

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Shepherd's Staff



ADVENT WORSHIP GOD'S FAMILY – OUR FAMILY WEDNESDAYS FROM 7:00 - 7:30 PM

Contact Information

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The Gospel of Matthew begins with Jesus' family tree. It's a long list of names. Some of those names are familiar and others are relatively unknown. Some of the people have a whole book of the Bible named after them and others get a verse or two at best. During our Wednesday evening Advent services, we will explore some of the people who are in Jesus' family tree, remembering that through Jesus, this is also our family tree. Join us on Wednesday evenings, starting November, 30th from 7:00 - 7:30 pm for worship. This is a great way to pause from all the business of the holidays and focus on the real gift of Christmas – Jesus. Jesus comes into our world to make us part of God's family forever. See you on Wednesdays!

ADVENT DEVOTIONS

Advent, the season of watching and waiting for our Savior's birth, began on **Sunday, November 27th**. Devotions are available for families with children AND for adults. Grandparents, you are invited to share with your grandkids too. Take one home to help you reflect on the meaning of Jesus' birth. Only one Manger on the Mantle per household please – it has activities for the whole family to do together.

GOOD SHEPHERD CHRISTMAS SEASON TRADITIONS

**Wednesday Evening Advent Worship Services at 7:00 p.m.
November 30, December 7th, 14th, & 21st**

**Good Shepherd Cookie Walk
Saturday, December 3rd
7:30 – 11:00 a.m.**

**Sunday School Christmas Program
Sunday, December 18th during 10:30 a.m. Worship Service**

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Services
Saturday, December 24th at 4:00 & 7:00 p.m.**

**Sunday, December 25th Worship - 9:00 a.m.
"Christmas Worship"**

* **Please Note the Special Holiday Schedule** *
* **ONLY 1 SERVICE AT 9:00 A.M. ON Sunday, December 25th** *
* **ONLY 1 SERVICE AT 9:00 A.M. ON Sunday, January 1st** *

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PASTOR'S NOTE

Dear partners in ministry,

Do you remember the joy, wonder, and excitement you felt as a child in anticipating Christmas? Many of us were literally counting the days, and sleeping was the last thing we wanted to do the night before Christmas.

Christmas as an adult is often a little bit different. While we long for the joy, wonder, and excitement of Christmas, the days leading up to Christmas may also be filled with pressure, stress and even grief. Amid all the preparations for Christmas, many people find themselves in a not so joyful spirit. The schedules we have, our to-do lists, the crowds, the over indulgence and expense of the season, and grief over loved ones who are no longer with us are part of the reality we face.

In the midst of everything that is going on in our lives and in the world, it is helpful to remember that Christmas is about God's gift to us and to the world. It's not about having everything perfect, and it's not even about feeling 100% joyful. Christmas is God's gift of Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us, given to us in a world that includes joy, wonder, and excitement, but also times of pressure, stress, and grief. At the heart of Christmas is the good news spoken by the angel in Luke 2, "For to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." The gift is for the shepherds, for you, and for me. Even those shepherds, didn't feel 100% joyful. In fact scripture tell us that they were filled with fear. Although the shepherds were told not be afraid, probably some of the shepherds were still wrestling with fear, worry, and even doubt. Like us, those shepherds didn't have everything all together, but part of the gift of Christmas is that no matter what we are going through, no matter how we feel, Jesus comes to us and continues to come to us each and every day.

As a church and as individuals, we can continue to share this gift with the world around us. Invite someone you know to worship on a Sunday morning, for one of the Advent services on Wednesday evenings, to the Children's Christmas program, or on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Volunteer or find someone to help. Check out the opportunities to give on the Giving Tree or buy a toy for Toys for Tots. In these ways and so many more, we share the gift of God's love in Jesus that comes into our world and in our lives.

Have a blessed Christmas!
Pastor Krista

Thank you for the flowers, cards and best wishes for pastor appreciation and for my birthday. You are a wonderful blessing from God!

GOOD SHEPHERD CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

BUILDING RENOVATION AND EXPANSION UPDATE

The Renovation and Expansion plans are proceeding. During the month of November, a Building Committee and Kitchen Committee were formed to help make basic design development plans.

The Building Committee includes Erin Bluhm, Scot Engler, Kory Bigalk, Joe Suntken, and Pastor Krista. During the month of November this committee met two different times with the architect and general contractor, Luke Kreofsky.

