

# Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

## The Shepherd's Staff



### ADVENT WORSHIP WEDNESDAYS FROM 7:00 - 7:45 PM

#### Contact Information

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The Wednesdays of Advent we will Journey together anticipating the expected Savior through the Psalms:

**Read Psalm 122--- "Song of Praise and Prayer for Jerusalem" at home (see page 3)**

**December 6<sup>th</sup>: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19  
"Prayer for Guidance and Support for the King" ---  
An expectation of justice in Christ**

**December 13<sup>th</sup>: Psalm 146:5-10  
"Praise for God's Help"---  
An expectation of the gifts of Christ**

**December 20<sup>th</sup>: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
"Prayer for Israel's Restoration" ---  
An expectation of salvation in Christ**

### ADVENT DEVOTIONS

Advent, the season of watching and waiting for our Savior's birth, begins on **Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>**. 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 pop-up Advent calendar per household please.

### GOOD SHEPHERD CHRISTMAS SEASON TRADITIONS

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

**Wednesday Evening Advent Worship Services at 7:00 p.m.  
December 6<sup>th</sup>, December 13<sup>th</sup>, & December 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Sunday School Christmas Program  
Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> during 10:30 a.m. Worship Service**

**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> Worship - 9:00 a.m.**

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

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\* Please Note the Special Holiday Schedule \*  
\* ONLY 1 SERVICE AT 9:00 A.M. ON Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup> \*  
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## PASTOR'S NOTE

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son...” - John 3:16

The days before Christmas are filled with many things. There's decorating, baking cookies and the traditional Christmas foods, and going to Christmas concerts and parties. Along with all of those activities, time and attention go into buying (or possibly making) gifts for others. Gift giving is a significant part of the season. From Black Friday on we are bombarded with commercials and sales encouraging us to buy gifts for others. In fact, according to Pastor Rick Warren, during this time of year the word 'gift' is heard more than the words “merry,” “tree,” “Santa,” or even “Jesus.”

Gifts become a central focus both for children who make wish lists and visit Santa and for adults who are searching for gifts for those they are grateful for as well as finding just the right gift for loved ones. Many individuals and families will also look for opportunities to give to those in need.

This gift giving is nothing new. The Bible and the early Christian church lift up stories that we claim as a source for our own gift giving. Within the Biblical Christmas Story it is the Wise Men who first brought gifts to the baby Jesus. The church also honors the life of Saint Nicholas who is believed to have brought gifts to children. These gifts helped meet people's needs and were given anonymously. While we site stories like these as the origins of gift giving at Christmas, the true origin of gift giving begins with God: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son...” (John 3:16).

Christmas is about generosity – God's generosity. Everything in our lives, including our very lives, is a gift of God's generosity. The air we breathe, the creation around us, the people in our lives are all gifts from God. And Christmas gives us an opportunity to celebrate the greatest gift, the most important act of generosity – the gift of God's Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. God loves, and therefore God gives. On that very first Christmas, God gave us (and the whole world) the gift of His Son. It is through this gift of Jesus that we have the gifts of God with us forever and ever, as well as the gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation.

Because God first gave to us, we give. Because God is generous and gives to us what we need, we can be generous and remember those we love and those in need. Whether we are shopping or donating, wrapping or opening gifts, let us use this time to pause and give thanks for God's generous gift of Jesus and the opportunities we have for generosity.

*Lord God, let this time of gift giving remind us of the greatest gift of all, your presence to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Let our gift giving be a way of sharing your love with others. Amen.*

In Christ,

Pastor Krista

# INTERN PASTOR'S NOTE

This year we will be *Expecting our Savior* by examining the psalms that speak of our expectations. The book of Psalms, found in the Old Testament, anticipates the arrival of a savior, a savior who will fulfill the prophesy and free God's people from the many things that bind them.

We only have 3 Wednesdays of Advent, so I give you the first of four psalms for you to do at home.

## Read Psalm 122 --- "Song of Praise and Prayer for Jerusalem"

### An expectation of unity in Christ

**Insight:** First thing to note is that the Psalms are not written chronologically. Psalm 122 is the third, in a series of 15 "Ascent Psalms" or Psalms that tell the story of a journey or a pilgrimage. This journey was most likely taking place on one of the many festivals recognized at the time. "**Jerusalem** is destination and goal because it is the place where God is present for his people."<sup>1</sup> Psalm 122 is sung on arrival, "*within your gates, O Jerusalem*" (Psalm 122: 2). Jerusalem is praised three times within the psalm as: a place of refuge (v3), praise (v4), and justice (v3). The psalm calls for all who love Jerusalem to come within the protected walls of its gates and join together as one harmonious group- harmony that may have been lost in our ordinary days. [As a contrast read Jesus' words on Jerusalem in Luke 19:41-44.]

