



MESSENGER – May 2020

A word
from our
pastor

Dear Partners in Ministry,

I heard the phrase “quarantine fatigue” for the first time just recently, but it gave a name to what I’ve been experiencing for weeks: that isolation-driven wondering about how I get my dog to wake up from this fever-dream he’s dragged me into where I’m home. All. The. Time.

These words from Paul seem particularly apropos for such a moment:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.”

For Paul, God’s consolation sometimes does look like miraculous healing or deliverance...but more often, it looks like endurance, a spiritual gift given to help Paul and his fellow believers persist through their trials. This gift was not given for the sake of the individual alone, but for the community, “so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction.”

As quarantine fatigue sets in, I’d much rather have a miracle than endurance. But whichever God chooses to give, Paul’s point stands: the gift is not only for our sake, but for the sake of others.

I pray that this perspective informs our coming conversations about re-opening: what best protects and nourishes others. I don’t think there are simple, one-dimensional answers to these questions. Physical wellbeing is crucial to consider when we’re in the middle of a pandemic...and so is mental and emotional wellbeing. Our congregation includes the elderly, as well as those who are missing their high school graduations and yearning to see their friends. It includes the immunocompromised, and those who live alone and haven’t had a hug in weeks. It includes hospital workers, other essential workers, and people who have lost their jobs. Our congregation comprises a diversity of circumstances that demand a conversation about reopening that is both deliberate and compassionate.

That kind of consideration takes endurance: patience to take the time to understand another person's circumstances and perspectives; the determination to develop new ways of doing church that provide for many, not just a few; the stamina to keep up with rapidly evolving restrictions and standards. And moreover, to have the best re-opening we can, the entire community of Good Shepherd must be focused on that kind of compassionate endurance, the kind that holds the welfare of our neighbor above our own.

Further on in this newsletter, you'll find a letter from the Bishop of our synod that plants some helpful seeds about what reopening may look like from a logistical standpoint. Know that while Good Shepherd is closed at least through May, our church council meets every two weeks to check in on what we know about our status and to prepare for next steps. Please pray for us. And know that we pray for you.

And please cultivate that compassionate endurance. Even in the midst of a time when we're all going to little crazy missing the things we've lost, let's also choose to notice the ways the Father of mercies and God of consolation is with us, blessing us so that we can in turn bless others.

May the peace of Christ be with you,
Pastor Larson

COUNCIL NOTES

On Tuesday, April 14th, the Council held their regular monthly meeting. This was a virtual Zoom meeting due to the pandemic. After opening prayers, we quickly approved the minutes from the previous Council meeting and then moved on to a full discussion of our finances (see below for more detailed information).

We also discussed that repairs to the side entries to the church will be completed through a generous gift from an anonymous donor.

Our church continues to remain closed due to the pandemic. Your council and Pastors continue to meet (remotely via Zoom) to find our way through these difficult times. We are doing the best we can to reach out to members and support those who need it.

Please let us know if there is anything else we can do.

Financial update from the treasurer (current as of May 3rd, 2020)

I remember the start of March well. It seemed like it would be pretty much like any other March in New England, weird weather, lots of mud, and we all had baseball season to look forward to. Then rather quickly things changed. As things began to change, the Finance Committee and Council realized we needed to prepare. We needed to make certain that the Congregation remained financially sound, that we took the right steps early on, and implemented the necessary changes to weather this pandemic. I want to highlight where we started, what has been done, and how we are doing.

When the pandemic hit we had approximately \$100,000 in reserves or the equivalent of two months expenses. We saw March's revenue drop by \$8,500.

Based on that we did the following:

- Applied for and received mortgage loan relief for three months (June – August). This means for those three months we do not have to make a principal or interest payment on the loan. The monthly mortgage payment is \$5,710. Once the pandemic is over, we are committed to making up those payments as soon as possible. While this seems counterintuitive to our New Horizons campaign, we felt strongly it was the right thing to do knowing that if this relief ends up not needed, we can make up those payments this year.
- Applied for the Paycheck Protection Program Loan through the CARES Act. This is a low interest loan covering salaries for two and a half months. If the loan is used to pay salaries, it does not have to be paid back. We have just heard that our application was approved, and will be finalizing the details of this loan in the next 10 days.
- Staff, committees, and the Pastors are reviewing their respective 2020 budgets to see where they can implement savings. There are some obvious savings because we are not meeting on a weekly basis (utilities,

supplies). All of this is being reviewed on an ongoing basis.

