

TOGETHER



RE-CENTER

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF FAITH THAT WORKS

RE-CENTER THIS FALL
AT GOOD SHEPHERD

RUDOLPH JR. IS
HOLIDAY MUSICAL

100TH ANNIVERSARY
PASTOR'S QUIZ

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SEPTEMBER 2022



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CHURCH
OF THE
**GOOD
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WORSHIP

Worship with Communion onsite at
10 a.m. every Sunday and online at
goodshepherdmpls.org.

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ON THE COVER: Good Shepherd finds its center at worship. Photo by Chris Hammond.

TOGETHER

**THIS IS WHO
WE ARE
HERE, AND
WHAT WE
ARE ABOUT:**

**LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF THE
GOOD
SHEPHERD:
FAITH THAT
WORKS**

Greetings in the strong name of our Savior, Jesus!

This fall at Good Shepherd, our theme is “Re-Center.” We will focus our preaching and education on four areas of communal life; worship, discipleship, service, and relationships. All of that is outlined further in a joint article, written by Pastor Deb Bergstrand and myself. Pastor Karl and the congregational council of 2021, along with the help of John Mendesh, outlined these four mission pillars. We are excited to examine them together.

The Scripture texts have been carefully selected, our new worship and music director, Deacon Andrew Stoebig is in place, our small and mighty staff is working diligently on our own development and preparing for a new year of learning.

We know that your family is hard at work, too. Some of our littlest Lutherans are attending daycare for the first time this fall. Some of our kids are attending kindergarten, humongous backpacks on their proud little shoulders. Our elementary schoolers, middle schoolers, and high schoolers wonder what this year will look like as COVID becomes endemic and we relearn how to be together again. Our college-age kids are leaving the nest for the school year or for good and embarking on new internships and careers. Our young people are finding partners to marry and build a future with. Some families are hoping for children and we join them in their prayers. Some parents are grappling with new family dynamics. Some members are transitioning jobs and life paths. Some are going back to school in their 30s and 40s. Some are considering retirement and the joy and grief that comes with laying down one’s vocation and picking up others. Many are facing down new diagnoses, sudden challenges to their mobility and abilities, and uncertainty about what lies ahead.

We have been walking recently through St. John’s letter of Revelation. In all of its wildness and beauty, the most important thing that is revealed is that Jesus stands in the center of it all. Jesus stands at the center of our congregation, knocking, seeking, opening doors, and shepherding. Jesus stands at the center of our lives. Jesus stands firm in the tumult, in the changes, in the grief, in the despair, and in our celebrations. Knowing that Jesus lived for us, died for us, was buried for us, raised for us, and lives again forever for us, we can be confident that we are not abandoned and we need not be dismayed. We are not lost. Our Lord Jesus leads us on. He is stirring us up for a dynamic new season of worship, discipleship, service, and friendship.

Our task together this fall is to simply thank God that he is in it all with us. He is our center, our mighty fortress and strong tower, our gentle shepherd, and fierce protector. As the disciples on the road to Emmaus suddenly glimpsed Jesus in the breaking of the bread, in what new ways will Jesus be seen at the center of things in this new season? As Jesus calls us to commit and submit to one another in mutual love and ministry, what distractions and idols need to fall away? The Holy Spirit sustains us and holds us fast. Let us join together in joy-filled prayer and praise this fall, asking for the Spirit’s help in seeing Jesus at the center.

I look forward to re-centering with you in the endless and perfect love of God!

God’s richest blessings,
Pastor Elise Pokel

**FAITH THAT WORKS IS FAITH THAT CAN TRANSFORM
THE WORLD – “MINE,” “YOURS,” “OURS,” “THE.”**

RE-CENTER This Fall at Lutheran

BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL AND PASTOR DEB BERGSTRAND

Maps. Maps help us find our way. Maps give direction when we are lost. But sometimes even with a good map we can find ourselves disoriented and not sure what direction we are heading. Google Maps has a solution for this. It's called the RE-CENTER button. The Google Maps app is a global positioning system (GPS) that is used widely. Sometimes, we have a longing to look ahead. We want to know exactly what steps we need to take to get to where we are going. When we stray too far from the present point, however, it can be overwhelming. When you press the RE-CENTER button, it takes you back to where your attention should be.



RE-CENTER helps us to find our way by putting our focus on the tiny, crucial place on the road we find ourselves. Once we establish where we are at, we can better look at the bigger picture. This allows us to be better oriented to what is ahead, and to travel accordingly.

This Fall at Good Shepherd we are taking time to RE-CENTER. The past 29 months have been filled with upheaval in our world and daily lives with the ongoing impact of the pandemic. We are facing uncertainty and loss with beloved members of the congregation and staff. Yet God's promises are everlasting, Jesus' message of love and forgiveness endures and the Holy Spirit abides with us always.

We will begin our RE-CENTER season by focusing on the established mission and vision of Good Shepherd. Pastor Karl, John Mendesh and others developed this in 2021 and presented it in the 2021 annual report. Considerable time and effort were spent to articulate four pillars which guide our Faith That Works.

We will preach and teach about the pillars which ground us here at Good Shepherd. There will be further work done to plan for the future by the Strategic Planning Task Force. This fall, however, we will focus on RE-CENTERING in who we are today.

Here's an overview of how we will RE-CENTER this fall:



SEPTEMBER 11, 2022

Our Current Vision: Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd is a congregation of God's people founded in a faith that works, a faith that helps us make sense of daily living and is at work through us for the good of the world.

SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 40:6-11; Psalm 100; John 10:7-18

EVENTS: Rally Day Celebration & Food Truck extravaganza, Children & Youth education starts



WORSHIP

SEPTEMBER 18 AND 25, 2022

We Center Ourselves in Worship (Pillar 1)

In worship, we encounter our living God, are inspired to praise God with song and Word, are equipped by the Holy Spirit with a living faith that helps us to make sense of life's complexities, and are renewed for life together.

SCRIPTURES: Psalm 133; Acts 2:43-47; John 14:25-27; Colossians 3:12-17; Psalm 150

Church of the Good Shepherd!

EVENTS: Welcome new Director of Music and Worship Andrew Stoebig, Lifelines Re-starting

NEW IN WORSHIP: Passing of the Peace, Installation of Andrew Stoebig



DISCIPLESHIP

OCTOBER 2 AND 9, 2022

We Make Disciples (Pillar 2)

Our life together in worship and community helps us to answer the call to follow Jesus. Disciples listen to God's word, seek to learn God's ways, discern God's presence in our daily lives, and pray to grow spiritually.

SCRIPTURES: 1 Kings 19:11-16; Psalm 119:105; 1 Samuel 3:1-11; Psalm 138; Luke 5:1-11

EVENTS: Story sharing from Appalachian Mission trip

NEW IN WORSHIP: Wellness Sunday re-introduced (blood pressure checks, anointing prayer, prayer shawls), beginning of stewardship talks



SERVICE

OCTOBER 16 AND 23, 2022

We Share Our Faith Through Other-Centered Service (Pillar 3)

Our faith is not just about us, but for the good of all. We are called to share our faith with our neighbors by loving and caring for them, activating our God-given gifts in service, and developing a cheerful stewardship outlook in our everyday decisions.

