

Return Service Requested

SPOKANE VALLEY  
UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH  
115 NORTH RAYMOND RD  
SPOKANE VALLEY, WA  
99206

**Sunday 9am**  
**Traditional Service**  
**Sunday School & Nursery**

**Pastor**

Rev. Alissa Amestoy  
**Director of Music**  
Betsy Pletscher  
**Director of Hospitality**  
Margie Manfred  
**Technical Ministry**  
**Co-Coordinator**  
Lexi Shay & Logan Tiedt  
**Coordinator of**  
**Ministries with**  
**Young People**  
Jen Price

**Assoc. Coordinator of**  
**Youth Ministries**

Jacqueline Florian  
**Nursery Caregiver**  
Chris Nilles

**Church Secretary**  
Mackenzie Draper

**Lay Leader**  
Zack Reiber



Check out  
our website!



Scan our new QR  
code for easy  
online giving!

Church Office: 509-924-7262  
Office Hours:  
Mon-Thurs 8 am - 11:30 am  
Friday 8 am - 2 pm

Church website: [www.spokanevalleychurch.org](http://www.spokanevalleychurch.org)  
Church email: [secretary@spokanevalleychurch.org](mailto:secretary@spokanevalleychurch.org)

**OUR PURPOSE:**

*Spokane Valley United Methodist Church is here  
to invite people to: follow Jesus, love others, and  
transform the greater community through the  
grace of God.*

## connections

december 2025

### Advent at SVUMC by Pastor Alissa

Happy Advent! As we prepare for the birth of the Christ Child this year, we're going to be doing something a *little* different than the Advent series of the past – we're turning to pop culture! Many of my clergy colleagues have taken this route with sermon series based on beloved Disney movies, popular TV shows like Ted Lasso, and theologically heavy fictional books like "The Lord of the Rings" but this will be the first time that *your pastor* has embraced this lens through which to view our story with God! To guide us this season, we're turning to a book by author and pastor, Rev. Matt Rawle, who created the *Experiencing Christmas* series we did two years ago. He's kind of an expert, if you will, on integrating pop culture references with Christian theology – in fact, he has a whole "Pop in Culture" series of which our Advent one is a part!

Through this series Rawle seeks to help churches explore what role God plays in our culture both in our day-to-day lives and in the work of our hands that produces music and art, literature and plays, plus movies

and technology. Throughout history, people have debated and drawn a dividing line between the "sacred" (that which is explicitly religious in nature) and the "secular" (everything else). At first glance, the dividing line may seem obvious, but when we stop to examine what God has to say about this division, we might be surprised to find there's quite a bit of intersection!

Scripture says that *all* things were made through Christ (John 1:3), and through Christ *all* things were reconciled to God (Colossians 1:20). In other words, everything and everyone in our world contains a spark of the divine - everything is sacred, and whether or not we choose to live in that truth depends on our perspective. Through Jesus, God put on flesh and walked among us, in our world, in order to re-narrate what it means to be a

child of God. On Christmas God entered into human culture and transformed it. So now all is sacred, and we are invited to see and proclaim God's glory in everything. Rawle truly believes we are called not to reject the culture we live in, but to *re-narrate* its meaning - to tell God's story in the midst of it.

In *The Heart That Grew Three Sizes*, Rawle takes a look at Dr. Seuss's beloved children's story, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* in a new way - through the lens of faith. On the flip side, Rawle also uses this beloved Christmas classic to help us understand the redemption and salvation offered to us in Christ, and how the birth of God's Son brings peace, hope, love, and joy. Whether we identify with the Grinch, sympathize with him, or feel aversion to his character, we can learn from his journey as he comes to understand that Christmas is more than what he originally thought. Over the four weeks we will look at four themes based on his journey: "When Everything Is Wrong", "When Christmas Isn't Christmas", "When Light Shines", and "When Joy Is Our Song". Each Sunday we'll have several main scriptures to guide us – a "grinchy" one from the prophets and more encouraging ones from the Epistles and/or the Gospels. We will also have the opportunity to sing "Welcome Christmas" from the movie as we step over the threshold into the Advent journey each week and light the candles of peace, hope, love, and joy.

