

Good Shepherd Council and Board Members

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President	Keith Casey	(785) 209-4781
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Contact Information

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 pastor@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org
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Krista Weiss, Office Manager
 krista@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org

Office Hours: M-TH 8:00 am - 1:00 pm
 Office (920) 231-0530

Web Site: goodshepherdinoshkosh.com

E-Mail Address: church@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org

facebook.com/oshkoshgoodshepherd

Worship Services:
 Thursday - 6:30 pm
 Sunday-8:00 am & 10:30 am

Bible Study
 Adult—Wednesday at 10:30 am and Sunday TBD

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH // APRIL/MAY 2021

PARISH PULSE

And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself.”

-John 12:32



Birthdays

Apr 1 David Doan	Apr 17 Avery Rodig	May 1 Louise Gabert	May 17 Kristy McMillan
Apr 1 Samuel Mehn	Apr 18 Bertrant Behm	May 1 Jackson McMillan	May 17 Charles Schultz
Apr 2 Kinsey Koepsell	Apr 18 Joshua Dreger	May 2 Jennifer Foley	May 17 David Wojciechowski
Apr 5 Darlene Paulsen	Apr 18 Shelley Goding-Rivera	May 3 Jackie Wagner	May 18 Hannah Bruss
Apr 5 Gerald Sprague	Apr 18 Ken Ruehl	May 6 Samantha Brunner	May 21 Chad Smith
Apr 6 Don Borgen	Apr 19 Patricia Adamski	May 7 JoAnn Haskins	May 21 Sara Suwalski
Apr 6 Aiden Schubert	Apr 19 Scott Kramer	May 7 Jenny Kirchenwitz	May 22 Benjamin Mehn
Apr 7 Ella Berry	Apr 20 Harper Tritt	May 7 Craig Skadahl	May 22 Maxwell Mittelstaedt
Apr 7 Ruth Wagner	Apr 22 Ericka Potratz	May 7 Becky Tuchscherer	May 24 Jodi Breitenbach-Casey
Apr 7 Apryl Weed	Apr 22 Dexter Schaub	May 7 Abby Zink	May 24 Faulkner Charles
Apr 9 Jane Eichhorn	Apr 23 Theresa Bray	May 8 Terri Kramer	May 25 Mike Radloff
Apr 12 Amber Leinweber	Apr 23 Natalie Haag	May 9 Laurita Daugherty	May 25 Nolan Tokarski
Apr 12 Delores Ziemer	Apr 24 Dennis Bostwick	May 9 Chad Goding	May 25 Barb Wiley
Apr 13 Gene Gohlke	Apr 24 Joanne Brinkman	May 11 Mike Kuble	May 26 Rev. James Daugherty
Apr 14 David Leinweber	Apr 24 Phillip Steinbeck	May 13 Preston Henke	May 26 Steven Tritt
Apr 16 Kiley Klauer	Apr 25 Andrew Klatt	May 13 Frank Jarvenpaa	May 28 William Beck
Apr 16 Eric Nienass	Apr 28 David Wagner	May 13 Landon Leinweber	May 28 Susan Danula
Apr 16 Ashley Schubert		May 13 Ruth Nevers	May 28 Heather Klauer
		May 16 Barb Bandelow	May 29 Finn Hinrichs
		May 16 DuWayne Besaw	May 29 Lucille Pflanzner
		May 17 Anne Fogtman	May 30 Leah Clappes

Wedding Anniversaries

Apr 5 Vicki Beck and Robert	May 3 Diane Wojahn and James	May 18 Aaron and Lori Bruss
Apr 8 Jeff and Linda Everson	May 7 Gary and Ruth Galow	May 21 Katie and Rob Rodig
Apr 11 Jim and Sharron Ziemer	May 9 Tim and Samantha Brunner	May 22 Brian and Lisa Spaeth
Apr 22 Becky Tuchscherer and John	May 9 Mike and Patricia Phillips	May 23 Don and Bonnie Borgen
Apr 24 Joan Warwick and James	May 9 Mike and Deb Radloff	May 23 Kurt and Emily Brunner
Apr 25 John and Brenda Hawig	May 10 Branden and Kristin Mike	May 23 David and Darci Doan
Apr 28 Brad and Barb Wiley	May 13 Gary Bunke and Jan Peterson-Bunke	May 23 Jan Peterson and Robert
Apr 30 Wesley and Shirley Radloff	May 13 Bud and Sharon Hoepfner	May 25 Kevin and Sandra Dordel
	May 14 James and Lori Purath	May 25 Phillip and Kari Steinbeck
	May 17 Todd and Heather Klauer	May 27 Bill and Marian Fenlon

Do We Have Something to Offer?

