



GOOD SHEPHERD STAFF

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Newsletter May 2020

XLIV, ISSUE V

Dear Good Shepherd Family,

This is the strangest time I can remember in my life. In speaking with our members who have lived much longer than me, I've been surprised to learn they share the same sentiment. The word "unprecedented" gets thrown around a lot to describe this time. But there are a lot of other words and thoughts that come to my mind. Some of those thoughts are appropriate to share here; others, not so much.



My life has been marked by great change in the last 6 or 7 months, I've taken a new call, moved to a new house, memorized the names of hundreds of new people, said goodbye to my father, become a part-time homeschool teacher, learned how to pastor during a pandemic, and learned how to completely clear and revamp my calendar for months at a time. This work is difficult and it continues. I'm still learning and growing. Some days, I think I'm getting the hang of it. Other days, it feels like I'm barely hanging on. Perhaps some of you can relate to this feeling. I say this not to overwhelm you or make you feel bad, but on the contrary, I find that it helps me to know that others can relate to my struggles. You all have your own struggles and I want you to know that I am here and your church family is here for you. You all have certainly been here for me and I am grateful for that.

I have heard words from some of my acquaintances and I have seen posted on social media some statements about this time that employ questionable theology and I want to help us think about this time in a Christ-centered way. Hear me clearly: God does not cause pandemics. We live in a broken world marked by sin and death—a world in which danger and disease are bound to happen. But this is never the work of God. God is the one who brings life out of death as evidenced by the resurrection of Christ. In our gospel lesson this coming week we will hear Jesus himself say that he has come "that we may have life, and have it abundantly." God did not cause this pandemic. God is not "trying to get our attention" with this virus. This is not God's way of "getting us to straighten up and fly right."

Yet it is important that we see God's presence and work in our lives during this time. We may see God's work as opportunities for reflection, for improvement, and for repentance. I know I have been thankful, for instance, to have so much time with my family. Being in a new call, I was getting into the habit of being in meetings almost every night some weeks. It was getting rarer and rarer to see my children in the evenings before their bedtime. This pandemic has allowed me a chance to reevaluate my priorities. As important as church meetings are, my work as a father is more important and I need to find a healthier balance. Where have you seen God at work in your life? Where are your opportunities for development and change? God's hand is not causing disease and death, but where is God working to reform and re-center your life? How can you grow in your faith during this time?

God is most definitely working among us during this time. I marvel that churches, including our own, have been as flexible and adaptive as we have been. I marvel that our stewardship has held steady—and in some ways improved—during this difficult time. I marvel that God has used us all in new ways to support and encourage each other and our neighbors. I marvel that we hunger for the word and sacraments in new ways during this time. God is with us. I am here with you. We will get through this together—strengthened in our ministry, renewed in our faith, and made whole again by the love and mercy of Christ.

With faith, hope, and love,
Pastor Andrew

WITH SYMPATHY

The family of Tommie Spence.

The family of Pat and Rose Butterfield upon the death of his sister, Julia Ann Riedinger.

Dr. Edmund Shay, who served for many years as Good Shepherd's Organist/Choirmaster and as organ professor at Columbia College, died April 21, 2020 in New Jersey. Death was caused from complications of the coronavirus, which he tested positive for with no symptoms. In accordance to his wishes, he will be cremated with no funeral service. He was 81 years old.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

To save expenses, we will not be running 1st quarter contribution statements ending March 31, 2020. Therefore, when you receive your 2nd quarter contribution statement it will include January – June 30 contributions. If anyone is interested in receiving one prior to that time, please feel free to contact me so that I can print and mail one to you. You can reach me in the church office on Mondays from 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. or email financialsecretary@gslc.com or debretired675@att.net.

Additionally, I am proud of this congregation for their continued support during this unsettling time. In the four years I have been in this position, this is the highest offering amount received for the First Sunday in Easter.

Deb Embrey
Financial Secretary

SOCIAL MINISTRY EMPHASIS FOR MAY

Project HOPE, a program of the Richland County Sheriff's Department to get fans for needy elderly persons in the area.

Contributions can be sent to the church office any time during May. Checks should be made to Good Shepherd and designated for Project HOPE.

Happy Birthday!

MAY BIRTHDAYS (ACCORDING TO CHURCH RECORDS)

2	Logan Struthers
4	Martha Haigler
5	Heather Gilbert
5	Gabby Shelton
5	Wes Snodgrass
5	Christi Wuori
8	Loren Alton
9	Jack Wuori
11	Daniel Wingard
14	Steve Hanayik
15	Susan Burch
16	Albert Alton
17	Jon Richardson
18	Mike Gilbert
19	Scooter Edwards
19	Peter Zornow
20	Matthew Beaman
20	Penry Gustafson
22	Susan Rodriguez
23	Keith Lindler
24	Nancy Hyatt
24	Rod Kent
24	Mark Lovern
24	Johanna Moore
25	Grady Smith
25	Fiona Taylor
25	Deborah Whitlow
26	Brad Aller
26	Don Hyatt
27	Mary Clare McAbee
28	Jim Donovan
28	Andrew Isenhower
28	Steven McFarland
30	Celeste Heisel
30	Lisa Sanchez