I am extremely happy to report that April income was \$67,345! This includes a one-time gift given specifically to cover the \$8,500 deficit from March and provide a little extra in case April income was also below budget. Well, April income was right on budget! If we remove the one-time gift, April income was \$54,445. This is approximately \$300 ahead of budget. Expenses for the month were \$54,250. Our Pastor's Emergency Fund is the healthiest it has been in the history of Good Shepherd. Due to many, incredibly kind donations, we have \$13,792 and we know of another significant gift that will be coming in the next few weeks.

We still do not know when we will be able to meet again as a Congregation, but we do know our Mission is strong and it runs through us whether we are in the building together or in our separate homes. Thank you for your incredibly kind donations and please know the Finance Committee and Council take the Financial Stewardship of Good Shepherd very seriously. We will continue to update you on a monthly basis as we weather this pandemic together.

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE: **GENEROSITY OVERFLOWS**

The re-vamped virtual Stewardship campaign for 2020, "**Generosity Overflows**," is underway. The pandemic makes this challenging, but we are up for the challenge! We started on Sunday, April 26th, with stories of generosity during the

offering time of the worship service and will plan to continue this through the month of May. We will be challenged with technology in terms of how to deliver these stories; some may be pre-recorded, written and read by the Pastors, etc. But we are sure that whatever the format, you will find the messages of how generosity is overflowing during these difficult times uplifting!

We chose our theme using 2 Corinthians chapters 8 and 9 as the inspiration. The context of these two chapters is Paul is writing to the church in Corinth and encouraging them to make a gift to the needs of Christians in Jerusalem. He is telling the story of how the churches in Macedonia made an incredibly generous gift towards this cause despite experiencing hardship and even poverty. From 2 Corinthians 8:2, *“For during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have **overflowed** in a wealth of **generosity** on their part.”* We are like the churches in Macedonia- experiencing an ordeal of affliction too, and hopefully still responding with generosity!

It is imperative that everyone completes a pledge card, even if you cannot pledge at this time or are doing Simply Giving. When we completed the 2020 budget, we expected a deficit of approximately \$23,000. With the pandemic, that deficit is at risk of growing worse. Our two main goals are (1) to increase our number of pledges by 20 for the upcoming year (“20 in 2020”) and (2) to increase our total giving to offset the original \$23,000 expected

deficit (about 4% of our budget). We are asking everyone to consider a 4% increase in giving, if possible. For example, if you give \$1,000 per year, this would mean an increase of \$40 to equal \$1,040. We plan to celebrate the giving of pledges on May 31st.

SURVEY

If you didn't notice the link in our e-newsletter last week, we have a survey out that we'd love you to fill out! There are two sections: one to get a sense of what kind of digital ministry offerings we can put together that best meet our communities' needs, and the other that takes your temperature about reopening. Find the survey at [this link](#).

From the Bishop of the New England

Way back in January we had church life. That model of church life consisted of a building with a paid staff, in-person gatherings, people shaking hands, sharing food, singing, hugging, and programs for various age groups. Some of us have only known that model of church life, and we've been lamenting as we've witnessed the struggle to maintain it. I now call that model of church life the January Church, because it was last in January when we experienced it fully. Much has changed since then, and every day brings more transition. The purpose of this letter is to set the stage for what's next in two areas, Reopening and Worship. This letter is longer than usual. Be forewarned.

REOPENING

It is clear that re-opening is going to be a slow and gradual process involving some careful planning. This will require congregations to be flexible and adaptive because change will be the consistent theme going forward. In some ways, I believe reopening will be more challenging than the decision to close. Considerations for planning your re-opening

1. Recognize that re-opening is not going back to normal. The church we all remember, what I call the January Church, is something we will not be returning to any time soon. If you view re-opening as an attempt to get back to the model of church as usual, I believe you will be continually frustrated. We must understand the need for grace and patience with one another as we all attempt to discover Christ in new ways.
2. Follow the guidance of your state's governor and health officials. New England Synod congregations are located in seven different states. While some states are acting in coordination with one another, this will not be the case throughout our region. In addition, I would not anticipate a great deal of specificity in the guidance for houses of worship. There are multiple reasons for that, including concerns about first amendment matters. While there may not be specific recommendations regarding houses of worship, look carefully at plans for schools (elementary through high school), since they are

most similar to churches in their dynamics, for instance, people traveling from a regional proximity, sitting in rows, gathering for food, interacting socially, etc. My advice is to watch the guidance for schools and translate that application to church life.

