



Advent: Hope Doesn't Equal Merry

Grace and peace to you Family in Christ!

Happy Advent! As you read this we are in the season of Advent; that season before Christmas when we prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. One of my favorite descriptions of the mood of Advent is that it is an “expectant longing for hope”. In the season of Advent we read the words of the prophets, filled with lament and hope, and we read the words of Jesus reminding us that the old must be moved away to make room for God to dwell in the world and in us.

This December we are ending a second year of living in a pandemic and many of us are weary, grief-stricken and hurting. It can be difficult to imagine how hope can thrive in our midst. These feelings can be made worse when we feel forced to be “merry” and “jolly”. While Advent is a season that focuses on Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, those things do not equal “merry”. Advent is about acknowledging where we are, it is about offering our whole selves as a dwelling place for God. It is about the kind of hope that knows the reality of our broken world and promises that God can and will bring healing and life into that brokenness.

Recently I read an article by Cassie Lynch in which she described attending Church on a Christmas Eve when she was experiencing deep heart ache:

As I sat I found myself talking to Jesus. "I'm ruining your party," I told him. It was his response in that moment that changed Christmas for me forever. He told me, Cassie I came to that manger as a baby not for those in celebration, but for those in mourning. I came for you. In this moment. Right here. For the first time in my relatively easy life, I was tasting heartache (and oh if only I knew how much more would come). And it was there that Jesus showed me the heart of Christmas. Jesus stepped down to pursue the broken and the hurting and the lost.

If this year broke you down. Isolated you. Left you grieving or fearful or hurt. I want you to know that you don't have to muster up cheer. You don't have to feel like a downer in the midst of celebration. You can sit at the feet of a savior who came for you where you're at right now. That's how Immanuel works. It's God with us in the dirt giving us hope in the face of despair.

"Those who walk in darkness have seen a great light, on those living in spaces of deepest darkness a light has dawned." - Isaiah 9:2

This season is one in which we are invited to sit at the manger, to hear God tell us that God's home is in us, in this world, with all of it's heartache and joy. So...welcome to Advent. Welcome to the empty spaces, the open places, the shadow places where we wait with expectation, longing and hope.

God give us Peace that makes us aware of your presence.

Faith that finds us when we are lost to ourselves.

Joy that perseveres through sorrow

And, Hope that guides us forward

Knowing, trusting, that You--through your Word made flesh, Jesus--will have the final Word and it will be Life. Amen.

Yours in Christ

Pastor Jess

MIDWEEK LECTIO DIVINA SERVICES



Lectio Divina Services

A Contemplative Reading of the Advent Scriptures

Please join us for our mid-week Advent services at 7:00 pm on Wednesdays. You can attend in person or via Zoom at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525508195?
pwd=MmtjVENGaUg3ODFuaXhhUHR1TVR3Zz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525508195?pwd=MmtjVENGaUg3ODFuaXhhUHR1TVR3Zz09)

Meeting ID: 875 2550 8195

Password: 5e4Hyi

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM SERVICE

Shepherds, Angels, Animals, Christmas Carols and Music.

What do they all have in common?
The makings of a wonderful Christmas Program.

This year our Christmas Program will take place within the regular Advent Sunday service. The Chime Choir will provide special music and we'll be singing Christmas carols while we once again visit the inspiring and awesome story of Christ's birth.

Come join us on December 12, 2021, at 10:00 am



LONGEST NIGHT PRAYER SERVICE



Longest Night Prayer Service (Blue Christmas)

Tuesday, 7:00 pm
December 21, 2021

In person or via Zoom at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525508195?
pwd=MmtjVENGaUg3ODFuaXhhUHR1TVR3Zz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525508195?pwd=MmtjVENGaUg3ODFuaXhhUHR1TVR3Zz09)

Meeting ID: 875 2550 8195

Passcode: 022399

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service A Family Service

Friday, 7:00 pm
December 24, 2021

in person or via Zoom at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525508195?
pwd=MmtjVENGaUg3ODFuaXhhUHR1TVR3Zz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87525508195?pwd=MmtjVENGaUg3ODFuaXhhUHR1TVR3Zz09)

Meeting ID: 875 2550 8195

Password: 5e4Hyi

SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS



Join us for

The Twelve Days of Christmas A Service of Lessons, Carols and Holy Communion

December 26, 2021, 10:00 am

WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS DINNER



Women's Christmas Dinner Celebration

Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 6:00pm.

