

The Shepherd's Voice

*Through the Holy Spirit, we are called by God to live Christ's love
as we touch all those in our lives, our church, and our communities.*



"Fear not....." (Reflections on the New Year, 2012)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

At the beginning of a new calendar year it has always been the tradition to look back on the past year, and make resolutions to try to insure that the coming year will be a better one. Well, I'm going to do just the opposite! So I ask you to journey with me into the future and look forward in this new year of 2012 to what God has in store for all of us.

We know that it will be a year of great change for all of us. I will be your pastor for only the first six months of this year. You have never had a pastor who has retired. As a matter of fact, you have never had a pastor as old as I am! Of course, I hate to admit that, but I just got my Medicare card in the mail, so unfortunately I can't deny my age any longer. As I write this, one verse from the New Testament keeps coming to mind, from the 13th chapter of Hebrews: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Those words were written to give comfort, hope, and alleviate the fear the people of God faced from the growing persecution of the Roman empire on all who were Christian. As a matter of fact, there are many times in both the Old and New Testaments when God or an angel from God comes with the message: "Fear not..." First to Abraham, "Fear not, Abram, for the Lord is your shield." Moses tells his people, "Fear not, for the Lord will deliver you." The angel announces to Mary, "Fear not, Mary, for you have found favor with God; an angel declares to the shepherds, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people;" and at the tomb on the dark Sunday morning following the brutal execution of Jesus Christ, an angel declares to the frightened women, "Fear not, for I know you are seeking Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen."

Through all the instances above, the people of God felt uncertainty even fear over their future, and constantly God would send an angel or some other messenger to assure them that the future is in God's hands, and therefore we need not fear, because our future is in the good hands of Jesus Christ.

With that said, as I assured the Congregation Council so I can assure all of you. For the next six months, I will be sharing with the council (and with any of you who are interested) my personal perspective on the strengths and growing edges of our congregation. I have done this with every congregation I served. No, it is not required, but the first few times I have done this both the Bishops' offices and the congregations I served

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January 2012

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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.

reacted positively. I feel these written reports will assist the committee writing up the profile of the congregation as well as the call committee which will be formed in the transitional process as you begin the search for a new pastor. It will be this same information that will be included in my annual Report to the Bishop.

Through 2012 you are going to constantly hear from me the “mantra” : “Fear not....” I believe that is a good motto for the entire year of 2012. A final note on this New Year regarding the Mayan calendar that ends on December 21, 2012. “Fear not.....” I believe the Mayans just ran out of space on their stone tablet!but whatever happens in 2012, Jesus wants us not to fear, because he is with us always, as he has promised, and he is the same, “yesterday, today, and forever.” Have a great year walking with the Lord!

Pastor Bryan A. Leone

This Holy Child

Our gracious thanks to the Choir and Choir Director Vic Johnson for the stellar cantata performance on December 18th. It was spectacular!





“O Come, let us adore Him!”

Friday evening, January 6 join us for a Vesper Service, A Service of Light, on this feast day of the Epiphany to officially end the Christmas season and begin the Epiphany season. Following the service at 7:00 PM, there will be a “flaming” dessert.

Highlights from Your Church Council

December 2011

The 50th Anniversary celebrations resulted in a net profit of \$140.43. Council discussed this and voted to send the proceeds to Camp Calumet's Capital Fund. If you would like to add to this donation with your individual contribution please note “Camp Calumet Capital Campaign” in the memo portion of your offering.



Inclement Weather Notice

In the event of inclement weather cancellation notices are posted:

- On the church website at www.gslc-ct.org/news
- On WICC radio 600 AM
- On WTNH Channel 8 news
- On Good Shepherd's Facebook page

Annual Congregational Meeting

Additional copies of the Annual Report are on the table in the narthex for you to take if you were unable to attend the meeting.

Prayer List

Members: Linda Bespuda, Holly Calhoun, Vic Johnson, Trudi Black, Dorothy Schrecker; Vickye Bell, Joanne Carlson, Ron Basala, Ed Mackey, Steve Krajcik, Charlie Miller, Ethan Dikmen, Martha Hoffman, Bret Jackson, Linda Pleva, Charlie Hoffman - Jewish Home, Kyle Immel, Jill Schmidt, Sarah Mora, Eric Dreher, and Helen Steinnagel.