BY PASTOR KOEPSSELL

Greetings people of the Good Shepherd! I pray this Parish Pulse finds you well.

I receive numerous emails and mailings about evangelism and how I (we) can make our church “grow”. Sometimes these emails and mailings even make me feel guilty. For heaven’s sake, we sing hymns from a hymnbook! (we don’t currently offer a full fledged Rock-Band to perform loud, contemporary Christian tunes to ensure our younger generations feel “more at home”). We don’t offer a hundred different programs for our kids, teens, “t-weens,” and more... I don’t typically preach (specifically) on how to make your marriage better, or how to deal with depression, or how to raise your kids, or how to overcome addictions, or how to handle conflict or...

Well, what do we have to offer? Why do we continue to grow (even during a pandemic!) in spite of our apparent lack of programs?

I like to believe it’s because we offer something different.

You see, you can turn on almost any daily self-help talk show and you’ll hear the loud music, you’ll hear how to handle conflict or battle addictions, or how to raise your kids. You can tune into any talk show and walk away feeling good about yourself (because the music was good...because you’ve heard how others have it way worse than you...or you come away with a nugget of information that just might make your life better...). **What you don’t hear, however, is about Jesus and what He’s done for you.** As desirable as some of those other things might be, none of them are DISTINCTLY Christian!

Do WE have something to offer? That question seems crazy because we certainly all know the answer! Of course we do! We don’t have to resort to the kinds of manipulation that the articles trumpet; we have Christ, the Son of God! We have the forgiveness of sins to offer. We have the good news to offer that Jesus Christ brings us new life, a life that never ends. We have the very riches of heaven to offer!

The Church’s mission is to offer Jesus Christ crucified and risen again to all people! What could be better than that?

(Continued)

IN THIS ISSUE

Staying Focused on Christ

The Joy of Music

What Will You Do?

April Showers

LWML at Good Shepherd

Do We Have Something to Offer (Continued)

As you've experienced again this Lenten Season, we've focused with an even greater intensity on God's sacrificial love in offering His Son to suffer and die for the redemption of every man, woman and child in this world. It's been a good Lenten Season. It's good to re-focus.

Yet many people are unaware of the riches that we (specifically, the Lutheran Church) have to offer because we haven't told them! We have not always spoken of our faith in Christ to our neighbor, but rather speak of simply "going to church." We may have even had the audacity to invite someone to church with us...and that's good, but...

While we may be simply "going to church," we are receiving the very best that God has to offer!

Maybe next time instead of simply inviting someone to church, you could tell them about your personal faith in your Savior. Tell them how you face adversity and bountiful blessings with a consistency of faith in the One who provides. Tell them about the confidence you have in life ever-after. Tell them about the empty tomb and how over 500 people saw Jesus after He was supposedly dead and buried...and how countless people died (and are still dying) to make this FACT known. Tell them how God has made good on every promise He's ever made and how you fully expect Him to keep His promises to you. Tell them all this and more...and then wait for them to ask you how you know all this stuff...and where you go to church!

Why keep it a secret?

When people ask you what your church has to offer, speak up boldly and proudly, "We have Jesus Christ to offer!" That is more than all the programs that man can devise.

Anytime is a good time to invite others to come with you to meet Jesus at Good Shepherd!

I am confident that when people find Jesus Christ they do return. We don't need to worry that we have done enough because God the Holy Spirit will convince them of their need for Christ. Lent's cry was that all may know the depth of God's love as Jesus willingly pours out His blood in order to redeem our world from sin and darkness. Easter's cry is HE IS RISEN!

We send our mission money to support missionaries and indeed, we have helped take Christ's message into all the world, to the far reaches of the globe. Maybe it's time to take Christ to those in our own backyard. You see, we really DO have something to offer!

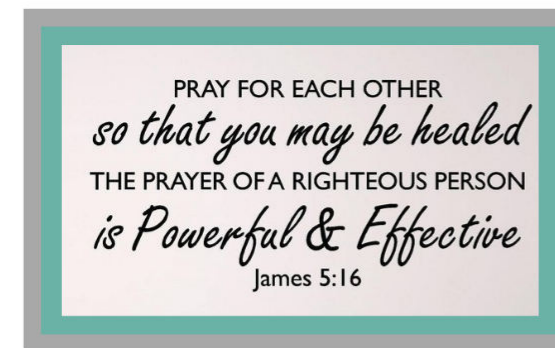
And just a little reminder, this is your Church! As you'll see in this newsletter, there are many ways for you to get involved and serve for the love of God and His people. As we come out of this pandemic, as we come into the renewal of spring, let's renew our involvement in our church community. It's time to get ready for the next wave of awesome that our Good Shepherd has to offer. Here are just a couple ways you could prayerfully consider helping out (and all of these things are to serve one purpose: To offer Jesus Christ crucified and risen again to all people!).

