



Shepherd's Staff



Easter Services 8, 9:30, and 11am

The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

April 2023



Jill Thompson Council President

"Glory to God in the Highest!" GSLC Council is such a committed, thoughtful group of people! For months we have been concentrating on our focus areas: Children, Youth and Family, Belonging, Spiritual Growth and Service. Our role is to look at these four with an eye towards policies and fiscal actions we should take to advance them. As a result of the excellent leadership of Paul Davis, the Council has developed a three-year plan! Council members are taking responsibility for moving those plans forward. We hope to put together a document that we can share with you detailing the plans in the future. Here are other actions the Council has taken or is working on. (Those that are a part of the strategic plan are noted with which part of the four focus areas the actions fall).

- Reviewed and approved Pr. Josh's sabbatical plans. Council views this as an important time for our Lead Pastor to recharge batteries, study deeply and reflect on God's call to our congregation and the world.
- Reviewed and approved structure to support Feed the Need STL-Service (Feed My Starving Children) including Council appointing a person to serve on the new 501C3's Board of Directors. That person will be charged with providing monthly reports on the progress of the new nonprofit. As we mentioned in an earlier letter, GSLC will retain strong ties and offer critical leadership to the new nonprofit. The Council fully supported the opportunities to expand our efforts by making the food pack a community-wide event and establishing the nonprofit.
- Reconstituted the Leadership Development Committee and approved new Chair-Belonging. Council is keenly aware of the importance of ongoing leadership development to the health of our congregation. Council approved clarifications to the Continuing Resolution that originally started the committee and clarified its relationship to the Nominating Committee. We were grateful for the leadership of Lori Klopf and Bret Spoerle to refine the purpose and structure of this group. Council was pleased to approve Bret Spoerle as the chair. He has accepted the role.

- Developed several task groups to work on safety concerns-Belonging, Children, Youth and Family. We are grateful to Council members and staff who are diligently examining concerns and strategies to address concerns. Council members who are serving are Greg Mueller, Gene Unverfehrt, Bob Fingland and Jill Thompson.
- Clarify vacation/leave policies and identify other areas for future review. Thanks to the leadership of Sharon Misuraca, the vacation policy was clarified. Council identified a few other areas under the vacation/leave policies that need to be updated and reviewed.
- Clarify how rental fees are established for Building Blocks. Thanks to the leadership of Lanny Schnipper, a team is putting in place a process to determine the rental fees. Gene Unverfehrt and Bob Fingland are participating in these discussions with staff.
- Establish a finance committee-Strategic Planning Funding. Thanks to the leadership of Troy Larsen, this committee is being established to help clarify sources of funding and how those sources align or can align with our current focus areas.
- Strategic Funding-Strategic Planning Funding. Over the next two months, Larissa Hautekeete, Paul Davis, Greg Mueller and Lanny Schnipper will be taking a deep dive into our current budget to see how current funding is supporting our four focus areas.

As you can see, we have a very active and thoughtful Council. I'd be remiss if I didn't give a shout out to Jan Thompson who keeps all of this recorded and on track! I am blessed to work with them to lead our congregation in Following Christ, Growing in Faith, Sharing God's Love.

Council is blessed to review the reports from our many ministries and committees. We realized that many may not be aware of all that is going on. As a result, we will be capturing some summaries in our Council minutes which are posted on the board outside of the office. We encourage you to stop by and see the great things God is doing at GSLC through our wonderful staff and volunteers. As always, we encourage you to get involved.

Peace and blessing be with you!

Jill Thompson
GSLC Council President



Josh Brecht
Lead Pastor

Dear Good Shepherd,

I am excited and grateful to share that I will have a sabbatical this summer. I am thankful to our council, staff, and the entire congregation for this gift to me and my family. Council has approved my sabbatical from June 1 – August 24. Sabbath is such an important spiritual practice in the rhythm of our faith, and one that is far too often overlooked in our fast-paced society.

When we think of sabbath there are multiple levels. Most often we think of the weekly sabbath, woven into the pattern of creation.

“Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work...For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day.” – Exodus 20:8-9, 11

In the life of Jesus, we see a pattern of daily sabbath, where Jesus takes time out of the day to rest and pray.

“Then Jesus got up early in the morning when it was still very dark, departed, and went out to a deserted place, and there he spent time in prayer.” – Mark 1:35
Paul encourages us to “pray without ceasing,” in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, weaving sabbath into the fabric of our days.

These are practices I have sought to embody in my life. I find these rhythms to be so important in my relationship with God as I seek to be obedient and follow Christ daily. Yet, there are times in scripture where we see much longer periods of intentional prayer and spiritual formation. Moses had such a period between the burning bush and beginning his ministry in Egypt. Paul spent significant time being formed between his conversion and his ministry. Jesus himself went out into the wilderness for 40 days between his baptism and his ministry.

