



The Shepherd's Voice

April 2020

Beloved of God,

The massive storm of the coronavirus has arisen. This storm is real. This storm needs to be taken seriously. *And* there is something even more real, even more important for us to remember. We are not alone in the storm. God is present with us in it. The power of God is at work.

The power of God brings peace amidst the storm. The power of God brings faith when we only know fear. The power of God brings hope out of despair, life out of death. This is what God does. Still we wonder, how is this power of God at work? We don't see Jesus simply stilling the storm with a simple word like he did once long ago. So how is the power of God at work in these days of global pandemic?

Ephesians reminds us, God's power is at work within us. God *"by the power at work within us* is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine." (Eph. 3:20). God's power is at work in this storm - within us each of us - to work faith, hope, courage, creativity and acts of love in this time.

God's power at work within us helps us to organize even when we can't meet in person to care for each other and the most vulnerable. I've seen this happen in Decorah this past week as the Decorah Area Faith Coalition and the newly formed Mutual Aid Network are working together to care for our community. I've seen this happen at Good Shepherd as Pr. Marion and the Social Justice Subcommittee work with me to organize our congregation into flocks with designated shepherds who will help to care for us all in this time. I've seen this happen as we've figured out how to livestream worship and how to use many online resources to stay connected.

God's power at work within us also helps us to be creative and resourceful in this time. This week I saw a plea from a doctor in New York, Dr. Cornelia Griggs, to please remain creative. She writes, "Please flatten the curve and stay at home, but please do not go into couch mode. Like everyone, I have moments where imagining the worst possible COVID-19 scenario steals my breath. But cowering in the dark places of our minds doesn't help. Rather than private panic, we need public-spirited action. Those of us walking into the rooms of COVID-19-positive patients every day need you and your minds, your networks, your creative solutions, and your voices to be fighting for us. We might be the exhausted masked face trying to resuscitate you when you show up on the doorstep of our hospital. And when you do, I promise not to panic. I'll use every ounce of my expertise to keep you alive. Please, do the same for us."

We can and we will remain hopeful, loving, creative and engaged because God's power is at work within us. God's power at work within us will create faith and hope and love for such a time as this.

Peace to you, Pastor Amy

WORSHIP IS RECORDED AND AVAILABLE TO VIEW AT YOUR COMMAND

Sunday Morning Worship and Holden Evening Prayer every Wednesday

The links to participate in all upcoming Wednesday evening and Sunday morning worship services will be posted on our YouTube Channel. Go to YouTube and search for Good Shepherd Decorah. Past service recordings are available to view any time at the GS website. The bulletins for worship are posted there as well. Services will be recorded and posted by 9:30am Sun and 7pm Wed and not livestreamed. Holden Services on Wednesday will continue as long as we aren't worshipping in person. Luther will not be able to broadcast our service on KWLC radio as the campus is closed. **Listen to or Read the Sermon:** The audio and text of the sermon continues to be posted on our website under the CONNECT tab and on our Facebook page.

Bible Study Via Zoom

Join Pr. Amy for Bible Study every Thursday at 10 am via Zoom. Even if you haven't participated in the past, you are most welcome to join this gathering when we are all in need of community and have more time at home! To join in, email Pr. Amy for the link by 9:30am on Thursday (amyzlarson@gmail.com).

Shepherds for our Flocks!

This support network will help us all stay connected in mutually supportive ways during this extraordinary time. We have grouped the congregation into 10 "Flocks." Each Flock has 14 or 15 individual and family group members and is cared for by "Shepherds." Think of these Shepherds as an expansion of the pastoral ministry of our congregation. All Shepherds have been in direct communication with their Flocks. They will maintain confidentiality, and share pastoral needs and concerns only with Pr. Amy and Pr. Marion. Thank you to our Shepherds! Please keep them in your prayers: Tom & Connie Buresh, Ed & Joyce Epperly, Reg & Jeri Laursen, Karen McLean, Kris & Dave Peterson, Norma & Harley Refsal, Jerry & Ruth Bruce, Dave & Gail Judisch, Marilyn Rue, Marty Steele & Bob Felde.