- Join one of our boards (fellowship, evangelism, etc.)
- Like gardening? Help revamp/renew our community garden
- Kind of know those people you see at church, but don't really know them? Invite them to your place for food and conversation!
- Start an in-home (or at church) small group Bible study
- Help out our Christian Education dept. with Vacation Bible School planning and re-start/jump start our 3-4-5 program
- Ladies, check out the new Lutheran Woman's Missionary League (LWML) forming at Good Shepherd
- We will have lots of babies born this year...maybe start a group to give those families a little help with their transition?
- Our landscaping out front could use some tender loving care. Is that your thing?
- Are you a prayer warrior...we need someone to lead out Prayer Chain

Certainly not an extensive list, but hopefully it gets you thinking. And if you'd like to add to the list, by all means, do so. And a great-big thank you to all of you who are already doing so many good things for your God, for your neighbor and for your church.

God's richest blessings to you this season of Easter and always.

-Pastor



Do you enjoy praying for others? Are you organized and have access to a computer? If you answered "yes" to these questions, please consider heading up the Prayer Chain at Good Shepherd. We are looking for someone to lead this important ministry. For more information, please call the church office 920-231-0530.

Fellowship Revisited

by Sharon Leinweber, Board of Fellowship

Its survey time – now is your opportunity to let me know what you want from Fellowship at Good Shepherd Church. The Fellowship survey was sent out Friday, March 19th. It's short and it gives you the chance to give your ideas. If you haven't already, please take a few minutes to complete the survey at :

<https://gslcfellowship.questionpro.com>

Thank you and together we can make fellowship come alive at Good Shepherd.



Digging in the Dirt

Spring is in the air and it's time to start planning the Good Shepherd garden. If you didn't know, the garden provides fresh vegetables for members and the Lutheran Food Pantry. This year Fellowship is working with Evangelism to make the garden grow. If you have ideas for the garden and/or want to help please contact me at sharon.leinweber@yahoo.com or the church office at church@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org.

Brushfires Update

Dear friends, I would like to ask for your prayers. I am busy planning the Sexual Integrity Leadership Summit to be held in San Antonio April 29-May 1. The details are overwhelming and the time is rapidly closing in. Yet, God has answered our prayers in amazing ways. We have an excellent lineup of presenters, including Rev. Dr. Matthew Rueger (LCMS) of Hubbard, IA, an amazing host church, and robust registrations (~150 people). Our primary prayer for this event is that God would be glorified. Would you pray with me for this and that the people attending would be well served and blessed? Your prayers are divine gifts of priceless worth. Thank you.



Treasurer's Report

by Diane Flouro, Treasurer

Hello Everyone,

We continue to hold steady on our income and expenses however, we have had to pay some large amounts out already this year for another new furnace, some furnace maintenance, and the elevator maintenance contract.

Here is a summary of January and February:

	Jan 2021	Feb 2021
Regular Giving	24,235.00	27,613.57
Debt Giving	355.00	1,320.00
Mission	225.00	111.00
Other	1611	348.67
Total Monthly Expenses	19,307.25	17,325.44
Monthly Budget Needed	22,538.00	22,538.00
YTD Expenses over (Under) Budget	(3,230.75)	(5,212.56)
Mortgage Balance as of End of Month	190,611.62	186,258.10
Additional Pay Down of Debt	4,339.05	4,353.52
West Point Bank Checking	16,515.70	16,482.16
West Point Bank Savings	4,133.56	4,133.56
LCEF Savings	35,335.24	43,057.91

If you currently utilize contribution envelopes for giving but would like to switch to online, automatic donations, it is easy with Joyful Response. Please contact me and I will get you started.

I want to let you know of another way you can support your church. It is very easy if you shop on Amazon. Amazon donates 0.5% of the purchase price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.

