

GOOD SHEPHERD
LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF OSHKOSH, INC.

LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD



2020 YEAR-END REPORT

2020 Pastors Report

We all know it's been a rough "pandemic" year. We've done strange things, from worshipping in our cars in the church parking lot listening to the service on the car radio, to "scheduled" communion appointments, to taking away the hymnals, to shutting down VBS and Sunday School...recorded messages from the pastor's basement and much more than that even, but through it all, Good Shepherd is still stable and even strong. I'm excited to see how we come out of this. I believe it will make us stronger and more capable of doing God's mission here in Oshkosh.

Thank you for everything...Doing things without being asked, those who clean and take care of church, helping with different events and serving on different committees, accomplishing tasks, welcoming new people, teaching and mentoring our children and young adults as best as we can, sharing musical skills, opening up your pockets to help pay the bills and support Good Shepherd's missions...tech help through these weird times...the support you give me and my family...so blessed to be here.

Good Shepherd is stable ... of course, church attendance is WAY down, about 50 less per week than 2019, but I don't think any of us are surprised by that. (also, a good amount of people watching online). The challenge for us is to be ready to explode when (and if) this pandemic is over. Another challenge is to pray and be prepared for the challenge of those (especially young families) who have not attended church in months to come back! The prayer is that they will come back! We've made strides in that direction the best we can. And when we do "explode" it's still important to keep it "small" intimate and soul touching. Every soul at Good Shepherd is so important, and God intends to keep it that way! We're going to continue to celebrate victories, and even look for reasons to celebrate (which shouldn't be that hard) and keep our growing church "small", by connecting people to people.

Let's look at some stats beginning with **Official Acts** (from 2020)

- **2020 Worship Service attendance total average weekly (total number of worshippers/52 weeks---2020 minus two months---): 185 (Less 2 months –April and May - /FB views, worship in the car, etc...)**
- **2019 the total average was 221.**

The following were received into His kingdom by the Sacrament of HOLY BAPTISM (14)

1. Katelyn Donat,
Baptism: 01-19-2020
2. Carter Malison
Baptism: 01-19-2020
3. Hannah Malison
Baptism: 01-19-2020
3. Liam Malison
Baptism: 01-19-2020
4. Janet Reinhart,
Baptism: 01-19-2020
5. Katherine Marie Purath, daughter of Christopher and Amanda Purath
Baptism: 03-22-2020

6. Ella Jean Berry, daughter of Chad and Elyssa Berry
Baptism: 05-03-2020
7. Bronson Cole Weed, son of Kieran and Apryl Weed
Baptism: 06-14-2020
8. Tonya Faye Richert
Baptism: 07/25/2020
9. Courtney Lynn Fritz
Baptism: 07/25/2020
10. Elijah Ronald Will
Baptism: 07/25/2020
11. William Woods, son of Adam and Alyssa Woods
Baptism: 12/08/2020
12. Jameson Clark Doyle, son of Clark and Sydney Doyle
Baptized: 12/20/2020
13. Knox Own Eichhorn, son of Riley and Samantha Eichhorn
Baptized: 12/20/2020

May the blessings of our Lord rest upon these baptized, and may the children continue to receive a Christian education.

JUNIOR CONFIRMATION

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Alex Beck | Confirmed: 05-31-20 |
| 2. Armand Lewis III | Confirmed: 05-31-20 |
| 3. Carson Steinbeck | Confirmed: 05-31-20 |
| 4. Chloe Tritt | Confirmed: 05-31-20 |
| 5. Silvie Weiss | Confirmed: 05-31-20 |

MARRIAGE

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 1. Jacob Schroeder and Nicole Reifschneider | Married: 03-28-2020 |
| 2. Christopher Hibben and Amanda Schoenrock | Married: 03-20-2020 |
| 3. Joe Stephenson and Samantha Kirchner | Married: 09-18-2020 |
| 4. Steve Casey and Jodi Van Dyn Hoven | Married: 12-31-2020 |

+ DEATH +

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Donna Daniels | Death: 01-02-2020 |
| 2. Herbert Edwardsen | Death: 03-15-2020 |
| 3. Joanne Zorr | Death: 12-06-2020 |
| 4. James Warwick | Death: 12-17-2020 |

NEW MEMBERS

1. Mary Becker
2. Joanne Brinkman
3. Abby Gallenberger
4. Bill & Nancy Macksam

5. Adam Schmidt
6. Ted Strobel

All in all 15 New members welcomed in 2020 including Children and baptisms.

