

PARISH PULSE

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

-John 3:16



The Gratitude of Repentance BY PASTOR KOEPSSELL

Greetings people of the Good Shepherd!

Whatever craziness you have planned for the next month or more, whatever the excitement, the anticipation, the worries or stress...no matter what the “holiday season” brings, once more the sun will dawn on Christmas day (unless, of course, well, you know)...

Throughout the world wherever the name of Christ is known, Christian people will gather to celebrate the birthday of their Lord and King. Songs of praise and thanksgiving, anthems of adoration, and expressions of worship will be echoing in millions of hearts and homes. In these glad hours, the eyes of untold multitudes will be fixed on that blessed manger scene where lies the Christ, “the Star of our life and the only Hope of our eternity.”

But why is Christmas a day of such unmixed joy? Because, what would be our fate had there been no Christmas?!

Since the fall of our first parents, the human race had groaned under the lash of the most cruel taskmaster, enslaved under the power of the prince of darkness—spiritually without help or hope unless ransomed by the promised Savior!

...Then suddenly on that first Christmas night the heavens were torn wide open with the enthralling message of the angel: “Unto you is born a Savior!” The ransom had arrived! The love of God, which sent a Divine Redeemer to rescue a doomed humanity, is the source of this unbounded gladness.

For us, who in our God-given faith believe in the Christ Child as our Savior and Redeemer, Christmas spells out the difference between (A) a dismal existence and an eternity in the company of the prince of darkness or (B) an exciting life, filled with purpose and a glorious eternity before the throne of God with all the saints in heaven—in the company of Him who loved us and redeemed us to be His own forevermore.

What a glorious festival, this Christmas! What a glorious message, this Gospel! And what a glorious Savior, this Christ!

In January (the 6th) we celebrate Epiphany, where the “Wiseman” (the Magi) came to worship the Messiah, our Good Shepherd. They got it. That’s probably why we call them “wise-men”.

You get it too. Thank God for that!

Live the celebration, stay safe & have a Blessed Christmas,
-Pastor

In this newsletter you will find out more about a change on the Elders board, encouragement for new habits in the new year, a wonderful summary of the annual Craft & Bake Sale, and many other things going on at Good Shepherd.

Faithful Service

by Keith Casey, Church President

Greetings and the Lord be with you!

Matthew 28:19-20: (19) "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."

Great news! Our congregation is full of the gift of the Holy Spirit! I have talked with several of you over the past couple of months and everyone is looking for ways to share the good news of our Lord and Savior! 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!

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, as always, are well, despite some unforeseen expenses this past year. We continue to pay down our mortgage debt, cover all expenses and reach out to the local, national and international communities through our missionary work. Again, I do ask everyone to prayerfully consider what you can give in the coming year, both financially and of time. We can use volunteer help in lots of areas and your gift of time and treasures are very much appreciated.

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 work in each and every one of you in your own special way. I would like to close this newsletter article with words of wisdom from Dr. Michael Uden, Vice Provost, Concordia University Wisconsin, about the power of God's Word, the Holy Spirit and the season of Advent:

"I assume most of us have a greater collection of face masks now than we have had at any point previously. Wearing a mask has become a ubiquitous part of our everyday lives. Yet even before COVID, was that not also true? How often have we covered who we really are or hidden what we think or believe in fear others won't accept us-or laugh and walk away? Long before COVID-19, "unmasking" meant to reveal one's true identity. As we approach the season of Advent, perhaps that is more needed than ever."

Each of us has hidden hurts, needs, sins, and struggles that we may disguise even from ourselves. In this sacred season of Advent, may we instead open God's Word each day and through the Holy Spirit's power, open our hearts and minds anew to his love and care? Just savor our first full breath when we remove a COVID mask, may God's Word and grace drop as the rain...distill as the dew, like gentle rain upon the tender grass, and lie showers upon the herb (Deuteronomy 32:2). Look at Advent in the face, and face this season with hopeful anticipation for your loving Savior's arrival." Dr. Michael Uden, 2020.

Treasurer's Report

by Diane Flouro, Treasurer

This last quarter saw a large reduction in our savings account at LCEF since we paid for the roof replacement that was done in October. You will see by the number we were also considered over budget for these amounts again. We continue to do well with staying within our budget and will most likely finish up the year under budget. We will be voting on the 2022 budget at the voter's meeting in December. Please plan now to attend and have a voice in what is happening in your church.

A summary of September and October is below:

October expenses include roof of over \$34,000

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.

