



The Shepherd's Voice

June 2020

Good Shepherd Mission Statement:

We are a congregation empowered by the Good Shepherd to:

Nurture and support Christ's flock through Christ centered worship.

Welcome all, offering trust and respect while sharing God's unconditional love.

Reach out to the broader community through service and responsible stewardship of all God's creation.

Beloved of God,

In 2018 and 2019, we celebrated that Good Shepherd is a "Place to Connect" and that we are a congregation with "Open Hearts and Open Doors." We poured our hearts, hands and dollars into making the building even more inviting and functional. This was all so that we could live out our mission as a welcoming congregation serving the larger community.

All the community groups and all the guests in the building see the same words we see when we gather for worship: "There is a Place for You Here." When we gather, we are known and loved. We are assured that we have a place in the very heart of God. We sing together and pray together. Those same words, "there is a place for you here" are used to invite us to the communion table each week where we experience Christ's presence in a way we can taste and touch and take into our bodies.

All of this makes the closing of our building and the suspension of in-person worship so very painful.

How can we be a welcoming, worshipping, community-minded congregation when our building is closed and we aren't gathering in person? How can we live out our mission in this time? That is the question we need to focus on most right now.

Certainly, we do need to consider when and how we can reopen the building and resume in-person worship. Our COVID-19 Task Force, the Congregation Council and I are doing just that. See the most recent update [here](#). We are asking many important questions about safety, science and online options.

However, the central questions for us continue to be: **How can we live out our mission in this time?** That is the question we need to keep before us always. And, beloved, we **are** living out our mission in so many ways.

We are still worshipping together along with many others from around Decorah and throughout the country. So many people are reporting that they are fed and nourished by these offerings. The good news of Jesus is getting out beyond the church walls. Our shepherds, homebound ministry folks, Pr. Marion and I are offering welcome and care to many members. We are actively serving the community through the Decorah Area Faith Coalition, the Upper Iowa River Conference of the NE IA Synod of the ELCA, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, the Decorah Community Food Pantry, the Seamsters Union of Winneshiek County, and the Mutual Aid Network.

We are also serving the community by offering a witness of what the love of Jesus looks like. It looks like sacrificing in-person gatherings out of love for the neighbor. It looks like being intentional about not excluding those who are most vulnerable.

We will continue to be intentional about discerning together how we can be a welcoming, worshipping, community-minded congregation when our building is closed and worship remains online. We will continue to discern how God is calling us to live out our mission in this time.

Thank you, Good Shepherd, for all the ways you are showing that our congregation is essential to this world, that our congregation has and will remain open. Please pray for our Task Force, our Congregation Council, other leaders and me as we guide and lead in this time.

Peace to you, Pastor Amy

STAYING CONNECTED WHILE WE ARE APART

WORSHIP

- Go to [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search for Good Shepherd Decorah. If you subscribe to the channel it will be easier for you to see new content.
- We are now "premiering" the services **Sundays at 9:30am and Wednesdays at 7pm to help us worship together**. This means the link for the service is available earlier but is first able to view at the worship start time. The live chat is available before those start times and during that premiering time. Joining the live chat is a way to be in community as we worship together. You can also view services after the premiere times.
- Luther College KWLC will broadcast our Sunday service starting on May 31, Pentecost Sunday. Services will be broadcast at 9:30am throughout the summer.
- Listen to [Pr Amy's Sermon](#) online through the GS website or contact the church office if you would like a copy mailed to you.

STUDY & DEVOTIONALS

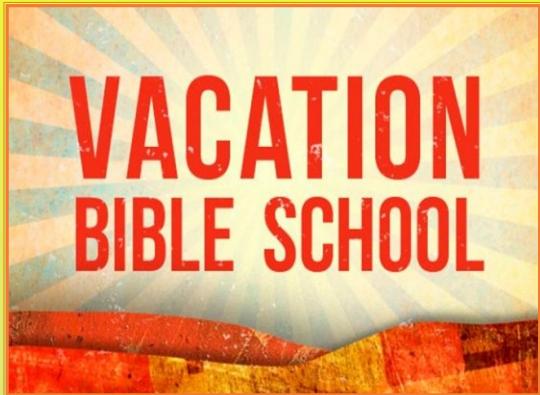
- Zoom Bible Study Thursdays 10 a.m. (Email Pastor to get the Zoom invite)
- Sign up for daily devotions that can be sent to your email. To sign up go to: d365.org or <https://go.augsburgfortress.org/christ-in-our-home-email-subscription>

