

# THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

*Good Shepherd Lutheran Church*

**MARCH 2025**

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AMMPARO

701 Iowa Ave. – Decorah, IA  
office@goodshepherddecorah.org  
(563) 382-3963  
goodshepherddecorah.org

# A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

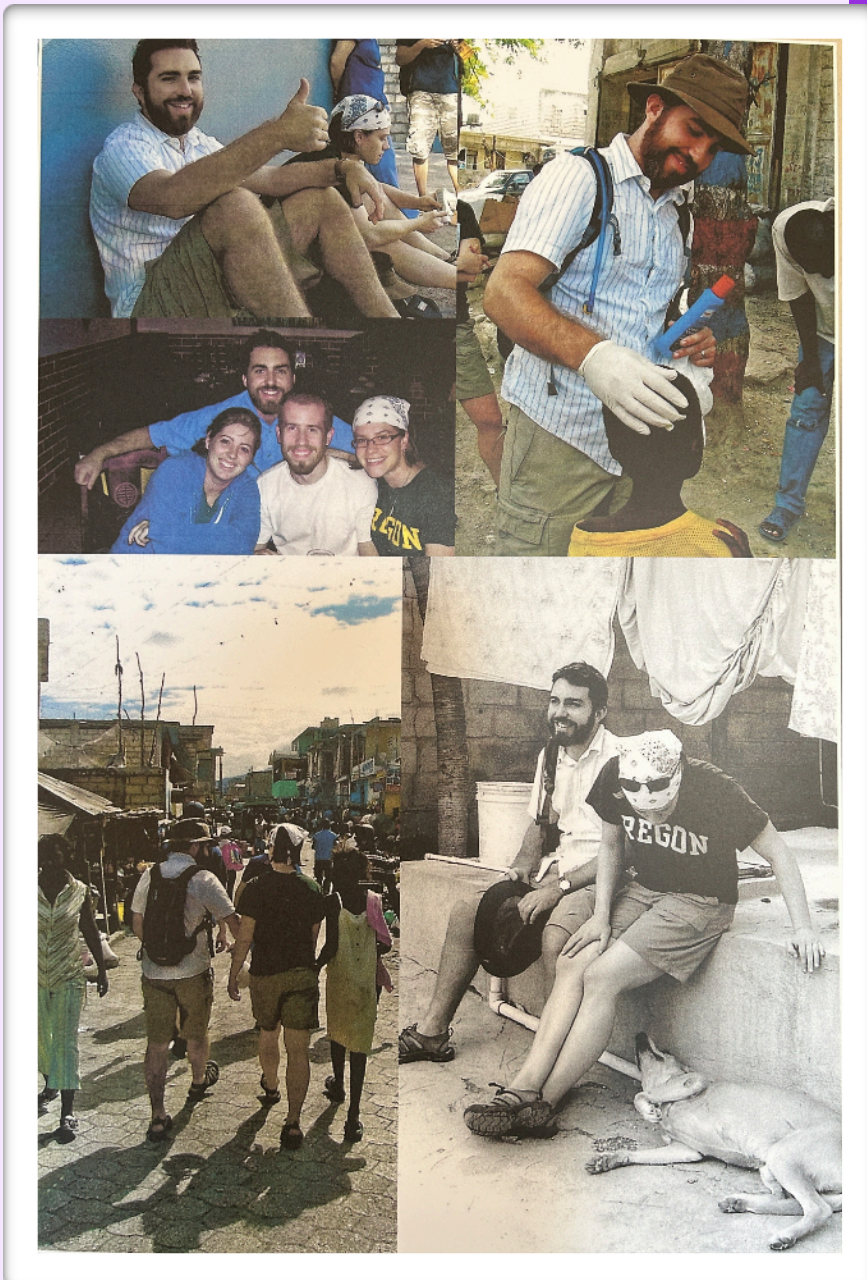
Lenten Theme 2025: “Lord Jesus, You Are Our Song As We Journey”

Beloved in Jesus,  
Forty-one years ago at dawn on this day, February 27, 1984, I gave birth to our son, Ben. Even before his shoulders were out he sang his first song which was certainly music to our ears. The doctor exclaimed, “That’s what we like, one hundred percent out of the chute.” Ben’s first breath was that song, that first cry of new life.

Twenty five years later, Ben’s beloved wife Renee was crawling all over the roof of that crumbling, shaking St Joseph’s in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. searching for a way to Ben. Bloodied, Al cried out, “I hear him singing.” Determined to get to Ben, Renee dangerously crawled back down to the hole from which she had escaped. She heard Ben singing. By then he was at the last verse of “The Lamb of God” (ELW setting 10). Faintly, Renee heard Ben sing with his last breath, “O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away; eternal peace with God you made:

God’s peace to us we pray.” Ben sang with his first breath and sang with his last breath.