2021 TREASURER'S SUMMARY	July 2021	Aug 2021
Regular Giving	26,102.01	32,492.00
Debt Giving	5,625.00	910.00
Mission	148.00	130.00
Memorials	0.00	150.00
Other	56.00	1,578.00
Total Monthly Expenses	20,597.00	18,362.00
Monthly Budget Needed	22,538.00	22,538.00
YTD Expenses over (Under) Budget	(1,941.00)	(4,176.00)
Mortgage Balance as of End of Month	114,021.03	109,412.21
Additional Pay Down of Debt	29,510.45	4,608.82
West Point Bank Checking	41,264.98	43,502.92
West Point Bank Savings	4,138.69	4,138.69
LCEF Savings	32,290.03	42,219.11

Serving the Church

by Tom Dunham, *Head of Elders*

Greetings Members of Good Shepherd.

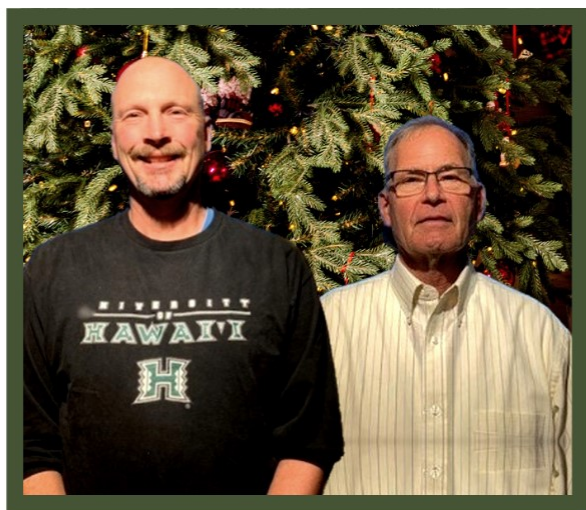
Your team of Elders has continued to be focused on trying to have worship services that are safe and in compliance with guidelines concerning Covid-19. Communion is provided at the early services on the first and third Sunday and at the late services on the second and fourth Sunday along with all Thursday night services. This has been well received and has provided extra safety for our members.

There will be two services on Wednesdays in the Advent season starting December 5th. One at 10:30 am and one at 6:30 pm. On Christmas Eve we will have three services , 10:30 am, 4:00 pm and 6:30 pm.

Volunteers have been working in many areas of our church and we thank all of them for their service.

Fred Kirchenwitz has agreed to become the new head Elder as of January 1st, 2022. We are very blessed to have Fred accept the position and we look forward to working with him.

Blessings to you this Advent Season.



Fred Kirchenwitz and Tom Dunham

The church extends its thanks to you, Tom, for your time as Head Elder. We appreciate all the thoughtfulness, intentionality, and sacrifice that comes with the position. Thank you, Fred, for your willingness to serve in this new capacity.

A Year of Blessings

by Daniel Weiss, *Stewardship Board*

It has been a busy autumn at Good Shepherd. The Fellowship Hour has returned, kids are back in Sunday School, and the Fall Craft Fair was an enormous success. These are just three of the awesome things happening at our church and all of this is made possible by an army of volunteers. We are so blessed to have such great spiritual gifts being used to the glory of God.

Equally remarkable is the heart of gratitude so many of you exhibit in your weekly and monthly giving. Because of the generosity of our members, we will be very close to paying off our debt next year. Thanks be to God!

December is when we will pass next year's budget. I am pleased to report that most of the boards participated in a series of strategic planning sessions that were held prior to our monthly council meetings. Because of this extra planning, we have seen greater cooperation between boards and more joint planning than I have seen before. There is a great deal of enthusiasm among board chairs for a new year of ministry. If you aren't yet connected to one or more outreach projects at Good Shepherd, contact a board chair or myself to see where you can plug in.

Please join me in thanking God for an amazing year of Gospel ministry at Good Shepherd.



The New Norm

by Sharon Leinweber, Fellowship Board

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

It's hard to believe that 2021 is behind us. It has been a busy year, lots of ups and downs along the way. There have been times to celebrate as well as times to shed a tear. Through all of it, God has been right beside us, guiding us, picking us up when we stumble, and loving us no matter what.

And now here comes 2022. Along with the new year comes the New Year's resolutions that we seem to make every year. I don't know about you, but I don't always keep my resolutions. I start out strong in January but seem to fade by March. I always think "Oh well, next year I'll do better".

