

PARISH PULSE

“...but all of you who held fast to the Lord your God are still alive today...”

–Deuteronomy 4:4



Staying Alive

BY PASTOR KOEPEL

Greetings people of the Good Shepherd! I hope and pray this little newsletter finds you and yours very well. Thank you for taking the time to read it and see what’s going on at your beloved church.

There’s a really big context to that little verse above. Moses, Joshua, the Promised Land, keeping the commands of the Lord, and much more. I just hit the little search engine on my Bible study software, typed in “alive” and this little verse was the most fitting to my story.

Here’s my story...It was a normal night. I was sitting in my chair in the living room watching something on the History Channel. One of our cats was in the screen porch that is attached to the living room and the screen door to the living room was left ajar. I hear, “squeak, squeak!” and see a mouse running through open door into the living room with the cat in hot pursuit. I call for my wife and son to bring the other cat as I slide the doors shut to the rest of the house. It’s on...

The others enter the room. My wife takes her place on top of the loveseat, which tips over backwards and shatters our standing lamp against the wall. Glass everywhere. Mouse under something in corner. First cat somewhat interested in still catching the mouse. Mouse goes under couch which I quickly turn over. Mouse goes under chair which I turn over. Mouse runs under curtains. I holler at my son to get me a towel. He obliges and I grab said mouse with the towel. I have the mouse by the tail and think I am victorious. Mouse bites me in the finger and I say a bad word and drop the mouse.

The chase is on again. Tables, chairs, couches, blankets, broken glass...everything is a mess. I laughed out loud a few times (after the bleeding in my finger stopped).

Cats are laughing at us humans because that’s what cats do when it’s not their idea. Mouse goes to the fireplace, actually starts climbing up the brick wall! This is my chance. I have it cornered. It’s a cute little guy with very sharp teeth.

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“*Staying Alive*” (continued)

I ask (or yell) for my son to get me an oven mitt. I grab it with that and throw it into the woods to live another day. Take a few pictures of the catastrophe of our living room and start to put things back together. One little mouse still alive. One big mess.

The next morning at work I hear the song “Staying Alive” by the Bee Gees and can’t help but laugh about that mouse and its desire and will to strive to stay alive.

And that brings me to us. To our beloved Church, Good Shepherd. We’ve been battling a lot these last several months. We’re striving to stay alive in the midst of whatever the world has to throw at us. Social upheaval, a deadly virus, mask mandates, fires, hurricanes, discontentment, schools open/closed/open/closed, job uncertainty, loved ones we can’t (or aren’t supposed to) see, paying the bills, maintaining the “status quo”...

It’s all weird. It’s all unusual. It’s not even good. No kids in Sunday School, no Sunday morning Bible study, no coffee and treats, limited fellowship, confirmation classes are a work in progress...

But through it all, we’re “staying alive”. People are stepping up to help clean and take care of the church, members are giving generously, parents are patient as we work out the details with potentially 27 kids in our confirmation class! New members are on the horizon! We’re meeting together to strategically plan the next 5-10-15 years at Good Shepherd!

We’ve never shut the doors of our little church. We’ve had our little bumps and bruises, we’ve climbed some peaks and wrestled in the valley, we may run from danger and certainly will bite back when cornered. We’re staying alive!

God has reached out with His gracious hand and amidst the confusion, chaos and discontentment of the world, Our Good Shepherd sets us free to live another day to His glory because we continue to “Hold fast to the Lord our God.” Our good and gracious God has His merciful hand

on each one of us through it all. He has the victory in our Good Shepherd, Jesus, rescuing us all with the “oven mitt” of His love. I’m glad I get to hold fast with you, people of the Good Shepherd. Keep striving. Keep “Staying Alive!” We’ve got this. One little church still very much alive, amidst one big mess!

God bless you all. See you at church!

Pastor G.

New Music Opportunity

Starting in October Good Shepherd will be starting a Chime Choir! This choir is a great opportunity for musicians to be able to adhere to any mask mandate and socially distance while playing!

We will meet Wednesday evenings from 5:15-6:15 pm (During Confirmation Classes)

The choir is open to any High School Student or Adult who has some knowledge reading simple rhythms.

We will meet in the choir room, since the kids are in the church sanctuary. Please consider participating in this musical opportunity. To make everyone feel comfortable, I will be masking for these rehearsals.