This is my prayer for you as we walk into our 40-day journey in Lent: “God’s peace to us, we pray.” Every week our Lenten journey is interrupted by a Sunday, because every Sunday is a celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even in this most solemn season of Lent, each Sunday we are reminded there is no sorrow on earth that



# A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

is not interrupted and, yes, overpowered by God's promise and resurrection actions of new life. Death never has the last word. God's word to us is always, Yes! In Second Corinthians 1:20 the Apostle Paul writes, "For in Jesus every one of God's promises is a 'Yes'."

On Ash Wednesday, we remember our mortality. The words spoken over the first human, Adam, are spoken over us: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:19). I remember the first time Pastor Judd and I, as our daughters' pastors, put the ashes on our little twins' foreheads. In my heart I cried out to God, "No, not these ones God. Not our little daughters." And yet we marked their foreheads with the same ashes and spoke the same words we said to every one of those dear parishioners that Ash Wednesday decades ago, "You are dust and to dust you shall return."

Every week of this Lenten penitential season is interrupted by the celebration of our Lord Jesus Christ's Resurrection, because every Sunday is a celebration of Christ's Resurrection. Yes, we mark this penitential season with a more austere sanctuary, increased moments of silence and prayers, less ornate music and some repetitive acapella songs, then followed by a simple weekly soup supper. Most importantly, we gather around the cross and listen and pray and sing together.

Our theme for the season is, "Lord Jesus, You Are Our Song As We Journey." Each week we will sing a verse or two of hymn 808. Each week we will hear sermons on the "Theology of the Cross" as it is lived out in a context each Lenten preacher knows personally and deeply. Martin Luther repeated constantly, "The only true theology is a theology of the cross, not the false theology of glory." We need to be constantly reminded by Luther and Apostle Paul, the Gospel writers and the entire Scriptures, of our God who is revealed most clearly, not in glory but in the cross, in weakness, in suffering, in loss, in loneliness, pain, and sorrow.

Our Lenten preachers are members of our worshipping community here at Good Shepherd. Thank you all for agreeing to teach and preach Jesus and the Theology of the Cross among us this Lenten Season! Watch for more detail and a poster of our Midweek Lenten preachers coming soon.

# A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

**Wed. March 12: Rev. Dr. Wanda Deifelt, PhD; (Lutheran Church in Brazil)**

**Wed. March 19: Dr. David Scott, PhD; (United Methodist Church)**

**Wed. March 25: Rev. Melissa Bills, DM candidate; (ELCA)**

**Wed. April 2 : Dr. Martin Klammer, PhD; (MA, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago)**

**Wed. April 9 : Rev. Dr. Rolf Svanoë; DM; (ELCA)**

As broken sinful human beings of the world, we all prefer the Theology of Glory. The Theology of Glory is the preferred theology of humanity and profoundly our American culture. Jesus' Beatitudes in Luke and in Matthew drip with the Theology of the Cross. Mother Mary's Magnificat is filled with the Theology of the Cross, as is Simeon's song to Jesus' parents. So also is Jesus' Inaugural Address in Luke.

Just a couple of weeks ago, an Evangelical Pastor read the Beatitudes to his congregation. Members came up to him after the worship angrily accusing him of proclaiming politics from the pulpit. The pastor responded, "I was merely reading the words of Jesus in Matthew 5." They responded, "Those words are not true anymore. They are too weak." This response dismisses some of the few words directly spoken by Jesus in the scriptures: "Blessed are the poor, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger, the merciful, those who weep, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted." Yes, Blessed are the weak!

In these newsletter pages, you will see your Good Shepherd prayers answered with wonderful news from our Call Committee and President. Good Shepherd also has good news about the May 1st start of new Luther graduate Gabby Bizal. She has accepted the twofold, now combined position of Youth Director and Ministry and Communications Coordinator at Good Shepherd. We are so excited! We will have a special "Gabby day" to welcome and begin to get to know Gabby Bizal on April 23rd. More information about this faithful and gifted sister in Christ, who joins our staff at Good Shepherd, will be coming in our April newsletter.

Blessings to each of you as we begin our Lenten journey around the cross this Wednesday, March 5th, with the imposition of ashes, prayer, proclamation, song and Holy Communion. God bless and keep you as we journey together in Christ this Lenten season. "Jesus you are our song as we journey".

God's peace to you I pray,  
Pastor April Ulring Larson

# FROM THE CONGREGATION PRESIDENT

Greetings! As President of Good Shepherd's Congregation Council, I am sending you this notice to hold a congregation meeting on Sunday, March 16, 2025. The purpose of this meeting will be to hear a presentation from Good Shepherd's Call Committee recommending that we as a congregation extend a call to Pastor Kristen L. Larsen-Schmidt, and then to vote on that recommendation and a compensation package.

Good Shepherd's Congregation Council met on the evening of Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup> to hear from the Call Committee about Pastor Kristen L. Larsen-Schmidt. She is currently serving as an interim pastor at a church in North Dakota. Each member of the Call Committee spoke from the heart about their support for Pastor Kristen and why she would be a good fit for Good Shepherd. Following the unanimous recommendation from the Call Committee, Good Shepherd's Congregation Council also met with Pastor Kristen and after that meeting voted unanimously to recommend her to the congregation for call.