A few weeks ago, I was on Facebook and saw a post from a good friend and it hit me, this is my resolution for 2022. This is something I can work on every single day. And with that thought, I want to share it with you. Following are the 7 ways to start making kindness the norm in your daily life:

1. Send an uplifting text to a friend or family member.
2. Let that guy merge into traffic with a waive and a smile.
3. Include intentional moments of kindness, laughter and delight in your daily routine.
4. Go slightly outside of our comfort zone at least once a day to make someone smile.
5. Share a compliment with a friend or co-worker.
6. Reach out to a family member you haven't spoken to for a while.
7. Treat someone to a cup of coffee (a friend, stranger, or even yourself).

Not too hard, right? May God bless you in every way in the coming year.

LWML

by Mary Becker, LWML

The LWML had a very busy fall. In September we held our Fall Retreat at the Oshkosh Convention Center; it was well attended and very inspirational. Following that wonderful event was our Fall Rally, held at Divine Savior, North Fond du Lac in October. The guest speaker, Julaine Appling, President of the Wisconsin Family Council was very informative and interesting. This fall, Cinda Poppe our SWD President, presented us with our LWML Charter Certificate, which is on the bulletin board. Officers elected are: Sharron Ziemer Secretary--Donna Gohlke Treasurer--Mary Becker President. Our by-laws have been approved and accepted.

We Have several events coming Up: LWML SWD Winter Getaway on February 4 & 5, 2022 at Clarion Hotel and Convention Center in Wisconsin Dells; more information is posted on the bulletin board. Prayer Breakfast in February at Divine Savior, North Fond du Lac; more information will be posted at a later date.

Our next meeting--Christmas Party at The Roxy, Tuesday December 14th at 5:15pm, all women are welcome; will need to know a count by Friday, December 10th. Please call or text Mary Becker at 920.229.9561. Thank you



Good Shepherd's LWML receiving charter certificate

Setting New Brushfires of Freedom

by Daniel Weiss,
Founder and President of Brushfires

Dear friends at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,

As 2021 nears its end, I'd like to share some ministry highlights that you have helped to make possible this year.

In April, we hosted our 3rd Sexual Integrity Leadership Summit (SILS) in San Antonio. Two hundred people showed up in the midst of the COVID pandemic and we were able to meet safely, worship the lord and learn from each other how to help churches promote Gospel-centered sexuality. The feedback we received from attendees was overwhelming. People connected with peers, made new friends, and launched many new ministry partnerships.

This summer we launched two new strategic working groups. These two Communities of Practice, as we are calling them, are focused on two issues of great importance. The first group is studying church systems in order to learn how to best manage culture change in churches, and the second group is exploring how to develop church-family partnerships for teaching young people and teens about sex in a supportive community model.

As I have been leading these new projects, I've had the opportunity to speak with hundreds of people that are excited to be a part of this larger SILS community. As you might imagine, addressing topics of sexuality with grace, truth and compassion in this culture can be very challenging and lonely work.

By supporting the Brushfires Foundation with your mission dollars, you are directly impacting hundreds of other Christian leaders around the country and the tens of thousands of people they serve. It reminds me of a story I once heard about a man who multiplied a few fish and loaves to feed more than five thousand people. Your gifts are truly being magnified like this. I thank you and praise the God whom we worship for allowing us to partner in this vital work.

May the Lord bless you this Christmas season.

Thankful

by Julie Toll, Youth Group

As we look back over the past year, we yet again have so much to be thankful for; thanks to our Father in heaven. God has showered our lives full of blessings through the day to day trials that we have walked through. He has brought us closer to him and to each other along the way! We entirely agree with David as he wrote Psalm 9:1 – *"I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart; I will recount all of your wonderful deeds."*

- Thank you God for all the members of the congregation that participated in the Youth Group fall cleanup fundraiser!
- Thank you God for the Weiss, Mehn, and Rodig families for their hard work and dedication to getting the job done!
- Thank you God for the parents of the youth and the youth who have committed to attending the 2022 Youth Gathering in Houston next July.
- Thank you God for the youth who attend youth group throughout the year.
- Thank you God for the congregation members who are praying for and financially supporting the youth of our church.
- Thank you God for the Sunday School and Confirmation teachers of our youth.
- Thank you God for our church building and property.
- Thank you God for our pastor.
- Most of all, thank you God for Jesus our Savior!