SCRIPTURES: Psalm 111; Romans 12:1-8; Psalm 128; Joshua 24:1-15

EVENTS : Ministry Fair and serving stories shared in worship

NEW IN WORSHIP: Stewardship talks, Pledge Sunday.

OCTOBER 30, 2022 - REFORMATION SUNDAY

SCRIPTURES: Romans 5:1-11; Psalm 46

NEW IN WORSHIP: Affirmation of Baptism

NOVEMBER 6, 2022 - ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY

SCRIPTURES: Psalm 9:9-18, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

NEW IN WORSHIP: Pastor Debra Samuelson preaching, new All Saints' art



RELATIONSHIP

NOVEMBER 13 AND 20, 2022

We Develop Christ-Centered Relationships (Pillar 4)

The most important thing we have in common is Christ Jesus our Lord. Sharing his name, we build one another up, support one another through hospitality, and care for one another by giving and receiving consolation and celebration.

SCRIPTURES: Luke 10:38-42; John 12:1-8; Psalm 95; Luke 9:28-46

EVENTS: Healing prayer, Wornen's retreat

We look forward to seeing you in worship this fall at Good Shepherd. Come, RE-CENTER, experience the living God and share all God has given you with the world around us.

LifeLines Follows Re-Centering Themes for Fall

BY PASTOR DEB BERGSTRAND

DATE	THEME	LEADER	TOPIC
Sept. 18	Worship	Pastor Bergstrand	Acts 2:43-47
Sept. 25	Worship	Pastor Pokel	Deacon Andrew Stoebig meet and greet
Oct. 2	Discipleship	Mark Halvorson and the Youth	Appalachian service project youth sharing
Oct. 9	Discipleship	Karen Walhof	Oromo Lutheran church members bringing greetings and education
Oct. 16	Service	Pastor Bergstrand	Romans 12:1-8
Oct. 23	Service	Pastor Pokel	Joshua 24:1-15 (Pledge Sunday)
Oct. 30	Reformation/ Affirmation of Baptism	Mark Halvorson	Affirming our Baptism
Nov. 6	All Saints Sunday	Pastor Deb Samuelson	Remembering the Saints
Nov. 13	Relationships	Pastor Bergstrand	John 12:1-8
Nov. 20	Relationships	Pastor Pokel	Luke 9:28-36 (Christ the King)



Music Ensembles Are Resuming

BY DEACON ANDREW STOEBIG

Good Shepherd Choir rehearsals resume on Wednesday, Sept. 7, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the Choir Room. Singers in high school through age 106 are welcome. For more information, contact Deacon Andrew. Come lift up your voice and join us!

Bell Choir resumes on Monday, Sept. 12, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Ringers with and without experience are welcome. Contact Tor Johnson for more information.

Alleluia! Choir (4-year-olds–first graders) begins again on Wednesday, Sept. 14, from 6:00 to 6:30 p.m. in the Parlor. In this group, our youngest singers are introduced to the fundamentals of music and singing praises to God. Contact Deacon Andrew Stoebig for more information.

Choristers (second–fifth graders) resume on Wednesday, Sept. 14, from 6:00 to 6:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room South. Choristers learn more about being a faithful musician and have a chance to sing more often in worship. Contact Tor Johnson for more information.

Join Book Discussion About Women And Aging: *The Gift of Years*

BY ANDREA NORMAN

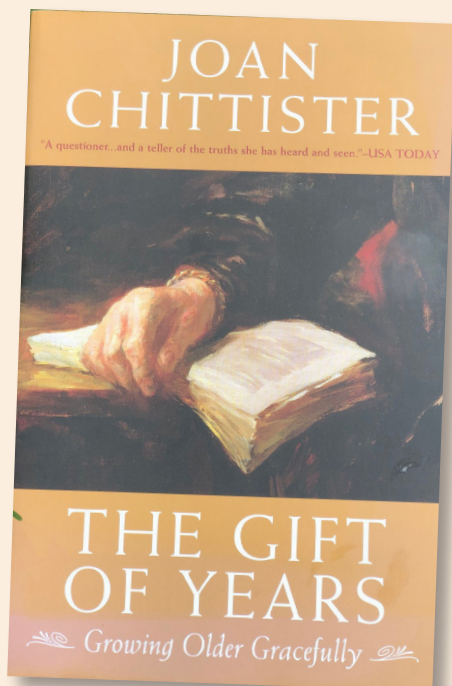
In her book titled, *The Gift of Years*, Joan Chittister suggests there are many dimensions of aging and perhaps the most important is to become aware of its profound purpose.

Join in conversation with other women as we consider the dimensions of aging presented in her book and “central issues that emerge with age...to make us new again,” Our conversation will evolve within the context of our personal and sometimes challenging life stories, and the importance of nurturing a faith that grounds us and empowers us to live in new ways.

We will meet on these Thursdays – Sept. 22, 29 and Oct. 3 – in the courtyard (weather permitting) from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Books will be available at the church for purchase.

If you have questions, contact Pastor Deb Bergstrand at D.bergstrand@goodshepherdmpls.org or Andrea Norman.

This will be a wonderful, short-term opportunity to learn and grow.



[IN OUR COMMUNITY OF FAITH] LIFE PASSAGES

DEATHS

DAVID HAHN

(Chris Hahn's father)

MAY 14

DONNA KRAFVE

(Roger Krafve's mother)

MAY 16

JEFF ANDERSON

(Debbie Anderson's nephew)

MAY 23

RON LIEN

JUNE 13

PATRICIA NASBY

JULY 3

CARSON BENCH II

(Carson Bench's son)

JULY 8

BETTY JOHNSON

(Linda Shay's father)

JUNE 24

We were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

ROMANS 6:4

FROM THE COUNCIL

Capital Campaign Plans, Personnel

BY ANDREA BRANDT, PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Council, I'd like to provide a summary of recent decisions and goals for the remainder of the year.

Earlier this year, Council appointed several members to serve on the Advisory Appeal Team (AAT). The AAT, led by Craig Brandt and David Quello, partnered with Kairos to determine if it is the right time for a Capital Campaign to address remaining \$1.5 million mortgage debt from the Build Our Path remodel. While many members felt it is the right time to launch a Capital Campaign, others requested that we, as a congregation, first clarify our vision. AAT's recommendation was to defer a Capital Campaign and have a period of further discernment. I thank the AAT for accomplishing what they set out to do which was answer whether it is the right time for a Capital Campaign. The answer is not at this time and that has been reported back to Council. Please refer to the relevant article in this Together edition for further details about their findings and recommendations.