As we finalize the details of this upcoming meeting on March 16th, further information will be shared. You will also receive notification of this upcoming meeting at the worship services on Sunday, March 2, 2025 and Sunday, March 9, 2025. If you have any questions in the meantime, feel free to reach out to me.

Sincerely, Chris Johnson



## FROM THE CALL COMMITTEE

The Good Shepherd Call Committee is excited to present Pastor Kristen Larsen-Schmidt to the congregation for consideration. Pastor Kristen is currently serving as the interim pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Thompson, North Dakota, and has previously served churches in North Dakota, Minnesota, and as a hospice chaplain. Pastor Kristen and her husband, Brian, have two children, Gracia and Michah, who are both studying at St. Olaf. Pastor Kristen is a 1995 graduate of Luther College, and an alum of Luther Seminary.

*Pastor Kristen Larsen-Schmidt*

The call committee was impressed with Pastor Kristen's candor, insight, willingness to ask tough questions, and her experience as both an administrator and preacher. We are confident in her ability to meet us where we are, challenge us to grow, and to serve and lead us well. We look forward to sharing more, and are eager to introduce Pastor Kristen to Good Shepherd.

# PRAYER FOR THE MONTH

*Offered by Jane Jakoubek*

O God, you know the storms that rage in our world. You know every war, every place where hatred lives, and where violence is violence. You know the storms that rage within communities and families. You know the storms that rage in our hearts.

Be with us amidst the storms. Thank you for walking with us, holding us, guiding us, strengthening us. Help us remember that sometimes you calm the storm and that sometimes you calm our hearts. Help us see how your love and power are at work in each moment of our days. Help us bring each storm in our life to you and ask you to guide us through. Help us be salt and light amidst storms, trusting you to show us how we can bear your love and light, your peace and justice, to each person and moment of our lives.

And so we turn once again to the prayer from the Lutheran Book of Worship Vespers service: Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, along pathways untravelled, through perils unknown. Give us the strength to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ, your son, our Lord. Amen.



# SCRIPTURE FOR THE MONTH

**March 2nd**

**Transfiguration of our Lord**

**Exodus 34:29-35**

*Coming down from Mount Sinai, Moses' face shone*

**Psalm 99**

*Proclaim the greatness of the Lord; worship upon God's holy hill. (Ps. 99:9)*

**2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2**

*With unveiled faces we see the Lord's glory as we are transformed*

**Luke 9:28-36**

*Jesus is transfigured on the mountain*

**March 9th**

**First Sunday in Lent**

**Deuteronomy 26:1-11**

*The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand*

**Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16**

*God will give the angels charge over you, to guard you in all your ways. (Ps. 91:11)*

**Romans 10:8b-13**

*If you confess that Jesus is Lord, you will be saved*

**Luke 4:1-13**

*The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness*

**March 16th**

**Second Sunday in Lent**

**Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18**

*The covenant with Abram and his descendants*

**Psalm 27**

*In the day of trouble, God will give me shelter. (Ps. 27:5)*

**Philippians 3:17-4:1**

*Our citizenship is in heaven from where we expect a Savior*

**Luke 13:31-35**

*I have desired to gather Jerusalem as a hen gathers her brood*

**March 23rd**

**Third Sunday in Lent**

**Isaiah 55:1-9**

*Everyone who thirsts, come to the water; seek the Lord*

**Psalm 63:1-8**

*O God, eagerly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you. (Ps. 63:1)*

**1 Corinthians 10:1-13**

*Israel, baptized in cloud and seas, ate the same spiritual food as Christians*

**Luke 13:1-9**

*Unless you repent, you will perish: parable of the fig tree*

**March 30th – Fourth Sunday in Lent**

**Joshua 5:9-12** – *Israel eats bread and grain, the produce of the land*

**Psalm 32** – *Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord. (Ps. 32:11)*

**2 Corinthians 5:16-21** – *The mystery and ministry of reconciliation*

**Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32** – *The parable of the prodigal father and the repentant son*

# LENTEN RECITAL SERIES AT GS

This year's **2025 Lenten Recital Series** at Good Shepherd once again features a variety of music on three Wednesdays during Lent, from 12:15-12:45 p.m. in the church sanctuary. All recitals are **free** and open to the public. Come and spend your lunch time here!

The series kicks off on **March 12** with meditative music for Lent, featuring Luther College students **Olivia Williams, Tara Rajanesan, Cam Moll,** and **Aaron Claxton,** all in the organ studio of **Alexander Meszler,** Luther College organist.



On **March 19, Anishka Vogl,** Luther College senior music major and current Good Shepherd Music Intern, will perform a solo violin recital.

