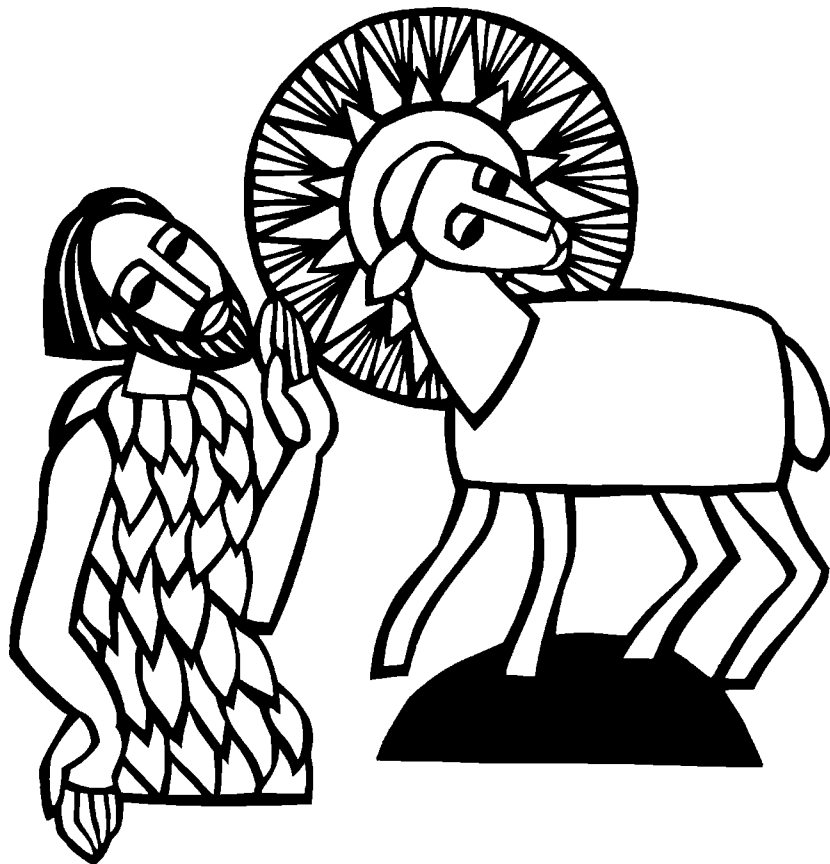


GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

... We Are God's People and the Sheep of God's Pasture ...

Psalms 100:3



December 17th – Third Sunday of Advent

ALL ARE WELCOME AT GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH.

God makes no exceptions. In the spirit of Jesus Christ, we offer trust and respect to all, including those who may experience alienation, distrust, or rejection.

We rely on the healing, unconditional love of God to shape our community in the name of the Good Shepherd.

In keeping with our welcome, Good Shepherd is a *Reconciling in Christ* partner congregation, affirming our welcome to persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions, and our commitment to anti-racism work so that all may participate fully in the life of our congregation. We are an AMMPARO *Welcoming Congregation* - Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities.

The Good Shepherd buildings are Carbon Neutral/Net Zero Energy use.

Welcome guests! There is more information for you on the back of the bulletin.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

From Evangelical Lutheran Worship- ELW (red book in pew)
and All Creation Sings – ACS (purple book in pew)

Page numbers (p.) in front of red book and hymn numbers (#) in back of books;
congregational responses are in bold; rise in body or spirit when indicated by *

GATHERING

PRAYER BELL

PRELUDE: “Gabriel's Message” – Basque carol, arr. Todd Marchand

WELCOME – ANNOUNCEMENTS

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.** God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Everlasting God,

you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all. **Amen.**

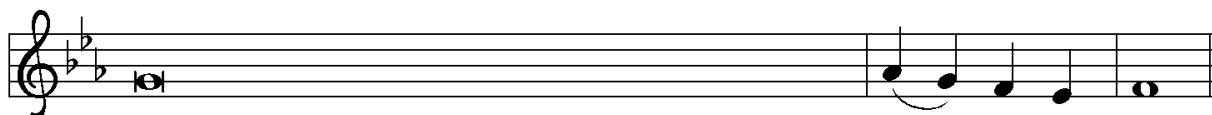
KYRIE:



