

January 2023 Newsletter

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

Thoughts from the Vicar

Greetings in Christ,

With the beginning of a new year we see the world in a fresh and new way. The darkest days are now past and the light is slowly returning. The true light of Christ shines in our hearts and in all of creation. It is a good time to place ourselves once again in God's hands, trusting and hoping in his grace, mercy, and love. All that is good from the past we bring with us, and all that is harmful we leave behind or we allow God to transform it from a curse to a blessing.

And we look to the renewal of our hearts through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." [II Corinthians 5:17] Each new day (and each new year) is a gift from God and a new opportunity to serve him and serve each other.

I look forward to this new year as we enter a new phase as a congregation. I am with you now not just as a "supply pastor", but as an intern, a member of this community of faith, working with you and for you, and learning how better to serve each one of you.

May God bless our life together in 2023 and fill our hearts with joy and wonder.

Blessings in Christ,
Vicar Thomas

Devotional Thoughts on FRIENDSHIP by Doris W. Greig

As I think about friendship, I wonder if I had my life to live over, how differently I would live.

Would I have invited more friends over for dinner, even if it were just a hamburger fry or macaroni and cheese?

Would I have sat on the lawn more often with my neighbors and visited while we watched the children play?

Would I have cried more often with them when appropriate, and laughed more often when that was in order?

Would I have said, "I'm sorry" more often?

I want to be more like the kind of friend found in this acrostic:

F—Fun, loving; Faithful

R—Risk being real, even misunderstood

I—Interested in the welfare of others

E—Expect the best of others; Empathetic

N—Natural relationship; Non-exclusive

D—Diplomatic; Delightful; Durable

S—Sympathetic; Supportive; Stable

H—Helpful; Hopeful; Happy

I—Interdependent by helping others

P—Patient; Protective of confidences; Personable

If I were given another opportunity at life friendship, I would seize every minute of live it for Jesus.

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Highlights from November Council Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Council was called to order by President Wayne Kurth at 6:30pm on November 17, 2022.

- **Secretary's report:** The Secretary's report for October 20, 2022 was reviewed. A motion to approve the October 21, 2021 meeting minutes as presented, motion approved.
- **Treasure's Report:** Jay Andrews presented the Treasurer's Report. The income is still running behind the budget for the year. The Council was reminded that a deficit in the budget was anticipated for the year. The current accounts are about \$4,600. behind for the month while the overall budget is \$22,500 behind.

Heating: \$696.04

Electric: \$148.59

Treasures report was approved.

- **Vicar's Report:** Vicar Thomas Mosbo presented his report. Vicar has provided pastoral care in person and on the phone to members and visited members who have been in the hospital. Vicar attended the Tuesday morning Bible Study and the Friendship Club dinner as well as conducted the Sunday Morning Worship services. Vicar Mosbo noted that he will be meeting with Bishop Stacie Fidler on Monday, November 21, 2022. Vicar's report was accepted as presented.
- **Committee Reports:**
- **Stewardship Committee:** The "Welcome to Lena" pot luck for Vicar Thomas and Coral Mosbo went very well. Good food and fellowship were shared by all in attendance.
- **Learning and Youth Committee:** Sunday School for all ages is not going very well. There have been three students and a couple of adults one Sunday and only a couple of adults the other Sundays. Looking for ideas and suggestions as to how to proceed in the future. The youth Christmas Program is being planned for December 18, 2022, during the Sunday Worship Service. It will be a program of narration and song of the season.
- **Finance Committee:** The Finance Committee will be meeting after Thanksgiving to work on the new budget for 2023.
- **Property Committee:** Part of the gutter guards are done. Waiting for the company to get a lift to finish the job. Wayne Kurth has worked on the boiler motors and currently everything is working again.
- **Facebook/Website Committee:** It has been noticed that the Website is in need of being updated.
- **Men's Group:** The Men's Group will be singing again on December 4, 2022 at morning worship service.

All Committee Reports were approved.

- **Old Business:** The Constitution Committee met and went over the concerns of the Church Councils review of their draft Constitution. They also had a new model Constitution from the Synod with the new revisions from the Synod Assemble. The committee presented their new draft for the Church Councils consideration. After reviewing the draft and some discussion a motion to send the current revised version of the Church Constitution to the Synod for their appraisal. Motion approved.

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Highlights from November Council Meeting

• **Old Business:**

- **Vicar Thomas Mosbo's Contract:** Vicar Thomas Mosbo will be traveling to meet with Bishop Stacie Fidler on Monday, November 21, 2022. He hopes to get more information about a contract and possible Internship Program here at Good Shepherd. He will report back what he learns.

