

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Weekly Update

*Our mission is to be more visible, to become more connected,
and to draw closer, with Christ as our center.*



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Wednesday, May 5, 2021



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Worship

As the number of vaccinated people continues to rise and the rate of infection continues to fall, we are happy to have three options for you to worship with us:

To join us for Indoor Worship at 8:30 am: We are no longer requiring sign-ups. Our numbers have been small. Masks are required as is physical distancing. Inside, we cannot sing, but Vic sings the hymns so that it is a more meaningful experience of music. We have a plastic protector on the altar, adding to our safe practices. Pastor Doug distributes Communion carefully but if you prefer to bring your own bread for you or your group that is fine as well. ***We are going to experiment with distributing wine as part of the Eucharist in a safe manner. We will prefill individual cups with wine. If you are more comfortable not taking wine, please don't.*** You certainly may greet and chat with others but please do so **once outside** the building.

To join us for Outdoor Worship at 10:00 am: The Service will be in the backyard of the church, chairs physically distanced. ***Masks are no longer required for outdoor worship.*** Bring a chair, sunglasses, and wear layers. ***Pastor Doug will distribute bread at communion. You may continue to bring your own bread to be consecrated during the celebration of the Eucharist. We are going to experiment with distributing wine as part of the Eucharist in a safe manner. We will prefill individual cups with wine. If you are more comfortable not taking wine, please don't.*** We will provide more information at the services. In the event of rain or storm, we will hold the 10:00 AM Service inside the church.

To join us for Worship online: There are several options for you to join us for online worship:

- 1) go to the Good Shepherd website www.gslc-ct.org. Click on youtube on the menu under News & Events to be directed to our church's YouTube page.
- 2) go to our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Good-Shepherd-Lutheran-Church-220717937953573/> Scroll down until you see the post with the current "Church Service (date)" click on this to be directed to our church's YouTube page.
- 3) To find us directly on Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/> enter Good Shepherd Monroe CT in the search field and you will be directed to our page, then select the worship video you would like to see. Subscribe to our channel to make it even easier.



We Are the Branches

Devotional for the week of May 2nd, 2021

To encourage flowering and fruit production in vines, trees, and shrubs, most of us know that pruning is necessary. This isn't the easiest of work, nor does it make the pruned plant look all that great for a while afterward. Yet often what results after pruning is a plant that is more abundant, beautiful, and healthy than it would have been otherwise.

In our reading today, Jesus makes it very clear that he is the vine, his Father is the vine grower, and we, his disciples, are the branches on which fruit grows. Without the vine and the vine grower, the branches do not exist. Yet, often in our spiritual lives it seems as though we get these roles mixed up. We are wooed by the sense of accomplishment and value that comes from producing results of one kind or another, and we fail to acknowledge the source that makes that "fruit" possible.

However, in today's gospel, Jesus reminds us that our job isn't to produce results; it's to stay connected. "Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing," Jesus says (John 15:5). Jesus is our source and strength; it is only by our connection to Jesus the vine that we the branches bear fruit that will last, such as love, compassion, forgiveness, hope, service, kindness, and patience.

To grow this kind of fruit, Jesus relates how necessary it is for us to be pruned occasionally. In other words, those things that are not of God in our lives have to be rooted out from time to time. The process of pruning isn't always the most enjoyable and can even include a good deal of pain, but it leads to lives that are whole and abundant. As we abide in Jesus, we are given the strength we need to endure the pruning process. We also experience the peace that comes from knowing that the fruit that will follow is for the glory of God.

Devotional message and art based on the readings for May 2nd, reprinted from sundaysandseasons.com.

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A Community of Prayer

For those in need of healing and comfort:

Members and Friends of the Congregation: Joan, Vic, Lauren, Ray, Tim, Marie, Audrey, Elizabeth, Gordon, Sarah, Miriam, Scarlet, Jason, Brian, David, Tricia, Cate, Cecilio, Donna, Anthony, Steve, the Wilk family, Linda, Todd, Noreen and family, Maureen.

Military (on active duty), Fire fighters, and Police: Ryan, Teddy, Tyler, Ben, Kenny, Brian, Bill, Ken, John, Glen, and Vic.

Front Line workers in the COVID-19 pandemic: Diane, Alicia, Brittany, Loretta, Jay, Alyssa, Monica, Rachel, June.