Come join us for an evening of fun and fellowship, appetizers and desserts, and Christmas carols. We will also be signing cards for local nursing home residents and writing encouraging messages to them.

If you plan on attending please email your RSVP to Lynda Parrott (parrott@chartermi.net) or call her at 616-399-4153.

HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS



Holiday Office Hours are as follows:

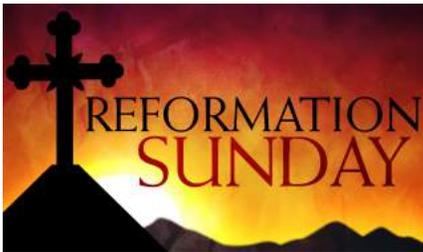
December 19 - 25:

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

December 26 - January 1:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

REFORMATION DAY CELEBRATION



What do you get when you put 6 cars, 7 kids and 4 famous Bible characters together?

A Reformation Sunday Trunk or Treat!

It was a fun event for all. The “Trunkers” enjoyed handing out treats while the kids visited all the stops and collected the goodies. Elijah and Jezebel (Dennis & Carolyn Willaman) and Samson and David (Jacob & Branden Bacon) all paid a visit.

Thank you to everyone who participated.



INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

If church service on Sunday is cancelled, regular attenders that have a correct mobile phone number recorded in Breeze, our church management system, will receive a text message stating that:

“Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Holland has cancelled Sunday morning service on...” and the date will be given.

This text will come from the number 874-47, not from church. Sunday cancellations will still be posted on WZZM 13 and WOOD TV 8.

Weekdays will remain the same: if West Ottawa or Zeeland schools are closed due to weather and/or road conditions, Good Shepherd events for that day are cancelled.



NEWS FROM NIGER

Goodbye to Dear Friends

As of this writing, the Ludwig family, Michael, Rachel and the children, have returned home safely. Their mission work in Niger will be complete on December 31, 2021. Over their eight years of service, they have had many joyful and inspiring experiences.

“Over these years with our partners, [PCUSA) World Mission and the Evangelical Church in the Republic of Niger (EERN)] we’ve grown close to each other through sharing the struggles of living as religious minorities. We’ve experienced the joys of finding deeper community. Together we’ve found ways to meet the challenges of living as witnesses to God’s abundant life in the face of the reality that many pastors and their communities are struggling to survive.” Memories of leading hands-on training sessions in Community Health Evangelism (CHE), attending the Bible school at Agueie and participating in the week-long women’s fellowship conferences are strong. “We look forward to watching how the EERN will continue to reach out to their country strategically. We’re confident that they’ll keep growing in reaching out with physical and spiritual help, through CHE and water and sanitation work, to communities that are looking for more holistic solutions.”

“Thank you for your ongoing love and support...We could not have served and grown with our siblings in Niger without the help you’ve provided!”

Michael and Rachel Ludwig



Read more about the Ludwigs in their letter on the bulletin board in the Commons.



Rachel and friends on the bus to attend a week-long women’s fellowship conference. Rachel received “...feedback from many women about how they felt valued and ‘seen’ on a new level because of her presence and sleeping outside with them in rustic conditions.”



The Ludwig children playing with local children, learning to build wagons and dolls out of millet stalks while at the Bible school in Agueie where Michael led CHE training classes. Agueie is about an hours ride from the Ludwig home.



Michael speaking with a Christian rickshaw taxi driver. The family once rode with a recipient of an EERN youth initiative taxi. In Michael’s words, “It was refreshing how hard he worked to buy a second taxi so he could employ and help others.”

ESTIMATE OF GIVING

Dear Friends of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,

For the past several years we have asked our contributing membership to estimate how much money they will be contributing to the church. This year is no exception. This gives our council an estimate of next year's income.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church wants you to develop a strong, personal relationship with God. We have done so much as a small community of faith and we have the potential to do even more. Your support by giving of your Time, Talents, and Treasures will strengthen your relationship with God and the church. Attached is an Estimate of Giving form that will provide the council with some of the information it needs to develop a budget for next year.

More importantly though, filling out this Estimate of Giving card will give you an opportunity to review your relationship with God and the church and determine just how much of your Time, Talents, and Treasures you are using to develop that relationship. Pastor's sermon on Sept. 12th reminded us that everything we do each day should be actions that show God's love in the world. **GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS.**

Please use this Estimate of Giving form and send it to the church office, or contact the church in anyway you see fit to help us estimate the church's 2022 budget; but more importantly to help you review and strengthen your personal relationship with God.

