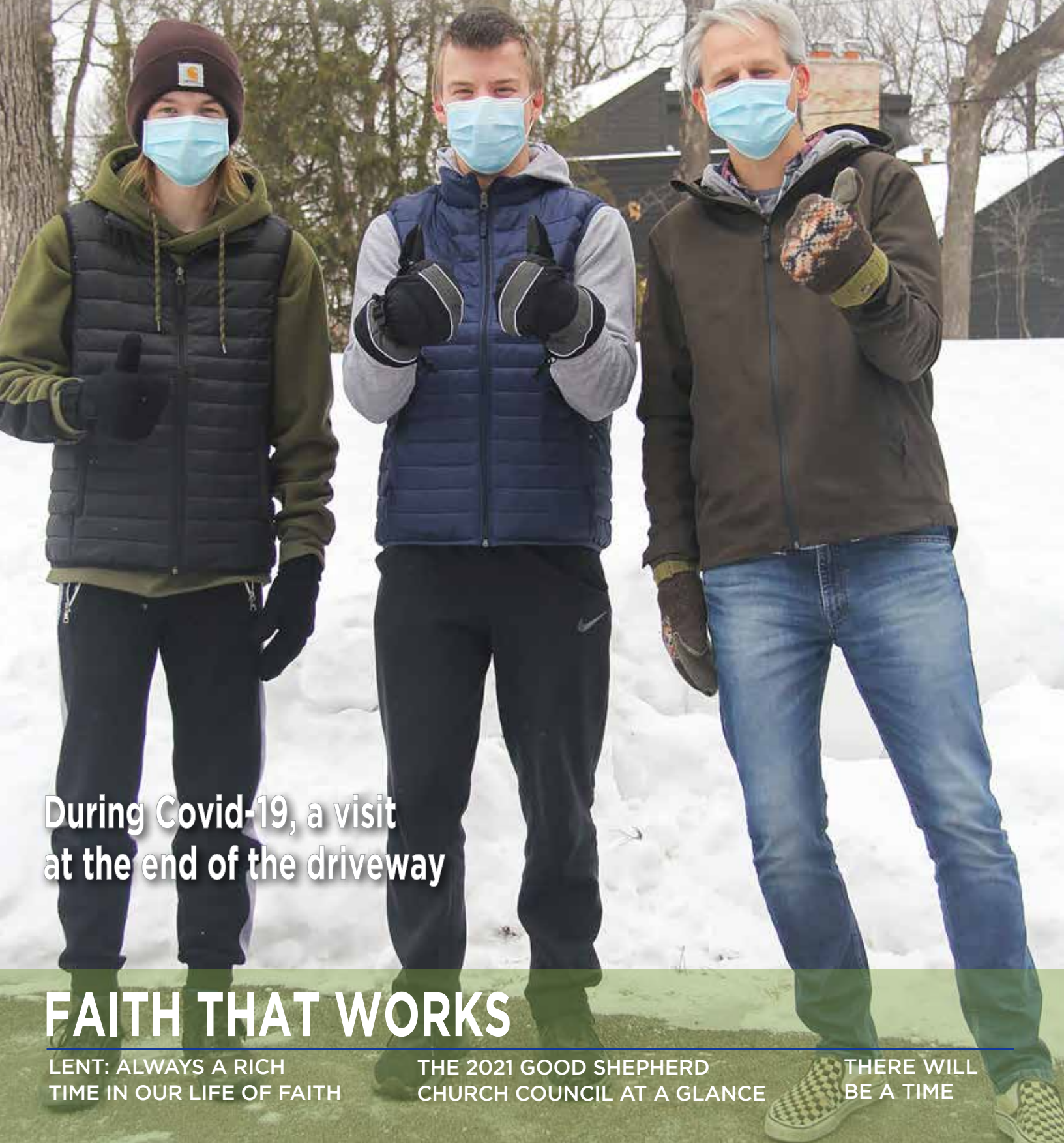


TOGETHER



During Covid-19, a visit
at the end of the driveway

FAITH THAT WORKS

LENT: ALWAYS A RICH
TIME IN OUR LIFE OF FAITH

THE 2021 GOOD SHEPHERD
CHURCH COUNCIL AT A GLANCE

THERE WILL
BE A TIME

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SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship with Communion online every Sunday at goodshepherdmpls.org

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ON THE COVER:

Mark Halvorson meets with Colton and Jason Davenport for an end-of-the-driveway conversation. Photo by Mara Halvorson.

TOGETHER



THIS IS WHO
WE ARE
HERE, AND
WHAT WE
ARE ABOUT:

LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF THE
GOOD SHEPHERD:
FAITH THAT
WORKS

I have been thinking a lot, lately, about the word “now.”

Now.

As N.T. Wright observes, “now” is an important word for the New Testament. But we shouldn’t be surprised that it is also an important word for the Old Testament. “Now” is a truly biblical word – “Now,” as in “at this moment,” “from this point on,” “immediately,” “right here . . . right now.”

“Now” is used to beg a lot of questions: What now? Now what? Now who? How now?

and to begin some answers: Here now . . .

Now then . . . Now see here . . .

Now.

What does now mean for us? What is the now that we are experiencing, still locked in the throes of this pandemic, and in racial, social, cultural unease?

Who are we, “now,” as opposed to before? Who do we need to be, now, in response to this moment? How do we live and share our faith, *now*, and – here is where the immediacy, the demanding, hopeful power of the word “now” comes to bear – *what will be next?*

These are questions that I have been asking as we have negotiated this hard year and as we look to the new year ahead – to the spring, summer, and fall before us.

One thing is clear to me as I have read “now” in the Scriptures: The biblical now has a lot to tell us about our own now – how this now can be won and how that won-now will be ours to own. One word from each testament speaks to it.

First, from Isaiah 43:19-21:

I am about to do a new thing;

now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.

The wild animals will honor me,
the jackals and the ostriches;

for I give water in the wilderness,
rivers in the desert,
to give drink to my chosen people,
the people whom I formed for myself
so that they might declare my praise.

In the face of struggle, Isaiah points to this God of ours who is always ready to do something new, to make our now new. As we struggle or are faced with trials, it can be difficult sometimes to wait for that promised newness, because it can feel less “now” and more “not yet.” But this God of ours has acted in the past, has promised us a future, and so we live in both memory and anticipation; we can realize a hope here, now, in the middle.

As Paul then says to the Galatians,

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Any death or darkness that we might fear, Christ has met them. And so, we too have met them. Now, it need no longer be a body of fear, or caution, or hesitation that we carry into a world full of uncertainties – not because we are careless or reckless, but because the lives we live now are lived by faith.