Once Advent Midweek services start in December, the group will decide on a different rehearsal schedule, if needed. In order to make this choir successful, we will need approximately 8 people (at the least) to fill the music needs!

“*Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us.*

- Martin Luther ”

Sharing, Now More Than Ever

By Keith Casey

Great news! In this uncertain time, our congregation is full of the gift of the Holy Spirit! I encourage you to share your faith in our Good Shepherd with not only those in our congregation, but with those in our community. Continue to look for ways to expand God's Kingdom through your faith!

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (20) and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." - Matthew 28:19-20: (19)

Remember; "A thriving church is one that goes beyond its walls and expands the love of Christ into the community."

From the business side of our congregation, finances are well, but as always, we could be doing better. We continue to pay down our mortgage debt, cover all unforeseen expenses and reach out to the local, national and international communities through our missionary work. All the while being able to put money aside each month. I do ask everyone to prayerfully consider what you can give, both financially and of time. We can use help in lots of areas and your gift of time and treasures are very appreciated.

By the time you have received this Parish Pulse, our strategic planning sessions will have started. The good news is that you can still join in the fun and help guide our "little Church on the corner of Westhaven and 9th" future in the upcoming sessions. Check the bulletin or the website for upcoming planning sessions. I look forward to seeing and hearing from you on this very important topic.

Switching gears, one last bit of business news; on Sunday October 18th after our outdoor service will be our fall Voters Meeting for officer and board chair positions. Please make every attempt to be there and make your vote count.

I would like to thank everyone for all their help in making our church grow and prosper. Again, it truly amazing to see the Holy Spirit works in each and every one of you in your own special way.

Rock of Ages

By Cam Bedroske

"Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken,
let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe.

- Hebrews 12:28

We have so much to be thankful for in this time! We know who we are and who God is. He is our Rock, cleft for us. I am so thankful to be able to worship our Savior whether in person or on-line. We are family.

With schedules, and life in general, not as we remember from last fall, we are challenged to adapt our Choir routine. With the mask mandate set until the end of September, I felt comfortable with looking for other options for our choir.

I shared information with Pastor and the Elders and have the following plan (as of today). There will be no Adult Choir Rehearsals in October on Wednesdays. Instead, I would like to invite singers to join a Communion Ensemble.

Here is how it could work. (I am writing this on Sept. 17th) Our masking policy will follow that of the congregation for October. However, masks are always welcome! We would meet, spread out in the Choir Room, 30 minutes before the service for a 15 minute rehearsal. Anyone is welcome to join us. The music will be easy to sight read.

During the service, people sit with their family as usual. When Communion is offered, we meet near piano to sing. When finished, we return to our pews.

Dates are as follows:

Oct. 4- Late service (meet at 10 am) Oct. 18th -Special service at 9:00 (Role of singers TBD) Oct. 25- Early service (Reformation; meet at 7:30 am)

Hopefully, we will start traditional rehearsals in November, but watch for upcoming information. Tentative rehearsals would be Wednesdays in November at 6:30pm.

In All Things

by Matt Toll

That will be the theme for the 2022 LCMS Youth Gathering being held in Houston, Texas. The theme is based on Colossians 1:15-20. Although planning for the gathering and selecting a particular text and theme was already well underway before the fears of a pandemic were upon us and that theme, text, and its talking points will go far beyond this current health scare, I can't help but feel the tingle as the Spirit speaks to us even now in today's crisis and weaves the path from the 2019 gathering to the 2022 gathering.

Many people today live in fear of COVID-19 and in the uncertainty of the future, but as Christians we can rest safely and securely in the arms of our God. Last summer at NYG, we spent 5 days in Psalm 46 and built a foundation on our REAL.PRESENT.GOD. We are all now experiencing some of the trembling and swelling, the giving way of the earth as COVID continues to affect our daily lives. When these things take place along the journey of life, we often are tempted to doubt. But God is our refuge, He is our strength. He is real. He is present. And He is our God...

Even during natural disasters and famines?

Yes, IN ALL THINGS, He is our fortress.

Even when loved ones die?

Yes, IN ALL THINGS, He is our fortress.

Even in the midst of now, during COVID-19?

Yes, IN ALL THINGS, He is our fortress.



We are looking forward with anticipation to the 2022 youth gathering to be reminded and strengthened in how Christ is in all things. For now, a reminder from Romans 12, "Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."

