Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Shepherd's Voice

AUGUST 2026



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A Letter from Pastor Kristen...



Dear Good Shepherd community,
Turning the page to August, VBS, and preparation for the school year, we are also preparing for Gabby to end her time with us as Community Engagement Coordinator on August 20th . Let's reflect on her 16 months with us.

Last year at this time, Gabby and I were both still getting to know the Good Shepherd community and one another and exploring what her role would entail. One thing we both recognized is that nurturing cross-generational community is one of Good Shepherd's gifts and needed to be utilized as we worked to build up our ministry to youth and families. We started dreaming about bringing all ages together for a meal and education on Wednesday nights during the school year. That became LIFT (Learning in Faith Together).

I am thrilled with how the LIFT initiative was embraced by the council and supported by this community. We are so thankful for all the people who have helped facilitate the learning for adults and for kids, for all who helped with the meals and all who have participated! It really does take a village! Gabby was a big part of helping to organize this village—from her recruitment and support of teachers for our kids, her preparation of curriculum, helping every Wednesday with the meal production, and review of the program. It has been a major LIFT (pun intended!) to get this program off the ground.

Gabby also helped support committees and staff in their organizing for other big community activities—Krumkake production, Friends and Neighbors Picnic, New Member Events, Annual Meeting, Christmas Program, Thanksgiving Pie and Prayer, VBS, etc. She attended committee meetings, participated in council planning and ensured that we were communicating clearly and consistently across all our media platforms. She forged partnerships with other youth directors across the community and synod, helped lead a college student Bible study and welcomed people to worship every Sunday morning. She led a LIFT session and preached one Sunday. She increased our connection to the congregation through prayer request forms. She provided a sounding board for my ideas and helped me implement them. In short, the role that she filled has been crucial to our ministry in this last year. We are deeply grateful for her time with us. As Gabby prepares to take her leave, we are preparing to keep going strong here, with her help. She has already arranged meals and teaching for fall with help from the council, flocks, and the education committee.

A Letter from Pastor Kristen...

As a staff, we are parceling out her responsibilities as best we can for the short term. Tristan is stretching to take on many of the communication pieces—bulletin ads, producing the newsletter, and our weekly Shepherd's Voice. I am thankful for his flexibility. I will take on a more active role with education, youth and college students, as I am able. We have a strong foundation and will be ok.

WE *WILL* NEED YOUR HELP IN THIS "ALL HANDS ON DECK" TRANSITION TIME.
Please consider whether you can help with any of these:

- We are seeking 2-4 rotating "**worship hosts**" on Sunday mornings to help orient our rotating worship leaders (flocks and shepherds) to their roles, greet people, corral acolytes, herd crowds, answer questions and provide hospitality to all. Training will be provided.
- We are seeking a couple of people for **Social Media POSTING** to help keep our digital presence current and engaging. This would include taking or collecting pictures from events and creating posts, in close communication with Pastor Kristen and Tristan.
- We are seeking 1-2 people for **"LIFT MEAL COORDINATORS"** to oversee the Wednesday night meal during the school year. This would not mean helping every week. It would mean managing the scheduling and being a point person for volunteers. Remember these are simple meals and the fall semester is already scheduled!
- There are other things we need to arrange related to facilitating our ministry to education and youth, but the ed committee has not met to discuss this yet.

Realistically, there may be some things that we need to "pause" or not take on until we are fully staffed again. We will discern priorities together for our time and energy.
After my vacation in the first week of August, I will continue consulting with council, committees, staff about the position description. Please be thinking and praying about this role—what it has evolved into in this last year and what will be most needful for us to consider in the next chapter of our life together. We will keep you all posted for ways you can provide input as we feel our way forward. God is leading us and Gabby, and God is faithful!

In gratitude and trust, Pastor Kristen

A Letter from Gabby...

My dearest Good Shepherd community,

First of all, thank you from the bottom of my heart for all the support and love you all have given me over the last week, since I made my announcement.

My time with all of you has truly been a gift. Getting to see our kids excited to come to church, seeing how welcoming you all are to every person who walks through those doors, how open you are to trying new ideas like LIFT, Dinner Church, the Children's Offering, and so many more. I have been stretched, I have learned, I have grown immensely since being here, and I will be taking many of those lessons with me throughout my life's journey.

Speaking of next steps, at the end of August, after I have concluded my time with you, I will be moving up to the Twin Cities and looking for work in the Social Services field. My heart has always felt called to working in this field, and I am excited to explore this area of interest.

Thank you all for the support, love, and guidance you have provided me over the last 16 months. It has been a joy and a privilege to serve alongside you.