On **March 26,** enjoy meditative music featuring **Craig Hultgren,** cello and **Brooke Joyce,** piano and organ. Their program includes:

Prelude from Suite No. 4 in Eb Major for solo cello - Johann Sebastian Bach

*Prière* for cello & organ - Camille Saint-Saëns

*Emerald Oceans & Altocumulus* from *Driftless Images* for solo cello - Daniel Swilley

*A Song Without Words* for cello & organ - Craig Phillips

*Conditor Alme Siderum* for cello & organ - Brooke Joyce

Hultgren is a long-time activist for new music, the newly creative arts, and the avant-garde. A recipient of two Artist Fellowships from the Alabama State Council on the Arts, he is also a founding member of Luna Nova, a new music ensemble with a large repertoire available on iTunes. Hultgren is principal cellist of the Oneota Valley Community Orchestra and President of OVCO's Board of Directors. He also serves as Secretary for the Iowa Composers Forum after completing three years as Chair.

Joyce is Composer-in-Residence at Luther College and Director of Music at Good Shepherd.





# 2025 YOUTH LENTEN PROJECT

## YOUTH LENTEN PROJECT SUPPORTS LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA

The Good Shepherd Education Committee is excited to announce that this year's Lenten Project, sponsored by Good Shepherd Sunday School children and youth, will raise funds for Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), one of the largest nonprofit human services agencies in Iowa.



The GS Sunday School youth selected LSI because they wanted to support Lutheran aid organizations that have been targeted nationally and within Iowa. Additionally, the students felt that it was important to remind the congregation of the critical work done each day across Iowa by LSI. The GS Sunday School children and youth's goal is to raise \$5,000 for LSI.

Throughout the Lenten season, GS children and youth will work together during Sunday School to write offering prayers. They will then share these prayers, along with a LSI fact, during services each Wednesday and Sunday, beginning on Ash Wednesday and continuing through Palm Sunday.

Donations for LSI can be dropped in a special donation box created by the younger Sunday School children that was inspired by the ELCA mantra "God's Work. Our Hands." The donation box will be at the altar during the Offertory on Wednesdays and Sundays throughout Lent. If you'd like to write a check, please make it out to Good Shepherd with "2025 Youth Lenten Project" on the memo line.

## NEW MUSIC INTERN AT GS

**Anishka Vogl**, senior Luther College music major, is Good Shepherd's Music Intern this spring. She started Sunday, February 23, and will assist Music Director Brooke Joyce with Sunday morning worship services and Wednesday evening Lenten services.

# LUTHERAN DAY ON THE HILL

Join Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) and ELCA Lutherans from across the state, including all three Iowa bishops, for **Lutheran Day on the Hill**. This annual event at the Capitol supports LSI's social services. The focus this year is on [food, hunger and agriculture](#), Iowa's [mental health care system](#), and [supporting refugee resettlement in Iowa](#).

It is also LSI's 160th birthday, and Governor Kim Reynolds has been invited to join the group at the Capitol for this special celebration.

**Updated Transportation Plan:** First Lutheran Church is organizing a **caravan of vehicles** from Winneshiek County rather than taking a bus. The goal is to bring 50 Lutherans and friends to the Iowa State Capitol. **The Winneshiek County caravan departs from First Lutheran at 5:30 a.m. and returns by 6:00 p.m.** To ride with someone or to be a volunteer driver, sign up [on this Google Form](#)

For a program, to request a T-shirt, and to select a free meal menu option, **Register directly with LSI** at [lsiowa.org/ldh/](https://lsiowa.org/ldh/)



# MESSAGE FROM LUTHERAN SERVICES

What does it mean to be part of a faith community? It's a question being asked in many places across our country today.

**At Lutheran Services in America, being the public witness means putting our faith into action every day—Grace, Care, and Service embodied.**

My faith journey began with my parents in the Appalachian foothills of Kentucky. There aren't many Lutherans in eastern Kentucky, so being Lutheran meant gathering in house church, attending confirmation in small groups, and participating in ecumenical youth groups. We were Lutheran because my parents chose to be, drawn to its message of grace and service. The values they instilled in me were not just personal; they were part of a much larger story—one rooted in Lutheran teachings that call us to care for one another in tangible ways.

**Martin Luther taught that being saved by grace frees each of us to serve others.** He put this into practice by establishing the Common Chest, a fund to support orphans, widows, education, and medical care. This wasn't just charity—it was a way to break cycles of poverty and build a stronger, more compassionate community. In the mid-1800s, as many Lutherans and other denominations fled hunger, violence, and persecution, they established churches in America. Deaconesses and clergy led the building of schools, hospitals, and care institutions for orphaned children, seniors, and veterans—laying the foundation for modern social ministry. Luther's teachings helped unleash the collective power of the broader faith community, launching a powerful legacy of purpose and hope.

**I am reminded daily that faith is not only personal—it is communal, woven into the acts of kindness, service, and love that connect us all.**

Today we are a vibrant network of more than 300 Lutheran social ministry organizations in 1,400 communities across the country rooted in a long-standing Lutheran faith tradition of service in caring for our neighbor. This work includes strengthening families, upholding the dignity, independence, and choice of older adults, championing full and meaningful lives for people with disabilities, and fostering stability and purpose for veterans and others.