3. Recognize that a phased re-opening is probably your best scenario. As an example, [Rhode Island](#) has a current limit of 5 persons gathering, and anticipates a process that will increase to 10, then to 15, then to 50. How will your congregation adapt to this type of model? I think a phased re-opening might look like this:

Phase 1 – When your state indicates a likely date for relaxing the quarantine, ask yourselves, “What’s most in need of attention?” One way to answer this question is to consider the most vulnerable and those who are grieving. Maybe it’s best to look at some social ministry that has been curtailed, such as a food pantry, before considering worship. In addition, if your congregation has had multiple deaths, perhaps attending to grief via memorial services is an appropriate first priority. The larger point is, don’t try to do everything all at once.

Phase 2 – As the next level of quarantine is relaxed in your state, begin conversations about how your congregation might be able to come together in smaller configurations. Not everyone will want to nor

should they want to gather publicly, but some people are eager to have some in-person contact. One congregation might consider a gathering of its shepherding groups where six or so people meet. If you have the capability, perhaps that first meeting could be outside. In other words, think of Phase 2 as an intermediary step, think small. Also think of those not able or desirous of an in-person gathering, how will you continue to attend to them?

Phase 3 – If your state officials relax restrictions to larger group gatherings, ask yourself how this might be done. A favorite question of mine these days is: What’s doable? Following the Rhode Island guidance, this means groups of 50 could gather together. If you have a smaller congregation this might work. But if you are in a larger congregation, does that mean you need to have multiple worship services or staggered attendance plans? In this phase, you’ll also need to consider ways you will attend to expectations of sanitizing your building. Additionally, are you continuing an online presence as well? How will you do this simultaneously? One church is considering plans for an in-person gathering on Sundays, but then an online gathering on Wednesdays. Are you now asking your pastor, administrator, musicians and others to do twice as much work? Have you considered

partnering with another church to share these responsibilities and more evenly distribute the workload?

Whether you use this concept or another, I urge you to recognize that this will be a gradual re-opening. You should also plan for the inevitable “two-steps forward, one-step back” scenario. Several health officials have indicated we may have times when the virus spreads quickly and we may need to restrict our activities again. How will you plan for this possible return to Phase 1? The reality is: this is hard. We are trying to balance a concern for health and safety with a desire to connect again. Take it slow; go one step at a time and recognize not everyone is ready to make the same step at the same time, so allow for flexibility.

Resources

There have been many resources published elsewhere that may help in your planning for re-opening, and I’ve listed some below. This is not an exhaustive list, but some comprehensive ones.

[A Plan for Returning to Church by the Wisconsin Council of Churches](#) – This

resource also makes use of a phased approach, as well as raising important considerations around actual worship practices. Again, remember to always be aware of your own state’s health officials’ recommendations.

[Coming Back Together by the Three ELCA Synods in Texas](#) – The three ELCA synods

in Texas and Louisiana have produced this guide. Since that part of the country has chosen to re-open sooner than New England, we can look to their experience.

I'll be in touch with my colleagues there to learn from them as they go through this process.

[Opening Up Again](#) – This is a document produced by the Federal Government that contains helpful information. It also uses the phased opening approach. This document contains important reminders about health and safety protocols.

Throughout this time of pandemic, I ask your patience with one another. Do not rush decisions. Be mindful of decisions that you make for all your constituents, as well as for longer term implications

WORSHIP FOR THE LONG HAUL

I have been impressed with how rapidly you have adapted to the new reality of worship and congregational life in these times. The widespread use of online worship, Bible Studies, fellowship hours, and meetings using a variety of technologies is admirable. We are all still beginners in this work, learning as we go. Like toddlers learning to walk, we spend a fair amount of time falling down. But that's how we learn. That's ok. As I've learned more and more about this disease and the likely trajectories of its impact on society, I'm realizing the need to begin making plans for the long haul. The commonly articulated time frame of 12-18 months before we achieve some semblance of broad public safety via a vaccine, credible treatments, and levels of herd immunity is a sobering timeline. Some have noted that timeline might be a best-case scenario. In light of this, I think we need to look at questions around the future both near term

and long term of the church. For now, let's discuss our worship life together.