As a next step, Council is working to appoint a Strategic Planning Task Force that, with guidance from Kairos, will clarify our vision, determine how to strategically leverage congregational resources (finances, staffing, property, etc.) and prioritize with respect to our four pillars: Worship, Discipleship, Service and Relationships. The goal is to have an update for the congregation at the Annual Meeting in January. In the meantime, I would encourage all to consider contributing to the special 100th Anniversary gift (more details on Sept 18th) to focus on reducing the mortgage balance and/or providing payments until we do have a Capital Campaign. Council is evaluating options to continue to cover mortgage payments. There were funds set aside from reserves to pay our monthly mortgage payments that will carry us until April 2023. It's important to note that we are paying for the mortgage payments out of reserves and the monthly payments have not been a part of our annual budget. Until we can pay down the entire mortgage debt, resolving the monthly shortfall will be a combination of reducing the debt to minimize payments, reallocating funds and/or reevaluating our strategic budget goals (incomes and expenses).



As chair of the Personnel Committee, I'd like to let you know that we are actively updating policies and procedures to keep them relevant in a changing world. From staffing perspective, Pastor Bergstrand has kindly agreed to extend her stay past August to be with us through the end of the year. This will give us additional time to coordinate for Pastor Jacobson's return, which we hope will be early next year. Recruiting for the Office Manager position was placed on the back burner to focus on hiring a new Director of Worship and Music. After a careful review, we found that all critical Office Manager tasks were currently being covered by existing staff. Staff job descriptions will be updated to reflect the additional office tasks, plus other new responsibilities necessary in a post-covid, hybrid (stream and in-person) era. The world and how we worship is changing. The staff have all been wonderfully flexible in this area and I am so very thankful. I'd like to express my very sincere appreciation for the exceptional leadership of Pastor Pokel and Pastor Bergstrand these past few months. They have navigated a period full of change and uncertainty yet managed to keep a positive attitude and provide spiritual leadership for this congregation. It's been a pleasure working with them both on a near-daily basis. I am blessed to be surrounded by so many capable and caring people.

I will continue to provide updates throughout the year. As always, feel free to reach out to me with questions or concerns.

Thank you,
Andrea Brandt
Council President

Appeal Advisory Team Listens to Members, Anticipates Future Action

BY DAVID QUELLO, CO-CHAIR OF APPEAL ADVISORY TEAM

You may recall that the last capital campaign appeal at Good Shepherd was “Build Our Path” in 2014, connected with a major project to expand and enhance the building and staff. While a large portion of the funding of those efforts was paid through the capital campaign, the church took out a mortgage to finance some of the project.

As of this spring, there was approximately \$1.5 million of outstanding balance on the mortgage and required annual payments of around \$120,000 per year. The past several years, the annual mortgage payments were provided by legacy gifts that are expected to be depleted in April 2023.

Recognizing the potential strain if the mortgage payments are added to the annual budget, the Church Council formed the Appeal Advisory Team (AAT) to evaluate whether it was the right time to move forward with a capital appeal, in part to try to reduce or eliminate the church’s mortgage debt.

The AAT was formed in April of this year to work with a consultant, Kairos, to evaluate if our congregation was ready for a capital appeal campaign. The team consists of Erienne Nelson, Craig Brandt, Bill Kerker, Laura Moret, Rich Omland, David Quello, Sue Read and Rich Sykora, with Craig Brandt and David Quello serving as co-chairs. The Kairos team consists of Pastor Joe Crowther and Pastor Jim Weckwerth.

First, we conducted a Missional Assessment Profile (MAP) survey with input from congregation members to assess congregational health and priorities. This was conducted in late April–early May. We had a great response, with 113 members responding.

Key highlights of the survey include:

- We have a mature, educated and highly committed congregation.
- Members trust the pastoral and lay leadership.
- Members are excited about the church’s potential and are looking for leadership and help imagining the church’s future.
- Good Shepherd could be more active in inviting others to join our ministries.
- The congregation is experiencing some uncertainty of its immediate future but has relatively limited concerns about it.
- There is a desire for more missional clarity.

We then followed up the survey with individual and group listening sessions with the Kairos consultants to further explore the themes from the MAP survey results and evaluate member

interest in a capital appeal. More than 83 members participated in either individual or group sessions.

Key takeaways from these conversations include:

- Despite the pandemic and Pastor Karl’s absence, there is a general feeling of stability.
- Members are generally aware of the mortgage debt but have varying levels of concern.
- Members would like more communication from leadership about the financial situation of the church.
- Good Shepherd has mission-oriented focus but would like more clarity and has a desire to expand outreach to the immediate Twin Cities’ community.
- Good Shepherd has a tendency to measure ministry success by worship attendance.
- Members feel like it is time to do something but not sure what that something might be.
- Financial status is fairly stable but there is some concern about reduced support for the Minneapolis Area Synod and mortgage payments that have not been included in the annual budget.
- A number of persons expressed that they were personally motivated by a desire to make a special gift in this 100th anniversary year of the church either to reduce the mortgage debt or to facilitate a time of planning and study so that we can move forward boldly in our congregation’s second century.

The Appeal Advisory Team wants to thank the congregation for their input into this process so we can determine how best to move forward. Based on the survey results, the listening sessions and follow up conversations with Kairos, the AAT recommended deferring a capital campaign appeal for now. However, the AAT also recommended providing a 100th anniversary giving opportunity this fall to focus on reducing the mortgage balance and/or providing annual mortgage payments for the next few years so we can continue with the ministries we have supported. There will be more communications on this giving opportunity during the next few months.

The AAT plans to provide an update in the worship service on Sept. 18 and also an opportunity for questions after the service. Thanks to all of you who have participated in this process. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the pastors, Craig Brandt or David Quello.

Youth Mission Trip to Appalachia – the Same,

BY MARK HALVORSON, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES



Once again this summer, a couple of giant white rental vans headed south. This trip has become an anchor of not only youth ministry here at Good Shepherd but an event that the entire congregation rallies around. Each summer, this experience provides us with an opportunity to work side-by-side with Appalachian homeowners who call those the area home. It gives us the chance to bond as a group of participants, no matter our age or school district or level of skill with a hammer. This trip allows us a week away from whatever the comforts of home look like for us and gently forces us into the discomfort of life outside of our zip code or home address.



While each year has its familiar components – gasoline stops, junk food, Ale-8, that werewolf game, pistachio nuts, kudzu, sweat and humidity – this year, there were a few things, like there always are, that add a unique flare and new perspective.

This year was the largest age range of participants that we have ever had: those entering ninth grade this fall all the way up to approaching their junior year of college. Students are

usually divided up into very small age ranges for school and activities and sports including musical groups that are based on proficiency. We’ve done an interesting job as adults dividing kids into bite-size age groups.

Church is different and we’ve always been able to push those boundaries and age limits, and this year’s trip was a beautiful example of how serving others in mission work can’t be contained to any specific age. The students who had not gone before were welcomed into the fold by those with years of experience. It didn’t matter that they hadn’t been. In fact, it was a wonderful way to reenergized those who had previously traveled. This year, the four college age young adults served as leaders just because of who they are and how they are wired. Gus Johnson, Jason Davenport, Lilly Halvorson and Mia Opsahl put on displays and lived out what it means to be a servant –



But, Oh, So Different

not just during the convenient times of a high school summer break. I believe they planted the seeds for many of those high school students to picture what it looks like to stay engaged, be connected in living out their faith after those high school years are behind them.