**You are a vital part of our mission!  
Together, we are the public witness.**

Thank you for your generosity and the opportunity to do this work together.  
In peace,

**Alesia Frerichs**  
President & CEO  
Lutheran Services in America



*Alesia Frerichs*

# UPDATES FROM BISHOP EATON

## MESSAGE FROM BISHOP EATON IN SUPPORT OF JERUSALEM Patriarchs on Gaza:

Dear church,

Recently, the Patriarchs and Heads of the Churches in Jerusalem issued an urgent plea to the global church, "[A Humanitarian Plea From the Churches of Jerusalem: Defending the Dignity and Presence of the People of Gaza.](#)" I write to uplift the timely and crucial words of these beloved siblings in Christ in Jerusalem and to call on our church to respond in prayer, action and solidarity.

This humanitarian plea from ecumenical church leaders in Jerusalem, including our partner church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, comes in the wake of comments from the president of the United States that outline a plan to forcibly and permanently displace roughly 2 million Gazans, with the stated goal of clearing Gaza for future real estate development.

The words of our brothers in Christ are clear:

"Amid this anguish, we are compelled to speak against the grave threat of mass displacement, an injustice that strikes at the very heart of human dignity. The people of Gaza, families who have lived for generations in the land of their ancestors, must not be forced into exile. ... As Christians, we cannot be indifferent to such suffering, for the Gospel commands us to uphold the dignity of every human being. The words of our Lord remind us: 'Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed' (Isaiah 10:1-2)."

Today our siblings in Gaza need our voices, our prayers and our actions more than ever.

[Continue reading here](#)

**BISHOP EATON RESPONDS TO EXECUTIVE ORDERS ON  
IMMIGRATION: [Click Here](#) or go to <https://youtu.be/pnho5l8iNoU>**



# ADVOCACY INFORMATION

## Pastor Marion Pruitt-

**Jefferson's** suggestions for action and information, presented at the February 9 Adult Forum, are summarized below. Her handout is available on the Gathering Space Table.



- **ACTION**

- **Phone Calls:** Contact our **US and Iowa representatives and senators**. Pastor Marion firmly believes and emphasizes that **phone calls** are the most effective ways to contact our elected officials and recommends this **Smartphone app: "5 Calls App"**.
  - It is a convenient way to make calls to our **U.S. Representative and Senators** and includes 5 additional numbers for in-state offices and suggested language. Leaving messages is okay if necessary.
- **Email messages and letters:** A complete list of our Iowa legislators and U.S. Representative and Senators that includes **email addresses, phone numbers, and addresses** is available on our website here: [goodshepherddecorah.org/social-justice-team/](https://goodshepherddecorah.org/social-justice-team/)
- **Lutheran Day On The Hill, March 11** - Organized by **Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI)**. For details, see the announcement on a previous page.
- **Donate to LSI and Global Refuge** (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service). Online information is below.

- **FOR INFORMATION AND UNDERSTANDING - Contact information below:**

- **Lutheran Services in America**, affected by a recent Executive Order, is a network of Lutheran organizations of which **LSI** and **Global Refuge** are members: [lutheranservices.org/](https://lutheranservices.org/) **Donations** can be made here.
- **Lutheran Services in Iowa** - [lsiowa.org](https://lsiowa.org) **Donations** can be made here.
- **Global Refuge** - [globalrefuge.org/](https://globalrefuge.org/) **Donations** are accepted here.
- **ELCA website** - [elca.org](https://elca.org) Presiding Bishop Eaton's messages are here.
- **Iowa ELCA Bishops Respond to False Allegations on X** about LSA and LSI money laundering: [neiasynod.org/2025/02/bishops-respond/](https://neiasynod.org/2025/02/bishops-respond/)
- **Immigration Support Letter from Iowa's Eceuminical Leaders** - [neiasynod.org/2025/01/immigration-support/](https://neiasynod.org/2025/01/immigration-support/)
- **"Know Your Rights Toolkit"** and **Family Safety Planning** guides are available in multiple languages at [catholiccharitiesdubuque.org/kyr](https://catholiccharitiesdubuque.org/kyr)

# AMMPARO QUARTERLY REPORT

[View the AMMPARO February report online here.](#)

# WELCA NEWSLETTER

## WELCA Newsletter

**St Benedicts Parish will be hosting World Day of Prayer on Friday March 7 beginning at 1pm. The theme for this year is “I Made You Wonderful” Psalm 139:14**

**The 2025 WDP program invites us into the knowledge that each one of us was made with care and love by God. When we can receive this profound truth, everything in our life changes and we begin to radiate and shine from within. We also learn how to treat every other person as made wonderful by God. Too often, women and girls have been silenced and oppressed, making this upcoming theme from WDP Cook Islands particularly relevant. The message that we, as women and girls, are “fearfully and wonderfully” made in the image of God reinforces our movement’s support of women in expressing their faith and speaking about their lives in prayer and worship before God and in community.(WDP website) Ann Naslund and Bev Sheridan are on the planning committee. All are welcome. A second presentation will be given March 8 at Hesper Lutheran Church.**