Four members called to their eternal home.

MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY – DECEMBER 31, 2020

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| *Communicant Membership: | <u>363</u> |
| Children: | <u>73</u> |
| Baptized Membership (Communicants & Children): | <u>436</u> |
| <u>*ACTIVE Members:</u> | <u>260 (ish)</u> |

**Always changing*

A couple highlights from 2020...

- Worship in the parking lot?
- Appx. \$18,000 was given to local and abroad missions.
- Lots of Sox and Undies gathered for Orphan Grain Train
- Almost \$3000 and hundreds of pounds of food were collected through our Super Sundae Sunday mission endeavor to support our local missions and Lutheran Food Pantry.
- We transitioned to two services on Sunday & Wednesdays to maximize the space God has blessed us with and to keep us as Covid safe as possible.
- Through God's people at Good Shepherd, we put a major dent in our mortgage...again.
- We welcomed some new people to serve on boards!
- Lives have been changed, faith has been strengthened, and friendships have been forged.
- 28 kids in confirmation class!

A couple things to look forward to in 2021 (As soon as it's deemed "safe")...It's hard, nut not impossible to dream bigger with so many unknowns, but...

- More new members on horizon
- Some baptisms on horizon!
- A few "friendship Sundays"
- A "Mingle and Munch" time for new members
- Polka service at Menominee Park (June)
- New people coming in means new ideas and energy
- Being blessed to serve and give in the many ways listed above again!
- Through any change, we're keeping the Good Shepherd at the center.

Personally: Pastor Koepsell and family are as good as can be.

2020 Trustee Year End Report

Kone elevator of Appleton was called to give us a second opinion on the issue we were having with random shutdowns of our elevator. Since the reversing relay was replaced on Monday Oct 26th the elevator has been operating properly.

In as much as Kone Elevator of Appleton was able to diagnose and repair the elevator when Otis wasn't able to, we have decided to Contract with Kone for elevator quarterly inspections as required and "on call" maintenance in lieu of continuing with Otis.

In July several minor roof repairs were completed and there have been no reoccurring leaks.

In September we had to replace one of the original building furnaces (about 35 years old) and one of the air-conditioners for the worship area was diagnosed as deceased. The air-conditioner will be replaced in the spring. Given the age of our building and infrastructure we can expect repair expenses will be larger in the future than they have been in past years.

With winter on us the parking lot snow removal contract is taken care of using the contractor from previous years.

Sidewalk snow removal is accomplished by volunteers; there is a signup sheet in the narthex. As always there is an ongoing need for volunteers for snow blowing and lawn care.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of a functioning church without them our earthly life would be much coarser. We enjoy the services of many good volunteers but we can always use more.

Respectfully submitted,
Craig Draeger
Trustee's Chair

2020 Evangelism Year End Report

Due to Covid 19 our congregational event were very few this year.

COFFEE HOUR: From January til March various groups were hosting this special time after service. With covid setting in coffee hr. was discontinued and continues to be stopped. We pray that in the New Year we can again have social time.

FESTIVAL BRAT BARN: Thursday, August 13th, Good Shepherd hosted the stand. It was a very successful day. THANK YOU to all members who helped and assisted in any way with this event. We had wonderful grillers, sellers, shoppers. Those who donated script cards and Thrivent Financial for the \$250 card all made it possible to turn a complete profit. \$920.00 in sales, and \$210 in tips. We look forward to next summer's event.

CHRISTMAS BOXES: ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN received over 100 boxes to give to children of all ages. THANK YOU to all members that either filled a box or donated items for boxes to be filled. We look forward to next year's event.

WORSHIP: it has been wonderful to be "IN PERSON" for worship since June. The on-line services have also been well viewed. We pray that more members will be attending soon.

NEW MEMBERS: on Sunday, December 6th we WELCOMED many NEW MEMBERS. Please continue to check the boards in the atrium and get to know them. Introduce yourselves to them and make them feel welcome. NAMES WILL BE IN PASTORS REPORT.

EVENTS PUT ON HOLD: we had various event put on hold for the year.

*PIZZA RANCH

*WATERFEST

*LENTIN/ADVENT MEALS

We have all been challenged this year. As Christians we know that God continues to be in control of our Nation. In all things GIVE GLORY TO GOD FOR HIS BLESSINGS.

