

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Shepherd's Staff



ADVENT WORSHIP WEDNESDAYS FROM 7:00 - 7:30 PM

Advent Theme: Readjusting to the Dark

12/04	John 1:1-5	The Darkness Did Not Overcome
12/11	Matthew 1:18b-24a, Luke 1:26b-38	Vision in the Night
12/18	Isaiah 45:3	Learning to Walk in the Dark

GOOD SHEPHERD CHRISTMAS SEASON TRADITIONS

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

**Wednesday Evening Advent Worship Services at 7:00 p.m.
December 4th, December 11th, & December 18th**

**Sunday School Christmas Program
Sunday, December 15th during 10:30 a.m. Worship Service**

Sunday, December 22nd Worship - 9:00 a.m.

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

Sunday, December 29th Worship - 9:00 a.m.

ADVENT DEVOTIONS

Advent, the season of watching and waiting for our Savior's birth began on Sunday, December 1st. 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.

Contact Information

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PASTOR'S NOTE

Every year I greet the start of Daylight Savings Time and lengthening of daylight with excitement and energy. I feel as if I'm more productive and have more energy. But come fall, I approach the end of Daylight Savings Time and the diminishing daylight with dread and a wish for the darkness to pass quickly. I can't imagine living in Utqiagvik (Barrow), Alaska where the sunset on November 18th and its residents won't see the sun again until January 23rd. For 65 days residents live without sunlight.

For many, darkness is synonymous with those things that people fear or want to avoid. Yet, darkness is important. Like most creatures we need darkness. Darkness is essential to sleep because the absence of light lets the body know it's time to rest. In addition darkness opens up the world around us. Darkness provides a clearer view of the universe, the stars, and the moon. One of my favorite experiences in Wyoming and Montana is to stare up at the night sky and see the Milky Way.

Just as I can't imagine living in Utqiavik, Alaska in the winter when the sun doesn't rise, neither do I want to live in the Arctic Circle in the summer with constant sunshine. The majority of us need darkness and light in our lives.

Darkness is also important in our faith life because God works in both darkness and light. There are many stories in scripture where God shows up at night. In the darkness God speaks, gives visions and dreams, and calls people into a life of service.

During this year's Advent services of worship on Wednesday nights, we will explore the theme Readjusting to the Dark. Each week we will look at God at work in the darkness and what that means for us in our lives. Here is this year's advent schedule:

Advent Services
Readjusting to the Dark
Wednesdays at 7:00 – 7:30 pm

Dec. 4	John 1:1-5	The Darkness Did Not Overcome
Dec. 11	Matthew 1:18b-24a, Luke 1:26b-38	Vision in the Night
Dec. 18	Isaiah 45:3	Learning to Walk in the Dark

This year's family Advent devotions will also explore the theme of God's work in the darkness. These can be picked up in the Gathering Space.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior which happened on that first Christmas night, may you be blessed and know the riches of God.

In Christ,

Pastor Krista

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH

GOOD SHEPHERD BOOK CLUB

Love to read? Then join your fellow bookworms to read and discuss interesting books. We will meet on **Wednesday, December 18th at 7:30 pm** at Good Shepherd to discuss *We are Displaced* by Malala Yousafzai. You will have to find your own copy of this book—or can share the one copy we have checked out for the church. Each chapter is one person's story so it is quick, easy, and interesting read.

The January book is *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro. We meet on **January 15th at 6:30 pm**. You can pick up a book at the December discussion or check it out from the church music room after that.

MILESTONE BLANKET WORK DAY

Spend a cold winter day **Thursday, January 9th** 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 8:30 am** and stop after lunch. 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.

MILESTONES

Baptisms

Blessings to Emelia Marie Parkinson, who was baptized on October 26th. Emelia is the daughter of Cody Parkinson and Sinath Chhel.

Blessings to William Gilbert John Parkinson, who was baptized on October 26th. William is the son of McKenna Parkinson.

Blessings to Jaxson Ernest Norton, who was baptized on November 17th. Jaxson is the son of Tyler Norton and Cadee Miller.

New Members

Welcome to the following people who joined our Good Shepherd Church family on Sunday, November 17th: Andrew, Kirsten and Kinsley Ausman, Patty Fritz, Todd, Monica, Lillian, Mikayla and Cal Hansen. and Daniel, Kristina and Tygh Madsen

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH CONTINUED ...

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

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

Your creative genius is needed to decorate luminaries on **December 4th starting at 6:15 pm**. Enjoy treats and conversation while we work.

Join the Advent services each **Wednesday in December starting at 7:00 pm**.

Cookie Walk is an exciting and fun way to serve. Come help on **December 7th from 7:30 – 11:00 am**.

Ski Trip – January 20, 2020.

Save the date and join us for a ski day at Coffee Mill. We are looking for caring adults/drivers to join us. If available, contact Carole Joyce or Pastor Krista.