Dear friends in Christ, it has been long year. But the year ahead of us, with all of its challenges and possibilities, is a year full of grace and opportunity for those of us who live our nows in Christ Jesus – now not just for ourselves, but for one another and for the world. This is what **faith that works** looks like, and it is what we are given to share.

Glory be to God in Christ Jesus who brings us such a powerful hope and promising purpose. Now, and forever. Amen.

FAITH THAT WORKS IS FAITH THAT CAN TRANSFORM
THE WORLD – “MINE,” “YOURS,” “OURS,” “THE.”

P.E.P. TALK

DURABLE FAITH FOR A GRITTY WORLD



BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL

Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work. He was the son (as was thought) of Joseph (Luke 3:23).

If anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them (2 Corinthians 5:17-19).

And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new” (Revelation 21:5a).

We often hear that we are living between two ages. We live between the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the glorious day of reunion, where, as St. Julian of Norwich put it, “And all shall be well. And all shall be well. And all manner of things shall be exceeding well.” We wait for the day that all will be put right. It’s difficult to live in the in-between.

Jesus understood the frustration and blessing of being a part of human history. We know that Jesus was God’s son and that Joseph was his adoptive dad. This certainly got his hometown folks talking! Chapter 3 of Luke’s Gospel details for us the interesting, infamous, saintly, despicable people in Joseph’s family history. Among my favorites are Zerubbabel, King David, Boaz, Perez, Judah, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Noah, Methusaleh, Enoch, Adam. I’m certain most of these names are familiar. Joseph has quite the pedigree for a simple carpenter!

Zerubbabel was a governor for the people as they were returning to the ruins of Jerusalem after the exile. He was tasked with helping his bedraggled and distressed people find a new vision for the future.

King David was the most famous king of ancient Israel. His exploits are detailed in a good chunk of the Old Testament. He was handsome, poetic (thanks for some good Psalms, Dave!), brave, and compassionate. He was also selfish, violent, and sinful.

Boaz can be found in the book of Ruth. He was a kindly man who married the widow, Ruth, and ensured that her mother-in-

law Naomi’s line continued. Ruth was all Naomi had left in the world. Boaz is remembered because of Ruth’s goodness.

Perez is a son of Judah, the biggest tribe to survive the splitting of the kingdom of Israel and the return from exile. Judah saw his sons married off to his daughter-in-law Tamar one after another. They all died, and deep down Judah blamed Tamar, though it was no fault of hers. He withheld his last son (against the law of those days). Tamar disguised herself as a prostitute and conceived twins through her father-in-law, Judah. It’s not a nice story to be sure, but the line of Judah continued to be drawn right to Jesus.

Of course, you know Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham. They were the fathers of Israel. Their triumphs and failings can be found in the book of Genesis.

Noah, Methusaleh, Enoch, and Adam are all pre-historical figures, meaning that they stretch so far back into history that we can’t be sure of the “true” details of their lives on earth. But their stories certainly loom large! Noah and the Flood. Methusaleh living into his 900s. Enoch being spirited into heaven, alive and whole. Adam, God’s firstborn son and creation.

Jesus is tied to all of human history. Jesus is a son of God. Jesus is an adopted son of Joseph. Jesus is our brother, transplanted right into our stories.

As much as we would love to have pristine family trees, filled with saints and heroes, the truth is that all of us come from messy, human histories. We’d love to release the old and simply be a new creation. Jesus understands this tension and meets us in the moment.

I am very interested in genealogy. While most eyes glaze over when they hit the parts of Scripture that involve lengthy lists of unpronounceable names, I perk right up. I’m always hunting for clues about what it means to be a descendant. What are my responsibilities? Who am I? Who do I belong to? Why am I the way that I am? What did Jesus think about his family history? What was it like for God to find himself stuck in the same, strange tree that we’re in?

I once had a week’s subscription to ancestry.com, and I used it to the fullest. I spent hours each day looking at gravestones in cem-

**And the one who was seated
on the throne said, “See,
I am making all things new.”**

REVELATION 21:5A

eteries across the United States, in England, Germany, and Norway. I was introduced to wonderful and horrible people, tied to me. I traced my mother’s history back through the years. Through the Civil War. Through slave-owning ancestors in Alabama. Through the Revolutionary War and a Pennsylvania Dutch community in New England. Back to Europe, all the way to the 1500s. I was thrilled to find a long line of fiery preachers and reformers. This is why I’m so restless and particular! But then my mom said that actually, my great-great grandma, Mercedes, was brought home by her father, who had an extramarital affair and ordered my great-great-grandma to raise her as her own daughter. So, all of my work was for nothing. Instead of soldiers and preachers, I didn’t know who I came from. My mom’s paternal side includes farmers, felons, and violent men whose histories are well-known in northwestern Minnesota and kept hushed up.

My dad is adopted, and neither of my birth grandparents would give me more than the first names of their parents. My grandpa, John Francis O’Halloran, couldn’t recall his own grandmas’ maiden names. Dead ends.

Jesus understands, I think, the restlessness of wanting to know who you are and where you come from. Where does one learn to be the Son of the Divine in the world? What does it mean to be Almighty God when the neighbors are gossiping about your parentage? Jesus had ancestors who did wonderful things. Jesus had ancestors who did terrible things. I think more than anything, that makes him Immanuel, God with us. Jesus, that kid from Nazareth, maybe born of Joseph, was the one who indeed makes all things new. We are more than our histories. We are more than our lineage. But our stories actually place us all into one story: God’s.

So, if like me, you’re feeling out-of-sorts and wondering where you belong fully, you belong here. You belong at Good Shepherd, which is where your brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers live. You belong in God’s story. You belong to God’s family tree. You belong to Jesus, a young man who laid everything down so that you would have eternity to discover just who you are.

Performing Arts Plans Two Zoom Productions

BY TOR JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES & PERFORMING ARTS

THE Messiah INQUEST

Lenten Drama

Our annual Lenten Drama did not happen last year, as we tried to navigate around the newness of the shifting pandemic landscape. This Lenten season, however, we will share the dramatic story of Christ’s crucifixion. Using Zoom, we will present the play we were going to do last year, “The Messiah Inquest” by Carol Shively and Jim Ineson. The play is an imagined courtroom drama which includes all the main characters of the passion story. We will be posting the Zoom drama on our website during Holy Week. Twelve adult members of the church will make up the cast.

ITSY BITSY: TRIAL OF AN EIGHT-LEGGED WASHOUT

Children’s Spring Play

Following on the heels of that Zoom production, a cast of children will present our first ever Zoom Children’s Spring Play, “Itsy Bitsy,” by Charlotte Nixon. Another courtroom drama, the Itsy Bitsy Spider is accused of kidnapping Dish and Spoon, and terrorizing Little Miss Muffet. This production will be posted on our website on May 14.

