

December 2021 Newsletter

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

118 E. Mason, Lena, IL 61048 Phone # (815) 369-5552

Shepherd's Voice

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

Dear God's beloved,

Have you ever wondered about God's having fun creating animals? Each animal is unique and beautiful in its own ways. I am easily fascinated by watching God's creatures big and small. It is amazing how God created them so differently and so holy. They too are precious in God's eyes. During the past months Kristy and I have been pet sitting for God's neighbor. Our tasks are to go there twice a day and give food and water to a dog and a cat, take the dog for a walk, clean the cat litter (and the floor whenever they leave us some gifts), and pet the cat if she desires. They are sweet, and I enjoy spending time with them. But some days they are nutty. One day I was running late and made the cat mad. When I got there, I found her empty dish in the litter box. Another day, I was surprised to find dog treats all over the floor. I had to talk to them several times, and you know, I love them. They breathe life to my crazy, trying to gain a sense of control, days. When I touch their heads with my hand, watch the cat communicate with her tail, and let the dog lead me on our walk, God breathes peace into my preoccupied mind. It is strange but these animals reveal the presence of God to me.

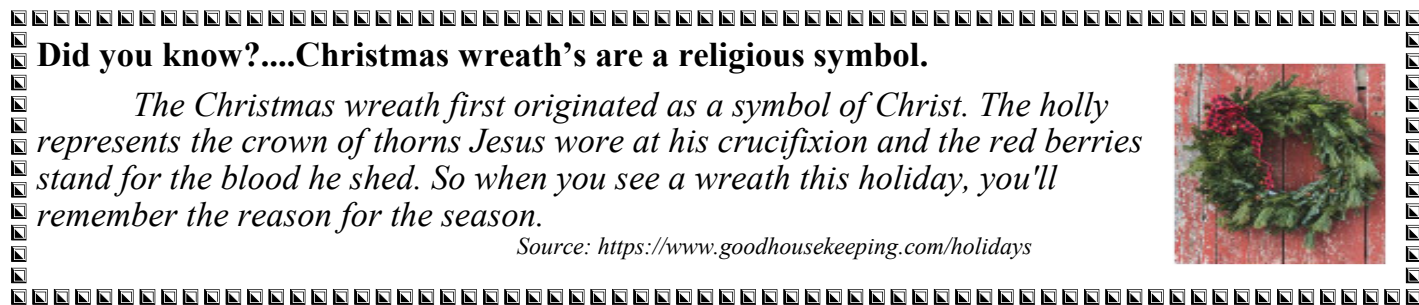
Recently Rene lent me a book, Praying with Katie: God, My Cat, and Me by Don Holt. It was about how Don, the author, encounters God through his family cat Katie. He watches how Katie demands his attention, and how she embraces who she is, and he begins to see God who loves him even he was unemployed and feeling depressed. His words sank into me. I appreciate his honesty and vulnerability shared in this book. His perspectives help me to re-imagine Christmas this year.

As you know on Christmas we celebrate God becoming human. Scripture says that "the Word became flesh and lived among us." Christ was born like you and me. I am pondering the question of why is it so important for God to take a human form? How does it make difference for our relationship with God? Sorry, I have no answer yet. During the 4 weeks of Advent I will explore. Maybe you or the animals will reveal the glory of God in surprising ways. I can hardly wait to encounter God who was born in Bethlehem and lived among God's people, and will be born among us again this year.

Christmas Blessing (from Sundays and Seasons)

The God of hope, fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit through Christ Jesus the Word made flesh. Amen.

Pr Miho


Did you know?....Christmas wreath's are a religious symbol.
The Christmas wreath first originated as a symbol of Christ. The holly represents the crown of thorns Jesus wore at his crucifixion and the red berries stand for the blood he shed. So when you see a wreath this holiday, you'll remember the reason for the season.
 Source: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays>





Prepare the Royal Highway; the King of kings is Near! Advent Devotion Resources

Advent means "coming" or "arrival" in Latin. It is a time to be ready and wait for Christ to come among us. We have some Advent suggestions for you to try this year.

