



GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

We Are God's People and the Sheep of God's Pasture Psalm 100:3

LARGE PRINT EDITION



December 21st, 2025 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Introduction: *Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the angel's visitation to Joseph, sharing the news of the birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.*

ALL ARE WELCOME AT GOOD SHEPHERD.

God makes no exceptions.

In the spirit of Jesus Christ, we offer trust and respect to all, including those who may experience alienation, distrust, or rejection. We rely on the healing, unconditional love of God to shape our community in the name of the Good Shepherd.

There is more information about our ministry on the back of the bulletin.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

*rise in body or spirit when indicated by **

PRAYER BELL

WELCOME

PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH— The Bills Family

Song *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* ELW 257, st. 6

O Come O Dayspring come and cheer;

O Sun of justice now draw near

Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,

and death's dark shadow put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

shall come to you, O Israel.

At every beginning there is a yearning for the one who is coming.

O Emmanuel,

Surprise us by your coming.

We gather together to let God's good news reorient our lives.

O Emmanuel,

Surprise us by your coming.

We wait for the day when all the world will see the sign
that God is with us.

O Emmanuel,

Surprise us by your coming.

We are shocked by how God comes close,
even at this very moment.

O Emmanuel,

Surprise us by your coming.

Jesus, we welcome your presence now with the lighting of these candles, whose
flames bring warmth to winter and fill this place with the glow of hope. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN: *Fling Wide the Door*

259 Red Hymnal

1 Fling wide the door, un - bar the gate; the King of glo - ry
 2 He is the rock of our be - lief, the heart of mer - cy's
 3 Oh, hap - py towns and bless - ed lands that live by their true
 4 Come, Lord, our Sav - ior, Je - sus Christ; our hearts are o - pen

comes in state; the Lord of lords and King of kings, the
 gen - tle self. His king - ly crown is ho - li - ness; his
 king's com - mands. And bless - ed be the hearts he rules, the
 wide in trust. Oh, show us now your love - ly grace, up -

Sav - ior of the world who brings his great sal - va - tion
 scep - ter is his love - li - ness; he brings our sor - rows
 hum - ble plac - es where he dwells. He is the right - ful
 on our sor - rows shine your face, and let your Ho - ly

to the earth. So raise a shout of ho - ly mirth and
 to an end. Now glad - ly praise our king and friend, and
 Son of bliss who fills our lives and makes us his, cre -
 Spir - it guide our jour - ney in your grace so wide. We

praise our God and Lord, Cre - a - tor, Spir - it, Word.
 wor - ship him with song for sav - ing us from wrong.
 a - tor of the world, our on - ly strength for good.
 praise your ho - ly name, from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weiszel, 1590-1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943
 Music: MACHT HOCH DIE TÜR, J. A. Freylinghausen, *Geistreiche Gesangbuch*, 1704; arr. hymnal version
 Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.
 Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

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***GREETING:**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY:**

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.

With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

KIDS' TIME

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

¹⁰ The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." ¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph | like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- | on the cherubim.

² **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, | and Manasseh,**
stir up your strength and | come to help us.

³ Restore | us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

⁴ **O Lord | God of hosts,**
how long will your anger fume when your | people pray?

⁵ You have fed them with the | bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of | tears to drink.

⁶ **You have made us the derision | of our neighbors,**
and our enemies laugh | us to scorn.

⁷ Restore us, O | God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

¹⁷ **Let your hand be upon the one at | your right hand,**
the one you have made so strong | for yourself.

¹⁸ And so will we never turn a- | way from you;
give us life, that we may call up- | on your name.

¹⁹ **Restore us, O Lord | God of hosts;**
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the Gospel Acclamation. Both staves are in the key of D major (one sharp) and use a treble clef. The first staff begins with a double bar line and contains the lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,'. The second staff continues with 'al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.' and ends with a double bar line. The melody is simple and repetitive, with notes connected by slurs.

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON: "Shameless."