There is clearly a need for us to think and plan for ongoing changes in worship life, chiefly around questions of online worship and some practices which have always been in-person such as Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, Ordination, weddings and funerals. How do we navigate the terrain of a three-legged stool of theological understandings, pastoral needs and technological innovation? While some have chosen a quick fix approach, I've not wanted to go that route for multiple reasons, which I have [previously described](#). I'm grateful to the pastors, deacons and congregations of this synod for their patience in honoring my request that we refrain from an impulsive decision to engage in various practices around Holy Communion.

However, I do think the time has come for us to dive more deeply into this subject. I am choosing a harder path in the hopes that the outcome will yield a more thoughtful decision. That path is to engage as widely as possible in a series of discussions on our practices of worship in these times.

We will begin with a series of discussions at the conference level with pastors and deacons. Then, we will introduce an opportunity for congregations to engage in similar discussions. There will be resources made available in both written, audio and video formats. These will be small digestible pieces that address the topic at hand. The full details of this approach are in

development and will be available next week.

My goal in all this is two-fold: 1. to deepen our understanding of the sacraments, and 2. to help provide for informed decisions as we move into a new way of being church. I could choose to simply write you all a letter, tell you what I think, and be done with it. That seems easier and briefer, but does not honor your gifts, intelligence and faithfulness. I'm choosing the harder way, but I believe the end result will be more broadly embraced. I will have more information and details next week, and you'll actually have tools to put in people's hands next Wednesday.

Finally, a brief word on the "big picture." I think we are in a time of transition. I don't fully understand it, but I sense that these are times of significant cultural and spiritual transformation. If you are interested in exploring this with me, I'm having a series of Wednesday evening Zoom discussions starting next week. More information on that is [here](#).

Once again, thank you for all you are doing. I'm witnessing so many examples of congregations, places of ministry, and individuals rising to the challenges. We are demonstrating to those around us that Christ is alive in the people of our synod. My confidence in the present and the future of this church continues to rise as each day I hear about Lutherans being the hands and feet of Jesus.

Sincerely in Christ,
Bishop Jim Hazelwood

MAY LECTIONARY

Date & Event Name	Readings
Sunday, May 3, 2020 4th Sunday of Easter	Acts 2:42-47 Psalm 23 I Peter 2:19-25 John 10:1-10
Sunday, May 10, 2020 5th Sunday of Easter	Acts 7:55-60 Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16 I Peter 2:2-10 John 14:1-14
Sunday, May 17, 2020 6th Sunday of Easter	Acts 17:22-31 Psalm 66:8-20 I Peter 3:13-22 John 14:15-21
Thursday, May 21, 2020 Ascension	Acts 1:1-11 Psalm 47 Ephesians 1:15-23 Luke 24:44-53
Sunday, May 24, 2020 7th Sunday of Easter	Acts 1:6-14 Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35 I Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 John 17:1-11
Sunday, May 31, 2020 Day of Pentecost	Acts 2:1-21 Psalm 104:24-34, 35b I Corinthians 12:3b-13 John 20:19-23

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress.
All rights reserved.

Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on
Common Texts, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Used by permission.

MUSIC MINISTRY NOTES

Reflection on Alleluia! Jesus is Risen!

One of my favorite hymns in our hymnal, the ELW, is “Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!” hymn number 377 and we will be singing this hymn as part of our service on May 10th.

This hymn combines great lyrics with one of my favorite hymn tunes, Earth and All Stars. The hymn tune is in $\frac{3}{4}$ time giving the hymn a feeling of dance and buoyancy. Add in the melody line sounding of triumph and you cannot help but smile singing this tune.

The text of this hymn has always given me a sense of hope, and I think it is very pertinent to this time we find ourselves in. There are two lines of text that have always stuck out most to me. The first is the last line of the second verse, “Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise.” I love this line of text because it was true in Jesus’ day and it is still true to this day. Jesus did many things during his ministry that surprised people and was out of the norm, and still to this day he continues to surprise and challenge us, in ways we never expected.

The other line that sticks with me most is the first line of the refrain, “Jesus is risen and we shall arise” Jesus rose for us and we will arise as well, no matter the challenge, because we are all beloved children of God. I have always been struck by the fact that the highest note of this line, the peak of the phrase, is on the word we, bring emphasis to this word. Any-kind-of “we” seems impossible currently, but it is still happening when we gather on Sunday mornings, just not in the way it was. But as this hymn

repeats during each refrain, “Jesus is risen and WE shall arise” we will arise, because Jesus first did for us.

Over the course of the next week I invite you to spend time with this hymn and to find how it is speaking to you and what meaning it holds for you. Then when we sing it on May 10th, I hope you will join in singing this hymn, with those thoughts in mind.

