



Shepherd's Staff



The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church • May 2020



Glenn Kraft
Council President

Looking Out...Looking Ahead

I know we can all relate to this image of looking out our window. We may not enjoy quite this view, but we have shared many images of home life or favorite places via social media, email and video meetings. Looking out can make us feel alone and isolated. Looking out may also create a sensation that as we are safe in our homes, that something out there might “get us” if we leave. It’s such a very strange time and we are experiencing this together.



I would like to share with you that while we look towards a time when we can safely venture out and eventually be reunited in new ways at church, that your Leaders, Staff and Council are continuing to plan ahead. The staff meets frequently and enjoys good communication through video meetings. Council held their first Zoom Council meeting and it was really good to see each other. And many of you are connecting with each other to share, to study and to care. More than ever, we can be grateful for functional modes of communication.

Council will meet next week with the Assistant to the Bishop, David Whetter to start the process of planning our transition. As we celebrate Pastor Rich’s service and honor his retirement, we will start to review our needs and structure. We will re-visit our core purpose as we endeavor to create the MSP (Ministry Site Profile). The rostered staff have assembled an interim staffing plan which is designed to help us navigate through this period without a formal Interim Senior Pastor. This plan has been approved by Council. Pastor Josh will serve Interim Head of Staff. Pastor Josh, together with the Executive Committee will manage staff until a new Senior Pastor is

called. Both Pastor Amy and Deacon Suzie had scheduled sabbaticals for 2020. However, given all the uncertainty of Coronavirus, these plans may be modified or rescheduled as the situation evolves. Of course, flexibility on all of our parts will be required to move through this time.

I also wanted to recognize the good work of the Healing Team, which assembled in January to continue the process of working through issues resulting from the vote for the Welcoming Statement. We are sourcing a local facilitator who will assist us when we reassemble. The focus of this effort is to help us all to appreciate that in our differences we can be a healthy Church Together. We look forward to learning more together. The members of the healing team (alphabetically) are:

Steve & Clara Anderson, Pastor Josh Brecht, Deacon Suzie Everingham, Jon Fatzinger, Kendra Hines, Rod & Carol Hollenbeck, Gary Kallansrud, Gary Klopf, Sally Kloppe, Glenn Kraft, Dominick & Sharon Misuraca, Dave Smith, Steve Spoerle, Pastor Amy Stewart, Jan Thompson, Pastor Rich Wolf and Lyle & Carol Ziemann.

I just want to thank all of those who are watching out for our Church and for each other. We have so much to look forward to as we look out. Let's keep our focus and look ahead to a church reunited and energized to *Follow Christ, Grow in Faith and Share God's Love*.

Stay Safe.

Glenn Kraft
President

COVID-19 Relief Fund

Some of you have said, "we have been fortunate through this difficult time. What can we do to help our fellow Good Shepherd members who may have lost jobs or income?" Others of you have shared stories of loss and struggle. In response to this, we have created a fund at Good Shepherd to help those in need. The purpose of this fund is primarily to provide financial assistance to members of Good Shepherd that have lost jobs or income due to this crisis. (If donations exceed the needs of GSLC members we will use any extra to support the wider church through the ELCA Covid-19 Response Fund)

If you would like to donate to this relief fund at Good Shepherd, you may mail a check made out to Good Shepherd with "Covid-19 Relief Fund" on the memo line. You may also donate online, through our mobile app. (Please note that donations cannot be designated for *specific individuals*, but given to the fund with pastoral discretion for distribution.)

Funds are available. If you have any needs during this time, please contact one of the pastors or deacons and we will walk with you and work to ensure your needs are met during this difficult season.

In 1 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul writes, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it

is with Christ...Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” Thank you for being the body of Christ, caring and providing for one another to ensure that the needs of all are met.

In Christ,

[Pastor Rich Wolf](mailto:rwolf@gslcelca.org) (rwolf@gslcelca.org), cell: 832-363-7371

[Pastor Josh Brecht](mailto:jbrecht@gslcelca.org) (jbrecht@gslcelca.org), cell: 763-486-9418

[Pastor Amy Stewart](mailto:astewart@gslcelca.org) (astewart@gslcelca.org), cell: 636-222-8758

[Deacon Suzie Everingham](mailto:severingham@gslcelca.org) (severingham@gslcelca.org), cell: 314-413-1230

[Deacon Gail Brecht](mailto:gbrecht@gslcelca.org) (gbrecht@gslcelca.org), cell: 763-229-7469

Stewardship Team

Thank You Church

When we met for the annual meeting, the congregation debated and then approved 2020 budgeted contributions to cover all of our planned expenses. It was our collective challenge to rise up and support the full ministry of Good Shepherd with our programs outreach and benevolence, despite the financial shortfall at the end of last year. In January and February, as the economy raced to new heights, our contributions were tracking behind this bold challenge. Then it became clear that the Coronavirus was changing our world and we followed the guidance of officials and ceased meeting together.

