

THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church



December 2023

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"I thank my God every time I remember you, 4constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, 5because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. 6I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:3-5

Thank you for your kindness and prayers as my family prepares for a move to Red Wing, MN. It is painful to say goodbye and change is so hard. Together, we are practicing honoring our own feelings about transitions while also being gracious and generous in how we treat one another in this tender time. Thank you. Thank you also for being so kind to Abby and for your concern for her. You can rest assured that she is excited and at peace.

It has been an honor and a privilege to get to know each of you, to hear your stories, and to accompany you in your journey of faith. God sees **you** and loves **you** so deeply. It has been a joy to assure you of that. I love you and I have loved being your pastor.

Now I long to sit down with each of you for a long conversation to say farewell. I long to have time with each of you. Yet I also know that is not possible in the time I have remaining. I treasure all the emails and Facebook messages you have sent. I long to reply to all of them but may not even be able to do that.

My focus for the next month is on Advent and Christmas worship and on helping the Congregation Council, Executive Committee, committees and staff prepare for the transition. I also need to tend to many administrative tasks to leave things in good order for a potential interim pastor and the next called pastor. I will bring communion to those who cannot get to worship, tend to those who are ill and grieving, and say farewells before and after worship.

On January 7, you will release me from the call to serve as your pastor. I will release my care for you into God's hands. This means that, though I will always continue to love and pray for you, I will not be able to provide any pastoral care or perform any pastoral acts (such as funerals or baptisms) for you. This is so that a new pastor can come among you to love you and serve with you in new ways.

I have such confidence and trust that our God is at work among you. You are growing, thriving, and serving so faithfully. Your Executive Committee, Congregation Council and committees are working well together and leading well in this time of transition. The staff is providing good leadership and support. Pr. Liz Bell from the NE IA Synod office is listening, supporting, and leading the congregation through this time. God is preparing an interim pastor and another called pastor to serve with you.

I give thanks for you, Good Shepherd, and for each of you. I love you deeply and always will. I look forward to seeing what God does among you in the future!

Peace to you,
Pr. Amy

SCRIPTURE FOR THE MONTH

	First Reading	Psalm Reading	Second Reading	Gospel
Dec. 3	<u>Isaiah 64:1-9</u> <i>Prayer that God would come with power and compassion</i>	<u>Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19</u> <i>Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (Ps. 80:7)</i>	<u>1 Corinthians 1:3-9</u> <i>Gifts of grace sustain those who wait for the end</i>	<u>Mark 13:24-37</u> <i>The sudden coming of the Son of Man</i>
Dec. 10	<u>Isaiah 40:1-11</u> <i>Good news of God's coming to a people in exile</i>	<u>Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13</u> <i>Righteousness shall prepare a pathway for God. (Ps. 85:13)</i>	<u>2 Peter 3:8-15a</u> <i>Waiting for and hastening the day of God</i>	<u>Mark 1:1-8</u> <i>John appears from the wilderness</i>
Dec. 17	<u>Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11</u> <i>Righteousness and praise flourish like a garden</i>	<u>Psalm 126</u> <i>The Lord has done great things for us. (Ps. 126:3)</i>	<u>1 Thessalonians 5:16-24</u> <i>Kept in faith until the coming of Christ</i>	<u>John 1:6-8, 19-28</u> <i>A witness to the light</i>
Dec. 24 <i>Special "Fear Not!" Service for Advent</i>	<u>Luke 1:5-25</u> <i>Fear not, Zechariah, priest and righteous one</i>	<u>Luke 1:26-38</u> <i>Fear not, Mary, favored one of God</i>	<u>Matthew 1:18-25</u> <i>Fear not, Joseph, son of David</i>	<u>Isaiah 43:1-7, 15-21</u> <i>Fear not, chosen people of God</i>

On Sunday, Nov. 26th we celebrated the end of the Liturgical year - the altar is garbed in the different paraments noting the change in liturgical seasons.

Flowers also mark the sides of the Altar in memory of Paul Solberg given by Carrie Solberg and family and Brendan Nuhmdahl given by Naslunds and family.



PRAYER FOR THE GOOD SHEPHERD CONGREGATION

prayer offered by Jane Jakoubek

Merciful God, there is so much in our lives we cannot understand: suffering, evil, unwelcome changes, other people, death. Be with us in our confusion and struggle. Help us listen this Advent to your quiet steady voice: Do not be afraid. Wait for the Light. Trust the One who created you. Help us keep listening to your word of life as we await your coming at Christmas.

God of justice, thank you for leading our congregation in our efforts to promote racial justice. May our conversations about paying reparations as we use the music of enslaved people help us grow in understanding and join you in making justice flourish on earth.

Incarnate God, thank you for coming to earth to live among us in Jesus. Help us to follow him so that we may be part of your kingdom here on earth. Help us to share our hearts and gifts with others this Christmas, especially the vulnerable and overlooked ones among us. Help us to know your joy as we follow Jesus in loving and serving others. Amen.

