



Shepherd's Staff

September 2019



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Sermon Series Fall 2019: Do Ministry. Grow Spiritually

What if every single person at Good Shepherd was involved in something where they are doing ministry and in someplace where they are growing spiritually? The church thrives when its people are using their God-given gifts to do the ministry of the church.

Joy, fulfillment, and purpose abound when our deepest passions intersect with the world's needs, when we do ministry. Faith in Christ is not an arrival or a destination, but journey. Discipleship, following Christ, is a constant desire to grow spiritually. We grow in prayer. We grow in our knowledge and understanding of the Word. We grow in our ability to seek God's leadership and trust. We grow in our spiritual capacity to pay attention to the movement of the Holy Spirit and live our lives accordingly.



We need both: to do ministry and to grow spiritually. If we are only

doing, but not **growing** we may burn out or hit a plateau in what we are able to do. However, if you are growing spiritually as you are doing ministry, you will see your ability to serve and do continue to increase. You may find you can do ministry in ways you never dreamed possible! On the flip side, if I am only focusing on my own spiritual growth, but not actually doing ministry and using the gifts God has given, I lose purpose and focus. I find my spiritual life is not as rich. I am not being stretched and challenged and putting my theology into practice.

Disciples always do both. If we look at the Gospels, we see that in following Christ, the disciples grow in faith (they learn) and then do ministry (share God's love). It is a constant dance, a back and forth. Learn-Do. Grow-Serve. Learn-Do. It is this rhythm and relationship of doing ministry and growing spiritually that fosters the spiritual breakthrough we see in the lives of the disciples, who go from fisherman to world-changers.

We invite you to join us on this journey as we explore how we all can do ministry and grow spiritually together.



Glenn Kraft
Council President

God Is Watching Us

I've always been a bit of a sap when it comes to songs that give voice to deep perspectives. In my current role as President I have learned more about our members and our church and I continue to experience Good Shepherd as a very special place.



As we have moved through the Reconciled In Christ process to launch a Welcoming Statement while the ELCA announces a position of Sanctuary to those in aiming to become US citizens, it can appear to be a win to those on the political left and a loss to those on the political right. Being more progressive on social issues personally, I now realize that I have been ignorant about how those actions can create negative sensations. I

have also learned so much about my assumptions and how incorrect I can be. Those on the left aren't right and those on the right aren't right. Sounds funny, but it's true. We are all so very wrong in so many ways. I believe that is why we come together as church.

At your convenience please listen to the Bette Midler song, "God is Watching Us." It's so powerful. Here is an excerpt:

From a distance there is harmony
And it echoes through the land
It's the voice of hope
It's the voice of peace
It's the voice of every man

From a distance we all have enough
And no one is in need
And there are no guns, no bombs and no disease
No hungry mouths to feed

From a distance we are instruments
Marching in a common band
Playing songs of hope
Playing songs of peace
They are the songs of every man

God is watching us
God is watching us
God is watching us from a distance

Each year, Feed My Starving Children brings all together to save lives. Cindy and I just completed our roles on the Development Council for ELCA World Hunger which exceeded their 5-year goal. ELCA World Hunger doesn't distribute food. Instead their work is accompanying projects of all types to equip those facing food risks with ways to equip people to become independent. These projects are so different, yet both are needed. Saving lives and building people up are two distinct ways to serve God. We can agree there are many approaches.

Let us not be proud to be politically accurate. Instead, let us be one church of treasured diversity, "Marching in a common band. Playing

songs of hope. Playing songs of peace. They are songs of every man.”

At Good Shepherd, we need everyone. We ALL belong.

Glenn Kraft
President



Intergenerational Mission Trip July 11-18, 2020

I wanted to share a bit about Good Shepherd’s intergenerational mission trip to Guatemala planned for next summer. First, you might wonder what intergenerational means. That means that the trip is open to adults of all ages and to youth who will have completed sixth grade by June 2020. The trip is open to both individuals and families.

What will we do during our week in Guatemala? We will partner alongside a local church on various projects needed in the community. Praying Pelican Missions (PPM) will be facilitating the trip and will handle many of the planning details such as housing, meals and training. PPM listens closely to the gifts and goals of the traveling church and the needs of the local community to ensure a meaningful partnership. There will be something for *everyone* to do ... from various levels of construction work and projects within the community to leading a VBS for the local children.

