



Shepherd's Staff

Carols & Cocoa

Sunday, December 13
4:30 pm at Good Shepherd



Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

December 2020



Pr. Josh Brecht

Associate Pastor/Interim Lead Pastor

Advent & Christmas at Good Shepherd

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus,

I had certainly hoped to be writing a very different article about our plans for Christmas Eve this year, but unfortunately the COVID-19 numbers continue at dangerous levels and continue forcing us to make difficult decisions. Bishop Susan Candea of the Central States Synod has issued a letter to our congregations with a recommendation to have all worship in our Synod to remain virtual through all of December, including Christmas Eve.

[\(Read Bishop Candea's Letter here\)](#)

In light of the COVID-19 cases in our region and the Bishop's recommendation, Pastoral Staff and Council have made the difficult decision to not have indoor, in-person worship at Good Shepherd on Christmas Eve. We know this is a huge disappointment, but we feel this is the right decision and your staff will be working extremely hard over the coming weeks to make Advent and Christmas special. To help explain this decision, I have recorded a video message that I invite you to watch.

[\(View Pastor Josh's message here\)](#)

While we cannot do our normal Christmas Eve this year, here is what we **can** do.

ADVENT

Carols and Cocoa: Telling the Story Together

On December 13, at 4:30 pm we will gather outside on the hill to sing Christmas Carols and interactively tell the Christmas story! We will have kids, families, and adults play various roles as we read scripture and tell the story (similar to our prior 3:30 & 5:30 Christmas Eve worship).

Bring Cocoa, enjoy a toasty fire, and celebrate the season together.

Isaiah Reading Plan

Throughout the month of December, we will be reading through Isaiah together. We have a daily reading, available in the mobile app, a printable bookmark, or in our Friday emails. I will also have a brief daily devotion on Facebook as we read this together.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Online Worship

We will be providing online worship and are working on ways to make this unique and special for the season.

Outdoor Worship (in cars, 5:00 pm)

We will have outdoor worship, in cars, in the lower parking lot at 5:00 on Christmas Eve. This will be a chance to gather together, receive communion, and receive the light of Christ as one.

In conclusion I offer a reminder of Paul's words to us. These words are so very important for us today, as we journey through this struggle together. May we all continue to be united in our commitment to protect one another and our community, and to pray for and support one another this Advent season.

"All things are lawful," but not all things are beneficial. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up. Do not seek your own advantage, but that of the other. – 1 Corinthians 10:23-24

Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, - Philippians 2:4-5

May the peace of God be with you always,
Pastor Josh

Thanksgiving Offerings

Our Thanksgiving offerings will help support Wartburg Seminary students' medical needs. Donations are still being accepted on the mobile app or at Goodshepherdlutheran.com/donate.



**A Feed My Starving Children Fundraiser:
Honey Baked Hams!**

Buy a Honey Baked Ham for your Christmas celebration and help FMSC! Feed My Starving Children is still in desperate need of donations to pay for the ingredients needed to pack meals for children in need all over the world. Good Shepherd's Feed The Need STL group is joining the Rotary Club of West St Louis County who are hosting a Christmas Ham Fundraiser. The proceeds from Good Shepherd's sales will be sent to support FMSC.



These premium Honey Baked Hams are fully cooked, sliced, glazed, and ready to serve. They are available either bone-in (8.5 or 10.5 pounds) or boneless (8 pounds). Plus, any leftovers can be frozen for future use. You will save money and time with the easy, drive through pick-up at the Callier's Deli location at 14787 Manchester Road in Ballwin.

We will be taking orders during a **two-week period** beginning on November 28 and ending at 12 noon on December 12th. Pickup will be available on two days: Friday 12/18 (3:00 to 6:00pm) OR Saturday 12/19 (9:00am to noon).

To order, open and print this [order form](#), or pick up an order form in the Narthex at Good Shepherd. Mail form and **payment made out to "Rotary Club of West St. Louis County"** to church or drop off in box in Narthex. If you have any questions or would like to pay by phone, call Mary Spoerle at (636) 529-1027.

Transition Team Congregational Conversation December 6th, 1pm

As I mentioned last month, our Transition Team's focus has turned to discerning our congregation's current mission and purpose (i.e., how we live out Following Christ, Growing in Faith, and Sharing God's Love) and how God is calling us to live these out. The upcoming Zoom Congregational Conversation [HERE](#) on **Sunday, December 6th at 1pm** is designed to gather your input on those subjects, and so we hope that each of you will be able to join us then. If you prefer to join the meeting by phone dial (312) 626-6799 and use the ID 814 9290 1500 with passcode 971546.