Who Are We?

by Daniel Weiss

Dear friends,

We are still seeking your input through the Connecting well survey. You may take it online or fill out a paper copy, but please do not do both. Our records show that more than 300 people have accessed the survey, but fewer than 50 have completed it. The surveys have already helped the nominating committee identify good board chair candidates, but don't let fear of service keep you from filling out a survey. No one is going to badger you to do anything, but we are VERY interested in finding ways to make each of you more comfortable and engaged in your local church. It only takes about 3 minutes and you can complete the form at: connectingwell.questionpro.com

In other Stewardship News, I have been working with Keith Casey to prepare for our upcoming strategic planning sessions. By the time this newsletter comes out we will have held our first one. I hope you can attend at least one of the three and lend your voice to the future of Good Shepherd.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has been giving generously to the reduction of our mortgage debt. We have been retiring this debt at an amazing rate. Just five years ago, we couldn't even make the principle payments for a short time. Your dedication and support is truly remarkable. We expect to have our debt paid down in two years or so. What will we do with the freedom this will bring? Come to the planning sessions and help us figure that out!

Strategic Planning Update

BY DANIEL WEISS

On September 26, just under 30 members of Good Shepherd came together to begin our strategic planning process. Led by congregation president Keith Casey, we explored why strategic planning is important, what the individual elements are, and how to do it well. Our second session will be held on October 24, beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Planning is a process, not a product

By engaging in the process of strategic planning, we are really opening up important conversations about how to wisely use the gifts and talents bestowed on us by God. Because this is a conversation, it shouldn't happen with just the elected church leaders or the regular volunteers. This is a discussion that needs everyone's input. The end of this process will not be a set of recommendations that we put in a binder on a shelf but will be a series of living principles and agreements that we develop, implement, and assess regularly.

The second planning session – October 24

At our next planning session, we will be examining our mission statement, drafting a vision statement, and developing some goals and objectives for future ministry. Although the discussion may go in a different direction, we are starting by exploring the three goals of evangelism, discipleship, and fellowship, which are elements of Jesus' Great Commission in Matthew 28. We will be breaking into three working groups to flesh these ideas out further and make recommendations that can be shared with the larger group.

What you can do

We sincerely hope you will make time to attend our next session, but if you have a conflict, you can send your ideas to the church office or me at the email address below. We can also be praying well in advance of the meeting. The truth is that we may have different ideas of what should or should not be done at Good Shepherd and there may be conflicts during this process. Different ideas and conflicts are fine, because they help us explore more deeply how God may be leading us. However, we always want these sessions to be guided by the Holy Spirit. Your prayers and your presence are very valuable! We look forward to partnering with you for the future of our shared ministry at Good Shepherd.

Brushfires News

by Daniel Weiss



Autumn greetings to you. As I sit down to write this update, I realize that I should be on a plane to Portland, OR. to host the national Sexual Integrity Leadership Summit (SILS). Many of our plans have been changed this year, but God has not changed. He continues to offer Himself to us through the Word and the Holy Supper. His love is unchanging and we can always depend on it.

My work this summer has changed with our so-called new reality. Instead of planning a summit event, I have been working with two dozen other Christian leaders to plan a long-range strategic plan for the Sexual Integrity Leadership Summit. At a recent two-day (!) Zoom meeting, we were able to collectively clarify our target audience and identify three primary ministry goals. Although we plan to wordsmith this a bit, we determined that SILS exists to 1) equip, 2) support, and 3) collaborate with change agents who are passionate about gospel-centered sexuality and want to help shape the culture of the Church. Further, our audience will be subdivided into church leaders (pastors, staff, lay leaders, parishioners), ministry leaders (individuals, entities, staff, and engaged volunteers), and caregivers (counselors, therapists, coaches, lay counselors).

We're all very excited about this more clearly-defined ministry path and are busy filling in the many details needed for success. I want to thank this congregation for its generous support of our mission and want you to know that your investment is not just supporting Brushfires, but the many partner ministries we work with. May the Lord bless us all as we labor together in his vineyard.

Crafting in 2020

by Pat Phillips

As you may already know, we will not be having our annual holiday craft fair. God has blessed us with such good attendance that the group has agreed it would be impossible to keep everyone safe in such a confined area. We are hopeful that we can resume the craft fair in 2021. Meanwhile if you have been crafting at home, please continue to do so as we will be able to build up our inventory.

The craft group will not be meeting on Wednesdays at this time. We hope to resume in 2021 and will keep everyone updated. We are currently looking for someone who would be willing to sew reversible fleece mittens. We have had many requests for them and were a big selling item in the past. We will provide the fleece and pattern for anyone interested.