As the community-wide practice of physical distancing moves into the third week, many people are beginning to run out of essential items. At Good Shepherd, we are committed to caring for one another as we move through the COVID-19 crisis together. A list of volunteers willing to do curbside pick-up of groceries and medications and deliver them to folks who are requesting assistance is needed. ***If you feel comfortable providing that service, we'd love to hear from you!*** Curbside pick-up is currently being provided by Fareway, Oneota Co-op, Donlon's and Thrifty White. This service allows you to pick-up necessary provisions for yourself or others with minimal human contact, thus greatly reducing exposure to any potential spread of the corona virus.

To volunteer to help people by providing curbside pick-up of groceries or medications, please contact Jenny in the church office, (decorahgoodshepherd@gmail.com; 563-382-3963) or Pr. Marion (mpruitt.jefferson58@gmail.com; 563-379-6197) Thank you!

Caring for the Larger Decorah Community

The Pastors and Social Justice Subcommittee are working closely with the Decorah Area Faith Coalition to care for our community at this time. The Decorah Area Faith Coalition and Decorah Now have created the Decorah and Winneshiek County Mutual Aid Network. This is a place where you can volunteer to help others in the community or indicate you need assistance. Go to decorahnow.com/mutual-aid-network/ to sign up.

Caring for Good Shepherd Ministries

Your continued generosity toward our operating budget will be more important than ever during this time. That's especially true as we seek to take care of our amazing staff. If you're not using electronic giving via your bank or automatic withdrawal, you can still mail your offering to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 701 Iowa Avenue, Decorah, IA 52101. **We have now added a GIVE button to our website** through the tithe.ly program.

Thank you for your donations to the Mission Assistance Fund. That is now in good shape. Please continue to give to the general fund.

Information about changes and responses related to COVID19 can be found on our website, goodshepherddecorah.org under the NEWS tab on the COVID19 page. Information continues to change quickly so please, those who have email, check your email often! All emails are also posted on the website under the NEWS tab on the Blog page.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

2020 Holy Week Worship Schedule

As we gather for worship online during Holy Week,
you may want to light a candle to remind you of God's presence with you in your home.

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 9:30 a.m.

We will use the palms of our hands to welcome and anoint Jesus as we enter Holy Week. Families are encouraged to make palm branches by tracing hands, cutting them out, coloring them green and pasting them onto sticks. You may also want to display these palm branches in your windows. In preparing for worship, you are also encouraged to have hand lotion with you.

MAUNDY THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 5:30 p.m.

You are invited to share in online dinner worship at 5:30pm around your kitchen table. We will remember our Lord's last supper as we share in suppers at our home.

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 10, 7 p.m.

In preparation for Good Friday, gather the crosses in your home near you. We will receive the sign of the cross on our bodies as we move through worship.

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 9:30 a.m.

April Scriptures

Sunday, April 5 Sunday of the Passion		Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 Blessed in the one who comes in the name of the Lord.	Matthew 21: 1-11 Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem.	Matthew 26: 6-13 A woman anoints Jesus before his burial.
Sunday, April 12 Resurrection of Our Lord: Easter	Acts 10:34-43 God raised Jesus on the third day		Colossians 3:1-4 Raised with Christ to seek the higher things	Matthew 28:1-10 Proclaim the resurrection
Sunday, April 19 Second Sunday of Easter	Acts 2:14a, 22-32 Christ's resurrection: the fulfillment of God's promise to David	Psalm 16 In your presence there is fullness of joy.	1 Peter 1:3-9 New birth to a living hope through the resurrection	John 20:19-31 Beholding the wounds of the risen Christ
Sunday, April 26 Third Sunday of Easter	Acts 2:14a, 36-41 Receiving God's promise through baptism	Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 I will call on the name of the Lord.	1 Peter 1:17-23 Born anew through the living word of God	Luke 24:13-35 Eating with the risen Christ

Good Shepherd Announcements

The church building may be closed but this congregation is even more active than ever caring for each other, the Decorah community and God's world. The ministry we do together is powered by the time, talents and treasures of members.

We invite giving and generosity for 2 main reasons:

1) We know it is good for each of us. The practice of giving forms us into grateful and generous people. Jesus says where our treasure is; there our heart will be also. We shape our hearts and our lives by how we choose to use our money and our time. Giving also helps us to trust that God will provide and opens us to experience how God cares for us.

2) We know that we can do more together as we join in God's work of loving and healing the world. Our gifts help us to more fully open our hearts and our doors in love and service to all of God's world. Good Shepherd gives 26% of its annual budget to ministries and relief work in the larger world.