GIVING

- Send your check or offering envelope through the mail - 701 Iowa Ave. Decorah IA 52101.
- Give online through your own bank or continue your auto withdrawal through the church.
- Give online at our website under the Giving tab through tithe.ly.
- Text to give: # 833-751-0260
- In addition to giving to the work of the congregation, please consider gifts to the local Mutual Aid Network fund to help those impacted financially in this time. You can give to Good Shepherd and designate for this fund.
- The ELCA has also started a COVID19 response fund. Your donation will provide funds to the ministries of the ELCA most in need and best positioned to help. This includes our congregations as well as local and churchwide ministries capable of reaching and assisting those in need. You can give to this fund through the GS website [GIVE](#) button or at ELCA.org



News for Good Shepherd Families, Youth, and Children



Good Shepherd Lutheran Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School will go on! It will take on a new look for the summer but we think it is vitally important to offer some type of VBS programming for our children and families this summer.

VBS this year will be provided in a virtual format. It will be sent out to families for each of the 5 Wednesdays in July. The video content will include bible readings, lessons and music. The emails will also include other content such as coloring pages and activities focused around the bible lesson that families can do at their leisure. Each week the videos and content will be posted at a specific time (TBD) but families can choose to watch them later or on a different day. We want the programming to be as accommodating as possible!

Children, Youth & Family Ministry

Sunday School curriculum and Children's Sermons will continue to be sent out through June 7th. Youth Forum Zoom meetings will continue through the summer but on a less frequent basis.

If your youth or children need any guidance or faith based activities during the summer, PLEASE reach out to Pr. Amy, Kathryn, your "Shepherds", or any of the Education Committee Members! We would love to assist you during this difficult time!

All of our children should now have access to a Spark Storybook Bible. If you do not, please contact the church office and let them know and we will arrange to get you one.



**Intergenerational Camping Event has been postponed.
New date TBD!**

Worship Notes

Starting on May 31, we are switching Behold I Make All Things New liturgy for worship, the liturgy composed by Benjamin Splichal Larson. Ben, a Luther College Alumnus, is the son of Pastors Judd and April Larson who are associate members of Good Shepherd. Jonathon Struve and Brooke Joyce will lead us in singing this liturgy together in our homes. Booklets with music for this liturgy can be picked up outside the west door of our building by the parking lot.

On Sunday, June 7, our worship will include a sermon offered by Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. The sermon will be included as part of our regular YouTube service. The service will premiere at 9:30am on June 7 at our YouTube channel. Pr. Amy, Brooke Joyce and Jonathon Struve will provide the leadership for the rest of the worship service.

Stewardship

School is out for summer and that means it's time for camp Ewalu! Just like everything else, the Corona Virus has affected the camp schedule. At this time camp is still on, but it has been delayed until June 28th for the start date, as of this writing. Good Shepherd has earmarked \$1,000 from our benevolence fund to contribute to camp Ewalu and also gives \$100 from the Education committee for each of our young members and friends of the congregation who attends camp. This year we have 7 youth interested in attending Ewalu, so that is \$700 in camperships. The education committee recently voted to still give that amount even though campers might change their minds or if camps are canceled.

Ewalu is committed to hiring and paying their summer staff and high schoolers on their leadership training staff. This also affects Good Shepherd as Nate Larson has been selected to be one of the Leadership Training Staff in the second half of the summer.

Going to camp is a life impacting experience. The hope is to experience faith forming and Christ-revealing moments. I can personally vouch for this with my own experience at Camp Ewalu and that was many years ago! I have many distinct and fond memories of going to camp that remain with me still.

Thank you, Good Shepherd for your support of this camping ministry with your continued giving even though we are not present together in our church building. Your on-line giving or checks sent to the church are making a difference in the lives of our youth as they are growing and maturing in their faith. May the camping season safely begin!