Pastor Kristen Larsen-Schmidt



1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow - ing thin.
 2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to drift a - way.
 3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,



Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with - in:
 Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com - ing day.
 come to bless with fire and fra - grance hours of yearn - ing, hurt, and need.



seed of prom - ise, deep - ly plant - ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
 Christ, the morn - ing star of splen - dor, gleams with - in a world grown dim.
 In the lone - ly, in the strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view;



Like the soil be - neath the frost - line, hearts grow soft to wel - come him.
 Heav - en's em - ber fans to full - ness; hearts grow warm to wel - come him.
 Child who comes to grace the man - ger, teach our hearts to wel - come you.



***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION:**

Response: God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

PEACE OF CHRIST

We share peace by waving to those worshipping online or through the public access channel and then with those in the sanctuary.

OFFERING AND CHILDREN'S OFFERING

Children are invited to come forward to get a pail to collect change and bills for our mission of the month, which is the Helping Services.

To give online, scan here.

Thank you so much for your support of our shared ministry!



OFFERTORY MUSIC: *Angel's Carol* – John Rutter

OFFERTORY SONG: *He Came Down, verse 3* **253 Red Hymnal**

*He came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have peace;
hallelujah forevermore.*

***OFFERING PRAYER:** Let us pray... **Amen.**

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

***WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

***LORD'S PRAYER:**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION: *All are welcome at Christ's table.*

COMMUNION SONG:



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have



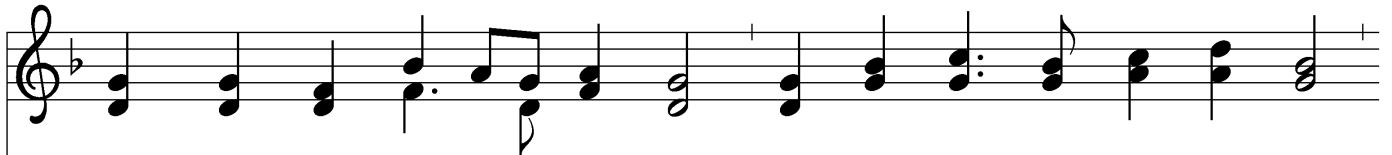
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



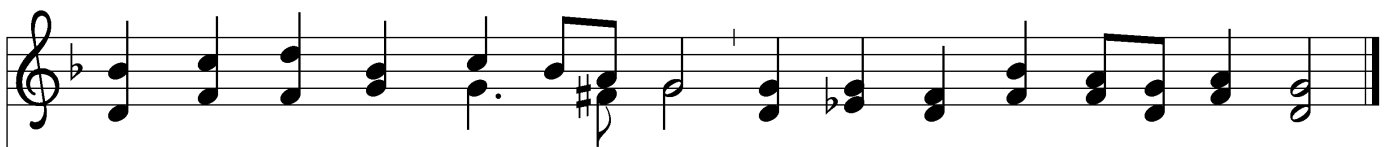
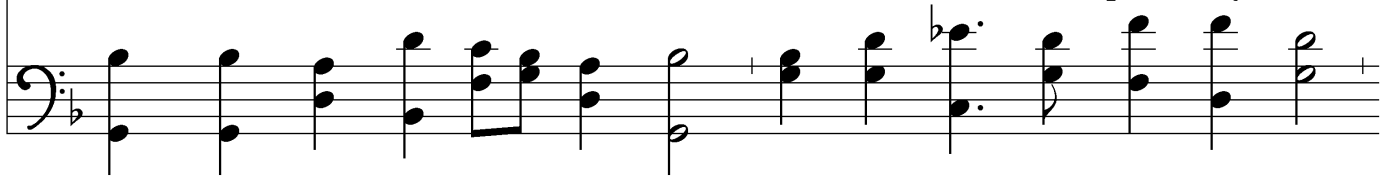
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a -



way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
 3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child— from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
 4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path - way leads;



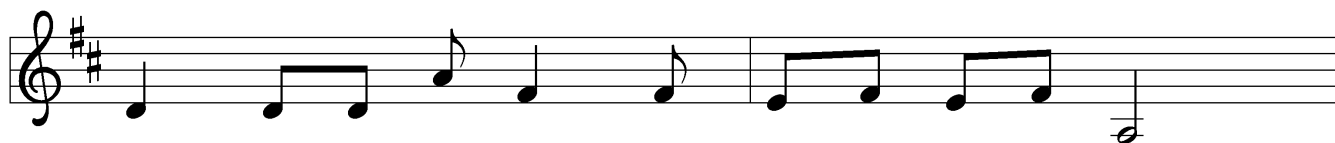
Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
 was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
 Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
 out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.