Learning from the patterns found in scripture, I see that sabbatical is not vacation, nor as a hyper-focused time to work on a large project. Sabbatical is a very intentional time to grow spiritually in Christ. It is a time to dwell in the presence of God and be formed as a leader and a disciple. What will that look like for me?

First and foremost I will be working on my prayer life. Reading scripture, reflecting, and spending time in solitude and nature to quiet my soul and receiving what God has to show me will be my focus throughout the summer.

I have an ambitious reading list! There are many books about church leadership and biblical study I have been longing to read and this will finally give me the time to focus on learning.

There are a couple of conferences/training opportunities I will be attending to grow as a leader, particularly as the lead pastor of a larger ELCA congregation.

I will also take time for rest and renewal, visiting family I do not often get to see. (All our family live far away from St. Louis).

Sabbatical is mutually beneficial gift. It is a gift for the pastor, but also for the congregation. My sabbath time will allow me to gain a deeper connection with God and grow as a leader, but my absence will also allow other staff and ministry leaders to shine. It is an opportunity for others to step into slightly different leadership roles for a season. We will be inviting a few different voices to preach and lead worship over the summer, and I am excited for you to receive their gifts!

Thank you so very much for this opportunity. I cannot wait to see how the Spirit moves in my heart and in our congregation this summer! I look forward to many incredible years of ministry together as we all learn to slow down and experience God daily. May you make space for sabbath in your life. May the Spirit of God fill you, empower you, and form you in the beloved disciple God has created you to be.

In Christ,



Our Neighbors, Our City

Our Neighbors, Our City (ONOC) is excited to announce two upcoming fun family activities.

Descendent Documentary (Saturday, May 6):

Descendants of the survivors from the Clotilda celebrate their heritage and take command of their legacy, as the discovery of the remains of the last-known slave ship to arrive in the United States offers them a tangible link to their ancestors. Come join us for a viewing and conversation around this groundbreaking documentary. Suitable for kids 10 and older. Childcare and popcorn will be provided. Please let us know you're coming by registering below on our Facebook page. A trailer for the documentary is available below as well.

[Register on Facebook](#)

[Documentary Trailer](#)

Ferguson Twilight Run (Saturday, May 20): Join other members of the Good Shepherd community as we run/walk/stroll to support our North County neighbors. Participants can take part in a 10k, 5k, 1-mile fun run or a virtual run – so this event is open to all ages and ability. To sign up, please use the referral link below, and it should make you a member of the Good Shepherd group and provide a discount on the registration fee.

We look forward to seeing you all at one or both of these May events!

[Referral Link/Sign-up](#)

Feed the Need STL MobilePack 2023

We are excited about our upcoming Feed the Need STL packing event. Our goal is to pack one million meals to feed 3,000 children for a year. But we need more packers! Many shifts are filled, but due to last minute cancelations, we still need 200 volunteers on Saturday, April 15. And there are a few openings on Sunday. Invite your friends and neighbors to join in the fun!



Plus we would appreciate help with the following: **Help set up** the packing room by setting up the tables or putting the packing equipment on the tables. **Be a guide:** help make this a great experience for our packers. Assist with check-in, hand out hairnets, show people where things are, and answer questions. **Help tear down:** At the end of the pack, help with tear down, washing the equipment, or putting away tables.

To volunteer, see the sign-up sheets in the Narthex.

If you have any questions, contact Suzie Everingham 314-413-1230 or email FeedtheNeedSTL@outlook.com.

Welcome Team Wink Article
Elliott Haugen

Happy Easter! – What a wonderful time of the year as we prepare to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday. Last month I wrote about the start of spring and the renewal of botanical life around us. This month, however, Easter is about our renewal and new life.



Historians have somewhat similar thoughts about the origin of the word “Easter” and its meaning for this shared Christian faith legacy. Norse scholars (yes, they exist!) linked Easter’s springtime celebration to ancient roots of “east” and meanings such as “season of growing sun”, “season of new birth”, and “the changing of the season”.

At the end of March, we welcomed 13 new members who are renewing their faith journeys at Good Shepherd. We, the congregation, committed to welcoming them fully into this community of faith, praying for them, walking with them through joys and struggles, and helping them discover their place within this body of Christ. We can surely and joyfully do that!

As the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 12:5:

“So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.”

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click the button below:**

[Good Shepherd Connect Profile](#)

Weekly Services Sunday 9am (traditional) & 11am (contemporary)
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