



# Shepherd's Staff

The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

November 2020



## **Robert Fingland** **A Message from the Council President**

Perhaps it's from my current perspective as President of GSLC that I have an enhanced awareness of the number of people and volunteers it takes to run a church of the scale of Good Shepherd. Even in the best of times it is sometimes a challenge to fill all the needed slots with people that are energized and have a passion for the mission of the church. Given how the COVID-19 pandemic impacts almost everything we do these days including how we worship, work, learn, exercise and participate in a myriad of activities, it is no surprise that the challenge of filling all the volunteer openings for Good Shepherd has become more challenging.

Martin Luther stated that, *"Faith is God's work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God. This faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing. It is impossible for it not to be doing good works incessantly."* I am hoping we all can pick one or two things where our passions lie that can assist the church in moving forward with its mission.

There are currently several opportunities that stand out right now where we need assistance.

- Serving in Video Ministry for worship
- Serving as Head of the Worship Committee
- Stewardship committee could stand another couple of members
- Facilities Management and Planning Committee (FMPC) needs another couple of members
- We will eventually need greeters to check people in and ushers when we return to in-person worship

As you fill out your Stewardship Commitment cards and review your time & talents, keep in mind that your support for GSLC is greatly needed. Not only financial support

is needed, but also your time and talents. There is a fairly comprehensive listing of Involvement Opportunities included with your commitment cards as well as the following link from Good Shepherd's web page:

<https://goodshepherdlutheran.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/GSLC-Involvement-Opportunities-Directory-2020.pdf>

These are opportunities available to assist at Good Shepherd as well as the appropriate contact person to get involved. I'm asking you to raise your hand and join in the work of your church, even in these difficult times. Thank you to all the members that support Good Shepherd in many ways.

In Christ  
Robert Fingland, Council President

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**Pr. Josh Brecht**  
**Associate Pastor/Interim Lead Pastor**

**The Jesus Way**

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As you read this, we are on the verge of an election like none we have ever seen in our nation's history. The tension and emotion surrounding this day is weighing on us all. An obvious component of this pressure is the crisis of the pandemic, but it goes much deeper than that. We live in unprecedented times of misinformation, divisiveness, and polarization. When the floodgates of the internet opened a couple of decades ago access to information hit us before we even knew what we were seeing. Combine that with social media and modern technology and we have a such a deluge of information we cannot sift fact from fiction, truth from manipulation, and we don't know who or what to trust. Never, in my lifetime, have I seen anything like this. People who live *next door* to one another can have completely different perceptions of reality. People in the same *church* can have completely different perceptions of reality. One may look at a situation and cry, "evil," while the other cries, "holy!" I may look at a situation and cry, "good," while my fellow Christian looks and cries, "bad."

When I look out my window (literally and metaphorically) I see fear. I see despair. I see anxiety. When I look out into our society I see judgement. I see dishonesty. I see hatred.

How do we, as the Church, as Christians, respond to this time? We do not change the world by yelling. We do not change the world by arguing or convincing. We change the world by embodying Jesus in **every** aspect of our lives.

Modeling a different way, the **Jesus** way.

The **kingdom** way.

We love one another, listen to one another, respect and honor one another **in** the Church first. We create the kind of community among ourselves that God desires for the world. This type of life, this type of community will shine like a light breaking the horizon at dawn.

It starts with me. It starts with us.

When the world is overwhelmed with fear, we remember:

*Do not be afraid. - Luke 12:32*

When we start to be filled with despair, we remember:

*For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. - Romans 8:24-25*

When we feel anxiety, we remember:

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. - John 14:27*

When we are tempted or told to judge others, we remember:

*Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. - Luke 6:37*

When lies, dishonesty, or misinformation are perpetuated, we remember:

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." - John 14:6*

When hatred rises in our hearts, we remember:

*But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. - Matthew 5:44*

Jesus doesn't command us to love enemies to be nice. To love an enemy is to diffuse the bomb of hatred. It is active and intentional. It takes tremendous discipline and strength. Whatever happens in the month ahead, my prayer is that we, as Good Shepherd, would be a picture of Jesus for the world. That we will refuse to bow down to the idols of liberalism or conservatism. We refuse to bow down to the idolatry of an identity rooted in partisan labels of Republican or Democrat. As Christians, the only God we bow down to is the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The only identity we allow to lay claim on our lives is that which God gave us in baptism. "You are a child of God. You have been sealed by the Holy Spirit, and marked with the cross of Christ"