ELCA World Hunger Advent Study 2021 offers weekly devotional reading based on the Sunday lessons while learning about ministries of ELCA World Hunger. Copies are available at church. You can also download the material at <https://www.elca.org/Resources/ELCA-World-Hunger>

Source: *A Devotional Coloring Book from Women of the ELCA and Gather Magazine.*



If you like music, you may try "Filled with Hope and Gratitude 2021 Advent Devotional" from Luther Seminary. This is a daily devotional reading and prayer based on a hymn Filled with Hope and Gratitude (ACS 907). You can download regular print and large print version at their website: <https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/advent-devotional>. Also printed copies of regular and large prints are available at church.



We have Advent Calendars, too.

"A Season of Hope Advent Sermon Series" from Lutheran World Relief. These are stories of hope around the globe. You can go deeper with videos and small group Bible study guide. Visit their website: lwr.org/advent

If you'd like to have copies, contact the church office.

You may collect coins for ELCA World Hunger God's Global Barnyard this Advent. Pick up your barns or pigs from church and bring them back.



Our Christmas giving program, *Project Room at the Inn* is the Christmas Engagement program through Lutheran Social Services (LSSI). The pandemic has challenged us all to re-examine how we engage with our communities, which inspired LSSI's *Project Room at the Inn*.

Project Room at the Inn is based on the Bible passage where Mary and Joseph were looking for a place to rest so that Mary could give birth to Jesus. The inn that they encountered had no room, but the owner allowed them to stay in the manger with the animals, which they gratefully did. What we learned from this act of kindness is that God made a way in what appeared to be an impossible situation. In the same way, we trust that God will make a way and bless the lives of the children in our programs.

Our goal is to provide gifts for 2,530 children in LSSI's care with Christmas gifts and help ensure that they know they are loved. Please join us in brightening a child's Christmas through, *Project Room at the Inn*.

We invite you to learn more about this program at LSSI.org/Christmas





Prayer Chain:

If you have a request for the Prayer Chain, please call the Church Office to submit your request at 815-369-5552. We are also looking for anyone who would like to join the prayer chain team. We send prayer through the phone chain and e-mail. You pray on your own and pass on to the next person in the prayer chain. God hears our prayers.

If you are interested or have any questions, please feel free to contact the church office.

A small gesture goes a long way when someone is feeling unwell. Let your friends and family know how much you care and thinking of them as they heal and fully recover.



Food Pantry volunteers needed for December 23rd 3pm-7pm

Since the 4th Saturday will be on Christmas Day, our volunteer date will be changed to **THURSDAY December 23rd from 3pm -7pm**. If you can help, please let the church office know. We are looking for 2 adults and 2 youth volunteers.

Feeding the hungry is an important God's work. We are grateful for the volunteers this year. Thank you! We'll continue to help at the Food Pantry in 2022.

We are also looking for next year's volunteers (2 adults and 2 youth each time). If you are interested, contact the church office or Pr. Miho.
THANK YOU

*We lift our prayers for
Lynn Lyvers, Dick Johnson, Jerry, Sheridan Brinker, Fern Harnish, Lois Paulsen, Taylor B., Nina Mueller, Curt, Connor Stadermann, Brooke, Jon Forsythe, Diane, Randy, Brian, Deb Lindeman Harder, Paul Heller, Janet, Ryse Stone, Harry Perra Jr, Nicole, Meghan, John, Chuck, Joyce, Terri, Tina, Julie, J.T., Jamie, Crystal, Katie, Christian, Anna, Abby, Karla, Jacob and his family, Richard Gordon, Jim DeMontigny, Kay, Sue, Shanna, Kathy, Charlie, Brad, Jonathan, Cindy, Amber, Chris, Ron, Vicki, Sophia, Abby and her triplets, Brenda, Abby Schick, Brenda, Jack, Gretchen, Kay, Roger, Tina, Sharon, Dan, Bryan. Pray for love, peace, comfort, and hope of resurrection for the families and friends of Jerry Stamm, Peter and Justin Capp.*

Thank You

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your generous gift to Lutheran World Relief's Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund! Your donation ensures that LWR Quilts and Kits get into the hands of a person who needs it.



