

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, December 30, 2020



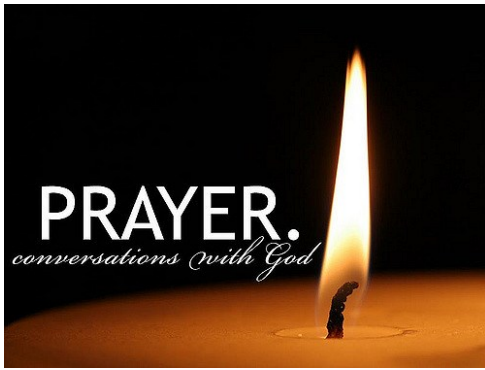
Fast Away the Old Year Passes Fa La La La La
(Not fast enough 2020)

I've heard or read this idea many times, that we can't get rid of this year fast enough because "it" has brought a boat load of troubles and suffering to so many. It's a human metaphor of course. We all know objectively that a given year does not come packed with and carrying disastrous things. As the bumper sticker says "Stuff Happens," that's the universe we dwell in as creatures. Yet sometimes a metaphor helps us get a kind of handle on the unexpected and the difficult. This week, in the Season of Christmas, a New Year begins. Objectively, I know the new year hasn't been preloaded with good stuff and bad stuff. It hasn't been loaded with anything. But I do actively hope that it will be a year where safety and joy abound in healing ways. The traditional gospel reading this week has been formed into an ancient night prayer of the Christian church. It is a line spoken by the old man in the temple upon seeing the Christ Child. I offer it to you as a prayer to focus on as the new year approaches.

"In the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on High will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke 1:78 - 79

Happy New Year

LV
PD



A Community of Prayer

For those in need of healing and comfort:

Members and Friends of the Congregation: Lauren, Ray, Tim, Joan, Marie, Audrey, Elizabeth, Gordon, Sarah, Miriam, Scarlet, Jason, Brian, David, Tricia, Cate, Cecilio, Donna.

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.

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.

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@gsllc-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).

Devotional for the week of December 27th, 2020

After hours of watching the news on television or scrolling through social media posts on screens big or small, your eyes can get tired. They get worn out not only from staring at the blue light of screens, but also from the unending stream of bad news. You might go to the newspaper, your favorite news channel, or Twitter with hopes of finding something good happening. Too often, you find the overwhelming problems of the world. It gets old. Your eyes get tired of seeing it all.

Two wise, faithful elders were in the temple praying and eagerly awaiting the good news that God had always promised to bring. They were filled with expectation and hope. But they were getting quite old, and after a long time of hoping, hopes can diminish. Faith can dwindle; eyes can get tired. Yet somehow, Simeon and Anna kept coming to the temple each day to pray and to wait.

Then the day came. The Spirit had guided Simeon. Anna had been sustained by her faith. Their old, tired eyes stayed open to see God's saving acts in plain sight: Jesus was born to be the Savior and Messiah. Simeon says: "My eyes have seen your salvation!" (Luke 2:30). Anna gives thanks and prophesies about the redemption Jesus brings (Luke 2:38). In seeing God's faithfulness, their hope is affirmed and renewed.

Many faithful people wait a long, long time to see what God will do to continue the story of salvation. Many elders among us have lived through trying times, never giving up hope, never ceasing to pray, always expecting that God will be faithful. In Christ, our old, tired eyes have been refreshed. All the bad news that wears us out and ages our bodies and minds is met with the good news of Jesus: God brings healing and forgiveness to all. Our eyes have seen God's salvation!

Devotional message and art based on the readings for December 27th, reprinted from sundaysandseasons.com.

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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: This Sunday, January 3rd at 10:00 am. We will have Drive In Church, weather permitting (If it is a steady rain, the service is cancelled).

