

# Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

## *The Shepherd's Staff*

### 2020 ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT GOOD SHEPHERD

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As we have come to expect this year, things need to look a little different and the Advent & Christmas Seasons at Good Shepherd are no exception! We will not have "in person" Advent services on Wednesday evenings but please join us on Facebook for a message from Pastor Krista. Also, Holden Evening Prayer is available to view/listen to on YouTube. **Our tentative plans for Christmas Eve are to have three services at 4, 5:30 & 7 pm.** We are considering the idea of having the 5:30 service be an outdoor service, weather permitting. If outdoors we would be able to join in singing our favorite Christmas hymns!! People could even come on their snowmobiles! There will likely be the need to sign up for Christmas Eve services as our numbers per service will be limited by the state mandate. We usually have our biggest crowd at the 4 pm service of worship but if we balance the number of people at all the services we would be able to still have the same number of people worship. The year we were under construction, people shifted from the 4 pm service and it worked out very well. Watch for more information as we see what the next few weeks have in store for us! All Christmas Eve services will be available on-line also.

### GOOD SHEPHERD GIVING TREE (without the tree)

The Good Shepherd Giving Tree is an opportunity to provide gift cards (no larger than \$25 per card) to be dispensed by the staff at the local Food Shelf in time for the holidays. The process will be stream-lined this year. Please leave a check in the collection site at church or on-line, indicating it is for the Giving Tree. **Deadline for collection is Sunday December 13<sup>th</sup>.** Gift cards will be purchased from "Bennett's and KwikTrip" and delivered to the Food Shelf on our behalf. Thank you for your care and concern for those who face financial challenges during the holidays.

### GOOD SHEPHERD COOKIE WALK – LEFSE DRIVE-UP

This year Good Shepherd **WILL NOT** be having their annual cookie walk. Lefse, however, **will be available.** There will be a "drive up sale" on **Saturday, December 5 from 7:30 am until lefse is gone.**

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## PASTOR'S NOTE

Like almost everything else in 2020 Advent and Christmas will be different this year. The loss of not being able to do things the way we have always done them and not being able to do things the way we want to do them is hard. It is only natural for us to grieve these losses. In fact it's better to acknowledge our grief rather than trying to pretend everything is merry and joyful. God knows what is happening in our lives. God knows the burdens and sorrow we carry in our hearts. And God knows we need hope. God knows we need a Savior.

It's all right to not be satisfied with the way things are right now. God isn't satisfied with how things are right now either. It is exactly because God wants something better for us that God chooses to come into our world in the birth of Jesus Christ. Jesus is our hope and salvation. Jesus is God with us always, no matter what is happening around us and in our lives. Jesus is the promise of eternal life, that there will be a day of no more pain, no more sorrow, no more grief, no more disease, no more death.

This Christmas is an opportunity to discover that God draws near to us in our hardest moments of life. Maybe recognizing our grief and loss this Christmas, also gives us the opportunity to experience the gift of Christmas on a much deeper level - to see that Christmas doesn't depend on us, it depends on God. God comes to us regardless of what we do or don't do because Jesus is God's gift to us. The meaning of Christmas – that God has chosen to come to us to be with us always – doesn't change because of COVID or because of our traditions and gatherings. Jesus still comes.

Even in the midst of our longings for the old normal, Christmas will come. Jesus will come. Whether or not there are concerts or programs, large gatherings, etc. the gift of Jesus can never be diminished. We have been given the most incredible gift – the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, Immanuel, God with us forever and ever. From the moment Jesus was born, his life was threatened. Even before he was born, this was a high risk pregnancy event with Mary on the road and no place to stay. In to this far from perfect world with far from perfect conditions, God chooses to take on human flesh. God loves us so much, nothing is going to stop God from coming to us. This is God's world and we are God's people, and God once again chooses to be born into our lives this Christmas and every day of our lives.

In Christ,

Pastor Krista

# CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH

## GOOD SHEPHERD BOOK CLUB

Love to read? It is a safe activity in these COVID times! Join your fellow bookworms to read and discuss interesting books. We will meet on **Thursday, December 10 at 7:00 pm** at Good Shepherd to discuss "*The Story of Arthur Truluv*" by Elizaberg Berg. This is a fun and uplifting read for all adults. A book bag with books to check out is located in Carole Joyce's office. We will meet if at all possible. In person. Distanced. Masked.

The January book is *Hidden Figures* by Margot Lee Shetterly. You will have to find your own copy of this book. We are excited to talk about this true story to honor one of these amazing women who recently died. We meet the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm.