With your help, we have delivered Quilts and Kits to families on Mozambique whose communities were utterly ravaged by Cyclone Idai. For refugee families, your gift means so much. A School Kit can make the difference between getting an education or missing out. A Personal Care kit helps families provide for basic hygiene needs, freeing up precious resources. Quilts help families through cold winter nights.

Please stay in touch! During this time of social distancing, we want to continue to bring you closer to the work you are doing around the world and we'd love to show you more examples of your gift in action. Go to LWR.org and sign up for the E News to receive the latest updates. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the LWR staff at 800-579-5972 or lwr@lwr.org

On behalf of LWR, our partners and those we serve together, please accept my heartfelt thanks once more for your gift and all that it will do.

Amabassador Daniel V. Speckhard (ret.)
President and CEO

LACC

The Lena Area Church Cooperative will be giving gift certificates for meat and groceries to those in need this upcoming holiday season. If you would like to donate monetarily to the Lena Area Church Cooperative you can either put the money in the earmarked basket in the Fellowship Hall, or you can put it in the offering being sure to designate that it should go to the Lena Area Church Cooperative or LACC.

Giving Tree (Formerly known as the Angel Tree)

The LBPA Giving Tree is setting up at the Lena Mercantile

If you have any questions, contact Lena Mercantile at 815-369-9955.



Christmas Poinsettias

Each year, Good Shepherd's chancel is decorated with poinsettias for the Christmas Services. You may order poinsettias in memory or in honor of a loved one or in celebration of the birth of Jesus!

Orders must be placed by December 12th. Cost will be \$14.00.

Order forms available at the church.

Make-A-Smile cards for Lena Living Center

Each month we will send cards to the Lena Living Center. This is a new ministry to share love of Christ to the residence in the nursing home. We are responsible for 10 cards each month. If you would like to help with this ministry, just bring cards to church by the 10th of each month. Please sign and include short encouraging words. Our hope is to make them smile!

Questions? Contact the church office or Pr. Miho.

Christmas Worship Schedules

You may join the service in-person or via Facebook Live. All service will be recorded.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Friday, December 24th, 7:00pm

*Holy communion will be celebrated in this service.

Christmas Day Service
Saturday, December 25th, 9:30am

Blue Christmas Service
Sunday, December 26th, 9:30am

Carols and Stories Worship Service
Sunday, January 2nd, 9:30am

*Holy communion will be celebrated in this service.

Also Christmas Program Video will be released on December 24th on GS YouTube channel. Beginning on December 25th, the "12 Days of Christmas" caroling video will be available, each of the 12 days of Christmas we will present another carol.

Answers to puzzle from page 10

CHRIST	ANSWER	MAN	JOHN	BAPTIZE
TESTIFY	LIGHT	BELIEVE	CONFESS	GOD

December Birthdays

12 -01	Jacob Doyle	12 -16	Bali Smith
12 -01	Daniel Hurth	12 -16	Mary Freitag
12 -01	Noah Wenzel	12 -17	Jim Hurth
12 -03	Penelope Price	12 -18	Jean Engel
12 -08	Marybeth Brinker	12 -20	Cyndy Shumaker
12 -08	Amy Hesselbacher	12 -21	Brian Hurth
12 -08	Coltin Coonts	12 -22	Richard Johnson
12 -10	Sharon Schlachter	12 -22	Wayne Hurth
12 -10	Ron Cross	12 -23	Abigail Brinker
12 -10	Jarod Timms	12 -24	Paula Schoenhard
12 -11	Ryan Fye	12 -27	Tom Brinker
12 -14	Chris Fahr	12 -30	Lynn Syvers
12 -16	Dan Lawson	12 -31	Kenlee Price

If we missed your birthday (or someone in your family) please call the office so that we may update our records!

LENA'S HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS PARADE

Good Shepherd will have a float in the Christmas Parade on Friday, **December 3rd**. Parade begins at 6:00pm. If you would like to ride on the float, be at the church by 5:30pm.



