



MESSENGER – March 2021

A word from our pastor

Dear partners in ministry,

This month brings the one-year mark since everything shut down in Massachusetts due to COVID-19 in March 2020. At that time, some of us expected we might be able to gather together again in the summer. Experience of course has proved otherwise, as the pandemic stretches on. While there is light on the horizon for

2021, we are not quite there yet.

March will also mark the second time that we will observe Holy Week and celebrate Easter Sunday in unexpected ways. In the last couple weeks, the staff and worship and music team have been considering how we can best worship during Holy Week, since there are a variety of options available to us. We hope our plan allows you to engage in a way that feels safe to you!

On Palm Sunday, March 28th, we will gather for worship like we have for some time with an online service at 9 AM, followed by a drive-in service using our radio transmitter at 10:15 AM. Holy Week kits will be available for pickup beforehand, and will include palms and other materials for the week. Then, following, at about 11 AM, we will have an intergenerational event outside to help mark the day. I am looking forward to the Palm Sunday parade, as well as a chance to serve through assembling a meal that will be delivered that day to the people of Cathedral In The Night, a ministry to and with those experiencing homelessness in Northampton MA. (To learn more, visit www.cathedralinthenight.org)

On Maundy Thursday, April 1st, we gather for worship outdoors at 5:30 PM as long as the weather allows. Many of us have valued the chance to gather around tables in the fellowship hall for this service in years past. We may not be in the fellowship hall, but we can still gather outdoors, and we invite you to bring a light supper with you. Together we'll remember Jesus and his disciples gathering for the Last Supper and share communion. Then, at 7 PM, we will have an online service that is livestreamed from our sanctuary via Facebook Live (and posted to our YouTube page afterwards). This service will include the sharing of communion and the stripping of the altar. We will share more details on we will include communion as part of an online service as we get closer.

Many people love our Good Friday Tenebrae service, and we will gather online at 7 PM to livestream this service, again using Facebook Live and posting to YouTube afterwards. We are also exploring including a small number of people from the congregation in the sanctuary who have been fully vaccinated or have immunity to COVID-19. Those people can join in the reading of the story of Jesus' arrest and crucifixion, as well as singing the hymns.

On Saturday April 3rd, for the second year, we will share an Easter Vigil service online, starting at 7 PM. This service will be pre-recorded and will include a number of us sharing creative interpretations of favorite stories from Scripture! If you would like to present a story, please let Pastor Larson or I know ASAP.

Finally, we will celebrate the resurrection on Sunday April 4th, gathering for worship in all four ways available to us. We will gather for an indoor service at 7:45 AM (with masks and no singing). We will gather online with a pre-recorded service at 9 AM, and at the same time gather for a drive-in service with our radio transmitter at 9 AM. That will be immediately followed by an Easter egg hunt outdoors, so children especially are welcome to attend at 9 AM! Lastly, we'll gather for an outdoors service at 10:45 AM, with the chance to sing together that "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today"!

Holy Week may be different, but the good news of Easter remains the same. We look forward to celebrating together in whatever way works best for you!

Walking with you,

Pastor Jeff and Pastor Larson

COUNCIL NOTES

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting

Feb. 7, 2021

Noon

Attendance:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Pastor Victoria Larson | 17. Bill Hendrick | 33. David Schwingbeck |
| 2. Pastor Jeff Goodrich | 18. Bobbie Hendrick | 34. Julie Schwingbeck |
| 3. Randy Koopman | 19. David Kaiser | 35. Kris Sheehan |
| 4. Bob Frederico | 20. Lisa Khoury | 36. Bethany Walker |
| 5. Deb Casey | 21. Donna Mann | 37. Wendy Ying |
| 6. Dana Gillin | 22. PJ Mann | 38. Ernie Zimmerman |
| 7. Sarah McRae | 23. Christiane Merrow | 39. Katie Zimmerman |
| 8. Joan Arnold | 24. Arthur Matson | 40. Darlene Zuehl |
| 9. Carie Corbett | 25. Nancy Matson | 41. Verle Zuehl |
| 10. Stan Corbett | 26. Brad McRae | 42. Staff - Kirby Stalley |
| 11. Rhoda Decatur | 27. Karen Morrissey | 43. Staff - Samantha |
| 12. Joan Dickert | 28. Joan Olson | Menpace |
| 13. Michele Fletcher | 29. Tom Olson | 44. Staff - Yeon Soh |
| 14. Caryn Francese | 30. Marilyn (Reiman?) | |
| 15. Bruce Grams | 31. Jochen Salfeld | |
| 16. Julie Hamilton-Grant | 32. Jim Scanlon | |

Pastor Larson opened the meeting at 12:10 p.m. with prayer.

Sharing moments that we've seen God through Good Shepherd's ministry:

- Advent kits
- Mask initiative
- Daily Music emails from Kirby
- AM radio station with outdoor services
- Sharing of peace at end of services
- Seeing people serve in digital services (prayers, readings, musical sharings, etc.)
- Called to Care program
- Support of members going through loss

Pastors' Annual Report:

Pastor Jeff:

Growing disciples: trusting God will guide us through great disruption -- worship changes such as livestreaming services and AM station outdoor services.

Are we learning how to hold things loosely, learned to adapt, and listening to God's call in the midst of it?

Pastor Larson:

Nurturing disciples: call to care ministry, virtual services -- allowing people to have those personal connections and incorporating different voices, AM services, and outdoor services when weather cooperates.