The **Prayer Requests for Family & Friends Notebook** is on the counter in the narthex. If you would like to add a loved one to the list, simply write the name in the book. If you would like a prayer card sent to your loved one, please include the full name and address. Prayer requests may also be made by email or phone and will be included in the notebook by the church office. Should a loved one need prayers for longer than three months, simply add their name to the list again. **To keep the list current and up to date, only the names recorded in the Prayer Request for Family & Friends Notebook will be listed on the prayer list. If you have not recorded a loved one's name, please do so.**

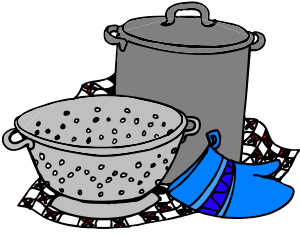
Family & Friends of Members: Noel, cousin of Howie Holleran; Carl, cousin of Arlene Juliano; Gladys, sister of Arlene Juliano; Ely, father of Erin Schwarz; Karin, daughter of Joanne and Bob Carlson; Mirta, sister of Thelma Cleland; Barbara, mother of Lisa Lilly; Mary, aunt of Donna Duessel; Walter, friend of Miriam Kursawe; Family and friends of Brienne requested by Dakota McDonough; Dena, friend of Ken & Nina Furnes; Jim, friend of Juliano family; David, friend of Doug Juliano; Eileen, grandmother of Rose Harrell & Sydnie Chin; Vincent, brother of Louise Begley; Trisha, niece; Mary, mother-in-law of Ingrid Kessler; Greg, Lisa Lilly's father; Joe, Susan Stockman's niece's husband; JoMarie, friend of Louise Begley; Arleen, friend of Eileen Remlin; Eric, brother of Eileen Remlin; Guy, friend of Matthew Johnson; Teresa, granddaughter of Elizabeth Cukan; Bill, brother of Pastor Leone, brain cancer; Al, friend of the Hassingers, heart surgery; Rick, nephew of Ken & Nina Furnes; Kenny, friend of Amber Serrano; T.J., friend of Amber Serrano; Dorothy, friend of Pastor & Kay Leone; Marge, colleague of Kay Leone; Dave, cousin of Sharon Duda; Bill & Ellen, friends of Pastor Leone; Patrick, nephew of Cindy Carlson; Jeff and Laura, son-in-law and daughter of Bill and Marie Fisher.

Special Prayers for Armed Forces Personnel: Ryan Piccirillo, Brian Kursawe, Glenn Riccio, Damon Dykes, Megan Dobbins, Phillip Balestrieri and Guy Davis.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.

Psalm 147 vs. 3

Community Supper - February 1, 2012
at Golden Hill Methodist Church, Golden Hill Street, Bridgeport



Cooks and set up crew needed between 2:30 -3:00 P.M. There is a serving crew, therefore only cooks are needed from Good Shepherd. If you haven't already signed up and would like to help, **please put your name on the list in the narthex.** We can discuss car pooling if you want to. Servers are responsible for cleaning up, so when we are finished with the meal preparation, we are free to leave. Any questions, please speak to Peg Wesche or anyone who has attended a supper before. Thank you!



Shepherd's Pantry

Juice
Vegetable Oil
Baked Beans
Pasta Sauce

Snacks
Salad Dressings
Barbeque Sauce
Soup

The Social Ministry and Community Outreach Committee invites you to contribute items to the Shepherd's Pantry located in the narthex. The items are delivered to the Monroe Food Pantry once a month. The Pantry also accepts Big Y coins (gold and silver) which can be put in the basket that has been placed on the Shepherd's Pantry shelves in the narthex. If you have any questions, please speak with Diane Hensel.



COVENANT TO CARE CHRISTMAS THANKS

Many thanks for your generosity and caring in supporting the kids on our list despite such a difficult economy. May God bless each of you with peace, good health, and prosperity in 2012.

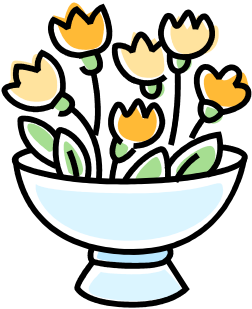
The Angel Tree

Once again your response to the Salvation Army's Angel Tree Program was overwhelming. Thank you for your kindness and generosity in filling the angel tags. What a blessing to be a part of such a caring, generous community!!