Musical theater camp is once again cancelled in June and July because of the virus. However, we’re planning a smaller drama camp in August. Stay tuned to our website and email for updates, or contact me at tor.johnson@goodshepherdmpls.org.

Lent: Always a Rich Time in Our

BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL

The season of Lent is upon us! Who would have guessed that we would be away from our sanctuary for almost a full year? Our usual routines and rhythms have been disrupted. Our narthex wandering and conversing has been paused.

We all have sacrificed so much and given up so many things to keep each other safe. It didn't seem right this year in the Pokel household to give anything up for the season of Lent. Instead, we're going to focus on what we have gained. We will turn our hearts and minds to what Jesus has done for us. Instead of thinking about what we have lost collectively, what if we thought about what Jesus claims for us? 1 Peter 5:7 says, "Cast your anxiety on him, because he cares for you."

This past year has caused so much anguish in our bodies, minds, and spirits. Fear, stress, uncertainty – it's hard to admit that these things have often been at the forefront. Trust? Not so much. Jesus has his hands open to you and me, and is asking to take on all of our baggage. Throughout Luke, he announces that his main priority is seeking and saving the lost. Our Rescuer draws near!

Our texts for Lent on Sundays are all about the ways Jesus takes initiative to serve and save us, under the theme, "Baggage Claim." Jesus is asking us to let go of the things that harm us and hold us back. Jesus takes on that burden. There is nothing that he cannot or will not claim as his own and relieve us from the weight.

On Wednesdays, we will consider "Tales from the Beloved Son." Throughout the Gospel of Luke, it's clear that Jesus is God's Son. Sometimes, the stories Jesus tells help us see that clearly. Other times, they muddy the waters. No matter what, Jesus' stories help us to ask questions about what it means to be a worker in his kingdom.

Come and worship!

See the right column for information on drive-thru and gathering opportunities during Lent

Opportunities for Wednesday Worship & Discussions

Our Wednesdays in Lent will feel familiar through our singing of Holden Evening Prayer. Of course, they'll feel different and new too. The Lenten Wednesday worship services will be posted on the Good Shepherd website homepage just like our Sunday worship services.

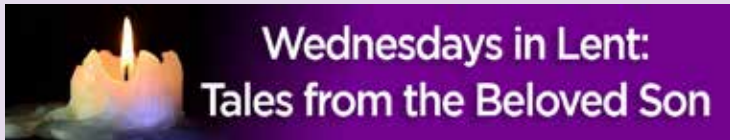
Then, after worship, all are invited to gather on Zoom for conversation and discussion about the evening's Scripture passage. Think of it as a virtual narthex! If you're an overachieving type, you'll find the Wednesday texts below and can use them to prepare. Please register online at good.shepherdmpls.org/lent2021 for these Wednesday night discussions. It will be wonderful to hear about how Jesus is shaping you for service in the kingdom right now.

Together, our Lenten season will still be meaningful, contemplative, educational, and joy filled.



February 21	Luke 10:25-42 (<i>The Parable of the Good Samaritan</i>)
February 28	Luke 13:1-9, 31-35 (<i>Tower of Siloam, Need for Repentance, Lament over Jerusalem</i>)
March 7	Luke 12:1-21 (<i>The Parables of Lost Sheep, Coin, Son</i>)
March 14	Luke 16:19-31 (<i>The Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man</i>)
March 21	Luke 18:31-19:10 (<i>Zacchaeus, Seeking the Lost</i>)

Life of Faith



Ash Wednesday Luke 9:51-62 (*Rejection of Jesus in Samaria*)
February 17

February 24 Luke 8:16-21, 9:1-9, 10:1-24
(*Losing Everything, Carrying Nothing, Gaining Jesus*)

March 3 Luke 12:1-21 (*Hiddenness & Disclosure, Worth More Than Many Sparrows*)

March 10 Luke 16:1-14, 17:1-10 (*Serving One Master, Increase Our Faith*)

March 17 Luke 18:1-17 (*Persistence, Humility, Trust: Ingredients for a Disciple*)

March 24 Luke 19:11-26, 20:9-19, 41-44
(*Parable of the Ten Minas, Parable of the Tenants, Whose Child is This?*)



Palm Sunday Luke 19:29-44 (*The Triumphal Entry*)
March 28

Maundy Thursday Luke 22:1-27 (*Jesus' Last Meal*)
April 1

Good Friday Luke 23:32-47 (*Jesus' Passion for You*)
April 2



Easter Sunday Luke 24:1-12 (*Resurrection & Reclamation*)
April 4

Ash Wednesday Drive-Thru for Ashes & Holden Village Booklets

Drive through the Good Shepherd parking lot on Ash Wednesday, February 17, from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m., to pick up a container of ashes which your family can use during worship that evening. We'll also include a Holden Village Evening Prayer booklet which will be used beginning February 24, so you can join the singing during mid-week Lenten worship.

Worship will commence at 7:00 p.m., including the imposition of ashes.

Wednesdays in Lent Drive-Thru Soup Supper

Beginning Wednesday, February 24, through Wednesday, March 24, please come drive through the Good Shepherd parking lot from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. to pick up a Lenten Soup Supper to go! We'll include a container of soup, a grilled cheese sandwich, and cookies in a to-go bag. You'll be home in time for dinner, then worship at 7:00 p.m.

After online worship, join a Zoom discussion of the text and meditation.

24-hour Courtyard Firewatch Returns

Starting on Thursday, April 1, at 7:00 p.m., we will tend the fire in the courtyard for 24 hours. We will watch and wait as the events of Holy Week continue to unfold. We will extinguish the bonfire at 7:00 p.m. on Good Friday just as worship begins.

Watch for more details as we get closer to Holy Week. Sign up as families or groups with whom you are already crossing paths. Masks will be required. We will be live-streaming the entire time so that those who are not able to be there in person can be part of keeping this fire going on any screen they choose.

The 2021 Good Shepherd Church Council at a Glance

BY CONNIE FUKUDA-CLARK

The newly elected Good Shepherd Church Council began its service right after the Annual Meeting.

Here is a brief refresher of those officers plus a fun fact about each of them.



Bill Kerker
President

Number of years at Good Shepherd: 22

Fun fact: Coaches Southwest High School's Nordic Ski team as its head coach



Andrea Brandt
Vice President

Number of years at Good Shepherd: 25

Fun fact: Enjoys yoga; bikes and hikes (any or all outdoor activities)



Karl N. Jacobson
Senior Pastor

Number of years at Good Shepherd: 8

Fun fact: For the sake of fun, how about this: I have strange toes; both my second and third toes are longer than my big toe . . . on both feet. if I were more flexible, I could probably play a piano duet, solo.