The Kitchen Committee includes Lily Bartz, Jason Bluhm, Karen Jurgenson, Sibyl Mason, Wayne Miller, Joe Suntken and Pastor Krista. This committee is helping to make recommendations regarding the use, needs, and layout of the future kitchen. In order to help think about different possibilities in terms of design and function, the committee took a tour of the newly remodeled kitchen at Peace United Church of Christ in Rochester, MN.

Once the Building Committee and Kitchen Committees' recommendations have been incorporated into the design plans, the Church Council will receive an update and then bring the information to the congregation. The Council wants to have these plans available for review at their January meeting, so they can be shared with the congregation at the annual meeting in January.

If you have any questions, contact Pastor Krista or Joe Suntken.

PARKING LOT CONCERNS

Please be careful in the church parking lot! Many evenings and every Sunday morning we have small children walking around on the church property. Please slow down and watch out for little ones!

THRIVENT ACTION TEAMS

Thrivent Financial gives seed money for groups to make an impact through service, education, and community projects. The money is to make a difference in our community and world. Any Thrivent member can sign up for money for up to two projects each year. Thanks to Good Shepherd members, Thrivent supported the Girl Scouts garden and gazebo, youth coffee shop, cookie walk, and graduate blankets during 2016.

Let's create even more action teams...for the food shelf, for community projects, for Good Shepherd projects. Talk to Carole Joyce, Jake Thompson, or call the church office if you are a Thrivent member and are willing to help. It isn't hard -- think of the impact we can make together!

ADDRESSES NEEDED FOR POST HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGE & YOUNG ADULTS

We need current addresses for Good Shepherd's post high school youth---those who graduated in the past 4-5 years. We would also like addresses for those in the military. Good Shepherd will be sending out care packages in late January. To get your young adult on this list, please email the church office or Carole Joyce (carole35@charter.net).

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH

COOKIE WALK **DECEMBER 3RD, 2016** **7:30 – 11:00 A.M.**

Are your cookies baked? Time is just about out!

We ask each family to donate between 12-15 dozen Christmas cookies. They can all be of one recipe or a variety of recipes. **Please concentrate on cookies.** Breads, candies, fudge and other treats don't seem to sell as well as cookies; however, we won't turn any of these items away.

We ask that the cookies come on nice platters or decorative boxes (this helps in the cleanup). Also, please write the name of your cookies (or list flavors) so the buyers know what kind of cookies they are. Also, if they have nuts in them, please list what kind (walnuts, pecans, etc).

We need the cookies delivered between 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Friday night so we can have them all placed on the tables and ready to go by 7:00 a.m. Saturday morning. The doors don't open until 7:30 a.m., but it seems like every year we have buyers waiting at the door by 7:00 a.m.

We also need a lot of helpers for this event. It is a very short time commitment and it is actually very fun. Youth (4th grade and up) are encouraged to help. We need helpers on Friday night and Saturday morning. Contact Franny Schwantz (876-2253 or frannyschwantz@hotmail.com) if you have any questions.

GOOD SHEPHERD BOOK CLUB

Love to read? Then join your fellow bookworms to read and discuss interesting books. We will meet on **Wednesday, December 14th from 6:00 - 7:00 pm** at Good Shepherd to discuss *You Before Me* by JoJo Moyes. Note earlier time because of Advent worship. You may check out books from the church office. They must be returned on December 14th,

The January book is *The Rosie Project* by Graeme Simsion. We will meet on January 18th at 6:30 pm. You can pick up a book at the December meeting or check it out from the church office after that.

CHRISTMAS COOKIE DECORATING & MOVIE

Adults and children of all ages are invited to gather on **Friday, December 16th at 6:00 p.m.** to spread the joy of Christmas. We will decorate Christmas cookies to share with others. We ask that families attending bring 2 dozen sugar cookies already baked. Some can bring frosting and plastic wrap. (You may keep it simple and just buy the premade dough and bake them.) If you love to decorate cookies, please come—decorators of ALL ages are welcome! We will eat a few and deliver the rest to people in need of holiday cheer. Come for all or part of the night.

- 6:00 pm Simple meal (Special thanks for Marty Hassig for organizing the food)
- 6:30 pm Cookie decorating
- 7:00 pm Hear the Christmas story with a movie for children

Please RSVP to Marty Hassig at hassigplc@yahoo.com so we have enough food. We will chip in together to cover the costs.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH CONTINUED ...

