

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, April 21, 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 now 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. 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. While masked outside we can now sing the hymns. Bring a chair, sunglasses, and wear layers. If you prefer you may bring your own bread for consecration but Pastor Doug will distribute communion to those who would like that. 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.

Whichever worship choice works best for you, we are delighted to have you worship with us!

You've all seen these movies or tv shows...people in a poisoned nuclear facility or a tear gassed grenade bank or an underwater cave eventually have a panic attack. Going kind of crazy they rip off their masks while others yell "Nooo, don't....." And they usually die. Research shows that after more than a year, many if not all of us have what researchers call "Pandemic Exhaustion." We are just sick and tired of our "normal ways of life" being robbed from us. I recently read about "Zoom Exhaustion" as well and psychologists have created a zoom exhaustion scale that we can score high or low on. I don't know anybody who wants to keep things this way, the way it's been for over a year. But getting angry and panicky about the situation can lead us to be like the panic stricken mask rippers in the movies.

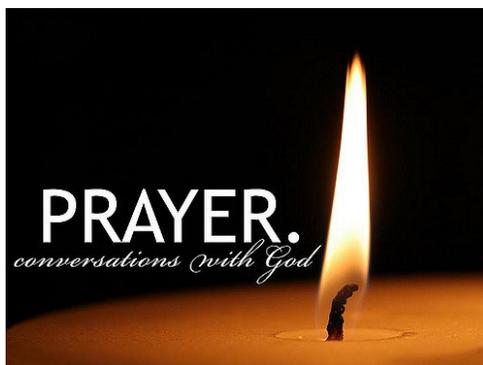
Only a quarter of our country is vaccinated. The newer UK variant is the largest now in this country and it is uncertain how the vaccines may protect against the U.K. variant and it is uncertain if the vaccinated person can still carry the virus to others. Of course there are anti maskers and anti vaxers among us in quite large numbers. And , of course, while one radio announcer said "this is simply the common cold!" The official count is now half a million dead of Covid 19 just in this nation alone. Many in and around the last administration caught the virus for disbelieving the use of safety precautions, including the president. While some died, those individuals had the best medical care on earth.

This is a time to, as scripture says "Choose life therefore that you may live." and I would add "as well as your household." and "your church." I do not know of any catholic or mainstream protestant church around us gathering, singing lustily with no masks, shaking hands and drinking the consecrated wine. Non denominational Evangelical churches not counted!! If you can find one - I'll give you my next paycheck.

It is important that we stay the course at this time! Our first and most important Christian worship practice is protecting life and health, of ourselves but especially of others. When you get fed up, antsy and angry talk to others especially God about your feelings. Sit and be grateful for what we DO have and CAN do. Pray for others. Pray for patience and endurance. Remain strong.

And if it feels safe enough for you, come to church!

LV
PD



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.

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@gslc-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).

Dear Good Shepherd Family,

The past 21+ years as the church secretary at Good Shepherd have been a joy and that is due to the wonderful people of this congregation. It is always a pleasure to speak with each of you and be a part of a warm, caring, and thoughtful congregation that is Christ centered and focused on helping those most in need.

After much thought throughout the past year, I have made the difficult decision to retire as church secretary at the end of May. While change is challenging, it helps us to grow personally and as a church. So I'm excited about the future for Good Shepherd and also for me. I am sure the new church secretary will have as many happy years in this position as I have been fortunate enough to have enjoyed.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for making my years at Good Shepherd such a terrific part of my life!

Yours in Christ,

Nina

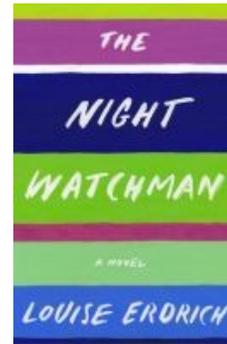
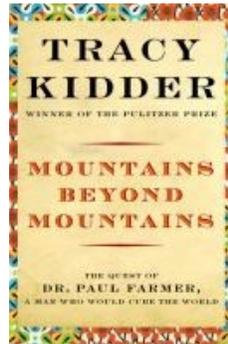
Thank you and congratulations to Nina Furnes for her 21+ years of service and her upcoming retirement. Nina has been so much more than Good Shepherd's church secretary. She has been a kind voice on the phone, an organized presence in the office, a force to get things accomplished and so much more. I thank God for Nina's service to us and wish her all the best in her retirement.

Barbara Abraham and Jeff Jackson (both retired human relations professionals) are heading up an ad hoc committee to fill Nina's position.