1. In this time when in-person worship is suspended, you can still give! Send your check or offering envelope through the mail as mail is retrieved each day at the church.
2. Give online through your own bank or continue your auto withdrawal through the church.
3. Give online at our website under the Giving tab or text to give through a new service we are offering called [tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly). We are just launching this service, watch for more coming soon!

Good Shepherd TEXT TO GIVE # 833-751-0260

We rejoice in WELCOME to these new members:

Liz & Ben Pfile, (Matilda & Willow)

Mike & Laurie Tallman

Jim & Laurie Biedermann

Janis & Darrell Blackmore

Contact information can be found in the online directory.

The **Decorah Community Food Pantry** remains open during this time of crisis with clients receiving pre-selected bags of food. All of the older volunteers have been replaced with younger ones and a temporary director has been hired. This adds to operational costs. The need to stay open is clear. Just during the week of March 16th the Pantry served 109 clients with 296 family members and 16 of these were new clients. The numbers are growing as more and more people are laid off. If you can help financially, please send a check to PO Box 26, Decorah or donate through

[decorahpantry.org](https://www.decorahpantry.org)

OFFICE HOURS CHANGE

The church office will now be open from **8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.** This is a permanent change going forward. For now, the office is open for phone and email contact.

There will be **NO ST GRUBBY'S DAY** planned for this spring.

MAY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

April 16

SAVE THE DATE:

GS VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL July 20-22

DIRECTORY UPDATES

Jutta Anderson added a cell phone number

Brooke Joyce has a new cell phone number

Wanda & Dale Rueber have new cell numbers

***If you are interested in doing a reading **for worship using Zoom or video** (as you saw last week) please email Pr. Amy.

Endowment Funds

Mission Endowment Fund Applications Due May 1st

The Good Shepherd Mission Endowment Fund is established:

- 1) to provide Mission Endowment Grants to members of the congregation for the development of current and future Church leaders in addition to the financial support provided by the congregation's operating budget;
- 2) to provide EPIC Scholarships to congregational members who are enrolled full-time at an ELCA college or university.

The committee is authorized to annually distribute up to 4 percent of the market value of the fund for these two programs.

The Good Shepherd Mission Endowment Committee is now accepting applications for Mission Endowment Grants from members of the congregation wishing to advance their Church related education and/or leadership skills. Examples of projects and ministries that may be funded include, but are not limited to, members attending seminaries or deacon/deaconess training programs.

The Good Shepherd Mission Endowment Fund is also accepting applications for EPIC (Educational Partners in Covenant) Scholarships to congregational members who are enrolled full-time at an ELCA college or university during the 2020-21 school year. These scholarships are available to new and continuing undergraduate students attending an ELCA affiliated college or university. The EPIC Scholarships are usually matched - fully or partially - by the participating ELCA college or university, depending on the policies of the institution.

Applications for EPIC Scholarships or Endowment Grants must be received at the church office on or before May 1, 2020. Application forms can be mailed or emailed to you by contacting the church office. **There are separate forms for the scholarships and the grants.** Drop off the completed application forms at the church or mail them to 701 Iowa Ave, Decorah, Iowa 52101. *As a reminder, continuing students must apply each year for either a scholarship or a grant.*

The Good Shepherd Mission Endowment Committee will review the applications and make the awards during the month of May. Because of the funds' 4 percent limit and the growing number of requests, it is possible that awards will vary from year to year.

Good Shepherd Kids

Hey Good Shepherd Kids!

I know the last couple of weeks have been a big change for you. All this time at home can be really fun, and it can be really hard too. We miss seeing you at church! What are some fun things that you've been doing with your time at home? I would love to hear about them! Have your parents send me an email or text with some updates.

Here is a list of 5 activities for you and your family to do while you're home. When you do each activity, make sure you read and talk about the Bible verse/story that goes with it.

Write a note, draw a picture, or build something. Have parents take a picture and send it in an email to a member of the GS congregation, especially those who might be home alone during this time.

Bible Verse: Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Take a walk and collect little pieces of nature you see on the way (leaves, small sticks, old walnut, etc.). Take home a small handful of nature and see if you can create a 3D picture or art project with it.

Bible Verse: Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made. So they are without excuse... (Romans 1:20)

On a rainy/snowy day, build a fort inside. Take your Bible in with you and read a favorite story. OR, on a nice day, head to the backyard and act out your favorite Bible story (think Noah's ark!).

