



Good News From Good Shepherd

“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”
John 10:11

January, 2021

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What's Changed?

The new year is upon us. Every year at this time, we contemplate what life was like and what changes we will have to make going forward. Our day-to-day life may have changed because of the COVID virus. Our way of life may be changing because of newly imposed political or societal views. Our church life may be changing because we will have a new pastor coming. We may be changing because our kids have grown up and we are getting, let's face it - older. How do we handle all of this? What is it that God calls us to do differently because of all these changes? The answer is “nothing.” Nothing different, that is.

In Matthew 22:37-38, Jesus quoted Moses when he said that the greatest commandment is to “love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” Our love for God is a key component of our faith. **1 Peter 1:3-9** says our trials test the genuineness of our faith. But then Peter goes on to describe our faith as not just a belief in God, but a love for him as well.

vs 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, **vs 9** obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Peter commends them for loving God as well as believing in him and rejoicing. This is the definition of true faith.

In Matthew 22:39, Jesus said the second commandment was like the first: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' We have been called to do the same. We are called to comfort one another (**2 Corinthians 13:11**); we are called to be compassionate with one another, forgiving each other (**Ephesians 4:32**); we are called to bear with one another in love (**Colossians 3:13**).

We are called by Jesus to love one another in all the aspects that love entails.

Later, in **John 13:34**, Jesus said to the disciples, "A new command I give you: Love one another." But this wasn't a new commandment; it is a re-emphasis of what God already told Moses. Likewise, God does not give us a new commandment or tell us to do anything differently. Three times Jesus asked Peter in **John 21:15-17** whether Peter loved him. Three times Peter said that he did, and three times Jesus told Peter to “Feed my sheep.” Jesus was about to ascend into heaven and his last instructions were not to perform baptism this way or have communion that way. Jesus' last words and instructions were, “do you love me” and, if so, feed my sheep. We should take that to heart.

Even if we don't like how the world around us is changing or what is happening to us as we get older, our duty has always been and will always remain the same – Love God and love one another. We just may have to love a little bit more as time goes by.

Philippians 1:9 And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more...

David Smith, Head Elder
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Remember you not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43:18-19

While Council did not meet in December, there was lot of activity within our church.



We got notification from the Ohio District Review Committee that our constitution and bylaw revisions were accepted without revision. That is a testimony to the careful consideration given by our congregation in the numerous discussions and the proposal work done by the committee. Thank you to all. We now must work out how we will implement the new structure permitted in the bylaws. This will be on the agenda for consideration at the February voter meeting. *Remember you not the former things, neither consider the things of old.*



The work of the call committee culminated in the voters calling a pastor on December 6. He has subsequently declined the call, so we start again. Our work as a church continues - pray for our Lord's guidance and perseverance that we do not weary in the task. *Behold, I will do a new thing!* Believe that God has a special person in mind for this flock.

The stewardship board continues its work on moving our pledging and time/talent commitments to an online format, making it more convenient for more of us to participate. Look for more in January. Fund raising for moving expenses was largely successful. The campaign to fortify the financial needs around building maintenance is on-going, as is the need for us to be financially prepared to support the new shepherd, when he arrives. Please pray for wisdom and fearless faith in these matters. *I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.*

November YTD	Actual	Budget	Over/Under
General Fund	\$ 167,418.70	\$ 225,171.84	\$ (57,753.14)
Operating Expenses	\$ 142,937.16	\$ 229,653.47	\$ (86,716.31)
Variance	\$ 24,481.54	\$ (4,481.63)	

You crown the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness. Psalm 65:11

Consider these highlights of 2020. Despite the challenges of the pandemic and Satan's attempt to discourage us, [remember ol' Screwtape from C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*? "*Plagues are a most effective weapon given to us by our father below. Normally, Christians are quite comfortable in receiving the dreaded sacraments and gathering in their prayers and other heinous Arts. But if you can stir up a hysteria by means of a plague so that they cut themselves off from our enemies gifts to them, the torment of isolation will drive them to despair and season them quite deliciously much to our delight.*"], the leadership team and our church body faithfully kept doing and believing and worshipping.... and not despairing!