You've likely already heard that there is a devotional book written by Rev. Matt Rawle that accompanies this series. I invite each individual or family to pick up a copy at the Connect Desk for a (Cont. on pg. 2)



(Cont. from pg. 1) suggested donation of \$10.00 or purchase the Kindle version. Our Sunday School kids and youth will be using the series’ study materials suitable to their faith development level so there’s the opportunity for members of all ages to engage the lessons of “The Heart That Grew Three Sizes” this Advent season! Be sure to check out below and the next page for special events and information for how you can join in the various “Grinch-inspired” festivities this month and what we’ll be doing in worship each week!

**And, of course, please plan to join us on Christmas Eve on Wednesday, December 24 at 7:00pm for our family-friendly, traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service! Be sure to invite all your friends and family! Merry “Grinchmas!”**

Peace – Pastor Alissa

# Special Advent Events at SVUMC

Save the dates and plan to join us as we prepare to celebrate Christ’s birth!

## November 30

After worship: Special Music during Coffee Chat with Tom Pletscher on piano and Charge Conference  
Pick up “Advent at Home Creation Station” kits for families (New kit offered each Sunday in Advent)

## December 7

Youth Group Food Drive for Partners Food Bank begins!  
Bring canned food and non-perishables to worship through Dec. 28th.  
After worship: Youth Group Gift Wrapping Fundraiser in Room 115

## December 13

7:00pm Bella Cristo Concert open to the public

## December 14

After worship: Viewing of “The Grinch Who Stole Christmas” during Coffee Chat and Youth Group Gift Wrapping Fundraiser in Room 115  
2-4pm Carol Singing at 45degree Brewhouse (21+) led by Betsy Pletscher  
2-4:30pm Children, Youth, & Family “Grinchmas” Party in the Fellowship Center

## December 21

After Worship: Special Coffee Chat hosted by the Youth Group with Cookie Decorating  
2-4pm Youth Group Christmas Party

**The church office will be closed starting Dec. 25 & reopen Jan. 5!**

# DECEMBER

# ANNIVERSARIES

**12/2** Jim & Mary Picken  
**12/14** Taylor & Kyndal Gebhart  
**12/28** Wes & Ann Holmquist  
Jerry & Nancy Larson

# BIRTHDAYS

**12/1** Gary Anderson  
**12/5** Alan Lovchik  
Norm Cwiek  
**12/6** Anna Jenkins  
Nancy Larson  
**12/7** Jackie Florian  
**12/9** Linda Hansen  
**12/17** Ethel Richards  
**12/19** Madelyn Bafus  
**12/26** Mary Picken  
**12/27** Carol Hickman  
**12/28** Margie Collin  
Shirley Porter  
**12/29** Suzan Sloan

## Special Events:

**12/1** 11:00 am Quilters’ Group  
**12/2** 10:00 am SPR Meeting  
**12/6** 11:30 am UWF Christmas Gathering  
**12/14** 10:00 am “The Grinch” Screening, Fellowship Hall  
2:00 pm Holy Pub Singalong & Family Night  
**12/8** 10:00 am Prayer Shawl & Lap Blanket Ministry  
6:30 pm Trustees  
**12/9** 9:00 am Hospitality Huddle  
**12/13** 5:00 pm Bella Christo Concert  
**12/15** 11:00 am Quilter’s Group  
**12/16** 11:30 am Touched by Cancer  
**12/22** 10:00 am Prayer Shawl & Lap Blanket Ministry  
**12/24** 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

## Weekly Events:

**Saturdays:**  
10:00 am Choir Practice  
**Sundays:**  
10:30 am Adult Sunday School Advent book study  
**Mondays:**  
9:30 am Shirley’s Small Group Advent book study  
10:00 am Walkers  
**Tuesdays:**  
10:00 am Walkers  
**Wednesdays:**  
10:00 am Walkers  
11:15 am Marlene’s Small Group Advent book study  
**Thursdays:**  
10:00 am Thursday Crew  
1:00 pm, Lois’ Small Group Advent book study



# Holy Pub

## A Christmas Singalong!

\*This is a 21+ event.