Bible Verse: But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and all the domestic animals that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. (Genesis 8:1)

Video call another family from Good Shepherd and do FAITH 5 together.

Bible Verse: Peace be to the whole community, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 6:23)

Look through your recycling bin and see what you might be able to create by giving items a second life! [This website](#) has great ideas.

Bible Verse: As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease. (Genesis 8:22)

Submitted by Kathryn Thompson, Children Youth and Family Director



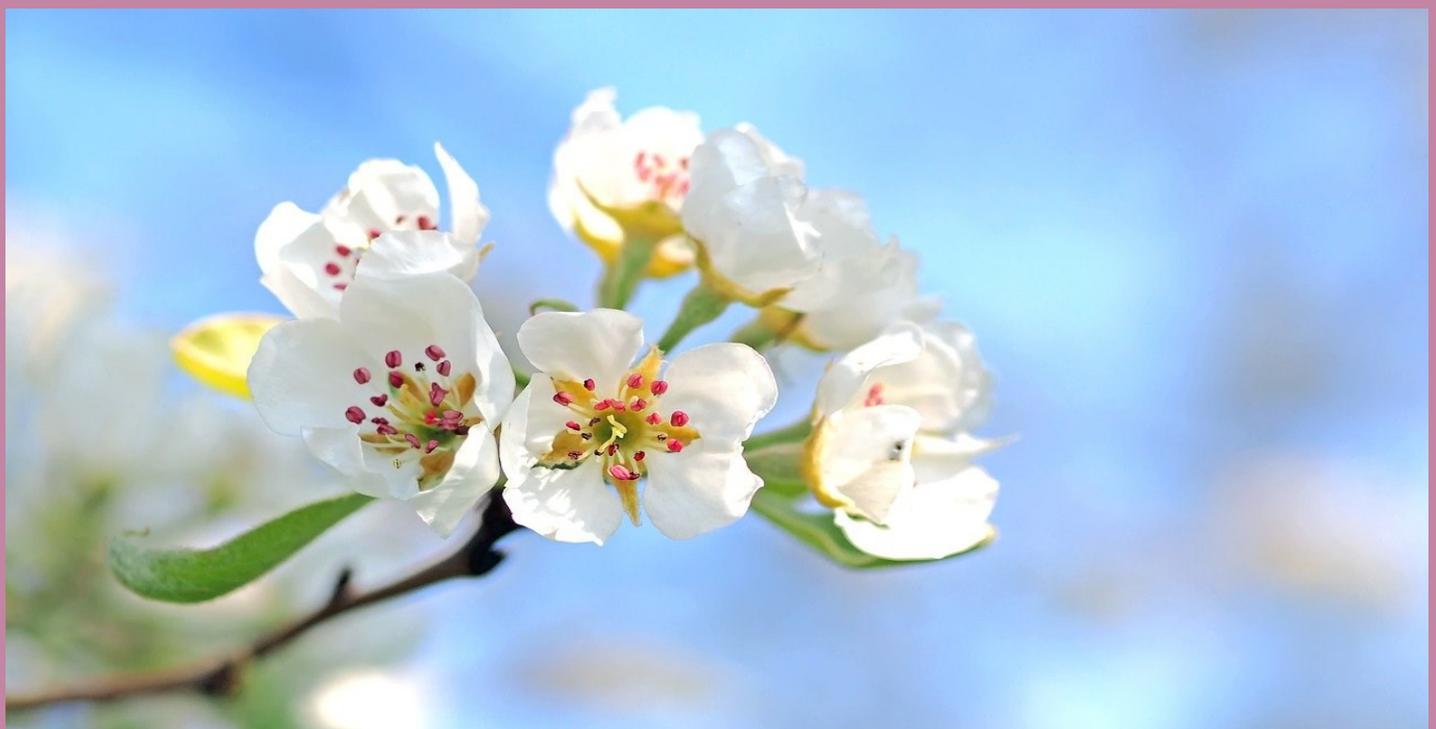
Greetings to all in these days of self-isolation. I hope that you are all finding ways to connect with others and share your faith and words of encouragement. I have been trying to talk to at least two people a day either by phone, email or across the street. This has helped me to not feel so isolated.