Please return your Estimate of Giving form to the church office by November 15, 2021.

May God give us Peace,
Your Stewardship Committee

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Estimate of Giving 2022

In gratitude for all that I/we have received from God, I am/we are returning to God the following in 2022:

\$ _____ Weekly Monthly Annually
Please circle one.

Please adjust this estimate of giving at any time by contacting the financial secretary.

Name: _____

Please print.

BOOK GROUP NEWS

January Book Selection:

Book Group



*Killers of the Flower Moon:
The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI*
by David Grann, non-fiction

David Grann, an American journalist, takes readers back to 1921 and the lands of the Osage Nation. It was a time when the Osage gained notoriety as the wealthiest people on earth following discovery of oil under their land. *Killers of the Flower Moon* describes a series of murders investigated haphazardly by various law enforcement personalities until a young J. Edgar Hoover—barely 30 years old—sends a former Texas Ranger turned Bureau of Investigation agent to take the lead. Readers join Special Agent Tom White as he uncovers a conspiracy—a culture of killing—that exploited an outdated guardianship system prohibiting Native Americans from administering their own wealth. The story then moves on to tell how the FBI came into being.

Next Book Group meeting: January 19, 2022, 4:30 pm.

February Selection: *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng, fiction

CHOIR NEWS

Chime Choir News: **Come Here They Play!**

The Chime Choir will be performing during the December 12, 2021 Sunday Service. Final rehearsal will be December 5, 2021 at 11:15 am.



Choir News:

At this time it is likely that Choir rehearsals will resume in January 2022. Watch for further details to come.

PASTOR'S SCHEDULE



Monday: 10:30 am - 12:00 pm & 1:30 - 3:30 pm —in the office,
Tuesday: 10:30 am - 1:00 pm —in the office,
after 1:00 pm—by appointment
Wednesday: 10:15 - 11:45 am —Welca Bible Study
11:45 am - 3:30 pm —in the office
Thursday: Available by appointment.

Pastor Jessica is available Monday - Friday
(Fridays for emergencies only.)
via phone, text, email and Facebook messenger.

Phone: (616) 403-4660

Email: pj.gslc@gmail.com

CHURCH CLEANING SCHEDULE

November 28, 2021 - March 5, 2022 — Cleaning Schedule Sign-up

Dates	Name(s)
Weeks of November 28 - December 4 December 5 - 11	Lynda and Rob Parrott Lynda and Rob Parrott
Weeks of December 12 - 18 December 19 - 25	Sharon Wendt Sharon Wendt
Weeks of December 26 - January 1 January 2 - 8	
Weeks of January 9 - 15 January 16 - 22	
Weeks of January 23 - 29 January 30 - February 5	
Weeks of February 6 - 12 February 13 - 19	
Weeks of February 20 - 26 February 27 - March 5	

Sign-up is for a 1-week period and includes cleaning all areas of the church building: sanctuary, sacristy, entrance, hallway, bathrooms, kitchen, conference room, nursery and Commons.

To sign-up:

Use the Cleaning Schedule form in the Commons
or

Contact Deb in the office:
gslc.office@icloud.com
616.772.4075



NOISY OFFERING – HOLLAND RESCUE MISSION (GATEWAY MISSION)

Holland Rescue Mission (Gateway Mission) The Great Thanksgiving Banquet



Our November and December noisy offering will be collected for the Holland Rescue Mission in support of the Great Thanksgiving Banquet and other programs. The Great Thanksgiving Banquet is an annual event offered by the Holland Rescue Mission to serve a Thanksgiving dinner to families in need in our community. Every donation of \$2.05 will cover the cost of the Thanksgiving dinner for one person. The Great Thanksgiving Banquet will be on Wednesday, November 24. Many volunteers are needed - see their website for more information if you would like to volunteer (www.hollandrescue.org/gtb2021).



The demand for this, and other services provided by the Holland Rescue Mission, is great. Bring your coins to church or contribute online! We will also be collecting Direct Your Dollars receipts for them. Please put yours in the box labeled "Direct Your Dollars" on the welcome table. They need the entire receipt not just the Direct Your Dollars portion.

Thank you for your participation.

FROM THE TREASURER

From Michael Russell:

This year has been interesting, to say the least. When setting the budget for 2021, we had no idea when we would meet again, inside or outside, or what activities we would be able to have. It has been a slow return to some semblance of normal. Currently we are worshipping inside on Sunday mornings and some activities have returned.