1 Alleluia! Jesus is risen!

Trumpets resounding in glorious light!
Splendor, the Lamb, heaven forever!
Oh, what a miracle God has in sight!

Refrain

Jesus is risen and we shall arise.
Give God the glory! Alleluia!

2 Walking the way, Christ in the center
telling the story to open our eyes;
breaking our bread, giving us glory:
Jesus our blessing, our constant surprise.

Refrain

3 Jesus the vine, we are the branches;
life in the Spirit the fruit of the tree;
heaven to earth, Christ to the people,
gift of the future now flowing to me.

Refrain

4 Weeping, be gone; sorrow, be silent:
death put asunder, and Easter is bright.
Cherubim sing: O grave, be open!
Clothe us in wonder, adorn us in light.

Refrain

5 City of God, Easter forever,
golden Jerusalem, Jesus the Lamb,
river of life, saints and archangels,
sing with creation to God the I AM!

~Kirby Stalley, Director of Music

kirby.stalley@goodshepherdcares.org

Confirmation Sunday Postponed

Since we are continuing to worship virtually for the time being, we are postponing Confirmation Sunday to the fall. Instead of celebrating in mid-May, the plan is to celebrate Confirmation on Reformation Sunday, October 25th. Faith statement presentations will also happen in the fall, alongside a few other fall gatherings for those being confirmed. We pray that we will be able to gather in person at that point!

Christian Education Director Search update

Over the past few weeks, the Christian Education Director search team has been working to prepare the job posting, which is now ready to go! Please see the job posting included in this messenger. Anyone who is interested in the opening is welcome to apply. Even more, we need your help! The most likely way we will surface candidates for this job opening is through personal connections and word of mouth. **So, we are asking everyone at Good Shepherd to spread the word.** Please consider anyone whom you may know that would be interested, and invite them to apply. Please share the job opening on any social media accounts you may have. We will have the job posting up through July, and hope to have someone ready to start by September 1st. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to anyone on the CED search team, which includes Gerry Hava (chairperson), Kristin Black, Mark Booher, Dana Gillin, Bruce Grams, Dawn Hall, and the pastors.



GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are growing, making, nurturing disciples in Christ.

183 W. Main Street + Westborough, MA 01581

Pastor Jeff Goodrich & Pastor Victoria Larson

www.goodshepherdcares.org

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - *God's Work, Our Hands*



OPENING FOR: Christian Education Director

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, located in Westborough, MA, is a member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). GSLC is one of the largest congregations in the New England Synod with approximately 700 active members. We are an active community of faith with many ministries that touch the lives of our members as well as people in Westborough and surrounding towns. GSLC is known as a welcoming congregation with outstanding Christian education and music programs.

Responsibilities: The Christian Education Director (CED) creates a vision and provides leadership for faith formation. The CED is responsible for working with the Christian Education Team and pastors to organize and resource Good Shepherd Lutheran Church's education programs, with an emphasis on children and youth, as well as to train church members for the task of teaching and leading Christian Education in a shared capacity.

Other responsibilities include:

- Planning, scheduling and effectively communicating a program of events.
 - Acquiring and adapting curriculum materials to conform with our Lutheran tradition.
 - Recruiting, training, and supporting teachers and assistants.
 - Acquiring and organizing necessary study supplies.
- Coordinating community service events and activities as part of faith formation.
- Planning and coordinating an ecumenical Vacation Bible School each summer in partnership with leaders from other Westborough congregations.
- Scheduling and chairing meetings of the Christian Education Team.
- Developing, planning and monitoring the annual Christian Education budget within guidelines.
- Performing other duties as may be directed by the pastors.

Qualifications—The CED should:

- Be a person of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, actively growing his/her own discipleship, with knowledge of Lutheran theology or the willingness to learn.
- Have sufficient training and experience necessary to assist in the nurture of the life of the church, demonstrating strong leadership skills with the ability to engage others.
- Have a passion for Christian Education and possess the characteristics and qualities necessary for working harmoniously, flexibly, and confidentially with church members, pastors and other church staff.
- Be able to adapt for remote/online learning.

Hours of Employment: 30 hours per week, which includes Sunday morning and Wednesday evening obligations.