SUNDAY MUSIC SCHEDULE

Choir rehearses 7-7:45 PM on Wednesdays
Band rehearses 7:45-8:30 PM on Wednesdays
Handbells rehearse at 8:45 AM on Sundays we play

December

<i>December</i>	
12/3	Advent 1: Choir Sings offertory ("Advent Prayer"); Sunday School kids sing
12/10	Advent 2: Handbells play offertory
12/17	Advent 3: Solo or small ensemble opportunity! Christmas Pageant @ 5 PM: band plays alongside youth
12/24	Advent 4: Solo or small ensemble opportunity! Christmas Eve: Choir and band will offer music during service
12/31	Solo or small ensemble opportunity!

Dancing, Dreaming, and Singing in the Darkness

This Advent, our theme is **Dancing, Dreaming, and Singing in the Darkness**.

On Wednesday nights we'll reflect on the book *Dancing in the Darkness*. On Sundays we'll focus on dreaming. Our devotional will help us to sing in the dark.

Sundays: Dreaming in the Darkness

The prophets, the psalmists, John the Baptist, Mary, Elizabeth, Joseph, Simeon, Anna, the shepherds, and the Magi—they were all dreamers. They received, discovered, and responded to God's dreams for the world. In Advent, we step into the mystery and awe of God's dreams and pray they shape our reality. This theme is for the dreamers in all of us—those who dream of a deeper connection with God and those who dream of a better world. It's for those who dream of comfort and for those who have given up on their dreams. It's for those whose dreams have been crushed and for those who show us that dreams take time. Together, we seek and sow God's dreams for our world. (from *A Sanctified Art, Those Who Dream*, 2021)

Descriptions for each Sunday in Advent from *A Sanctified Art*:

First Sunday in Advent

- Those who dream do not fall asleep to the realities of the world. God prompts us to pay attention to where God's dreams for change and new life are emerging. In Advent, we remember that God's ultimate dream is to be intimately connected to us—to come down and dwell among us. As we keep awake, we join Isaiah and the psalmist in pleading for restoration and for God to draw near.

Second Sunday in Advent

- John the Baptist calls the crowds into the journey of repentance and transformation. Similarly, we are called to prepare the way for God's message of love and liberation to be shouted, heard, and received. Those who dream make way for righteousness and peace to kiss, for faithfulness to spring up from the ground (Ps. 85:10-11).

Third Sunday in Advent

- Ultimately, dreams sow joy, even if that joy doesn't immediately spring forth. Sowing seeds into the soil always feels risky and feeble—how can something so small become something so beautiful, so big, and so nourishing? Like Mary, we are called to tend and nurture the dreams God has woven into us.

Fourth Sunday in Advent

- A service of Word and Song offered through the resource, *Sundays and Seasons*. The angels who appeared to Zechariah, Mary, and Joseph all proclaimed "Fear not!" in response to the human emotions displayed before them. God's word also breaks into the fears of our world with the promise of Christ. Surely God is our salvation; we need not be afraid.

Dancing, Dreaming, and Singing in the Darkness

ADVENT EVENING WORSHIP: Dec. 6, 13, 20 at 5:30pm

- **Dancing in the Darkness: Spiritual Wisdom for Turbulent Times** inspired by the book by Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III. We'll sing Negro Spirituals and reflect on Dr. Moss's teaching.
- Confirmation Students will serve as the ushers and readers for these services.

Christmas Eve Worship, Sunday, 24th at 5pm

Lessons and Carols: Sunday, Dec. 31

ADVENT SPECIAL OFFERING: will go to LDR Middle East Crisis: Lutheran Disaster Response is working with partners in the Middle East to get humanitarian supplies to people affected by the Israel-Hamas War

WREATH LIGHTING: Each Sunday and Wednesday at the beginning of worship, families are invited to light candles on the Advent Wreath. There are currently 7 openings, December 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20, and 24. Sign up on Good Shepherd's website under the SIGN-UPS Tab or in the Gathering Space.

POINSETTIAS FOR THE SANCTUARY: Altar Guild has arranged with Decorah's The Country Garden for members to provide poinsettias for the Christmas season at \$15.00 per plant. Orders, with payment, are to be placed through the Church Office no later than 12:00 p.m. on Friday, December 15. Contact the church office via phone, email, or note or put your check in the offering plate to place your order.

- Checks accompanying each order should be made payable to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, with Poinsettia in the memo line.
- Plants may be given in honor, as memorials, or as a gift by including names with the order. Names will be included in bulletins. Please email, or print clearly the names of those you are dedicating the poinsettia for.
- Red poinsettias wrapped in gold foil will be placed on the altar rail for services beginning Saturday, December 24. You are welcome to remove your plant after the Christmas services, but no later than Saturday, January 6. Communion at the altar rail resumes on Sunday, January 7.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM: December 17th, 5:00 pm

- Simple sandwich/chips/desserts meal to follow with free-will donations to raise funds for the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering
- Youth attending the Youth Gathering will be in charge of setting up/serving/and cleaning up the meal. They will also provide desserts.

AUGSBURG FORTRESS DEVOTIONAL: Come, Emmanuel: Devotions for Advent and Christmas 2023-2024. Good Shepherd purchased 20 Devotionals for this Advent. A donation of \$3.50 is encouraged to cover the cost of this order.

