



The Shepherd's News

132 East Valley Forge Road · King of Prussia · Pennsylvania · 19406

December 2020 · January 2021 · February 2021



Good Shepherd Friends,

I think it is safe to say that this Advent and Christmas will be like none other! And yet, Good Shepherd is here to help make it a meaningful season for you and those you love.

Advent

At the end of November we invited people to come to Good Shepherd to pick up an Advent wreath for their home. We have a few extra. If you did not get one, please call the church office and we will make sure that you do!

And don't forget to celebrate the 4 weeks of Advent by worshipping with us through our YouTube channel at 9:30am on Sunday mornings. Consider lighting the candles on the wreath on Sunday mornings during our online worship service, and then throughout the week, as we watch and wait for the coming of the Christ Child.

Christmas

Even while we observe Advent, the Good Shepherd staff and leaders are preparing to celebrate Christmas. While we won't be able to have indoor, in-person worship, we WILL welcome the baby Jesus. Nothing, not even the pandemic, can stop him from being born! We are providing two worship opportunities for you this Christmas:

5pm Outdoor Live Nativity

We will have a brief outdoor service of traditional Christmas carols, the reading of the Christmas story, and the singing of *Silent Night* by candlelight. All the while you will be able to gaze upon a live nativity scene, complete with sheep, goats, a donkey and a camel (well, maybe not a camel but an alpaca that looks an awful lot like a camel from a distance!). The worship service is open to young and old alike. Feel free to bring a chair. The service will last approximately 20 minutes, but you may view the live nativity until 7pm.

7pm Traditional Christmas Eve Worship (YouTube only)

We will be live streaming a Traditional Christmas Eve Service at 7pm which will include glorious music, a full liturgy, and will conclude with *Silent Night*. We encourage you to light your own candle and sing along as we observe this time-honored and beloved tradition.

Like everything else in 2020, Advent and Christmas will be different, but the seasons will be glorious nonetheless! The world has never needed the peace and love that the Christ child brings more than it does today.

Peace,

Pastor Julie



In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life we remember the following Good Shepherd members who have entered the church triumphant:

Carl Doerrmann † Joseph Morgan

OUTREACH IN DECEMBER—The December Outreach funds will support **Neighborhood Meals on Wheels**. There is a need in our community for meals for the homebound. Upper Merion Township had responded to that need since 1974. Many Meals on Wheel volunteers are from Good Shepherd. Neighborhood Meals on Wheels accepts no government funding and as a result is able to bring new clients on board with much less paper-work than is required by the county and state. However, because it has no government funding, it must rely on the generosity of friends, neighbors, community groups and faith-based organizations to sustain it. *Checks may be made payable to Good Shepherd and designated for "Outreach."*

OUTREACH IN JANUARY—The January Outreach funds will support the **Lutheran Settlement House**. According to their website "Established in 1902, Lutheran Settlement House (LSH) is a non-profit, community-based organization committed to serving children, adults, and families living in Philadelphia. Over the past century, the programs and services offered by LSH have changed in response to the evolving needs of the community. However, the core mission of Lutheran Settlement House — *"to empower individuals, families, and communities to achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through an integrated program of social, educational, and advocacy services"* — has remained constant." *Checks may be made payable to Good Shepherd and designated for "Outreach."*

OUTREACH IN FEBRUARY—The February Outreach funds will support **Bear Creek Camp**. As with many other places, the camp has been hit hard this year due to the pandemic. However, their mission stays the same; to help individuals explore, celebrate and grow in God's creation. Bear Creek Camp is a ministry of the Southeastern and Northeastern Pennsylvania Synods of the ELCA. Located in the beauty of the Pocono Mountains, they offer year-round opportunities, including summer residential youth camp, nature day camp, environmental education programs, weekend camp retreats and outside group rentals. *Checks may be made payable to Good Shepherd and designated for "Outreach."*