In peace,
Gabby Bizal

Gabby's Last Day at Good Shepherd is August 20.



We will be thanking, blessing and celebrating Gabby on her last Sunday at Good Shepherd, August 16 in worship and at the farewell reception in her honor during fellowship. Thank you Gabby! We will miss you.

Prayer for the Month

Offered by Jane Jakoubek

A prayer growing out of a Lutheran Book of Worship vespers prayer…

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, along pathways as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us the faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love
supporting us…

Lord God, every day we face ventures of which we cannot see the ending—jobs, relationships, plans of all sorts. We cannot see where things will go for our health, family, work, congregation, groups we belong to. We cannot see where things will go for our nation or the earth. Life is nothing but ventures of which we cannot see the ending.

Give us the faith to take all ventures one step at a time. Give us the faith to follow you and to trust that you will guide us.. Help us trust that you will provide for us. Help us to turn to you when everything seems too much, when we don't know where to go, when we are lost and alone.

Lord God, help us to lift our eyes from our own ventures and see those of our neighbors. Help us to notice the burdens they carry. Help us find ways to help them carry their burdens. Help



Children's Offering for August

Postville Fire Community Support Fund

A community support fund has been established to help people and families affected by the July 28th fire at the Agri Star Meat Plant in Postville. The 2026 Postville Fire Community Support Fund will provide grants to qualified nonprofit and community organizations responding to immediate needs and supporting long-term recovery efforts. The Allamakee County Community Foundation and Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque are working with local nonprofits, community leaders and emergency response partners to assess needs and identify ways to support recovery.

If you would like to donate directly, you can use this link or scan the QR code,

Good Shepherd Field Trip to Commonweal Theater in Lanesboro!

Sunday, August 23rd

All are welcome to join us as we venture up to Lanesboro to see the musical “Spitfire Grill”! The show is on August 23rd, at 1:30pm. We will leave Decorah around lunchtime. All are welcome!

Click here, use this QR code, or call (563) 382-3963 to request a ticket!



Reparations Royalties

In 2023, Good Shepherd committed to make annual gifts as a form of “reparations royalties,” paying for the historic and current use of Negro Spirituals in our services while also committing to ongoing engagement with issues stemming from the legacy of slavery, racism, and white supremacy in the United States. Our first contribution was given to the Fisk Jubilee Singers. For 2026, the Worship and Music committee voted to donate to the Jesse Cosby Center in Waterloo, IA to help support their Community Collective Choir, which recently won the Community Choir Group of the Year award from the Iowa Gospel Music and Arts Association.

DINNER CHURCH
Faith + Fellowship + Fun + Food

Good Shepherd Dinner Church

August 12th, 6pm

Our third & final Dinner Church of the summer is Wednesday, August 12th from 6-7:30pm! This month, we are encouraging you to invite a friend or two. Our meal will be spaghetti! We will also be featuring music from our VBS kids & band!

A peek at what we have been up to at Good Shepherd!













Our Krumkake crew!













A peek at what we have been up to at Good Shepherd!











Flock gatherings















Dinner Church

YOU ARE INVITED TO A

POOL PARTY

AT THE STAMMEYER FARM!

AUGUST 16TH

4:00PM

BURGERS PROVIDED,
PLEASE BRING A DISH TO
SHARE AND A LAWN CHAIR

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731 PIONEER DR,
WAUKON

Scripture for the Month

These are the lectionary texts for each Sunday in August.
Please note that they may not all be read or used during worship.

Sunday, August 2nd - 10th Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 55: 1-5: *Eat and drink that which truly satisfies*

Psalm 145: 8-9, 14-21: *You open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Ps. 145:16)*

Romans 9: 1-5: *The glory of God's people Israel*

Matthew 14: 13-21: *Christ feeding five thousand*

Sunday, August 9th - 11th Sunday after Pentecost

1 Kings 19: 9-18: *The Lord speaks to Elijah on Mount Horeb*

Psalm 85: 8-13: *I will listen to what the Lord God is saying. (Ps. 85:8)*

Romans 10: 5-15: *Hearing and confessing the word of faith*

Matthew 14: 22-33: *Jesus walking on the sea*

Sunday, August 16th - 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 56: 1, 6-8: *A house of prayer for all peoples*

Psalm 67: *Let all the peoples praise you, O God. (Ps. 67:3)*

Romans 11: 1-2a, 29-32: *God's mercy to all, Jew and Gentile*

Matthew 5: [10-20], 21-28: The healing of the Canaanite woman's daughter

Sunday, August 23rd - 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Isaiah 51: 1-6: *The enduring foundation of God's salvation*