Reminders: There will be no Sunday School on December 24th and 31st

FUNDRAISERS FOR ELCA YOUTH GATHERING: This summer 14 Good Shepherd Youth and 2 adult leaders will be going to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans - to help fund this trip, the youth will be doing fundraisers throughout the year. The detailed list is on page 8 of the newsletter. This month look out for:

- Gift Wrapping
- Christmas Program Dinner

WREATH LIGHTING: Each Sunday and Wednesday at the beginning of worship, families are invited to light candles on the Advent Wreath. There are currently 7 openings, December 3,6,10,13,17,20, and 24. Sign up on Good Shepherd's website under the SIGN-UPS Tab or in the Gathering Space.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM TIMELINE AND DETAILS:

- More information from Brooke will be coming soon. However, if your child would like to play prelude or postlude music for the Christmas program. Please contact Brooke no later than the 10th.
- **December 3rd** Christmas program practice begins! Following practice we will decorate the Christmas Tree in the Sanctuary.
 - Each week of program practice, all kids age 4yr.-6th grade will start class in the large classroom and then move to the sanctuary, Rehearsals will happen during regular Sunday School from 10:45-11:30 am
 - Scripts and parts will be sent out before practice officially starts.
- **December 10th** costumes will be tried on
- **December 17th** Final practice during Sunday school time & **Program Day!**
 - The program will be at 5pm. Please plan to have your children at church between 4:15 - 4:30.
 - Children offering special music please be at the church by 4:00pm and all other musicians please arrive by 4:15 pm.
 - A sandwich dinner will be provided afterwards. Youth attending the Youth Gathering and their families are in charge of setting up, serving, and cleaning up the meal along with bringing 2 dozen treats. Youth are also invited to help "entertain" the youngest children prior to the service (reading books, talking with them in the Sunday School room). Sign-up will be emailed soon.



Sign-up for midweek worship

Confirmation youth are asked to help lead worship for the 3 midweek advent worship services. They will serve as an usher and as a reader. Here's what to expect:

- Usher: Arrive at 5:10 to greet worshippers and hand out bulletins. Passes and presents offering plates. Places offering in the Office following worship with Kelli's assistance.
- Reader: Read scripture and a prayer during worship.

Confirmation Bowling Party! During Advent, the Confirmation class attends the midweek Advent worship at 5:30pm. There is no Confirmation class at 7pm so that students can attend with their families. After this first one, on the 13th after worship, Confirmation students along with Pastor Amy and Kelli will all go bowling! Good Shepherd will pay for the lanes and shoes. We will have supper there as well. Please send money for food.

Class ADDED with Pr. Amy: Before Pastor Amy leaves, she wants to have one last confirmation time all together. Please add January 3rd at 7pm to your calendars as an additional confirmation class. To make up for this addition, a class will be subtracted in the spring.

ELCA YOUTH GATHERING FUNDRAISERS

We have 13 students registered for the youth trip to New Orleans in July 2024! **Thank you for the support during the leaf raking and coffee sales fundraisers!**

Upcoming Fundraisers to support this trip:

GIFT WRAPPING:

- Bring your Christmas presents to be wrapped by Youth during Fellowship Hour on **December 10th**. GS Youth will provide the wrapping paper and joyous elf-wrapping spirit. Wrapped presents will be ready for pick-up from the Annex after Fellowship Hour. Free-will donation.
 - **RSVP** with any special notes (like "bubble wrap please") in the Gathering Space on **Nov. 26th and Dec. 3rd** or by emailing Kelli @ kelli@goodshepherddecorah.org

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM DINNER

- Dinner following the Christmas Program: Dec. 17, 5:30 PM. Simple dinner of sandwiches, chips, and dessert. Youth attending the Gathering will be in charge of setting up/serving/cleaning up and providing desserts for the meal and helping with the younger youth prior to the program.
 - **Free-Will donations for meal will go to the trip.**

Outlining the Call Process in the NE IA ELCA Synod

This time of transition can be fraught with many different emotions - remember you are not alone as an individual, or as a congregation. **The Synod has shared notes about the call process to help all know what to expect in the coming time of transition. The weekly bulletin and newsletter are also updated as able to keep all informed through this process.**

- The Synod staff will work with the church council to find an interim pastor and/or supply pastors. An interim pastor may help with some aspects of the call process.
- From there, a **call committee** will be established according the GSLC constitution (6 voting members of the congregation as elected by the council). Once formed, the call committee will:
 - compile a "Ministry Site Profile" with the help of the congregation and submit it to the ELCA to help potential candidates understand this congregation.
 - meet the synod staff and receive coaching on how to conduct an effective interview and receive step-by-step assistance from the synod through example documents, being on call for questions when needed, and more.
 - receive the names and rostered minister profiles of pastors interested. From this list they will choose who to interview, check their references, and view sermons/worship services as able.
- **After the call committee has voted to recommend a candidate to the council**, it will meet with the council to share information about the recommended pastor.
 - The executive committee will meet and speak with the candidate to discuss compensation and benefits.
- If the council votes to recommend the candidate to the congregation, the council will call a **congregational meeting for the purpose of issuing a call** and the council will formally recommend that the congregation call the candidate to be our pastor.
 - Members of the congregation will be given the opportunity to meet the nominee.
 - A congregational call vote takes places according to our constitution. 2 secret ballot votes are held: one to approve the call & one to approve the compensation package.
- If the congregation **approves** the call and compensation by the necessary margins, a **Letter of Call and Compensation Sheet** are signed by the council president and secretary and forwarded to the bishop for signature, then sent to the pastor nominee.
- The candidate for call has 30 days to accept or decline the call.
- If the nominee accepts the call, an installation date is set. If the candidate declines the call, the call committee goes back to work with the synod staff to receive additional candidates.
- The call process officially ends after the pastor is installed.

