

# The Shepherd's Staff

## Contact Information

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
P. O. Box 355  
Plainview MN, 55964  
(507) 534-3675  
[www.goodshepherdlutheran-plainview.org](http://www.goodshepherdlutheran-plainview.org)

Pastor: Krista Henning-Ferkin  
Office Hours: Vary  
Email: [Krista.goodshepherd@gmail.com](mailto:Krista.goodshepherd@gmail.com)

Phone: (507)534-3675 (office)  
(605)480-2325 (cell)

Cong. Administrator: Lynn Eversman  
Office Hours: Vary  
Email: [lynn.goodshepherd@embargmail.com](mailto:lynn.goodshepherd@embargmail.com)  
Phone: (507)534-3675

Passing on Faith Facilitator: Carole Joyce  
Office Hours: Vary  
Email: [carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net)  
Home Phone: (507) 288-0551  
Cell Phone: (507) 269-9374

## GOOD SHEPHERD FINANCIAL REVIEW

On **Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 a.m.**, a meeting to review the financial portion of the annual meeting will be held in the sanctuary. Please plan on attending if you have any questions/concerns at all about Good Shepherd finances.

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The annual **Congregational meeting** will be held on **Sunday, January 31<sup>st</sup> following the 10:30 a.m. worship service.** There will also be a potluck meal, so please plan on bringing a dish to pass.

## GOOD SHEPHERD CHANGES TO HOLY COMMUNION

Adult Education classes in January (3, 10, 17, 31) will focus on the topic of Holy Communion (see the newsletter article: First Communion – A Change in our Current Practice). We will discuss what makes it a sacrament, how Holy Communion relates to the sacrament of Baptism, why we should receive Communion, when we should receive Communion, the night Jesus celebrated this meal with his disciples and what was going on that night, the ties with the Old Testament and the celebration of Passover, how different churches practice Holy Communion, and any other questions you may have.

Grab a cup of coffee and join in from **9:30 – 10:15 a.m. on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup>.**

## Inside This Issue

- 2 Pastor's Note
- 3 Bishop's Note
- 4 Congregational Care Team
- 5-6 Education
- 7 Finance
- 8 Missions & Stewardship
- 9 Birthdays & Anniversaries

## PASTOR'S NOTE

Dear partners in ministry,

Happy New Year and a Blessed Epiphany!

This year on Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> we will celebrate Epiphany, the arrival of the Magi (the wise men) to see Jesus. The actual date of the Epiphany of our Lord is January 6<sup>th</sup>. The story of Jesus' birth includes Mary and Joseph, the angels and shepherds, and also the magi (ancient sages or wise men) following the light of a star to Jesus, the light of the world. Epiphany and the season of the church year that follows are focused on revealing Jesus as the light of the world, and how that light is made known to the world.

We don't know very much about these wise men, but the rising of a star had alerted them to the birth of the King of the Jews. Wishing to see this king and honor him, they embark on an incredible journey.

The Magi made predictions based on what they saw in the stars, and the light of a star signaled something extraordinary to them. Finding answers and information about life events in the stars seems a little strange. Today people might refer to this as astrology and dismiss the whole thing. Yet, God was clearly at work leading and guiding the Magi. In this part of the Christmas story, we discover that God is able to use any means and tools available for revealing truth to those who seek it. The Magi used the knowledge before them to seek out the child. These wise men, who had never worshiped God in the temple, who had not heard the prophecies about the Messiah, went searching for the child and worshiped him.

God can indeed work in this world in many different and mysterious ways. How strange that these strangers recognize that Jesus is the one to worship. How incredible that God from the very beginning shows us that the birth of Jesus isn't only for the people of Israel, but for all people. How amazing that God uses what people know and do, to lead them to Jesus.

Today God provides us with many gifts through the discoveries made with a microscope, through scientific wisdom or the knowledge of today's scientific and medical sages. Knowledge and information are wonderful gifts from God, and like the Magi, we too are invited to use all the knowledge and information before us to honor and follow the newborn King.

