

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, October 28, 2020

Here are responses to last week's Question for Reflection: What has Worship at Good Shepherd meant to you since March and the pandemic? Thank you to those who responded.

--- The Outdoor Service; meaningful sermons, singers and instrumental music and the extra work done by all involved in planning and carrying out of the Service... This has contributed so very much to good mental health and continued community in such a confining and stressful time. Thank you all for keeping the GSLC community together!

----- The Recorded Services! Thank you all so much who do them! The sermon on Forgiveness was especially meaningful to me!

----- I have loved Outdoor Worship! It has been a reminder that Worship is not the building; it is the people and the Message. I found it decidedly moving to be in the breeze, under the clouds with the sun on my face...I hope even when we don't have to, we continue to worship outdoors from time to time.

----- I enjoy the online Service as I can watch when I can, mornings have not been my best time of day. I can stop and start as I need to and I can sing as loud as I want! When I watch the online Service, I am doing so with my community and I imagine that they are right there with me.

----- being able to continue worship with our Good Shepherd family and be reminded by Pastor that the word of God is ever constant, especially during these upside down times, has been a much needed source of comfort, reassurance and relative "normalcy". Tuning in to YouTube for Sunday morning service those early months of isolation was a nourishing and uplifting way to end the week and start another. Then, with the opening of outdoor worship, another missing element was added to the depth of my experience, connection! How wonderful to feel the power of Matthew's verse, "Wherever 2 or more are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them". What a blessing to be in that lovely outdoor space, surrounded by nature and hearing the Word of God in the company of our masked fellow worshippers! Joy in the morning!

This coming Sunday is the Feast of All Saints And our LAST OUTDOOR WORSHIP

Our custom is to write the names of our own beloved dead/now sanctified in God's own New Life on a large paper. As you may recall, this paper is then placed on the altar and Holy Communion is celebrated on it. For those of you who worship with the recorded Service email the names of people that you would like us to write for you on that prayer paper. You may email them to Nina or me **prior to and including this Thursday morning! For those of you who come Sunday we have arranged a Covid safe method of writing names at Worship.**

LV,

PD

Council Highlights October 19, 2020

Attendance : Meeting was held on Zoom beginning at 7:35 pm. Present: Pastor Doug, Donna Duessel, Barbara Abraham, Trudi Black, Tricia Bobowick, Thelma Cleland, Jeff Jackson, Brian Immel, Riley Immel, Renee Shoop and Karen Merrick. Absent: None

Reports

Finance: Barbara Abraham reported summary of year to date church finances is doing fine. Expenses are favorable to budget by \$706. Tim will be preparing and filing the Payroll Protection Program Loan forgiveness upon approval of council. Barbara moved to have the Finance Report approved; seconded by Jeff Jackson. All voted Aye to approve.

Council further discussed keeping June Mora in Church's payroll through October 2020, given the federal stimulus funds received; motion made to approve by Jeff Jackson, Brian Immel seconded it, all voted- Aye.

Council discussed Contributions were down for August, but better than previous Augusts. Church should be OK through 2020, but budget for next year may be challenging. Finance Committee asked Tim Carlson to assess whether Church can refinance mortgage to improve on budget for 2021. Tim will be working on that.

Pastor- Pastor Doug indicated that the sale of his house fell through and he has taken it off the market for the winter. Cost of rental properties were not convenient at this time and not much available. He thanks people from the church for helping him with cleaning the garage.

Pastor Doug also discussed what we as a church have created in view of the pandemic such as outdoor services, and what people want to keep doing. He mentioned issues with membership, including, that some members are afraid that the videotaping services will discontinue once we go back inside. He has reached out to other congregations and advised that some pastors feel that recorded services will not go away. He also mentioned that some people that were not currently attending are watching on video and have reached out to him.

Confirmation – A long discussion was had regarding confirmation – both confirming the students who attended confirmation during the past two years and the meaning of confirmation going forward. Pastor Doug is concerned that confirmation means graduation from church for whole families. Further discussion tabled for December meeting.

Worship and Music –

Key discussions:

Drive-in church. Committee agreed to have Drive-in Church on Nov. 8. This will be the first experiment.

Property Committee has found a system that removes 99+% of influenza virus that should work for the corona virus; system costs about \$3,000 and an anonymous donor will fund the system, includes project to purchase and install. Donna Duessel indicated a Reme Halo system was selected upon recommendation from Rural Fuels in order to improve ventilation. The Church's existing ventilation system fans are not big enough to install HEPA filters. Property Committee believes it is a reasonable technology. System to be install in Sanctuary, and with the practice of social distancing, safety sanitation protocols, reservations for services; having multiple services, the church will be able to enjoy indoor services and Christmas. System will take about a month to install. REME Halo system must run with the fan system on. The REME Halo System reduces the risk of airborne viruses; it does not eliminate the risk. All other safety measure would continue: mask wearing, social distancing, no hymnal use. M/S made to approve REME Halo System installation. All Ayes. Installation to occur possibly in November, perhaps before Dec. 1.