MILESTONE BLANKET WORK DAY

Spend a cold winter day **Friday, January 6th** with Good Shepherd friends sewing blankets for our graduates and baptisms! Meet at church for sewing, fellowship, fun, and of course food (warm soup and bread). We will start at 8:00 am and stop sometime in the afternoon. Come when you can and leave when you must.

Sewing skills are helpful, but not required. So, if you can't sew, come anyway to cut, pin, and most of all have fun. Bring any of the following items that you have: sewing machine, scissors, pins, and needles. Questions, talk to Carole Joyce at carole35@charter.net or 269-9374.

HELP WITH BACKPACKS

We are excited to be able to help fill food backpacks for hungry kids during the months of December and January. We need volunteers to:

- Pick up the empty backpacks from the K-3 building and 4-6 building on Wednesdays.
- Return filled backpacks to K-3 building and 4-6 building after they are filled (by Friday).
- Confirmation students will fill backpacks on Wednesday evenings.
- Order/pick up food for backpacks.

Contact the church office to volunteer for any of these.

MILESTONES

Baptisms

Blessings to Evelyn Pearl Appel, who was baptized on November 13th. Evelyn is the daughter of Paul and Karla Appel,

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH CONTINUED ...

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

Senior High Youth Ministry – A good thing growing! (Grades 9-12)

In December, high school students are invited to stop into the youth room following Wednesday Advent worship. All are welcome! Bring a friend.

November 30	Making luminaries for Olde Fashioned Christmas
December 7	Summer Trip Meeting (bring parents to learn about trip & reserve your spot)
December 14	Service & Learning Night
December 21	Christmas party

Summer Boundary Waters Trip Meeting on Wednesday, December 7th: Trip Dates July 23-28, 2017

High school youth, parents and other interested adults/young adults are invited to an information meeting about a summer Boundary Waters trip July 23rd – July 28th. We will meet at 7:40 pm (right after Advent worship). We have reserved two groups so we have room for all youth who want to attend. The second group may be an intergenerational group with other adults and young adults who would like to experience God in the wonder of creation too. Come to the meeting if you are interested and want to learn more.

Remember **NEVER** let finances keep you from participating! Good Shepherd works very hard to decrease the costs and scholarships are available as needed. Contact Carole Joyce at carole35@charter.net or 269-9374 to join the trip.

December Coffee Shop

Thanks to the high school youth, we have flavored coffee, hot chocolate and cinnamon rolls between services the 3rd Sunday of each month. Look for these tasty treats on December 18th -- Christmas program day. Join us for wonderful fellowship. Thank you to the congregation for your support of high school ministry.

Fair Trade Coffee

Did you notice the fabulous taste of the coffee at November's coffee shop? The youth served LWR Fair Trade coffee. Some coffee drinkers described it as rich and smooth. Fair Trade coffee provides a sustainable living for the families which produce the coffee. Lutheran World Relief works with smallholder coffee producers in Latin America, Asia and Africa to:

- Create linkages along value chains that benefit producers
- Contribute to environmental sustainability, and
- Create profits for socially responsible businesses

It's a triple bottom line: People, Planet, and Profit — to help improve producers' lives, from the ground up.

Youth will be serving Fair Trade coffee at their coffee shops and will have some available for you to purchase if you would like.

EDUCATION

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASSES (9:30 A.M. – 10:15 A.M.)

For December, we will be looking at two different TED talks (TED is a nonpartisan nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful **talks**) and discussing what we heard.

December 4 Inside the mind of a former radical jihadist
December 11 The power of vulnerability.

CONFIRMATION

November 30 Luminaries
December 7 Color with prayer: We will split kids into two groups. First we will open with how we pray, and encourage writing a prayer of intercession. Then we will tell them a little about praying in color and give them time to pray on their own.
December 14 Christ Centered Yoga and Play Dough and prayer: We will split the group in two -- Half in play dough and half in yoga and then switch.
December 21 Praying the Labyrinth: We will again split the group into two, and they will do a walking, and finger Labyrinth station.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM REHEARSALS

Rehearsal for all age groups will **only be during the education hour** this year. Plan to be at Good Shepherd by 9:15 am every Sunday in December (if at all possible). Watch your email for words for songs so you can practice together at home. Dress for the program in nice church clothes.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Sunday school Christmas program will be presented at the 10:30 am worship service on Sunday, December 18th. You won't want to miss hearing the story of Jesus' birth as told by our Sunday school children! Linda Theisen and Pastor Krista are directing the musical called "Manger Tales" with our 1st- 6th graders. Preschool and Kindergarteners will also be presenting a short program. Invite your family and friends to join us that day. The back-up-date in case of weather will be Wednesday, December 21st at 7:00 pm.