Tim Matyi
Treasurer

Number of years at Good Shepherd: 28

Fun fact: Likes reading (favorite authors are Stephen Ambrose, Daniel Silva, and David Baldacci); bikes around the Three Rivers trails; watches Twins and Dodgers baseball games



Amanda Sykora
Treasurer-Elect

Number of years at Good Shepherd: 32

Fun fact: Bakes her own home-made bagels (a recent activity)



Morgan May
Secretary

Number of years at Good Shepherd: 23

Fun fact: Re-reads *Harry Potter* books every year



Cathy Mooney
Member-at-Large

Number of years at Good Shepherd: 5

Fun fact: Collects beach glass, rocks, shells and sand dollars; loves to photograph flowers and fall foliage



Kevin Roellinger
Member-at-Large

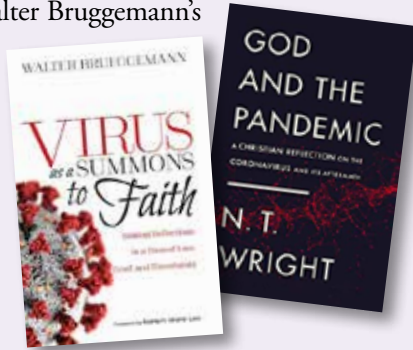
Number of years at Good Shepherd: 12

Fun fact: Compiles sports trivia, including who played whom, when, and where, what uniforms they were wearing, how long have teams and stadiums existed, teams and stadiums name changes

Lifelines Discusses Authors' Insights

BY PASTOR KARL N. JACOBSON

For the past two months we have been reading two books about faith, God, and the Christian life in the face of pandemic. We started with Walter Bruggemann's *Virus As a Summons to Faith: Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief, and Anxiety*, which deals primarily with ways in which the Bible (the Old Testament in particular) itself wrestles with questions of theodicy – how/why God allows suffering – and offers us a path forward in how we live our lives in times of trial. We turned, next to N.T. Wright's *God and the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and Its Aftermath*, which is broader in scope – starting with the Old Testament and moving on to Jesus, the Gospels, and the rest of the New Testament – though our readers found Wright to be a bit more surface-level in his engagement of the biblical material.



What our shared reading and conversation brought to light was, on the one hand, a desire for substantive answers to very difficult questions, and some little frustration in that regard. However, the conversations that ensued were fruitful and faithful, and allowed for shared reflection on our callings as Christian citizens in a world beset by serious complexities.

One highlight was a Zoom conversation with Walter Bruggemann to round out conversation about his book. Dr. Bruggemann was delightful, generous, and reported to me that he was grateful for our group of thoughtful believers.

Next, we are moving on to a book by Kate Bowler titled *Everything Happens for a Reason: And Other Lies I've Loved*. Dr. Bowler's book is a reflection on her battle with cancer, and how she made sense of her life of faith in the midst of it. This, too, will be a helpful conversation starter as we think about our own struggles, whether of health, conscience, or the present cultural realities.



We're Praying at Good Shepherd!

BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL

Something that makes online worship especially fresh and fun are the variety of voices we get to hear. I have the great joy of finding individuals and families who lead the Prayers of the People. I call or email individuals to see if they would like to record the prayers of the people. Sometimes they write their own. Sometimes I write a very spare template for them that they can fill in with what's on their heart. It's so much more meaningful when the Prayers of the People are just that! When I write the prayers in full, I think back on what I prayed for that week. I read articles from the AP throughout the week and pray over the headlines. For the petition for healing, folks give us permission to pray their names out loud in worship.

Hearing your voices and seeing your faces as you hold the rest of us in your prayers is powerful. I try to ask folks who have been assisting ministers in the past, but I also balance it out by asking people of all ages who haven't done it before. The Prayers of the People belong to all of us. Don't be surprised if I reach out and ask you to add your voice to the faithful chorus!

In addition, for many years, faithful women from Good Shepherd have diligently prayed for our members and their loved ones as part of the Prayer Chain. Some names are heard publicly. Some are prayed for privately. But you can trust that everyone's names get lifted up with tenderness and diligence! Our members approach God's throne boldly and often! It's been one of my biggest blessings to pray with this group.

We added our first male members in 2020. Thanks for joining us, John Mendesh, Ron Hovland, Peter Samuelson, Ken Horstman, and Andy Pokel! If you'd like to join the prayer chain, please reach out. We'd love to add you to our list of pray-ers!

Lindsay Yock leads the Prayers of the People during online worship.



There Will Be a Time

when we will be able to hold hands and see each others' smiles

BY MARK HALVORSON, DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

By now you're all probably tired of reading articles or letters that start out with words like "What a strange year it's been!" or, "These sure have been different months that we've experienced."

I have searched high and low for a better way to start an article, and I simply cannot, so I resort to the following: This has been a strange year filled with difficult and bizarre months and most definitely challenges when it comes to youth ministries, its programming and events.

It's also true that great things have occurred. High school and middle school students have participated in deep, dare I say theological conversations about the big stuff of life. We have crossed paths and shared Zoom screens, staying connected as valuable and engaged participants in each others' lives. It's been a hard year though, and there are a lot of things we had hoped we could have experienced but could not. During these past 10 months we've missed out on:

- Celebrating our graduating seniors of 2020 as a congregation
- Preparing for and spending a week in the Boundary Waters at Wilderness Canoe Base
- Traveling in a pack of rental vans to serve together deep in the Appalachian mountains
- Monthly service nights at the Simpson Shelter, serving dinner for hundreds
- The Rally Day kick-off open house that sets the tone for the year
- Camp Castaway in Detroit Lakes with high school students
- Celebrating in person the confirmation worship service with ninth grade students
- Sunday morning middle school gatherings
- The PCYC gift sale and our shopping together to prepare
- Bunco tournaments
- Congregational *Christmas Story* movie night
- Building our own sled downhill derby
- Neighborhood scavenger hunts
- The Feed My Starving Children mobile pack
- Late winter broomball tournament

- Worshiping in person with coffee and treats in hand
- The 24-hour firewatch
- Dodgeball
- More dodgeball

We had to push pause on a long list of activities, and while the list itself is interesting and impressive (albeit incomplete) what's hard for me to know is that some of those events may have been the singular point of entry for a student, the one time a friend was going to be invited here, or one of those gatherings could have taken place at the exact time in a kid's life that they needed to just be together with other disciples.

While we can never understate the importance of a conversation or a dive into scripture, or a night of watching silly videos – of which we have had many – it's important to admit that, while there was not a laundry list of replacement activities over the past months, God was a part of and active in our lives in ways that mirror those God experiences we had come to expect.

We know that the power of our God is not limited because we didn't rent vans this past year, crash through the malls buying gifts for the PCYC gift sale, play a few rowdy games of "Pit," or consume can after can of whipped cream at the coffee shop.