May we give all of ourselves to Jesus when he says to us:

*"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." - John 13:34*

In Christ,  
Pastor Josh



**John Fred**  
**Transition Team Chair**

**Transition Team Update**

First of all, heartfelt thanks to all who shared their memories of the congregation through the online form or at the Zoom event. They richly demonstrate the welcoming nature of Good Shepherd, its long history, and its

heart for others in our community and world. We also heard your stories of Good Shepherd's youth programs, music opportunities, commitment to benevolence and social causes, and (yes) challenges. We are exploring ways to bring these stories to the entire congregation so that present and future members can benefit from them.

In the meantime, the stories and memories shared are a critical foundation to the assessment of the current state and direction of our congregation. That assessment, along with the congregation's vision for the future and where it wants to go, in turn are the foundation for the profile of our church needed for the Call process. The Transition Team--in alignment with the Council--will concentrate on this visioning process in the coming weeks. We hope and pray that each of you will take the opportunity to contribute to that process (further details will be forthcoming).

In Peace,  
John Fred

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**Jamie De Geer**  
**Director of Music Ministry**

**What does the Advent/Christmas Season look like at Good Shepherd during a Pandemic?**

While things will look and feel quite different for us as we approach the end of 2020, the staff is planning several ways that we can celebrate together, both in person and on our own, that will help to make this season special! Look for more detailed announcements in your weekly Friday emails.

**Lighting Your Advent Candles:** We are looking for individuals and families to make video clips lighting your advent candles at home which will be used in a montage during our online and/or in person worship services during advent. Contact Emily Harrow [eharrow@gslcelca.org](mailto:eharrow@gslcelca.org) for detailed instructions. Videos would need to be submitted to Andrew Leach [aleach@gslcelca.org](mailto:aleach@gslcelca.org) before November 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Putting Up Decoration:** We are looking for small groups or family units to gather on your own and put up decorations on the outside stair rails, in the Narthex, in the Sanctuary and in Room #108. This needs to be completed before the first Sunday in Advent which is November 29<sup>th</sup>. Contact Brenda Ogroski [bogroski@gslcelca.org](mailto:bogroski@gslcelca.org) to volunteer. The tasks are broken down so that it would only take about an hour for 4-5 groups to complete at their convenience.

**Nativity Set Pictures:** We would like to get as many still photos as possible of your home nativity sets to use in our Christmas Eve worship services. Please submit photos to Andrew Leach [aleach@gslcelca.org](mailto:aleach@gslcelca.org) by December 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Carols & Cocoa - Telling the Story Together** - This *Special Outdoor Event on Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup> around Dusk* is for everyone to come together and celebrate the season. We will gather on the hill and in the upper parking lot to sing Christmas Carols and tell the Christmas Story with Narrators and Characters in Costumes. There will be a bonfire and you are also encouraged to bring portable firepits from home (if you have one) to add to the atmosphere and keep warm. We ask that you bring your own chairs and beverages

(cocoa, cider, etc.), wear masks, and remain physically distanced.

**Christmas Eve Worship Services:** We are planning for a variety of worship opportunities available on December 24<sup>th</sup> including in person in the Sanctuary, outside in cars on the lower parking lot and online. All the services will have the same basic format of **Lessons and Carols**, each with different instrumentation and leadership. For in person services, there will be a 100-125 person limit at each service and they will be spaced throughout the day to allow for sanitization between. There will be 1 outdoor service held for folks in cars on the lower parking lot broadcast over FM Radio. It will be similar to the indoor services but might have some different songs. All in person services will celebrate Holy Communion and Candle lighting (*electric tealights will be available or you are welcome to use your phone flashlight ... and outdoor attendees can bring their own candles and lighters to use if they choose*). One service will be recorded and posted online for home viewing.

**To determine how many services to plan for we are asking you to take the survey [HERE](#) indicating which service you might attend.**

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### **No Mask Left Behind Vicki Haugen**

"No Mask Left Behind is a project to make and give away (for free!) masks to individuals and organizations who need them. One of the most beautiful aspects of this ministry is that it is a collaboration between Good Shepherd members and their neighbors! It is truly an example of living out our discipleship beyond the walls our building, seeing the need God places before us and responding. If you are interested in learning more or helping with this ministry, contact [Vicki Haugen](#). Thanks be to God for this service to our community!". [Click Here](#) to see how we have helped out in the community.

