



# Shepherd's Staff

The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church · December 2019

## Christmas Eve Services

**3:30 & 5:30 pm** Family Services, Holy Communion, & Live Nativity  
**8:00 & 10:30 pm** Candlelight Services & Holy Communion



**Rich Wolf**  
Senior Pastor  
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A few weeks ago, I referred in my sermon to the frequent meme we see on Facebook and elsewhere; *"Stay Calm and Carry On"*. As I mentioned, the phrase was part of an effort by the British government to encourage the English people to remain steadfast during the darkest days of WW2. The message was don't give up, don't give in, don't get discouraged because they'd be able to get through those difficult times together by relying upon each other.

In the sermon, I mentioned the similarity to Jesus' advice to his followers in the early dark days of opposition and uncertainty that they were to face. It was good advice in the First Century, and it is certainly still good advice for us in the Twenty-First. I suggested that of first importance Jesus wanted them to remember *"who"* they are and *"whose"* they are. No matter what they would face, they could see their way through. God would support and sustain them. The Holy Spirit would go with them. Jesus himself would be present with them even in those times of doubt and difficulty.

I would be so bold as to suggest that this is also good advice in our current situation here at Good Shepherd. Conflict and disagreement is definitely not unknown in the Church. In fact, historically it seems to be one of the Church's most descriptive

attributes. And so, it comes as no surprise that Good Shepherd will also have its moments of conflict and uncertainty. Throughout our history, there have been times when the Body of Christ here in this place has suffered its own share of disagreement and pain.

And yet, through it all, God has never given up on the Church. And God has never given up on us. The Holy Spirit still moves among us, prodding and encouraging us to *“Follow Christ, Grow in Faith, and Share God’s Love”*. As saints and sinners, we often fall far short, but we also share in more than a few instances where God has accomplished wonderful things through our ministry together. Through it all, Christ is present among us in Word and Sacrament and makes his presence known among us in so many ways that we cannot count them all. With God’s guidance and help, Good Shepherd has been making a difference in people’s lives for a long time. And we can be assured that effective, vibrant ministry will certainly continue here. We can count on that. Jesus promised us as much.

I know that recent events have been a source of misunderstanding, mistrust, and pain for many. There is need for a time of healing; a time for additional caring and listening; for an opportunity to reestablish relationships that have been strained; for forgiveness to be extended and received. It will probably not be easy and there will certainly be challenges ahead.

And so, I encourage us all to take our cue from Jesus: Remember “who” we are and “whose” we are. Remember that we can do so much more together than apart. Trust in God’s promise to support and sustain this community of faith even through difficult times. Trust that Christ walks with us even when the path forward seems difficult. Stay calm, knowing that the Holy Spirit will guide us to an even deeper understanding of God’s presence among us. Carry on with the work of ministry, knowing that others see the love of Christ in the way that we continue to love each other even when it’s difficult.

Pastor Rich



**Glenn Kraft**  
**Council President**

**LOVE ANYWAY**

First, I want to thank all those who have been able to respond to my letter regarding the current giving gap. Your ability to joyfully give to our core ministry matters and helps us to progress in all that we do.

Second, I want to thank Bishop Susan Candea and those members who attended her rescheduled Town Hall Meeting on Monday, November 18<sup>th</sup>. She opened reminding us that differences have been a core part of Christianity since the very beginning. She referenced that the fact that the Bible has 4 gospels speaks to how faithful

Christians experienced those early times with differences. Christians held key understandings of Jesus life, crucifixion and resurrection but emphasize aspects very uniquely. Bishop Candeia ended the Town Hall meeting reminding us that what unites us in our differences is our core Lutheran understanding of salvation, grace and a shared mystery of God.

The exchanges at the meeting were honest and still quite painful. I was asked at the end of that meeting, “what are we going to do to heal?” I mentioned that Bishop’s visit was just the start. I reflected that more talking alone has not equated to resolution and that we must be open to new methods to consider for healing. I do not believe that “doing nothing” is effective. One member suggested we begin with forgiveness. This was a peaceful moment. Sweeping this under the rug, and avoiding conversation about it and hoping it will go away, will only make it worse. Sometimes we must have the hard conversations to strengthen our relationships. We have a chance to help this wound heal with a smooth and healthy scar, so long as we do the hard work of reconciliation.

Recently, I ran across a great T Shirt from an unique organization that states simply **LOVE ANYWAY**. Can you love me anyway as a flawed simple person trying his best to help to lead our church? Can I love you anyway even though I have been hurt by many in this process? Can we love each other anyway, because, as Bishop Candeia reminded us, our core faith is united in Christ and in strong Lutheran traditions? These are all questions now. However, we never have to ask if Jesus will love us anyway, because he always has and always will.

Please contact me directly if you have a particular suggestion for Council and leadership to consider for further healing.

Thank you for the opportunity to help lead at this time.  
Glenn



## Feed My Starving Children

### Thank You From Thousands of Starving Children!

The amazing and record results of the 13<sup>th</sup> GSLC Feed My Starving Children MobilePack are in.