We focused on our God, we explored our relationship with Jesus, and we deepened our friendships with each other in new ways these past many months, including:

- A custom weekly confirmation tool kit for families to help facilitate faith conversation in homes
- Sunday morning gatherings of middle school students during Advent and beyond
- Shared screen movie viewings with Charlie Brown and the greatest Christmas tree ever.
- Small group gatherings around the courtyard bonfire with high school students
- Collections of both summer and winter gear and supplies for the Simpson Shelter
- Hopping on our bikes and looping around the lakes before the cold and snow set in.
- A handful of “meet you at the end of your driveway” conversations with middle schoolers
- Super socially distant movie nights in the sanctuary when we are able to use that space safely
- Emails, postcards, and text messages beyond what can be tallied

Confession: I probably spent too much money on postage, sending microwave popcorn packages to every kid in middle and high school as an invitation for one of those shared movie showings, but – we all know – someday these young adults will enjoy getting actual mail.

During this unprecedented time, Good Shepherd has worked hard to keep people connected as we strive to remain as close as we can. Some of those happen online, others offline, some get publicized, others float below the radar and quietly keep individuals plugged in.

In all of this, though, there is screen time fatigue. It is a real concern. A year ago every adult was in agreement that kids were spending too much time on a screen, and now all of us have spent more time than we can calculate doing just that. It is a difficult balance – being available online and digitally – while constantly encouraging and pushing hard for kids and adults to unplug and be off-line.

This spring and summer will hopefully bring some new light, some new yet familiar opportunities, and the collective feeling of turning a corner.

Our ninth graders will be invited to publicly affirm those baptismal promises when we can safely be together as a congregation. Preparations have started for our return to the Boundary Waters as well as that anticipated week of service down south. With the permission to start gathering together in safe small groups, we will start returning to the building that the students have seen only as my Zoom background for far, far too long.

We will faithfully, carefully, and diligently, with optimism, begin re-populating the calendar with some of the things we know that we’ve set to the side – not as a way to re-introduce faith conversation that have been put on hiatus, but as a way to be in the same space physically, sharing stories and laughing and crying and smiling together with no internet buffering concerns.

Someone much smarter than me said, at the beginning of this journey, “Don’t let a crisis go to waste.”

We now have months of proof that what we knew to be true is in fact so: Our God cannot be limited or hindered just because there is physical distance between us. This new way of staying connected will serve us well for the months and years to come when we’re not all in the same school districts yet long to remain tethered to this congregation, participate in worship and discussions, and be active in each others lives.

Last thought: There will come a time very soon that, as students and leaders, we will be able to gather in the same space together. When those wonderful gatherings come to a close and we end in prayer, we will be able to hold hands and see each others’ smiles sans mask. And that will be a good thing.





10 QUESTIONS WITH ELAINE MATYI

CHAIR OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY TEAM

BY MORGAN MAY

1 WHEN DID YOU JOIN GOOD SHEPHERD, AND WHAT DREW YOU TO THE CHURCH?

Tim and I joined Good Shepherd in the spring of 1993, a few months before Pete was born. We were first drawn to the church by the meaningful worship services and the uplifting music, as well as the friendly welcome we received. Over the years, we've appreciated the Sunday School and youth programs, as well as adult learning, fellowship, and service opportunities.

2 HOW HAS GOOD SHEPHERD EVOLVED OVER YOUR TIME AS A MEMBER?

Certainly the congregation has experienced highs and lows in the last 20-plus years. However, we're a congregation rooted in faith, and we continue to grow in that faith in exciting ways.

3 IN WHAT MINISTRIES HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED THROUGHOUT YOUR TIME AT GOOD SHEPHERD?

I'm thankful for the wide range of ministries in which Good Shepherd has allowed me to participate. I had the opportunity to

teach Sunday school with John Mendesh for many years – both the 2-year old class and then middle school. Before Covid-19, Tim and I helped at the Camden Food Shelf the first Saturday of each month, and more recently we've been serving at Loaves and Fishes. In addition, I've enjoyed Wednesday morning Midrash gatherings, and I've become active in Altar Guild. We also appreciate Sunday morning Lifelines and Wednesday U gatherings, now via Zoom of course.

4 CAN YOU SHARE AN IMPACTFUL EXPERIENCE YOU'VE HAD AT GOOD SHEPHERD THAT'S STUCK WITH YOU? ANYTHING FROM A CONVERSATION OVER COFFEE TO A MISSION TRIP ABROAD.

There have been many impactful experiences at Good Shepherd. Although I enjoy a Sunday-morning peppermint mocha from the coffee shop while visiting in the narthex, highlights over the years include experiences outside the walls of our church. I especially appreciated accompanying the high school youth to Harlan, Kentucky, for several years, and then traveling to Ethiopia to visit our ministry partners there. In addition, on family trips to Uruguay, Tim and I have enjoyed the special experience of worshipping at Nuestro Salvador.



Elaine loading the truck for the Camden Promise Parking Lot Sale

5 GOOD SHEPHERD IS GEARING UP TO CELEBRATE OUR 100TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2022. AS CHAIR OF THE ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE, HOW ARE YOU PREPARING FOR THE BIG YEAR?

We're just beginning our preparations for this celebration, and an enthusiastic, creative, and thoughtful team is in place to plan. 100 years is a big deal, so we look forward to providing ways to commemorate this milestone. (Thanks to the planning team: Ron Hovland, Linda Kerker, Nancy Liddy, Morgan May, Vic Perlbachs, Brita Taracks, and Mary Zeleny Arimond.)



Elaine (2nd from left), Tim (center), and son Dave (right) at Nuestro Salvador

6 WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO LOOK BACK ON THE HISTORY OF GOOD SHEPHERD?

We have a long faith tradition at Good Shepherd, and it's important to look back at those who have come before us and the foundations that they laid. Thankfully, Mary Ireland and Ginny Pearson have worked tirelessly in the Heritage Room (pre-Covid-19), and they'll be able to provide lots of fun history that we hope to share.

7 WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO CONVEY ABOUT GOOD SHEPHERD THROUGHOUT THE CELEBRATION YEAR?

We're hoping to convey the importance of our 100-year history, while celebrating the present and looking forward with hope to the future. And, somewhere in the celebration, I'm hoping for cupcakes.

8 WE'RE AT AN INTERESTING INFLECTION POINT IN CHURCH LIFE. COVID-19 HAS DRAS- TICALLY CHANGED HOW WE WORSHIP AND

GATHER TOGETHER. HOW DO YOU THINK THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY CAN SERVE AS A SPRINGBOARD FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS AT GOOD SHEPHERD?