ALTAR FLOWERS and CHURCH BULLETINS



Because we are not holding in person worship, a flower and bulletin sign up will be sent out before the end of the year. Please look for a link in the weekly email blast The cost for altar flowers is \$20.00. The cost of the bulletins is \$10.00. Each week, the flowers are available for you to pick up from the Church office. Please call ahead during regular office hours to make arrangements to pick up your altar flowers. *Checks may be made payable to Good Shepherd and designated for "Flowers or bulletins"*

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS



Is there someone you would like to remember or honor this holiday season? You may do so by ordering a **poinsettia plant** as a memorial or in honor of someone special. Please mail or drop off an envelope for the poinsettia plant to the church office.. Include the names of the people you would like to remember or honor on the outside of the envelope. The cost of each plant is \$10. Orders should be placed before December 15th.

Bible Study
Women in the Bible
Tuesdays 7-8pm on Zoom
(link will be provided through email BLAST in January)

Women have come a long way in equality in society, and yet they still drastically face discrimination in so many ways. The women in the Bible have been given little attention over the centuries and many of their stories and messages have been left unheard. Women in general, but specifically in the Bible, have traditionally been said to be subservient and passive but when we look deeper into the words and actions of these women, we will see they are anything but that! It's time to uncover the beauty these women hold and the ways their stories can inspire us today.

Each week we will explore the story of a different woman in the Old Testament. We will spend time talking about her story, the other characters in it (namely other important women), the relationships we can see, and the ways their story has influenced the role and view of women today.

You are encouraged to read the whole story beforehand because often a small passage is not enough to truly understand these women.

January 12: *Hagar* (and *Sarah*) Genesis 16:1-16 and Genesis 21: 2-3, 8-21

January 19: *Miriam* Exodus 15:1-18, 20-21, Numbers 12:1-16

January 26: *Deborah* (and Jael) Judges 4 (Judges 5 is the poetic retelling of Judges 4)

February 2: *Ruth* (and Naomi & Orpah): The book of Ruth

February 9: *Bathsheba* 2 Samuel: 11:1-12:25 and 1 Kings 1:1-37, 2:1-25

Courtney Smith will be leading the study. She is a senior Seminarian at the *United Lutheran Seminary*.



**PUB THEOLOGY WILL CONTINUE THROUGH
 THE WINTER MONTHS THROUGH ZOOM**

Winter Pub Theology gatherings will begin at 7:15 pm on the dates below.

Links and passwords will be sent out before each event via the weekly email blast.

Please join us on the following Mondays!

Monday, December 7th—*Be still, and know that I am God.* What does this mean to you and how can we do this?

Monday, January 4th —What does it mean to be more like Jesus?

Monday, February 1st—Carey Nieuwof says that *“One of the things important for the future of the church is to equip its members to live out their faith in the world. To do so we must simplify by focusing our energy on things the church can uniquely do best.”* What are those things?

Meal Ministry

With the cold weather arriving, we would like to serve our cousins at the **Cecil and Grace Bean Soup Kitchen** a warm meal. Although guests are still not allowed to dine in due to Covid restrictions, we can serve them a warm meal to go. We will follow strict protocols to keep everyone safe. Volunteers are needed on **Saturday, December 19** to make casseroles from 8:00-9:00 am at Good Shepherd. We also need volunteers to serve our “cousins” at the soup kitchen in Norristown. Servers must arrive at the soup kitchen at 12 noon and will be finished by 2:30 pm. Call or email Janice Rackovan at 610-715-2601 or jcrackovan@gmail.com, with any questions. Other winter dates include Saturdays January 16 and February 20.

GOOD SHEPHERD PRESCHOOL



Registration for the 2021-2022 school year will begin in January. Morning classes are available for children ages 2-5. Please contact Diane Smith at 610-265-0733 or gskoppreschool@verizon.net.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 2021 at 11:00 AM

Please look for the details and zoom link in upcoming weekly email blasts.