Connie Buresh
Stewardship Comm.

June Scriptures

Sunday, June 7 The Holy Trinity 1st Sunday after Pentecost	Genesis 1:1--2:4a The creation of the heavens and the earth	Psalm 8 How majestic is your name in all the earth!	2 Corinthians 13:11-13 Paul's farewell to the church at Corinth	Matthew 28:16-20 Living in the community of the Trinity
Sunday, June 14 2nd Sunday after Pentecost	Exodus 19:2-8a The covenant with Israel at Sinai	Psalm 100 We are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture.	Romans 5:1-8 While we were sinners, Christ died for us	Matthew 9:35--10:8 [9-23] The sending of the Twelve
Sunday, June 21 3rd Sunday after Pentecost	Jeremiah 20:7-13 The prophet must speak despite opposition	Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18 Answer me, O Lord, for your love is kind.	Romans 6:1b-11 Buried and raised with Christ by baptism	Matthew 10:24-39 The cost of discipleship
Sunday, June 28 4th Sunday after Pentecost	Jeremiah 28:5-9 The test of a true prophet	Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18 Your love, O Lord, forever will I sing.	Romans 6:12-23 No longer under law but under grace	Matthew 10:40-42 Welcome Christ in those he sends

YAGM Central Europe Country

Greetings Friends and Supporters in Iowa!

Every May 16th, we celebrate Roma Resistance Day. This celebration commemorates the uprising in the Roma section of a Nazi death camp 76 years ago. Beyond just remembering this brave and heroic event, the commemoration is meant to empower and encourage Roma communities and Roma allies nowadays to stand up against current social injustices encountered by the Roma community around the world.

Over the past few weeks, we have enjoyed *virtually* connecting with some of you with sermons and zoom calls. For those that are interested, please reach out to me and schedule a time to connect that makes sense for your community. [Here](#) is a link to the “video” copy of the newsletter, which has a short movie of Dorothy learning to walk on the final page. May God’s peaceful and encouraging presence be with us too, as we learn to walk together into the new realities of life that await us.

In Christ, Zach Courter - ELCA Missionary – YAGM Central Europe Country Coordinator

Note: the links are also found on the Good Shepherd website www.goodshepherddecorah.org

Good Shepherd Announcements

RADIO BROADCASTS RESUME: David Grouws has notified us that Luther College **KWLC** will be able to start broadcasting again. They will broadcast our Sunday service starting on May 31, Pentecost Sunday. Services will be broadcast at 9:30 am throughout the summer. They will pull the sound from the audio of our YouTube so a better signal and more reliable sound will be available.



Robert Fitton, director of projects and laboratories in biology at Luther College for more than 42 years, has announced his retirement effective May 29.

DIRECTORY UPDATES:

Robert & Karen Fitton - new email addresses
Darrell & Janis Blackmore - new address
John van der Linden - new address

THANK YOU TO ALL for the beautiful personal & local pictures used on our weekly YouTube slides for worship. These pictures have continually kept us connected while we are apart.

JULY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE JUNE 18



THANK YOU TO ERIK BERG FOR HIS MASTERY AT PRODUCING NEW OUTDOOR SIGNAGE FOR US!

IMMIGRATION WORKING GROUP AT NORTHEAST

IOWA PEACE AND JUSTICE CENTER

The Neighbors Helping Neighbors fund was established several years ago to assist immigrants and their families in rebuilding their lives, especially in emergency situations. Started through a community effort with Decorah UCC as its fiscal sponsor, the fund is sustained through donations from individuals, organizations, and congregations. Immigrants in this area are in many different situations as they seek asylum, work permits, and continued DACA protections. Currently, COVID-19 finds many immigrants needing layers of assistance. If you are able, please support our neighbors by donating. There are two ways to give: **Give online** by PayPay at <http://decorahucc.org/neighbors/> or **Mail a check** with "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" in the memo line to Decorah UCC, PO Box 470, Decorah.



