



Shepherd's Staff

Listening Through Lent

Lectio Divina & Holy Communion
Wednesdays at Noon and 7:30pm (Zoom)



"We wish to see Jesus"
-John 12:21

Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

March 2021



Josh Brecht
Associate Pastor/Staff Lead

A Year of Pandemic Ministry Loss or Learning?

As we approach one year since our lives were upended by a new virus, we find ourselves in a natural state of reflection, filled with intensified emotions. Just as we go through seasons of the year, so too have we gone through seasons of this pandemic. Every few months we realized something new, and our focus and planning shifted to adapt to the new reality.

In the beginning, we all hoped this would be a short-term crisis. We thought we could get this under control, so we paused. We waited. We sat still. We had online worship. We met over Zoom as needed. After a couple of months, however, we began to realize we were in this for the long haul, and we needed to figure out how to press on with the mission and ministry God has given us. So, we learned and we adapted.

In the second season, we began new ministries like House Church to offer communion, more frequent and intentional gatherings over Zoom to continue fellowship, bible study, and the work of ministry. We pivoted to a backyard VBS so our kids could learn about the love of Jesus Christ! We figured out how to do drive-by collections of food and goods to help those in need. You gave over \$10,000 to a Covid relief fund to help our members who lost employment. You gave \$20,000 to purchase and install video and streaming equipment so we can continue to proclaim the Gospel in engaging, and high-quality ways.

Then a third season came as we approached fall and began to realize that the worst was not over, but yet to come. You, Good Shepherd, began to move beyond temporary adjustments, and dug in deep to create significant ministry that would build and sustain our mission regardless of a pandemic. People stepped up to serve as Confirmation mentors online. We gathered outdoors for worship throughout the fall and even Christmas Eve! We created Family Faith Formation kits to send home so our

children could grow spiritually. We continued collecting food and serving in the community.

Now we are in a fourth season. We have learned so much over the past year. We have learned how to do ministry despite obstacles. We have learned how to adapt and support one another. We have learned what we truly value, what we had taken for granted, and perhaps what is ok to let go. In this fourth season, we also see a light at the end of the tunnel. Hope is on the horizon. We still have work to do, and we still have a long journey ahead of us, but we are getting closer each day.

As we look back over the past year, what do we see?
Do you see a year of loss?
Or a year of learning?

While we have certainly experienced much loss and grief, as Christians we do not let suffering go to waste. We learn from the cross, and we learn from our painful experiences so that when we look back on these difficult seasons of our lives, we can see them as learning, as growth.

In the coming months, as the end of this pandemic coming begins coming into view, we may feel a desire to return to things as they were, to quickly fall back into what was once normal. My challenge to us all is this:

Do not miss the learning.

Reflect on how we have grown and what we have learned over this past year. What have we discovered is essential for ministry that we can't wait to build upon? What is maybe not as important as we once thought and might be worth letting go? What new things that have been created in this time are worth holding on to?

What's Next?

This Lent is a season like no other. We continue to reflect. We continue to pray. We continue to be the Church as we move toward the cross, for it is only through the cross that we can celebrate the resurrection. This Lent & Easter season we are worshipping in a variety of ways.

Sundays – Online worship will be available every Sunday at 9:00

Wednesdays – Worship will happen over Zoom throughout Lent at noon and 7:30 (with Lectio Divina & Holy Communion)

Holy Week

- Maundy Thursday will be drive-in/outdoor worship with Communion at Good Shepherd
- Good Friday will be a reflective online worship with Pastor Josh and Deacon Gail Brecht
- Easter Online – We will have a pre-recorded Easter worship available online
- Easter Outdoor – We will have an outdoor worship service on Easter morning at 10:00!

Thank you for continuing to be the Church, sharing the light and love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the words of Paul from Thessalonians Chapter 5:

“Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing... Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

With much love and deep gratitude,
Pastor Josh



Feed My Starving Children Lenten Challenge

This Lenten season, we are challenging ourselves to save starving children’s lives. We have a goal of feeding a least 120 children for a year! For every \$88, you will provide one child a nutritious MannaPack meal every day for an entire year. Your help is needed more than ever as the pandemic has greatly increased the number of starving children all over the world.

FMSC has been struggling with funding without the donations that MobilePacks bring in. FMSC has developed and improved their capability to pack with machines, and now they need the funds to be able to purchase the ingredients to pack enough meals to feed and save the lives of children.



Please donate this Lenten season. Consider giving what you can spare. Your donation will go directly to FMSC and will pay for needed ingredients. To donate, go to our Feed the Need STL website: <https://feedtheneedstl.org/donate>, send a check to GSLC designated for FMSC, or donate on the Good Shepherd online giving page [here](#).

Unfortunately, our 2021 FMSC MobilePack has been cancelled. Due to COVID, FMSC has cancelled all MobilePacks through June. By then the building we were going to use at Queeny Park will be closed for renovations. And due to the space needed to meet social distancing, we are unable to go back to packing meals in our gym.