As of the end of December this is my last report to give. I give glory to God for the many years I have served you as Evangelism Board Chair. My prayer for 2021 is that you all remain FAITHFUL to word and sacrament, continue to meet and greet each other, pray for each other and stay safe and healthy.

NEW CHAIR AND COMMITTEE: Nicole Schroeder (recent new member)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: *Susan Danula *Cindy Meier

*Janet Dunham *Jon & Judy Mielke

*Chris Feutz *Mike & Kristie Zellner

Thank you to these members who have stepped up to help with upcoming events. Remember, the entire congregation is really part of EVANGELISM. GOD BE THE GLORY.

GOD'S BLESSINGS IN 2021.

Respectfully submitted,
Vivian Mittelstaedt
Evangelism chair

2020 Board of Education Year End Report

2020 was a trying year for the Board of Education. Following guidance provided by health organizations, No VBS or Sunday school was held in 2020. As Pastor touched on, a majority of parents with young families have not returned to attending services, which has made it difficult to stay connected.

Video outreach was performed by Sunday school teachers via YouTube and Youth bibles were delivered to each family at the end of 2020 by the Sunday School Teachers.

The Board of Education welcomes Cam Bedroske as the Sunday School Superintendent. We continue to explore ways to connect with typical Sunday school students during 2021 with things such as take home “Church” bags that can be picked up with activities.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Charles
Board of Education Chair

2020 Board of Youth Year End Report

2020 has been a transition year for the youth group at Good Shepherd. We opened the age group for the Youth group to include grades 6 through 12, we have transformed the old adult bible study room into our meeting space and we scheduled a regular meeting time on Wednesday evenings. Below is a detailed list of highlights in 2020 and plans for 2021.

2020 Highlights

- Roster/Involvement
 - 7 active members on weekly basis
- Activities
 - Nourishment (Wednesday night devotion time)
 - Fundraising (two Pizza sales)

2021 Plans

- Roster/Involvement
 - Continue to reach out to youth to encourage their involvement
- Activities
 - Nourishment (Sunday morning Bible study, Wednesday night devotion time)
 - Fundraising (Pizza sales, carwash?)
 - Service (Reformation party, larger project?)
 - Social Events (escape room, Noah’s Ark trip)

Respectfully submitted,
Matt & Julie Toll
Board of Youth

2020 Fellowship Year End Report

January 11: Donna Daniels Funeral (65 people)

January 19: Hosted Fellowship Hour
February 16: Hosted Fellowship Hour
February 26: Lenten supper hosted by the Confirmation class
March 4: Lenten supper hosted by the Choir
March 11: Lenten supper hosted by the Youth Group
Remaining Lenten suppers canceled due to COVID-19
The balance of Fellowship events were canceled due to COVID-19

Thank you to everyone who helped serve and make these events a success.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Purath & Sharon Leinweber
Fellowship Co-Chairs

2020 Elder Year End Report

Our congregation has been blessed despite Covid-19. We continued with our ministry, church services and communion during this difficult time trying to keep everyone safe. Services were provided in various ways to try and provide access for everyone depending on needs and comfort level. Masks and social distancing were implemented with disinfecting pews in between services. Several of our members contracted the virus.

We had to make some rapid changes for the Christmas services. We were fortunate to have assistance from the newly installed Pastor Pemberton of Trinity Oshkosh. He assisted with two baptisms and two Christmas Eve services. We appreciate his willingness to step in and look forward to having continued interaction with them.

During the year of Covid-19 we had wonderful parking lot services for Easter and Reformation Sunday being able to use electronics to enhance the services. We would again like to thank Pastor Koepsell for providing refreshing messages, Cam Bedroske and the choir for the music and Jacob Bedroske for his electronic expertise. We also want to thank everyone that has been involved with the taping of the services.

Even though during this time our physical attendance has been smaller, our members have been very faithful in various ways including stewardship that has allowed us to meet our operating expenses and even pay down our mortgage substantially.

Our adult choir is smaller, but they have occasionally been able to offer singing, to help glorify the Lord. A small group has been able to sing to some of our members at Evergreen Manor outside their rooms.

Our Sunday school has not been in session, but the leaders have tried to provide materials to the families of Sunday school children.

Bible studies were suspended for a while but are starting up in January 2021.

There are 27 students in confirmation and have been broken down into three classes.

Your assigned Elder is always open to hear from you with any concerns. Please use them as a resource whenever needed.