• **New Business:**

- **Review of the Mailing List:** It was suggested that due to the cost of postage that the current Newsletter mailing list be reviewed. After review and discussion, it was decided to leave the list as it is for now.

- **Endowment Funds:** The semi annual Rent Support for the Lena Food Pantry is due to be paid. A motion was made to end \$600 to the Lena Food Pantry for the Good Shepherd's portion of the Rent Support and to take the money from the Lucille Baker Endowment Fund Interest. Motion approved.

It is also time for the annual disbursement of the Endowment Fund Interest to support the Mission Work of the Church. Following is a list of the organizations that funds will be disbursed to:

- Piece Corp \$2,500
- Grace Place Campus Ministry \$ 250

To be taken from the Lucille Baker Endowment Fund Interest for a total of \$2,750.

- Lena Food Pantry \$1,000
- Lena Area Church Cooperative \$ 500
- Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Center \$ 500
- Pine Ridge Retreat Center \$ 500
- Sisters of Immaculate Heart Madonna Renewal Center \$ 250

To be taken from the Special Funds Endowment Fund Interest for a total of \$2,750.

Motion made to approve the disbursement of the funds to the above listed organizations. Motion approved.

- **New Christmas Tree:** It has been suggested that it may be time for a new Christmas tree. The current tree was purchased in 1999 and it's 23 years old. There are some of the lights that will no longer light and the tree must be tied up so that it does not lean to one side. There is a tree at Wal-Mart for \$340. A member of the congregation has offered money toward the purchase of a new tree and the rest of the money will come from the Memorial Fund. After discussion a motion was made to purchase a new tree, motion approved.

Having no other business, the meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting will be on December 16, 2021 at 6:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Janis Kurth
Church Council Secretary



The Secret Life of Plants

What rescuing leafy captives from a store taught me

By Susan Sparks

When I want to lift myself out of the dumps, I go to the Astor Place Kmart in the East Village of New York City. Sure I could default to other solutions, like walking around Central Park, watching a rerun of “Chopped,” or on a really bad day, breaking out the French onion soup packet, sour cream and Ruffles.

But my first choice is the Kmart.

Specifically, I favor an area in the far back corner of the Kmart basement. Devoid of windows or natural light, it has a back wall of clear glass that faces the dark, dungeon-like tunnel of the Number 6 subway train. There, you will find the most unexpected of things—a plant nursery.

Sprouting in this dreary prison are woven Ficus trees, begonias, African violets, scheffleras, Christmas cacti and spindly spider plants. I feel so sorry for those little plants. They struggle to grow in their stale, lifeless chamber. And if the fake light isn’t bad enough, every five minutes the train roars by, shaking them to the base of their wee roots.

That’s why occasionally, I head to Kmart to stage a prison break for a few lucky leafy inmates, so that they might recover in my home-or, given my gardening abilities, die in peace. But at least they have a chance. And that’s all we as humans want, too.

Our environment is not so different from that of the plants in that Kmart basement. We live surrounded by toxicity, in places where we are often denied light, love, and sustenance, places where we can be shaken to our roots by unforeseen circumstances.

Maybe you’re facing a bully at work, or dealing with a difficult person in your family. Or maybe you’re in the middle of a divorce or losing a loved one. Many people are denied sustenance these days due to the skyrocketing price of food. Others are deprived of basic dignities due to racism and hatred. One of the most tragic examples is our brothers and sisters in the Ukraine who are surrounded by the toxicity of war-shaken to their roots by circumstances beyond their control.

It would be easy to give up, in the face of such obstacles. But then I think of those wee plants which continue to fight, use whatever they must to stay alive, and stretch their roots and strain their stems to convert even the tiniest bit of artificial light into energy and life.

One reason I love rescuing them is the tiny plastic tab that peeks out of each plant’s pot. On it is an image of what that plant could grow into if it receives proper light and care. It is an image of the plants true potential.

We all have that same divine potential-that metaphorical plastic tab, embossed with the image of our best self. Sometimes we, too, need a reminder of what that looks like so we don’t lose our way-something that’s all too easy to do in this world.

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Our true potential has nothing to do with what anyone else's "plant tag" looks like. Consider the marigolds in the Kmart. They don't try to grow into another kind of flower, like a rose. They don't question whether they are paid enough. Their only quest is to grow into that one unique image on their plastic tag and evolve into their divine potential.

Nor does an experience define who we are, war, hatred, hunger, poverty—all of these represent human situations, not the human soul.