5 Now your manger, shining bright,
 hallows night with newborn light.
 Night cannot this light subdue;
 let our faith shine ever new.

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version
 Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524
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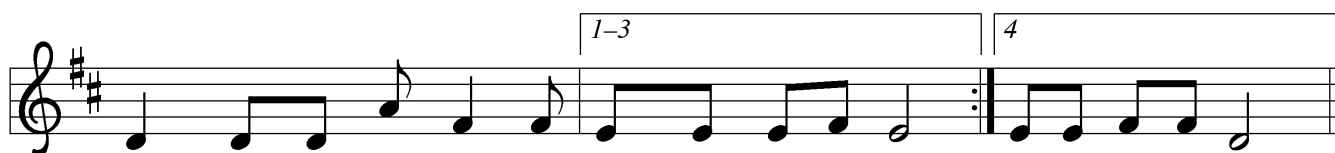
To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra_al Sal - va - dor
 1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
 2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
 3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
 4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y_el sur - co_a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
 Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
 new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
 This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
 la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
 ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
 here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
 world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
 God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
 stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
 clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
 Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946
 Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé
 Spanish text and tune © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.
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TABLE BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION: Let us pray... **Amen.**

SENDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

***BLESSING**

***SENDING SONG: Joy to the World**

267 Red Hymnal

Children are invited to come forward to play percussion instruments during the Sending Song.

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

***DISMISSAL: Go in peace. Keep awake. Thanks be to God.**

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TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERSHIP AND HOSPITALITY:

PREACHING AND PRESIDING: Pastor Kristen Larsen-Schmidt

ORGANIST & PIANIST: Brooke Joyce

CANTOR: Nicholas Shaneyfelt

ASSISTING MINISTER: Paul Skrade

READERS: Lulu and Poppy Bellrichard

USHERS: Daniel Skrade, Annelise Skrade, Solveig Bellrichard

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN: Matt Bills

FELLOWSHIP: Liza Hicken, Sue Blom, the Skrade family, the Bellrichard Family, Jutta Anderson

Special thanks to the Hiner/Thompson/Martin families for their music today!

SAVE THE DATE

The Rev. Yehiel Curry, Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, will offer keynote remarks at Luther College's 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Day lecture on Monday, Jan. 19, 2026 at 10:30 AM, in the Center for Faith and Life Main Hall.

The theme of the day and Curry's talk is "Courage for the Common Good." Supported by the Williams Endowment Fund, the day begins with Curry's address at 10:30 a.m. Following an optional community lunch at noon for attendees, two sessions are planned for the afternoon at 1:15 p.m., a youth discussion with Curry, and a panel discussion with regional ELCA bishops for all others.

The event is open to the public, and admission to the morning program and the afternoon break-out sessions are free. Lunch tickets for adults are \$10, but free for youth who are registered for the youth session.



This Week at Good Shepherd

Today, Sunday, December 21st: Fourth Sunday in Advent

10:45 AM: Fellowship Time; Fellowship Hall; treats: Orange Flock

Monday, December 22nd: Church Office Hours: 9 AM-2 PM

3:30 PM-8 PM: Violin Lessons

6:30 PM: AL/ANON; Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, December 23rd: Church Office Hours: 9 AM-2 PM

NO WELCA MEETING TODAY

9:30 AM: Bible Study with Pastor Kristen; Library — all are welcome

Wednesday, December 24th: Church Office Hours: 9 AM-2 PM

4:00 PM: Christmas Eve Worship

6:00 PM: Christmas Eve Worship

Thursday, December 25th: CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS

Friday, December 26th: CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 28th: First Sunday of Christmas

9:30 AM: Christmas Hymn Singing Service

10:45 AM: Fellowship Time: Fellowship Hall; treats: Orange Flock

Pastor Kristen will be on vacation from December 25-Jan 3. Pastor Melissa Bills will be on call Dec 29-Jan 3.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

4pm &
6pm



All are welcome to join us as we celebrate the birth of our Savior! We will hold two services, one at 4pm and another at 6pm. The services will be the same, so choose whichever one works best for you and your family!