I have been blessed to have participated in mission trips in the past, and they have truly been some of the most life-changing experiences for me – made even more so, by having the opportunity to travel with my husband and kids on most of these trips. What a blessing it was to share time, love, and faith with the new friends we met – we learned much, laughed much, and shared stories and songs. I realize that, though a trip of this sort takes some planning financially and spiritually, anything I gave of myself was returned tenfold by what I learned ... about the culture, myself, my strengths and my faith. And, the conversations I’ve had with my new friends and my Good Shepherd family during and after these trips are moments I will treasure forever. My son and I recalled just last week how lucky we have it to be able to go to Lowe's to pick up some

gravel instead of walking a good distance to a creek bed and hauling sacks of gravel on our back, up a hill, like we did in Kenya. We remembered, too, how giving, gracious and faith-filled the people we met there were. We are still connected with folks we met there and that was now over ten years ago! Next summer's trip is sure to offer life changing moments and long-lasting connections both in Guatemala as well as with others from Good Shepherd. With past trips including folks from age 12 to those nearly 80, the sharing of knowledge and energy was a blessing all on its own.

If you would like to learn more about this trip opportunity, I would encourage you to stop by the informational table in the narthex between services on September 8th, 15th and 22nd. Folks from the Guatemala 2020 planning team will be there to answer your questions and/or provide registration information. October 1 is the commitment date so that we can begin securing our work site and make travel arrangements. If you're ready to say "yes," you can sign up on the Good Shepherd Connect app or <https://goodshepherdlutheran.tpsdb.com/OnlineReg/81>

Whether you choose to consider this trip or not, your prayers are much appreciated for those planning and participating in this experience.

God's peace,
Becky Howard

"A Mother's Story" by Janet Smith

I've never publicly shared my story here at church before. I was afraid of the responses that I would have gotten. There is that old children's rhyme that goes "sticks and stones can break my bones but words can never hurt me". We all know that our words can be very hurtful, however, I need to speak out now in hopes that my story can be a help to others who are struggling with these same issues.

I grew up in a conservative household. I attended a Missouri Synod Lutheran Church and elementary school. I believed marriage was between one man and one woman. I knew nothing about 'gay' people and frankly I didn't want to know anything.

During her high school years my daughter began to have serious mental health problems. She began to cut herself and contemplated suicide. I didn't know why this was happening. I thought that I was going to lose her. My husband and I did everything that we knew to do to help her. After considerable struggle and mental stress for all of us, it was revealed that my daughter wanted to become my son.

At first I thought that this was just a passing whim. She and I talked to a therapist who dealt with transgender issues. I thought that my daughter would change her mind when she heard about the medical procedures that would be involved. She didn't. She was willing to handle all the changes involved.

I was afraid to talk about it because I felt that most people wouldn't understand. This was about the time that the ELCA voted to ordain gay and lesbian clergy and I lost some good friends because of that vote. I asked my pastor at the time if a transgender man could marry a woman and was told that they would be considered a same sex couple. Since this was before 2015 such a marriage would have been illegal in Missouri.

My daughter began her transformation by writing to all of our relatives informing them of her decision. To my initial surprise, she received letters of support from all of them. I shouldn't have been surprised because love is a powerful force.

I was not supportive of my daughter at first. I felt like I was losing a daughter especially when she changed her birth name. I had trouble using the correct pronoun for him. It was extremely difficult to accept but as she transformed to he, I saw how happy he became.

There was no more cutting, no suicide plan and no more self hate. I knew now that he had made the right decision for him. His choice was not a lifestyle choice; it was a life saving choice. I had lost a daughter but I gained a son. A son who broadened my mind and taught me that definitions can be limiting, even hurtful.

Two years ago my son married the love of his life and they are living happily in Colorado. Who am I to say that their love is wrong or that God doesn't love them and want to be in a relationship with them. I am so proud of my son for persevering in his pursuit to become the person and

gender that he knew he was. A mother has to love a child like that.