I understand this, as a breast cancer survivor and a comedian. During my battle with cancer, I found that laughing in a place of pain was the quickest way to remind myself of my inherent worth, even while I was immersed in a toxic experience that shook me to my roots. Humor in that moment, made me realize something: While cancer could possibly defeat me, it would never define me.

Joan Chittister, a Benedictine nun and author, once said that we have the potential to be the human beat of the heart of God. So don't waste that gift. Don't give up the fight just because you find yourself in an unhealthy, unsupportive place. Each one of us has divine potential. We just need to stretch out minds, bodies and souls toward the light.

The next time you are feeling low, consider a little wisdom from the basement of the Astor Place Kmart. Find a place in your community where you can literally rescue and imprison a plant. If so, remember to take time for joy and laughter. That time to remind yourself of your inherent worth even while surrounded by toxic influences.

Most of all, remember that there are many others out there who feel the same way. Just as I rescued plants from the Kmart, consider "rescuing" another person who might be trapped in a toxic place by showering them with light and love. You could reach out to a friend in need. Or perhaps you might volunteer at a homeless shelter or nursing home. Maybe you involve yourself in the important work of racial reconciliation and find a way to support the Ukrainian relief efforts. Whatever methods you choose, reaching out to others can do wonders to help them—and you—grow.

Source: Gather Magazine, September/October issue

We lift up our prayers

Lynn Lyvers, Jerry, Sheridan Brinker, Fern Harnish, Lois Paulsen, Taylor B., Denny Bergmann, Willie Kayser, Rene', Sue Kraft, Connor Stadermann, Brooke, Jon Forsythe, Diane, Randy, Brian, Deb Lindeman Harder, Paul Heller, Janet, Ryse Stone, Nicole, Meghan, John, Chuck, Joyce, Terri, Tina, Julie, Jamie, Crystal, Katie, Christian, Anna, Abby, Karla, Jacob and his family, Richard Gordon, Kay, Shanna, Kathy, Charlie, Brad, Amber, Chris, Ron, Vicki, Brenda, Abby Schick, Brenda, Jack, Gretchen, Tina, Joe, Dan Kempel, Ron Heckman, Justin Yeager, Phil, Sue, Emma, Cindy, Lamar Hail, Connie, Rachel Collins, LaVonne and Logan.



Devotion Books

January-March issues of Christ in Our Homes and The Word in Season are available now. These devotion books are helpful ways to keep growing our faith. Start a new year with word of God every day! Take one home today!

Greetings and A Happy New Year to you all.

As you plan you're January calendar, I urge you to mark Sunday, January 8th. Rev. Julie Monnard, assistant to our Bishop Stacie Fidlar will be with us to install Vicar Thomas Mosbo as our intern for this coming year. There will be a reception following the service in the Fellowship Hall. This will give you each the opportunity to meet Rev. Monnard and ask any questions you may have regarding the new Synod staff.

God's riches blessings on you all this New Year.

*Wayne Kurth
Council President*

Will be held on January 29th, 2023 at 10:30am following service.
Committee Chairs, please get your reports to the church secretary by January 9th.

Potluck to be held after Annual Meeting.

Treasurer's Report
Jay Andrews

Incoming November 2022	\$3,915.19
Expenses November 2022	<u>\$6,287.28</u>
Net Income (Loss)	\$(2,372.09)
Income, Year to Date 2022	\$ 75,569.75
Expenses, Year to Date 2022	<u>\$100,344.74</u>
Net Income (Loss)	\$(24,774.99)

Christmas Thanks

We are blessed by everyone who purchased poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. Their beauty brings peace, joy and warm memories of loved ones. Thank you.

We are blessed with the talents of our choir members and musician's who provided beautiful sounds for the Christmas season. Thank you.



Lutheran Outreach Ministry Center
Connecting the Word of God with the World of God.

*To the Congregation of Good Shepherd,
The Lord makes their face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you; the Lord lifts up their
countenance upon you and gives you peace.*

Numbers 6:25-26

*As winter is here, we have been busy this fall
welcoming groups to LOMC and preparing for a
new season. Your donation helps LOMC in so
many ways as we navigate ministry needs. Peace
to you!*

*Thank you Good Shepherd for this amazing
support.*

*Blessings and peace from the LOMC staff and
board.*

*Robert Gieraltowski
Executive Director.*

December 21, 2022

To Members of the Northern Illinois Synod,

Please ignore email messages you may receive that says it is from Bishop Stacie Fidlar asking for you to purchase gift cards or to contact her as she needs you to complete a task. THIS IS A SCAM. Bishop Fidlar will never ask you to purchase gift cards or to ask you to contact her to complete a task. If you look at the sender's email address you will notice that this is not Bishop's email address.