This is how it works:

- Pastor Doug will be on a platform at the rear (east edge) of the large, main parking area.
- Cars should park facing that direction (east – towards the wooded area) with taller vehicles closer to the main road. This will allow shorter vehicles visibility by parking in front of the taller ones.
- The radio frequency of the broadcast is **FM 94.9**. Please tune your car radio to that station to hear the worship service.
- You should stay in your vehicle and keep your windows closed.
- Bring your own bread (as you did for Outdoor Worship) for communion.
- You must wear a mask if you exit your vehicle.
- Other recommendations of social distancing apply when you are outside your vehicle.



Offering Envelope Boxes for 2021

The boxes for the new year are on the table in the narthex. If you attend the Drive In Service, please stop in and pick yours up. If you would like to pick it up during the week, please make an appointment to stop by during office hours - Monday through Thursday, 9 am to noon. If those times are not convenient for you, just call the church office at 203-268-7596 or send an email so that other arrangements can be made.

Treasurer's Report - November 2020										
Contributions	November		Actual	YTD Bdg	Var	Expenses	November		Actual	YTD Bdg
	Actual	Bdg					Actual	Bdg		
Pledged	15,608	19,331	165,585	165,385	200	Pastoral Ministries	7,623	7,890	84,279	86,794
Unpledged	1,710	2,033	10,820	16,539	(5,719)	Mortgage	1,130	1,130	12,425	12,425
Prior Year	0	0	10,805	0	10,805	Music & Worship	5,532	3,188	35,458	34,281
Loose Offerings	0	288	2,484	2,096	388	Benevolence	2,216	2,317	20,922	19,720
Church School	0	19	645	206	439	Property	548	680	5,012	7,896
Lent & Easter	0	0	960	1,937	(977)	Office	2,292	2,186	23,575	24,694
Other	0	163	5,115	2,695	2,420	Utilities	314	1,174	7,388	10,346
Thanksgiving	280	140	280	140	140	Christian Educ.	0	23	20	402
Advent/Christmas	60	200	60	200	(140)	Interim Pastor	0	0	0	0
						Evangelism	0	0	160	84
						Youth	0	0	0	0
						Stewardship	0	0	0	50
						Insurance	523	475	5,616	5,224
						Altar Guild	0	71	267	779
						Social Ministry	0	0	0	0
Total	\$17,658	\$22,174	\$196,754	\$189,198	\$7,556	Total	20,176	19,134	195,121	202,695
Variance	(\$4,516)		\$7,556			Variance	\$1,042		(\$7,574)	
	Actual	Bdg	Actual	Bdg	Var		Dec'19	Nov '20	Var	
Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$2,518)	\$3,040	\$1,633	(\$13,496)	\$15,129	Cash/Investments*	76,053	98,859	\$22,807	
Future Seminarian Fund	19,227					Mortgage	94,159	85,525	(\$8,634)	
Capital Impr Fund	11,791					Pastoral Housing	29,115	29,423	\$307	
Bathroom/Sidewalk Repair	2,334					Equity Share	77,900	77,900	\$0	
Parking Lot Fund	29,616					PPP Loan	-	21,100	\$21,100	
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	625									
Music Supplies	1,034									

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

November Summary

Contributions were \$4,516 unfavorable to Budget

Year-to-Date contributions are \$2,444 unfavorable to Budget (excluding the \$10,000 offering from 2019 received in 2020)

Expenses for the month were \$1,042 unfavorable to Budget given \$2,000 catchup payment to videographer offset by no oil expense

Year-to-Date expenses are \$7,574 favorable to budget due to favorable snow removal, favorable oil expenses and budget phasing

Year-to-Date Surplus is \$1,633 versus a Budget Deficit of \$13,496

\$8,964 Surplus Budgeted in December....Full Year Surplus of approximately \$10,000

\$21,100 Payroll Protection Plan Loan was Received (Application has been filed to have it forgiven)

Upcoming Events

The Book Club is meeting on January 5th at **1:00 p.m.** we will discuss "The Indigo Girl" by Natasha Boyd. In February, we will discuss "The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek" by Kim Michele Richardson. We will either meet via Zoom or possibly indoors using the new handler system if the infection rates are low. We welcome new members!

