



Shepherd's Staff

Memory Verses & Readings

Fall 2023

The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

October 2023



Josh Brecht
Lead Pastor

Bible, Prayer, and Bouquets: Three New Ways Good Shepherd is Helping People Experience God's Presence Throughout the Week.

Do you ever wish God would just speak to you clearly and plainly? When life throws you a curveball and you find yourself struggling, you feel an acute longing to hear God's voice.

God, what should I do?

God, where are you in this?

The most *consistent, common, and accessible way* God chooses to speak to us is through The Bible. The more intimately in touch with The Bible we become, the easier it becomes to hear a Word from God for our daily lives.

At Good Shepherd, we want you to experience God's presence each day. We experience God in community in a unique way when we come together for Worship on Saturday or Sunday, but our heart is to help you cultivate a deeper awareness of God's presence in your life **every day**.

Life gets busy. Competition for our time is higher than ever. God ordered creation in a seven-day pattern, yet we humans consistently try to squeeze in more activity and more achievement, as if in the beginning God made a mistake! If only God had created an eight-day week! Let's be honest, though. If God gave us eight days, we would feel like we needed nine, right?

We have created three new practices to help you grow spiritually at home and experience the love of God more deeply in your life.

1 - Weekly Bible Readings & Memory Verse

Each week we have Bible readings in worship, but what if you could have instant

access to those readings anytime and anyplace? What if you could look ahead with curiosity before you come to worship, or reflect on the readings later in the week? And what if there was a single, memorable Bible verse that spoke to us in a profound way?

We have created a resource for you that will have all The Bible readings for the season, along with a featured memory verse for every week. We have compiled all of these into an easy, accessible E-book format, so you can download it right to your phone, tablet, kindle, or computer.

Memory Verses E-Pub Version

Memory Verses PDF Version

2 - Grow Spiritually Podcast

Families and individuals consistently tell us that they don't know where to start to engage in faith conversations together or find helpful devotionals for individual use. The Grow Spiritually Podcast was created so that it's easy to sit around the table after dinner together, or go on a walk with ear buds in, while hearing from God's Word and pondering what that Word means for your day-to-day life. This devotional guides you through Scripture and commentary, as well as engaging questions, to help you look for God present and at work, around and within you. Episodes are added monthly and can be found through Facebook, the GS Connect app, or wherever you get your podcasts.

3 - Flower Ministry

Our new flower ministry is a way to help people experience God's presence. Each week members of the Care Team work with Pastor Varinia to arrange bouquets to be personally delivered to people in the community as a symbol of God's love, care, and presence. It is an incredible, tangible expression of God's love in our daily lives, not only for those who receive, but also for those who visit and deliver. We hear story after story of how meaningful this small gesture is for people to know that they are being prayed for, and how they experience God's loving presence through this small gift. The Bible may be the primary way God chooses to speak to us, but a close second is through the loving presence of one another.



Facilities Management and Planning Committee (FMPC)

Mike Kelley - Chair

One of the objectives of the FMPC is to create a safe, healthy and welcoming environment at Good Shepherd to enable God's work to take place here in the myriad ways that can happen. While there are many ways in which we work toward that goal, in the last 18 months FMPC has taken a number of actions that not only make our building look and feel better, but cut down on our electrical usage as well.

The congregation was closely involved in replacing our two large rooftop HVAC units last spring. Our previous equipment was about 20 years old, with parts starting to fail, and replacements no longer in production. With your help and generous financial commitment, we successfully replaced both units with new units incorporating more efficient cooling, more comfortable and higher volume air movement, and MERV 13 filters which capture very tiny particulates, including viruses. The bonus is that the

units use considerably less power. While one cannot make an apples-to-apples comparison year over year because of the variances in weather, whether looking at usage or cost, the savings to Good Shepherd are in the 28-33% range year over year.

Additionally, we have been moving the building lighting from older incandescent and, especially, fluorescent lighting to LED. We started a few months ago when all bulbs in the sanctuary were changed, resulting in better and more even lighting in the pews as well as highlighting the altar area, cross, and musicians areas. In early September, Gene Unverfehrt replaced scores of bulbs in fixtures throughout the building in the offices, hallways and classrooms. Gene's summary to the committee says it all:

Fixtures in which bulbs were upgraded: 264
Number of obsolete bulbs removed: 514
Number of ballasts removed: 347
Number of new bulbs installed: 514
Reduction in wattage consumed: 73.5%

Depending on the electrical utility rate and how many hours per day/year the bulbs are actually lit, he calculates the payback will be in the range of 1.5-2 years (understanding that Gene valued his time at zero).

We thank and salute Gene for his hours of work on this project. If you simply look down the length of any hallway, you see the improvement.

Members cannot always see the results of the work of FMPC, but we wanted the congregation to be aware of why all of us are looking and feeling better these days inside Good Shepherd, and saving money doing it.



