

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Weekly Update

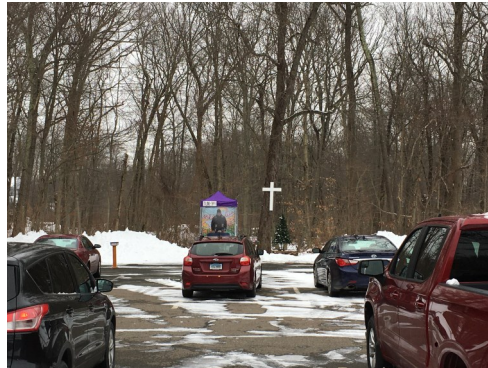
*Our mission is to be more visible, to become more connected,
and to draw closer, with Christ as our center.*



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



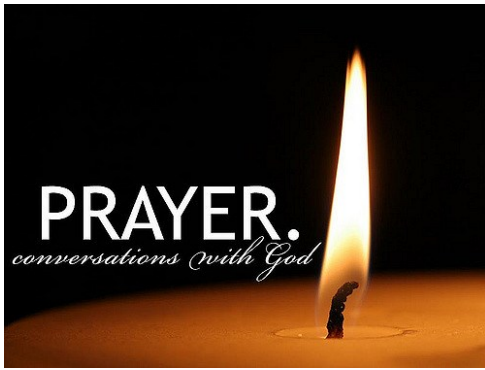
Wednesday, January 6, 2020



I have really come to enjoy our Drive-In Worship on Sundays. I'm in awe of the work that the Worship and Music team has done to create this possibility coming to fruition for us. I am also stunned by their commitment each Sunday to setting up all the working parts. Vic and Kylie have found a way to set up keyboards at the doorway with speakers set up on the lawn. I even have a small electric heater in the "popemobile" as some have called it, or as I like to say "the ppp" purple plastic pavilion." We average 20 cars each Service. We have shown grace, creativity and incredible flexibility as a congregation. In this we have joined the Christians of all times who have had to, out of necessity and hostile circumstance, do the very same.

My favorite part of these Services however is the Sharing of Christ's peace. As I extend the peace to the "congregation -in - cars" and invite them to share the peace with each other, there is a glad cacophony of honking horns and flashing lights. Most Sundays it brings a grin and a laugh to me. And some Sundays it brings a sudden "strange warming of my heart" as John Wesley once said. I am glad in that moment for all of you and glad of your commitment to Christ and to the mission of His church. I feel appreciation for you all and your faith strengthens my faith. It is a hard time in many ways. Yet we are being shown the Light even and maybe especially here in this time.

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@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).

Truth Beyond the Facts

Devotional for the week of January 3, 2020

There are many questions today about facts. Who do we trust to give us the facts? What sources and individuals are reliable? Social media can be a great tool for sharing, but it has also become a means of spreading misinformation, false beliefs, and bad advice. Many people today are suspicious of what some claim to be the facts.

Even if we have the right facts, we might not have something more important: the truth. Facts can be a partial representation of the truth. Facts might tell us that it is sunny and warm this morning, but the weather forecast might say thunderstorms are coming in the afternoon. The latter statement is truth. Truth is the larger reality that smaller facts don't capture, and sometimes contradict.

John tells us that Jesus is God's Word, full of grace and truth. In Jesus we get the full truth of God, not merely the facts. What are the facts we might see? We are all sinful and have strayed from God's just and loving ways. The world is a mess. Left to our own ways, we are surely lost. These are the facts, as if we woke up to a dangerous thunderstorm but don't know what the weather forecast is after that. Jesus is the fuller truth that in spite of the stormy mess of the world and our individual lives, God's grace is a gift to us in Christ. There is a blue sky and a safe calm that is ours through divine love.

Some of us live with messages that tell us we are not the right kind of person to receive God's grace because of our past mistakes, or ethnicity, or gender identity, or level of education, or poverty. The truth of Jesus Christ tells us we are children of God. "From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:16). This is the truth that gives us life.

Devotional message and art based on the readings for January 3rd, 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 10th 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.

Upcoming Events



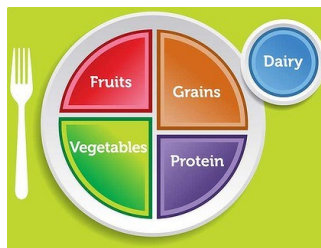
The Book Club is meeting on February 2nd at **1:00 p.m.** when we will discuss "The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek" by Kim Michele Richardson. We will either meet via Zoom or possibly indoors using the new handler system if the infection rates are low. We welcome new members!

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.





Worship in the Home Epiphany of Our Lord January 6, 2021

Blessing for a Home

*We heard in Matthew's gospel that when the magi saw the shining star stop overhead, they were filled with joy. In the home, Christ is met with family and friends, in visitors and strangers. In the home, faith is shared, nurtured and put into action. In the home, Christ is welcome. For gatherings of families, each member may take turns in parts of the blessing. Following an eastern European tradition, a visual blessing may be inscribed with white chalk above the main door; for example, 20 + CMB + 21. The numbers change with each new year. The three letters stand for either the ancient Latin blessing *Christe mansionem benedicat*, which means "Christ, bless this house," or the legendary names of the magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar).*

May peace be to this house and to all who enter here.

By wisdom a house is built and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures. (*Proverbs 24:3-4*)

As we prepare to ask God's blessing on this household, let us listen to the words of scripture. 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, and the life was the light of all people. 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. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. (*John 1:1-4, 14, 16*)

This inscription may be made with chalk above the entrance:

20 + C M B + 21

Write the appropriate character (left) while speaking the text (right).

The magi of old, known as

C Caspar,

M Melchior, and

B Balthasar,

followed the star of God's Son who came to dwell among us

20 two thousand

21 and twenty-one years ago.

+ Christ, bless this house,

+ and remain with us throughout the new year.

O God, you revealed your Son to all people by the shining light of a star. We pray that you bless this home and all who live here with your gracious presence. May your love be our inspiration, your wisdom our guide, your truth our light, and your peace our benediction; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Then everyone may walk from room to room, blessing the house with incense or by sprinkling with water, perhaps using a branch from the Christmas tree.

Then speak the Blessing:

Almighty God,

who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary,
proclaimed joy through the angels,
sent the shepherds with good news,
and led the magi by a star,

bless us this day + through the Word made flesh.

Amen.

Sunday, January 10 - The Baptism of Our Lord

Prayer of the Day: Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after your Son, 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: Genesis 1:1-5

Psalm 29

Second Reading: Acts 19:1-7

Gospel: Mark 1:4-11



John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."