DAR Youth Citizenship Medal Awarded to Brenna Parker



As I am writing this we are still adjusting to the new "normal". I hope that everyone is staying healthy and hope to see you in person sometime soon. Thank goodness we have You-tube church and Zoom meetings to look forward to. We will continue to have our monthly circle meeting via Zoom on June 23 at 7 pm using the June Gather Magazine Bible Study. Sharon Drew will lead the discussion. Call Bev Sheridan or Pastor Amy if you would like to attend the meeting and have not received the link.

Mike Knipp from LSI has invited anyone that would like to learn more about navigating change during COVID-19 to a webinar the first week of June. "For many, LSI is known for our Bremwood and Beloit residential treatment centers that serve youth. Did you know that LSI also has passionate and talented clinical professionals that provide behavioral and therapy services to families, too? To give you a sense of this important aspect of LSI's work, we invite you to attend a special event that we think you will really enjoy. This webinar – that you can enjoy from the comfort of your own home -- will feature one of LSI's wonderful Mental Health Therapists sharing her expertise on how you can "Navigate Change During Covid-19"! Looking forward to seeing you virtually!"

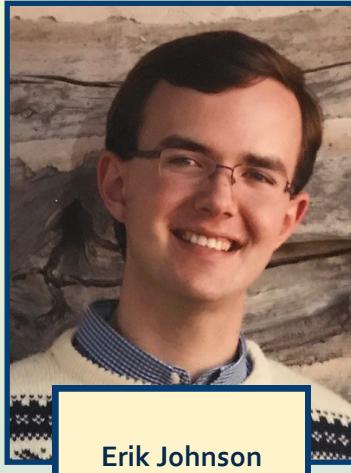
It will be presented three different times to fit your schedule. Wednesday, June 3 at 9 a.m., Thursday June 4 at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, June 6 at 9 a.m. Please [register](#) for the date and time that works best for you.

Contact Bev Sheridan if you need assistance registering for the webinar.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS AWARDED



Hallie Johnson



Erik Johnson



Ava Holland

The Good Shepherd Mission Endowment Committee is announcing the recipients of scholarships and grants for the 2020-2021 academic year. Good Shepherd members Erik Johnson, Hallie Johnson and Ava Holland have been awarded \$1000 EPIC (Educational Partners in Covenant) scholarships; all three will be attending Luther College. Erik is a senior majoring in Political Science (Erik participated in Luther's Virtual graduation but has one semester remaining) Hallie is a sophomore majoring in English and Nordic Studies, and Ava will be a freshman and intends to major in Global Health.

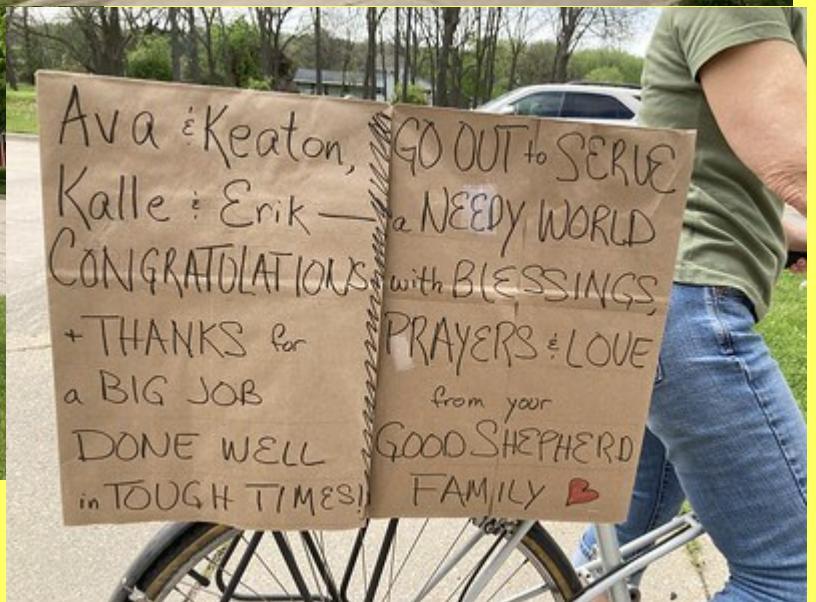


Angie Sadler

Angie Sadler is the recipient of a \$500 grant for her diaconal studies as a Phase II student at the Lutheran Diaconal Association. She anticipates completing her program in 2022.