Through the whole process, your prayers are essential. Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you, your call committee, your council, and your synod in discerning who God is calling to serve as your next pastor.



Northeastern Iowa Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

201 20th Street, PO Box 804
Wavery, IA 50677
neiasynod.org
319-352-1414

Pr. Amy's shorter announcement about her leave: (the full text can be found on the website under "News") The people of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Red Wing, MN voted to call me as their pastor on Sunday, Nov. 5. I have accepted the call and will begin serving them in January 2024. My last Sunday with Good Shepherd will be Sunday, January 7, 2024; the last official day of call will be January 15, 2024. Two things are true: I feel deep joy about this new call, and I feel deep grief about leaving Good Shepherd. Yet I have such peace that Good Shepherd will continue to thrive and that this is the next right step for me and my family.

Each week in the weekly E-newsletter and bulletin, and in the monthly newsletter we will be having a "Call Process Update" section. We will edit this section as able in order keep the congregation informed as clearly as able:

- On November 14, the Congregation Council, Pastor Amy, and Good Shepherd staff met with Pastor Liz Bell of the Northeastern Iowa Synod. Pastor Bell will work with Good Shepherd on the call process going forward. Also, the Synod shared with the Executive Committee the name of a potential Intentional Interim Pastor.
- This week (the first days of December), the Executive Committee of the Congregation Council, along with Brooke Joyce, Music Director, is scheduled to meet with a pastor candidate to serve as Good Shepherd's Intentional Interim Pastor. The interim pastor would begin service after January 7, 2024.
- **The Council is following the procedure outlined by our Good Shepherd constitution:** the Executive Committee will make a recommendation to the Council of an interim candidate; when the Council votes to consent, the bishop of the synod appoints the recommended interim.
- **The Work ahead:** the Council will work to establish a Call Committee composed of 6 voting members of the congregation. According to Section C13.04. of our Constitution, the Call Committee is composed of 6 voting members of the congregation elected by the Congregation Council.
- The work of the Call Committee is outlined in detail by our Synod; these procedures have been shared with Council and digitized by the Church Office for the use of the Call Committee. Pastor Liz Bell of the NEIA Synod will accompany the Call Committee in its work.

Keep Walking the Path - written by Bob Larson

Over the past month or so, our congregation has been hearing about living stones and how such stones can serve as a metaphor for maintaining the spiritual vibrancy of Good Shepherd. Pathways leading to such vibrancy can be diverse, difficult, smooth, winding, straight, narrow, wide—the list goes on. But living stones can help us to navigate those pathways providing affirmation as we continue to live out Christ's call to serve, share, comfort, learn, support, and love.

In last month's church newsletter, Cheri Lane of the Racial Justice Committee provided ways that members could respond to the ELCA's work regarding Indian Boarding Schools complicated history. So often when confronted by such historical as well as current racism challenges, the question, as Cheri put so strongly before us, is "now what?" There are no easy answers but as living stones each of us can make a difference in constructing pathways to a more equitable world.

I must admit to more than a few moments of "what now" or "what can I do" when troubling events unfold locally, nationally, internationally. Yes, a small gesture of time, resources, engagement repeated often enough can be important even if it seems so minimal in the face of social and political turmoil. Having such a conversation with my daughter (a retired school principal) she asked if I had ever visited the website **S.U.R.J. (Standing Up for Racial Justice** - <https://surj.org/>)? She is active in one of the Iowa chapters. Thanks to her urging, I am finding the website a useful resource as it provides guides to action in the on-going work of racial justice.

So again, now what? With God's guidance let us keep walking the path, sharing the living stones, navigating the diverse pathways, reflecting on our faith, and joining with one another, as the congregation's racial statement reads: *"to 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)"*

ADULT FORUM ON LUTHER COLLEGE'S TIES TO INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS

On December 10, Dr. Anna Peterson, Luther College Associate Professor of History, will present her research about some of the ways that the College was involved in the Bethany Indian Mission School in Wittenberg, Wisconsin. This forum continues our understanding of the role of the Boarding Schools and how the White church contributed to long-standing racism against Indigenous People. In January, Luther College archivist and Good Shepherd member, Hayley Jackson, will talk about the records the College has that pertain to the Bethany Indian Mission School, how they came to our possession, and issues we face now regarding such materials.

EPIC SCHOLARSHIP DISPLAY CASE

The Good Shepherd Mission Endowment Fund is a standalone account, utilized strictly for financing EPIC (Educational Partners in Covenant) scholarships for members attending ELCA colleges or universities. Four percent of the fund's total value, which currently stands at approximately \$125,000, can be used annually.