**Supplies for LWR Personal Care Kits and Baby Care Kits will be collected during March and April. Donations can be dropped off in the containers in the Gathering Space outside the Sanctuary. We have some supplies on hand. Gail has been busy shopping at the Depot for baby things. Items still needed are: new, dark-colored bath towels (between 20” x 40” and 52” x 27”); 4-5 ounce wrapped bars of soap, any brand; new adult-size toothbrushes in original packaging; new metal nail clippers; sleepers without feet; cloth diapers, flat fold; dark-colored hand towels. We will be assembling the kits in late April.**

**The NEIA Synod Women Organization has scholarships available for women continuing their education. Please contact Bev Sheridan, 563-608-3272 for more information.**

**WELCA along with the Good Shepherd EPIC Scholarship Ministry Committee will host an Easter Potluck Dinner at 11:30 on Easter Sunday in the Fellowship Hall. The dinner be a fundraiser for both the Mission Assistance Fund and the Mission Endowment Fund. A freewill offering will be divided equally between the two ministries. Meat will be provided and attendees are asked to bring a dish to pass. Guests are welcome.**

# WELCA NEWSLETTER

## Gather Bible Study Winter/Spring 2025: “Faithfulness” by Denise Recto

### Session Three: Peter and Cornelius (Acts 10-11)

We do not always see eye-to-eye with our neighbor. And yet, we are called to love our neighbor. Peter’s experience with someone different gives the Holy Spirit an opportunity to teach Peter, the church and us to see others as God sees them. (from Gather website)

#### Upcoming events

March 7: World Day of Prayer, St Benedicts Parish Hall, 1 pm

March 25: Gather Bible study, fellowship hall, 7 pm, Connie Buresh, Bible study, Carrie Solberg refreshments

April 5: Cluster D Spring gathering, Hesper Lutheran

April 20: Easter Potluck Dinner, fellowship hall, 11:30

May 2: May Friendship Day, First United Methodist

May 3: LWR pickup



# EPIC SCHOLARSHIP AND MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND UPDATES

## Easter Potluck Dinner to be Hosted by EPIC Scholarship Ministry and WELCA

Good Shepherd WELCA and the Good Shepherd EPIC Scholarship Ministry Committee will host an Easter Potluck Dinner at 11:30 on Easter Sunday in the Fellowship Hall. The dinner will be an all-congregation potluck meal and will serve as a fundraiser for both the Mission Assistance Fund and the Mission Endowment Fund. Freewill offerings will be divided equally between the two ministries. Meat will be provided and members of the congregation are asked to bring a side dish, bread, or dessert. Guests are welcome.

The Good Shepherd Mission Assistance Fund provides financial assistance for those in the community in need, regardless of church affiliation. The fund is administered by the Pastor in consultation with two advisory members of the congregation.

The Mission Endowment Fund is the congregation's vehicle for funding the EPIC Scholarship Ministry. Each year the EPIC Scholarship/Mission Endowment Fund Committee is authorized by the congregation to utilize 4% of the MEF to award a \$1000 EPIC scholarship to each member of the congregation attending an ELCA college.

Service for the Easter Potluck Dinner will be provided by WELCA, the EPIC Scholarship Ministry Committee, and current scholarship recipient families. Plan now to celebrate the joy of Easter with your Good Shepherd family.

Dear WELCA Members ,

On behalf of the EPIC Scholarship/Mission Endowment Fund Committee I thank you for the generous donation that you made to the Mission Endowment Fund recently. Your gift is very much appreciated and needed.

As you know, the Mission Endowment Fund is the vehicle for funding the Good Shepherd EPIC Scholarship Ministry. This academic year the EPIC Scholarship Committee awarded six \$1000 scholarships to Good Shepherd members attending ELCA colleges. It appears that we will have seven next year and as many as ten the following academic year.

The congregation has authorized the use of 4% of the Mission Endowment Fund for scholarships. That translates into \$25000 in the fund to generate one \$1000 scholarship. We currently have approximately \$130,000 in fund value, the equivalent of 5 scholarships. Congregational growth, especially the youth, is happening faster than is the growth of the fund.

Once again thank you and know that our committee is dedicated to making the EPIC Scholarship Ministry continue to serve Good Shepherd.

Jerry Bruce, for the committee

Jim Buzza

Erin Anderson

Mic Martin

Lindsay Erdman



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Last fall, as part of the ELCA's Truth and Healing Movement, we were asked by the Racial Justice Team to develop a Land Acknowledgement Statement for our congregation. It will not only play a crucial part in combating erasure of Indigenous peoples but also provide a ritual of respect and gratitude for the land and for Indigenous peoples from whom the land was taken.