We all watched as the rains came and came in the weeks leading up to our departure and wondered how this was going to work. Would we get diverted to assist with some of those needs or what our trip be postponed or outright canceled because of the massive flooding taking place in eastern Kentucky at the time? While there were a couple of centers that had to reassign volunteer groups, we were unaffected. Our center was about 90 minutes southwest of where the worst of the flooding was and so our work went on as planned. However, we knew what was happening outside of our county. When President and CEO of Appalachian Service Project (ASP), Walter Crouch, showed up for dinner one night, we learned how ASP would be an instrumental player after the flood waters receded. ASP is and always will be a home repair ministry. There are other organizations better suited for disaster recovery, and ASP has a list of these organizations on the front of their website (www.ASP.home.org). Although that work needs to take place, ASP is staying focused on the work that they can do to make a difference to the families and homes that were not affected by the flooding. There is a lot to do to keep people warm, safe and dry.

Walter explained, “Make no mistake about it. Those places can be rebuilt. ASP is going to be first in line with its more than 50 years of construction experience. We have thousands of volunteers to be at the forefront of helping those families rebuild.”

Thanks to Jason Davenport and Laura Opsahl who went on the first of these trips back in the year 2000. They have continued to stay



invested with the lives of the students in this congregation. In fact, this year’s mission trip into a vacation for their family of five. Thanks to Tara Halvorson, who on the Thursday before we departed learned that her leadership would be needed for this trip. She set aside all that she had planned for that week and without hesitation hopped into this experience and that rental van.

Thanks also to Ian Johnson, who helped prep these kids for the faithful adventure that they would be living out. Although he was unable to join us this year, we knew he would be holding us in his prayers during the course of the week. We also brought all of his tools back safely!

Another trip is in the books, and planning for 2023 has already begun.



Ready for Activity Again!

BY MARK HALVORSON, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

These rooms sat quiet all summer long. As canoe trips and mission trips and coffee excursions took place, these rooms sat quiet. As we met to prepare for Kentucky and the Boundary Waters, these rooms sat quiet. As we ran around with VBS kiddos and gathered upstairs in the air conditioning (thank goodness), these rooms sat quiet.



These rooms missed kids.

This fall, a lot of the scheduling and programming will look the same and feel familiar to those who are returning as well as hopefully feel very welcoming and utilized by those coming into youth stuff here at Good Shepherd.

Before the specifics of age groups and times, retreats and opportunities though, here's an invitation.

Every Sunday morning at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary, families are invited to come together and worship. You are invited to sit shoulder-to-shoulder with your family and others as we sing, pray, laugh and cry. You are invited into the deep stories of our faith and the challenges to live them out in our daily lives as individuals, as families, as a congregation.

Yes, make no mistake about it: We want students to be participants and engaged in youth ministry programming. We also want to underline, bold and amplify the importance of being in worship together – all of us. It's where we are reminded that this life of faith is bigger than any individual, although important and often a little silly, program or event . . . of which there will be many.

- Middle school youth group meets on Sunday mornings starting at 9 a.m. in the youth area. This is for students and friends in grades six through eight this fall.
- High school youth group meets on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8 p.m. This is for students and friends in grades 9 through 12 this fall.
- Monthly service and goofball fellowship events will take place and be communicated over email, postcard, Morse Code, and through the website this fall.
- Camp Castaway, the MEA getaway retreat, will take place from Oct. 20 to 23 in Detroit Lakes. Students in grades 9 to 12 this fall can get more info and sign up with Mark, starting on Rally Day, Sept. 11.





Sunday School Begins: Sacred Stories of Women and Psalms of Praise!

BY TOR JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

This fall the theme for Sunday School will be "Sacred Stories of Women and Psalms of Praise!" The themes from the last three years were "Stories of Our Faith," "Foundations of Our Faith," "Children of the Heavenly Father." "Sacred Stories of Women and Psalms of Praise!" includes many different women's stories from the Old and New Testaments.



Once again this fall, students entering ninth grade, as well as any older students who missed out on or weren't a part of the fall Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation service), are invited to think about that and be a part of that special day. Invitations and information are being sent to those students and families.

Another way that we engage our faith as middle and high school students is through helping and teaching and assisting. If you would like to be a part of the Sunday School program as a leader, please let me know so I will help get you connected with Tor Johnson. If you would like to be a part of worship as a reader, an assistant minister or with serving Communion just let us know!

On Rally Sunday, Sept. 11, we kicked off the year with an open house, a few games, quirky trivia, and food, of course. Check the website often for updated schedules, opportunities to plug in, and way to get involved in youth programming and congregational ministries.

Friends: We are not yet out of the COVID pandemic, so things will continue to ebb and flow and shift. However, we will return to weekly programming again this fall. We will gather in worship as individuals and families and the congregation at large. We will play, serve, and deepen our friendships with each other and make new ones along the way.

Here's to fall 2022 – Here we go!

The stories start with the heavy hitters, like Sarah and Rebekah, and move to the more obscure, like Jochebed, the mother of Moses, and Bithia, the daughter of Pharaoh. Then the stories move on to the New Testament, like Mary, Elizabeth, Anna, and Mary Magdalene, among many others.

Along with the Sacred Stories of Women, we also will include many Psalms of praise, like Psalms 150, 23, and 18: "How I love you, Lord! You are my fortress and my rescuer. With you I can always be safe."

Lending her creative gifts to this Sunday School theme is the inimitable Mara Halvorson. Look for her sacred yet playful artwork to adorn our walls again with fresh stories from the Bible. We will continue doing hybrid Sunday School, through the gift of Zoom technology, for those families who cannot always join us in person.

It's a strange and difficult time in our world, and we are looking for ways to celebrate faithful women and our faithful God to help offset the negativity that pervades so much of our lives. We hope to achieve this quest by having a fun and faith-filled Sunday School session every Sunday of the upcoming church year!

Rudolph Jr. Is the Holiday Musical!

BY ANNIKA ONSTAD

With the fall season so quickly approaching, I asked Performing Arts Director Tor Johnson a few commonly asked questions about what lies ahead for the program.

The Holiday Musical returns once more! This year's play will be "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer Junior." Auditions for children will be on Sept. 15 and 16, from 5 to 8 p.m.



Rehearsals will start on Sept. 20 and take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 to 8 p.m. The performances will be on Dec. 1, 2, and 3, with performances at 7:00 p.m., and an additional matinee performance at 2:00 p.m. on Dec. 3.

Tor's goal is to provide a fun, meaningful, and memorable experience for the cast and the audience. If you're a kid considering auditioning, have no fear! Auditions are both simple and straightforward. Don't let auditions keep you from participating; they are only a small part of a truly exceptional experience.