Each of us experienced sudden requirements of these new restrictions. This impacted work, education and social meetings. At Good Shepherd, the staff and leaders considered new ways to connect, to care and to worship. Since the abrupt interruption of this virus and unplanned economic disruption, Good Shepherd has experienced a beautiful response. Many of our members have switched to on-line giving. Others sent their checks by mail, adding amounts in recognition that this is going to be a tough time. Others have reflected that as their income appears stable, they understand that others just cannot give as their incomes have ceased. **The contributions for March almost equaled the contributions for January and February combined. Wow!**

Thank You Church! We are grateful. Please continue, as you can, to support the operating fund as this is vital support to our core mission. We have also become aware of members who are financially hurting due to unemployment. If you desire to contribute to a new Coronavirus Fund, we will ensure those dollars are distributed to those in need, through our Pastors. Some have reflected that the government checks might be well used for such a cause.

The full impact of this virus is unknown. What we do know today is that we are Church together. We are apart, yet coming together in new ways. We are uncertain, yet sure in our belief that God is with us and that we must not fear.

Please celebrate this moment.

The Stewardship Team



Thank You! From Lexi Swain

I hope everyone is doing well amidst the uncertainty of Covid-19. I am writing this article to say thank you for the donations I received from Good Shepherd for my seminary scholarship. The Iliff School of Theology ended up matching the scholarship, so I received \$1,750. I am so grateful to have received this scholarship, especially during this time in which I am unable to get the hours in for my youth ministry job that I normally would virtually. With this scholarship from Good Shepherd and another scholarship I received from the First Plymouth Foundation, almost my entire spring quarter tuition has been covered! Your donations and prayers have made such a difference for me, and I am looking forward to continuing my education at Iliff with much more financial ease. THANK YOU Good Shepherd!



Community News from the faithful . . .

As you know, during the “social distancing due to COVID19,” we, as a community of faith, have tried to stay spiritually connected. We have a Stay Connected Team who are making calls to all members, we have a Caring Angels group that is ever ready to help pick up food and medicines, etc. During this time, also, I have had the pleasure of talking with many of you about the ways you are staying close with friends and family at this time. I thought I would share some of those things in case others need “how to” ideas.

- Having “Drive by” Birthdays.
- Alerting friends and family of Birthdays so that calls and Facebook “hellos” make the day special for all.
- Making masks for hospitals, nursing homes.
- Picking up food and meds for neighbors.
- Playing Badminton with neighborhood children who are so tired of being inside.
- Playing ball with friends – keeping distance.
- Lots of walks - with children, with dogs, by yourself.
- Many are using this time for long put-off projects, cleaning closets, painting, pulling weeds (sad, but even that is exciting – just to be out of the house)
- Getting a few baby chicks (I’ve also heard puppies and kitties, too)
- A dad/son project of building a chicken coop.
- My daughter, Tara, is turning our 28’ x 12’ chicken house into an art studio
- Having a contest to see who can make “butter” the fastest using heavy whipping cream and shaking in a glass jar.
- Sunday drives in the country.
- Having personal picnics – in the yard, in the car, in the house.
- Having a picnic with the grandchildren by sitting on front porch and they are inside in the foyer with glass screen door.
- Dressing up for lunch or dinner – yet staying in.
- Sitting outside at night and looking at the stars.
- Playing LOTS of games together as a family.
- Making bread, or pasta, or whatever “family” recipe that always seemed like too much time and trouble in the past.

- Creative cooking by seeing what you have in the pantry and frig. and asking “Google” for ideas of what you can make.
- Having full blown movie nights with popcorn (made from scratch in a pan) or popcorn popper.
- Meeting in a grocery store parking lot to talk car to car (sort of face to face).
- Many have noted the gift of listening to [GSLC on-line worship services](http://www.goodshepherdlutheran.com/worship-online/).
- Others have appreciated Zoom meetings Bible studies, FLY (the amazing gift to literally see each other has been so helpful).
- Time spent just “being” - reading a book, or time for introspection and prayer.
- Utilizing the many free virtual tours – [National Park Service](http://www.nps.gov/) for tours of parks, [history channel](http://www.history.com/) for a variety of shows, virtual tours of [Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History](http://www.naturalhistory.si.edu/) (www.naturalhistory.si.edu) , [CNN](http://www.cnn.com/) (www.cnn.com) for a variety of museums, etc., and finally [The Moth](http://www.themoth.org/) (www.themoth.org) for a variety of real-life stories told by individuals. “The Moth” is a favorite of our family.