The Piece Corps Quilters

Are you looking for yarn, or are you getting ready for those winter knitting or crochet projects? If you are, the Piece Corps Quilters has extra yarn available for you. Clothing is not needed at this time.

Thank you for your donations.

Did you know?...St. Nick was more generous than jolly

You probably already knew that the idea of Santa Claus came from St. Nicholas. The saint wasn't a bearded man who wore a red suit; that tradition came much later. In the fourth century, the Christian bishop gave away his large inheritance to the poor and rescued women from servitude. In Dutch, his name is Sinter Klaas, which later morphed into Santa Claus in English.

Source: <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays>



Offering Notes

Please be sure that any contributions you would like credit for this year, is received prior to the end of worship on **Sunday, December 26, 2021**. Any contribution received after that will be credited in 2022. Thank you for your cooperation.

In an ongoing effort to reduce expenses, your offering envelope number for next year may change. It's imperative that you write your name on your envelope.

Your generosity and cooperation are very much appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Sheila at (815) 369-5101. Thank you.

Dear Friends,

The weather is getting cooler, the leaves are falling, and my heart is overflowing with gratitude for you and the support you have provided to Grace Place Campus Ministry. When we entered this fall, we had no idea what the semester would be like once we opened our building and began offering in-person programming.

Through our weekly meals, worship, social event and outreach, we are inviting all those who seek a community full of God's radical love. We are creating a community where every single person feels that they can fully come, just as they are, and know that not only will they be accepted and welcomed but know that they will be loved.

Consider making a donation either via check or via Facebook (@GracePlaceNIU). You can also make an impact by finding our Amazon Charity Wish List and help us replace items around our building. No matter the amount, please know that your gift matters and that makes a difference to this community. Thank you for helping us live into God's radical love and supporting the ministry of Grace Place.

Rev. Mack Patrick
Campus Pastor

Annual Reports Are Due December 10, 2021

Annual reports are required for each committee and organization of the congregation. These reports are assembled and made available to the congregation members prior to the meeting. The reports are the responsibility of the chairperson or offices. If possible, please type up the report and email it to

GoodShepherdLena@outlook.com in Word format.

Thank you..

THANK YOU!
thank you!

Your generosity helps us continue to do God's work. If you cannot make it to service on Sunday morning, you may mail or drop off your offering to church. Your offering will be included to the following Sunday. We are thankful for all your support to Good Shepherd.

We all love to sing along to **Jingle Bells**, but have you ever noticed that the song doesn't have the word Christmas in it? Or Jesus or Santa Claus? That's because it wasn't originally a Christmas song! In fact, the jolly anthem was written in 1850, entitled **One Horse Open Sleigh** for the **American** holiday, **Thanksgiving!**

Source: <https://www.natgeokids.com/>



Treasurer's Report Jay Andrews

Incoming October 2021	\$6,986.00
Expenses October 2021	\$11,574.63
Net Income (Loss)	\$(4,588.63)

Income, Year to Date 2021	\$89,588.61
Expenses, Year to Date 2021	\$109,443.41
Net Income (Loss)	\$(19,854.80)

Highlights from October Council Meetings

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the September 16, 2021 Church Council Meeting were reviewed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Jay Andrews reported that Church giving has been low and he is having trouble meeting the budget. The Stewardship Committee will be sending out a communication to the congregation on this matter. Jay Andrews also reported that the paperwork has been completed for the Payroll Protection Program loan forgiveness has been completed. The bank has confirmed that the loan for \$10,792.89 has been officially forgiven.

Electric Bill: \$138.78 Gas/Heating Bill: \$258.69

Pastor's Report: Pastor Miho reported that the September Food Pantry served 52 households and that the Mobile Food Pantry was in Lena and served 83 families. On October 11, 2021 FHN conducted a Flu Clinic at Good Shepherd. God's Work Our Hands thank you cards were delivered.

Committee Reports:

Learning and Youth Committee: Confirmation is moving forward.