That being said, the majority of our expenses have not changed a lot this year. Overall, thru October 2021 (83.3% of the year) our expenses are at 79% of budget which puts us 4% below budgeted expenses. This is good!

Now the other side. Based upon historical info and pledges, we planned on, for the 2021 budget, contributions of \$205,864. So far, thru October, we have only received 67% of expected contributions. This has left us *short \$24,700* thru October 2021. Thankfully we have savings to cover this, but our savings will not last forever.

When you are thinking about your December contribution, your pledge for 2021, or considering your charitable giving during December please think about Good Shepherd. Your church depends on you.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions:
616.283.6723 or miker163@yahoo.com.



Tithes and offerings

SUNDAY SERVANTS — DECEMBER

Please help us fill the spaces. Volunteer to be a Sunday Servant

Use the form in the Commons or contact Deb in the office.
616.772.4075 or gslc.office@icloud.com

Date	Worship Leader/ Communion Assistant	Reader	Usher	Communion Prep/ Clean-up
December 5 2nd Sunday of Advent	CA - Sharon Wendt	Sharon Wendt		Vicki Russell
December 12 3rd Sunday of Advent	Congregational Christmas Program	Congregational Christmas Program	Congregational Christmas Program	Deb Ludwig
December 19 4th Sunday of Advent	Som Vixayphone	Tom Ludwig		Deb Ludwig
December 24 Christmas Eve 7:00 pm				Deb Ludwig
December 26 1st Sunday of Christmas				Deb Ludwig

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Sunday Services and Activities are also on-line.

*Sunday Services, 10:00 -11:00 am, also available via Zoom 10:00 am and available later via YouTube

Quilter's Meet, Tuesdays, 10:30 am on site

Bible Study, Wednesdays, 10:15 - 11:30 am; Social Time 9:30 - 10:15 am

Book Group, December 15, 2021, 4:30 - 6:00

(* link also available on the Breeze calendar)

OUR THANKS AND PRAISE

The Measure of our Love

Computers connected to Zoom link = Families

Total Sunday Attendance: 135

families: 5

Average Sunday Attendance: 34

documented persons



OUR THANKS AND PRAISE CONT.

We received a care package...today, and it was delightful! Please pass our appreciation on to anyone...who contributed. Lucian was thrilled about the pumpkin pie. We are very grateful ❤️

The Aikens/Preston family.

We received another care package today around noon, I wasn't able to catch her name but it is all so very delicious. We are so thankful for such a loving congregation.

The Aikens/Preston family

Rec'd Oct. 28 & 29, 2021

I wanted to thank all of you who came out for our Reformation Celebration...we had some amazing helpers in worship and the Trunk or Treat was really fun! Thank you for making Reformation Sunday a fun, faith family day!

Yours in Christ, PJ

Rec'd Nov. 1, 2021

It was nice on Sunday [Oct. 31] having the youth participation and attendance - that adds such life to our congregation. Maybe they could participate more often?

Rec'd Nov. 1, 2021

...a special thanks to you Pastor Jessica, my sister Cathy Sytsma & congregation. Thank you for your prayers. I'm finally on the road to recovery.

Sincerely Jan & Perry Stemen

Rec'd Nov. 12, 2021

Dear Friends,

"I've got so much, so much, so much, so much...to be thankful for! These are words from one of our favorite songs at Camp.

With your gift (\$675.00), you ensure that we can continue to offer experiences that model and nurture a culture of grace, inclusion, and joy. Your gift...will impact the lives of many in the coming year.

We appreciate your being a part of the Sunshine community, your willingness to be an agent of change, and your commitment to sharing grace and joy!

In Gratitude,

Kathy Rohlman

Rec'd Nov. 29, 2021

December

Birthdays

Benjamin Rohrer 2
Adam Preston 7
Jennifer Zylstra 12
Dave Wendt 13
Michael Russell 23
Branden Bacon 25
Chris Manzo 25
Nancy Hazekamp 30
Ron Meyer 31



Anniversaries

Som & Chan Vixayphone 24

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Church Council Members:

Jessica Bacon	(920) 889-8706, jessica.lois.bacon@gmail.com
Bryan Blank	(616) 312-9358, knalbb26@gmail.com
Elliott Eisaman	(716) 785-0918, elliott.eisaman@gmail.com (President)
Rob Parrott	(616) 836-0172, parrott@chartermi.net (Vice President)
Vicki Russell	(616) 796-8606, vicki0528@gmail.com (Secretary)

IN OUR NOVEMBER PRAYERS

In Our November Prayers...