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



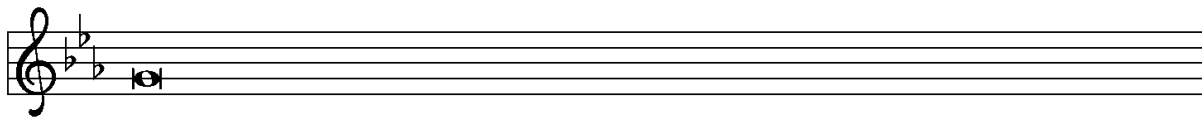
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



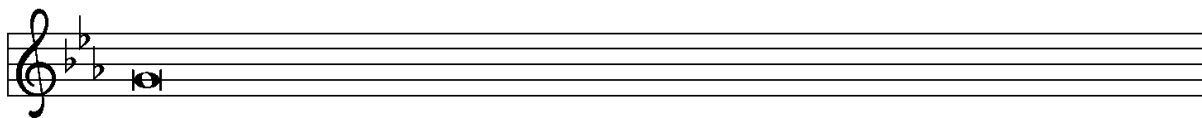
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

ADVENT WREATH LITANY

Praise to you, O God,

who holds our joy and sorrow.

You bring water to parched ground and life out of death.

Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away.

Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises.

Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand. Amen.

- Three Advent Candles are lit during the intro to the Gathering Song.

***GATHERING SONG:** ACS 901 Now the Heavens Start to Whisper



1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow - ing thin.
 2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to drift a - way.
 3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,



Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with - in:
 Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com - ing day.
 come to bless with fire and fra - grance hours of yearn - ing, hurt, and need.



seed of prom - ise, deep - ly plant - ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
 Christ, the morn - ing star of splen - dor, gleams with - in a world grown dim.
 In the lone - ly, in the strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view;



Like the soil be - neath the frost - line, hearts grow soft to wel - come him.
 Heav - en's em - ber fans to full - ness; hearts grow warm to wel - come him.
 Child who comes to grace the man - ger, teach our hearts to wel - come you.



***GREETING:** From the one who is, who was and who is to come, grace and peace be with you all. **And also with you.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:** Let us pray...**Amen.**

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; ²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. ⁸For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. ¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

- Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 126

¹When the LORD restored the for- | tunes of Zion,
then were we like | those who dream.

²**Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with | shouts of joy.**
Then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great | things for them."

³The LORD has done great | things for us,
and we are | glad indeed.

⁴**Restore our for- | tunes, O LORD,**
like the watercourses | of the Negeb.

⁵Those who | sowed with tears
will reap with | songs of joy.

⁶**Those who go out weeping, carry- | ing the seed,**
will come again with joy, shoulder- | ing their sheaves.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil. ²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

- Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*GOSPEL: John 1:6-8, 19-28

The Holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' " as the prophet Isaiah said. ²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW 241 Oh Lord, How Shall I Meet You**

1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel - come you a - right?
 2 I lay in fet - ters, groan - ing; you came to set me free.
 3 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me.
 4 Re - joice, then, you sad - heart - ed, who sit in deep - est gloom,

Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!
 I stood, my shame be - moan - ing; you came to hon - or me.
 Your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro - cured my lib - er - ty.
 who mourn your joys de - part - ed and trem - ble at your doom.