Property – Council thanks Jeff Jackson, Bob McFarland, Dave Wang and Mickey Pellela for all facilities work.

Stewardship – Stewardship Drive Letter sent out.

Council of Churches - Donna Duessel delivered Quilts to Summerfield and Billie Flaherty brought dress shirt donations also. Pastor Gaston was very grateful

Old Business

Coronavirus Response - CARES Act – \$21,200 received—Council discussed that Tim Carlson will be preparing and filing the Payroll Protection Program Loan Forgiveness Form obtained from Newtown Savings Bank and upon approval from Council. Motion made and seconded, and Council approved (All Ayes) that Tim Carlson is authorized, on behalf of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, to file Form 3508S to seek forgiveness of our \$21,100 PPP Loan.

How are we doing? What should we be doing? Council Members to continue Reach-out program to members on their list

Book Club request to meeting inside. Currently Club members have met outside or Zoom about 10-12 people. Donna Duessel asked if they can wait until new air system is installed. Members are concerned with attracting new members to attend.

Credit Card – Newtown Savings Bank has approved and issued a credit cards to GSL. Nina Furnes, Peg Wesche and Donna Duessel have cards.

Safe Church Policy – update, required by new insurance – Donna Duessel to work on draft this week. Kristen Baron, Tricia Bobowick and DD worked on it back in July

Videographer – in process of hiring Reed, Reed to deliver papers on Thursday 10/22/2020

Summerfield Partnership – Routine giving to provide protein – will kick-off in November Budget

Pastor Health Insurance – BA presented the need to select a plan by 10/31 to cover PD upon termination of his wife's coverage in first half of 2021. BA indicated Synod has three options, Gold, Platinum and Silver. Gold and platinum are prohibiting to our Church Budget. ELCA recommends Silver Plus plan of \$1,179/month, bronze is less and not suitable. Silver is \$13K per anum with HAS; one can contribute \$50 or \$75 contribution to IRS limit of about \$3900 for an individual plan, which includes dental. ELCA recommends 80:20 cost sharing with PD. Barbara made motion to approve recommendation; seconded - All Ayes, PD abstained.

Fall Planning

Sunday School – DD indicated that working with parents, kids send cards to veterans.

New Business:

Property:

RFG REME-Halo System for Sanctuary Air Handling \$2,891.20 – anonymous donation will cover the cost; installation in November. Rural Fuels would install. See above discussion in Worship & Music.

Window Replacement – Windows in Vic's office need to be replaced at a cost \$1,500. A proposal to use bathroom/sidewalk fund – Dave Wang spoke with the family associated with that memorial fund and they were okay with using the funds to replace the windows. M/S to approve. All Ayes

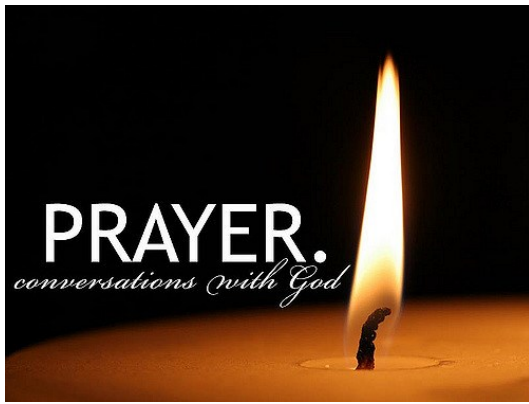
Audit Report – Paul Schwarz's letter attached. No adverse findings. M/S to approve. All Ayes

Annual Meeting December 13th – Council chose Dec. 13 enough room for 40 people, others by zoom, logistics to be worked on. Discussed gathering a Quorum. Need reservations for annual meeting. Donna Duessel to look in constitution to confirm if proxy vote and if meeting can be delayed.

Calendar: Outdoor Church – weekly; will try drive-in church in November 8

Next meeting: November 16th – Budget – Tim Carlson to attend

Respectfully submitted,
Thelma Cleland



A Community of Prayer

For those in need of healing and comfort:

Members and Friends of the Congregation: Tim, Joan, Marie, Audrey, Elizabeth, Gordon, Sarah, Timmy, Scarlet, Jason, Brian, David, Tricia.

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 Anna With Ulrich, grandmother of Donna Lindsay.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalms 147 vs. 3

Pour out your Spirit on all people living with illness, as well as their loved ones and caregivers. Help them to know that you claim them as your own and deliver them from fear and pain; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord. Amen.

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).

Weekly Offering

As worship services are online and/or outdoor for the near future, if you have a chance, please submit your offering to help with our expenses. Thank you for your contribution!