Ever wonder how the Performing Arts Program chooses plays each year? Me too! Tor reveals this top-secret process, stating that "almost all of the musicals we do are from the Broadway Junior collection. [These shows] are just condensed versions of the full Broadway shows, including almost all of the songs and most of the dialogue." For recurring shows, we'll intentionally wait five or more years before allowing them to return to the stage. Tor reminds us that it's essential to be mindful and "get a feel for what would work" for audience members and families.

The Holiday Musical has always been an esteemed part of the

holiday tradition for both Good Shepherd and the community. Tor says, "though most of the shows I put on are not religious in their theme, [they're] still a form of outreach and a way of bringing people into our building and church family."

The Dramatic Play Camps in the summer are good examples, with dozens of kids from the community gathering each year to dance and act. Many of those same kids return and audition for the Holiday Musical in the fall. Seeing kids return and grow each year is one of Tor's favorite parts of directing the Performing Arts Program.

Safety is the top priority when it comes to putting on shows. According to Tor, "COVID is always lurking in the shadows, no matter where we are." The choice of mask wearing will be up to individuals and their families. In the event someone tests positive, the program will follow protocol and hope they can return in time for the performances.

The Holiday Musical's most significant obstacle is how troublesome scheduling conflicts can be. Tor points out that kids have many other commitments, which makes it hard to have everyone at rehearsals. While this may not have been too bad before COVID, the pandemic has made connecting in-person much harder. However, we hope that by continuing to follow protocol with positive cases, we can help prevent more actors from getting sick.

Finally, the last subject we'll address is the care Tor puts into every musical. "I love the rehearsal process," Tor admits, revealing a sincere passion for seeing "relationships [form] because of the family we create with each new musical." When asked what inspires him, he replied, "I'm inspired by the level of talent and enthusiasm that the kids bring to the shows year after year . . . I'm very moved when I see how excited the kids and their families are after performances."

If you have any questions not answered in this article or would like to inquire about participating in the Performing Arts Program, please don't hesitate to reach out to Tor Johnson.

Introducing “Mini-tries”

BY ERIENNE NELSON

What are you passionate about outside of church? When was the last time you lost track of time doing something?

God has given all of us unique gifts. Some, like musical talents, fit beautifully into a traditional worship service. Others, like woodworking or biking don't have such an obvious place in the church.

The Ministry Board has been hard at work supporting the plethora of permanent ministries at Good Shepherd, but we also want to find a way to encourage everyone to bring their non-churchy talents to church. And to do so in a way that's approachable and not overwhelming with your already chaotic schedule.

Introducing “Mini-tries” – a low-pressure way to share your God-given gifts with the church community you already know and love. We want you to share your talents by creating pop-up ministry events that don't have to be a permanent commitment.

A few examples:

- Are you a passionate home chef? Host a meal for eight people who sign up. Share your culinary prowess and develop relationships with people you might not otherwise have met.
- Do you love to hike? Schedule a hike at your favorite location for a day trip. Use your body and experience the beautiful natural creations we don't usually have time to notice.
- Are you handy at restoring furniture? Teach others, work on a project together, and donate the finished product.



- Trivia master? Organize a group to head out to a local establishment once a month during winter
- Yoga instructor? Plan a class in the sanctuary after worship for a few Sundays one month with an invigorating Christian playlist.
- Stressed out parent? Set a date and time at a playground and invite other families to join.

This congregation is filled with talented, passionate, God-loving people. By weaving our church selves and our passions together, we can create authentic connections while honoring the varied gifts God has given us. The idea is not to replace current ministries, but to encourage us as lay people to take a leadership role in planning and sharing more of ourselves.

On Wednesday nights during youth group, we regularly ask each other where we saw God in our daily lives. Often, people's answers are not connected to church directly. Someone felt God's presence while sprinting on the soccer field or on a still lake at sunset. God shows up in a perfectly-timed song on the radio or in a quiet moment with a good friend. God is absolutely present in our wonderful church activities, but he's everywhere else too.

So, what do you love to do that you could share with others? Do you have an idea, but don't know how to get started? The Ministry Board is here to help! Reach out to Erienne Nelson, Linnea Benson, Laura Opsahl, or Pastor Elise Pokel, and we'll support you and help communicate your “Mini-stry.”



10

QUESTIONS WITH DEACON ANDREW STOEBIG

BY KAREN WALHOF

1 WHO ARE YOU? TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR LIFE.

I'm almost a Twin Cities native; we moved here from the Chicago area when I was four years old. I grew up in Plymouth before attending college in northwest Indiana then returning home to the University of Minnesota for graduate school. At the moment, my life is about to take a big step forward as my fiancée Sarah and I will be getting married in January. And our dog Milo is excited about it too.

2 YOU HAVE SEVERAL ADVANCED DEGREES. WHY DID YOU PURSUE THEM AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR YOUR WORK?

I pursued a degree in choral conducting because choral singing has been my primary instrument since at least the fourth grade when I joined the Minnesota Boychoir. I understand rhythm and expression best through conducting gesture and am passionate about building a mutual relationship of expression with singers.

Musicology and liturgy have come a little later in my life, though not for lack of interest. For me, these fields are two sides of the same coin in my lived practice of faithful musicianship. They

both help me develop historical understandings of music and ritual even as such scholarship directly influences our work in the here and now.

3 WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT YOU'RE A "DEACON"?

A perennial question! Deacons are among the first of the church's offices that are recorded in scripture, after preaching in the form of the apostles. The word deacon comes Greek for "servant," most specifically table server. As you can read in Acts 6, the function of deacons became necessary when squabbling emerged in the early church between Jewish and Gentile community members. Since then, deacons traditionally operate in a more service-oriented role in tandem with word and sacrament ministers, which we Lutherans call pastors. Deacons are called to word and service ministry and occupy the space in between the church and the world. For me, this looks like proclaiming the word in music and liturgy, supporting the preaching of the Gospel, and calling the entire church (myself included) to a deeper understanding of our call to live out the Gospel in our actions.



Andrew, Sarah, and Milo

4 WHAT IS IT ABOUT WORSHIP PLANNING AND MUSIC FOR WORSHIP THAT IS ESPECIALLY INTERESTING OR MEANINGFUL TO YOU?

Planning liturgy is like painting for me. I love to develop a whole range of shading and nuance in my music and text selection in response to a given scripture reading or theme. I run all sorts of options over in my head, listening to how the texts and tunes interact with each other over the course of a given worship service. And I *love* talking with folks about what they hear (or don't hear) in programming choices. Please don't hesitate to come talk to me if a specific selection resonates with you on a given Sunday.

5 WHY IS CHORAL SINGING IMPORTANT FOR OUR CONGREGATION AND FOR THE SINGERS?

You know this already so well at Good Shepherd! Unlike concert-based choirs, our church choirs are not the primary singing group in worship – we all are, the entire assembly. Our choirs serve first and foremost to support the assembly's voice, as well as to augment it with additional harmonization or arrangements not readily accessible to the full community.