- ✝ The Inreach board assembled the 25th Anniversary Committee and as months progressed a dozen volunteers were involved! While we had to pause the event for 2020, it promises to be a wonderful celebration when it happens in 2021!
- ✝ Our Outreach/mission team provided numerous ways for us to serve locally and around the world through Charlie's Socks, Go Pantry, Masks, GSL Food Pantry and Good Neighbor donations, School Supplies, Federation Flood Buckets, Operation Christmas Child, holiday meal baskets and the Christmas Angel tree.
- ✝ Communications began sprucing up the web site.
- ✝ Property members tackled hallways, lights, outdoor grounds and the street sign, coordinated the re-roofing and have plans for more (needing more volunteers!).
- ✝ Our Education team and Elders, pivoted to online and home resources to keep Bible study, VBS, confirmation and Sunday school activities a vibrant part of our church life and the Elders saw to the support of our regular worship.
- ✝ The Stewardship team kept us informed and educated and conducted needed fundraising, capped by the fun and creative basket raffle.

As we close out a memorable 2020, *crowned with goodness*, let us fix our gaze on Jesus and face the future with confidence, knowing that our heavenly Father so graciously blesses us every day with just what we need (*thy paths drop fatness*) to fulfill his purposes. A blessed New Year to you all.

Marlis Norton, Council Pres.

Embraced by His Grace, Engaged in His Word, Empowered by His Spirit

Stewardship Committee

As we start our new church year and calendar year, there are several things to ponder. Will this virus ever end and what about a pastor for GSLC? While we are wondering about these things it is good to see that there is light at the end of the tunnel. God knows what is needed and will supply answers to those needs.

Phil. 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:



God asks us to trust and continue to do good. It is our faith that we rely on when we see that we need to "move a mountain". As you know the Stewardship Committee has been running the God's Army-Building God's Kingdom Capital Campaign to raise money for the Pastoral Relocation and Building Fund. We will have totals to report after 1/3/2021.

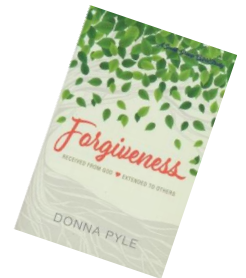
We need to now look toward our General Fund and keeping the Building Fund in the picture also. Our General Fund has been down in the last year compared to when we addressed the issue back in January of 2019. The church sets its budget guided by the commitment pledges that we submit in the Fall each year. This year with the pandemic and all of us being stressed over what we can do and can't do, we postponed that event until this month. We are going to move to an electronic version of our paper pledge and time/talent forms. Our church requires funds to provide for the building, the pastor and the other wonderful works God has given us to do and we need people to help do those wonderful jobs. Please prayerfully consider your financial giving status and watch your email (make sure we have the correct one in the office) and the Voice for instructions to complete the online forms when available. Remember that our Building Fund is always active and the property team is upgrading areas just as you do in your home to keep it safe, secure and comfortable. May God Bless you and watch over you in the New Year.

The Stewardship Committee, Tammy Woolley chair.



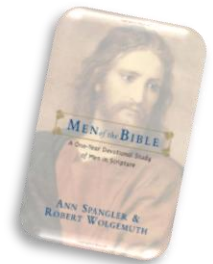
Women's Sunday Bible Study • 11 a.m. • Sunday • January 5

Our small group meets with appropriate distancing on Sundays in the Duchow Room and a Zoom connection is provided for those not ready to meet in person. Our study is Forgiveness by Donna Pyle. The book is available from CPH for \$14.99. Please feel free to join in. It's not too late! We've only finished Lesson 1 and begin Lesson 2 on the 5th.



Women's Bible Breakfast • Saturday • January 9

Mark your calendars for the second Saturday in **January at 9 a.m.** We'll begin the new year with studies from the LWML Quarterly. We will be on-site for those who wish to attend. You are encouraged to bring your own favorite breakfast and are not required to share. If you wish to share a dish, awesome. It is current medical understanding that the virus is not transmitted via food. We will take all the necessary precautions of masking, distancing and cleanliness around service items. If you wish to participate remotely, let me know by Wednesday, January 6 and a Zoom session will be set up and the study emailed to you.



Women's Tuesday Bible Study • Men of the Bible • 9:30 am

We are meeting at church. All are welcome. Join in any time. We study one person each session, no book required.

Tuesday Bible Study at the Smith's

We will take an in-depth look at this life-changing book focusing on our justification, sanctification and glorification. There is space in the 3-5 pm group at my home. Contact me if you are interested or have questions.