Josh Brecht
Lead Pastor

ELCA God's Love Made Real

We live in a rapidly changing world, which means the way God is calling us to be Church for the sake of this world is changing, too. The Holy Spirit is every bit as active in our lives and in the world as ever, but as the world around us becomes less engaged in religious practices and faith communities we have new opportunities to witness to the saving grace we have experienced in Jesus.



In my grandparents' generation the spiritual question was simply, "what church do you attend?" Everyone they knew was Christian (some nominally, some actively). In my children's generation the question has become, "Do you believe in God? Is there any faith tradition you practice?" In my parents' generation Sundays were reserved for worship and rest, with a weeknight reserved for faith community. It was very common for many people to participate regularly in community activities and church. In my children's generation there is no slowing down of schedules, activities, or massive demands on time. Most families are now forced to choose between extra-curricular activities or church.

If we, as followers of Jesus, want to see the Church thrive decades in the future, we

must follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit into this new world. Under God's leadership, we adapt the ways in which we practice our Christian faith. If we want God's mission to continue for generations, our tactics must adapt to a changing world. This language can make us nervous, but let me be clear.

The practices of ministry always change, but the mission God has given remains the same.

Our mission is to share the Gospel and to love both our neighbors and our enemies. We are called to care for the poor, feed the hungry, and stand up for the oppressed. We are called to proclaim the kingdom of heaven and share God's grace and mercy through our daily lives.

The mission God has given us is the same mission Jesus gave to the disciples. The ways in which we accomplish this mission are ever-changing. The Gospel of Jesus Christ speaks good news in every time and to every culture.

The ELCA has launched a new initiative to explore what it means to be church together and fulfill our mission in now and in the future. The leaders of our denomination want to hear from you!

Through "Future Church: God's Love Made Real," the ELCA is seeking broad input about where we see the Holy Spirit at work in our church and our community. This is the beginning of a long process to prayerfully discern how Jesus is calling us to live out our mission and be church for the sake of the world. I invite you to join me in taking a few minutes to share your perspective through this survey.

[ELCA Future Church: God's Love Made Real](#)

[ELCA Member Survey](#)

Thanksgiving Dinner Food Drive - See Narthex Display October 28/29

Dianne Unverfehrt

Join us in Good Shepherd's long-standing tradition of providing Thanksgiving meals to people who are struggling with food insecurity. We are again partnering with Wings of Love and Care/Crisis Aid. They have been feeding and supporting the needy throughout the years.

Angie Liggins, the program director for Wings, works closely with three schools in St. Louis that have families living below the poverty level who will be receiving meals this year. In addition, meals will also go to families around the neighborhood of Wings on South Jefferson.

Good Shepherd will collect all the staple items for 150 family boxes. Each box will include:

- 2 cans 14 oz. corn
- 2 cans 14 oz. green beans
- 1 can 14 oz. cranberry sauce
- 2 cans 15 oz. yams or sweet potatoes
- 2 boxes 6 oz. stuffing
- 2 cans (no glass) 12 oz. gravy or 2 packets of gravy mix
- 1 turkey baking bag
- 1 roasting pan

Look for the display in the narthex on October 28/29 and pull off the tabs for the items you are willing to purchase. All items must be back at church by November 12.

In addition, Good Shepherd will collect \$25 donations to buy a turkey for each box. Use the envelopes on the display marked "Thanksgiving Turkey Donation" for your donations that are placed in the offering baskets during the service. If writing a check please put "Thanksgiving Turkeys" on your check. You may also click the button below to access the GS Connect app, use the drop down menu, and choose "Thanksgiving Turkeys".

Thanksgiving Turkeys

Good Shepherd will also have a group go down to Wings on Thursday, November 16 from 9:00am – 12:00pm.

Members from Good Shepherd will help pack the boxes to be handed out on Friday, November 17. We will carpool from church leaving at 8:30am. The Wings address is 3137 S. Jefferson.

Look for the sign-up sheets on the Thanksgiving display board.

What a blessing it is to be able to work together this year to provide meals for families in need.



Welcome Team "Wink" Elliott Haugen

Good Shepherd has been blessed again! This month we welcome another group of wonderful new members. They shared comments, similar to what we have heard from others, that people come here to develop a deeper relationship with God. They also want to worship with and be part of a shared faith community that loves, cares for, includes, and supports them and each other.

People discover Good Shepherd because they were invited or learned about our church another way. So, as Pastor Varinia says at the end of worship, "invite a friend!" Please greet and welcome everyone, whether they are a visitor or an existing member. And include them in our educational, service, fellowship, and group activities. In other words, let's share God's love, as we were taught in John 13-34.

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

**To access your Good Shepherd Connect "member profile",
click the button below:**

Good Shepherd Connect Profile

Weekly Services Sunday 9am (traditional) & 11am (contemporary)
goodshepherdlutheran.com | 636-391-6685 | [Calendar](#)