At his wedding reception, the table favors were keys with the following words attached; "Love is the key". How appropriate. I will be voting in favor of the new welcoming statement in the hope that all who are struggling with belonging can find a safe, supportive place to be.

You Belong - Discerning Together **by Jen Wade**

Hello again! This September 29th, we will be having a congregational meeting to discern if we at Good Shepherd are ready to adopt the Proposed Welcoming Statement that was developed through the work of the You Belong team. We heard from a number of folks that it would be helpful to know what implementation might look like in order to make a more informed decision. This makes a lot of sense, so we asked ourselves, "What would we want to put out there, if this welcoming statement passes?" After a few designs and redesigns with the help of the office staff, we now have a pretty good idea of what would make sense to us. The pastors and church council did like what we came up with, but our plans are still tentative pending feedback and the results of the congregational meeting. There are four places where it made sense to us to share information about our welcome: the Good Shepherd website, the changeable sign out front, the church entrances and on the announcements at services. We showed slides and discussed the thinking behind each placement at a temple talk a few weeks ago, but if you are interested and missed it, we have added that information to the Good Shepherd member's website. (password: MartyLuther) Let us know what you think!

Also, the pastors are hosting a forum in the evening for those who have questions or concerns about the Proposed Welcome Statement on Tuesday, September 3rd, 7-8pm in room 205 for anyone interested.

I'd like to once again thank each of you for coming along this far with us on this journey. We are looking forward to the sacred conversations in the weeks to come!

A Summary of the Forum for Questions and Concerns about the Proposed Welcome Statement established by the You Belong Committee held on August 26.

About 40 members and staff assembled to share their beliefs and concerns about proceeding with the proposal as stated by the You Belong Team. While we were all in agreement the You Belong Team had put a lot of work and thought into the process, we felt their view throughout offered a forum for those in favor of this change while not offering a platform for those who did not agree.

- The main thrust of this meeting today was to bring to the table ideas and notions that were not necessarily contrary to the You Belong Team proposal, but to discuss whether there really was a need to make a change in our Welcoming Statement at all. The current mission of Good Shepherd is “Following Christ, Growing in Faith, and Sharing God’s Love”. Most of those attending felt the current statement was adequate and reflected the feelings of the congregation. This statement should be the most important thing Good Shepherd promotes and “All are Welcome!” to share that mission.
- Good Shepherd is Welcoming already, this extra step of a new policy seems unnecessary.
- Those expressing concerns about the direction this team was taking felt the leadership and the You Belong Team left them with unanswered questions when approached.
- The need to develop a new policy apparently stemmed from a congregational survey taken over 3 years ago. It was unclear where this appeared in the survey.
- The format followed by the You Belong Team was taken from the website, “Reconciling in Christ” (RIC). This format, when followed, does not allow a venue for anyone opposing the process to be heard. The temple talks and presentations were all one-sided. If approved on September 29th, does that mean the church will have to add the “Reconciled in Christ” (RIC) logo to the sign outside and on all the doors. Can the policy be adopted without having RIC logos or the proposed multi-color heart logos around the church?
- If this proposal is adopted, the controversy concerning same sex marriage was a concern for some attending.

The result of this discussion was that further work needs to be done and both sides need to be heard.

There will be another meeting to continue this discourse next **Tuesday, September 3rd at 7:00 pm**. Please plan on attending if you feel you would like to contribute to this discussion prior to the planned congregational vote on **September 29th**.

Summarized by Jim Brooks

Pumpkin Patch 2019 is Moving on Up the Hill!

In just a few weeks the north end of our property will be filled with pumpkins! This year will see the patch in a new location, but with all the activities and fun familiar to our community. Families from all around our area will be coming to share time together, choosing pumpkins and enjoying the fall weather with outdoor games and our perennially popular jokes (*How do you fix a hole in your jack o 'lantern? With a pumpkin patch!*). In addition to being a great community outreach event, this year the Pumpkin Patch will support these three projects:



- **West County Interfaith Alliance**
- **2020 Mission Trip to Guatemala**
- **With God's Little Ones Mission of Rudy and Dorothy Schaser**
- The Pumpkin Patch also has a profound impact on the people living on the Navajo Reservation in Farmington, New Mexico, where our pumpkins are grown. With unemployment at 42% on the reservation, the Pumpkin Patch employs a staff that is 100% Navajo and hires over 300 additional Pueblo workers for the harvest. For many of the workers, the Pumpkin Patch is the only opportunity to provide for their families.