With deepest gratitude,
Trudi & Larry Black, Salvation Army Angel Tree Liaisons



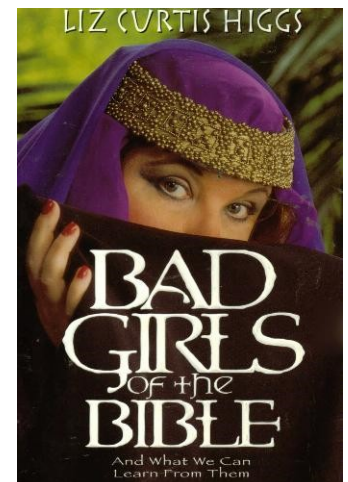
Altar Flowers



If you would like to donate flowers, please sign up on the flower chart in the hallway and be sure to include the dedication you would like to appear in the bulletin with your offering. A donation of \$40 is requested. In addition, please indicate if you would like to take one or two arrangements after the services or if you would prefer to have one or two arrangements taken to a shut-in. To help balance the budget, flowers will be on the altar only on Sundays when a donation is received.

Women's Bible Study

Join in the conversation of "The Sinful Woman" at the next Woman's Bible Study on Wednesday evening, January 25th at 7 p.m. Her story can be found in the Gospel of Luke chapter 7:36-50. Also you can read about her in the "Bad Girls of the Bible" (green book).



Happy Birthday

Charlie Hoffman	1-Feb	Nancy Johnson	15-Feb
Connor Flaherty	2-Feb	Heidi Gendron	16-Feb
Hannah Lee	2-Feb	Ray Goulet	16-Feb
Kevin Behn	3-Feb	Justin Behn	18-Feb
Bill Mc Donough	5-Feb	Alex Buck	18-Feb
Norman Lilly	6-Feb	Jewelianna Crawford	18-Feb
Dakota Mc Donough	7-Feb	Amanda Gorman	18-Feb
Emily Pelella	9-Feb	Tristan Mc Donough	19-Feb
Collin Hoffman	9-Feb	Julianna Kusinski	20-Feb
Brent Dreher	12-Feb	Norma Hudson	21-Feb
Sydney Chin	13-Feb	Ingrid Kessler	22-Feb
Ken Furnes	13-Feb	Fred Aubrey	23-Feb
Ellie Noll	13-Feb	Diane Hensel	24-Feb
James Crawford	14-Feb	Ingrid Dikmen	25-Feb

The current month's birthday listing is posted on the bulletin board outside of Pastor Leone's office. If your birthday is not listed, please contact the church office and the files will be updated. We do not want to miss anyone's birthday.

Treasurer's Report - November 2011											
Contributions	November		YTD			Expenses	November		YTD		
	Actual	Bdgt	Actual	Bdgt	Var		Actual	Bdgt	Actual	Bdgt	Var
Envelopes	20,329	15,800	179,246	184,150	(4,904)	Pastoral Ministries	\$7,462	\$7,548	\$83,987	\$83,331	\$656
Loose Offerings	120	250	1,649	2,000	(351)	Mortgage	1,723	1,650	20,781	18,150	2,631
Church School	57	77	544	3,715	(3,171)	Music & Worship	2,689	2,694	27,962	28,280	(318)
Lent & Easter	0	0	1,689	1,600	89	Benevolence	2,895	1,547	21,001	19,385	1,616
Other	25	58	4,258	2,892	1,367	Property	746	636	12,882	8,954	3,928
Thanksgiving	165	200	165	200	(35)	Office	1,493	1,368	17,279	20,322	(3,043)
Advent/Christmas	120	0	120	0	120	Utilities	560	455	13,450	10,337	3,113
						Christian Educ.	(600)	0	1,897	4,626	(2,729)
						Intern	0	0	0	0	0
						Evangelism	0	21	178	229	(51)
						Youth	0	38	0	413	(413)
						Stewardship	0	0	498	500	(2)
						Insurance	380	404	4,547	4,846	(299)
						Altar Guild	47	0	506	353	153
						Social Ministry	130	0	130	0	130
Total	\$20,816	\$16,385	\$187,671	\$194,557	(\$6,885)	Total	17,524	16,359	205,098	199,726	5,373
Variance	\$4,431		(\$6,885)			Variance	1,165		5,373		
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Bdgt</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Bdgt</u>	<u>Var</u>		<u>Dec '10</u>	<u>Nov '11</u>	<u>Var</u>		
Surplus / (Deficit)	\$3,292	\$26	(\$17,427)	(\$5,169)	(\$12,258)	Cash/Investments*	61,737	\$48,584	(\$13,153)		
Current Intern Fund	\$19,953					Mortgage	163,034	\$150,157	(\$12,877)		
						Pastoral Housing	97,227	\$98,690	\$1,464		
						Capital Reserves	1,300	\$2,905	\$1,605		