Everyone in Whoville is invited to the fourth annual Holy Pub Event! Join us at 45 Degree Brewhouse to sing Christmas carols on Sunday, Dec. 14th from 2-4 pm. Your best Grinch attire is required!



# We're invited!

...to join our siblings in Christ at the Marshallese Church that meets in the Chapel on Sundays from 2-5 pm. They are preparing a special Christmas celebration service on 12/7 with traditional Marshallese songs!



# DECEMBER WORD SEARCH

Peppermint

Santa Claus

Advent

Gift

Merry Christmas

Gloves

Snow

Boots

Popcorn

St. Nicholas

Letter

Pastries

Milk

Gingerbread

Hot Cocoa

Chestnuts

Winter

Saturnalia

Yule

Eggnog

Kwanzaa

Candy Cane

Fruitcake

Family

S	A	L	O	H	C	I	N	T	S	K	W	A	N	Z	A	A
J	Y	W	K	O	Z	A	G	L	B	V	S	T	B	X	Y	P
C	H	E	S	T	N	U	T	S	C	Y	L	I	M	A	F	E
N	J	T	Q	C	Y	S	X	W	K	H	R	V	O	R	S	M
L	S	E	V	O	L	G	B	C	A	N	D	Y	C	A	N	E
A	W	Z	I	C	T	K	F	L	B	C	U	L	M	V	I	X
B	M	H	P	O	P	C	O	R	N	L	J	T	E	H	D	S
T	X	T	Y	A	G	F	S	B	E	Z	S	K	M	B	N	A
N	S	F	U	O	K	W	Q	F	S	I	L	G	A	O	Y	T
I	H	I	N	L	S	T	C	K	R	A	B	J	W	O	L	U
M	Z	G	B	I	N	Q	N	H	I	U	W	I	N	T	E	R
R	G	L	O	E	K	U	C	M	K	B	I	R	U	S	C	N
E	I	R	V	H	Q	Y	O	P	D	L	K	T	A	U	M	A
P	L	D	A	E	R	B	R	E	G	N	I	G	C	W	Y	L
P	A	S	T	R	I	E	S	Z	U	Q	S	M	P	A	B	I
E	W	J	E	H	N	R	E	T	T	E	L	X	J	M	K	A
P	L	M	O	D	S	U	A	L	C	A	T	N	A	S	I	E

# THE HEART

## THAT GREW THREE SIZES

### Worship Preview

#### November 30 – Advent 1 – When Everything Is Wrong

Threshold Moment (Romans 12:9-1) with Rev. Peter Imathiu as Liturgist  
The Price Family lighting the Candle of Peace (Isaiah 61:1-2, 67)  
Message on Amos 5:18-24 – “It’s The Most Wonderful Time of the Year?”  
Special Coffee Chat with Tom Pletscher followed by 2025 Charge Conference

#### December 7 – Advent 2 – When Christmas Isn’t Christmas

Threshold Moment (Zechariah 7:9-10) with Tracey Partridge as Liturgist  
Tracey & Nancy Olds lighting the Candle of Hope (Isaiah 60:3-6)  
Message on Matthew 3:7b-12 – “Looking the Part”  
Celebration of the Lord’s Table

#### December 14 – Advent 3 – When Light Shines

Threshold Moment (Matthew 2:11) with Ali Norris as Liturgist  
Amy Norton & Brian Hoyt lighting the Candle of Love (Luke 1:52-53)  
Message on Luke 1:26-38 – “When You’re Sure You’re Right”  
Special Kids Christmas Choir Singing