Our deepest sympathy and prayers to the family and friends of Carl Noll, brother of Vic Noll.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalm 147 vs. 3

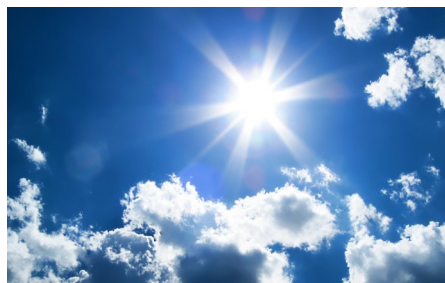
Do you wonder how to put a loved one, friend, neighbor, or yourself on the prayer list?

Simply email the church office at office@gsic-ct.org. If you would like a prayer card sent to your loved one, friend or neighbor, please include the full name and address. Prayer requests may also be made by phone (203-268-7596) and will be included by the church office.

For privacy, only the first name of each individual will be listed.

Do you have something you would like to discuss with Pastor Doug?

Should you be in need of pastoral care, please contact Pastor Doug Ryniewicz by cell phone (860-595-9560—text if you like!) or by his email (dearynos@gmail.com).



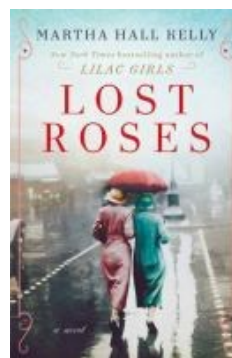
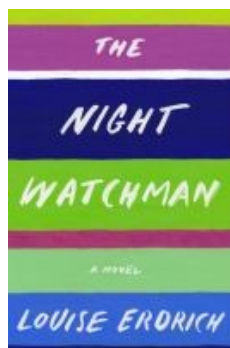
Adult Learning Forum

"Catching Up" catching up on very new and sometimes very ancient developments in Christian wisdom and understanding. The brain gets renewal by encountering novelty. The body and spirit are renewed by being physically together and sitting outside in the sunshine!

11 a.m. on Tuesdays - May 11, 18, 25 you can come to any one or all. Wear layers.

Led by: Pastor Doug

Upcoming Events



The Good Shepherd Book Club is meeting on **June 1st at 1:00 p.m.** when we will discuss "The Night Watchman" by Louise Erdrich. In July we will discuss "The Lost Roses" by Martha Hall Kelly. We will outdoors weather permitting or indoors if needed. We welcome new members!

News from the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

*Leveraging hope,
changing lives.*



Register for our Spring Fling Virtual Event "Be Our Guest"!

This virtual event will be held on **TUESDAY, MAY 25th at 7:00 PM!!!**

Until COVID is well behind us, we continue to put safety first, and our Spring Fling will be via zoom, with a virtual auction, where people will bid on ways to support our work. (You can also donate at any time on our [DONATE](#) page and select VIRTUAL SPRING FLING!)

[It's Free to Register Here!](#)

Janus Center Partners with Boys and Girls Club!



The Janus Center is happy to announce that we'll be partnering with the Boys & Girls Club in Bridgeport this summer starting June 21st - August 20th for the second year in a row. From our work last year, we are taking our collaboration a step further and we will be working predominately with sixth graders as well as the middle school cohort for 6 weeks. We are looking forward in discussing school readiness, mental health, overall health and wellness, personal safety, and family dynamics all in a group setting. We hope to partner with community partners to bring forth life skills, problem solving techniques, and inspire our youth with professional speakers from various professions.

If you are willing to come and speak about your professional role to the youth, please contact AdileneGarcia@ccgb.org for more information!

Reaching Out, Serving Others:



Shepherd's Pantry

The need is great!

The Monroe Food Pantry provides emergency food assistance for needy individuals and families in Monroe. Their clients receive one week's worth of food per month and they serve more than 100 households per month.

The Social Ministry and Community Outreach Committee invites you to contribute items to the Shepherd's Pantry located in the narthex. You may drop them off on Sunday mornings. The items are delivered to the Monroe Food Pantry once a month.

The Food Pantry is looking for following items to fill out their inventory:

- canned fruit - apple sauce, mandarin oranges, peaches, pears, pineapple
- canned vegetables (regular AND low sodium) - beets, creamed corn, French cut green beans, olives, potatoes, spinach, Sauerkraut, sweet potatoes
- canned beans (regular AND low sodium) - cannellini, pinto
- baked beans - regular, pork, vegetarian, chili with beans, vegetarian chili, refried beans, vegetarian refried beans
- broth/stock (regular and low sodium) - chicken, beef, vegetable
- canned tomatoes (regular and low sodium) - diced, crushed, whole, puree/sauce, paste
- jarred pasta sauce
- whole wheat egg noodles
- Ramen - beef, shrimp
- baking supplies - bread crumbs, brownie mix, cake mix, flour, sugar
- packaged foods - Hamburger Helper, instant potatoes, Knorr pasta/rice sides, Pastaroni, Ricearoni
- salad dressing - balsamic, ranch, Thousand Island, Italian, blue cheese
- condiments - cooking oil, ketchup, mayo, yellow/brown mustard, pancake syrup, taco/hot sauce
- crunchy peanut butter
- beverages - black tea (regular and decaf), ground coffee (regular and decaf), hot chocolate, low sodium V8, Ensure, shelf stable milk
- paper towels
- personal hygiene products - deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, conditioner, menstrual pads, bar soap, facial wash, razors, handsoap
- household cleaning items

Thank you for your support!