We drafted a statement that acknowledges the land, the indigenous peoples who lived here, and the impacts of forced removal and assimilation. We also identified what we need to do on our journey, led by the Spirit, to seek truth and healing that honors the land itself and the indigenous people who have cared for it throughout generations. We want to introduce it to you for your consideration:

## *Land Acknowledgement Statement*

*Forests merge with western grasslands on the rolling hills and bluffs of this midwestern landscape, drained by an intricate system of rivers and streams. This land sustained life, providing food, water, shelter, and medicines for all of its living beings. For more than 10,000 years, it shaped and directed tribal identity, spiritual energy, and continuity of life.*

*The loway tribe, Wahpeton band of the Dakotah Oyate, Sauk and Meskwaki tribes, and the Ho-Chunk Nation once lived on this life-giving land, holding it sacred and inseparable from their cultural and religious understanding and experiences. Their forced removal and assimilation caused immense suffering and death, shattered indigenous societies, destroyed the cohesiveness of indigenous communities, and destroyed their religious communities and individual identities.*

*We now live and worship on this land.*

- We seek the truth about our history and our religion's role in removal and assimilation.*
- We seek a path to healing and understanding, led by the Spirit, that unites us into one community of creation and opens our hearts to hear and understand ourselves and one another.*
- We seek to honor, with gratitude and respect, the sacred land itself and the indigenous people who have cared for it throughout generations.*

We plan to host one or more Adult Forums to present how we arrived at this statement, to highlight how it can be used (all or in part), and to solicit your input prior to presenting it to Church Council.

Peace,

Linda Donoghue

Land Acknowledgement Task Force Member (Elizabeth Kaschins, Anne Clausen)

# FEBRUARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

## GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATION COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING February 18, 2025

### AGENDA

**Attending:** Pr April Larson, Marilyn Rue, Sara Hopkins, Kris Peterson, Karin Martin-Hiner, Lise Kildegaard, Chris Johnson, Anne Clausen, Laura Barlament, Brian Caton, and Luther Snow (Stewardship Outgoing Chair)

#### Preparing Our Hearts and Minds to Serve

- In one word or one sentence, share what you most need from God now and/or gratitude
- Opening Prayer - Pastor April
- As we deliberate, let us affirm our congregation's commitment to pursue racial justice, advocate for migrant families, and support the LGBTQIA community.
- Is there anything on the consent agenda that should be moved to the discussion agenda? If not, is there a motion to approve the whole agenda?

Brian moves to amend the agenda and Kris seconds it. It passes.

Sara moves to approve the agenda, Marilyn seconded it. The agenda was approved.

#### Consent Agenda

1. Approval of [January 2025 Council Meeting Minutes](#)
2. Reception of Committee Reports (see summary below)

#### Discussion Agenda

1. Pastor's Report: Pastor April Ulring Larson Staff: filling the ministry for Youth and Education combined into one position. She has agreed to the position. Gabby Bizal will start May 1st. April 23 orientation in the evening.

March 23 new member sunday.

Salary and hours discussion for Gabby. Kris made the motion and Karin seconded that we increase Gabby's hours to 30/week.

2. Report on call process.

# FEBRUARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

3. Brian reminded the Council that last year, Council agreed that committees having bylaws and continuing resolutions currently stored in a set of Google Docs need to be converted to a format consistent with the Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA, and that this work should be done after the 2025 Annual Meeting. Council instructed Brian to communicate this work to committee chairs as soon as possible, and that the deadline for completing the work should be April 30, 2025.
4. Discussion on Flocks Luther Snow presenting on the flocks as he leaves the Stewardship committee. Reflections Care and engagement within the flock. Keep it going, bring it to the new pastor and find a new way of supervising it within the Congregation. What needs to happen next: time line, shifting groups, succession model. Collect success stories. Shepherds gathering for reorientation in the spring. March 30 tentative shepherds gathering.
5. Reception of [January Treasurer's Report](#)
6. Reception of [February Treasurer's Report](#)

Sara made a motion and Marilyn seconded to accept the reports for January and February Treasurers reports and they passed.

## **Announcements**

1. Newsletter Deadline is Monday Feb 24th
2. Committee reports/summaries due to office on Second Monday of the month, 3/10
3. Agenda with committee links emailed to Council Third Monday of the month, 3/17 Please read prior to the Council meeting.
4. A special Council meeting and Call committee will convene on February 25 Tuesday at 6:00p.m.
5. Next Council meeting (third Tuesday of month) is March 18th
6. Thank-you's and appreciation time

## **For Review: Recurring Work of the Body – Committee, Pastor, and Officer Reports**

Education Committee: [Link to report](#)

- 1.

# FEBRUARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

## **Outreach and Hospitality Committee:**

1. Catherine Hildebrandt will be joining our committee.
2. New Members Sunday will be March 23rd.

## **Facilities and Grounds Committee:**

From Reg Laursen: “Facilities and Grounds has not met since the elections due to not much business and not knowing who our Council liaison will be.”

## **Stewardship Committee: [Link to report](#)**

- 1.

## **Worship and Music: No report submitted**

- 1.

