

# 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, September 30, 2020



#### **Bible Reading Way Down In Pandemic**

The Christian Century reports research that reveals personal reading of the bible has significantly decreased during the pandemic. Perhaps this surprises you. I'm wondering what your own personal practice is with reading the scriptures. It certainly isn't a requirement yet it is a 2,000 year old recommended practice for the followers of Jesus. A pastor friend told me that he just read the bible cover to cover. He's in his forties. The last time he did this was in his twenties. He found some parts mind numbingly boring, some parts really distasteful, some parts useless and confusing and some parts very moving. Neither of us recommends this practice, it's likely to be a disaster and you'll quit after Numbers or Deuteronomy for sure. Besides it's not how many times you've been through the bible, it's how many times has the bible been through you! Yet, I DO want to encourage the reading of scripture as a devotional practice. Here is what I recommend: read Genesis and Exodus. That's the basis of everything. The basic story. Read 1 and 2 Kings. Great stories that read like a novel. Very human, sometimes heart-breaking stuff. Flip through the psalms, find one that calls out to you and read it slowly. Enjoy like poetry. The four Gospels are a great read. Probably don't do one right after the other. Vary them with the other books I've recommended. Ruth and Esther are nice stories as well. What to skip until a bible study or a Master's degree comes your way?... Skip Daniel, Revelation, Chronicles! For an introduction to the prophets start with Amos. Maybe stop there. After reading, note your thoughts and impressions. Don't get all serious about having to understand everything. It's not theology or doctrine...yet, it's STORY. Enjoy it like that. Let me know how it is going. Lutheran teaching is that not every part of the bible is as important or even is important. It doesn't weigh in all the same. It didn't get snuck in from heaven through a ceiling tile. The common themes of what it is to be human and in touch with Mystery Present are the fruit of your reading. Also, don't read the bible as W.C. Fields did ... "to look for loopholes!"

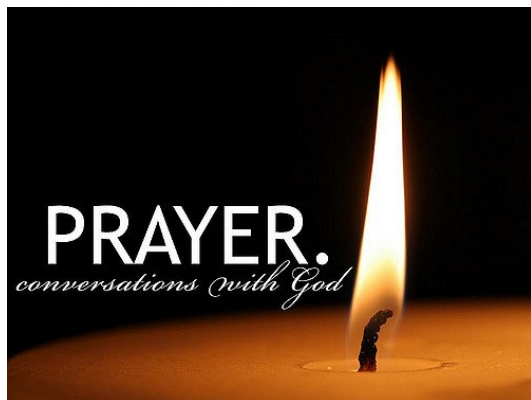
LV  
PD

**This Sunday morning and throughout October, we have changed the time for the Outdoor Worship Service to 10:00 a.m. to help keep us warm.** 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 9-9:15. 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.

Please remember that we are all handling these unprecedented times in the best ways we know how given our unique circumstances. Some will feel more comfortable than others, some face greater risks than others. Please be respectful of these personal differences and lift each other up as we move into gathering in community again. We are taking a conservative approach so that as many people as possible may feel safe in joining us. Please follow any directions given by our ushers.



## A Community of Prayer

*For those in need of healing and comfort:*

Members and Friends of the Congregation: Ingeborg, Bill, Vicki, Peg, Marie, Karen, Pat, Billie, Audrey, Catherine, Elizabeth, Ray, Gordon, Miriam, Sarah, Chuck, Timmy, Bruce, Karl, Kendra, Mary Helen, Carolyn, Irma, Patricia, Cate, Misty, Julia, Sydne, Anna, Roy, Judy, Marilyn, Scarlet, Jason, Brian.

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@gscl-ct.org](mailto:office@gscl-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?**

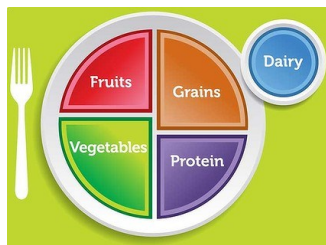
*Should you be in need of pastoral care, please contact Pastor Doug Ryniewicz by cell phone (860-595-9560—text if you like!) or by his email ([dearynos@gmail.com](mailto:dearynos@gmail.com)).*



Let us pray in thanksgiving for and safe travels to Gary and Liz Scrofani who are moving away to North Carolina. They were a blessing to us for too short a time. Happy Trails!