Service Committee: Good Shepherd will be at the Food Pantry Saturday, October 23.

Finance Committee: There will be an upcoming meeting soon.

Property Committee: The Property Committee made two proposals for gutter guards. After looking at the proposals, the Church Council recommended tabling and action until after the new year.

Men's Ministry: The men will be having their Steak Fry and meeting on October 30. Please sign up if you wish to eat steak.

New Business:

Elevator: The motor was taken to Precision Drive and Control in Monroe for repair and a cost of \$850. The Council approved this repair for the elevator.

Food Pantry: It was brought up that it is time to pay Good Shepherd's portion of the rent (\$600) for the Food Pantry. It was decided to take the money out of the Lucille Baker Endowment Fund.

Finance: It was recommended to the Church Council that \$5,000 be taken out of the BMI Interest account to supplement the Pastor's Housing Allowance. This was approved. It was also noted that the Church supports the Peace Corp Quilters with a \$2,000 donation to help buy supplies. It was approved to take the \$2,000 out of the Lucille Baker Endowment Fund.

Organ Repair: Wayne Kurth met with a representative from the Levsen Organ Company from Buffalo, Iowa to get another opinion on the needs of the organ. Levsen Organ's representative suggested that the rectifier needed replacing and that this would solve many of the problems. The cost of a new rectifier would be \$500. The Property Committee recommends going with this recommendation as well as tuning the organ at a cost of \$350. Treasurer Jay Andrews reported that a \$2,000 memorial has been presented to the Church for the organ repair. After discussion, it was decided to accept the bid from Levsen Organ Company to replace the rectifier and tune the organ for a total cost of \$850.

Continued from previous page.

Having no other business, the meeting was adjourned. Next meeting will be on November 18, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Janis Kurth
Church Council Secretary



My Knitting Mistake

By Julie Cicora

Sometimes a picture of a sweater pattern can take my breath away. One showed a beautiful woman with long black hair posing in a field, hair wafting around her face, enjoying the spring breeze in a celery green cotton sweater. Cables ran up and down the sweater fanning out over her hips; back in at the waist, and then expanding again at the chest. Purl stitches filled in between the cables, generating a textured fabric, highlighting the cable. The loose three-quarter-length bell sleeves completed the romantic look.

I bought the yarn, cast on, and started knitting. Then my father had a heart attack.

It was the middle of the night when my mother called. I jumped out of bed and started packing for the seven-hour ride to the hospital. I was throwing clothes into a duffle bag when my eye caught sight of the green cotton sweater sitting on the couch. I grabbed it, stuffed it into a bag, and tossed it in the car. It turned out to be my saving grace those many hours in the hospital. I sat next to my father's hospital bed, cable needle resting behind my ear, knitting my way up the back of the sweater. I made remarkable progress on the sweater, and my father made remarkable progress recovering from his surgery. After days of sitting and knitting, the back was almost done, my dad left the hospital, and I was back in the car traveling home.

It wasn't until months later that I discovered an anomaly. I was admiring the cables, while pressing the garment in order to measure its length when I saw it. There, square in the middle of the back piece, was a cable missing a twist, it was the only cable on that row that hadn't been twisted. I looked harder thinking this cannot be true; I must have made it up. I looked again, but it was still there. My eyes went immediately to the mistake. I asked some of my non-knitting friends how they laid, the sweater and if they could see the mistake in the back. They couldn't see a mistake. My knitting friends would zero in on the cable and say something like wow, what an interesting pattern. Others said that mistake is pretty far back, are you going to take it out? Now I had to decide if I was going to take out the eight or so inches of work.

Knitting is one of the rare activities where we can tear out our mistakes and redo it. It may sound appealing to be able to correct a mistake, but we pay for the privilege by ripping out hours of work.

I decided to keep the mistake in the sweater. A friend of mine told me; if you can't fix it, flaunt it. I made the mistake because I was distracted. I was probably talking to my father while I knit the stitches instead of cabling. I know that every time I wore that sweater, I would think of the time I had with my father in the hospital, and how I paid more attention to him than to my knitting. The mistake became an indication of my love for my father. If I unraveled it, it would be like unraveling history.