WANT TO SAVE ON TAXES? WANT TO HELP GOOD SHEPHERD AT THE SAME TIME? WIN WIN FOR ALL!

As you plan your donations to Good Shepherd, here are a couple of tax strategies that might benefit you either now or in the future...

1. If you are older than 70 1/2 years and you draw down your Traditional IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), the amount you take will be counted as taxable income to you. However, if you give a portion of your RMD to Good Shepherd (up to \$100,000) that amount will not count as taxable income to you, which could save you money and at the same time help Good Shepherd. You would simply have the company holding your IRA send the amount you desire directly to Good Shepherd. *Win-win situation for you and Good Shepherd!*
2. The stock market has done pretty well over the last few years, so if you have appreciated stocks that you have held for longer than a year, you can direct shares to Good Shepherd and take a charitable contribution and avoid paying taxes on the capital gain of those shares. *Win-win situation for you and Good Shepherd!*
3. You might consider whether it makes sense for you to make two years worth of your giving to Good Shepherd in one year, as that may give you the opportunity to take a charitable deduction this year. If you are interested in that, please let us know so that we can apportion your gift for 2020 and 2021.

As with all matters involving your financial plans, it is suggested that you speak to your financial advisor since everyone's tax and financial situation is unique.

YEAR END REMINDERS FROM THE TREASURER

Despite the pandemic, Good Shepherd has been able to remain financially positive thanks to everyone who has continued to send in their offering via the mail and online banking. To insure proper inclusion of your gifts in the year 2020, please mail them in early enough so that we receive them before making a year-end deposit. If you plan to make an extra donation for Christmas, make sure to write "Christmas" on the memo line of your check. When we begin the new year, please be careful when writing the date as the bank will reject checks with the incorrect year. Blessings to all!

Lent at Good Shepherd

Our Lenten season at Good Shepherd begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17th at 7:00 pm

While we are unsure about whether we will be holding in-person worship, rest assured that Pastor Julie will come up with a clever way for you to receive your ashes. Please check the weekly email blasts in February about Ash Wednesday and Mid-week Lent worship.

DECEMBER WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AT GOOD SHEPHERD

December 6th—2nd Sunday of Advent

Live Stream Service @ 9:30 AM—Lighting of 2nd candle on the Advent Wreath

December 13th—3rd Sunday of Advent

Live Stream Service @ 9:30 AM—Lighting of 3rd candle on the Advent Wreath

December 20th—4th Sunday of Advent

Live Stream Service @ 9:30 AM—Lighting of 4th candle on the Advent Wreath

Thursday, December 24th—Christmas Eve

5:00 PM-7:00 PM Live Nativity

5:00 P.M-5:20 PM — Outdoor Candlelight Service with Carols

7:00 PM — Live Stream Candlelight Service

December 27th—1st Sunday of Christmas

Live Stream Service @ 9:30 AM (Lessons and Carols)

JANUARY WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

January 3rd—The Epiphany of Our Lord

January 10th—The Baptism of Our Lord

January 17th—2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

January 24th—3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

January 31st—4th Sunday after the Epiphany

FEBRUARY WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

February 7th—5th Sunday after the Epiphany—Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday

February 14th—Transfiguration of Our Lord

February 17th—Ash Wednesday

February 21st—1st Sunday of Lent

February 28th—2nd Sunday of Lent

We hope to be back at in-person worship early in 2021.

Look for announcements in the weekly email blasts.

Zoom Monday's at Good Shepherd

First Monday of the Month is Pub Theology.

December 7th, January 4th and February 1st

Second Monday of the Month is Committee Meetings

Please check if your committee is meeting.