- **Our Sympathies:** To the family and friends of Laura Hardy (Jeff Hardy's mother), who passed after a long battle with ALS, Friday, October 22, 2021. To the family and friends of Sally H. (Laurie Schuldt's friend) who succumbed to stage 4 lung cancer November 9, 2021. To the family and friends of Richard Hardy (Jeff's grandfather) who passed away before All Saints Sunday.
- **In Thanksgiving:** Richard Russell received a cancer-free diagnosis this past week. To ensure the diagnosis does not change, he will be continuing treatment. Stephanie (Kris Norvell's niece) was declared cancer free this week.
- **Military News:** Zachery Wiesner and family are deployed to Germany for 3 years beginning June 2022. Cortney Ivanov has reenlisted in the Reserves. She and Konstantin continue to be very active in the Service.
- **Healing/Peace:** Aikens & Preston Family, Allan Anderson (brother to Lois R.) starting radiation for cancer, Chuck (friend of Lois R.) starting treatment for cancer, Brian (Jessica Bacon's uncle), Lucas Barton, Janet Baumgartner, hospitalized for pulmonary embolism, (Lois R.'s daughter-in-law's mother), Zach Bergland (Beckers' nephew), Bryan Blank, Paula Born, diagnosed with lung cancer and Covid, & her husband, Clarence Born, (brother & sister-in-law of Howard Born), Patricia Bradfield, Selena Casillas, 8 yrs old-diagnosed with cancer (friend of Ellen Lichtman), Kody De Haan, Jim Dyke, Carol Essig (Bret D'Agostino's aunt), Sandy Edwards, diagnosed with ovarian cancer (friend of Corinne Becker), Judy Forsten (Marijo's Sister), Bill Geerlings, back surgery (friend of Norvell), Jessie George (Deb P-G's daughter), Alyssa Gorraiz, Sally H. (Laurie Schuldt's friend, stage 4 lung cancer), Richard Hardy recovering from a broken hip (Jeff's grandfather), Randy Kasdorf (friends of Parrotts) suffered a stroke, Cathy Kelly, Iris Mears, (PJ's godmother), Gene Mohr, (Uncle of Tori Lindsley) who is recovering from 3rd degree burns, Roland Rivera, Janice Russell (Mike's sister-in-law), Richard Russell (Mike's brother), Rodney Sebaugh, very ill with Covid (family of Ludwigs), Katherine Slee (friend of Beckers), Jan Stemens, (Cathy Sytsma's sister), Chad Stettinichs (cousin of Perry Pearson), Russ & Rita Taylor (Julie Wolff's parents) Rita has dementia, Jessica Underhill, Donna Vargo, Dan Vertanen (Julie Hardy's uncle) in hospice care and has Parkinsons, Justin Walker (Pastor's husband), Jon Wiening, Seth Zimmerman on ventilator for Covid, update: in ICU and recovering (family of Ludwigs).
- **Prayers for Our World:** We remember those families in Michigan, the country and around the world who have lost loved ones due to Covid-19; and families affected by the economic downturn as a result of Covid-19.
- **Assisted Living/Nursing Home/Homebound:** Christopher St. John (Son of Bonita Zielke), Bonita Zielke,
- **Healthy Pregnancy:** Nikki and Andrew Delo, friend of (actually like a daughter of) Kris and Floyd Norvell. Ashley & Tyler Visser, expecting a girl in April, (Norvell's granddaughter/son).
- **Serving Our Country:** John Bounthapanya (Som's nephew), Steve Dyke, Cortney and Konstantin Ivanov (Gigi Howard's daughter and son-in-law), Kayla Kleinjans (Stan & Debbie's granddaughter), Alex Miller, Andrew Wagner (Patricia Bradfield's grandson), Zachery Wiesner (Gigi Howard's son-in-law).
- **Prayer Partners:** Immanuel Lutheran Church, Rev. Kate Schroeder, Jackson; St. James Lutheran Church, Rev. Martha Porter-Reid, Jackson; Lutheran Church of the Savior, Rev. Nicolle Smith, Kalamazoo; Trinity Lutheran Church, Revs. Ken Johnson & Jacob Lehman, Kalamazoo.