God's blessings to you this Epiphany and in the many ways God comes to you each and every day.  
In Christ,

Pastor Krista

# BISHOP'S NOTE

## LEADERSHIP

*By Bishop Steven Delzer*

I've been a pastor and leader in the church for 40 years, and for 40 years I have loved it. And I want other pastors and rostered leaders and lay leaders to love it as much as I have. That's why I am so committed to the goal that was lifted up in our recent feasibility study:

*To develop leaders who feel supported, who are growing spiritually, and who are serving effectively in their contexts.*

So what does being a good leader look like? When considering someone for leadership in the church I look for what I call a Pastor's Heart, which I describe using my 4 C's of Leadership:

**COMMITMENT** to Christ and the Church can be seen in the leader's careful listening to God's call to service, and in the leader's perseverance in ministry even in the midst of difficult challenges, and in the leader's joyful enthusiasm about sharing the good news of God's love in both words and actions.

**COMPASSION** for people flows out of the leader's experience of the compassion – the grace, and love, and forgiveness that flows from the heart of God. Having experienced such love and compassion, the leader freely and joyfully becomes a channel for the compassion of God to flow into the lives on those the leader serves.

**COLLEGIALITY** – the desire and ability to work together with others – is essential to good leadership and effective ministry. None of us can be effective in ministry on our own. We need others with whom we can be honest and open about both the joys and struggles of leadership and ministry.

**COMPETENCE** to serve as leaders and to carry out effective ministry is a life- long process of learning and growth. Continuing Education is essential for the leader to be healthy and joyful. And healthy, joyful leaders make for healthy, joyful congregations.

How are we, as a synod, empowering the 350 rostered and lay leaders of our synod to be good leaders? I have begun an intentional process of visitation with rostered leaders to get to know them better, and to learn more about how leaders are feeling about their leadership:

- Do they feel supported?
- Do they feel like they are growing spiritually?
- Do they feel like they are serving effectively in their contexts?
- What one thing could we do to be most helpful to our leaders?

Also, as a synod, we are offering a variety of opportunities for both rostered and lay leaders to continue growing their skills and competence as leaders in ministry. Living Every Day As Disciples, Stewardship for All Seasons, annual Leadership Retreats, Councils as Leaders, and the Fall Theological Conference are all examples.

For 40 years I have loved being a pastor and leader in the church. And I want you – rostered leaders and lay leaders – to love it as much as I have. I will do everything I can to help you love it as much as I have, because we are in this together as the Body of Christ in this place we call the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA.

*Bishop Steven Delzer was elected to serve in 2013. He is energized by our synod's three priorities: developing leaders, supporting congregations, and accompanying global partners. Bishop Delzer believes healthy leaders make for healthy congregations.*

# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH

## WORK DAYS FOR MILESTONE BLANKETS

Spend a cold winter day **Friday, January 8<sup>th</sup>** with Good Shepherd friends sewing blankets for our graduates and babies! Meet at church for sewing, fellowship, fun, and of course food (warm soup and bread). We will start at 8:00 a.m. 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. If you have questions, contact Carole Joyce at [carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net) or 269-9374.

## BOOK GROUP PARTY AND BOOK FOR JANUARY

The January book is *Ordinary Grace* by William Kent Krueger. Books are available in the church office. Please note book discussions are the **THIRD Wednesday** of each month at **6:30 p.m. -- January 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.**

In January we will be having a party with treats and a book exchange! Bring a pre-read book to share – no brand new books! Bring a book that you have already read and are willing to give away. We will exchange books by playing a simple game. So wrap that book — in a bag or newspaper or box.

Our February book is *Blessings* by Anna Quindlen. A library book bag is reserved so pick up a book at the January meeting or in the church office afterwards.

## SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

### High School Mission Trip -- Chicago: July 24-29, 2016

Youth often say the service trip is the most meaningful of the summer trips. You will see the world and your faith in a totally different way as we meet new people and reach out in service and love in Chicago. Sign up is going on NOW. Make a deposit to reserve your spot. Six youth have signed up already.

Talk to Carole Joyce ([carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net) or 269-9374) ASAP if you would like to come or bring a friend. Remember **NEVER** let finances keep you from participating! Good Shepherd works very hard to decrease the costs and scholarships are available as needed.

# EDUCATION

## JANUARY ADULT EDUCATION

### First Communion – A Change in our Current Practice

Holy Communion is an important sacrament within the life of the church. In Communion we are promised the forgiveness of our sins, life, and salvation. Although this sacrament was instituted by Jesus, and we can read about it in the Bible, there is nothing in the Bible that tells us how old one must be before receiving Communion.