6 WHAT INSTRUMENTS DO YOU PLAY?

My primary instrument is the choir and singing. I also play the piano and the organ, though I shy away from calling myself a pianist or organist.

7 WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE HYMN?

Whichever one I'm singing at the moment! Though "In Thee Is Gladness" will always be first among equals.

8 WHAT PART OF THE LITURGY SPEAKS ESPECIALLY RICHLY TO YOU?

It's actually a very specific rite on a very specific day. My diaconal community, the Lutheran Diaconal Association (that's what the 'LDA' after my name means), holds the washing of feet as our primary symbol of Christ-like service. Taken from the account in John 13, this ritual on Maundy Thursday is for us the clearest form of mutuality in ministry and Christian life, because we each have the opportunity both to serve and to be served. In fact, the whole liturgy of Maundy Thursday is the most meaningful of the year for me, because it's on that day we partake in the very real inversion of what is meant by glorification. Jesus, knowing full well what is about to transpire, nevertheless takes up basin and towel. How much more should we, who don't know what might be about to transpire, also take up basin and towel?

9 HOW DO THESE CHANGING TIMES AFFECT OUR WORSHIP?

Being together to hear the word of God proclaimed and share the meal of Christ's own body and blood has been crucial to our faith since its beginning in the first century. As beneficial as it has been for our sisters and brothers who are homebound to be able to join us virtually on Sundays, I really do believe that the Christian life needs an in-person, weekly Sunday gathering if at all possible. The physicality of presence with one another, Christ's presence in the midst of even just two or three, cannot be exactly replicated via distance – just as our family Thanksgiving celebrations cannot be replicated via Zoom no matter how hard we try. So perhaps the convenience of livestream (and its vital existence for many) might call us to expand our physical assembly by discerning ways to be in greater in-person contact with those who can't be present on Sundays.

10 HOW ARE THESE CHANGING TIMES AFFECTED BY OUR WORSHIP?

I think we learned rather quickly in 2020 how we'd taken much of our weekly Sunday gatherings for granted. In the midst of what seems like near constant anxiety, I believe we have such an opportunity to witness to the importance of this kind of ritual practice, one that requires us, as shame researcher Brené Brown points out, "to sing with strangers, to pass the peace [it's coming back soon!] with people who six days a week [we] might like to punch in the face, and to . . . break bread in communion with people I don't know." What a gift we have to offer to an anxious and weary world just by showing up and modeling what healthy community looks like in the reign of God.



Andrew and Sarah
in Paris



Foundation Approves Three Grant Requests

BY NANCY RYSTROM, FOUNDATION PRESIDENT

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd Foundation Board unanimously approved three grant requests at its August meeting.

Tree of Life Lutheran Worship Songs Commission

Tree of Life Lutheran is a primarily young adult and LGBTQIA2S+ inclusive mission start congregation in northeast Minneapolis.



The worship team at Tree of Life

They have struggled to find worship materials that resonate with their congregation. They recently developed a worship service for the season after Epiphany and want to expand their nascent ministry of liturgical resource creation.

The Board approved \$4,500 for Tree of Life Lutheran to commission five new worship songs, including making these compositions available for use within worshiping communities in the Minneapolis and St. Paul Area Synods. We look forward to introducing these songs to Good Shepherd when they are complete.

Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Book Publishing

Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) is the Lutheran Church in Ethiopia and is the fastest growing Lutheran church in the world. One of its challenges is teaching the faith to new members, given the rapid growth of the church. Good Shepherd members heard about this challenge when they last traveled to Ethiopia.

Seminary instruction is in English, but many students are minimally conversant in English. The EECMY has decided

to publish theology books in the languages of the church – Amharic and Afan-Oromo – so that pastors can better learn theology and their congregants can learn the faith. EECMY will be translating, editing, and printing classic Lutheran theology books and distributing them throughout the church.

The Board approved \$4,000 to assist the EECMY in this new opportunity to share the gospel.



This volume, *Growing in Faith*, has been published in Amharic. It serves as a primary text (instructor’s manual) for confirmation and new-member classes.

Minneapolis Area Synod Congregational Organizing for Racial Justice Project

The Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA created an initiative that supports a racial justice congregational organizing program that engages the long-term, systems-change work of dismantling structural racism. A focus of this initiative is voter re-enfranchisement, that is, restoring voting rights to community members returning from incarceration.

Synod issue-based organizing programs are funded outside of the gifts congregations, like Good Shepherd, and provide to the synod through their annual budgets. The Board approved \$4,000 to support this synod initiative.

Thank You

The Foundation is grateful to all who have given memorial gifts to the Foundation. The Foundation also welcomes celebration and legacy gifts. These gifts enable the Foundation to continue its ongoing support for the congregation and its outreach.

The Challenge of Growth in the EECMY

BY KAREN WALHOF DIRECTOR FOR OUTREACH

Our global partners in Ethiopia are congregations, seminaries, and ministries of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY), the Lutheran church there. A member of the Lutheran World Federation, EECMY is the fastest growing Lutheran Church in the world and the largest at this point in time.

New members are joining every Sunday, all across the country. The church struggles to place enough pastors and evangelists in its congregations.

All of this results in a most interesting issue that the church faces: The church is growing so fast that they are finding it very difficult to teach the faith to its new members! In the western world where the church continues to shrink, we smile at such a dilemma. Nonetheless, it is a real difficulty that challenges this spirit-led church.

When a group from Good Shepherd was in Ethiopia in 2019, we were confronted with this challenge a number of times. President Melkamu, in the BirbirDilla Synod, where Aira is located, talked to us about his great concern to teach the faith to new members. “They do not have a Bible,” he pointed out. “How do we teach them the faith?” Illiteracy is high in Ethiopia – more than 57 percent of Ethiopia’s women and around 30 percent of men in working age group (15 to 45 years old) are illiterate – which creates additional challenges.

When we returned to Addis Ababa, Pastor Jacobson and I met with the president of the EECMY, Dr. Yonas Yegezu. He earnestly and passionately talked about this issue, saying it was the duty of the church to find a way to teach the gospel in its fullness. After receiving a gift of books from Good Shepherd – always a favorite gift for our friends in Ethiopia – he lifted up *Luther’s Lively Theology*, a book on Luther’s Small Catechism written by our member, Del Jacobson, and said, “This is where we need to start, I think, with the Small Catechism, the basics.”

In another conversation with one of the regional seminary presidents, Pastor Asfaw, he pointed out that pastors needed to be trained “more deeply” so they can better teach the faith. English is the language used in Ethiopian advanced education – secondary and up. So, classes in Ethiopian seminaries are taught in English. In many African and Asian countries, education is conducted in English because it is the language in which most resources are



Lalo Aira Congregation

available. Ethiopia has 80-plus languages, so a decision has to be made to simplify to one language. However, so many students are only high school graduates and struggle with the English language. The result, then, is that sometimes pastors are not well equipped to teach the faith to others.