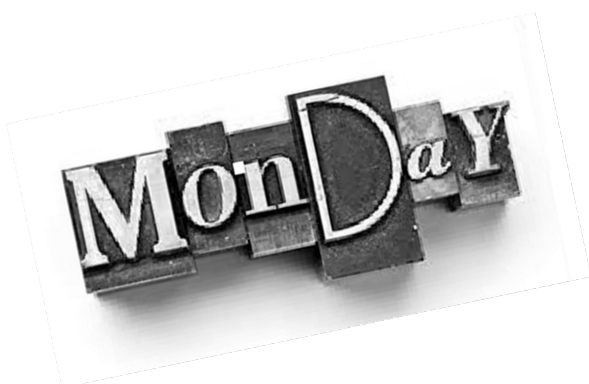
December 14th, January 11th and February 8th

Third Monday of the Month is Council Meeting

December 21st, January 18th and February 15th

Fourth Monday of the month is Book Club

January 25th and February 22nd





The Music Ministry of Good Shepherd



I began to write this newsletter submission just a few hours after the decision to return to fully virtual worship for the congregation had been made. While this move may be disappointing for some, it's important we do everything possible to keep everyone safe and healthy.

We have worked very hard over the past few months to upgrade our live-streaming capabilities. For example, we've added a new, high-quality camera that provides beautiful images of our worship. Our tech team and I have spent lots of time tweaking the sound and video settings to keep improving what we stream each week.

With this move back to what our Bishop calls, "sacred cyberspace" – rest assured that the music ministry of Good Shepherd will continue to be alive and well! We'll continue to bring you our traditional liturgy, meaningful hymns, and special music each week.

This move also means that Christmas Eve worship will be quite different. Even though we will be physically distant, we will still be spiritually close. Our 7:00PM traditional Christmas Eve worship will offer many familiar hymns sung by our worship team. We'll also have choral and handbell music, instrumental music, and organ selections to complete your Christmas experience. So, put on your comfy sweatpants, light a fire, sit by the tree and enjoy your Christmas Eve worship in our collective, "sacred cyberspace."

Earlier in the evening on Christmas Eve we'll be offering a brief, outdoor live-nativity service at 5:00pm - complete with the congregational singing of a few familiar carols, and of course, there will be sheep! We live in unique and difficult times; but we will get through it, together. Romans 12:12 says, "Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer."

We got this, Good Shepherd!

Musically Yours,
Ross

GOOD SHEPHERD HAS A YOUTUBE CHANNEL AND IS NOW LIVE STREAMING

Join us on Sundays at 9:30am to watch the in-person service through our YouTube channel.

Don't worry if you're late, you can join in any time and "rewind" to catch the beginning of the service. Can't make it on Sunday? No worries, the video will be available shortly after the service for viewing any time.

Log onto YouTube and search for Good Shepherd King of Prussia.

When you get there, be sure to "subscribe" to our channel.

By subscribing, you will get updates and alerts to when there will be livestreams. Our channel is divided into sections.

When there is a livestream currently streaming, that will be at the top of the channel.

The next section is a listing of our upcoming livestreams.

This is an exciting new ministry we're launching to reach out to those who can't make it to our church service (for whatever reason) or are outside of our local area! If you are interested in video production, livestreaming and spreading the love of Jesus outside of our building, please contact the church office.

WINTER BOOK CLUBS at GOOD SHEPHERD (7:00PM VIA ZOOM)

Please look for the zoom link in the weekly email blast.



Monday January 25, 2021—The Guardians by John Grisham

In the small Florida town of Seabrook, a young lawyer named Keith Russo was shot dead at his desk as he worked late one night. The killer left no clues. There were no witnesses, no one with a motive. But the police soon came to suspect Quincy Miller, a young black man who was once a client of Russo's.

Quincy was tried, convicted, and sent to prison for life. For twenty-two years he languished in prison, maintaining his innocence. But no one was listening. He had no lawyer, no advocate on the outside. In desperation, he writes a letter to Guardian Ministries, a small nonprofit run by Cullen Post, a lawyer who is also an Episcopal minister. Guardian accepts only a few innocence cases at a time. Cullen Post travels the country fighting wrongful convictions and taking on clients forgotten by the system. With Quincy Miller, though, he gets far more than he bargained for. Powerful, ruthless people murdered Keith Russo, and they do not want Quincy Miller exonerated. They killed one lawyer twenty-two years ago, and they will kill another without a second thought.