## **Reaching Out, Serving Others:**

### **Kids at Summerfield Methodist Need Our Help**



Pastor Gaston has made us aware of a critical need for nutritious food for the kids at Summerfield. Protein is especially needed. GSLC Council has decided to challenge 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. We are hoping to begin the program in October as the need is critical. Pledge card, specific envelopes and a box for directed contributions will be available in the coming weeks. If you wish to donate without making a pledge, please write a check to GSLC with the notation "Food For Summerfield" or place cash in the Summerfield box. More detailed information on the program will be available shortly.



## Summerfield UMC School Collection Update

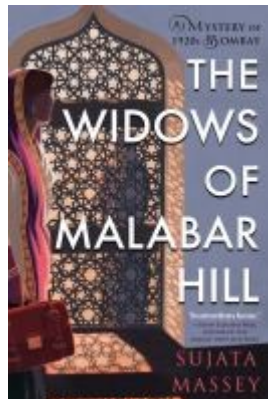
This is the last of the school and food that went to Summerfield last week. They also received a check from us for \$3,000 to maintain the school supplies throughout the coming year.

Please keep a 17 year old young man in your prayers. His initials are AW. He was severely beaten by other young "men" because of his refusal to join a gang. Pastor Gaston is deeply involved in the situation and asked for our prayers.

*Trudi and Larry Black*



## Upcoming Events



**The Book Club** met outdoors in September! Our next meeting will also be outdoors, please bring your own chair and sit socially distant from each other. On October 6th at **1:00 p.m.** we will discuss "The Widows of Malabar Hill" by Sujata Massey. In November, we will be discussing "The One" by John Marrs. We welcome new members!





## Council Highlights

September 21, 2020

Attendance : Meeting was held on Zoom beginning at 7:30 pm. Present: Donna Duessel, Barbara Abraham, Trudi Black, Tricia Bobowick, Thelma Cleland, Jeff Jackson, Brian Immel, Riley Immel, Renee Shoop and Karen Merrick. Absent: Pastor Doug

### Reports

**Finance:** Finance Report below. Barbara Abraham reported the Church is doing extremely well. Contributions are up without PPP loan counted. Still waiting for form to be available to file for forgiveness. She indicated \$3,409 favorable to budget for the year, excluding \$10,000 contribution for 2019 that was made in early 2020. Contributions are up. **Thank you to Congregation.**

Pastor Doug is in the process of selling his house, GSLC has equity in his house. Donna Duessel to attend closing. Donna proposed to put monies from house sale due to GSLC in our savings account with NSB. Motion was made and seconded to have the equity share money put into saving account. No discussions. All Ayes.

**Worship and Music** – Donna Duessel reported two items to discuss as part of new business. Looking at cold weather plans, we have drive-in capabilities. Charlie Simon will attend to check-out St James services for example how they are conducting their services using the FM transmitter. Also committee proposed Budget for videographer. Discussion for when it is cold outside and how to deal with outdoor service. M/S to approve the W&M report –All Ayes.

**Property** – Property is getting in touch with LeClaire re: heating/ ventilation system. We are asking them if the current system brings in any fresh air, what filters are used and how our current system might be improved. **Thanks to Dave Wang, Mickey Pelella, Jeff Jackson and Bob McFarland for quick response on all property needs. Council Thanks Billie Flaherty for beautiful flowers at entrance.**

**Stewardship** – Billie to set-up Venmo and PayPal accounts for on-line contributions. Billie to prepare stewardship letter to send to Congregation with information.

**Council of Churches** – Pastor Gaston visited the Blacks to collect school supplies. Pastor Gaston most grateful. Blacks delivered 10 bags of groceries to Summerfield.

### Old Business

Coronavirus Response – Donna is challenging W&M committee to come up with ideas on how to celebrate Christmas. Trudi Black received a letter from the Salvation Army. M/S to do Angel Tree. All Ayes.