Matt and Julie Toll



Members of the Youth Group working their way to Texas

Music and Sunday School

by Cam Bedroske, Sunday School Director

Winter Retreat

As we mentioned in the last issue of the Parish Pulse, several Confirmation students were able to attend a Confirmation Retreat at Camp Luther this past fall. We now have a base of kids who are finding out about the opportunities for Christian Fellowship and fun at Camp.

Many of you may know about the South Wisconsin Camp called LUWISOMO. That camp has not been fully operational since Covid hit. However, we are blessed to have another camp in Wisconsin, Camp Luther. They are offering a "Winter Blast Retreat", January 21-23.

Winter Blast Retreats

"Experience a weekend in the Northwoods full of adventure, laughter, and some amazing chocolate. More than that, this weekend will provide your group with the opportunity to recharge and be reminded once again of who they are in Jesus Christ."

Action packed activities, intentional faith building and a whole lot of fun. The whole weekend is led by the Staff of Camp Luther Staff to allow your leaders to focus on hanging out and building relationships with your students."

I am organizing this trip and it is open to Middle School and High School Students. Registration has already begun and they fill up quickly. The itinerary would be as follows:

- Arrive 7-8 pm Friday Eve and depart Sunday 10:30 am
- Cost is \$130
- Dorm-style housing in retreat center
- All meals included

I am working on funding this amazing opportunity and hopefully receiving some help through our congregation's camp fund. Our camp reservations are due by Dec. 20th.

Please let Cam know if you are interested or you have any questions.

Thank you and I hope to see you at camp.

To find out more, you can go to:

<https://campluther.com/winteryouth>

Music For Christmas

Not sure what to give your church family for Christmas? Consider sharing your gift of Music.

I am always looking for soloists, pianists, instrumentalists, quartets, singers, etc. Traditionally, 1/2 hr before Christmas Eve service, we have many people share their talents. If you are looking for music to sing or play, or how to organize a group, just let Cam know.

The Elders set the timetable for those services, so as soon as they publicize that, please hop aboard and be a musician that day/night.

P.S. I am also looking for special music to be offered by any kids before the Sunday School Program if they want to do that.



Sunday School Christmas Program

Our church family will celebrate the Sunday School Christmas Program on Dec. 19th at the late service. Please attend and support this dedicated group of kids who, despite many obstacles, make their way to Sunday School each week and grow in God's Word and friendship.

The program is their gift to you, so come and get it in person! Please pray for determination, patience and good health as we prepare to once again share the best story ever told!

I also give thanks to our great teachers. We are all an awesome "Stop at Nothing" team!

RightNow Media

Parents and grandparents, as you know, Christmas Break is just around the corner. Have you already started to plan special activities to do with the children in your life? Sometimes the weather doesn't cooperate with our plans or we find ourselves just a little too tired to go out into the cold & drive on icy roads. Have you considered the option of using RightNow Media to spend some rewarding time with your kids? There are thousands of videos for all ages and interests, all for free! Consider taking advantage of this amazing resource to help your kids learn more about topics from a Christian perspective instead of a secular one. If you haven't already setup your free account, please let the office know and they will email you the free invitation.

2021 Craft & Bake Sale

After not having a craft fair in 2020, the craft committee wondered how successful 2021 would be. Thankfully, there was no cause for worry. Once again our proceeds were over \$10,000 and set anew record set with over 1,000 people attending.

As crafters who enjoy creating, it was sometimes hard to understand why others did not share our enthusiasm. We soon realized their talent was creating delicious bakery, snacks and candies. Our tables overflowed with "yummy" items and workers were kept busy refilling the tables as they were quickly depleted. Often the first words spoken by customers were "Where is the bakery." Some other comments were "the prices are so reasonable" and "next time we will have to come earlier."

Many other congregation members contributed to the success of this event. Those people who gave their gift of time to help set up the week before by setting up tables and putting away chairs, those who were on their feet all day checking people out or walking about greeting people, those who came to purchase items, those who told others about the event, those who worked behind the scenes and last but not least those who prayed for our success.

While it was wonderful to be able to earn money for church, most important was the opportunity to carry out the message and prayer by Pastor Hayman. It is evident that many friendships and love for one another takes place through our efforts working together and on one day we are able to demonstrate our love for one another and 1000 people who walked through the door.

Perhaps this should have been mentioned first but "Praise God" who has richly blessed our congregation. Without His guidance we would not have been able to achieve our success.

Although full use of the proceeds has not yet been determined, a portion will be used to support the Orphan Grain Train and the LCMS youth gathering.

Wednesday craft sessions will not be resumed until after the holidays but we are not idle. As we are going through craft withdrawal we are already planning ways to improve the 2022 Craft Fair and working with Evangelism to disseminate more information about our church to the community.