Monday February 22, 2021—The Lions of Fifth Avenue by Fiona Davis

Told in two timelines, *The Lions of Fifth Avenue* tells the stories of Laura Lyons (1913) and Sadie Donovan (1993) and their experiences at the New York City Public Library. In 1913, Laura's husband is the superintendent of the library and their family actually lives in an apartment inside the library. Laura wants more from life and is bored at home with her two children, so she enrolls in journalism school and becomes involved with a radical group of women feminists meeting in Greenwich Village. Meanwhile, valuable books are stolen from the library and her family is under suspicion. In 1993, Sadie is the Curator at the New York City Public Library and also shares a secret connection with the famous essayist, Laura Lyons. The library experiences the theft of a few valuable pieces and Sadie's job is in jeopardy. Truths come to light regarding Sadie's family history as the case is investigated.

A NEW MINISTRY HAS COME TO GOOD SHEPHERD SPURRED BY THE PANDEMIC!

During this time of uncertainty and turmoil the need for prayer is ever present. Good Shepherd is answering that need with a Community Outdoor Prayer Sanctuary. We are inviting our members and community to our outdoor sanctuary (the area between our two buildings) to pray. While many know about our outdoor sanctuary, others do not, and so there is a sign on our lawn inviting the community up to the hill to pray. In addition, there is a Prayer Drop Box for people's prayer requests. Our Good Shepherd prayer warriors will lift up these concerns in prayer.

Social distancing measures and masks are required of all who use the outdoor sanctuary. The Evangelism Committee hopes you are as enthusiastic as we are about this ministry. What a blessing and privilege for our faith family to pray with, and make this space available to, our community!

HEARTS AND HANDS

Hearts & Hands reaches out to greet our Good Shepherd Family in this time of social distancing. Though we have not been meeting as a group, our mission goes on as we each work from home. Completed projects this year include: 72 afghans and blankets for Project Linus, 184 pillow cases for Miles of Smiles, 46 little dresses for Africa, and a collection of sweaters, hats, scarves and mittens for World Vision. Also, some of our ladies helped to make 926 masks for *Lutheran World Relief*. We pray for a happy, healthy and safe holiday season for all.

PEACE OF PEACE OF PEACE

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

The Shepherd's News Winter 2020-2021

MARCH • APRIL • MAY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE...MONDAY, February 15, 2021

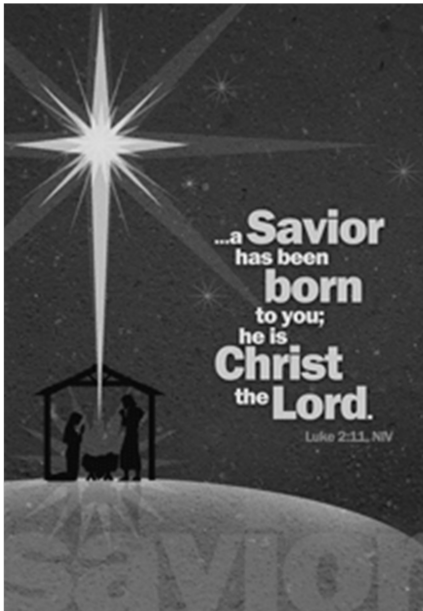
Please email your print ready article to gskopstaff@verizon.net.

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9:00 A.M. – Noon

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:30 A.M. virtual worship via our YouTube Channel
Watch the weekly email blast for changes



THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF

Pastor—Julie DeWerth 610-308-2675
Vicar—Thomas Natalini 610-265-4545
Director of Music Ministries—Ross Boerner 484-369-1017
Parish Administrator—Kay Shinnars 610-265-4545
Preschool Director—Diane Smith 610-265-0733
Sexton—Ray Erwin 610-265-4545

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