In 2020 we read:

January: The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd

February: The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian by Sherman Alexie

March: The Lost Girls of Paris by Pam Jenoff

April: The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls

May: The Oysterville Sewing Circle by Susan Wiggs

June: Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides

July: Killers of the Flower Moon by David Grann

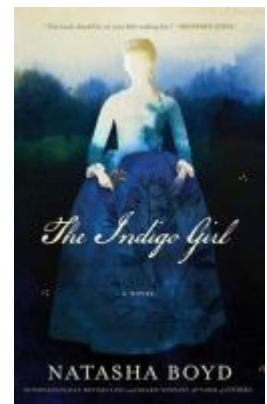
August: The Last Days of Dogtown by Anita Diamant

September: Mrs. Lincoln's Dressmaker by Jennifer Chiaverini

October: Widows of Malabar Hill by Sujata Massey

November: The One by John Marrs

December: The Secrets We Kept by Lara Prescott



Reaching Out, Serving Others:



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.



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

Dear friends,

Christmas greetings to you and yours.

Did you see the email below? I want to make sure you received this note from the Rev. Daniel Rift about ELCA World Hunger, our church's ministry to end hunger and poverty. Thanks to generous friends of our church, right now we have an opportunity to make our gifts go even further. This year, as so many people are facing increased hardship due to COVID-19, this is especially important.

Between now and the end of the year, every gift to ELCA World Hunger will be matched, dollar for dollar, until we reach \$100,000.

If you have already made a gift toward this matching challenge, thank you. You stand shoulder to shoulder with so many others who are working to end hunger and poverty around the world in Jesus Christ's name.

If you have not yet made a gift, please prayerfully consider supporting this important ministry today.

Thank you.

Peace and blessings,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



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



God of mercy and grace, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. Amen. (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 64)

Dear friend,

A young mother is laid off from her job in the restaurant industry as the pandemic hits, and the wages and tips she relies on to feed her children have vanished.

A farming family reels from the loss of a father to COVID-19. His labor provided for them, and now they're grieving and not sure how they'll make ends meet.

A young man who had moved far from home to find work in a factory had his employer abruptly shut its doors. With transportation shut down, he begins a long walk home without food or water.

These are just a few of the millions of hardships that people around the world have faced this year. Estimates tell us that nearly half of Americans have lost their jobs or are economically insecure, and that global hunger and poverty will increase at least 12% by the end of the year.

But you can make a difference. And right now, your gifts can go twice as far.

[Between now and Dec. 31, every gift made to ELCA World Hunger will be matched, dollar for dollar, until we reach \\$100,000! Will you give today?](#)

The ministry of ELCA World Hunger was ready to meet the year's challenges, participating creatively and courageously in the renewing work God is doing, even in the most difficult times. In more than 60 countries including the United States, ELCA World Hunger is working to end hunger and poverty. From food pantries to water wells, health care to advocacy, gifts to ELCA World Hunger are at work.

This is part of Jesus Christ's call on our church. But to answer, we need you.

Give Now

Thank you,

The Rev. Daniel Rift

Director, ELCA World Hunger and Lutheran Disaster Response Funding

P.S. If you give by the 11:59 p.m. Central deadline on Dec. 31, all gifts will be matched, dollar for dollar, until we reach \$100,000. Gifts received before this date are also tax-deductible for 2020 as allowed by law.



3 ways to give



Give online anytime by 11:59 p.m. Central time on Dec. 31.



**Call 800-638-3522
Monday through Friday,
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Central time.**



**Make checks payable to
"ELCA World Hunger"
and mail to:
ELCA
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009**

Please write "matching challenge" on the memo line. Checks must be postmarked on or before Dec. 31 in order to be matched and tax-deductible for 2020.

Sunday, January 3 - The Second Sunday of Christmas

Prayer of the Day: Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, 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, January 3, 2021

The Second Sunday of Christmas

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14 or Sirach 24:1-12

Psalm 147:12-20 or Wisdom 10:15-21

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

Gospel: John 1:[1-9] 10-18



[In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.] He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.