Interested individuals may apply by sending cover letter and resume to:

CEDsearchGSLC@gmail.com

News for Teens at Good Shepherd

“Social Dis-TAGS-ing”

TAGS from a minimum of six feet away

IN THIS NEWSLETTER:

- A NOTE FROM PASTOR LARSON
- MISSION TRIP TO NIAGARA FALLS CANCELED
- POSSIBLE SUMMER LOCAL MISSION?
- HAMMONASSET CANCELED
- INTEREST MEETING FOR 2021 YOUTH GATHERING ON MAY 17TH AT 5PM
- VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: FOOD PACKAGING
- BLESSING FOR EMPTY BACKPACKS

We got 6 feet of space but a heart full of love

Hello, TAGS friends. Oh boy, how I miss you, especially in this time when I know how many OTHER things you're missing: friends, school, extracurriculars, sports...and for those of you who are seniors, so so many different rites of passage.

I wish I were writing with news that we're on the way back to normal, but you and I know that normal's a long way off, and will probably look different than we remember it being. Cancellations and changes are beginning to stretch into the summer and even the fall, and sadly, include our planned mission trip to Niagara Falls as well as Hammonasset. (More on this below.)

In spite of the sad news, hang in there, guys. A maxim I turn to when I'm frustrated is: "Do the best you can, where you are, with what you've got." We can't do TAGS like we normally do. But we're more than happy to do TAGS like we never-normally do!

I've got ideas--and I'll bet you do too--for stuff we can get up to in this weird time. We can meet by Zoom. We can watch a movie, play charades, do scavenger hunts. We can plan for a local mission weekend this summer. We can commit to walking/running a 5K together on a pre-ordained day at a pre-ordained time. We can [insert your amazing idea here].

The thing is, I know that you guys are spending a ton of time and energy just keeping on keeping on right now, so I need to hear from you about what it is that would feed you. So reach out: shoot me an email or a text, and tell me what you have the energy and interest in doing!

Know that you're in my prayers in this time, and I have faith that all will be well, and all will be well, and all manner of things will be well. ~PastorLarson

The Mission Trip is Canceled

Last week, we made the tough decision to cancel this year's mission trip to Niagara Falls. Youthworks is working with us to partially refund our deposits and to give us some credit toward a future trip. (They keep part of our deposit, and we hope that will help sustain their ministry.)

Long Live the Mission Trip!

Despite our trip to Niagara Falls being canceled, we're considering the option for a local mission trip. What might it be like to plan a three-day local mission in our area this summer? To spend a day digging at Community Harvest Farm? To return to Jeremiah's Inn? To pack food for local pantries with the Outreach Program? And to do it during days that start and end with praise and with fellowship, with an intention to see Jesus in the face of our neighbor?

This is an idea-in-waiting until early summer, at which point we hope to know more about our abilities and limitations in gathering. Please keep your eyes open and your brain pondering local service opportunities!

Hammonasset Canceled

From the Hammonasset Planning Committee:

"Based on the current COVID-19 situation, including stay at home orders, schools moving to remote learning through the end of the academic year, and unclear forecasts of when we might be able to gather in large groups, we have decided to cancel our event scheduled for September 2020. Hammonasset State Park is not currently issuing Special Use Licenses, which also contributed to the decision. We will plan to pick back up in September 2021. We may be exhibiting an overabundance of caution in our decision, but we feel it is the right thing to do."

2021 Youth Gathering

Next year's Youth Gathering is scheduled for June 29th to July 3rd in Minneapolis, MN! This incredible, once-every-three-years event gathers over 30,000 ELCA high school youth and adult leaders from across the U.S. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, we grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live our faith in our daily lives. Join us for an interest meeting via Zoom on May 17th at 5pm.

Zoom link: [Click here.](#)

Meeting ID: 889 4646 8147

Password: 772082

Volunteer Opportunity

The organization we partner with for February's Food Packaging event at Good Shepherd is still at work during the pandemic, trying to meet the demand from local food pantries. If you're young, able-bodied, not-at-all-sick, and able to get yourself to Pembroke over on the south shore, you can help package food at the warehouse where the Outreach Program is working right now. They will be packaging meals there as long as they have funds and volunteers. There are two different rooms set up. If families are coming, they can serve on one half of an assembly line, socially distant from the other family on the same line. They've gotten the all clear from the MA governor's office, the Pembroke health department, and the home office to do this. Text Matthew Martin at 857-939-3459 to volunteer.

A Blessing for Empty Backpacks

BY REV. SARAH JUIST

God of Love,

I didn't want to hang up my backpack. I didn't plan to give up my spring season, my warm days in the sun with friends, my favorite projects or trips, or any of my year-end celebrations.