As a result, the EECMY has made a significant decision. It has tasked the Yemisrats Dimts communication unit of the church to begin publishing books in Amharic (which had been the language of the country during Haile Selasse’s reign) and in Afan-Oromo (the language of a majority of EECMY members). They are beginning by translating some classic Luther texts into Amharic and Afan-Oromo from English or German.

After the texts have been translated, edited, proofread, and printed, copies of these texts will be sold to pastors who are then better equipped to teach the faith to their congregation members. Receipts from those sales will allow them to print additional titles. It’s still a huge task, with many challenges, but it is a faithful first step in training their members. Gemechis Didi, director of Yemisrats Dimts, brought greetings to our congregation in August.

Our Foundation has issued a grant of \$4,000 to support publishing of one of these translated books – a beginning in teaching the faith to so many who are hungry for the truth of the gospel! (See article on page 18.)

100th Anniversary Pastor's Quiz

BY RON HOVLAND, MEMBER OF 100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

One could make a case that a congregation would not last for 100 or more years without excellent pastoral leadership during those years. From its beginning as a mission congregation of the Norwegian Lutheran Church to its present day 100-year celebration as a member of the ELCA, Good Shepherd has been blessed with strong pastors.

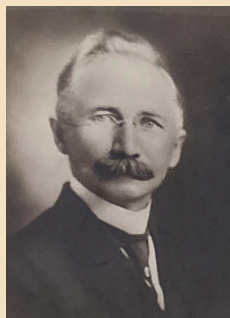
This quiz is simply meant to introduce our members to all the solo or senior pastors who have led this church for its initial 100 years. Answers and some trivia about these wonderful people follow. Please note that the quiz covers only the solo or senior pastors. While we have been blessed as a congregation with incredible associate pastors, they are not included as part of this quiz nor are any interim pastors.

Here's the list of the pastors who have served as solo or senior pastors during Good Shepherd's first 100 years:

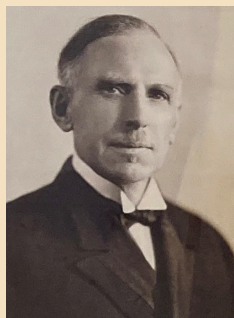
F. C. Norman	1921-1924
Wilhelm Pettersen	1924-1927
Harold Hansen	1927-1928
A. B. Swan	1929-1941
Oscar Anderson	1942-1948
Theodore Heimarck	1949-1969
Harris Lee	1969-1988
Paul Monson	1988-2003
Jon Buuck	2004-2008
Debra Samuelson	2010-2018
Karl Jacobson	2018 to present

QUESTIONS

- Who was the first, and so far, only female senior pastor at Good Shepherd?
- Who were the two longest serving pastors for this church?
- In addition to our current senior pastor, which three pastors have published at least one book?
- Which pastor worked as a "service pastor" in San Francisco for the military during World War II?
- Which pastor served as president of Augsburg College?
- Who was the first pastor to live in the church parsonage on Towns Road?
- Which pastor owned a cabin on an island in northern Minnesota?
- Which pastor incorporated a Sunday Evening service during part of his tenure?
- Which two pastors were also married to pastors?
- Which pastor finally incorporated the inclusion of women in church leadership positions, also supporting the call of our first woman associate pastor?
- An easy follow-up: Which pastor played a role in the call process of our second female associate pastor?
- Which pastor oversaw the redesign of the parking lot entrance to the building and the addition of the bridge along the south of the sanctuary?
- Prior to the redesign of the parking lot entrance, other major changes to the building have been made. Which pastor oversaw the construction that moved the offices from Ewing Avenue to France Avenue, where they currently exist?
- Another building-related question: Which pastor spearheaded the construction of our current building and the addition of the education wing to it?
- Which pastor was god parent to our current senior pastor?
- Which pastor was raised in the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church and later rejected its teachings and became a member of the LCA and then the ELCA?
- Who was the first pastor to have an electric refrigerator in the parsonage?
- Which pastor suffered a stroke while preaching one Sunday morning?
- Who was the pastor when Morningside Lutheran Church purchased its first building and changed its name to Lake Harriet Lutheran Church?
- Which pastor served Lake Harriet Lutheran for the shortest period of time – less than 11 months?



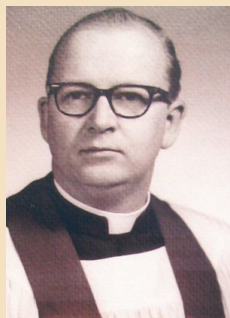
F. C. Norman



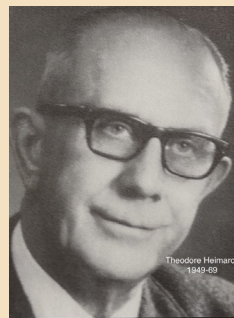
Wilhelm Pettersen



A. B. Swan



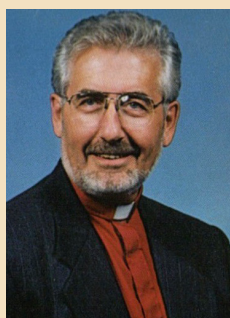
Oscar Anderson



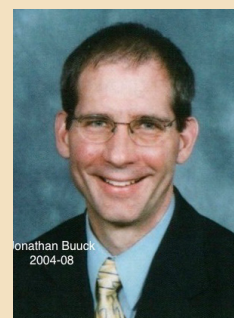
Theodore Heimarck



Harris Lee



Paul Monson



Jonathan Buuck
2004-08



Debra Samuelson



Karl Jacobson

21. Who was the pastor when Good Shepherd received the Paul Granlund sculpture titled "The Crucifixion," which currently stands in the narthex?
22. Who was the pastor who chose to purchase his own home instead of living in the parsonage on Towns Road?
23. Which pastor became the first *senior* pastor when the congregation called its first assistant pastor?
24. Which pastor took the sixth grade Sunday School graduates on a canoe trip down the St. Croix River?
25. A cheater question: Which pastor's heritage includes the Sámi culture from northern Norway?

Thanks to all of the pastors who have served this church during its first 100 years. Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd has been and continues to be truly blessed.