I think the changes of the past year have as much influence on our future as the 100th anniversary. Part of our rich history is our church building. However, this year church left the building, reminding us once again that it's God's people gathered wherever that make the church. We've learned to value the experience of worship, fellowship and learning opportunities online – and there have been creative ways to serve others, most recently "A-Blazing Grace" with the Sunday night Advent giving trees. This creative change has been a good way to re-think church and begin the next 100 years.

9 WHAT ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT FOR THE FUTURE OF GOOD SHEPHERD?

I'm excited that Good Shepherd will continue to offer opportunities for kids, youth, and adults to worship, learn, and serve. God's people are gathered in this faith community.

10 HOW CAN OTHERS GET INVOLVED WITH THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING AND CELEBRATIONS?

As the 100th Anniversary Team finalizes plans for the celebration, I'm certain that there will be lots of opportunities for involvement, and ideas and assistance will be welcome. We'll let you know!

[IN OUR COMMUNITY OF FAITH]

LIFE PASSAGES

DEATHS

JOAN BERGLUND
10.1.1930 – 11.30.2020

KATHERINE JACOBSON
2.4.1934 – 12.16.2020

MARILYN HAGER
5.27.1940 – 12.18.2020

JOHN WEINARD
6.10.1939 – 12.18.2020

Good Shepherd Online Choir Makes A Joyful Noise from A Distance



BY RALPH JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF WORSHIP AND MUSIC

At this time last year, we had no idea that soon – just a couple of weeks into the Lenten season – we would be exiled from our place of worship and community for an indefinite period of time, and that we would have to quickly (with no training and little expertise) reimagine how to continue as a worshipping congregation without being in the same room. If you were to go back again and watch our first few pandemic-era worship services, you would see how simple and spare they seem compared to what they are now. Our team has learned much (with much more still left to learn, of course).

Similarly, a backward listen to the seven “projects” recorded by the Good Shepherd Online Choir since April of last year would reveal a definite progression in our ability to make beautiful and convincing choral music together, even though we have been completely separated from one another. Since we started up again this past September, the members of the Good Shepherd Online Choir have rehearsed anthems on Zoom and recorded them remotely – in their offices, living rooms, bedrooms, kitchens, basements, cabins – wherever they could sing their parts without waking up the neighbors or annoying the cat. They then have sent their individual tracks in with the (hopefully not misplaced) trust that their voices would be blended together into music that might bring the Word of God to your ears and comfort to your hearts – and sound something like a choir in the process.

The picture to the right is a screenshot of the recording project for our Christmas Eve anthem, “Before the Marvel of This Night,” composed by eminent church musician and composer Carl Schalk, who passed away just days before this writing. There are 31 individual vocal tracks (with some singers recording more than one voice part) and two instrumental tracks (one for organ and one for a “click track” which provides a steady, woodblock-like beat to help keep everyone together and is

only heard by the singers). When recording their parts at home, each choir member sings along with a “mock-up” recording consisting of the organ part, click track, and usually a quartet of singers singing the full anthem. Each choir member listens to this “reference track” through headphones or ear buds as they record to make sure the reference track is not audible on their individual recordings. Once the parts are recorded and sent back, each individual recording is imported into the software shown below (Logic Pro X, if you’re a nerd), and then edited for timing, balance, and sometimes pitch, so that the finished product sounds as much like a real choir singing in church. It’s all quite a lengthy and complex (and, yes, fun) process, but we believe it is worth the time and effort.

Looking ahead, the Good Shepherd Online Choir is planning to record several more anthems for worship during the Lent and Easter seasons, including special pieces for Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. Pray for us as we continue to serve God and this wonderful Good Shepherd community through singing, and please feel free to join us at any time to add your voice to the choir. There is no audition, and we have a great time together! Rehearsals are Thursday evenings from 7:00 to 7:50 (or so) on Zoom. (Sign up on the church website or contact me directly at ralph.johnson@goodshepherdmpls.org.)



Sunday School Follows Luke, Then Parable Patty Returns for VBS This Summer

BY TOR JOHNSON, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES & PERFORMING ARTS

Sunday School

Strange as it may seem, Sunday School has been thriving during the COVID era. We have 20 weeks of Zoom Sunday School sessions under our belts, with another 17 or so left before we break for the summer. Our Sunday School families have remained steadfast and consistent with their attendance each week. Barring a miracle, Zoom will remain our format until we're done on May 16.

Though we are not following verbatim the weekly lessons of the church's Narrative Lectionary schedule, we are still keeping pace with slightly

different New Testament stories, mostly from the Gospel of Luke. Using the *Foundations of Our Faith* booklet, which Mara Halvorson illustrated and I wrote, each week brings a new story which we read, discuss, sing about, create a craft, and play a game around. Some of our upcoming explorations will include Jesus exhorting us to love our enemies, Jesus calming the storm and his disciple's fears, the widow's offering, and working on our dramatic rendering of the Passion story.

Mara Halvorson and Mark Halvorson have been instrumental in keeping Kids' Time going every week on our online worship services. We will continue to come up with creative ways to share the love of God with our children and families who tune into our online worship.



Vacation Bible School

When the summer thaw does finally happen, Vacation Bible School will be right there, whether via Zoom meetings or live in the church building. Our theme for VBS will be Parable Power! Our Kids' Time animated series about parables last summer was very popular. We will continue with that thread of Jesus' ministry again this summer.

Another exciting thing to anticipate about VBS is that we're planning to expand to two back-to-back sessions. The first session, June 14 to 18, will be for 3 year olds to first graders, and the second session, June 21 to 25, will be for second to fifth graders.

Our weekly emails will keep you informed, but contact me anytime at tor.johnson@goodshepherdmpls.org.



Internship Project: Celebrating 100 Years of God's Faithfulness and Our Call as God's People

BY PASTORAL INTERN DUSTIN HAIDER

Good Shepherd has been such a blessing to the community, and I am glad that my internship project is tied so closely to celebrating Good Shepherd's history. We have already begun planning ways to celebrate the 100th anniversary of this congregation in 2022. Anniversaries are a time to join together and rejoice in the ways that God has been present with us. It is a time for stories, for funny pictures from the past, and for reflecting on the goodness of our God. Anniversaries are also a time for thinking about the ways we are being called to live into our calling to be God's people.

For my internship project I want to help with planning and preparing for the 100th anniversary. I want us to see (and maybe try) the recipes in the Good Shepherd cookbooks. I want us to look at the best of the old pictures and think about the things that previous generations of Good Shepherd were doing to proclaim the love of Jesus to the world. My prayer is that it gives us hope and inspires us to see the way God is moving among us, that it centers us in God's love. When we are centered in and by the love of God, I am confident that we will create many opportunities for the 200th year anniversary team to celebrate.