There are different ways to contribute. You may bring it with you to the outdoor worship service or you may mail it if you are worshipping online with us or you may use your bank's online checking and have the bank issue the check and mail it—it's most often a free service offered by banks. Check with your bank to see if this works for you. In addition, our Finance Committee is working on implementing online contributions by this fall.

Let us know if you have any questions, we are always happy to help.

If you would like a current financial statement that details what you have given to date and what you have pledged, please call or email the church office and Roy Remlin will be happy to send one out to you.

Reaching Out, Serving Others:

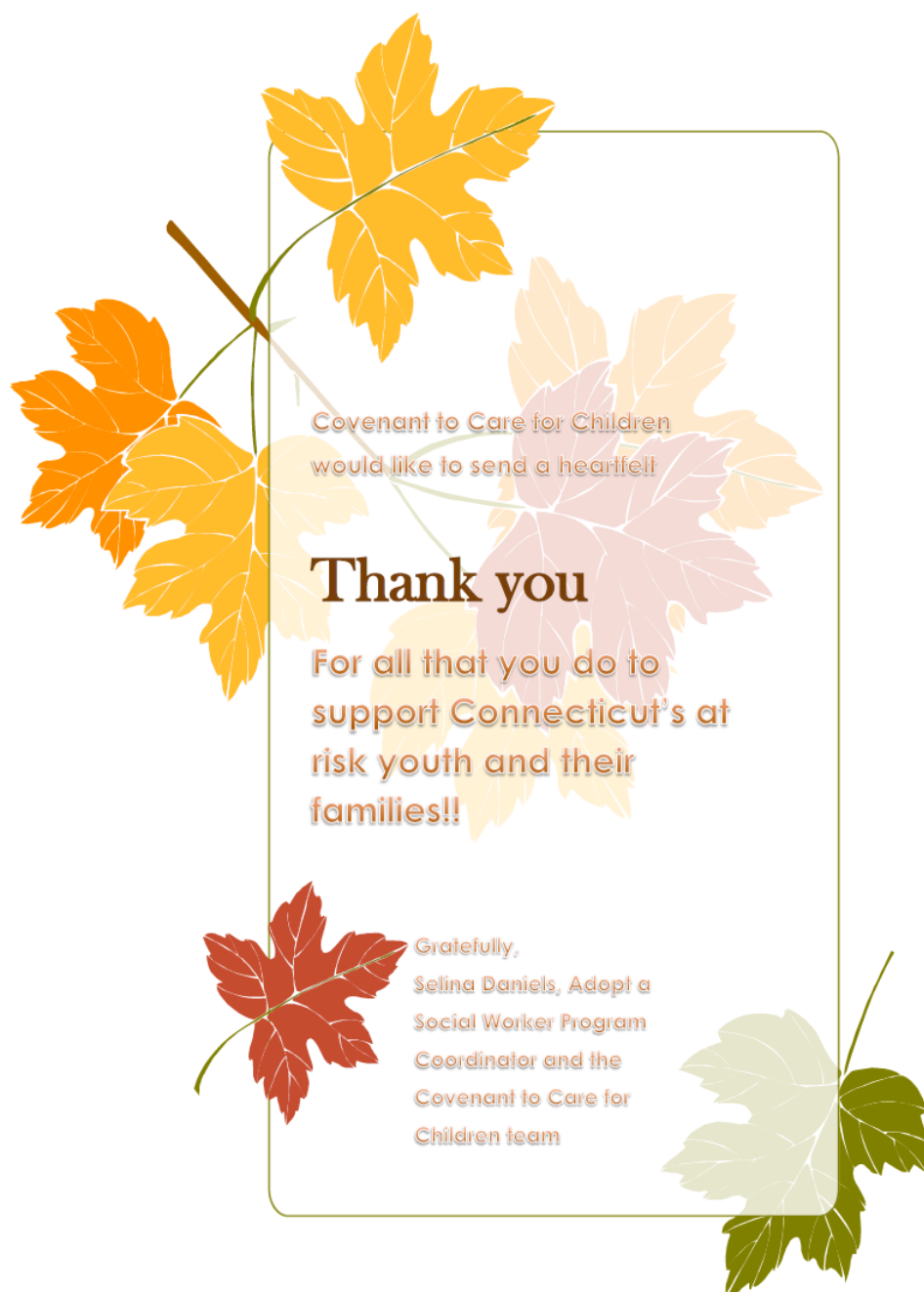
Covenant to Care Holiday Plans

Like everything else, our outreach for Covenant to Care has been affected by COVID 19. Instead of providing name tags for Thanksgiving and Christmas gifts, we are being asked to consider anonymous donations of Stop 'n Shop gift cards for Thanksgiving and unwrapped toys for Christmas. These will be matched to the needs within the Covenant to Care organization.