Our March and April Gather magazine articles have had some very timely messages. “We are called” has been the Bible study for the past four sessions. I would like to share a quote from this month Bible study from Kathryn Kleinhans “Sometimes God’s call is direct and easy to discern, but often it is others-our calling networks-who help us understand God’s call in and for our lives.” Thank you to “our calling networks” who have helped us to understand God’s call in this time of uncertainty. I would encourage you to attend Pastor Amy’s Thursday morning zoom Bible study as a way to stay connected.

Several WELCA events have been postponed at this time. The Spring Gathering at Immanuel in Cresco and our LWR kits pickup will be rescheduled. Please continue to collect items for our baby care kits, school kits and health kits when it is safe to go shopping again. You may also want to knit or crochet baby blankets or sweaters, or if you have flannel at home you can make baby diapers for our kits.

Stay healthy and I hope you get some projects done at home or read those books that you have collected.

Submitted by Bev Sheridan



GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, March 17, 2020 - 7:30 pm

Preparing Our Hearts and Minds to Serve

Present: Pr. Amy Zalk Larson, Jonathon Struve, Kerry Johnson, Linda Donoghue, Robert Fitton, Ann Naslund, Connie Buresh, John Moeller, and Hayley Jackson. Missing was Bob Larson.

Devotions and Initial Actions: Robert Fitton led devotions. Motion to approve the agenda seconded and passed.

Consent Agenda:

Items in the Consent Agenda are designed to be approved by consent of the council without discussion or formal vote. The chair asks for objections to the items in the consent agenda. If there are no objections, these agenda items are then considered passed by consent. The council may choose to move an item from the consent agenda to the discussion agenda if council members feel a discussion is warranted.

1. Approval of the February 2020 Congregational Council meeting minutes.

Change Lenten gift allocation from tree planting projects to Lutheran Disaster Response (COVID-19)

The Consent Agenda was approved by consent of the council. Item 2 was approved by email vote on March 23, 2020.

Discussion Agenda:

COVID-19 Strategy: Pr. Amy discussed Good Shepherd's decision to close the building to all but a few individuals. This was done to minimize community spread of the COVID-19 virus and model good physical distancing practices for the congregation. Zoom will be used for congregational meetings, as well as offered to AI Anon. Sunday morning services and Wednesday Holden Evening Prayer services will be livestreamed for the congregation. The individuals who will have access to the building will be staff, treasurer John Moeller, building manager Reg Laursen, and cantor Jonathon Struve. Pr. Amy was grateful for the work of the Pandemic Task Force, and will look to the Executive Committee to make further decisions relating to Good Shepherd and COVID-19. Additionally, Jenny Werner is creating an online giving site for congregational use. Council was supportive of these actions, but regretful of the necessary limitations on baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Council also commended Pr. Amy, Brooke Joyce, and Jonathon Struve for the first Sunday live-streamed service. Discussion included whether or not to lock the doors during the building closure, the need for signage to indicate closure and provide alternative contact methods, creating a dropbox to receive assistance requests, and having clear policy to reassure the congregation.

Part Time Custodian: Good Shepherd's current custodian Steve McCargar will be resigning effective 3/23. The need for a new custodian led to discussions between Pr. Amy and the Property and Management Committee about the potential of hiring a 20hr/week building manager to care for and maintain the building and property. Adding this position would provide continuity and save money, as well as take on some smaller tasks from Property and Management. While there is not funding in the budget for such a position this year, Reg Laursen had independently offered to serve in this capacity for free. After discussion, the Executive Committee approved of appointing Reg as a building manager. While we look into reallocating funds for a position for next year, this arrangement will provide a trial run of sorts and enable us to create a job description. Council was supportive of these actions.

Capital Projects Priorities: Robert Fitton shared a list of various capital projects for the Council to consider that the Property and Management Committee have heard discussed among the congregation. These include replacing the 30-year-old windows in the sanctuary and fellowship hall, upgrading the audio system, upgrading and expanding the kitchen, and installing exterior security cameras. The Council was favorable to Property and Management beginning research on these projects and particularly supportive of beginning discussions regarding replacing the windows. Discussion included the age and issues with the windows, whether or not Good Shepherd has a LOOP system (no), and current upgrades to the front sidewalk (these are scheduled for the summer).