Important Patch Dates

- **Set-up Sunday, Sept 29;** we'll head up to the patch right after the congregational meeting
- **Friday, Oct 4 at 4:00 pm - The Pumpkins Are Here!** Join the fun on

the north hill as we pass the pumpkins from the truck to their pods. There are jobs for all ages, so bring the family! Join us for the entire time or just an hour – whatever time you have available will help make the job quicker. We need LOTS of hands to unload LOTS of pumpkins! Attention students and scouts – come earn service hours!

- **Pumpkin Patch cashier/sales trainings dates – Wednesday, Oct 2 at 6:30 pm & Sunday Oct 6 at noon.** Learn open/close procedures, important money handling procedures and pumpkin care tips needed to help out at the patch.
- **Fall Festival & Bake Sale, Oct 12: 10:00 am – 5:00 pm** – Games, crafts, face painting, fun fall science experiments, pumpkin tossing with the trebuchet, bake sale...a day full of fun! Check the Pumpkin Patch display in the Narthex to sign up to help or bake a treat for the sale.

Pumpkin Patch Sign-ups

We're using **SignUp.com** to organize our upcoming Pumpkin Patch. Here's how it works:

1. Click this link to go to Signup.com - <http://signup.com/go/dFqtUhc> (or go to <http://gslcpumpkinpatch.com> for a link to Signup.com)
2. Enter your email address (you will not need to register an account or keep a password)
3. Review options listed and choose the spot(s) you like
4. Sign up!
5. (Note: SignUp.com does not share your email address with anyone)
6. For questions, or for more information, contact Karen Kallansrud at kkallansrud@sbcglobal.net, or (636) 527-0402 or Dawn Schwab at drhschwab@gmail.com or (314) 223-2040.

We'll see you at the Pumpkin Patch!



A Call of Love

by: Vicki Haugen

Moving can be difficult, physically and emotionally, and I experienced both while moving to the St. Louis area in 2014. But, now where was God *calling me to volunteer* in my new

community?

A few months later I attended a WELCA Triannual gathering and heard Becca Stevens, founder of Thistle Farms (www.thistlefarms.org). Her passion and concern for helping women who had survived prostitution, trafficking and addiction was contagious. These traumatized women needed to relearn how to trust, make friends, and function in everyday situations. This was especially challenging after moving to a new city and home, filled with strangers.

I learned that Magdalene St Louis had a similar mission and it would be a great volunteer opportunity. With the help of friends, we began by assembling Welcome Baskets with sheets, towels, lotion and shampoo for their new residents. We also started monthly “*Breaking Bread*” gatherings and cooking classes that provide meals and generate joy-filled, loving conversations and friendships.

Last year Magdalene House was rebranded *Bravely* (www.bravely.org) to highlight the difficult healing journey the residents must travel. As the “Church Ladies”, we continue to praise the Lord as we share our gifts! Love is Brave!

A "Wink from the Welcome Ministry Team by Elliott Haugen



Welcome to September! For many children, youth and adults this is a time of starting or continuing their educational journeys. During the summer, however, some people attended high school or college class reunions to celebrate the completion of an educational milestone. It was funny to hear some reunion attendees mention how old their classmates looked!

I did not have a class reunion this summer, but certainly noticed the opposite – how young my doctor, dentist, mechanic, and other service providers looked. In July, I stopped by Good Shepherd’s Vacation Bible School (VBS) and found the church full of young children, counselors, and young-at-heart volunteers. The scene of so much excitement, energy and engagement almost made me wonder if I was in the right place since I recognized so few of them. Proudly and joyfully, I knew I was at Good

Shepherd!

Please take a moment to welcome and share a smile with all the young and older “children of God” and show them how much we love them and want them to have great relationships with God and each other.

“Do to others as you would have them do to you.” Luke 6:31

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[Good Shepherd Calendar](#)

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