In our denomination, the ELCA, there is no set age for a Lutheran to receive First Communion. It used to be that First Communion was tied to the Rite of Confirmation, but most churches have moved away from this practice, so that children do not feel as if they have earned Communion. Communion is God's gift of grace for us. There is nothing we can ever do to earn Communion or God's grace. The ELCA provides us with this statement regarding First Communion, "Baptized children begin to commune on a regular basis at a time determined through mutual conversation that includes the pastor, the child, the parents or sponsors involved, within the accepted practices of the congregation. Ordinarily this beginning will occur only when children can eat and drink, and can start to respond to the gift of the Christ in the Supper" (The Use and the Means of Grace, 1997).

The ELCA opens up the possibility that children may begin communing at any age. When the ELCA statement in 1997 came out, many ELCA congregations changed their first communion age to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade or an earlier age as determined by each individual family. Some congregations have no age requirement at all, and let this decision fall to each family to determine. Here at Good Shepherd the practice has been that first communion happens on Maundy Thursday for 5<sup>th</sup> graders. This year we will make the change of offering First Communion to children in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and above. Ultimately, the decision to receive communion will be made by parents with their child. Within the month families with children in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade through 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be receiving a letter about these changes.

How we learn and understand God and Holy Communion changes over time. As we grow in years, maturity and life experiences our understanding of Communion deepens and changes. Regardless of our age, all of us can continue to take advantage of opportunities to learn more about the great gift of Holy Communion. First Communion instruction is offered for those who have yet to receive the sacrament. During confirmation students again explore the sacrament of Holy Communion. Adults are encouraged to join us for adult education classes as we explore this topic. During the month of January adult education classes will focus on the topic of Holy Communion. Come join us and learn more.

## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM THANK YOU

Thank you to the amazing preschool and elementary Sunday school students (and their teachers and parents) for the wonderful message about Jesus' birth: "Tale of the Drowsy Shepherd". What a gift to have you share the Christmas story in this meaningful way. Thank you to Linda Theisen and Pastor Krista who planned and directed the program! Thanks to Tom Anderson, Lynn Eversman, Joe Ulwelling and all the Sunday s teachers for their help. Thank you!

You can share the program with friends and family by going to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiKyoAS49f4&feature=youtu.be>  
Preschool-Kindergarten program begins at 7:10 and 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade program begins at 12:10

## **EDUCATION CONTINUED ...**

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

#### **January Schedule**

**January 3** – Regular Schedule  
**January 10** – Regular Schedule & Baptism Beach Party  
**January 17** – Regular Schedule & TIF – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade  
**January 24** – Regular Schedule & TIF – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade  
**January 31** -- Regular Schedule

### **TOGETHER IN FAITH**

**Parents and all Infants, 2 & 3 year olds (not in Sunday school yet):** Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:15 a.m.

We want to remember your child's baptism in worship on January 10<sup>th</sup>! Bring your child's baptismal candle if you can find it to whichever service you prefer to attend.

Then we will have a Baptism Beach party during the education hour. Parents and infants/toddlers/and those too young for Sunday school, come warm up your winter at the baptism party! We will play beach games, remember our baptism, and have time for adults to talk. Break out summer hats and sunglasses for some mid-winter fun!

#### **Second Grade: "What's Fair?" -- January 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>**

We are looking forward to seeing you and your child at the special class for second graders and their parents, "What's Fair?". This will be a time of serious fun, where we will face one of our children's greatest frustrations – that life isn't fair! Discover together how to cope with life's unfairness and learn what God considers the fair facts. We will meet in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom from 9:15 –10:15 a.m. on January 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

Looking Ahead to February...

#### **Parents, Kids, and Money: Wednesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.**

This class is for all 1<sup>st</sup>- 3<sup>rd</sup> graders and their parents. Mark your calendar now. Watch for more details.

### **CONFIRMATION MINISTRY**

Confirmation ministry (7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades) meets every **Wednesday night from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.** Each night begins with a meal in the fellowship hall and continues with activities and discussions that are designed to nurture faith.

### **THURSDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY**

The Thursday afternoon Bible study group will meet on **the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month**. So, plan on meeting on **January 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m.** here at Good Shepherd.