Psalm 138: *O Lord, your steadfast love endures forever. (Ps. 138:8)*

Romans 12: 1-8: *One body in Christ, with gifts that differ*

Matthew 16: 13-20: *The profession of Peter's faith*

Sunday, August 30th - 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Jeremiah 15: 15-21: *God fortifies the prophet against opposition*

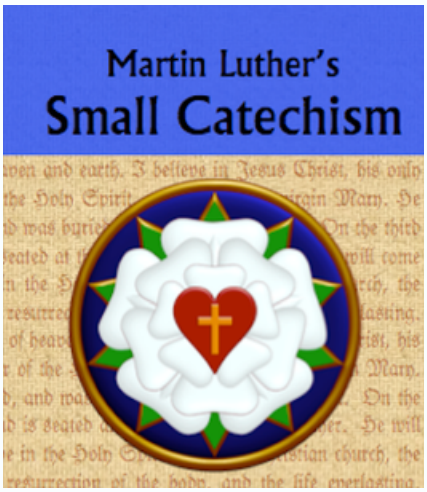
Psalm 26: 1-8: *Your love is before my eyes; I have walked faithfully with you.*

Romans 12: 9-21: *Live in harmony*

Matthew 16: 21-28: *The passion prediction and rebuke to Peter*

Lifelong Learning at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Life in the Lutheran Lane



with Pastor Kristen & Professor Wanda Deifelt

Six Mondays: September 14th - October 19th (come to the ones you can) - 6:15-7:30pm

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This interactive class is for any adults or young adults who want to explore what it means to be a Lutheran Christian. Whether you grew up Lutheran or didn't even grow up going to church, this is a good class for exploring the historical roots of Lutheranism, the basic teachings of our faith (using Luther's Small Catechism), and our current call to live out our Christ-centered faith in a complex world.

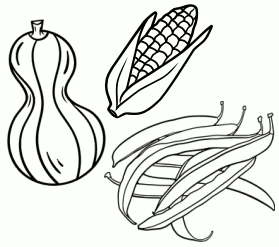
No previous knowledge required. Please sign up in the gathering space or by calling the church so we have enough materials.

Six Sessions:

1. How it Started: Martin Luther & the Rise of the Reformation
2. How Are We Grounded? The Gift Law and Gospel – The Ten Commandments
3. Who is God to us? Unpacking the Apostles Creed
4. How do we stay connected to this God? The Lord's Prayer
5. How does God's grace reach us? Worship, the Sacraments, and Community
6. Living as Beloved Saints and Sinners in a Messy (and Ecumenical) World :

Put these dates on your calendar now! Maybe invite a friend or two? Let's commit to learning and laughing together.

An Invitation to Visit Our Relatives—The Three Sisters



Earlier in the year, we talked about planting corn, beans, and squash, grown together by Indigenous people for millennia, and how they complement one another to provide good nutrition and tasty food. They are now here in our church garden, growing to feed us, feed the land, and feed our imaginations, telling us how we might live. They visibly manifest what a community can become when its individuals flourish and share their gifts with one another. So please visit the Three Sisters!

The corn, Mandan Bride, attributed to the Mandan tribe in North Dakota and treasured for its beauty, is used in fall displays or ground into corn meal. The beans, Hidatsa Shield Figure, are from the Hidatsa tribe in North Dakota and dried for later eating. The oval squash comes from the Meskwaki tribe in Tama, Iowa. Because sunflower seeds are such an important part of Indigenous diets, they are often called a Fourth Sister. So, we also planted Arikara Sunflowers, known for their sunny blooms and edible seeds. These came from the Arikara tribe at the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota. These wonderful plants are in the northeast corner of our garden. Please do not walk among the Sisters as they are still growing, but talk to them, touch them from the pathway, and honor them with your presence and delight.

As noted in the book, Braiding Sweetgrass, the genius of the Three Sisters lies not only in the process by which they grow, but also in the way they complement each other on the kitchen table. They taste good together! So, on November 18 th , we are planning a Three Sisters gathering to share dishes made primarily from corn, beans, squash, and sunflowers. By this meal, we want the Three Sisters to know that we've heard their story. Use your gifts to take care of each other, work together, and all will be fed. Save the date!