Each year the craft group has designated some of the craft fair proceeds for missions. For the past two years we have filled Christmas boxes for missions overseas. We would like to continue contributing to this ministry(Orphan Grain Train) supported by the LCMS churches. In addition to the Christmas boxes there are other ways in which to donate such as making hygiene kits, baby layettes, pillow case dresses and school supplies. We are also discussing other ways to donate items that will only cost us time but no money. This could be crocheting sleeping mats from plastic bags or having a Spring/Fall closet cleaning drive. No, we will not clean your closets but we will collect new and gently used clothing along with some items that countries are in need of.

One last request will only a few minutes of your time. We are interested in receiving any feedback or suggestions you may have about the way the Shoebox donations were handled this year. We will be having our Christmas in July shoebox event again next year and wondered if you preferred filling an entire box yourself or just donating items. We were very pleased with the results and maybe a little surprised at the number of filled shoeboxes amidst the uncertainty of the pandemic.

Here is a summary of the response to the Christmas shoeboxes incase you missed the bulletin. Of the 102 boxes filled; 50 were filled by the craft group, approximately 28 were filled using monetary donations and the remaining boxes were filled by congregation members. In addition we had donations of underwear, socks, coloring books and crayons. The large carton of underwear and socks will be sent along with the Christmas boxes.



Craft Group Volunteers Filling Christmas Boxes



Completed Boxes, Ready to Be Shipped

Birthdays

October

Carl Stechly	10/1
Cheyenne Wagner	10/1
Logan Reetz	10/2
James Wojahn Jr.	10/2
Thomas Kramer	10/3
Jacob Bedroske	10/6
Jacob Schroeder	10/6
Jennifer Charles	10/8
Donna Gohlke	10/9
Chuck Spiegelberg	10/9
Kristin Wiley	10/9
Carilee Kla	10/10
Keith Casey	10/11
Ethel Pollnow	10/12
Gabby Foley	10/13
Isabelle Foley	10/13
Lisa Spaeth	10/13
Patricia Dreger	10/15
James Gishkowsky	10/15
Cole Heideman	10/15
Greg Koepsell	10/15
Pat Koltz	10/15
Susan Smith	10/15
Casey Ludwig	10/16
David Ullrich	10/16
Sharon Hoepfner	10/17
Tanner Krause	10/17
Todd Klauer	10/19
Alyssa Dreger	10/20
Mitzi Papenfuss	10/20
Gary Bedroske	10/21
Nicole Clarkson	10/22
Rick Cullen	10/22
Ron Feutz	10/25
Ronald Groskreutz	10/25
Carol Bostwick	10/26

Amber Tritt	10/26
Matthias Charles	10/27
William Zorr	10/28
Michael Kirchoff	10/30
Michael Kramer	10/30
Benjamin Collins	10/31
Desiree Flouro	10/31
Lori Purath	10/31

November

Avery Mueller	11/1
Skylar Hibben	11/2
Lillian Leinweber	11/2
Morgan Kirchenwitz	11/3
Shirley Sprague	11/3
Carlton Collins	11/4
Ginny Palkovich	11/4
James Purath	11/4
Steven Collins	11/5
Nancy Kantin	11/6
Aaron Bray	11/8
Kimberly Heideman	11/9
Jordan Steinbeck	11/9
Lori Malcolm	11/11
Vicki Beck	11/12
Patricia Phillips	11/12
Emily Brunner	11/13
Diane Wojahn	11/15
Krista Weiss	11/16
Jean Ullrich	11/17
Jo Zorr	11/18
Cindy Meier	11/19
Stuart Suwalski	11/19
Mandi Hinrichs	11/22
Sharon Leinweber	11/22
Carlos Alvarenga	11/23
Jay Schultz	11/24
Doug Zuhlke	11/24
Geoffrey Cullen	11/25
Lori Bruss	11/26
Patti Stinski	11/26

*"Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves. A cord of
three strands is not quickly broken."*