**Reflection:** There is an expectation of something that is expressed in the first two verses of the Psalm: The Psalmist is glad to be in Jerusalem. Why the gladness?

We see in verse three that the gladness is due to the unity that is within Jerusalem. It is important to note that unity does not mean there is not diversity, which is echoed in verse four: "to which the *tribes* go up". There are multiple peoples coming to Jerusalem so what does this mean for our church today as we prepare for the coming of the Lord? The next couple of verses (not to skip over v5) starting with v6 are petitions for what this unity brings: May it bring peace and prosperity and a desire to do good. The basis of this however is praising the Lord as expressed in v4. How are we praising the Lord in today's time?<sup>2</sup>

**Sing:** "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" -- ELW Hymn 254

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us;  
Let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art,  
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king;  
Born to reign in us forever, now that gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
By thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.

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<sup>1</sup> Mays, James L.. Psalms: Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Kindle Location 7555). Westminster John Knox Press. Kindle Edition.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from classroom assignment for Prophets and Poetry (instructor Rolf Jacobson) written post by William Busbey (student).

# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH

## **COOKIE WALK** **DECEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2017** **7:30 – 11:00 A.M.**

**Are your cookies baked? Time is just about out!**

**The Cookie Walk is SATURDAY!!!** If you plan on bringing cookies, please have them delivered to church between 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Friday night so they can have them all placed on the tables and ready to go by 7:00 a.m. Saturday morning. Please place them 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 also need a lot of helpers for this event. It is a very short time commitment and it is actually very fun. Youth (4<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:frannyschwantz@hotmail.com)) if you have any questions.

## **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.

Contact the church office to volunteer for any of the above.

## **GOOD SHEPHERD BOOK CLUB**

Love to read? Then join your fellow bookworms to read and discuss interesting books. We will meet on **Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm** at Good Shepherd to discuss *Wonder* by RJ Ralacio. Note later time because of Advent worship. You may check out books from the church office. They must be returned on December 20<sup>th</sup>.

The January book is *Go Set a Watchman* by Harper Lee. We will meet on January 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. You can pick up a book at the December discussion or check it out from the church office after that.

## **MILESTONE BLANKET WORK DAY**

Spend a cold winter day **Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup>** 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, contact Carole Joyce at [carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net) or 269-9374.

# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH CONTINUED ...

## SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

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

High school students are invited to stop into the youth room following Holden evening Advent worship on Wednesdays in December. All are welcome! Bring a friend.

<b>November 29</b>	Parent and youth meeting to plan for fundraisers and set up Christmas ornament sale
<b>December 6</b>	7:30 p.m. – hang out together, decorate and eat Christmas cookies after the Advent Service

**Don't forget to sign up to help with the December 17<sup>th</sup> coffee shop!**

### December Coffee Shop

Thanks to the high school youth, we have flavored coffee, hot chocolate and cinnamon rolls between services the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month. Look for these tasty treats on December 17<sup>th</sup> -- Christmas program day. Join us for wonderful fellowship. Thank you to the congregation for your support of high school ministry.

## MILESTONES

### Baptisms

Blessings to Alison Ann Langins, who was baptized on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Alison is the daughter of Peter and Laura Langins,

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

## FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

The financial program that changes EVERYTHING! This is the time for Your Money; Your Story; Your Life. Learn God's ways of handling money with Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University! This class, taught via video by Dave Ramsey and the Financial Peace University teaching team, will help you achieve your financial goals by showing you how to eliminate debt, save for the future, and still be givers.

Good Shepherd is looking to offer this class in 2018. Any individuals interested in helping put this class together and help make it a success are welcome to include your name on the "Count Me In" form. All questions are welcome, call or send an email to:

Kareen and Kory Bigalk  
507-951-4586  
507-251-0983  
Bigalk.kareen@gmail.com  
Kgbigalk@aol.com

According to Dave Ramsey the average family pays off \$5,300 in debt and saves \$2,700 in the first 90 days (Ramsey).

## 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 cookie walk, Vacation Bible School, youth coffee shops, care packages, Palm Sunday breakfast and blanket ministry during 2017.

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, and 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 from high school 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 at [carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net).