But I did.

God, I give you all of the hope I've mustered - hope that this isolation will end, that the people I loved will be okay, and that the light of spring will wash away our fear.

God, I give you all of the grief I carry - grief for lost time, for lost opportunities, for lost celebrations and changed relationships.

God, I ask for your strength, your courage, and your comfort. May my hands not cramp with all the typing. May my eyes not hurt after staring at screens all day. May our wi-fi be strong, and the bonds of friendship and community even stronger.

Help me remember those who are struggling, and remind me to ask for help when I need it.

Keep us safe, help us live, and lead us to love.

Amen.

I would like to thank everyone for their generous donations to my Backpacks for the

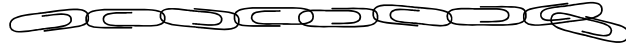


Homeless Eagle Scout Service Project! I am truly overwhelmed by the generosity of our church and community. Before the governor's stay in place advisory, I delivered over 100 backpacks to Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Worcester. The backpacks were filled with toiletries, first aid kits, rain ponchos, sweatshirts, hats, gloves, hand and foot warmers, snacks, and reusable water bottles. With the help of my troop, we also made fleece blankets and paracord survival bracelets for the backpacks. We also included a handwritten note of encouragement in every backpack. We added a resource list of homeless shelters, food pantries, free medical care and reduced cost clothing in the Worcester area and a list of ways to prevent the risk of infection as well. IHN distributed the

backpacks to North High School and other emergency shelters in Worcester.

God Bless and stay safe,
Aaron Lowy

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLIPS



Hello Friends!



All Aboard!

This summer at VBS we will be going on a mountainous adventure on

THE ROCKY RAILWAY

We will meet animal friends who dwell far up the mountain peaks and deep in the cool rivers all the while learning how “Jesus’ Power Pulls us Through!”

VBS will be August 3rd-7th either at GSLC or virtually if we are still social distancing.

The digital registration forms are available on the [Westborough Ecumenical VBS Facebook page](#)

Print registration can be found at Good Shepherd’s website [HERE](#)

Be well friends!

Hilary Parsons, Interim Director of Christian Education

Adult Forum by Zoom on May 3 and May 10, 2020 10:30 a.m.

Did you ever listen on the radio to another service while driving home after worship and notice that the readings are the same?

The reason: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, like many congregations in the United States and Canada, follows the Revised Common Lectionary developed by the Consultation on the Common Texts. This ecumenical group of liturgical scholars and denominational representatives provided readings for Sunday worship in a repeating three year cycle. FYI, the Church year starts with the First Sunday of Advent. Each year focuses on one of the synoptic gospels:

- Year A Matthew,
- Year B Mark
- Year C Luke.

The Gospel of John is read each year, especially during Advent, Lent, and Easter.

The lectionary provides four-related readings for each Sunday: an Old Testament reading, a Psalm, an Epistle reading, and a Gospel reading.

The readings relate to the seasons of the Church year: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and the Season after Pentecost. Because we are currently in the Easter season (the seven weeks between Easter and Pentecost), the Old Testament

reading is replaced by a reading from the Book of Acts and the Gospel reading is from John.

In our study, we will look at the connections between the four readings for each Sunday, with the benefit of having listened to our Pastor's sermon during the worship service. We will experience together what Martin Luther called "scripture interprets scripture."

Sunday May 3 – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Readings: Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; I. Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10.

Sunday May 10 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

Readings: Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16; I Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14.

While reading the scripture passages ahead of time is helpful, it is certainly not required.

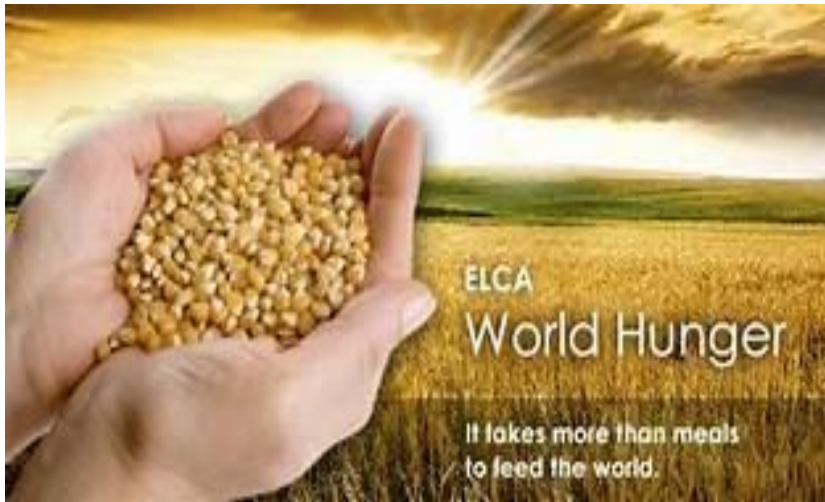
Please brew a coffee at home and join GSLC [Zoom Meeting](#) at 10:00 a.m. for the virtual Coffee Hour or at 10:30 a.m. for Adult Forum.