Ecclesiastes 4:12

Anniversaries

October

Michael & Melissa Kirchoff	10/6
Joel & Tina Nitzke	10/6
Howard & Susan Danula	10/7
Tom & Janet Dunham	10/7
Abby & Eric Zink	10/7
Ron & Christine Feutz	10/8
Bertrant & Joann Behm	10/9
Doug & Diane Flouro	10/9
Milton & JoAnn Haskins	10/10
Michael & Lynn Kramer	10/16
Kyle & Nikole Vergin	10/16
Craig & Patricia Dreger	10/17
Cindy & Kurt Meier	10/20
Jerry & Jan Ratchman	10/22
Mike & Kristie Zellner	10/24
Brian & Lisa Haag	10/26
Craig & Jodie Skadah	10/26
Bill & Pat Koltz	10/28

November

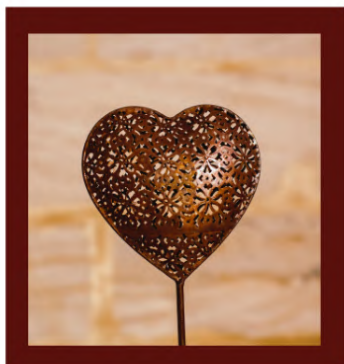
Rick & Doreen Dittberner	11/7
David & Jackie Wagner	11/8
Nathan & Morgan Kirchenwitz	11/12
Carlos & Heather Alvarenga	11/15
Rick & Bridget Cullen	11/17

Acts of the Church

Marriage:

Joseph Stephenson
&
Samantha Kirchner

September 18, 2020



Good Shepherd Council and Board Members

OFFICE	NAME	TELEPHONE
PRESIDENT	KEITH CASEY	(785) 226-3147
VICE-PRESIDENT	CHAD SMITH	(262)-442-0061
RECORDING SECRETARY	DONNA TRITT	(920)420-2803
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	DEB BOCHINSKI	(920) 312-0417
TREASURER	DIANE FLOURO	(920) 420-5841
BOARD OF EDUCATION	JENNIFER CHARLES	(414) 517-9322
ELDERS	TOM DUNHAM	(920) 233-0263
EVANGELISM	VIVIAN MITTELSTAEDT	(920) 479-0775
FELLOWSHIP	LORI PURATH	(920) 379-9202
STEWARDSHIP	DANIEL WEISS	(920) 642-3990
TRUSTEE	CRAIG DREGER	(920) 420-8751
YOUTH	MATTHEW & JULIE TOLL	(920) 379-9938

Financial Updates

We continue to hold steady on our income and expenses in spite of having some large expenses this month (i.e. furnace, maintenance on other furnaces). I am sure many of you review the numbers posted in the bulletins on a weekly basis. I wanted to let you know the total giving for the envelopes each week includes all Joyful Response or Giving +Plus Amounts. Please remember that these weekly amounts fluctuate (sometimes greatly) as members choose to give at various times throughout the month. The biggest amounts come at the beginning of the month and then in the middle of the month, so you will generally see larger amounts given the 1st and 3rd weeks.

Here is a summary as of the end of August.

Total July-August Balances as of 8/31/2020

Regular Giving	\$53,863.62
Mortgage Balance	\$256,409.98
Debt Giving	\$3,131.00
West Point Bank Checking	\$53,696.87
Mission	\$489.00
West Point Bank Savings	\$2,048.09
Scrip	\$8,290.18
LCEF Savings	\$36,160.11

Total Monthly Expenses - \$43,096.92

Monthly Amount Under Budget - \$19,781.61

If any of you have ANY questions whatsoever, feel free to reach out to me, Diane Flouro, on my cell phone (920) 420-5841 or email

Contact Information

Staff

Rev. Gregory A. Koepsell, Pastor
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Cell (763) 913-8445

Call or text Pastor Anytime

Krista Weiss, Office Manager
krista@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org

Office Hours

M-TH 8:00 am - 1:00 pm

Office (920) 231-0530

Pastor's Hours Tues - Thu

11:30 - 3:00 PM

Web Site:

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E-Mail Address:

church@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org

Facebook:

facebook.com/oshkoshgoodshepherd

Worship Services

Thursday - 6:30 pm

Sunday-8:00 am & 10:30 am

Bible Study

Adult—Wednesday at 10:30 am

Adult—Sunday TBD

Sunday School

TBD

Prayer Chain

Kathy Reehl—(920) 688-2312

Hospitalized?? Or you desire a call?? If you are going into the hospital, please call to let the Church Office know. We do not always receive the information in a timely manner so that the appropriate visitation can be made.

Also, hospitals can no longer release information to us about your admittance and room number if you have not signed a waiver. If you want a home visit from Pastor Koepsell, a call or other service, please contact the church office with your request.