I also want us think about and remember the things that make Good Shepherd great. Several months ago, during our sermon

series on the Psalms, I asked you to reflect on Psalm 136 and send me the things about Good Shepherd for which you want to give thanks. My hope is that that the Psalm that we are writing together can be part of our celebration. (It's not too late to send me the things about Good Shepherd you are thankful for!) I also hope that it helps us see the many and diverse ways that the Good Shepherd community is meaningful in the lives of our members.

Additionally, I hope to record some of you responding to questions about our church – questions like:

What keeps you coming back to Good Shepherd?

What do you want others to know about Good Shepherd?

What is a favorite story from your time at Good Shepherd?

My hope is that by creating these videos, they can be part of celebrating our 100th anniversary. The videos can play and serve as a way to enhance our festivities. I also hope that by answering the questions, it will help us think about the ways that God is calling us into community with one another and calling us to serve those outside our building walls. I hope it enlivens the conversations that we have about the new ways we are being called into our community. If you would like to volunteer, I would be glad to add your voice to the conversation.



In short, my internship project is about our call – our call to be a church and our call to live as God's people. We listen to that call together, and the 100th anniversary is a time for us to come together do that listening. As we listen to God's call, I don't think it is always about having to drastically change what we are doing; it is about understanding and celebrating the positive difference that we are making in the world. And it is about taking a stand and making a commitment to continue working to make the world a better place. I want us to talk about making the world a better place. I want us to envision what a better place can look like, even as the world around us changes. Finally, I want us to embody what it means to be a better place, so that our community knows that we love them, that they matter to us, and that we will continue to walk with them no matter what the world throws our way.

Girasol Montessori School Safeguards Against Covid-19, Adds Additional Classroom

BY LAURA STEIN, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR

Girasol (Spanish for “sunflower”) Montessori School began their preschool at Good Shepherd in the fall of 2019. With the exception of a few weeks in March/April, they have remained open during the pandemic. Sharon Estrada is the director of the school, and the partnership between Good Shepherd and the preschool has worked very well. In fact, they are ready to lease additional space and expand the school. They currently use Room 220 and one of the offices on the east side of the building. They will be adding Room 226 as a classroom and are moving their office into Room 216. They will use their current office as a place for all the student’s cubbies. We are grateful for their partnership. The children bring energy to our building every day!

Here is what Sharon has to say about their Covid-19 response and their expansion of the school:

First of all we want to express our gratitude to the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd’s community. You all have been so kind and welcoming to us, we will always have a special place for all of you in our hearts!

A few months after we all decided to embark on this adventure, we encountered what I consider one of the greatest challenges for a small starting business, a global pandemic.

Our approach has been to think ahead and prepare for the worst case scenario.

Our Girasol Montessori community was fearful of the unknown and worried about our children’s safety, but we were also committed to do what was necessary to protect the children’s environment.

We closed for a couple of weeks when Covid-19 started. During that time we worked intensively in developing a plan to keep our community safe. We implemented rigorous cleaning and sanitizing procedures. We invested in some disinfecting equipment, and continue today to work hard on reinforcing our

illness and Covid-19 policies, amongst the families in our community to prevent community spread. The staff and children started using face coverings, even before those were mandatory. We also reduced the classroom’s capacity in order to promote social distancing and limited access to the building from our families. Our staff has gone above and beyond their job description to help us keep up with all of these changes. All of that hard work and perseverance lead us to conclude 2020 with the satisfaction of not having any Covid-19 cases in our community!

We are now starting 2021 with an optimistic attitude. We are ready to increase the capacity of our school, just enough to meet the needs of our community, but not too much that could compromise nor dilute the quality and integrity of our authentic Montessori program.

We are extremely excited to grow as a school while contributing to the wellbeing of the Good Shepherd’s church and the surrounding community. We truly feel fortunate and humbled to call the Good Shepherd’s staff our friends and could not have asked for a better group of supportive and warmed-hearted people, to bring some kindness and positivity during such a challenging time.

The current primary classroom



After 40 Years, Loaves & Fishes Finds New Site

BY KAREN WALHOF, DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH MINISTRY

The June 27, 1982, issue of *The Shepherd's Staff* reports that Good Shepherd's Church Council had approved a three-month trial to join a new ecumenical ministry in Minneapolis, "preparing and serving meals for the jobless and other needy persons through a program called Loaves & Fishes," which had begun locally in 1980.

A few weeks later, *The Shepherd's Staff* described the first encounter: "Preparing and serving food to approximately 450 persons on July 20 at St. Stephen's School in Minneapolis."

For 38 years, Good Shepherd has served our neighbors with hot food and warm hearts at Loaves & Fishes, always at St. Stephen's. That changed as of January 1. Loaves & Fishes moved their location to Peace House at 18th and Portland. On Tuesday, January 19, we served our first meal there. It's a good time to celebrate a long-time ministry that Good Shepherd has supported with benevolence funds and hands-on support.

Bi-monthly, on the third Tuesday of the month, a handful of people gather to prepare the food at 2:00 p.m. After it goes in the oven, bread is buttered. Then at 5:15 p.m., workers gather to serve the food to our neighbors who come. Since early last year, the food we have prepared is put in to-go containers, since our guests are not able to gather in a dining area, due to state health department regulations related to Covid-19.



At the Peace House, Debbie Anderson ladles the entrée, Calico Beans, into to-go containers along with apples, carrots, buttered bread, and milk, then placed in carry-out bags.

Debbie Anderson, head of the serving crew, says, "After 30-plus years of serving Loaves and Fishes at St. Stephens, we moved to Peace House. John, Karen, Jon, and I quickly adapted to our smaller new location. We assembled take-out meals for 105 guests. It is an honor to work with a strong Loaves and Fishes team and Good Shepherd members when feeding a community in need."

When Good Shepherd began this work in 1982, over 400 people came to the meals served. In the last several years at St. Stephen's we served around 200. Now, at Peace House the number has dwindled to around 100. But, as people find the new location, we anticipate dinners will increase again, moving toward 200.

Want to help? We could use help in preparing food and in serving the dinners. Let me know if your heart is calling you to Loaves & Fishes, to serve people who are deeply in need of loving care. They are God's children.



SCRIPTURE STORY

God's Grief and Goodness in Isaiah

BY PASTOR ELISE POKEL

I love the Old Testament. Specifically, I love the prophets. I love them even when they're at their harshest, because often I need to be snapped out of whatever pity party or spiritual stupor I find myself in. I know that when a prophet's tone starts to make me nervous, God's goodness is just around the corner. This is especially the case in the book of Isaiah. Now that we're wading into Luke, I am hearing Isaiah's echoes and am finding myself back in his book.