## MILESTONE BLANKET WORK DAY

Spend a cold winter day **Thursday, January 14** with Good Shepherd friends sewing blankets for our graduates and baptisms! Meet at church for sewing, fellowship, fun, and of course warm soup. We will start at 9:00 am. Masks and distancing will be observed.

Sewing skills are helpful, but not required. So, if you can't sew, come anyway to cut, pin, and most of all have fun. Questions? Or to get an email (in case anything changes) contact Carole Joyce at [carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net) or 269-9374.

# CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

## ADVENT DEVOTIONS

Advent, the season of watching and waiting for our Savior's birth began on November 29. Devotions for adults are in the gathering area, or you can contact Carole Joyce at [carole35@charteter.net](mailto:carole35@charteter.net) for a digital copy.

3-D devotions with stickers are available for families with children. Contact Carole Joyce at [carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net) to get yours or pick one up on the table outside of Pastor's office. Grandparents, you are invited to share with your grandkids too.

## 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 blanket-making and Faith at Home kits.

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!

## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS CONTINUED ...

### **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 active 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).

### **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!

## EDUCATION

### **NEEDED FOR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

All Sunday school families are invited to send a photo of themselves to Carole Joyce at [carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net) by December 5. We want everyone to be in this year's Christmas program. Send any fairly recent family photo or take a new one by the manger outside of the church! Pets are welcome too.

### **CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

The Sunday school Christmas program will premiere at the 9:00 am worship service on **Sunday, December 13**. Watch it live on Good Shepherd's Facebook page or YouTube page—or sleep in and watch it any time after. You won't want to miss hearing the story of Jesus' birth as told by our Sunday school children! *Who Is at the Manger?* will be presented by our Sunday school aged children and their families. Something special this year, was photographing it outside with live animals. Thanks to all who participated—what a gift in this unusual and challenging year!

### **Sunday School & Home Kits for January**

Thank you for your flexibility as we offer the best and safest faith forming activities in the midst of the pandemic. Our plan is to continue the Faith at Home kits and Facebook lessons for January and February until Lent. If the COVID numbers decrease and we can add an in-person component or a family milestone event, we will!

If you want your Faith at Home kit delivered, email [carole35@charter.net](mailto:carole35@charter.net) and it will arrive in early 2021.

## FINANCE

# *Giving With Gratitude & Generosity*

Want to Give to GSLC? — (4 Easy Steps)

- Go to our Web Site ----- [goodshepherdlutheran-plainview.org](http://goodshepherdlutheran-plainview.org)
- Select "Give"
- Click on the Phone
- Create Your Profile (1<sup>st</sup> time only)
- Select Area for Contribution



# **MISSIONS & STEWARDSHIP**

## **TOYS FOR TOTS**

Toys for Tots boxes are placed in the gathering space here at Good Shepherd. Place all donated toys in those boxes by December 20<sup>th</sup>, as they will be picked up on that date.

## **TOYS FOR TOTS/FOOD SHELF DONATIONS**

Between now and December 17<sup>th</sup>, drop off a toy for Toys for Tots or a food item for the local Food Shelf at the Plainview Thrivent office and receive a Live Generously T shirt (while supplies last). The Thrivent office is located at 343 W Broadway, Plainview, MN. Call 534-3411 with questions.

## **DECEMBER NOISY OFFERING**

Our December Noisy Offering will be directed to the Plainview-Elgin Food Shelf. Pans are set up alongside the offering boxes during the month of December. 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 over 70 boxes to give hope and joy to children! Boxes will be shipped to 100 different countries around the world.

32 health kits were delivered to Lutheran Worlds Relief. Thank you for your generosity in providing supplies during COVID! This was an amazing amount of kits considering we couldn't meet in person! Thanks to those who helped pack and to Carole Joyce who brought them to the warehouse in St. Paul.

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

# BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

## Birthdays

12/01	Erin Bartz	12/16	Benjamin Suntken
	Nicole Bartz	12/17	Linda Schmitz
	Monica Hansen	12/18	Rose Grover
12/02	Craig Steele	12/19	Roberta Kurth
12/03	Haley Breuer		Kora Steffen
12/04	Kristina Madsen	12/21	Nicolas Crudele
12/05	Jayda Schwantz	12/22	Brody Lyons
12/06	Becky Wehrs	12/23	Pastor Kris Ferkin
12/07	Logan Hanson	12/24	Ashtin Bethke
12/09	Michelle Klennert	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		

## 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**

*Gifts of time and love are surely the basic ingredients of a truly merry Christmas.*



**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:

**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 2021 Newsletter is**

***MONDAY, DECEMBER 21.***