Yours in Christ,

Donna Duessel, President

Upcoming Events



The Good Shepherd Book Club is meeting on **May 4th** at **1:00 p.m.** when we will discuss "Mountains beyond Mountains" by Tracy Kidder. In June we will discuss "The Night Watchman" by Louise Erdrich. We will outdoors weather permitting or indoors if needed. We welcome new members!

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 4, 11, 18, 25 you can come to any one or all. Wear layers.
Led by: Pastor Doug

News from the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport

A poster for a virtual spring fling event. At the top, it says 'SAVE THE DATE' in large, bold, purple letters. Below that, it says 'BE OUR Guest' in a red, cursive font. In the center, there is an illustration of Lumiere from Disney's 'Beauty and the Beast' holding a tray of food. Below the illustration, it says 'FOR A VIRTUAL SPRING FLING' in purple, 'TUESDAY, MAY 25TH @ 7:00 P.M.' in red, and 'ENJOY A BROADWAY INSPIRED MUSICAL PERFORMANCE FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME' in teal. At the bottom, it says 'WITH OUR SPECIAL MUSICAL GUESTS, CHRIS COOGAN & MICHELE GRACE' in purple. In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport with the tagline 'Leveraging hope, changing lives.'

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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 during the Worship Service. The items are delivered to the Monroe Food Pantry once a month.

Items Needed:

- canned fruit - mandarin oranges, sliced/diced pineapple
 - canned vegetables (regular and low sodium) - sliced/whole beets, creamed corn, French cut green beans, sliced/whole potatoes, olives, Sauerkraut, spinach, sweet potatoes
 - canned beans (regular and low sodium/fat free) - cannellini, pinto, refried, vegetarian refried
 - baked beans - regular, pork, vegetarian, refried beans
 - chili - with beans, vegetarian
 - stock (regular and low sodium) - beef, chicken, vegetable
 - canned tomatoes (regular and low sodium) - crushed, whole, sauce, puree
 - regular and low sodium jarred pasta sauce
 - baking supplies—bread crumbs, brownie mix, pancake mix, sugar
 - salad dressing - balsamic, blue cheese, Italian, ranch, Thousand Island, French
 - condiments - cooking oil, mayo, ketchup, yellow mustard, brown mustard, pancake syrup, bbq sauce
 - packaged foods—Hamburger Helper, instant potatoes, pasta sides
 - strawberry jelly/jam
 - beverages - black tea (regular and decaf), ground coffee (regular and decaf), hot chocolate, low sodium V8, Ensure, shelf stable milk
 - household items cleaning items, laundry detergent
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 - toilet paper, paper towels - personal hygiene items - menstrual pads, face wash, deodorant, bar soap, shampoo, conditioner



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.

Church Offering and Financial Statements

Financial Statements will be sent out in April. Please review your statement and if you have any questions, Roy Remlin will be happy to assist you.

As worship services are indoor, outdoor and online, 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 worship service or you may mail a check 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 diligently on implementing PayPal/Venmo and plans to have it in place in the next few weeks. We will let you know as soon as it's ready to be used.

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

 AUGSBURG FORTRESS



We Are Fed

Devotional for the week of April 18th, 2021

It appears the gospel writers knew that people would question whether Jesus was indeed fully human. Details such as how he wept at the death of his dear friend Lazarus, lost patience with those who had turned the temple into a marketplace, and was a bit annoyed with his mother when she asked him to help out at the wedding in Cana remind us that Jesus felt many of the things we feel ourselves.

Similarly, in case anyone wondered if Jesus had really risen from the dead, Luke tells us how, after Jesus appeared to his disciples, he asked for something to eat. This may seem like a small detail, but there's no doubt it is an important one. After all, only people who are living and breathing must eat; there is no getting around that physical need.

However, this detail does not remind us only that Jesus really was raised from the dead. It also brings to mind the many times Jesus gathered around a table with a great variety of people, feeding them in both body and soul. As we remember each of these interactions, we are reminded that even though we do not dine with Jesus in the flesh, today he is still at work to nurture us.

Jesus feeds us through his words of forgiveness, through the love of our family and friends, and through the blessing of community. Most notably, Jesus feeds us at the Lord's supper, where he invites all to taste and see God's goodness and grace. Through bread and wine we are fortified with Christ's body and blood to be witnesses to God's love out in the world as we go about our daily work, bless one another with our time and gifts, and serve our neighbors in need.

Devotional message and art based on the readings for April 18th, reprinted from sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2019 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

Sunday, April 25 — Fourth Sunday of Easter

Prayer of the Day: O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us into your fold. Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

First Reading: Acts 4:5-12

Psalm 23

Second Reading: 1 John 3:16-24

Gospel: John 10:11-18



JOHN 10:11-18

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."