CARES Act – \$21,200 received

Safe Church Policy – update, required by new insurance – will have draft to approve by end of year.

### New Business:

#### Fall Planning

Sunday School – Donna Duessel and Bob McFarland will work on this. Alison Rubin is not able to continue teaching Sunday School because of time conflicts. **Council thanks her for her leadership and service to Sunday School.**

Confirmation – Confirmation for those kids that have attended two years to be performed by Pastor Doug with family only, perhaps an outdoor event.

Church Time Discussion about moving time to 10 am. M/S to move to 10 am. All Ayes. Announce it at next Sunday and Council members to call others and newsletter announcement. This will start the first Sunday in October.

**Videographer position** – Donna Duessel discussed W&M proposal for Videographer job

description as written. Brian Immel proposed revising job description to include knowledge of graphics/adding graphics to the service. M/S motion to approve to add graphics to job description - All Ayes.

**Summerfield Partnership** – Discussion on routine giving to provide protein. Proposal is to match up to \$250/month as a good way to do outreach starting in October. MS to accept proposal was made. Trudi, Donna and Alice Deak will work on details and coming up with procedures to go forward.

## Budget

Nursery Attendant – **Council thanks June Mora for her many years of service.** Council discussed not anticipating having a nursery on 2021 so it does not need to be in the budget. M/S was made not to have nursery in budget for 2021. All Ayes

Council has approved the following contacts for budget purposes for the 2020 Budget year:

Staff Salary Increase – Donna Duessel proposed 2.5% increase for Pastor Doug, Vic, Nina, and Kiley – M/S to approve proposal- all Ayes

Pastor Health Insurance – Church will need to provide Pastor Doug with health insurance beginning in June 2021 – Barbara Abraham will look at plans to report on for next month's meeting.

**Calendar:** Outdoor Church Services to continue every week; indoor events are limited to 25 in sanctuary. Jeff Jackson proposed projecting to Gibiser Hall and other areas of church to accommodate more than 25. Donna Duessel to look into NE Synod and National Church and CT guidelines for input re worshipping indoors.

M/S to adjourn 8:47pm - All Ayes

**Next meeting:** October 19<sup>th</sup>

### Treasurer's Report - August 2020

Contributions						Expenses					
	August			YTD			August			YTD	
	Actual	Bdgt	Actual	Bdgt	Var		Actual	Bdgt	Actual	Bdgt	Var
Pledged	14,840	11,108	130,502	121,640	8,862	Pastoral Ministries	7,623	7,890	61,411	63,123	(\$1,712)
Unpledged	1,247	1,111	7,822	11,964	(4,142)	Mortgage	1,130	1,130	9,036	9,036	0
Prior Year	0	0	10,805	0	10,805	Music & Worship	3,042	3,218	24,001	24,969	(969)
Loose Offerings	20	298	2,479	1,490	989	Benevolence	1,623	1,270	15,868	13,714	2,154
Church School	0	19	625	150	475	Property	468	629	3,549	5,471	(1,921)
Lent & Easter	0	0	960	1,337	(977)	Office	2,238	2,136	17,011	17,979	(968)
Other	0	163	5,115	1,957	3,158	Utilities	275	453	6,379	7,959	(1,581)
Thanksgiving	0	0	0	0	0	Christian Educ.	0	73	20	283	(264)
Advent/Christmas	0	0	0	0	0	Interim Pastor	0	0	0	0	0
						Evangelism	9	0	104	53	52
						Youth	0	0	0	0	0
						Stewardship	0	0	0	0	0
						Insurance	443	475	4,081	3,799	282
						Altar Guild	0	71	267	567	(300)
						Social Ministry	0	0	0	0	0
Total	\$16,107	\$12,698	\$158,307	\$139,138	\$19,170	Total	16,850	17,344	141,726	146,953	(\$5,226)
Variance	\$3,409		\$19,170			Variance	(\$493)		(\$5,226)		
Surplus / (Deficit)											
	Actual	Bdgt	Actual	Bdgt	Var		Dec'19	Aug '20		Var	
Future Seminarian Fund	19,130					Cash/Investments*	76,053	112,062	\$36,010		
Capital Impr Fund	7,291					Mortgage	94,159	87,912	(\$6,247)		
Bathroom/Sidewalk Repair	2,334					Pastoral Housing	29,115	29,179	\$64		
Parking Lot Fund	29,616					Equity Share	77,900	77,900	\$0		
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	625					PPP Loan	-	21,100	\$21,100		
Music Supplies	1,003										