MONTHLY THURSDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY

The December (Christmas) meeting of the Thursday afternoon Bible study group will meet at Betty Fahrenz's home on **Tuesday, December 13th at 12:00 noon**. Please bring a soup, salad, or sandwiches of your choice.

COMING UP IN JANUARY

Splash for Infants (Age 3 & Parents)	January 8 th	Worship & 9:15 am
2 nd Grade & Parents: It's Not Fair	January 15 th & 22 nd	9:15 am
PreK-2 nd Grade: Sing at worship	January 22 nd	
Service Sunday for All Ages—Care packages	January 29 th	9:15 am



FINANCE

We have both **Simply Giving and On-Line Giving systems** all set up for easy and free access – just let us know how we can assist you. Please feel free to contact the church office or Tom Anderson directly (507-993-8326).

Good Shepherd Lutheran Financial Summary Notes ---- Nov 1, 2016

General Account	\$ 17,297
Restricted Accounts	\$ 14,721 (w/o Bldg. Fund)
Building Fund Account	\$ 171,592
Loan Receivable	\$ <u>5,159</u>
Total Short Term Assets	\$ 208,769

Fixed Assets	\$ 900,308
Total Assets	\$1,109,077

Mortgage Balance \$ 59,613
Equity \$1,049,464

Check Book Trends (General Fund)

Jan	\$ 36,187	June	\$ 26,382
Feb	\$ 32,344	July	\$ 27,843
Mar	\$ 31,673	Aug	\$ 21,817
Apr	\$ 28,570	Sept	\$ 15,815
May	\$ 25,360	Oct	\$ 17,297

MISSIONS & STEWARDSHIP

DECEMBER NOISY OFFERING AND ADVENT OFFERINGS

Our December Noisy Offering and Advent offerings will be directed to the Plainview-Elgin Food Shelf. You help so many in our immediate community with your donations to the Food Shelf, and they do say thank you. Thank you for helping to ensure that no one goes hungry when there is plenty to share. Thank you for letting kids focus on school work and enjoy life, instead of leaving them consumed with wondering when they will get to eat again. Thank you for making a difference!

GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

Many Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes were sent this year – our goal was to ship 75 boxes – we delivered 76 boxes!! WAY TO GO!! Our boxes (for this year) will be sent to Saint Lucia in the Caribbean and Madagascar, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, all in Southern Africa. It is fun to know where the children are who will be getting our goodies. Thanks to everyone who contributed this year, giving hope and joy to all the children!

During the month of December, Good Shepherd will be filling the Backpacks for Kids on Wednesday nights. Read the article on page 5 of the newsletter to see how you can get involved.

Thank you Karen Jurgenson and Michelle Wendt for spending the night with Good Shepherd's youth November 19th – 20th. Thanks to the youth who made cinnamon rolls from scratch at 2:00 am so they would be warm and wonderful for all to eat on Sunday morning.

Thanks to Thrivent Financial (www.thrivent.com) for their support of Good Shepherd's youth ministry. Because of their action team, we are able to start serving Fair Trade coffee at the coffee shops. All proceeds from coffee shops will go to youth ministry and summer trips.

Approximately \$211 was collected from our November noisy offering, which will be given to the Blue Star Moms. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this worthy cause, and to Tami Sawyer, who is a Blue Star Mom.

TOYS FOR TOTS

Todd Rau has been in contact with Toys for Tots and we, Good Shepherd Church, will be collecting toys/gifts for that organization this year. There will be a box in the narthex where you can place the toys/gifts you purchase. **You will have from TODAY through December 21st** to buy toys/gifts and place them in the box – toys/gifts will be picked up on December 23rd.

The toys/gifts will be given within our communities, Elgin & Plainview areas, first. However, if there are any left over toys/gifts, which they hope there are, they always have needs in other communities. There are no specific needs, so shopping should be easy!