# EDUCATION

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

December 3<sup>rd</sup> - Join Vicar Nicole for a study of the prophets in the Old Testament

December 10<sup>th</sup> - We will conclude our study of "And Who is My Neighbor" (exploring the issues of racism) with a speaker from ISAIAH. ISAIAH is a vehicle for congregations, clergy and people of faith to act collectively towards racial and economic equity.

December 17<sup>th</sup> - No adult education - Come for coffee shop!

December 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> - worship at 9:00 AM - no adult education

## 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 17<sup>th</sup>.** You won't want to miss hearing the story of Jesus' birth as told by our Sunday school children! Pastor Krista is directing the program called "*The Night Before Christmas*" with our 1<sup>st</sup>- 6<sup>th</sup> 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 snow or ice will be Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup> 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 12<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon**. Please bring a salad, sandwiches, or dessert of your choice.

## COMING UP IN JANUARY

Splash for Infants -- Age 3 & Parents  
2<sup>nd</sup> Grade & Parents: It's Not Fair  
PreK-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade sing at worship  
Service Sunday for All Ages -- Care packages

January 7 worship & 9:15 am  
January 14 & 21 at 9:15 am  
January 21  
January 28 at 9:15 am

# FINANCE

## *Giving With Gratitude & Generosity*

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 ---- October, 2017***

General Account	\$ 12,683
Restricted Accounts	\$ 21,349 (w/o Bldg. Fund)
Capital Campaign Account	\$ 246,658
Loan Receivable	\$ 1,487
<b>Total Short Term Assets</b>	<b>\$ 282,187</b>
Fixed Assets	\$ 903,554
Total Assets	\$1,185,741
*****	
Mortgage Balance	\$ 22,312 (at current Rate will be paid in April 2018)
<b>Equity</b>	<b>\$1,163,429</b>

### ***Check Book Trends (General Fund & Restricted Fund W/O Capital Campaign Fund)***

Jan	\$35,135	May	\$36,855	Sept	\$34,242
Feb	\$34,547	June	\$35,372	Oct	\$34,042
Mar	\$35,882	July	\$38,136		
April	\$38,386	Aug	\$36,099		



# 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. Thank you for putting together 75 boxes to give hope and joy to children! Boxes will be shipped to 100 different countries around the world.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Chili Feed and Silent Auction. Approximately \$1400 was raised for the Food Shelf and \$1900 for Good Shepherd's Building Fund.

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

Approximately \$244 was raised through our November noisy offering for the Blue Star Mothers. This group is made up of mothers who have children serving in the military, guard or reserves, or children who are honorably discharged veterans. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

Thanks to Thrivent Financial [www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com) for their support of Good Shepherd's ministries.

## 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 21<sup>st</sup> to buy toys/gifts and place them in the box – toys/gifts will be picked up on December 21<sup>st</sup>.**

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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. and Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> 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!

# BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

## Birthdays

<b>12/01</b>	Erin Bartz	<b>12/17</b>	Linda Schmitz
	Nicole Bartz		Shelbey Ramthun
<b>12/02</b>	Craig Steele	<b>12/18</b>	Rose Grover
	Sarah Wilhelmson	<b>12/19</b>	Roberta Kurth
<b>12/03</b>	Haley Gudmundson		Kora Steffen
<b>12/05</b>	Jayda Schwantz	<b>12/20</b>	Olivia Amos
<b>12/06</b>	Becky Wehrs	<b>12/21</b>	Nicolas Crudele
<b>12/07</b>	Logan Hanson	<b>12/22</b>	Brody Lyons
<b>12/09</b>	Michelle Klennert	<b>12/23</b>	Kevin Fuerstneau
	Blake Biers		Pastor Kris Ferkin
	Karen Larson	<b>12/26</b>	Claire Henry
<b>12/10</b>	Anika Steele	<b>12/27</b>	Police Chief Tim Schneider
<b>12/11</b>	Jake Thompson	<b>12/28</b>	Shane Holst
<b>12/12</b>	Carson Castle	<b>12/30</b>	Ben Mohs
<b>12/16</b>	Benjamin Suntken	<b>12/31</b>	Ron Peterson

## Anniversaries

<b>12/06</b>	Clark & Shannon Olstad	<b>12/23</b>	Dennis & Carol Buntrock
<b>12/15</b>	John & Jane Folkert	<b>12/28</b>	Al & Deb Ninas
<b>12/22</b>	Tom & Karen Anderson	<b>12/31</b>	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**

PO Box 355  
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Address Service Requested  
Issue 202, 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 January 2018 Newsletter is**

***FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22.***