The congregation has entrusted the Mission Endowment Fund Committee to maintain and manage the fund, award the scholarships, and grow the fund as necessary to meet the needs of the congregation. Current committee members are Erin Anderson, Jerry Bruce, Jim Buzza, John Jefferson, and Brian Solberg. Clara Knudson serves as the MEF Financial Secretary. The committee utilizes the Stewardship for All Seasons concept to manage and grow the fund. Stewardship for All Seasons consists of four components, the first of which is to keep the congregation informed about the EPIC scholarship ministry. The committee has been diligent about doing this over the past five years through weekly and monthly newsletter articles, Adult Forums, and postings on the Good Shepherd website. There have also been annual meetings with eligible students and their families.

Most recently the committee has arranged for a permanent display case to be installed to highlight current scholarship recipients. The display is located between the Gathering Space and the church office and includes photos of the students as well as general information about this ministry.

The display fits very nicely with the Stewardship for All Seasons concept of keeping the congregation informed because it is an ongoing reminder of how this ministry continues to serve youth who have grown up in the congregation. The display case has truly been a congregational effort. The idea originated with Kris Peterson, who saw a similar display while visiting an ELCA congregation. After doing research, the committee ordered the case and Reg Laursen installed it in a location with limited exposure to sun and optimal visibility. Erica Yaneff and Jim Buzza designed the display, which will be updated annually as new EPIC scholarships are awarded.

With the approval of Jane Borelli, the MEF Committee has designated the case in memory of Glenn Nelson. A long time member of Good Shepherd, Glenn served on the faculty and staff of Luther College and, in the final years of the American Lutheran Church, was director of the Division of College and University Services, for which he was awarded an honorary doctorate degree from Grand View College. Joe Hammel, of Hammel Jewelers, engraved the memorial plate.

As a part of the SAS "informing" component, the MEF Committee encourages you to stop by and view the new display.

Jerry Bruce, MEF Chair



Advent Brunch: Burr Oak Lutheran Church invites us to join with them in preparing our hearts for the Advent Season. They will be hosting an advent program followed by a brunch on **Saturday, December 2 at 9:30 AM** at the church. All our welcome.

Gather Bible Study

December 2023 Advent devotional: "Topsy-turvy" by the Rev. Hannah Hawkinson

In her song, Mary, the mother of Jesus, praises God for turning the world upside down—or perhaps, turning the world right-side-up! Gather's annual Advent devotional focuses on the Magnificat song of Mary (see Luke 1:46b-55), as well as parallel topsy-turvy stories of Mary's ancestors, including Shiphrah and Puah (Exodus 1), Hannah (1 Samuel 1-2), the daughters of Zelophehad (Numbers 27), Hagar at the well (Genesis 16 and/or 21) and Ruth and Hagar. (from Gather magazine)

January 27, 2024 will be holding our WELCA annual meeting and mid-winter brunch (program to be determined). We will also be dispersing funds from 2023, contact Bev Sheridan if you have any funding requests. We are also looking for a few people to provide refreshments. All are welcome.

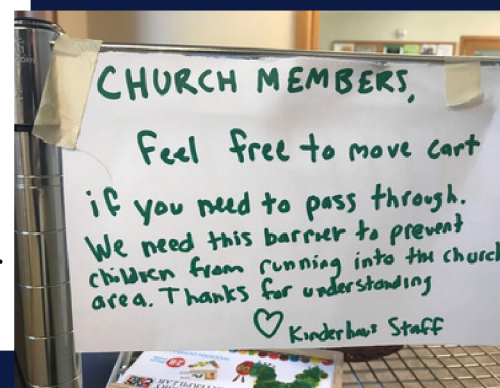
UPCOMING EVENTS:

December 2: Advent Brunch, Burr Oak Lutheran, 9:30

January 27, 2024: WELCA annual meeting and mid-winter brunch

NOTE FROM KINDERHAUS PRESCHOOL

On weekdays in the morning hours, Kinderhaus Preschool needs to put up a barrier in the hall close to the Fellowship Hall/Preschool. The barrier is often chairs with/without a sheet on them, and the cart with wheels (as pictured). Director Gracie Platt passes on that folks are most welcome to move the cart and still access that part of the building, the barrier is there to help contain and maintain a safe environment for the youngest kids - there is a note on the cart saying this as well. The staff also want to pass on a reminder to please drive slowly through the cul-de-sac area when kids are outside - between a predominately young group, and developmental needs of some of the kids, extra caution around the preschool area is appreciated. Please get in touch with Erica in the office if you have any concerns. Thank you.



GOOD SHEPHERD HELPING AT JANUARY COMMUNITY MEAL

14

DECORAH COMMUNITY MEAL -- *Building Community Plate by Plate*

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. Read below for further details:

GOOD SHEPHERD WILL:

- Provide 14 salads (7 green salads, 4 fruit salads, 3 misc.), each large enough to feed 15 adults.
 - Provide 12 desserts, each large enough to feed 15 adults.
 - Provide volunteers to help with dishes, bussing tables, serving, setup, and cleanup.
- Approximately 12 individuals are needed (split between 2 shifts) and children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult. Shifts are approximately 75 minutes each.