* Excludes Memorial, Exchange, Intern, Pastoral Housing and Campership Funds

Significant Activity in November

Contributions were \$4,431 above budget and are \$6,885 below budget year-to-date
 Expenses were \$1,165 above budget for the month, primarily due to Benevolence expenses
 Contributions to the Synod were higher than budget due to significant contributions in the month
 Bridgeport Council of Churches payment was made in November, but budgeted in July
 Surplus for the month was \$3,292 versus a budgeted Surplus of \$26
 Deficit year-to-date is \$17,427 versus a budgeted Deficit of \$5,169
 If budgeted surplus is achieved in December (\$5,167), Forecasted Deficit for the year would be \$12,260

Summary of 50th Anniversary Activities

Dinner: \$4,339 Received; \$4,177.96 Expensed - Surplus of \$161.04
 Brunch: \$123 Received; \$243.61 Expensed - Deficit of \$120.61
 Anniversary Celebration Contribution Received \$100
 Net Surplus from Activities: \$140.43



Are you making New Year's resolutions? Are you willing to give one or two hours a month to help others? Would you like to get more involved in activities at church? Joining a committee to utilize your time and talents may be the answer for you. Committees meet once a month. Please check the church calendar for the date of the next committee meeting and join in the fun! Here is a list of the committees at Good Shepherd and the chairperson or contact name:

Altar Guild - Donna Duessel

Christian Education - Erin Schwarz

Shepherding (Evangelism) - open

Finance - Ken Furnes

Property - Bill McDonough

Social Outreach - Diane Hensel

Stewardship - Debra Convertito, Ken Convertito

Worship and Music - Larry Black

Youth - Matthew Johnson, Dakota McDonough

Check out the Annual Report to see what they have done in the past year and come be a part of a rewarding, fun experience.

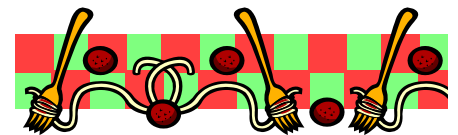


Quilting Group News

Join us on Saturday, **January 21, 2012** from 9:30 a.m. to noon as we sew, iron, cut and assemble quilts for the needy. Feel free to come and go as you need. If you have questions, please speak with Ellie Noll.



Save the Date
Annual Spaghetti Dinner
March 24, 2012



Don't miss out! Mark your calendars for March 24, 2012 for the Annual Spaghetti Supper. We are planning a special event to include delicious food, great entertainment and wonderful fellowship. Watch upcoming newsletters for more details...

Only 84 days to go...

Youth Group Sound Tigers Game



On Saturday, **February 4, 2012** the Youth Group invites you to a Sound Tigers Game at Harbor Yard in Bridgeport. The Sound Tigers will be playing the Manchester Monarchs at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$15 each. The deadline for tickets is January 22nd. Please see Dakota McDonough if you have any questions.

ELCA Thank you!

Together we fund the following ministries:

- **61 new congregations** approved in 2010
- **195 existing congregations** intentionally focused on renewal
- **250 mission personnel** in 50 countries, including 49 young adult volunteers
- **Ministry projects in over 90 countries**
- **8 seminaries**
- **26 colleges and universities**
- **Over 180 campus ministries**, with cooperating congregations in campus ministries at an additional 400 campuses nationwide
- **1,530 Lutheran early childhood education centers**, from birth through age five
- **257 Lutheran elementary schools**, K-8, and 14 high schools
- **145 outdoor ministries**
- **Health and pension benefits** for retired clergy, mission personnel and lay church workers
- **Long-term community development**
- **Advocacy** with the United Nations, federal and state governments and corporate development
- **Partnerships** with The Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches and National Council of Churches in Christ

Thank you!

Together we do God's work in ways that no individual, congregation or synod can do alone.

This is only a snapshot of the work being done by this church in God's name, thanks to the generous support of members like you.