High School Summer CO Backpacking Trip

We are excited to be offering an outdoor adventure backpacking trip this summer. We will work together, explore God's creation, and learn about God and ourselves while hiking in the mountains of CO. Rainbow Trail Bible Camp will be our guides. You can learn more at <https://www.rainbowtrail.org/compass-points/>.

Sign up is going on NOW and we want to know you are coming by January 10th. Make a deposit to reserve your spot. Friends are welcome too as space allows. Contact Carole Joyce at carole35@charter.net to get a registration form.

December Coffee Shop

Thanks to the high school youth, we have flavored coffee, hot chocolate and cinnamon rolls between services once a month. Look for these tasty treats on **December 8th**. Join the wonderful fellowship. Thank you to the congregation for your support of high school ministry.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

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 trip, care packages, Palm Sunday breakfast, LWR service day, and Building Dedication during 2019. Thanks to Thrivent for these funds too.

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 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.

AMAZONSMILE

Remember to use AmazonSmile when you do your shopping!

Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. Bookmark the link <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/41-1323971> and support Good Shepherd every time you shop. The more you shop, the more Good Shepherd receives!

CHILI/CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP COOK-OFF

Thank you to everyone who took part in any way in the 9th annual Chili/Chicken Noodle Soup Cook-Off. We raised \$1119 for the Plainview-Elgin Food Shelf.

Congratulations to the winners of the Cook-Off! Winners were:

Professional Chili	Green Prairie Assisted Living
Professional Soup	O'Neal's
Individual Chili	Jenny Grover
Individual Soup	Sue Tangen

EDUCATION

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Sunday school Christmas program will be presented at **10:15 am on Sunday, December 15th**. You won't want to miss hearing the story of Jesus' birth as told by our Sunday school children! *Arrest These Merry Gentlemen* will be presented by our 1st-6th graders, preschool and kindergarteners too under the direction of Linda Theisen and Pastor Krista. Invite your family and friends to join us that day. We are excited to have extra narthex space and monitors now, so everyone should be able to see really well.

MONTHLY THURSDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY

The December meeting of the Tuesday afternoon Bible study group will meet on **December 2nd at 1:00 p.m.**

ADULT EDUCATION/FAITH MATTERS

In December we will finish our study of immigrants and refugees. We are using the Bible study developed by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services that explores the Exodus story and stories of today's immigrants and refugees. Join us **December 1st and 8th from 9:30 – 10:15 a.m. in Pastor's office.** No study on December 15th.

COMING UP IN JANUARY

Beach Party for Infants Age 3 & Parents	January 12 worship & 9:15 am
PreK-2 nd Grade sing at worship	January 12 at 10:30 am worship
Service Sunday for All Age - Care packages	January 26 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 ----10/30/19

General Account	\$ 39,140
Restricted Accounts	\$ 23,969 (w/o Bldg. Fund)
Capital Campaign Account	<u>\$ 106,876</u>
Total Short Term Assets	\$ 169,985
Fixed Assets (old Bldg etc.)	\$ 905,479
New Bldg. to date	<u>\$1,280,965</u>
Total Assets	\$2,356,109

Mortgage Balance	\$ 796,929
Equity	\$ 1,559,180

Check Book Trends (General Fund- end of month)

Jan.	\$19,783	May	\$31,114	Sept.	\$42,060
Feb.	\$29,499	June	\$35,320	Oct.	\$39,140
March	\$32,081	July	\$36,939		
April	\$34,162	Aug.	\$41,128		

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 Cook-Off and Silent Auction. About \$1500 was raised for the Food Shelf and about \$1100 for children and youth ministries at Good Shepherd.

The November noisy offering, which was given to the Blue Star Moms brought in \$208.65. THANKS to all who helped support this great mission.

During the months of December and January, Good Shepherd will be filling the Backpacks for Kids on Wednesday nights. See article below to see how you can get involved.

Thanks to Thrivent Financial (www.thrivent.com) for their support of Good Shepherd's ministries.

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 nights

Contact the church office to volunteer for any of these.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

12/01	Erin Bartz	12/17	Linda Schmitz
	Nicole Bartz	12/18	Rose Grover
12/02	Craig Steele	12/19	Roberta Kurth
12/03	Haley Gudmundson		Kora Steffen
12/04	Kristina Madsen	12/21	Nicolas Crudele
12/05	Jayda Schwantz	12/22	Brody Lyons
12/06	Becky Wehrs	12/23	Kevin Fuerstneau
12/07	Logan Hanson		Pastor Kris Ferkin
12/09	Michelle Klennert	12/24	Ashtin Bethke
	Karen Larson	12/26	Claire Henry
12/10	Anika Steele	12/27	Tim Schneider
12/11	Jake Thompson	12/28	Shane Holst
12/12	Carson Castle	12/30	Ben Mohs
12/14	Wesley Kostel	12/31	Ron Peterson
12/16	Benjamin Suntken		

Anniversaries

12/06	Clark & Shannon Olstad	12/23	Dennis & Carol Buntrock
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 2020 Newsletter is

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20.