A special thanks to all of the Elders as this Covid-19 has required us to make adjustments with various services.

We pray that all of our members are safe and we look forward to getting back to our full ministry as soon as possible.

2021 work program

1. Support and assist the Pastor with his overall ministry at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
 - Provide Elder coverage for all church services so they are conducted in good order with assistance from the music director, ushers, altar care, acolytes, decorations, etc.
 - Regular Services and special services such as: Lent, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Advent, Christmas, parking lot services, park service and any other special services such as the Lenten Meditation service and any other public worship.
 - Assist Pastor in his duties associated with serving the Lord's Supper, Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals.
 - Assist Pastor as needed with home and hospital visits.
 - Assist Pastor as needed with disciplinary, counseling and other special needs of the Pastor or congregation.
2. Each Elder is responsible for a group of members with particular concern for the spiritual and personal well-being through prayer and regular contact and will act as a liaison between the member and organizations of the Congregation.
3. Look forward and assist with having the church pews filled with worshiping members, kids sermons, Sunday School in session and socializing between services.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Dunham
Chairman of Elders

2020 Stewardship Year End Report

As we say goodbye to 2020 and welcome in 2021, I encourage all of us to stop and thank God for his faithfulness to us over the past year. Despite the MANY challenges we all faced as individuals and as a family of faith, God has blessed us considerably over the past year. As Stewardship Chair, I would like to highlight the five most important projects we were involved in this past year:

1. Financial Stewardship -- You may want to sit down before reading this. At the end of November, 2019, just 13 months ago, our mortgage balance sat at \$467,627.80, nearly half a million dollars! At the end of this past December, 2020, our mortgage balance was down to \$194,950.67. In just over one year--in the midst of a pandemic--we paid off more than \$270,000. This happened through the remarkable generosity of many families and individuals in our congregation. Even though it hurt, this church continued to give in support of the life-changing Gospel being shared at and through Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. Thanks be to our Mighty God!

2. Mission Stewardship -- This past fall, the congregation was invited to a series of strategic planning meetings led by President Keith Casey and supported by the Stewardship Board. We talked through some of our strengths and weaknesses as a congregation and identified some of the challenges and opportunities facing our church in this culture and community. We also began crafting a mission and vision statement to guide our future plans. With our mortgage close to being paid off, we intend for this strategic planning to continue in the new year so we can be well situated with actionable plans for the future of our church. If you haven't yet attended, look for announcements for the next round of meetings.

3. Volunteer Stewardship -- While stewardship is often considered to be just about money, I believe Good Shepherd Church is called to carefully steward all of the gifts given to us by God. More precious than offering envelopes and Joyful Giving and the beautiful souls entrusted to our care. God has called each of us to this church for our good and His glory. In fact, this ministry could not occur without the dedicated and faithful gifts of time and talents that so many of us give. Near the end of last year, I asked the church council and other leaders within the congregation to send me a list of all the volunteers they worked with over the course of the year. The number of names I received surprised and thrilled me. According to our best estimates, 168 individuals from 100 families donated their time to carry out the work of Good Shepherd in 2020. In recognition of your volunteerism, the Board of Stewardship purchased gift cards to GrubHub for all our volunteers. We hope to have an in-person meal to celebrate in the coming year, but for now, please receive our hearty and well-deserved thanks for your service to God, and this congregation.

4. SCRIP Program -- Among our many amazing volunteers, I'd like to single out Jeff and Linda Everson for special thanks. Even with reduced church attendance and a time when we didn't meet at all, Jeff and Linda have been faithfully stewarding our SCRIP program. Because they invest themselves in being available, answering questions, taking and making orders, the church was able to receive approximately \$2,400 in 2020 through their efforts and through your SCRIP card purchases. What's more amazing is that this total is only slightly lower than last year's final amount. We are so blessed to have this tag-team couple working faithfully for the financial health of our congregation.

5. Connecting Well Survey -- Although it got overshadowed by last year's circumstances, we revised the previous time and talents survey to help us get a sense of where and how our members would like to get involved in the ministry of Good Shepherd. In all, just under 50 members completed the survey, but through their responses we were able to identify and approach several members to serve on the church council, as well as to assist with other board service. We will continue to use these responses as we work on our strategic planning and to increase our volunteerism in 2021.

Joyfully submitted on January 19, 2021.

Daniel Weiss
Stewardship Chair