If you're unable to participate in the Dec. 6th event, we invite your feedback on this form by **December 15**: <https://forms.gle/2TFjf9roXaiiHY768>.

In Peace, [John Fred](#), Transition Team Chair

Endowment Committee

Dan Engle, Chair

Endowment Funds Now Available for Grant Requests

Our church is blessed with a substantial endowment due to the charitable giving by members to the Good Shepherd endowment fund. Each year the Church Council distributes 5% of the endowment fund balance to the Endowment Committee. For 2020, this endowment distribution was approximately \$28,000, which is now available for application toward approved grant requests.

Grant requests must further the work of Christ, consistent with Good Shepherd's Mission Statement of "Following Christ, Growing in Faith, Sharing God's Love". Grant requests must also further Good Shepherd's Vision Statement, which is "Guided by God's Grace, and with a longing to grow in faith, we will be a church that helps people make a difference in our local communities, in the world and in our congregation."

During 2020, the Endowment Committee has funded \$15,000 toward local, national and international needs as submitted by five grant requests. Grant preference is given to established and newly proposed domestic and foreign missions, seminarian scholarship support, as well as other causes at the discretion of the committee. Grants are usually a one-time funding of \$5,000 or less and should have a direct connection to a member or ministry associated with Good Shepherd.

The Grant application form can be found on the GSLC website [Here](#), or it can be e-mailed to you, upon request, by the church office. The current members of the Endowment Committee are Beth Anderson; Dan Engle (Chair); Beckie Fingland; Rick Hautekeete; Steve Schilson; and Tim Sorensen. Pastor Josh is an ex-officio member and is kept apprised of all endowment committee meetings and recommendations. The committee meets quarterly to consider grant requests, or as needed, and welcomes all requests for funding, consistent with the guidelines above.

Stewardship Committee

Glenn Kraft



As you prepare for the end of 2020. Please consider a few methods to consider for a year-end gift to Good Shepherd:

1. A gift from your IRA after age 70 ½ allows you to enjoy the full gift deduction without taxation from the withdrawal.
2. This year has been a solid year for stocks. A gift of stock allows you to enjoy the full charitable deduction without tax on the related capital gain.
3. This year we have not been able to travel, go to theaters, sporting events or go out to purchase clothes, gasoline etc. Consider giving from your excess to close our giving gap. As we transition our ministry in 2021, it will be important to know our capacity of giving.

Just a couple of tips for your year-end planning.

If you have questions, please contact our Accountant, [Jennifer Makowski](#).

Thank you for giving to our core ministry at Good Shepherd.

A "Wink" from the Welcome Ministry Team

Elliott Haugen

Merry Christmas and greetings to all! This update draws on an

email I recently sent to those who joined Good Shepherd since last December. Those nearly 60 individuals were getting to feel more at home and connected here when COVID-19 changed everything. Since the pandemic has impacted all of us, I am sharing my thoughts in this newsletter.



The Welcome Team misses seeing you - in person! We miss welcoming you in the Narthex, sitting with you in the Sanctuary, exchanging handshakes and hugs of love and support, and sharing times together within this wonderful faith community. We hope you have adjusted to changes in your personal, family, work, educational, and religious lives. Thankfully, there have been countless blessings in the form of creative, pragmatic, and faith-filled solutions that have sustained relationships, communications, and daily lives for you and Good Shepherd.

We can chuckle now about our optimism in April when the Welcome Team mailed cards to recent new members to encourage “looking forward” - to Easter, the pumpkin patch, and a physical return to Good Shepherd. Fortunately, we are now in Advent and have its real “looking forward” message of waiting and preparing to celebrate the birth and promise of Jesus Christ. We pray that you have many wonderful and wonder-filled days ahead; continue to stay connected to each other and Good Shepherd; and find peace, love and joy in the power of prayer and God’s Word.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” *Philippians 4:6*

On behalf of the Welcome Team, have a healthy, safe and blessed Christmas season. We will see you soon – whether virtually, in person, or in our thoughts.

Visit our
Website

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

[Good Shepherd Calendar](#)

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