**Anne motion to close seconded by Lise and it passed.**

**Closing Prayer**

# MARCH CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30am In-person Worship</li> <li>10:45am Fellowship Time</li> <li>10:45am Sunday School</li> </ul>	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election setup</li> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>10am Staff Mtg</li> <li>2pm Violin lessons</li> <li>6:30pm AL/ANON</li> </ul>	<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Election day</li> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>9:15am Bible Study w Pr. A</li> <li>2pm Northeast Iowa Quiltie</li> <li>3:30pm Piano lessons</li> <li>4pm Stewardship Commit</li> <li>4pm Violin lessons</li> <li>7pm Northeast Iowa Quiltie</li> </ul>	<p>5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>5pm English language clas</li> <li>7pm Ash Wednesday Wors</li> </ul>	<p>6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recycle</li> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>12:15pm Violin lessons</li> <li>5pm Decorah Community</li> <li>5:30pm Racial Justice Tea</li> </ul>	<p>7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No Kinderhaus</li> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> </ul>	<p>8</p>
<p>9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30am In-person Worship</li> <li>10:45am Fellowship Time</li> <li>10:45am Sunday School</li> <li>3:30pm Open Hub Singing</li> </ul>	<p>10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>2pm Violin lessons</li> <li>6:30pm AL/ANON</li> </ul>	<p>11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>9:15am Bible Study w Pr. A</li> <li>3:30pm Piano lessons</li> <li>4pm Violin lessons</li> </ul>	<p>12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>10am Eastern Star/Arln Fa</li> <li>12:15pm Lenten Recital Se</li> <li>2:30pm Aase Haugen Con</li> <li>5pm English language clas</li> <li>5:30pm Lenten midweek v</li> <li>6:30pm Simple Soup Supp</li> <li>7pm Choir rehearsal</li> <li>7:30pm New member orie</li> <li>7:45pm Band rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>12:15pm Violin lessons</li> <li>1pm Travel Club</li> </ul>	<p>14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> </ul>	<p>15</p>
<p>16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All Congregation Meeting</li> <li>9:30am In-person Worship</li> <li>10:45am Fellowship Time</li> <li>10:45am Sunday School</li> <li>4:30pm Eat, Play, Love</li> </ul>	<p>17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>10am Staff Mtg</li> <li>2pm Violin lessons</li> <li>6:30pm AL/ANON</li> </ul>	<p>18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>9:15am Bible Study w Pr. A</li> <li>3:30pm Piano lessons</li> <li>4pm Violin lessons</li> <li>6pm Sons of Norway</li> <li>7pm Congregation Council</li> </ul>	<p>19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>12:15pm Lenten Recital Se</li> <li>1pm Prayer Shawl Ministry</li> <li>5pm English language clas</li> <li>5:30pm Lenten midweek v</li> <li>6:30pm Simple Soup Supp</li> <li>7pm Choir rehearsal</li> <li>7:45pm Band rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recycle</li> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>12:15pm Violin lessons</li> <li>12:45pm MEF Committee I</li> <li>5pm Oneota Community C</li> </ul>	<p>21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>9:15am Craig/Broke rehe</li> <li>11am CPPC and Stakehold</li> </ul>	<p>22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8am Erik Sessions recital r</li> </ul>
<p>23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New member Sunday</li> <li>9:30am In-person Worship</li> <li>10:45am Fellowship Time</li> <li>10:45am Sunday School</li> <li>1pm Erik Sessions Recital</li> </ul>	<p>24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>2pm Violin lessons</li> <li>6:30pm AL/ANON</li> </ul>	<p>25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newsletter Deadline</li> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>9:15am Bible Study w Pr. A</li> <li>3:30pm Piano lessons</li> <li>4pm Violin lessons</li> <li>7pm WELCA Circle Mtg. G.</li> </ul>	<p>26</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>12:15pm Lenten Recital Se</li> <li>5pm English language clas</li> <li>5:30pm Lenten midweek v</li> <li>6:30pm Simple Soup Supp</li> <li>7pm Choir rehearsal</li> <li>7:45pm Band rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>12:15pm Violin lessons</li> </ul>	<p>28</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> </ul>	<p>29</p>
<p>30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30am In-person Worship</li> <li>10:45am Fellowship Time</li> <li>10:45am Sunday School</li> <li>5pm Decorah Farmers Mai</li> </ul>	<p>31</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>10am Staff Mtg</li> <li>2pm Violin lessons</li> <li>6:30pm AL/ANON</li> </ul>	<p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tristan Away?</li> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>9:15am Bible Study w Pr. A</li> <li>3:30pm Piano lessons</li> <li>4pm Stewardship Commit</li> <li>4pm Violin lessons</li> </ul>	<p>2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>5:30pm Lenten midweek v</li> <li>6:30pm Simple Soup Supp</li> <li>7pm Choir rehearsal</li> <li>7:45pm Band rehearsal</li> </ul>	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recycle</li> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> <li>12:15pm Violin lessons</li> <li>5pm Decorah Community</li> <li>5:30pm Racial Justice Tea</li> </ul>	<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Church Office Hours</li> </ul>	<p>5</p>