Volunteer tasks include: *We encourage volunteers to eat before or after their shifts to experience the fellowship and good food that help Decorah Community Meal build community.*

- Cut and serve desserts, refill dessert table
- Mix and pour drinks, refill drinks
- Floater/Runner; Keep main table stocked with dishes, silverware, napkins, entrées, salads.
- Serve coffee and greet guests.
- Bus dishes and help in kitchen after meal
- Dry washed pots, pans, bowls, etc.
- Unload dishwasher and put dishes away
- Wipe tables and chairs
- Vacuum/mop and help with take-down
- Assistance as needed

Guidelines for food donations:

- Donated dishes can be dropped off at Decorah Lutheran's kitchen between 2:00 and 4:15 pm on the day of the meal. The kitchen is in the basement area adjacent to the Social Hall
- Plan to prepare a dish that is large enough to feed 15 adults.
- High quality, healthy, homemade dishes are preferred.
- To accommodate those with food allergies, please include a note card that states whether the dish contains the following common allergens: gluten, dairy, nuts, or eggs.
- Please mark your name on any containers you wish to keep, and plan to pick up your containers from the Social Hall before 7:00 PM

IMPORTANT WEATHER-RELATED CANCELLATION POLICY:

Good Shepherd will notify those signed up to donate food or volunteer at the meal in case of a weather cancellation. The committee will do their best to announce weather related cancellations on the Wednesday morning preceding the meal when possible. The cancellations will also be called in to KDEC and KVIK radio stations as well as posted to the KVIK cancellations web page.

NEW ONLINE CHURCH DIRECTORY LAUNCHED: Good Shepherd launched a new online directory through the Church Management System “Breeze”. Members, associate members, and friends received an email invitation to create an account and access the directory. Step by step instructions for setting up an account are available on the church website under the CONNECT Tab, as well as in the Gathering Space. For additional assistance in setting up an account, Erica and Tristan can help! Just stop by the church office. Check the bulletin or online church CALENDAR Tab for their hours.

- **Quick Tips:**

- Once logged on, click on the “People” Tab/Menu to access the Directory.
- Use the LARGE search bar to search, not the small one on the top right
- You can edit any of your information!

UPDATED PRINT DIRECTORY: Good Shepherd will provide a print directory for those interested. Please contact the Church Office if you would like an updated print directory now that our new online directory system, Breeze, is up and running. Print directories will be available in early/mid December, in color or black and white. There is no charge for a black and white copy; the color version is \$5.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY: Do you enjoy crocheting or knitting? Prayer Shawl Ministry meets on the third Wednesday of each month 1:00-3:00, September thru May in the Gathering Space at the church. New members please join us! Yarn will be available. Confirmants, graduates, people who are baptized, those suffering illness, Helping Services for Youth and Families and Hospice Winn-Med are all recipients of shawls. Questions: Contact Jeri Laursen.

FREE COMMUNITY MEAL on Thursday, Dec. 7th 5:00 - 6:15 p.m in the Fellowship Hall of Decorah Lutheran Church, 309 Winnebago Street. All are welcome! Come enjoy fellowship with your friends and neighbors. Members of Decorah’s Prairie Lakes Church will provide volunteers, salads, and desserts. The main course is provided by Sodexo of Luther College. Decorah Lutheran members provide guidance, rolls and butter, beverages, and set up and clean up each month. Gluten-free options and carry-outs are always available.

MISSION ASSISTANCE FUNDS NEEDED: Good Shepherd’s Mission Assistance Fund, set up to help people who need short-term emergency assistance, is almost depleted. Funds are distributed at the discretion of the Pastor and two congregation members on the Mission Assistance Committee. To donate to the fund, drop your donation in the basket on the Fellowship Hour serving table, in the offering plate, or Church Office, designating “Mission Assistance Fund” on your check or envelope.

HOLDEN VILLAGE TRIP: Join Pastor Mike Wilker (First Lutheran) and Judy Kittleson on a trip to Holden Village in early August! Holden is a remote wilderness community, rooted in the Lutheran tradition, located in the Cascade Mountains of Washington. The Village offers educational sessions, arts and crafts, hiking and recreation, and children's programming. Because Holden fills quickly in the summer, registration will need to be done in early January. The plan is to arrive in the village August 4th and depart August 9th. An informational meeting will be held Sunday, Dec. 3, at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall at First Lutheran Church. If you are interested in the trip but unable to come to the meeting, contact Jon or Mary Hart at 563-419-2207 or mj-hart@hotmail.com

MARTHA MONSON LOWE AND GEORGE LOWE TO SHARE THEIR RECENT EXPERIENCES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary-Good Shepherd Lutheran Church members George Lowe and Martha Monson Lowe were in Bethlehem on October 7, the day the Israel-Hamas War began. They will give a presentation about their experiences in Palestine and Israel. Some background will be provided on what led up to October 7, and they will share recent personal stories of friends from Bethlehem. George and Martha have spent over a year, since 2014, in Bethlehem and East Jerusalem, and will offer for sale a selection of Palestinian handwork before and after the presentation. All proceeds will go directly back to the Palestinian artisans. All are welcome at this public presentation.