Support your Church by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com, then select Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Oshkosh as your charity. You only have to set this up once, then just remember to use smile.amazon.com instead of amazon.com

We have also been getting some members who send in one check for their contributions along with numerous weekly envelopes. I wanted to let you all know this is not necessary as you would get credit for whatever dollar amount you contributed no matter how many envelopes you send in. I understand that you like to see an amount given per week but sending in numerous envelopes makes things a bit difficult for the counters. It is much easier on the counters if you send in one regular envelope and any special envelope you would like money allocated to. We understand, in this odd time, that you may not attend church weekly, so we understand that the contribution you send in is for more than just one week.

As always, if you would like any details behind the numbers, please feel free and reach out to me. My cell phone is (920) 420-5841 or email at flourodi@yahoo.com.

LWML at Good Shepherd

by Mary Becker

What is the LWML? The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is an official auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Since 1942, the LWML has focused on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries, and supporting global missions.

Who can join? Every woman who is a communicant member of an LCMS congregation is eligible to become a member of the LWML. All you need is a love for others, a desire to share the Gospel message, and a heart to serve. "Lutheran Women in Mission" describes who we are and what we do.

Please consider joining us once at month at church (no meetings in July and August) Meetings can consist of a Bible Study, projects, business meetings, fundraising for grants at the local and national level, hosting/attending ingatherings and so much more!

If you are interested in learning more about the LWML at Good Shepherd, please fill out a short online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R2BZFFS> or contact Mary Becker at 920-229-9561 with any questions.



Staying Focused on Christ

by Keith Casey, Church President

On Sunday, March 14, Pastor's sermon was on staying focused on Christ and it got me thinking about how can I stay focused on Christ?

Even those who have followed Christ for a long time can find it difficult to stay focused on Christ. What teachings does the Bible offer to help us stay focused?

In Matthew 13, Jesus gives the parable of the sower that includes insight in this area. In explaining the parable, He shares, "As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful" (v. 22). The "cares of this world" and desire for wealth can cause people to no longer be focused on Christ.

The cares of this world can include a wide variety of competing activities. Many of these activities are even good, but when given the wrong level of priority can take away from focusing on Christ. For example, it is important to work to take care of family needs, but being consumed with work can take the place of serving God.

The same is true with the pursuit of wealth. Money is necessary for many of life's activities, but Paul clearly states, "For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs" (1 Timothy 6:10). It is the love of money, not money itself, that is sinful and distracts our focus from Christ.

To stay focused, we can learn much from the example of Scripture. First, Luke 9:23 teaches, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Each day we are to deny our personal desires and follow God's way. Christians are not given a day off or a vacation from following God. It is a daily pursuit. In a culture of "Sunday only" Christianity or where faith is seen as only one of many areas of our life, the challenge is to live surrendered to Christ each day.

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”

Second, realize we will endure suffering. Many people stop following Jesus when times are tough; this comes from wrong thinking that we are not supposed to suffer as Christians. Yet Scripture is clear, "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Timothy 3:12). Certainly, Jesus suffered greatly. All of the apostles faced great suffering on behalf of their faith. We should expect that life will sometimes be difficult when we live for Christ.

Third, we can stay focused by regularly learning from God's Word. Psalm 119:105 says, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." When we are weak, it is often due to not spending adequate time focused on God's Word. This may require time alone with God, time meditating in prayer, or other forms, but the overall focus is that time in God's truth lights our path and keeps us focused.

Fourth, we can stay focused on Christ by spending time with other believers. Hebrews 10:24-25 shares, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." Time with other believers allows us to be encouraged and grow in good works, while also allowing us to encourage others.

Staying focused on Christ is difficult, but is an essential part of the Christian faith. When we seek to daily grow, anticipate suffering, spend time reflecting in God's Word, and spend time with other believers, we can better focus on Christ and a life committed to Him.

From the business side of our congregation everything is going very well due in large part to you, our wonderful and dedicated Church members. Financially we are doing well, bills are being paid and our mortgage continues to shrink. Our Stewardship, Fellowship and Evangelism boards are continuously looking for innovative ways to share the Love of our Savior and Christ both internally and externally to our congregation. If you have the Spirit and want to help in these wonderful efforts or you are handy around the house, please reach out to our board leadership to see what exciting ways you can share your time, talents, and treasures!

The Joy of Music

by Cam Bedroske, Music Director

At Good Shepherd, we are blessed with a very strong Music Ministry due to the involvement of many of members. We try to offer a variety of musical opportunities to our congregation.

We are very thankful for the small, but faithful, group of singers that comprise our Adult Choir. Please consider joining the Choir if or when you feel comfortable. We will finish this season in mid-May. We welcome signers of all ages from High School Student and older.