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

#### August Summary

Contributions were \$3,409 favorable to Budget

Year-to-Date contributions are \$9,170 favorable to Budget (excluding the \$10,000 offering from 2019 received in 2020)

Expenses for the month were \$493 favorable to budget given expense phasing

Year-to-Date expenses are \$5,226 favorable to budget due to favorable snow removal, favorable oil expenses and budget phasing

Year-to-Date Surplus is \$16,581 versus a Budget Deficit of \$7,815

\$21,100 Payroll Protection Plan Loan was Received (To Be Forgiven with Proof of continued Payroll)

## SEASON OF CREATION 2020

*Renewing, repairing  
and restoring*  
our commitments to God,  
to one another  
and to all of creation.

SUNDAY, OCT. 4, 2020

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth  
Eaton, Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America

+ Pentecost 18 (Lectionary 27)

Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 |

Psalms 19 | Philippians 3:4b-14 |

Matthew 21:33-46



*The law of the Lord is  
perfect, reviving the soul.* Psalm 19:7

In the story of creation God provided a paradise. All of creation was in balance and was a delight. And God set clear boundaries so that balance could be maintained and all created things could flourish. These boundaries provided definition that made possible the amazing diversity of the created world. Far from being a constraint, these boundaries provided freedom and, paradoxically, real connection.

But humankind rebelled and continues to rebel. It is almost as if we view boundaries as an offense and limits as an affront. Creation is ours to use! But that denies the truth that we have this one earth and this one temporal life.

As I write this, we are living in a pandemic. The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 has spread throughout the world, bringing sickness and death. Viruses are strange creatures. They have no nucleus or membrane; they are unable to differentiate like normal healthy cells and are completely dependent on a host cell to survive. They will use up that cell even if it means the death of the host.

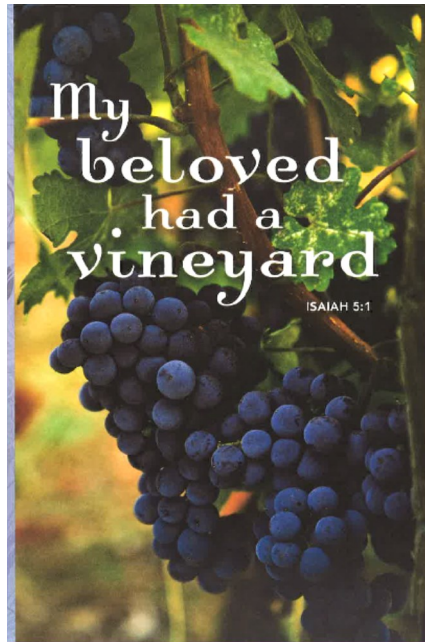
So God, through the law, gave us the gift of limits. God is God and we are not. We are responsible to each other. Our actions have consequences. We are not to live as membrane-less viruses.

The law of the Lord is perfect, sure, right, clear, pure and true. It brings wisdom, rejoicing, enlightenment and righteousness.

*Creator God, help us to accept your boundaries so that all created things can flourish. Amen.*

Suggested hymn: "Light Dawns on a Weary World"  
(Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 726)

Beloved God, from you come all things that are good. Lead us by the inspiration of your Spirit to know those things that are right, and by your merciful guidance, help us to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.



Readings for Sunday, October 4, 2020

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

First Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

Psalm 80:7-15

Second Reading: Philippians 3:4b-14

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-46

[Jesus said to the people:] "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.'" So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time."

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures:

'The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone;  
this was the Lord's doing,  
and it is amazing in our eyes?'

Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls."

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.