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

Happy Thanksgiving! And "thank you" Good Shepherd members for building up, sustaining, and advancing this Church and its mission, ministries, and people. This is not a stewardship message, but it has similar elements. Your continued involvement is key to developing this community of Christ, faith, love and caring that is real and valued.



In October, we joyfully welcomed nine new members - and soon the baptism of one couple's child. During our Zoom new member orientation/informational sessions, these individuals shared why Good Shepherd has already had an impact on their lives. Their comments included the importance of a Christ-centered focus; Bible-based sermons; and the Lutheran theology found in the ELCA. Also mentioned was the importance of Sunday School; raising children within a faith-based setting; developing relationships with people of all ages; and of course, donuts and popcorn. They sought and want to add to the sense of community, to service and volunteering, and to a place where people are seen, accepted and loved. Therefore, thank you for being inviting, welcoming, and accepting - and living the Word of God.

*So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.* Ephesian 2:19-22

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### Feed My Starving Children Update

Please consider giving to Feed My Starving Children this month. They are still in desperate need of funds. Even though they have the capacity to pack more meals, they are limited by the lack of money to purchase ingredients. FMSC has only able to produce about one third of the 30 million meals a month it produced last year. And the need for MannaPack is even greater than ever.

One of FMSC's amazing food partners is Risen Savior Missions in the Philippines. <http://risensaviormissions.org/> This organization relies on ManaPack meals from FMSC. And there are 7.5 million malnourished or starving children in the Philippines.

Risen Savior Missions (RSM) partners with local churches, service organizations, and government agencies to bring nutritious MannaPack Rice from Feed My Starving Children into poor neighborhoods. RSM takes a holistic approach towards the problems of poverty. They address the basic needs of the poor first by implementing a practical program designed to reverse malnutrition. Food is the platform upon which to build livelihood. Once healthy nutrition is in place, RSM and its partners then feed the mind and evangelize the soul. They teach the poor about hygiene, sanitation, nutritious cooking, farming, manufacturing, microfinance, and faith formation, and they participate in medical missions to address special health concerns and offer free solutions.

One of their success stories is Kimberly. RSM found Kimberly who at age seven weighed only 24 pounds and was just skin and bones. RSM took Kimberly to a doctor who diagnosed her with pneumonia and prescribed antibiotics. RSM also supplied FMSC MannaPack Rice to her family, and now she is healthy and happy. This is Kimberly's 'after' photo!



Please donate to FMSC through our Feed the Need STL website: <https://feedtheneedstl.org/donate/>. Your donation will go directly to FMSC, and every penny you give will be used to feed a child.

Only \$88 feeds a child for a year - \$365 feeds a family for a year.

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**Thanksgiving Basket Drive**

Our annual Thanksgiving Basket Drive has been an important ministry of Good Shepherd for over 20 years. This year's Thanksgiving Basket Drive will be quite different. But the results will be the same: Thanksgiving dinners to families in south St. Louis who cannot afford to buy their own. Instead of asking for donations of food items like stuffing mix and cranberry sauce, we are asking for monetary donations to purchase the turkey and all the trimmings.



The meals will be purchased and distributed by Wings of Love and Care. The folks who come to Wings for help have many challenges. Angie Liggins, program coordinator for Wings, shared the story of a veteran who has been receiving food from WINGS at the Friday food distributions. In the last 6 months, this gentleman has had to have a hip replacement plus a lot of dental work. He also is waiting for surgery to repair an injured shoulder. Through this, he has been unable to work which has set him back financially. He is thankful for the food and the special meats given to him because of his dental issues. And he is grateful that Wings is there for him and for others during times of need.

Please help! We will be supporting 150 families again this year. Since everything will be purchased in bulk, just \$35 will provide a Thanksgiving meal for one family, \$70 for two families, and \$105 for three families. Mail a check to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and note that it is "For Thanksgiving Meals". Or donate electronically to the "Thanksgiving Meals Fund" using the Good Shepherd Connect App or through the [GSLC website](#).

To learn more about Wings of Love and Care, watch the video 'Angie's Story'. <https://www.crisisaid.org/wings/>.

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

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