- Over 3200 volunteers
- \$200K funds raised as of 11/10/19
- 970,488 meals packed
- 2658 kids fed for a year!!
- 8% increase in meals and kids fed

So far, meals have been shipped to Uganda, Nicaragua, and Haiti. Without **Good Shepherd**, this would not have happened. **You** - Volunteer, Donate,

help bring in the community, businesses, schools, civic organizations, church and faith partners, friends and neighbors. The results of your doing God's work are incredible. In 13 years :

- 20,000 Volunteers
- 5.9 million meals packed
- Over \$1million donated
- 16,218 starving kids fed for a year.

To pack more meals and save more starving children, things are changing next year. The pack has a new name - **FEED THE NEED – STL**, is moving to a new place - **Queeny Park** and in a new month – **August**. The preliminary goal is to pack 1.2 million meals. Enough to feed over 3,200 starving children for a year!

**SAVE THE DATE – August 14-16, 2020**

**We pray you will continue to support the Mobile Pack with your life-giving volunteer time and generous donations.**

Thanks to your generosity and love, you save lives and make a difference!  
The FMSC Team

**“He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry.” Psalm 146:7**



### **Lutheran Campus Ministry-St. Louis**

Lutheran Campus Ministry (LCM) is an ELCA ministry that serves primarily students at Washington University and St. Louis University, although it is open to students from all the universities/colleges across the St. Louis metro area. The center of the campus ministry is a block off Washington University's campus, in a home that Bethel Lutheran Church has generously provided for LCM use. This home is a great location for students to hang out, relax, commune with other Christians in a safe environment. Most of the students come from an ELCA background, but not all. Both undergraduate and graduate students participate in the ministries at LCM. The students especially enjoy gathering on Sunday evening for a meal and worship.

Here are some quotes from students about what LCM means to them:

“LCM is an oasis where I can be and grow to my fullest potential and be challenged by others in the community”. Haana

“LCM is a home away from home. Everyone is very welcoming and supportive of each other. I enjoy seeing everyone each week and getting to hear about their

weeks". Kelsey

"A place I can come and be myself without worrying about everything else going on." Sydney

"LCM gives me a space on campus to live and grow my faith". Viktoria

LCM is experiencing a year of transition. The former pastor accepted a call to the campus ministry program at the University of Arizona. We currently have an interim Pastor and are in the midst of the call process. Hopefully a new permanent Pastor will be in place soon.

LCM relies on donations from individuals and local congregations to support their ministries. Good Shepherd has been a valuable partner in this ministry. Thank you for your generous support. If you are interested in supporting LCM in St. Louis, here are some ways that you can help.

1. Keep LCM in your prayers, especially as we seek a new Pastor.
2. Provide a Sunday night meal (15-20 people). Sign up at [www.lcmstl.org](http://www.lcmstl.org)
3. Sign up to play trivia at our annual Trivia night on February 1<sup>st</sup> at [www.lcmstl.org/trivia](http://www.lcmstl.org/trivia)
4. Donate directly to Lutheran Campus Ministry or through the Advent and Christmas offerings at GSLC which will benefit LCM.

If you have any questions about Lutheran Campus Ministries-St. Louis, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,  
Kirsten Molskness  
GSLC member and LCM-STL board member.

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## **Prayer Shawl Ministry**

Hello to my many friends at Good Shepherd. I'm one of the colorful prayer shawls longing to find a new home with someone who needs a hug from God; Someone who is struggling with trials in their life, illness, or a celebration of joy and laughter. I'd be so happy if you would give me to someone you know.

As Christmas is nearing, perhaps you might consider giving me as a gift to brighten a person's day. There are many lovely colors to choose from. We have a dedicated ministry that meets the 3rd Tuesday morning at 10 AM in the fireside room.

I've heard them say they would be delighted to welcome more friends to come join in the sharing and chatter. If you don't know how to knit or crochet, but want to learn, they will be glad to help you.

Should you get chilled during worship, please take one of us to wrap around your shoulders, then return me to the display table in the narthex. Envelopes are available for a contribution for the purchase of yarn, however, we are a gift so please don't feel obligated.

May your Christmas be filled with many blessings and love as we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christchild. God's peace be with you.

Submitted by Barb Rouse on behalf of the Prayer Shawl

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## A "Wink from the Welcome Ministry Team by Elliott Haugen



**Merry Christmas!** Some may be concerned they won't be ready for Christmas 2019 because there may not be enough time to prepare. Fortunately, we have Advent to help us focus on the coming of Christ; this year Advent starts on December 1 and ends on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Now that sounds like enough time to prepare for the celebration of the birth of Jesus and to reflect on the blessings of this year. Actually, we should be saying "Happy New Year" since Advent is also the start of the church year.

So what do preparation, memories, and a new year have to do with the welcoming ministry at Good Shepherd? Three times during each year the Welcome Team helps host a two-part informational session for persons considering joining our church. The first Sunday provides an opportunity for attendees to learn more about Good Shepherd and for us to learn about them. The second Sunday focuses on personal faith journeys and experiences. It is during this sharing that Christmas is often mentioned as a time when family and religion merge to form memorable, positive influences in people's lives and relationships.

It is wonderful that during Advent we will welcome another group of individuals and families into Good Shepherd's community of faith. Together, we will prepare to welcome Christ and others into our lives, make new Christmas memories, and share a new year together. **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all!**

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Good Shepherd Lutheran Church | 636-391-6685 | [goodshepherdlutheran.com](http://goodshepherdlutheran.com)

[Good Shepherd Calendar](#)

STAY CONNECTED