# FINANCE

# MISSIONS & STEWARDSHIP

## GOOD SHEPHERD FINANCIAL PLEDGING

### A Historical perspective of Good Shepherd's Financial Pledging History

2014	44 Pledges	\$103,414 Pledged	Pledges done by Mail & On-line
2015	41 Pledges	\$127,472 Pledged	Pledges done by Mail & On-Line
2016	93 Pledges	\$198,383 Pledged (To date)	Pledges done by 3 ring binders and On-Line

**Job Well Done!**

## GOD'S WORK: OUR HANDS

**Sharing Tree:** THANKS to everyone who donated money/gift cards to our Sharing Tree this year. The total collected here at Good Shepherd was \$1335 in gift cards (plus some brought directly to the Food Shelf) and \$300 in checks made out directly to the Food Shelf. A special thanks to Bonnie McMillin and Betty Fahrenz for setting up the tree, making out the gift tags, and making sure the Food Shelf got all the contributions!

**Cookie Walk:** Good Shepherd raised approximately \$1700 from our cookie walk this year. It will be distributed 3 ways: one third to the youth mission trip, one third to a charity outside the church (possibly Salvation Army) and one third to our building efforts. THANKS to everyone no matter what your part was in this important and fun mission! A special thanks to Franny Schwantz for heading this up again this year.

**Toys for Tots:** THANKS to everyone who contributed to our Toys for Tots mission. We don't have a total number of toys collected, but several big boxes were carried out of here. THANKS also to Todd Rau for heading up this mission project!

**Christmas Anonymous Family:** Good Shepherd youth adopted a Christmas anonymous family this year. Thanks to all who contributed we were able to give clothes, gifts, bikes, and a gift certificate. Hopefully they will know Jesus' love and hope through you.

**Lights for Life Luminaries:** Lights for Life luminaries were decorated by Confirmation students this year. Thanks for your artwork. These lights celebrate those who have fought with cancer and money donated went to cancer research.

**Advent Worship:** Thank you to Gloria Keseley, Nicole & Erin Bartz, Kali Jurgenson, and Kaylee Hutchison for leading Advent worship.

**Food Shelf:** A check for \$568.53 was issued to the Plainview-Elgin Area Food Shelf. This money was collected from the offering during Advent services and from our December noisy offering. Once again – thanks to you all!

# BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

## Birthdays

<b>01/01</b>	Merlin Mielke		<b>01/15</b>	Joe Crudele
	Annie Weinrich		<b>01/16</b>	Travis Ihrke
<b>01/02</b>	Kathy Sveen		<b>01/18</b>	Don Fiskum
	Grace Wangen		<b>01/19</b>	Sherry Tuxen
	Christian Wangen			Zachary Hassig
<b>01/04</b>	Tucker Johnson		<b>01/23</b>	Gloria Keseley
	Charli Yust			MariClair Schneider
<b>01/05</b>	Don Weinrich		<b>01/24</b>	Fran Grover
<b>01/08</b>	Ron Kurth			Deb Weinrich
<b>01/09</b>	Lorie Turri		<b>01/25</b>	Hayley Rau
<b>01/10</b>	Kelsey Rahman			Hunter Rau
<b>01/11</b>	Nicholas Hanson			Evan Kobler
<b>01/12</b>	Tammy Peterson			Brandon Melcher
<b>01/13</b>	Trisha Schumacher		<b>01/31</b>	Tayla Erickson
<b>01/14</b>	Dennis Buntrock			Alysha Mohs
	Frank Horstman			

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

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**We would worry less about what others think of us  
if we realized how seldom they do.**

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**

PO Box 355  
Plainview, MN 55964

Address Service Requested  
Issue 190, Published Monthly

Presorted Special  
Standard Mail  
US Postage Paid  
Plainview, MN 55964  
Permit No. 68

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:

**N**otice the needs of our congregation, community, and world with eyes of faith.

**E**ducate all from cradle to grave.

**W**orship in thankfulness and joy.

**V**alue all generations in passing on the faith.

**I**dentify and affirm the gifts of God's people.

**E**nergize God's people to use their gifts for ministry.

**W**elcome the opportunity to walk the talk with our youth.

**The submission deadline for the February 2016 Newsletter is**

***FRIDAY, JANUARY 22.***