Finally, one member that I was talking with noted a story he heard that was very meaningful to him at this time. It was the story about a Native American tribe that were known for doing a “rain dance” that always produced rain. Wondering how this occurred the Native American tribe across the river invited the chief across to explain. The question posed, “what do you do to produce rain?” Oh, said the visiting chief, we don’t do anything special, we just keep dancing until it rains.” For this member who survived COV19 – this was a powerful statement . . . after spending 10 days in the hospital – he said, “Suzie, I just kept dancing. Please tell everyone to JUST KEEP DANCING . . . one day we will be through this and it will rain.” Perhaps, then a rainbow will appear as God’s gift to us of love and hope for the future.

I know there are endless ideas of how each of you are using this time, and I would like to share more ideas, too. So, if you have something you would like to share to the community – let me know. You can e-mail me at severingham@gslcelca.org or call 314-413-1230. We will put them in the Friday News Blast as “Community News from the Faithful.”

Joyfully in Christ, Suzie



Kathy Rebholz
Director, Building Blocks Preschool
krebholz@gslcelca.org

Even during this quarantine, our students, parents and staff have found multiple ways to stay connected. While our teachers record eLearning videos and activities, teach on-line curriculum and implement *Zoom* teaching and playdates, I work behind the scenes here at Building Blocks. Looking to feel connected to Good Shepherd right now? Want something to lift your spirits? Enjoy these snapshots and words of encouragement from our teaching staff. Watch our upbeat [Building Blocks Preschool Video](#) – Quarantine Style.

If there's one thing I've learned, it is that we have to live each day with faith. When we look at our lives, we see only the current situation, like a snapshot. But God...God

News from Feed My Starving Children/Feed the Need STL



Due to COVID-19, Feed My Starving Children has had to suspend all MobilePack and permanent site packing until July 31st.

In 2020 FMSC committed to packing 1 million meals a day because the need is so great. However, they had to suspend packing in mid-March, and they had only enough packed meals to last through early April.

To understand the impact of Feed My Starving Children: In 2019 FMSC sent 1,286 shipments to 75 partners in 67 countries totaling 349,968,072 meals. Enough to feed 958,816 children a daily meal for an entire year.

Now close to a million children are at high risk without the life-giving meals from FMSC.

FMSC is trying to find alternate ways to pack meals until the volunteers can safely return. They have partnered with one of their ingredient suppliers to use their facility to package bulk meals for orphanages, schools and hospitals. Therefore, they have been able to ship a few containers of bulk meals. They are also working to find more options. Unfortunately, these alternate packing methods increases the cost per meal. We are hoping that we still be able to pack meals for FMSC at Queeny Park on August 14 - 16th or on a later date if necessary. Please check our new [website](http://www.feedtheneedstl.org), (www.feedtheneedstl.org) for more information.

And please pray for this situation. And because funding is more vital than ever, please consider donating to Feed the Need STL. Donate directly to MobilePack #2008-010SC [here](http://www.feedtheneedstl.org/donate/) (www.feedtheneedstl.org/donate/).

A "Wink from the Welcome Ministry Team by Elliott Haugen



Happy Easter – yes, it’s still Easter (until the end of May) and the messages of hope, new and renewed life, and spring are as meaningful as ever. In the past I wrote that May meant time to be outside regularly, celebrate end-of-school milestones, and start spending more time together. Now, we just have to be more patient and creative in these activities.

For some countries, including the early USA, May 1st meant the start of summer and celebrations of dancing, singing, and treats. “May baskets” were filled with flowers or treats and left at a person's front door as the giver ran off – wow, sounds like social distancing. This year we are practicing very different acts of kindness, caring, communications and love. And as soon as it is safe, we will be back together singing, dancing, and shouting “Hosanna”.

Please note that May Day has nothing to do with the emergency radio call of “mayday, mayday...” - that term was derived from a French term for “help me!” Nonetheless, let us continue to be aware of and responsive to those who need some help in this challenging time.

Finally, each May your Welcome Ministry reminds you to invite or bring someone to church. Please share the ways we are virtually worshiping, educating, communicating, and staying connected. May God’s love continue to inspire, lead, and embrace everyone.

Let me hear in the morning of thy steadfast love, for in thee I put my trust. Teach me the way I should go, for to thee I lift up my soul. Psalm 143:8

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Good Shepherd Lutheran Church | 636-391-6685 | goodshepherdlutheran.com

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