(Continued on page 9)

Restructuring Financial Duties: Pr. Amy discussed with Council options for temporarily restructuring how money counting and bill-paying should be handled, given that the two members who usually assist with these tasks are being encouraged to stay home due to COVID-19. While best practice is to have two individuals involved in these processes, but in extenuating circumstances, adjustments have to be made. Pr. Amy expressed her hope that this will only last a couple of months and that we will do an audit afterwards.

Council was presented with two motions:

First, that Reg Laursen and Jenny Werner do counting together until the building reopens. Motion seconded by Robert, passed unanimously.

Second, that John Moeller step in to pay bills in addition to his treasury duties until the building reopens. Motion seconded by Jonathon, passed unanimously.

Recurring Work of the Body – Committee, Pastor, and Officer Reports

The Committee Reports were received and accepted as submitted.

Education Committee: Ann Naslund

GS youth met on Saturday, March 7th and made cookies and centerpieces for Fellowship the next day.

Adult Forum about Augusta Victoria Hospital was Sunday, March 8th and the youth coordinated, served and cleaned up after Fellowship.

6 youth in grades 3-6 are attending a retreat at Ewalu March 14-15.

Property and Management Committee: Robert Fitton

St. Grubby's Day, scheduled for May 3, 2020, has been canceled in light of the COVID-19 virus. Mowing crew and schedule have been finalized and will be published towards the end of March. Recent building updates include repairing a kitchen faucet and fixing security lights on the south-facing part of the sanctuary. Other repairs waiting for better weather include the Iowa Ave. bouvelard sidewalk and landscaping damaged from the geothermal installation. The Committee submitted two actionable items to the Council, which were the potential of hiring a building custodial manager and request that Council prioritize capital projects, including replacing sanctuary/fellowship hall windows, improving the sanctuary audio system, upgrade/expand the kitchen, and install security cameras.

Treasurer's Report: John Moeller

Monthly Income:	1/31/2020: \$20,310.47	2/29/2020: \$23,853.97
Monthly Expense:	1/31/2020: -\$20,916.45	2/29/2020: -\$31,835.63
Monthly Net:	1/31/2020: -\$605.98	2/29/2020: -\$7,981.66
Total income year to date:	1/31/2020: \$24,777.03	2/29/2020: \$45,956.02
Total expense year to date:	1/31/2020: -\$13,975.07	2/29/2020: -\$41,688.63
Net total year to date:	1/31/2020: \$10,801.96	2/29/2020: \$4,267.39

Announcements:

Newsletter Deadline: March 19, 2020

Next Council Meeting: The next meeting will be April 21, 2020, 7:30 PM via Zoom

Adjournment and Closing Prayer: The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM. Pr. Amy Larson led the council in the Lord's Prayer to close the meeting. ---Submitted by Hayley Jackson, Congregation Secretary

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
			8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 7pm - Evening Prayer	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 10am - Bible Study via 1:30pm - Property and	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Palm Sunday	Pr. Amy Day Off	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 7pm - Evening Prayer	Maundy Thursday Recycle	Good Friday	
9:30am - Worship @ GS	8:30am - Office Hours-	9am - Pastor's Office	7pm - Evening Prayer	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 5:30pm - Maundy	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 7pm - Good Friday	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Easter	Pr. Amy Day Off	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 4:45pm - Education	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 7pm - Evening Prayer	Newsletter Deadline	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 11am - Stewardship 2:45pm - Council	
9:30am - Worship @ GS	8:30am - Office Hours-	9am - Pastor's Office	7pm - Evening Prayer	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 10am - Bible Study via	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:30am - Worship @ GS	Pr. Amy Day Off	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 7:30pm - Congregation	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 7pm - Evening Prayer	Recycle	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office	
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
9:30am - Worship @ GS	Pr. Amy Day Off	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 7pm - Evening Prayer	8:30am - Office Hours- 9am - Pastor's Office 10am - Bible Study via		

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

701 Iowa Avenue

Decorah IA 52101

APRIL 2020

The Shepherd's Voice

Pastor Amy Larson

Visitation Pastor: Marian Pruitt-Jefferson

Music Director: Brooke Joyce

Children Youth and Family Director: Kathryn Thompson

Administrative Assistant: Jenny Werner

Email: decorahgoodshepherd@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.goodshepherddecorah.org>

Church Office: 563-382-3963

Office Hours: M-F; 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

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**GOOD SHEPHERD IS A RECONCILING
IN CHRIST CONGREGATION**