- They will also be sales of Palestinian handwork Wed. Dec 6th and Sunday Dec. 17

ANNUAL "HOME FOR CHRISTMAS" DECORAH CHORALE CONCERT SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 7:00 p.m., Decorah Lutheran Church - The 23rd Annual Decorah Chorale "Home for Christmas" benefit concert supports the work of Winneshiek County Habitat for Humanity and Decorah Area Food Pantry through the concert's free-will offering. The Decorah Chorale is directed by Good Shepherd member Jason Rausch, and a number of Good Shepherd members sing in the Chorale.

LUREN SINGERS CHRISTMAS CONCERT - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2:00 p.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, Spring Grove, Minnesota "Hope for Resolution and Peace" is the theme of this year's Luren Singers Christmas Concert, which will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church, 205 East Main Street (MN Highway 44), Spring Grove, Minnesota. The 60 member male chorus is directed by Good Shepherd member Dr. David Judisch, with Rachel Storlie as guest soprano soloist. A number of Good Shepherd members sing with the Luren Singers. A free-will offering at intermission will be divided between the Houston County Food Shelf and the Houston County Ring and Run.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

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NOVEMBER 14, 2023, 7:00 PM

In attendance: Pastor Liz Bell, Kaarin Martin-Hiner, Brian Caton, Chris Johnson, Kris Peterson, Pastor Amy Zalk Larson, Marilyn Rue, Cindy Ernst, Tristan Occhipinti, Kelli, Lise Kildegaard, Brooke, Tim Lecander is attending on Zoom as will Erica Yneff as she is able.

Preparing Our Hearts and Minds to Serve

- In one word or one sentence, share what you most need from God now.
- Prayer
- As we deliberate, let us affirm our congregation's commitment to pursue racial justice, advocate for migrant families, and support the LGBTQIA community.
- Is there anything on the consent agenda that should be moved to the discussion agenda? If not, is there a motion to approve the whole agenda? Jill Wood is added to the Outreach and Hospitality Committee in the agenda as accepting the position Chris Johnson made a motion and Marilyn Rue seconded and it was accepted.

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of October 2023 Council Meeting Minutes October Council Minutes
2. Reception of Committee Reports (see summary below)
3. Receiving resignation of Rebecca Boehm Shaffer from the Outreach and Hospitality committee for personal reasons. The incoming member of the committee has been asked to begin serving earlier, awaiting reply. A council vote via email may be needed to approve this.
4. Receiving New Members:
 - a. Jon and Mary Wendling
 - b. Cheryl and Dwaine Lemke
 - c. Dianne Burke
 - d. Janet Snider
 - e. Beth Bodensteiner, Michael and Ian McCandless
 - f. Sarah, Karl, Philip, and Ellis Wicks- associate members
 - g. Erica Yaneff (as member) Nicky, Aemon and Bowen Yaneff as friends of the congregation
 - h. Dave and Jan Siefken, moving from associate members to full members (don't need another welcome on Sunday)
 - i. Note Dave, Sonya, Violet and Jack Geenen will be welcomed Sunday (have been members for a while but haven't been able to attend a new member welcome.)

Discussion Agenda

1. Call Process (from NE Iowa Synod)
 - Devotions
 - Closure & Transition
 - Exit Interview
 - Certification of Completion of All Obligations
 - Feelings about a pastor's departure
 - Farewell Celebration
 - Intentional Interim, Interim, contract pastor, and supply pastors
 - Review Call Process
 - Call Process – bulletin insert

CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEETING NOTES

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NOVEMBER 14, 2023, 7:00 PM

- Synodical priorities for pastoral ministry
 - Networks for Names
 - Constitutional Guidelines for Calling A Pastor
 - Synod
 - Congregations
 - Selecting a Call Committee
 - Size
 - Diverse
 - Representative
 - Election
 - Qualities
 - Compensation Package range – synod guidelines
 - Parsonage or housing allowance
 - Ministry Site Profile
2. Recommendation to Council re Land Acknowledgement Task Force
3. Approval of Treasurer's Report
- Cindy moved and Chris seconded and approved accepting the Treasurer's Report.

Announcements – Newsletter Deadline is November 25, 2023 (always the 25th of the month)
Next Council meeting - Dec. 19, 2023 7:00pm

Adjournment and Closing Prayer- Lord's Prayer

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

- Education Committee: meets after council this month as council moved up a week.
- Outreach and Hospitality Committee: 8 New Member Households
- Stewardship Committee: goal of 100 statements of intent, meeting for shepherds Dec. 3

Pastor's Report

1. Council, I'm grateful for your support, prayers, and leadership in this time of transition.
2. The nominating committee process has been going so well. There have been lots of yeses to serving and fewer positions need to be filled due to changes to the structure.
3. The flocks continue to do well with Sunday roles. We will be having a meeting for shepherds on Dec. 3.
4. I'm working with staff and committees on transition planning.
5. My last Sunday and last day working with Good Shepherd will be Sunday, Jan. 7.
 - a. I had already scheduled time away for Dec. 27-31
 - b. I will take my remaining vacation days for 2023 following Jan. 7 so my last day of call will be Jan. 15.
6. Next steps were discussed and Brooke suggested the staff meet with Amy to discuss what all needs to be covered during this transition period and they would get back to the council to recommend some directions.
 - a. Anne moved, we adjourned, Kaarin seconded and it passed as we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