The **Good Shepherd Mission Endowment Fund** was established in 1993 for the purpose of providing financial support for members of the congregation attending Lutheran institutions of higher learning. Awards from the fund are bestowed annually.

Graduate Celebration Drive-By



GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, May 19, 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, Bob Larson, and Hayley Jackson.

Devotions and Initial Actions: John Moeller 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. Approve April 2020 council minutes.

Property and Management Committee request that facilities manager Reg Laursen be made an ex-officio member of the P&M Committee.

The Consent Agenda was approved by consent of the council.

Discussion Agenda:

COVID-19 Response Updates: Pr. Amy shared her message to Good Shepherd's COVID-19 Task Force regarding the need to create a phased reopening plan to help guide our decision-making and answer questions from congregation members. She also shared some useful resources she has been consulting, including the ELCA's recently-published "Considerations for Returning to in-Person Worship" and a recent talk given by Dr. Michael Osterholm to ELCA bishops and pastors of the Minneapolis area synod. The Task Force has begun this work, but is proceeding with caution, especially since we have yet to see possible effects of Iowa's reopening. Council agreed that the Task Force should begin this work and that our plan should have clear benchmarks for each stage, as well as indicate whether our metrics come from the White House guidance or ELCA guidance. Council also agreed that a slower reopening was preferable to a faster one – the downside of reopening too quickly is "too great" to risk, especially given the risks that indoor church services pose. Pr. Amy is encouraging the Task Force to review possibilities for limited outdoor worship, which is viewed as less risky. However, Task Force does have concerns with outdoor worship, including traffic flow, and enforcing social distancing. They will look into the possibility, but June would be too soon for any implementation.

Al Anon Meeting Request: Al Anon, who has been meeting by Zoom, requested the opportunity to have an in-person gathering of fewer than 10 people in the Good Shepherd backyard. Under normal circumstances, they meet outside in the summer and the Good Shepherd grounds offer more privacy than a public park. Council was sympathetic, but decided that it was uncomfortable to allow an outside group gather on the property when we are not permitting our own groups to similarly gather. The following motion was made by Bob Fitton:

Motion: The building and grounds of Good Shepherd are closed to all groups, both public and members of the congregation, for the time being, and worship will continue to be held online through June. We will reevaluate again at the June meeting for July. Bob Larson and Connie Buresh both seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Kinderhaus Camp Request: Kinderhaus reached out about holding a summer camp in August, which they are currently planning. There are concerns over the variables and unknowns, and given that Luther has cancelled all summer camps, it seems unwise to move forward with planning an event knowing that we might not be able to promise that the building and grounds would be available. The following motion was made by Kerry Johnson and seconded by Ann Naslund:

Motion: Kinderhaus cannot use the grounds or the building of Good Shepherd for their camp currently scheduled for the beginning of August because of continued concerns and unknowns related to COVID-19. Motion passed unanimously.

School District/Church Classroom Space: Pr. Amy shared that at a recent meeting of the Decorah Faith Coalition, representatives of First Lutheran bought up the possibility of offering building space to be used as classroom space for the Decorah School district as a way to minimize the need to stagger classes and support the community. Representatives of other churches were supportive of the idea. Council asked if this request came from the superintendent or if First Lutheran was planning to offer it. Pr. Amy shared that this was not a request initiated by the superintendent. Council members expressed concerns about wear and tear on the building, the need for additional deep-cleaning that would be required, and if it was our place to reach out when the school district had not directly expressed interest. It was decided that Pr. Amy would maintain Good Shepherd's neutrality in further conversations with the Faith Coalition.

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

The Committee Reports were received and accepted as submitted.