ANSWERS:

1. Debra Samuelson
2. Theodore Heimarck and Harris Lee. Both served approximately 20 years.
3. Wilhelm Pettersen published *The Light In The Prison Window** about the Norwegian evangelist Hans Nielsen Hauge. Oscar Anderson published *With Him All The Way,** a collection of Lenten sermons and homilies. Theodore Heimarck published *Preaching For Tethered Man,** a book of 15 sermons he had written and preached, as well as another, *The Spirit of Lent*. Karl Jacobson and his brother Rolf have co-written a number of books, the most recent being *Divine Laughter* about humor in the Bible and using humor in preaching. Note: Good Shepherd has copies of the books with asterisks (*) in the Heritage Room.
4. A. B. Swan. He guided Good Shepherd, then called Lake Harriet Lutheran, through the hard years of the Depression.
5. Oscar Anderson was president of Augsburg from 1980 to 1997.
6. Theodore Heimarck. Harris Lee was the only other senior pastor to live there. Associate Pastor Keith Magnuson lived in the parsonage for a few years before purchasing his own home. When he moved out, the parsonage was sold.
7. Paul Monson. An interesting thing about the cabin: except during the winter, it was accessible only by canoe.
8. Jon Buuck
9. Debra Samuelson and Karl Jacobson
10. Harris Lee. The first woman associate pastor was Marilyn Breckenridge. She and her husband Tom are members of Good Shepherd.
11. Karl Jacobson. Elise Pokel is the current associate pastor.
12. Debra Samuelson
13. Paul Monson
14. Theodore Heimarck
15. Oscar Anderson
16. Jon Buuck
17. Oscar Anderson
18. F. C. Norman. He survived a stroke and retired soon after. Interestingly, he was member Andy Norman's father and also grandfather to current member Andrea and her two sisters.
19. Wilhelm Pettersen
20. Harold Hansen. Interestingly, his photo is not among the pastor photos in the lower west hallway.
21. Theodore Heimarck. He and his wife were also involved as financial donors.
22. Paul Monson
23. Theodore Heimarck. The Assistant Pastor, Melvin Ranheim, was hired in 1956. A number of his family have remained faithful members of Good Shepherd.
24. Paul Monson. Pastor Monson loved canoeing almost as much as he loved being a pastor.
25. Elise Tweten Pokel. While Pastor Pokel is not officially a part of this list, she has been a "solo" or lead pastor during Pastor Jacobson's absence. The leadership she has shown during his time away has been exceptional.

Good Shepherd Becomes President's Volunteer Service Award Certifier

BY KAREN WALHOF, DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH



In our culture today, many children and teens are encouraged to work volunteer hours to help others. We have many people in this congregation who are involved in our outreach ministries or with other organizations where their work assists others.

The President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) is a national honor offered in recognition of sustained volunteer service. It recognizes hours served over a 12-month period. In 2003, the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation founded the President's Volunteer Service Award to recognize the important role of

volunteers in America's strength and national identity. This award honors individuals whose service positively impacts communities in every corner of the nation and inspires those around them to take action, too. Colleges and universities welcome this type of record of volunteer service.

Recipients receive:

- an official lapel pin reflecting the Bronze, Silver, or Gold service level.
- a personalized certificate of achievement.
- a congratulatory letter from the U.S. President.

Good Shepherd will report volunteer hours each year in September.

What is a Presidential Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) Certifying Organization and how does an organization become certified?

A certifying organization has been granted the authority through an application process to award the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) to volunteers. Nonprofit, community-based, faith-based, business, school, national service programs, membership or trade associations, federal, state, or local government agencies, U.S. military, and state entities abroad are eligible to apply to become a certifying organization.

How are individual volunteer hours maintained and tracked?

Certifying organizations maintain and track volunteer hours, based on a 12-month cycle. Our cycle is September to September. Each volunteer must maintain a personal spreadsheet. Volunteers are required to communicate directly with the contact at their organization (Karen Walhof) to report hours volunteered.

Please contact Karen Walhof at k.walhof@goodshepherdmpls.org to register as a participant. You will receive information on how to record your volunteer hours.

What are the eligibility requirements for individual volunteers?

1. Must be a United States citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States (i.e., green card holder).
2. The minimum age is five years old.
3. Must complete eligible service within a 12-month period (for annual Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards) and over a lifetime (for Lifetime Achievement Awards),

Eligible service is unpaid acts of volunteer service benefitting others.

Ineligible service includes donating funds, political lobbying, religious instruction, conducting worship services, proselytizing, volunteer service performed as part of court-ordered community service, and serving only family members.

What age categories and award categories are involved?

AGE	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD	LIFETIME
Kids (5-10)	26-49 hrs.	50-74 hrs.	75+ hrs.	4000 hrs.
Teens (11-15)	50-74 hrs.	75-99 hrs.	100+ hrs.	4000 hrs.
Young Adults (16-25)	100-174 hrs.	175-249 hrs.	250+ hrs.	4000 hrs.
Adults (26+)	100-249 hrs.	250-499 hrs.	500+ hrs.	4000 hrs.

Rob Albright brought this option to our attention, and council has determined we will be involved for a one-year test, with reconsideration by the council at the end of this year. Please contact Rob Albright or Karen Walhof with questions.

SCRIPTURE STORY

Re-Centering in the Psalms

BY PASTOR DEB BERGSTRAND

This fall our theme is RE-CENTER. What better way to RE-CENTER our lives in faith than to dwell in the Psalms?

The Psalms are a unique source for consolation in the current times. Professor Cameron B. R. Howard tells us that “the Psalms give us words for our biggest feelings when we run out of ways to describe them: grief, sorrow, guilt, fear, abandonment, joy, and praise. They intersect in one way or another with nearly every thematic category we might identify throughout the Bible: worship, wisdom, exodus, monarchy, prophecy, exile, lament, sin, repentance, hope, freedom, grace, and more.”

I remember hearing Psalm 46 in worship after Sept. 11, 2001. The phrase, “A mighty fortress is our God,” took on an entirely new meaning for me as our world feared for our safety and grieved the loss of so many innocent people. I felt more courageous and confident being able to read and sing the words of the Psalms together in worship.

When I read Psalm 6 during the pandemic, “Be gracious to me O Lord, for I am languishing . . . How long, O Lord,” I found empathy for how I was feeling. This pandemic has been a time of loss and lament. Yet God listens to how we feel and helps us keep perspective on our sadness and anxiety.

“This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!” Psalm 118 is one of my favorite ways to begin a beautiful morning. Repeating these words reminds me that it is God who gives us the beauty of creation to enjoy and appreciate each day.

In the words of Walter Bruggemann, renowned Lutheran theologian, sometimes our lives have a sense of orientation, day-to-day life is stable and we are at peace. Then something happens and we become disoriented, feeling lost, afraid or unsure of the future. Then God breaks through with a new word of orientation or re-orientation. God seeks to move us through our times of disorientation to a new place of knowing God’s presence and power.

The Psalms are one of the best resources for helping us re-orient and navigate through times of uncertainty and the messiness of life. This fall at Good Shepherd, we will be singing a Psalm each week in worship. The Psalms will guide our preaching messages and worship. All the Psalms that will be used are listed in the



King David Writing the Psalms by Govert Flinck, 1615-1660

graphic below. Look them up, and spend some time each week savoring them. Let us give gratitude to God, lament our losses, and celebrate God’s love for us through the Psalms!

- Psalm 9** The needy shall not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the poor perish forever.
- Psalm 46** The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob our refuge.
- Psalm 95** He is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.
- Psalm 100** The Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.
- Psalm 111** Full of honor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.
- Psalm 119** Deal bountifully with your servant, so that I may live and observe your word.
- Psalm 128** Happy is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways.
- Psalm 133** How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!
- Psalm 138** You stretch out your hand, and your right hand delivers me.
- Psalm 150** Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary.



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