WELCA Newsletter

UFF DA! We survived the 2026 Nordic Fest. Our theme this year was "Krumkake-made with butter, rolled with love" and we certainly had plenty of both! Thank you to all who helped (from ages 5-94) to make our Krumkake Demo and Sale a success. We all worked many hours-buying ingredients, labeling baggies, retrieving supplies from the annex, mixing batter, baking and packaging krumkake, cleaning the downtown booth, transporting everything downtown, demonstrating and selling at the Fest and then-cleaning up and bringing everything back to the church-wow! We sold our last Krumkake 9 pm Saturday evening. We were ready to take the last dozen of gluten-free back to the church, when someone showed up and bought the last ones-perfect Fest! **We had total sales of $4,623**. 10% of the total sales will be given to the Nordic Fest board. Our gluten-free was a big hit again this year. We doubled the amount of GF we made this year with two full days of baking. We also only worked partial weeks due to another commitment in the fellowship hall. This seemed to work well for us-nice to have a midweek break. We will be disbursing the proceeds at our WELCA annual meeting in January. **Please let Bev or Ann if you have any funding requests.**

We applied for a Thrivent Action card and a Walmart grant and along with monetary donations were able to purchase paper products and baggies, water for our volunteers and extra baking ingredients (flour and sugar). **A big shout out to the coordinating committee-Ann Naslund, Bev Sheridan, Carrie Solberg and Sue Blom for their leadership in this huge project!** Thank you again to all for your help.

Now on to our next project. This fall we will again be collecting items for LWR school kits and baby care kits. School supplies are on sale right now so it is a good time to start stocking up. Items needed for school kits are: 70 sheet notebooks of wide or college-ruled paper, 30 cm ruler, pencil sharpener, blunt scissors, #2 unsharpened pencils, black or blue ballpoint pens, box of 16 or 24 count crayons, 2 ½ "eraser.

Items needed for baby care kits are cloth diapers, small hand towels, infant sleepers, receiving blankets(up to 50 “square), sweater or jacket, cotton t-shirts, and 4 ounce soap bars. If you have questions, you can contact Sue Blom 320-491-7172 or Jan Siefken 563-380-3008 (baby care kits) or Bev Sheridan, 563-608-3272 (school kits). Thanks so much for supporting our LWR project this fall. A donation box has been set up in the fellowship hall. LWR in-gathering will be held Saturday, November 7, 2026 from 7:30 am to 10:30 am at Olson's Explosives and Trucking, 1837 Trout Run Rd, Decorah, IA 52101

Bev Sheridan recently attended the 2026 Triennial Gathering of the Women of the ELCA in Des Moines along with over 1000 other women and girls. The theme was “I Am Worthy” based on Psalm 139:14 “I am fearfully and wonderfully made”. We started the Gathering with an opening worship led by Bishop Amy Current of the SE Iowa Synod. The Rev Sara Olson Smith led us in three Bible Studies which were also the summer Gather Bible study. Several keynote speakers and workshops led us in the theme “I am worthy”. Workshops included AMMPARO, mental health issues, safety & healthy relationships for youth, diakonos solutions, transgender experience, Storytelling-I am Worthy, and MOSAIC. The Gathering concluded on Sunday with a closing worship. ELCA Bishop Yehiel Curry was our presiding minister and preaching was the Rev Lucille “CeCee” Mills, secretary to the ELCA. “I am worthy-because God says so”

Gather Bible Study
Summer 2026: “I am worthy,” by the Rev. Sara Olson Smith
((August 2026) “I am because you are: We need one another.”
Our individual identities are always bound up in community. Jesus describes this vision using a vine and branches. Paul talks about a body with many parts. The prophets describe communities of liberative interdependence. Archbishop Desmond Tutu describes this way of mutual interconnectedness as “Ubuntu,” where “my humanity is caught up and bound up inextricably with yours. I can only be fully me if you are fully you.” In delving into Scripture, we learn how no one can flourish unless everyone does, and how our lives are bound up with one another and the planet. (Gather website)
August 18: LWR warehouse trip/tour, St Paul, MN leave at 6 am
August 25: Gather Bible study, Fellowship hall, 7 pm, Bev Sheridan bible study, Jan Siefken refreshments
Nov 7: LWR pickup, Olson Explosives and Trucking, 7:30-10:30 pm

Have you ever wondered:

What happens to the LWR kits and quilts we put in the truck in Decorah?

What is Global Health Ministry (GHM)? Here is your chance to find out.....

Tuesday, August 18, 2026

6-6:30 am Gather and depart from Big Canoe Lutheran Church
9:30 am Tour LWR warehouse, South St Paul
11:30 am Lunch at Perkins, Fridley
1:00 pm Tour GHM, Fridley and complete volunteer activity
7-8 pm Return to Big Canoe Lutheran Church

Cost is $20 for transportation; meals and shopping on your own.