Pastor's Report: Pr. Amy

In addition to her COVID-19 updates, Pr. Amy shared a statement from the Rostered Ministers of the Upper Iowa River Conference of the ELCA, which shares specific recommendations from the ELCA "Considerations for Returning to in-Person Worship" that seem particularly relevant for congregations as they begin to design re-opening plans, urging for prayerful and thoughtful consideration. She also shared her report from her time away:

Continuing Education: 3 weekdays for Festival of Homiletics- May 18, 20, 22 & 1 Sunday, May 24

(10 weekdays & 2 Sundays allowed in letter of call)

Vacation: 3 weekdays January 1-3

Upcoming Days Off: 1 weekday- May 21; 3 weekdays TBD- week of June 1-7 (Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Elizabeth Eaton is offering a sermon for all ELCA congregations for June 7)

(20 weekdays & 4 Sundays allowed in letter of call)

Education Committee: Ann Naslund

Spark is providing Sunday School curriculum through June 7th. Kathryn will continue to send it out to families.

Youth forum will continue to meet via Zoom through the summer although less frequently and will do some fun things like rock painting and bingo.

VBS will take on a virtual format for the 5 Wednesdays in July. Information will be sent out to families and the video(s) will be posted at 4:30 each week. Families can use them at that time or later as desired. We will incorporate a bible lesson and music. One option would be to use this curriculum - https://www.illustratedministry.com/vbs/?ck_subscriber_id=136899963

Property and Management Committee: Robert Fitton

Approved proposed Facilities Manager Duties.

Received a progress report from Reg that the heating system was repaired by LG technical support.

Received a verbal report of the grounds clean-up lead by Bob Naslund in early May.

Received a progress report from Reg that smoothing and seeding of areas damaged by construction was in progress.

Approved and fully supported a request by our neighbor to the west (Craig Spilde) to infringe on the lot line by approximately two feet to allow grading the property to a flat profile, smoothing and seeding to grass.

Scheduled a meeting with Lindsay Erdman, Reg and P&M representative to plan a repair/replacement of front sidewalk that currently has trip hazards.

Stewardship Committee: Connie Buresh

Committee members shared information learned from a podcast about charitable giving during a recession, which tend to follow a "burst, dip, surge, sustained" pattern. As a response, we need to focus on telling stories of generosity and impact, assure congregants that we are looking at work beyond survival, and thank our donors continually. The committee is currently contemplating the theme for this year's Stewardship drive, hoping to maintain the basic structure of previous years while making needed modifications to address the pandemic.

Treasurer's Report: John Moeller

Income: Total offering this year is currently \$88,113.68, which is lower than the anticipated \$25,000.00 each month predicted based on statements of intent.

Income versus Expense: YTD Income is currently \$94,841.46, YTD Expense is currently -\$95,296.34. Currently running a deficit of about \$400.00, but have a surplus of \$2,000 due to Youth Director salary coming from a different account. As monthly expenses vary and May expenses tend to be higher than April's, the surplus is not expected to remain.

SBA Loan: Loan was used to pay the April 30 salaries and utilities, so technically that amount adds to the April surplus. John recommend nothing be done with potentially freed funds until we are certain how much surplus we have and have a better sense of whether the loan will be forgiven. Overall John believes we are okay financially – not coasting, but not in dire straits.

Worship and Music: Committee has not met in April or May, but has decided that previous conversations will be put on hold, as putting together virtual online services consumes much of Pr. Amy and Brooke Joyce's time.

Announcements:

Newsletter Deadline: May 21, 2020

Next Council Meeting: The next meeting will be June 16, 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

WE CONTINUE TO WORSHIP IN PLACE



decorahgoodshepherd@gmail.com

Jun 2020 (Central Time - Chicago)

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

*A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
701 Iowa Avenue
Decorah IA 52101*

JUNE 2020

The Shepherd's Voice

Pastor Amy Larson

Visitation Pastor: Marion 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 am - 12:30 pm

GOOD SHEPHERD IS A RECONCILING IN CHRIST CONGREGATION



Words from Pastor Larson 1

Staying Connected 2

Education Update 3

Worship Notes 4

Stewardship 4

June Scriptures 5

YAGM Update 5

GS Announcements 6

WELCA News 7

Scholarship/Grant awards 8

GS Graduates 9

Council Minutes 10-11

Worship Where We Are 12

June Calendar 13