Food for Summerfield

There is an ongoing need for nutritious food for the kids at Summerfield. Protein is especially needed. GSLC Council has challenged the congregation to provide funds for the purchase of nutritious food. GSLC will match donations from members for up to \$250 per month. Pastor Gaston has told us that \$500 per month would meet their nutritious food needs. If you wish to donate please write a check to GSLC with the notation "Food For Summerfield" or place cash in the Summerfield box.

Happy Birthday

The current month's birthday listing is posted on the bulletin board outside of the Pastor's office. If your birthday is not listed, please contact the church office and the files will be updated. We do not want to miss anyone's birthday.



Church Council thanks Renee Shoop and Billie Flaherty for the clean-up and organization of the kitchen, narthex and hallways.

Church Council thanks Dave Wang who took a tree down and a neighbor is going to take the wood away.

Treasurer's Report - March 2021									
Contributions	March		Actual	YTD Bdg't	Var	Expenses	March		YTD
	Actual	Bdg't					Actual	Bdg't	
Pledged	18,806	14,862	44,761	46,586	(1,825)	Pastoral Ministries	8,270	8,458	24,855
Unpledged	1,020	1,486	1,706	4,659	(2,953)	Mortgage	0	0	0
Prior Year	0	0	1,135	3,943	(2,808)	Music & Worship	3,336	3,454	10,185
Loose Offerings	45	247	148	740	(592)	Benevolence	2,001	1,715	4,870
Church School	0	19	0	56	(56)	Property	1,122	290	3,867
Lent & Easter	100	200	195	200	(5)	Office	2,130	2,197	6,633
Other	0	123	745	660	86	Utilities	378	2,033	2,477
Thanksgiving	0	0	0	0	0	Christian Educ.	254	31	254
Advent/Christmas	0	0	6	0	6	Interim Pastor	0	0	0
						Evangelism	166	23	166
						Youth	0	0	0
						Stewardship	0	0	0
						Insurance	506	526	1,517
						Altar Guild	0	37	0
						Social Ministry	0	0	0
Total	\$19,971	\$16,936	\$48,696	\$56,843	(\$8,147)	Total	18,163	18,763	54,824
Variance	\$3,035		(\$8,147)			Variance	(\$600)		(\$3,794)
	Actual	Bdg't	Actual	Bdg't	Var		Dec '20	Feb '21	Var
Surplus / (Deficit)	\$1,808	(\$1,827)	(\$6,128)	(\$1,776)	(\$4,352)	Cash/Investments*	126,523	55,112	(\$71,411)
Future Seminarian Fund	19,273					Mortgage	68,616	-	(\$68,616)
Capital Impr Fund	11,652					Campership	13,802	13,826	\$24
Bathroom/Sidewalk Repair	2,334					Equity Share	77,900	77,900	\$0
Parking Lot Fund	29,616					Memorial	11,300	14,781	\$3,481
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	875								
Music Supplies	1,034								

* Excludes Memorial, Exchange, Intern, Pastoral Housing and Campership Funds

March Summary

Contributions were \$3,035 favorable to Budget for the month and are \$8,147 unfavorable YTD

\$48,696 March 2021

\$65,931 March 2020 (Excl \$10,000 from 2019)

\$67,215 March 2019

\$52,573 March 2018

Expenses for the month were \$600 below budget, as unfavorable snow removal offset favorable oil expenses

Surplus for the month was \$3,035

Deficit for the year is \$6,128, \$4,352 unfavorable to budget



Church Council has announced the Annual Church Picnic and Outdoor Worship Service will be held at Wolfe Park in Monroe on Sunday, June 13th. Details will follow.



Sunday, May 9 — Sixth Sunday of Easter

Prayer of the Day: O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

First Reading: Acts 10:44-48

Psalm 98

Second Reading: 1 John 5:1-6

Gospel: John 15:9-17



1 JOHN 5:1-6

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

JOHN 15:9-17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.