Once again Thank You to all who participated.



Some of the many Craft Fair volunteers



Last minute details before the Fair opened

Birthdays

December

Dec 1	Nicole Schroeder	Dec 13	Benjamin Wiley
Dec 3	Benjamin Heideman	Dec 14	Doreen Dittberner
Dec 4	Richard Keas	Dec 14	Richard Tritt
Dec 4	Ella Schultz	Dec 15	Rebecca Dittberner
Dec 5	Tami Klauer	Dec 16	Deidra Flouro
Dec 5	Dana Rasmussen	Dec 16	Phyllis Huebner
Dec 5	Doris Wojahn	Dec 19	Catherine Lute
Dec 6	Brittany Bandelow	Dec 19	Brian Spaeth
Dec 6	Linda Nienass	Dec 20	Justin Mielke
Dec 7	Andrew Makurat	Dec 20	Ken Szweda
Dec 7	Kyle Makurat	Dec 21	Sherri Groskreutz
Dec 7	Jennifer Wiley	Dec 21	Judy Mielke
Dec 8	Sandra Casey	Dec 21	Kat Skadahl
Dec 8	Diane Flouro	Dec 21	Carol Zuberbier
Dec 10	Lydia Phillips	Dec 22	Ryan Bandelow
Dec 10	Patricia Warning	Dec 24	Dylan McDonald
Dec 11	Ella Beck	Dec 26	Ryan Beck
Dec 11	Renate Pottter	Dec 30	Bette Lienhard
Dec 13	Bill Macksam	Dec 31	Heather Beck

January

Jan 1	Willie Lewis	Jan 15	Darci Doan
Jan 1	Kari Steinbeck	Jan 15	Shawn Kirchoff
Jan 3	Katherine Purath	Jan 15	Stacy Martin
Jan 3	Susan Schaefer	Jan 15	Keith Reetz
Jan 4	Danielle Flouro	Jan 15	Cody Skadahl
Jan 4	Diana Trinoskey	Jan 15	Zoe Skadahl
Jan 6	Kurt Brunner	Jan 19	Marsha Clarkson
Jan 6	Zoe Brunner	Jan 19	Tom Dunham
Jan 7	Lynn Kramer	Jan 19	Lea Potratz
Jan 8	Pamela Laatsch	Jan 20	Bill Fenlon
Jan 8	Gavin McMillan	Jan 21	Bill Koltz
Jan 9	Elisha Charles	Jan 22	Rick Rasmussen
Jan 9	Bryan Koch	Jan 23	Paul Mittelstaedt
Jan 10	Alfred Pottter	Jan 24	Kathy Groskreutz
Jan 10	Brad Wiley	Jan 26	Camala Bedroske
Jan 11	Valorie Gebel	Jan 26	Mike Zellner
Jan 11	Rori Hinrichs	Jan 27	Fallon Crowe
Jan 11	Bill Wagner	Jan 29	Marlee Potratz
Jan 12	Ashlyn Casey	Jan 31	Chad Berry
Jan 14	Jenny Mehn	Jan 31	Sandra Dordel
Jan 14	Jimmy Smith	Jan 31	Brenda Hawig

Wedding Anniversaries

December

Dec 1	Matthew and Catherine Lute (12)
Dec 13	Seth and Jessie McDonald (18)
Dec 24	Pete and Judy Mehn (27)
Dec 26	Rev. Mark and Edna Hayman (50)
Dec 29	Chad and Elyssa Berry (10)
Dec 31	Steve and Jodi Breitenbach-Casey (1)

January

Jan 3	Mike and Genie Kuble (41)
Jan 14	Eric and Linda Nienass (38)

Church Register

Marriage

Todd Nagler and Bobby Luft
October 8, 2021

Contact Information

Rev. Gregory A. Koepsell, Pastor
pastor@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org
Cell (763) 913-8445 - Call or text Pastor Anytime

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Office (920) 231-0530
krista@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org

Web Site: goodshepherdinoshkosh.com
E-Mail Address: church@oshkoshgoodshepherd.org
facebook.com/oshkoshgoodshepherd

Worship Services:

Advent - Wednesdays 10:30 am & 6:30 pm
After Advent - Thursday - 6:30 pm
Sunday-8:00 am & 10:30 am (Communion offered on 1st & 3rd
Sundays at 8:00 am and 2nd & 4th service)

Bible Study

Adult—December hiatus, will return in January