We don't have the ability to unravel our latest mistake in life. At best, we can apologize, make amends and try harder. We live with our mistakes, and we can learn from them. We wear them much like the sweater; they are part of us, and they can be powerful motivators for change if we are willing to examine them.

We become who we are through our mistakes. My knitting mistake reminds me that relationships are more important than perfection. I have embraced that cable with the missing twist and I wear it with pride.

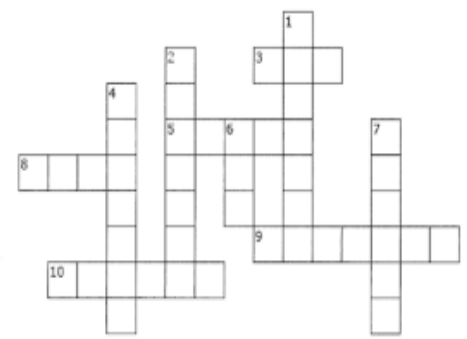
Source: Gather Magazine, November/December 2021



Ethan and Lucas Fye

The Light of the World

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. John 1:6, 8 (NIV)
 Based on John 1:6-8, 19-28 (NIV)



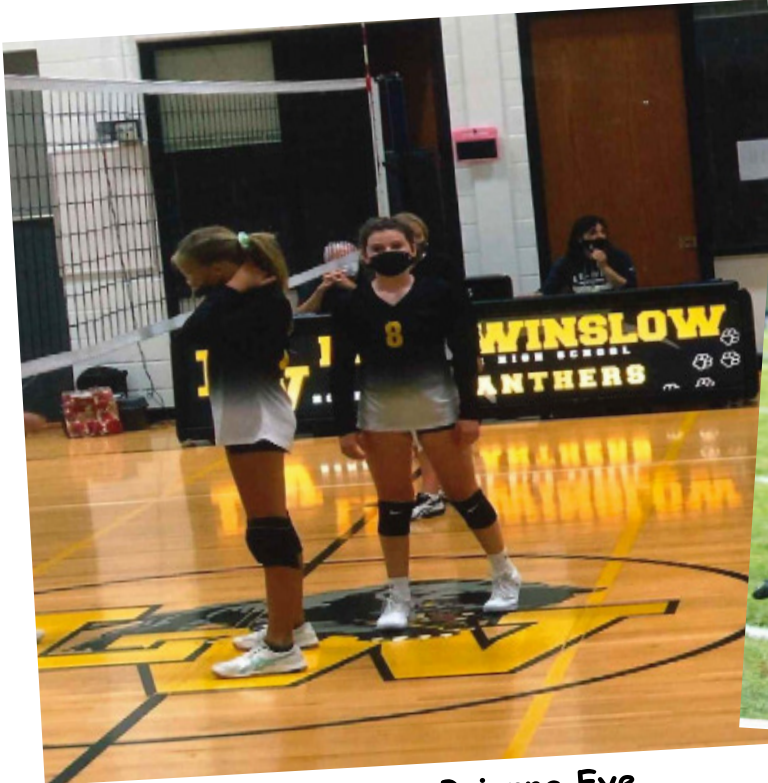
ACROSS

- 3. An adult male human
- 5. A source of illumination, such as a lamp, or a lantern
- 8. The man sent from God to prepare the way for Jesus
- 9. To give evidence based on personal knowledge
- 10. To reply to a question

DOWN

- 1. To immerse in water
- 2. To be convinced that something is true
- 4. To admit that something is true
- 6. The creator of the heavens, earth and its people
- 7. The Messiah, as foretold by the prophets