#### December 21 – Advent 4 – When Joy Is Our Song

Threshold Moment (Romans 12:17-21) with Susan Ingalls as Liturgist  
The Richmond Family lighting the Candle of Joy (Psalm 136:1-3)  
Message on Luke 2:8-10 – “The Heart That Grew Three Sizes”  
Ministry that Matters Moment: Family Promise

#### December 24 – Traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve

Threshold Moment (Isaiah 9:2-7) with Dr. Shawna Beese as Liturgist  
The Plowman & Nilles Families lighting the Christ Candle (Psalm 96)  
Message on Luke 2:1-20 – “What If Christmas, Perhaps, Means a Little Bit More”  
Singing “Silent Night” as we pass the Light of Christ

#### Dec. 28 – Singing Sunday Celebration Service Led By Our Choir

Threshold Moment (Isaiah 63:7-9)  
Lighting the Candles of Advent & the Christ Candle (Psalm 148)  
Lessons from Matthew 2:13-23 and Hebrews 2:10-18  
Singing our favorite carols of the Christmas season!

### Join us this Advent season as we grow our hearts THREE sizes!

6

3





*"Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can."*  
John Wesley



United  
Women  
in Faith


*United Women in Faith shall be a community of  
women whose purpose is to know God and to  
experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus  
Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship;  
and to expand concepts of mission through  
participation in the global ministries of the church.*

Thank  
you 

### Thanks for your support!

We raised \$700 at November's  
Cinnamon Roll Sale! All  
proceeds will go to Missionary  
Joy Prim who works with  
migrant workers in Hong Kong.

Thanks for  
the cookies!

Broadway Elementary's  
craft & cookie night  
wouldn't be  
the same  
without you! 



Join us in collecting \$10 gas  
cards for Family Promise  
of Spokane at the Connect  
Desk in December!



### Volunteers needed!

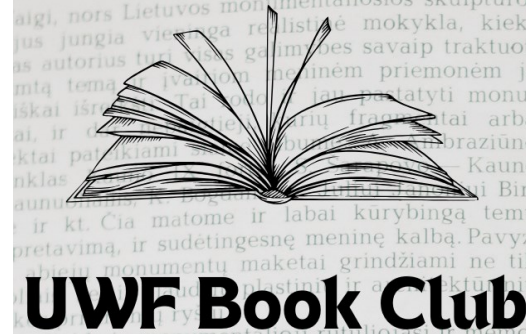
Eastern Washington Legislative Conference

31 January, 2026 | 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Sign up at the Connect Desk to set up tables  
and rooms, prepare food, greet attendees at the  
door, direct traffic in the parking lot, etc.

### MCOC Christmas Joy

Thank you for helping  
us collect brand-new  
children's clothes with  
MCOC in November!  
This annual event  
provides 1,000+ kids  
with their own  
sets of new  
clothes every  
year! 

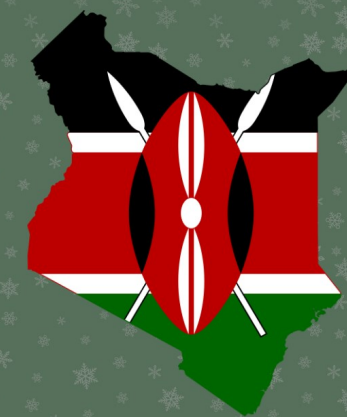


"The Girl  
With Seven  
Names" by  
Hyeonseo  
Cee

Beginning Feb. 22  
1:00 pm

Fireplace Room

Interested? Contact  
Robin Gregory  
(858-344-7462)  
or Madelyn Bafus  
(509-869-8213)



Speaker:  
Rev. Peter Imathiu  
RSVP today at  
the Connect Desk!

12.6.25

11:30am - 1:30pm

"Christmas Traditions in Kenya"  
All women of the church welcome!



No Circle groups in  
December! See you  
in January.