Oh, kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, your lamp with - in my breast
 A glo - rious crown you give me, a trea - sure safe on high
 Oh, love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace
 All hail the Lord's ap - pear - ing! O glo - rious Sun, now come,

to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.
 that will not fail or leave me as earth - ly rich - es fly.
 in love, all love ex - cel - ling, our lost and fall - en race.
 send forth your beams so cheer - ing and guide us safe - ly home.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:** *Each petition ends...* Stir up your power O God, **Stir up your power and come.**

***PEACE:** The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

We share peace by waving to those worshipping online or through the public access channel and then with those in the sanctuary. Bows, signs, fist bumps, handshakes, are all honored!

MEAL

OFFERING MUSIC: "Blest Mary Walks Amid the Thorn" – German carol, arr. Todd Marchand

Our Special Offering throughout Advent will be given to Lutheran Disaster Response Middle East Crisis. LDR is working with partners in the Middle East to get humanitarian supplies to people affected by the Israel-Hamas War. Checks can be written to Good Shepherd with "LDR" in the memo line.

***OFFERING SONG:** ACS 998 In Silence We Wait



***OFFERING PRAYER:** Let us pray...**Amen.**

***GREAT THANKSGIVING – HOLY:** p. 107-108, 110

***LORD'S PRAYER:** p. 112 – Our Father in heaven... (we'll use *this* version of the Lord's Prayer during Advent)

HOLY COMMUNION

*All are welcome at Christ's table. Ushers will direct you out of your pew, up the aisle near parking lot and to the altar rail where you can hold out your hands to receive gluten and dairy free bread. The plate of cups will then be offered for you to select wine or grape juice. If you prefer a blessing, indicate by placing your hands in front of your heart. If you need an individual, pre-packaged serving of bread and wine, please request that of your server. Place wine/juice cups in the basket by the altar as you return to your pew. **Sunday school students, teachers, and Fellowship servers please come to communion first.***

COMMUNION SONGS: Lamb of God p. 112-113; ELW 815 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light, ELW 253 He Came Down

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to
 2 I want to see . . . the bright-ness of God. I want to
 3 I'm look - ing for . . . the com - ing of Christ. I want to

fol - low Je - sus. God set the stars to give
 look at Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ - teous-ness,
 be with Je - sus. When we have run . . . with

light to the world. The star of my life is Je - sus.
 shine on my path, and show me the way to the Fa - ther.
 pa - tience the race, we shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain

In him there is no dark-ness at all. The night and the

day are both a - like. The Lamb is the light of the

cit - y of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

He Came Down

1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;

he came down that we may have love;
 he came down that we may have light; hal-le - lu - jah for-ev - er - more.
 he came down that we may have peace;
 he came down that we may have joy;

Text: Cameroon traditional
 Music: HE CAME DOWN, Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949
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TABLE BLESSING- PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING

SENDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIVING KIDNEY DONATION STORY

***BLESSING ... Amen.**

*SENDING SONG: ELW 248 People Look East

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new

of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming

trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
 that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
 bright as the sun and the moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
 with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look

east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

***PRAYER BELL**

***DISMISSAL:** Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE: “What is the Crying at Jordan?” – Irish tune, arr. Todd Marchand

The postlude sends us out for service in the world. Feel free to use this time in any way that helps to send you out!

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TODAY’S WORSHIP LEADERSHIP AND HOSPITALITY – USHERS & GREETERS: Dave Siefken, Matt, Sam, & Ellie Bills; READER: Megan Buckingham; CANTOR: Tom Buresh; ASSISTING MINISTER: Melissa Bills; ADVENT WREATH LIGHTERS: The Wicks Family; FELLOWSHIP: Lyle & Sue Luzum, Jan Siefken, James Barth, Laura Barlament, Kate Narveson, Diane Kruse; ORGANIST & PIANIST: Brooke Joyce; PREACHER & PRESIDER: Pr. Amy Zalk Larson

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM REHEARSALS: Youth and children have a **FINAL** rehearsal today in the sanctuary from **10:45-11:30 AM** for the Children’s Christmas Program.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM TONIGHT: The Program will be offered **TONIGHT, Dec. 17th at 5:00 pm.** Please join for a simple sandwich, chips, and homemade treats dinner following the program in the Fellowship Hall. A free-will donation at the dinner will support the ELCA Youth Gathering Trip.