Ms. Julie Lewis
Executive Administrator to the Bishop
Northern Illinois Synod, ELCA

January Birthday's

1-01 Tim Gordon
1-02 Elizabeth Kurth
1-03 Brady Meier
1-03 Shayleigh Albright
1-08 Tena Rackow
1-10 Noah Schoaf
1-11 Tamara Albrecht
1-13 Heather Fye
1-14 Courtney Lawson
1-15 Isabelle Schoaf
1-16 Sarah Baker
1-17 Gary Meyers
1-17 Owen Martin
1-18 Tim Aurand
1-21 Tyler Raders
1-27 Becky Huttenlocher
1-28 Jan Wybourn
1-28 Denise Flack
1-28 Heather Block
1-29 David Graff
1-29 Bailey Schoenhard
1-30 Marilyn Fulfs
1-31 Lisa Wienand

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



We are looking for volunteers at the
Le-Win Food Pantry.

Good Shepherd helps with Le-Win Food Pantry on the 4th Saturday of even numbered months from 8:20am-11:30am. Needs are high and we are looking for 2 volunteers for upcoming even numbered months. If you are interested, put your name on the sign up sheet at the ramp or contact the church office .



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.

We send prayer through the phone chain and e-mail. You pray 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.



Make-A-Smile cards for Lena Living Center

Each month we will send cards to the Lena Living Center. This ministry was started 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!



January 2023 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Lena, IL

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30am Worship Service (Communion Sunday) 10:30am Fellowship 10:45am-11:15am Chime Practice 11:15am-11:45am Choir Practice	2 Cub Scouts Meeting at 6:30pm, Fellowship Hall	3 <i>11:00 am Bible Study Group</i> Cub Scouts Meeting at 6:30pm, Fellowship Hall	4 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters	5	6 Epiphany	7
8 Baptism of our Lord 9:30am Worship Service Installation of Vicar Mosbo as Intern for Good Shepherd 10:30am Reception for Vicar Mosbo	9	10 <i>11:00 am Bible Study Group</i>	11 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters	12 6:30pm Council Meeting	13 Newsletter Deadline	14
15 2 Epiphany 9:30am Worship Service (Communion Sunday) 10:30am Fellowship 10:45am-11:15am Chime Practice 11:15am-11:45am Choir Practice	16 Cub Scouts Meeting at 6:30pm, Fellowship Hall	17 <i>11:00 am Bible Study Group</i>	18 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters	19	20	21
22 3 Epiphany 9:30am Worship Service 10:30am Fellowship 10:45am-11:15am Chime Practice 11:15am-11:45am Choir Practice <i>Annual Report will be available for pick up.</i>	23	24 <i>11:00 am Bible Study Group</i>	25 8:00-11:30am Piece Corps Quilters	26	27	28
29 4 Epiphany 9:30am Worship Service (Communion Sunday) 10:30am Annual Congregational Meeting Potluck following meeting	30	31				

January Volunteer Schedule

Greeter

January 1 Darci Meier/Anna Patterson
January 8 Tim Gordon/ Sue Diddens
January 15 Anna Patterson/ Tim Gordon
January 22 Michelle Andrews/Wayne Kurth
January 29 Darci Meier/Sue Diddens

Lectors

January 1 Karen Niemeier
January 8 Tena Rackow
January 15 Wayne Kurth
January 22 Coralyn Hudik
January 29 Sue Diddens

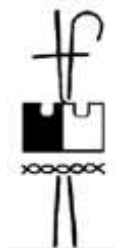


Communion Assistant

January 1 Beth Martin
January 15 Shirley Fox



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.



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
118 E. Mason Street
Lena, Illinois 61048

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

Upcoming Commemorations

Confession of Peter

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

Today the church remembers the apostle Peter's great acknowledgement of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God." This festival serves as a fitting beginning to the week in which we particularly pray that all Christians might be united in faith and witness.

Henry, Bishop of Uppsala, martyr, died 1156

Thursday, January 19, 2023

When Erik, King of Sweden, determined to invade Finland for the purpose of converting the people there to Christianity, Henry went with him. Henry is recognized as the patron saint of Finland.

Conversion of Paul

Wednesday, January 25, 2023

The week of prayer begun by the remembrance of Peter's confession now comes to an end as we recall the pivotal moment in the life of the other pillar of the early church, the apostle Paul. His encounter with the risen Christ turned him from persecutor of the followers of Christ to one of their leaders.

Source: Sundays and Season, ELW Lesser Festivals and Commemorations