DECEMBER CALENDAR

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
8:45am - Choir warms up for 9:30am - In-person Worship & 10:45am - Fellowship Hour 11am - Adult Forum Kitchen Table	9am - Church Office Hours 4pm - Piano lessons @ Sanctuary 4:30pm - Keill's Office Hours 6:30pm - ALANON @ GS	9am - Church Office Hours 3:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - WELCA Circle Mtg. Gather	9am - Bobbers coffee 9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 5:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - Choir rehearsal @ 7pm - Confirmation Class @	Recycle 9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 11am - Bible Study @ Library 1pm - Violin lessons @ Sanctuary 2pm - Flute Lesson @ Library	Pastor Amy day off 9am - Church Office Hours 5:15pm - Trumpet lessons @	
8:45am - Choir warms up for 9:15am - Sunday School choir 9:30am - In-person Worship & 10:45am - Fellowship Hour 10:45am - Sunday school 11am - Shepherd's Meeting	9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 4pm - Piano lessons @ Sanctuary 4:30pm - Keill's Office Hours 5pm - Education Committee 6:30pm - ALANON @ GS	9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 3:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - Israel-Palestine	9am - Church Office Hours 5:30pm - Advent Evening Worship 5:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - Choir rehearsal @ 7:45pm - Band rehearsal @	9am - Church Office Hours 11am - Bible Study @ Library 1pm - Violin lessons @ Sanctuary 2pm - Flute Lesson @ Library 3:30pm - Piano lessons 5pm - Decorah Community Meal @	Pastor Amy day off 9am - Church Office Hours 5:15pm - Trumpet lessons @	
8:45am - Handbells warm up for 9:30am - In-person Worship & 10:45am - Fellowship Hour 10:45am - Sunday school 11am - Adult Forum Indian 11:30am - Green Flock: Krumkake	9am - Church Office Hours 4pm - Piano lessons @ Sanctuary 4:30pm - Keill's Office Hours 6:30pm - ALANON @ GS	9am - Church Office Hours 1pm - Violin lessons @ Sanctuary 3:30pm - Piano lessons	9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Eastern Star/Arlyn Faick 10am - Erica office hours 1pm - Wellington Place 2:30pm - Aase Haugen 5:30pm - Advent Evening Worship	Recycle 9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 11am - Bible Study @ Library 2pm - Flute Lesson @ Library 3:30pm - Piano lessons	Pastor Amy day off 9am - Church Office Hours 3:30pm - Regina Dowling 5:15pm - Trumpet lessons @	2pm - Regina Dowling Christmas
9:30am - In-person Worship & 10:45am - Fellowship Hour 10:45am - Sunday school 5pm - Youth Christmas Program	9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 4pm - Piano lessons @ Sanctuary 4:30pm - Keill's Office Hours 6:30pm - ALANON @ GS	9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 3:30pm - Piano lessons 5:30pm - Sons of Norway @ 7pm - Congregation Council	9am - Church Office Hours 1pm - Prayer Shawl Ministry @ 2pm - Worship and Music 5:30pm - Advent Evening Worship 5:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - Choir rehearsal @ 7:45pm - Band rehearsal @	9am - Church Office Hours 11am - Bible Study @ Library 12:45pm - MEF Committee 1pm - Violin lessons @ Sanctuary 2pm - Flute Lesson @ Library 3:30pm - Piano lessons 5pm - Oneota Coop Potluck @	Pastor Amy day off 9am - Church Office Hours 5:15pm - Trumpet lessons @	
9:30am - In-person Worship & 10:45am - Fellowship Hour 4:15pm - Choir and band warm up 5pm - Christmas Eve Worship @	Office Closed for Christmas 6:30pm - ALANON	Tristan out Newsletter Deadline 3:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - WELCA Circle Mtg. Gather	10am - Erica office hours 5:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - Choir rehearsal @ 7:45pm - Band rehearsal @	Recycle 9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 11am - Bible Study @ Library	Pastor Amy day off 9am - Church Office Hours 5:15pm - Trumpet lessons @	
Kinderhaus Winter Break						
9:30am - In-person Worship & 10:45am - Fellowship Hour 4:15pm - Choir and band warm up 5pm - Christmas Eve Worship @	Office Closed for Christmas 6:30pm - ALANON	Tristan out Newsletter Deadline 3:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - WELCA Circle Mtg. Gather	10am - Erica office hours 5:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - Choir rehearsal @ 7:45pm - Band rehearsal @	Recycle 9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 11am - Bible Study @ Library	Pastor Amy day off 9am - Church Office Hours 5:15pm - Trumpet lessons @	
Kinderhaus Winter Break						
9:30am - In-person Worship & 10:45am - Fellowship Hour 4:15pm - Choir and band warm up 5pm - Christmas Eve Worship @	Office closed 6:30pm - ALANON	9am - Church Office Hours 10am - Erica office hours 3:30pm - Piano lessons	9am - Church Office Hours 5:30pm - Piano lessons 7pm - Choir rehearsal @ 7:45pm - Band rehearsal @	9am - Church Office Hours 11am - Bible Study @ Library 1pm - Violin lessons @ Sanctuary 2pm - Flute Lesson @ Library	Pastor Amy day off 9am - Church Office Hours 5:15pm - Trumpet lessons @	12pm - Farmers market board