In spite of all these challenges, we are looking forward to getting back to packing in 2022. Until then, we will continue support FMSC by raising funds to save children’s lives.

Lenten Reverse Offering

For several years Good Shepherd has supported various not-for-profit agencies by giving items to that agency during Lent. When we were in worship - we would pull a slip of paper from a basket. We cannot do that yet - but we can, with your help, still support the agencies. Each week we will be collecting for a different agency (per list below). There is also an online giving opportunity (select Lenten Reverse Offering on the drop down) if you wish to give funds in lieu of items mentioned [here](#). You can drop off the items during the week on normal office hours OR - EVERY Saturday in March there will be a drive-by drop off from 1 to 2 p.m. for you to drop off the requested items for that week.

If you have any questions, please call Suzie 314-413-1230. Thank you.

God's Helping Hands: Feb. 28 - March 6 Collecting: Canned Meat, Canned Meals, Peanut Butter and Jelly, Protein Drinks and Laundry Detergent - God's Helping Hands operates a food and clothing pantry in The Ville neighborhood of north St. Louis. 50% or more of the residents are at or below the Federal Poverty Level and live more than 1/2 mile from a grocery store. The ministry survives from donations to provide 50+ food boxes to individuals and families in the area, many of whom are seniors.

Fisher House: March 7 - March 13 Collecting: Disposable Kitchen Gloves, Ziplock type plastic bags, Paper napkins, Lysol Cleaner, Daily shower cleaner like Clean Shower. Fisher House of St. Louis provides a free "home away from home" environment; offering a warm, caring, comfortable, and convenient lodging for family members and caregivers coming to the St. Louis area with their loved ones that are undergoing extensive treatment and/or rehabilitation at the VA Medical Center.

Nurses for Newborns: March 14 - March 20 Collecting: Diaper Wipes, Baby Lotion, Baby shampoo, Diapers (sizes 4 & 5), Formula. Nurses for Newborns (NFN) exists to provide a safety net for families most at-risk through home visiting by experienced, registered nurses who provide healthcare and resources and teach positive parenting skills. The overall goal is to prevent child abuse and neglect and infant mortality. NFN provides services to babies who are born with medical problems, born to teen moms or born to mothers with disabilities/mental health concerns, or who are born into families who do not have money for even basic necessities. In addition to medical care, we assist families whenever possible with donated materials needed for the babies.

St. Patrick's Center: March 21 - March 27 Collecting: Toilet paper, Paper towels, Laundry detergent, Dish Soap and All Purpose Cleaner (like 409). St. Patrick's Center provides opportunities for self-sufficiency and dignity to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Individuals and families build permanent positive change in their lives through safe and affordable housing, sound mental and physical health, and employment and financial stability.



Glenn Kraft Stewardship

A Giving Mood

At our recent Stewardship Zoom meeting, the Zoom time was restricted to 40 minutes. As our meeting progressed close to that end time, a message popped up saying: "We're In A Giving Mood" as Zoom authorized the meeting to continue. It was a gift.

The Stewardship Team would like for you to consider telling your story of giving. What puts you in a giving mood? It's not particularly Lutheran to share personal stories, especially about giving money. However, in our work we have been inspired by so many who give. We have a generous membership and would like to encourage the broader membership in their giving journey. Our team is organizing a simple outline for you to offer a 2-3 minute video or 2 paragraph article. We aim for your message to encourage and enlighten. Please contact me if you would like to learn more. We will assist you in the production and editing of your message to make it easy for you.

We are also excited to add two new members to our team. We welcome Kyle McCommis and Emily Goerss! If you have an interest in joining the Stewardship Team, please contact Glenn Kraft at gkraft@kraftpartnersllc.com.

Super Pack for Troops - Love Emboldened Vicki Haugen

The scrappy ladies of Project Boomerang would like to share their appreciation for your support and donations to their Feb 3 Super Pack. With your help we packed 17 boxes of greetings cards and care packages for 3 deployed ELCA chaplains overseas. We couldn't have done it without YOU!!!!



Most Wednesdays a group of ladies called the Scrappy Ladies gather or meet via zoom in Chesterfield, MO to create or sort greeting cards for Project Boomerang. The project's mission began simply in July 2006 in Alexandria, VA with an idea to create blank greeting cards for military chaplains to distribute to deployed troops and others. Recipients would add a personal message and send the card to their loved ones back home, thus the boomerang effect.



Envelopes are donated and new card stock is cut to fit. The cards are designed using recycled cards, ink stamps, magazines, stickers and ribbons. Seed money donations are received from Thrivent Financial and generous friends to cover supply costs and postage. Now the group sends its cards to Fisher Houses, the USO, to overseas Chaplains for the deployed, or wherever they are needed. Since Project Boomerang's beginning more than 100,000 cards have

been distributed to those at home and abroad. If interested in helping contact Vicki Haugen, Project Boomerang Midwest: Vicki.Haugen2@gmail.com

Visit our Website

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

[Good Shepherd Calendar](#)

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