SALE OF PALESTINIAN ARTISAN GIFTS TODAY: Before and after worship, Gathering Space - A wide selection of beautiful Palestinian handwork will again be available for sale before and after worship by Good Shepherd members Martha Monson Lowe and George Lowe. All proceeds go directly to the Palestinian artists. Payment can be made by cash or check.

FINAL WEDNESDAY ADVENT SERVICE: This Wednesday, the **20th 5:30-6 p.m.,** featuring reflections on the book *Dancing in the Darkness: Spiritual Lessons for Thriving in Turbulent Times* by Reverend Dr. Otis Moss III, and the singing of Negro Spirituals.

MISSION ASSISTANCE FUND NEED: Good Shepherd has a Mission Assistance Fund set up to help those needing emergency assistance. Funds are distributed at the discretion of the Pastor and 2 congregation members on the committee. Currently, this account is depleted and we need funds to help those who stop by needing emergency assistance. To designate funds to this account, give money at Fellowship Hour (basket at the front of the serving table) or denote “Mission Assistance Fund” on a check or envelope.

TRANSITION UPDATE:

- The Council is working to establish the Good Shepherd Church Call Committee. Members of Good Shepherd are invited to prayerfully consider the talents and gifts of fellow church members, and to participate in the process of the Council's discernment of members for nomination to the Call Committee. Our constitution states: C13.04. "When a vacancy occurs in a position for which this congregation calls a rostered minister, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council." **Please use the index cards provided in each pew, and also on the Gathering Space table.** On each card you choose, write the name(s) of the individuals you would raise for consideration. Please write the reason you would choose to nominate this person. You may nominate yourself. During the Offertory time, please walk your card to the front of the church and place it in the dry baptismal font as a visible sign of participation and presentation. You may also choose to place your card(s) in the offering plate, or email Erica or Tristan in the church office with your nomination(s). The nomination Sunday opportunities will be **December 17, 24, 31, and January 7**. The office may receive nominations **until January 9th, 2024**.
- **Pr. David Wrightsman** will begin as **our Intentional Interim Pastor** January 1st.

WINTER CLOTHES NO LONGER NEEDED: Dear members and friends of Good Shepherd, thank you so much for your contributions to the Postville clothing closet at the elementary school and public library. We have given away dozens of coats, snow pants, hats, and mittens, thanks in part to your generosity. We have many new families this year from Mexico and Central America, and we just added 3 new students this last week! I am so pleased that we can offer them warm clothes for their new winter reality. Thank you again for supporting the Postville community!

FAREWELL BRUNCH FOR PASTOR AMY: All are invited to join in a farewell gathering for Pastor Amy on Sunday, January 7th following worship in the Fellowship Hall. This will be a catered brunch in honor and celebration of her time at Good Shepherd.

GIFTS FOR PASTOR AMY: The Outreach & Hospitality Committee is collecting donations for some farewell gifts for Pr. Amy from the Good Shepherd Congregation. Donations can be given to the Church Office via mail, envelope, or in the offering plate. These gifts will be given to her during the farewell brunch.

GOOD SHEPHERD SERVING & PROVIDING FOOD FOR JANUARY DECORAH

COMMUNITY MEAL: A free Community Meal is held the first Thursday of each month in the Gathering Space of Decorah Lutheran Church. This meal serves 100-200 people from 5:00-6:15 p.m. The main course is provided by Sodexo of Luther College and different organizations provide volunteers, salads, and desserts. **Good Shepherd is scheduled to provide volunteers, salads, and desserts for the January Community Meal.** Sign-up in the Gathering Space, online, or contact the office.