Source: www.sermons4kids.com



Brianna Fye













Ethan Fye



December 2021 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Lena, IL



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters 10:00am Pr. Miho at Roistered Minister's zoom meeting	2	3 6:00pm Lena's Home Town Christmas Parade	4
5  Advent 2  9:30am Worship Service (Communion Sunday) 10:30am Fellowship 11:00am Confirmation Class 11:00am Choir Practice 5:00pm Chime Practice	6	7 <i>10:00 am Bible Study Group</i>	8 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters 9:00am Pr. Miho at NW Conference zoom meeting	9 1:00 pm Friendship Club Christmas Sing-a-long	10 Annual Reports Due	11
12  Advent 3   9:30am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship 11:00am Confirmation Class 11:00am Choir Practice 5:00pm Chime Practice <i>LAST DAY to order Poinsettias</i>	13	14 <i>10:00 am Bible Study Group</i>	15 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters 10:00am Pr. Miho at Roistered Minister's zoom meeting January Newsletter Deadline	16 6:30pm Council Meeting	17	18 Full Moon 
19   Advent 4   9:30am Worship Service (Communion Sunday) 10:30am Fellowship 11:00am Confirmation class 11:00am Choir Practice 5:00pm Chime Practice	20	21 <i>10:00 am Bible Study Group</i>	22 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters	23 3:00pm-7:00pm Good Shepherd at Le-Win Food Pantry	24 7:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Check GS YouTube Christmas Program Video	25 9:30am Christmas Day Worship Service Check GS YouTube 12 Days of Christmas carol video
26 9:30am Blue Christmas Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship Check GS YouTube 12 Days of Christmas carol video	27 Check GS YouTube 12 Days of Christmas carol video	28 Check GS YouTube 12 Days of Christmas carol video	29 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters Check GS YouTube 12 Days of Christmas carol video	30 Check GS YouTube 12 Days of Christmas carol video	31 New Year's Eve Check GS YouTube 12 Days of Christmas carol video	

December Volunteer Schedule

Greeter

December 5 Michelle Andrews/Wayne Kurth
 December 12 Tim Gordon/Darci Meier
 December 19 Anna Patterson/ Sue Diddens
 December 24 Anna Patterson/Tim Gordon
 December 26 Wayne Kurth/Darci Meier

Lectors

December 5 Karen Neimeier
 December 12 Coralyn Hudik
 December 19 Sue Diddens
 December 24 Wayne Kurth
 December 25 Tena Rackow
 December 26 Wayne Kurth

We are still looking for volunteers for
Elevator Operator and Live Stream.
 If you are interested or have questions,
 please contact the church office.
WE NEED YOU!

One Bless'ed Night

On a journey from afar
 Only guided by a star
 Was Mary the Virgin bride
 Traveling with Joseph by her side



To Bethlehem they were heading
 But no room were they getting
 For the baby to be born
 Oh so early in the morn

They came upon a peaceful manger
 where the animals held no danger
 and through the miracle of birth
 Jesus Christ came unto this earth



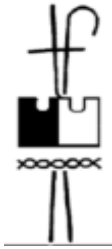
To this day there is celebration
 Throughout every God enriched nation
 To remember the birth of our Savior
 One bless'ed night in a manger.



By: Robin Zelaya



Please mark your calendars
 for the dates that you have
 been assigned, **if you cannot
 serve on the day that you
 have been assigned please
 switch with someone and
 /or call the church office by
 Tuesday of the week that
 you are to volunteer so that
 arrangements can be made.**
 815-369-5552



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118 E. Mason Street
Lena, Illinois 61048

Email: goodshepherdlena@outlook.com
Facebook: "GSLCLenaIL";
Website: www.GoodShepherdLena.org

Martin Luther's Small Catechism

How people are to be taught to confess

What is confession? Confession consists of two parts. One is that we confess our sins. The other is that we receive the absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God himself and by no means doubt but firmly believe that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven.

Which sins is a person to confess? Before God one is to acknowledge the guilt for all sins, even those of which we are not aware, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. However, before the pastor we are to confess only those sins of which we are aware and which trouble us.

Which sins are these? Here reflect on your walk of life in light of the Ten Commandments: whether you are father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, lazy, whether you have harmed anyone by word or deed; whether you have stolen, neglected, wasted, or injured anything. Small Catechism of Martin Luther ELW page 1165