Toys for Tots is a program run by the United States Marine Corps Reserve which distributes toys to children whose parents cannot afford to buy them gifts for Christmas. The program was founded in 1947 by reservist Major Bill Hendricks. It is a top-rated program, with over 97% of what is collected going to their mission of providing toys, books, and other gifts to less fortunate children.

COMMUNITY NEWS

PLAINVIEW COMMUNITY CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Plainview Community Choir will present their annual Christmas concert on **Sunday, December 4th at 7:00 p.m.** in the PEM high school gym. This year's cantata is called Glory in the Highest. There is no cost for admission, but a freewill donation is taken during the intermission to help with expenses. Come, enjoy and get into the Holiday Spirit!

COMMUNITY CENTER'S FESTIVAL OF TREES & MORE

The Plainview Community Center will be having a silent auction on Friday, December 2nd from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and Saturday, December 3rd from 10:00 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. They will also be having a white sale of gently used items. On both Friday (11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. and Saturday (11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.) they will be selling soup, hot pork sandwiches, chips, beverage and a dessert for only \$10.00. Stop in and support the Plainview Community Center!

GREEN PRAIRIE REHABILITATION CENTER

Friends of Seniors Invites you to:

An Olde' Fashioned Country Christmas at Green Prairie Assisted Living

810 2nd Ave. NW, Plainview

Family Group Craft & Bake Sale

Friday, December 2, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 3, 9 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

An Olde' Fashioned Country Christmas Breakfast

Sunday, December 4, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Green Prairie Assisted Living
will be decked for the holidays!

Bring your entire family and come dressed festively!

Yum!
Menu:

Scrambled Eggs/Sausages/Fruit Display/
Baby Red Potatoes/Baking Powder Biscuits/ Gravy/Jellies/
Cinnamon Rolls/ Banana Bread /Christmas Cookies/Apple Bars
Orange Juice/Coffee/Milk

Suggested donation of \$15 per person, children 8-12 suggested donation of \$10. Children under 8 are complimentary

**Proceeds will support a Chair' itable Affair
which means we will be purchasing recliners for our loved ones at the home.**

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

12/01	Erin Bartz	12/17	Linda Schmitz
	Nicole Bartz		Shelbey Ramthun
12/02	Craig Steele	12/18	Rose Grover
	Sarah Wilhelmson	12/19	Roberta Kurth
12/03	Haley Gudmundson	12/20	Olivia Amos
12/05	Jayda Schwantz	12/21	Gannon Olson
12/06	Becky Wehrs		Nicolas Crudele
12/07	Logan Hanson	12/23	Kevin Fuerstneau
12/08	Alex Jurgenson		Pastor Kris Ferkin
12/09	Michelle Klennert	12/26	Claire Henry
	Blake Biers	12/27	Police Chief Tim Schneider
12/10	Anika Steele	12/28	Shane Holst
12/11	Jake Thompson		Lauren Bartz
12/12	Carson Castle	12/30	Ben Mohs
12/16	Benjamin Suntken	12/31	Ron Peterson

Anniversaries

12/06	Clark & Shannon Olstad	12/23	Dennis & Carol Buntrock
12/10	Rick & Lorie Turri		Chad & Andrea Getschmann
12/15	John & Jane Folkert	12/28	Al & Deb Ninas
12/22	Tom & Karen Anderson	12/31	Kory & Kareen Bigalk

*NOTE: Birthdays and anniversaries listed in the newsletters are now being limited to adult members and their college-aged and under children. If you have questions and/or concerns with this, please contact the church office.

PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE IF YOU HAVE ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO THE LIST OF BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

***Bless us Lord, this Christmas, with quietness of mind;
teach us to be patient and always to be kind.***

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

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The Shepherd's Staff is a communication tool among our friends and members spreading the word of Jesus Christ with news of our church and related events. It is published monthly by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Plainview-Elgin.

VISION STATEMENT, GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

Claimed by God through Word & Sacrament, we move forward with a NEW VIEW:

Notice the needs of our congregation, community, and world with eyes of faith.
Educate all from cradle to grave.
Worship in thankfulness and joy.

Value all generations in passing on the faith.
Identify and affirm the gifts of God's people.
Energize God's people to use their gifts for ministry.
Welcome the opportunity to walk the talk with our youth.

The submission deadline for the January 2017 Newsletter is

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22.