MESSENGER DEADLINE

Friday, May 22, 2020

Please email your articles to Caryn Francese in the office at

office@goodshepherdcares.org



*GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH,
Westborough, MA*

Thank you for your faithful service in sharing your God-given financial resources with the ELCA World Hunger Program! Your generosity is helping people have sustainable lives. Through gifts like yours, people in over 60 countries have better agricultural resources, access to clean water, nutritious food, education for children, effective ways to earn a living and better health

According to the ELCA World Hunger Program, your church for fiscal year 2019 has given to the ELCA World Hunger Program

\$1,907.34

This reflects #19 in congregational giving in the New England Synod.

Pastor David Rinas and Doreen Rinas

Co-Chairpersons

New England Synod World Hunger Team



183 W. Main Street † Westborough, MA 01581 † 508.366.7095
www.goodshepherdcares.org † prayercircle@goodshepherdcares.org
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - God's Work, Our Hands

STAFF DIRECTORY

508.366.7095 Tel. • 508.796.2611 Fax

Name	Ext.	All emails are @goodshepherdcares.org
The Rev. Jeffrey Goodrich	104	pastorjeff@
The Rev. Victoria Larson	103	pastorlarson@
Hilary Parsons, Interim Director of Christian Education	107	hilary.parsons@
Kirby Stalley, Director of Music	106	kirby.stalley@
Yeon Soh, Organist	109	yeon.soh@
Stan Corbett, Financial Secretary		finsec@
Caryn Francese, Parish Secretary	101	office@
Steve Brevik, Sexton	108	

Co-Pastors

The Rev. Jeffrey Goodrich 1329 Main Street, Concord, MA 01742 Cell: 508-808-1795	The Rev. Victoria Larson 46 Summer Street, #2 Westborough, MA 01581 Cell: 302-897-4167
--	--

SIMPLY GIVING

Please consider signing up for **Simply Giving™** so that Good Shepherd can count on your contribution even while you are away. Contact Stan Corbett, financial Secretary at finsec@goodshepherdcares.org to sign up. In addition, throughout the year the online giving form is accessible for changes in your pledge. Go to <https://www.goodshepherdcares.org/give/> anytime to add a pledge or amend your current pledge.



ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

(September through May)

Day	Learning	Time (s)	Contact
Sundays	Adult Forums	9 ⁰⁰ & 10 ⁴⁵ am	Mark Booher mark.booher@verizon.net
Mondays	Bible Study	9 ³⁰ am	Joan Olson jeolson423@icloud.com
Tuesdays	Men's Breakfast	8 am	Tom Olson tomo815@me.com
Wednesdays	Word on Wednesdays (WoW)	6 ³⁰ pm	goodshepherdcares.org
Fridays	Friday Group	9 ³⁰ am	Kay Devaprasad kanaga.devaprasad@gmail.com

See Calendar for more specific about locations
 Feel free to contact the office at 508.366.7095 with questions or email office@goodshepherdcares.org

facebook

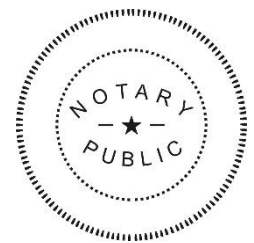


Name:
 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Westborough, Massachusetts

See us online at:
www.goodshepherdcares.org
 On Facebook
 Search for *Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Westborough, MA*

NOTARY PUBLIC SERVICES Caryn Francese, Notary Public

These services are provided at no cost to the congregants of Good Shepherd. Please call before you come and note that she will not be available to notarize on Wednesdays between Noon & 3. Caryn's office hours are: Mon., Tues. Wed. & Fri. 8:00 am to 3:00 pm, & Thurs. 8:00 am to 4:00 pm



Support Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

When you shop at smile.amazon.com, Amazon donates.

[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)

amazonsmile