If you would like to donate toward Thanksgiving meals, please mail a Stop 'n Shop gift card to the church office and designate it as "For Covenant to Care". Cards should be received at church before Wednesday, Nov. 18, when they will be picked up. Details to come re Christmas plans.

Our sincere gratitude for your past support and for whatever you can provide to help meet needs which have only increased during this challenging time. Thank you!

Jane Fieberts



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.

To join us for Worship in person: On November 1st, we will have the Outdoor Worship Service at 10:00 a.m. On November 8th, we will have Drive In Church (details will be coming soon). We are committed to our goal of having no spread of the contagion due to our gatherings. With this in mind, we ask you to observe these *updated* guidelines:

- 1) If you do not feel well or if you do not feel comfortable, please stay at home. The service is available online for those who do not join in person.
- 2) **Please put on your face covering before leaving your vehicle. You will be expected to wear it throughout your visit.**
- 3) Please bring: a lawn chair, face covering, and portion of bread for communion for every person in your group.
- 4) Please plan to arrive between 9:30-9:45. There will be a table at the entrance where you may leave your offering.
- 5) Please choose a spot at least six feet from other family groups. Your chair should be positioned so that your feet are on the white line in front of you. Please stay seated until worship begins.
- 6) Please refrain from unnecessary movement through the worship space to allow everyone to get set up while maintaining social distancing.
- 7) Please understand that singing has been shown to be one of the riskiest activities at this time. We will NOT be singing during this service. Please hum softly or mouth the words without using your voice.
- 8) We will pass the Peace without physical contact.
- 9) For Holy Communion, you will be asked to get out the bread you brought with you. Pastor will consecrate it from the altar and signal you when you should eat it. No wine will be available. As Lutherans, we believe that Christ is present to us in, with, and under both the bread and wine, so in times such as this when it is not safe to share a common cup, the sacrament is fully available and complete in the consecrated bread.
- 10) When the service has ended, please do not linger to socialize; go directly to your vehicle and depart.
- 11) The church is now open if you need to use the bathroom. Please use the designated bathroom and sign in to help us ensure the bathroom is cleaned regularly.
- 12) In the event of inclement weather, the service will be cancelled. You may assume that if there are thunderstorms or torrential rain in the forecast, there will be no service. Check our Facebook page and Website for updates if the weather seems questionable.



As a reminder, Daylight Savings Time ends on Sunday, November 1st in the early morning, so be sure to set your clocks back on Saturday night.



Reformation Sunday Outdoor Worship attendees in front of the burning bush!

Upcoming Events



The Book Club met outdoors in October. On November 3rd at **1:00 p.m.** we will discuss "The One" by John Marrs. We welcome new members!



RAISING THE BAR -BECOMING ANTI-RACIST JOIN THE MONTHLY DISCUSSIONS

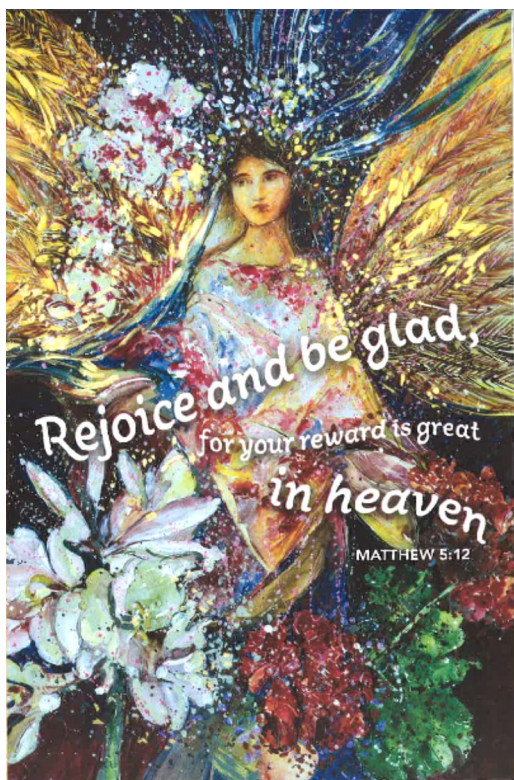
Our Anti-Racism Work Begins a Whole New Chapter!

The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport's 5-part series discussing Jemar Tisby's *Color of Compromise* drew over 180 participants this summer! Our Raising the BAR (Becoming Anti-Racist) team led deep and thoughtful discussions each night, and many participants have told stories of small but significant transformations in their perspectives and understanding. Now we invite you to join a monthly conversation, on the 3rd Thursday evening each month.

[Click here to register](#)



Almighty God, you have knit your people together in one communion in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Readings for Sunday, November 1, 2020

All Saints Day

First Reading: Revelation 7:9-17

Psalm 34:1-10,22

Second Reading: 1 John 3:1-3

Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.