
Karin Sanderson
Ketcher White
- 3** Jim Gustad
- 4** George Cotton
Kim Esbenshade
Linda van Dyk
- 7** Sarah Nick
- 9** George Meister
- 10** Grace Blanchard
Bradley Boodt
Christopher Cochrane

- 12** Diane Pilloud
- 13** Phyllis Lerud
Robert Penn
- 14** Brian Cox
Marilyn Daves
Mats Engdahl
Fikir Yohannes
- 15** Maren Massie
Winston Nyquist
Calvin Stone
Brandon Stratton
- 16** Betty Nelson

- 18** William Reinert
Scott VanOrdstrand
- 20** Kelly McCartney
- 21** Katherin Howell
Melanie Vanderhoof
- 22** Venus Conklin
Arlo VanderWel
Maddie Lamphere
Ruth Peterson
Brynn Stadolnik
- 24** Shirley Barr
Amy Beswick
Katrina Crook
Jay Freed
Bethany Lutz
Noah McCartney
Pamela Ninke
- 25** Susan Talbot
Donna Vaughters
Eloise Wolfe
- 26** Jeff Towery

- 27** Abby Farrand
 - 28** Sonja Engebretson
Charles Esbenshade
Mary Richardson
 - 29** Tracy Lutz
 - 30** Sheryl Kamicar
Jordan Tribbett
 - 31** Matthew Miller
- If your name should
have been on this list
but wasn't, please call
Augustana's office
(303-388-4678).*