The Old Testament is scandalously honest about the triumphs and failings of God's chosen people. The best and worst of what humanity has to offer is chronicled unflinchingly. The highest of highs are recorded. The people walk on dry land in the middle of the sea, slaves no longer. Miriam and her tambourine ladies sing together once freedom is realized. The judges come to save the day with their wisdom and amazing rescues. David dances before God's presence and is anointed king. Solomon knows how to pray beautifully and has the most gorgeous robes. Kingdoms, land, power, plenty. It's all theirs.

The lowest of lows are to be found as well. The people worship a homemade idol in the desert just after their salvation has come. David sends one of his soldiers to the frontlines so that he can take his wife. Solomon has a weakness for hoarding women and strange gods. God's people from time to time conveniently ignore their covenant promises so that they can steal, extort, deceive, hoard, and kill. The kingdoms topple. Their land is invaded. Their power and plenty vanish.

God, speaking through Isaiah, is honest about how his people have caused God to suffer.

I reared children and brought them up; but they have rebelled against me (1:2b).

Jerusalem staggers, Judah is falling; their words and deeds are against the Lord, defying his glorious presence" (3:5).

These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me (29:13a).

Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, "You did not make me"? (29:16b).



The Prophet Isaiah in the Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo

Instead of righteous helpers in God's world, the people stumbled and turned to evil. Instead of the tasty smell of animal fat offerings wafting up to the heavens, God couldn't get past the stench of cruelty and injustice. Instead of lovely creations that would be displays of God's splendor, the people wanted the glory for themselves. God's grief and anger are real and palpable throughout Isaiah. The chapters aren't in a straight-forward, chronological order. Warning, woe, rage, comfort, hope, and healing are not easily disentangled.

But God's amazing faithfulness and grace can still be found.

Even though we as God's people continue to fall short and distort God's vision for a just and peaceful world, God chooses us at every turn.

Though we are headstrong and difficult to teach, God "will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths" (2:3b).

Though we are wild and unruly, "the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion" (30:18a).

Though God justifiably could have turned away, God never did and never will. "He tends his flock like a shepherd. He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart" (40:11).

God promises, "I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you" (41:13).

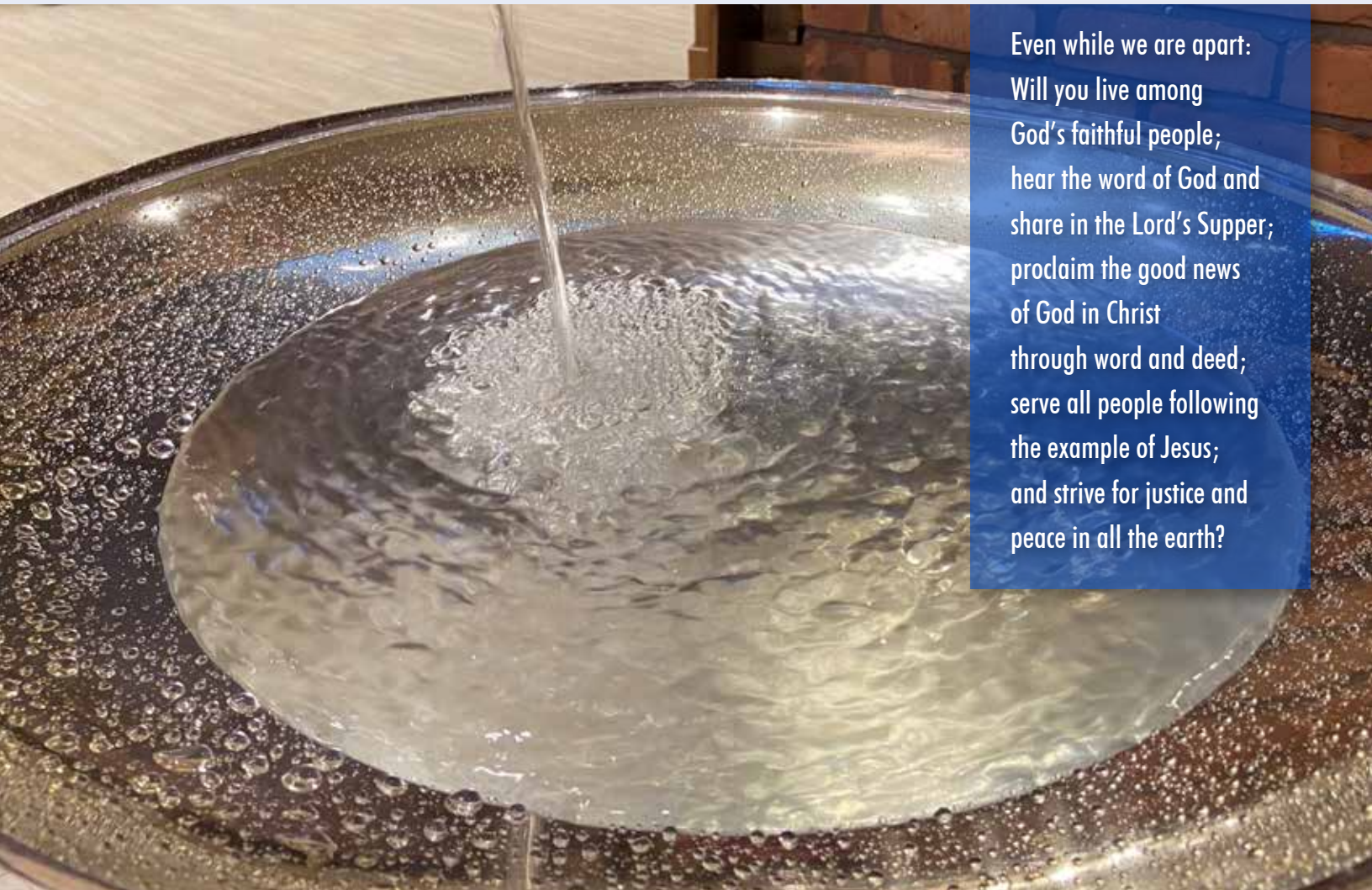
I love the Gospels and the good news they deliver through the person and power of Jesus. But there's something so moving about the good news popping up in the prophets when one least expects it. My favorite line from Isaiah is 57:18: "I have seen their ways, but I will heal them; I will guide them and restore comfort."

God knows we'll stumble and grumble. God knows we hurt and need healing. God has known from the beginning. What a good God we have!



LUTHERAN
CHURCH
OF THE
**GOOD
SHEPHERD**

4801 France Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55410



Even while we are apart:
Will you live among
God's faithful people;
hear the word of God and
share in the Lord's Supper;
proclaim the good news
of God in Christ
through word and deed;
serve all people following
the example of Jesus;
and strive for justice and
peace in all the earth?