Sherri Smith 210-854-259

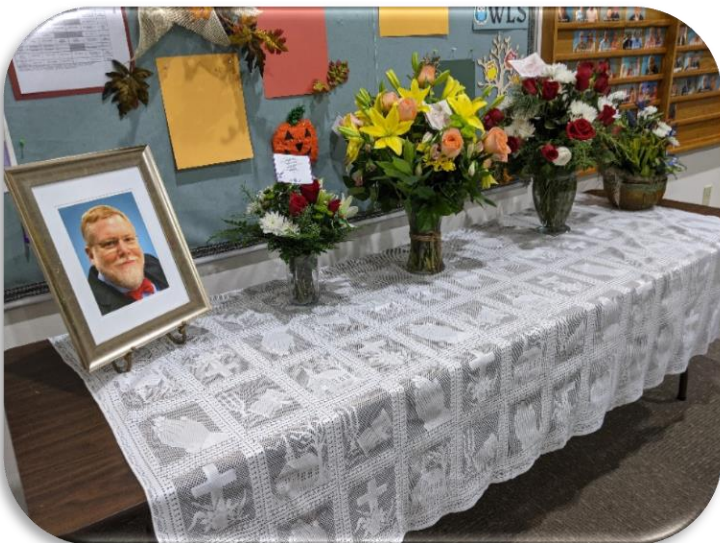


December Events

Balloon Lift Off in Honor of Craig Speicher's Birthday on Dec 8



Luncheon after Memorial Service for Craig Speicher





Representative from First Church of Christ expressed their appreciation by presenting a box of goodies to Julie and Lynn



Angel Tree Gift Collection



Thank you to everyone who gave gifts to the children on the Angel Tree. More than 40 gifts were collected. Thank you for your generosity.





Pastor Poynter and wife Julie have a new addition to their family, Emma Hannah.



Andy Gawura and Lynda Oberst continue their tradition : who has the best Christmas outfit.

Celebrating Christmas At Home

Marlis and daughter Anna

Glen and Kim Leavens



The Aragons



Eva, Gerda Taylor's granddaughter



Lenton Woolley and the boys



The Branns



Adam, Melissa and the boys



Jillian and Madelyn Cottrell



Taylor and Kohen



David and daughter Karina





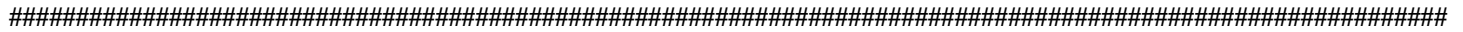
Thank you from Kim Leavens

Thank you for the extra, beautiful music provided in December by Taylor Woolley, Leroy Raap, Mary Givhan, Barb Barvincak, and Glen Leavens.

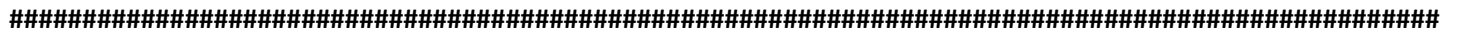
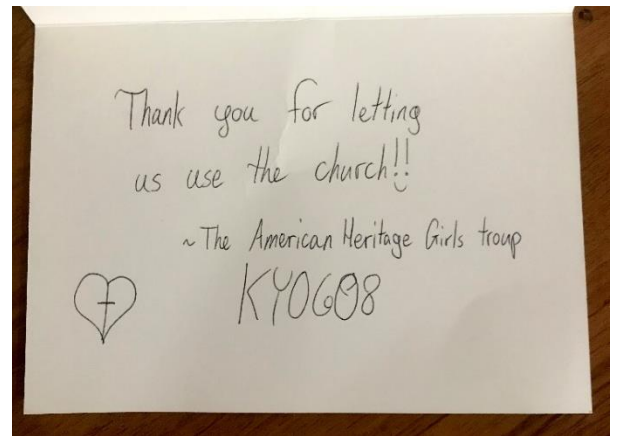
My heartfelt thanks to the members of Good Shepherd for the Christmas gift. I continue to be overwhelmed with your generosity and kind words as I play for worship services. Kim Leavens



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| Isaiah Warren | January 8 |
| Kim Leavens | January 10 |
| Zach Molina | January 15 |
| Marian Brockhoff | January 17 |
| Austin Duane | January 20 |
| Randall Gage | January 21 |
| Robert Brown | January 29 |
| Mary Givhan | January 31 |



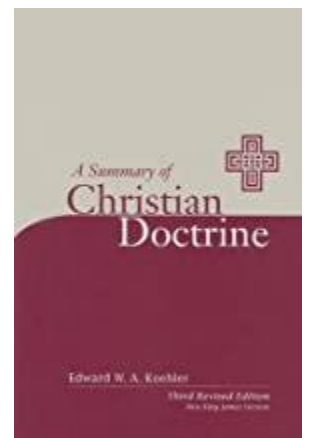
AHG Troop KY0608 has donated \$350 to GSLC as a thank you for our support.