Please RSVP to Anna Jetson (952-240-9569) or Bev Sheridan (563-608-3272) by 8/15/2026

We can also depart from Good Shepherd if we have enough interest.
Also looking for additional drivers, if needed (will receive gas money)





Good Shepherd Summer Bingo!

This summer, join Good Shepherd in a fun, low-stakes game of bingo! Pick up a card from the Gathering Space table, complete some fun ideas, and bring it back when you get a bingo for a prize! But don't stop there! Keep your card and keep filling out the squares to get a blackout bingo, where you will be entered into a drawing for a quilt made by the Good Shepherd community! The deadline for getting your cards completed and back to the church for the drawing will be Sunday, August 16th!

There are boxes that people of all ages can fill out - from conversations with other community members, to reading, to spending time outside! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to either Gabby or Melanie Folkerts!





Good Shepherd Quilt Project!



We have finished painting our quilt! Melanie is now looking for anyone who would be interested in helping to tie the squares together. If you are able to assist her, please do contact her! Melanie Folkerts.

The Good Shepherd Scholarship Committee

Jutta Anderson Recognition Day Being Planned

The Good Shepherd Scholarship Committee is in the process of planning a recognition day for Jutta Anderson, long time member of Good Shepherd and a resident of The Highlands. Jutta has been a loyal supporter of the Scholarship Ministry and in January of this year, donated $100,000 to financially support it. The recognition event will be held during the Fellowship Hour on a Sunday to be determined. Jutta will be unable to attend in person but will speak to the congregation via video.

Each year, under the leadership of the Good Shepherd Scholarship Committee, the congregation awards a $1,000 scholarship to every member of the congregation attending an undergraduate institution of higher learning. This year Good Shepherd has 12 such students. The scholarships are funded through the Good Shepherd Mission Endowment Fund, established at the congregation's 1994 Annual Meeting. The committee is authorized to utilize 4% of the fund's value for the awards . The estimated value of the MEF is currently at $255,000 and it takes $25,000 to generate one $1000 scholarship. Research indicates that the congregation will need 12-14 $1,000 scholarships in upcoming years, meaning the MEF will need to grow to $300,000-$350,000. The committee encourages members of the congregation to become more acquainted with this ministry and consider joining others in its financial support.

An announcement with be forthcoming when the planning for the Jutta Anderson Recognition Day is finalized.

Thank You!

Thank you to our Outreach & Hospitality team for your work in making our monthly dinner churches a success!

Thank you to our Facilities & Grounds committee for your work in keeping up the church and its grounds!

Thank you to Bev, Ann, Carrie, and Sue, as well as everyone who helped make and sell Krumkake for Nordic Fest!

June Council Minutes



You can view the June minutes here. The July Council minutes are not yet approved. The July minutes will be published in our September newsletter.

August Calendar

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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Sun. Aug. 2nd - Facilities & Grounds Committee Meeting, 11:30am
Tues. Aug. 4th - Bible Study with Pastor Kristen, 9:30am
Wed. Aug. 5th - Men's Coffee at Lefse Lodge, 3:30pm
Thur. Aug. 6th - Decorah Community Meal, 5pm, Decorah Lutheran
Fri. Aug. 7th - Office Closed
Mon. Aug. 10th - Thur. Aug. 13th - Vacation Bible School
Tue. Aug. 11th - Bible Study with Pastor Kristen, 9:30am
Wed. Aug. 12th - Communion at Eastern Star/Arlin Falck, 10am
Wed. Aug. 12th - Communion at Wellington Place, 1pm
Wed. Aug. 12th - Communion at The Highlands, 2:30pm
Wed. Aug. 12th - Men's Coffee at Lefse Lodge, 3:30pm
Wed. Aug. 12th - Dinner Church, 6pm
Mon. Aug. 17th - Outreach & Hospitality Meeting, 4pm
Tue. Aug. 18th - Bible Study with Pastor Kristen, 9:30am
Wed. Aug. 19th - Men's Coffee at Lefse Lodge, 3:30pm
Thur. Aug. 20th - Good Shepherd Scholarship Committee, 12:30pm
Tue. Aug. 25th - Newsletter Deadline
Tue. Aug. 25th - Bible Study with Pastor Kristen, 9:30am
Wed. Aug. 26th - Men's Coffee at Lefse Lodge, 3:30pm

The Shepherd's Voice

The Shepherd's Voice is the monthly publication of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Decorah, Iowa.



Our Mission

We are a congregation empowered by the Good Shepherd to:

- **Nurture and support** Christ's flock through Christ centered worship.
- **Welcome all**, offering trust and respect while sharing God's unconditional love.
- **Reach out** to the broader community through service and responsible stewardship of all God's creation.



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AMMPARO