GOOD SHEPHERD HYMN SING

Dec. 28th | 9:30 AM

JOIN US AS WE GATHER TO SING
FAMILIAR FAVORITE CAROLS &
HYMNS, LED BY ROLF SVANOE!



Prayers of Healing, Care and Joy

Praying for others is a cherished ministry that everyone can participate in at any time. People on the prayer list are welcome to remain there for as long as is needed.

Those with health concerns:

- Mic Martin
- Dick Schmidt, *Brian Larsen-Schmidt's dad*
- Wanda Rueber
- Robin Darland
- Ruth Bruce
- Evah Raney, *aunt of Dan Raney*
- Barbara Nasby, *best friend of Stephanie Hoff*
- Ann Fredrickson, *friend of Gabby Bizal*
- Bob Wilson
- Linda and Jim Morgan, *Jane Borelli's sister and brother-in-law*
- Linda Schmidt, *Brian's mom*
- Joan Searles
- Glenda Wuest
- Naomi Craft
- Barbara, *mother of Christy Vrtis*
- Anthony McCabe
- Lise Kildegaard
- Mickey Slind
- Scott Barnes
- Jon Wendling
- Elizabeth Hermeier
- James Barth
- Ginny Olson
- Haisleigh – *children's hospital, Iowa City*
- LaVerne Ramsey
- Phillip Swanson
- Harland Nelson
- Carrie Solberg
- Jutta Anderson

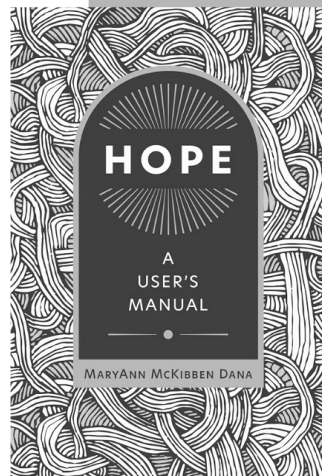
To have a prayer request added to or removed from the Prayer List, please email Tristan at office@goodshepherddecorah.org or call (563) 382-3963.

Book Study With Pastor Kristen

Mondays, 5:30-6:30pm
Jan. 5th - Feb. 9th
Pulpit Rock
Event Room

Books are available at the church for \$15, or at most major book retailers! We will begin talking about section 1 on Jan. 5th.

All are Welcome!





Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
701 Iowa Ave. Decorah, IA 52101
(563) 382-3963 office@goodshepherddecorah.org

WELCOME TO ALL GUESTS! It is a joy to worship with you. You are welcome to enjoy really great coffee, juice, treats, and conversation down the hall after worship – just follow the crowd. Sit anywhere!

- In keeping with our welcome, **Good Shepherd is a Reconciling in Christ partner congregation**, affirming our welcome to persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions, and our commitment to anti-racism work so that all may participate fully in the life of our congregation. **We are an AMMPARO Welcoming Congregation** - Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities. Good Shepherd buildings are Carbon Neutral/Net Zero Energy use.
- **Our RACIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT** was approved by the congregation on February 6th, 2022. Find the full statement at goodshepherddecorah.org/Racial-Justice-Statement or by scanning the code.
- **ALL ARE WELCOME TO SHARE IN HOLY COMMUNION**, the bread is all non-gluten. Wine is dark, grape juice light.



GOOD SHEPHERD STAFF:

Pastor Kristen Larsen-Schmidt

(563) 202-0780

pastorkristen@goodshepherddecorah.org

Gabby Bizal; Community Engagement Coordinator

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Brooke Joyce; Music Director music@goodshepherddecorah.org

Tristan Occhipinti; Office and Building Manager tristan@goodshepherddecorah.org

Mike Sammons; Custodian