CHRISTMAS AT GOOD SHEPHERD:

Christmas Eve: Dec. 24, 5pm Preaching, Carols, Holy Communion, Candle lighting

Second Sunday of Christmas: Dec. 31 - 9:30am, Service of Lessons and Carols, Holy Communion. All are invited to help take ornaments off the tree following worship.

STEPHANIE HOFF'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE: Our member Stephanie has Stage 5 chronic kidney disease, is now on dialysis, and is still hoping for a kidney transplant. Information about Stephanie and living kidney donation is available at **goodshepherddecorah.org/mystory**

OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK: Tristan: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM M-F. Erica: 10-5:00 PM M-Tue.

PRAYER LIST

Good Shepherd Family: Tim Lecander & June Melby, Bonnie Flora, LaVerne Ramsey, Ingrid Callaghan, Ginny Olson, the family of Glenn Nelson, Donna Bahr, Helen Hermeier, James Barth, Marion Hanson, Stephanie Hoff, Ed Hover, Harland Nelson, Janet Gall, Jutta Anderson, all residents and staff at Aase Haugen, Eastern Star, Wellington Place, Mosaic Homes, and Bartels Lutheran Retirement Community, and those preparing for public ministry: Kathryn Thompson and Kristin Kopperud-Stinn

Relatives and Friends: Sid Sampson (brother-in-law of Marty Steele), Miriam Plautz (aunt of Melanie Folkerts), Arlene Lecander (mother of Tim Lecander), Lily Laursen (granddaughter of Reg & Jeri Laursen), Bob Fahrenkrug (grandfather of Sarah Wicks), the family of Amber Einck (friend of Jane Borelli), Maryn Olson (daughter of Ginny Olson), Noi Tran (Kim Kavan's mother), Karen & John Silseth (brother and sister in law of Kris Peterson), Frank Barth (James Barth's Brother), Nathaniel Judisch (son of Dave and Gail), Dennis Martin (brother-in-law of the Slinds), Nathan Scheuerelein (grandson of Bonnie Flora), Lynzee Makowski (friend of Laurie Biedermann), Todd Hove (son of Gloria Hove), Aaron Buzza (son of Jim and Kathy), Marilyn Walli (Cousin of Marv Slind), Mary Beth & Bayo Oyebade and the Mashiah Foundation in Jos, Nigeria, and our Companion Synod in Hungary

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

563-382-3963 office@goodshepherddecorah.org goodshepherddecorah.org
Pastor Amy: Cell 563-419-0140 pastoramy@goodshepherddecorah.org

WELCOME TO ALL GUESTS and especially to Luther Students! It is a joy to worship with you. You are welcome to enjoy really great coffee, juice, treats, and conversation down the hall after worship – follow the crowd. Sit anywhere!

ALL ARE WELCOME TO SHARE IN HOLY COMMUNION. It is Christ's table and Christ is the host. Instructions are included in the communion section of the Order of Worship.

THE PRESENCE, ENERGY, AND NOISE OF CHILDREN ARE MOST WELCOME HERE!

The sound of a child in worship is the sound of a new Christian being formed. This congregation is glad to share in this work. We welcome and encourage kids to move and play. A nursery with toys and activity bags are available. Mothers are welcome to nurse anywhere that works for you and your child. An Infant Feeding Chair is available in the music office (hallway outside of sanctuary) for more privacy if desired.

RACIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT: This Statement was approved at the annual meeting of the congregation on February 6th, 2022. It was developed through the work of the Racial Justice Team which held listening sessions with the congregation. A portion of the Statement is printed here each week. Find the full statement at goodshepherddecorah.org/Racial-Justice-Statement or by scanning the code.



***We publicly declare** that we will actively pursue racial justice in all aspects of our congregational life and make changes to adopt antiracist policies and practices around worship, education, advocacy, stewardship, governance, and through our community partnerships and relationships. (Ephesians 2: 14-15, Isaiah 56: 6)*