New Men's Bible Study



The Men of the church have started a new Bible Study, *A Summary of Christian Doctrine*, which meets on Tuesdays, 6 pm at church. Please join them.



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry – January 2021

It's a new year. It's a time when we take stock of the year past in order to improve the year to come. It's a time when we sit down to plan and implement what we want to accomplish and even change. Part of that is planning our stewardship for the coming year.

Often, we find this difficult and daunting and even joyless, but it doesn't have to be. In fact, it is really quite simple and full of joy. So, here are some tips to make that planning less stressful. You begin by answering these three questions:

- Who are you?
- To whom do I give?
- And how much?

So, who are you? The Table of Duties in the *Luther's Small Catechism* informs us. Are you a hearer of God's Word? Are you a citizen of society? Are you a member of a family? Stewardship covers these three estates: church, society, and family. We don't particularly struggle to give to society or family. Our struggles, our difficulties, and our questions arise in giving to the Church.

So, what is our duty as members of the Church with regard to giving? Again, the Table of Duties, gives us a guide. If you are a hearer – a member of the Church who receives instruction – St. Paul taught: "Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches" (Gal. 6:6). This means the local congregation is primary.

Your pastor is the one called to preach the Gospel to you and administer the Lord's blessed sacraments to you. Your congregation is the place where those things happen. Thus, when God calls us to give to the Church, He has the local congregation in mind. For "the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14).

How much do we give to the local congregation? Our only instructions are to give:

- Regularly (1 Cor. 6:1–2);
- Proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12);
- Generously (2 Cor. 8:20);
- Of our first fruits (Gen. 4:4; Prov. 3:9; Lev. 27:30); and
- With a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23).

In other words, giving to the Church is not to be an afterthought, given after everything else is spent. In this way, it is deliberate. We give regularly – weekly, biweekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly – keeping in mind our own strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. We set it aside beforehand – before anything else is spent.

From those first fruits, we set aside a proportionate and generous amount. Ten percent was the standard for the Israelites. This was a command for the ancient Israelites. We can give as much as we want, but ask yourself: Do we really want to be less generous than was commanded of the Israelites? Is the job of the New Testament Church bigger or smaller than the job given to Israel?

And how are we to give it? We give it with eagerness and earnestness. We give it cheerfully and with love, not out of compulsion. For through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, God has made us His children, forgiven us all our sins, given us grace upon grace, promised us life everlasting with Him in His kingdom, and filled us with His own Spirit, the Holy Spirit. This makes giving a joy, as Jesus said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

It's that easy. And it is joyful. For in stewardship, our gracious and giving Lord invites us to take part in the work that He accomplishes here on earth, providing for the ongoing preaching of the Gospel as well as those who are in need. Taking part in that makes all our work holy – work that is done in service to the Lord as priestly members of His kingdom.

WINTER BIBLE STUDY on February 6

“Godly Living in a Pagan World – It’s Not All About Us

”



Plans are complete for the Winter Bible Study on February 6. We won’t have to travel far or worry about snow dates as it will be on Zoom and phone conferencing. Just tune in at 10:00 a.m. with your coffee in hand. Co-Chairmen Carol Leslie and Peggy Kelm have invited Pastor Mark Etter of Bethany Lutheran in Erlanger to present one Bible Study in his new series. This one titled “Godly Living in a Pagan World – It’s Not All About Us” will be based on Daniel 3: 1-30. Won’t it be refreshing to “see” our sisters in LWML, inspiring for our faith, and delightful to share our thoughts! All women welcome.

Helping the Homeless

Join your congregation donating to the “Helping the Homeless” service project with personal care items and basic clothing needs. These will be delivered to Prince of Peace Lutheran, as they team with Tolbert House, helping 65 homeless individuals make it through the winter months. Help others reaching and teaching Jesus’ Love.

Items requested: deodorant, toothbrushes and paste, bar soap, shampoo and conditioner, razors, feminine products, socks and underwear, hats and gloves, sweatshirts, hoodies, thermal tops and bottoms, sizes L to XXX

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