Have you attended a worship service where the Chime Choir has played? What a beautiful addition to the service their music is! We thank the members of this new group for their willingness to gather together, (socially distanced), in this time of COVID. We are always looking for new members to join the Chime Choir. If you are an adult or high school student who is able to read rhythms and enjoys learning new things, please check us out on Wednesday evenings starting at 5:15 pm.

With the season of Lent now over, rehearsal dates and times have changed. First of all, there will be no rehearsal on April 7th.

Starting Wednesday, April 14th, the Chime Choir will meet from 5:15-6:15 pm. Adult Choir will rehearse from 6:30-7:30 pm. The last date to meet this spring is May 19th.

Thank you everyone who has volunteered to help make the Music Ministry such a strong part of Good Shepherd.



Children's Ministry

by Cam Bedroske, Sunday School Director

At the beginning of February, the Board of Education started a new program, Home Church Bags. It has been a true pleasure to work with various church members and help organize this ministry. We were able to supply 20 bags to interested families. Bags were available to be picked up during worship times, all month long. The pick-up system will be the same in April. On Easter Sunday we will have 25 bags ready. We will also put the bags in the blue totes outside the church doors for the first weeks in April from 8:00-11:30am. Please consider taking a bag if you are a parent or grandparent of someone you want to share the love of Jesus with.

Have you noticed the weekly Family Devotions online on our website and Sunday School Facebook page? They are around ten to fifteen minutes long and are a great way to be intentional about sharing God's Word with the little ones in your life. Cam Bedroske has been organizing and recording them each week. If you would like to volunteer to help for a week or two, just let her know. There is a devotion book she can share with you.

Did your kids miss not attending VBS last year? We missed having that special time with them and are happy to announce we are planning on the return of VBS this summer! Our thoughts right now are holding VBS on the evening of Friday, August 20th and Saturday, Aug 21st. We are planning on a fun outdoor experience for families. Please keep those dates in mind because we will be looking for various volunteers.

This fall we will once again have in-person Sunday School! We plan on starting on Sunday, September 12th. Although that is many months away, please consider if you would be willing or able to assist us in various ways such as: teaching part time or full time, volunteering as a substitute teacher, being an assistant in the classroom, helping with snacks, or volunteer to lead the musical aspect of Sunday School. Please prayerfully consider how you can help out with this vital ministry.

What Will You Do?

by Daniel Weiss, Stewardship Chair

As we approach Easter, we are again reminded of the meritless gift we received through Jesus' shed blood on the cross. His life freely given so that we might live. Yet, Scripture explains that while we did nothing to deserve this gift of forgiveness and life, it was not given so that we might squander its worth. Paul wrote in Romans 6:20-23:

"For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Although many of us are familiar with this passage, do we really understand that Paul is teaching us to steward this gift of life? The question of how we should live in the world or act in a given situation is always before us. Will the fruit of our choices lead to death or life? Again Paul writes:

"For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another." (Gal. 5:13)

These passages came to mind after I received a third stimulus payment from the federal government. I did nothing to earn it. It just came to me. But, now I need to prayerfully decide what to do with it. Will I use it to gratify the flesh (boat, TV, etc.) or will I invest it in my family, the church, or the wider community? For some of us, this gift is desperately needed after a very tough year. Others have more choices.

I invite you to pray with me about how best to steward this stimulus check. Maybe you will feel called to help a family in need, support a local or international charity, or offer it back to the church for programs and debt reduction. However you choose, do it with gladness, for the "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

"For you were called to freedom, brothers."

April Showers

by Craig Dreger, Head of Trustees

Although the calendar says that spring has arrived, we cannot seriously think about outdoor flowers, planting and yard care until we get through April showers. That's not to say it is too early to start thinking about it. Just like at your house there are plenty of opportunities for beautification around our church home. Outdoor activities are a great way to safely socially interact. Soon we will need volunteers for yard cleanup, shrub trimming and flower planting. All summer long we will need assistance with lawn mowing. If any of these activities are appealing, please consider signing up to help. Information will be on the bulletin board in the atrium. Don't be bashful with helping keep our church beautiful. If you feel called to take responsibility for the maintenance of a certain area, please reach out to me.

Later this spring we will need to work on the lighting in the worship area. We will be renting a scissor lift and replacing the halogen bulbs with LED's. We need to round up the correct people to get this done. We are trying to do this in April or May. Total cost should be in the \$3,000 range.

Finally, the windows in the worship area need some attention but again this will have to wait for more favorable weather. We also have an air conditioner that will be replaced this spring. I believe all other areas of the physical facilities are under control and maintenance concerns are addressed as noted.