Making disciples: racism and anti-racism conversations, digital tools used to connect people in worship and community, including people who are travelling and those unable to come to church normally.

Pastor Jeff reminded us about Lent Kits available outside the church's front door. There are enough for friends, family, neighbors, not just necessarily for our own church members. Let us spread the word of God amongst those not just in our church family.

Pastor Jeff thanked the staff, leadership, council, and members for their work of spreading God's word and nurturing our church family.

Kirby's Music Report:

Kirby thanked the people and families who have contributed their musical talents to church services and other gatherings throughout the year.

The daily emails started in March as a way to uplift people, now the distribution list is up to 80 people and reach across the country. Kirby receives several emails a week thanking him and communicating to him because of these daily emails.

Samantha's Christian Education Report:

Sam gave nods to Beth Singley (1st Communion and Talent Show) and Hilary Parsons (Virtual VBS, figured out how to connect people in a new way).

Sam's interview process impressed her with a sense of community and honesty. She's happy we're willing to try new things: Trunk or Treat, class-based Sunday School, virtual Christmas pageant.

She sees God at work in creativity in Lent Kits, Christmas cards, and Wednesday discussion groups.

Council Report: (Randy Koopman, president)

Thank God for Zoom and email and rest of communication tools! At least we get to see each other. What would it have been like if Martin Luther had Zoom? ;-)

We made our budget with a little left over.

Hats off to Samantha and her courage to take on a new job during the pandemic.

Good Shepherd gained 25 new members in 2020. We'll miss the ones who have left our church family.

Hats off to our fantastic staff -- they've had to reinvent EVERYTHING!

Thanks to 2020 council members and 2021 council members, committee members, volunteers who saw a need and filled it.

1620 AM -- Good Shepherd Radio, which seems to reach 3 blocks from the church.

Treasurer Report: (Deb Casey)

We started 2020 with projected \$630,000 giving and \$23,000 operational deficit; but received \$670,000 in giving, and expenses were kept down. So we had a surplus of \$103,000 because of the PPP Loan and giving was greater than our expenses.

Council decided to tithe off of \$30,000: \$1,000 each to ELCA World Hunger, Worcester County Food Bank, Camp Calumet campership funds.

In 2021, will we have to repay the PPP loan? \$100,000 surplus will then drop to \$30,000. We'll look at that point to determine where further tithes go.

Shared annual report spreadsheet.

Received \$88,000 to New Horizons program to pay down mortgage.

Small surplus of \$11,000 expected for 2021. Giving is down, so 2021 could still be a challenge.

Stan Corbett motioned to accept annual report as presented. Tom Olson seconded, passed unanimously.

Randy shared congregational goals for 2020 and 2021.

2020:

- Strengthening personal connections
- Keeping our mission statement in front of us
- Cultivating active listening and transparent communication and decision making

2021:

- We will continue to explore creative ways to form and strengthen personal connections within our congregation.
- Grounded in our mission statement ("Growing, nurturing, and making disciples in Christ"), we will discern and shape our transition into post-COVID ministry.
- We will cultivate active listening and transparent communications and decision-making.

Tom Olson praised the New Horizons program in lightening a huge financial debt.

Joan Arnold asked if we expect the PPP loan to be forgiven. Deb and Randy do expect that, but we haven't gotten confirmation, so we don't want to get caught unawares.

Karen Morrissey asked how our sister congregations in Worcester are faring. Pastor Jeff said Trinity is doing ok. Concordia is currently unknown, as their pastor retired early 2020 and that congregation is going through some pastoral turnover.

Caryn Francese motioned to close the meeting after prayer, Dana Gillin seconded, passed unanimously.

Pastor Jeff shared a blessing as prayer and closed the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church – Council Meeting

Feb. 11, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 6:37 p.m.

Attendees: Pastor Jeff, Pastor Larson, Randy Koopman, Deb Casey, Dana Gillin, Sarah McRae, & Bob Frederico

- Dana Gillin opened with a devotion about human's creation in the image of God and our stewardship for nature.
- Deb shared financial report. **Sara motioned to accept it, Bob seconded; council accepted unanimously.**
- Dana shared congregational meeting minutes. Will add goals for 2020 and 2021. **Pastor Larson motioned to accept with proposed changes, Deb seconded. Council passed unanimously.**
- **Randy motioned to enter the Executive Session. Pastor Larson seconded; council accepted unanimously.** Council entered Executive Session.
- **Pastor Jeff motioned to exit the Executive Session. Randy seconded; council accepted unanimously.**
- The council discussed that Yeon will be out for seven Sundays this summer in order to visit family in Korea. Two weeks of that will be leave carried over from 2020, two weeks allotted for 2021, and the balance made up by additional time worked prior to her leave such as recordings for upcoming virtual services.
- Pastor Jeff: Can we find a team of people to lead the Care of Creation initiative? We'll talk about it next session.
- Pastor Larson: RIC committee asked for expansion and rewording. Three pieces:
 1. Update our welcome statement. Transgender isn't a gender by itself, not mutually exclusive of female/male; suggested: "male, female, or nonbinary". Also asked to add Indigenous to the race line in the statement. We're not changing the spirit or organization of the Welcome Statement, so we won't need a congregational vote, although we should share that we've updated it. The RIC committee will update and bring back to council for a vote.
 2. Expand anti-racism stance. Julie Schwingbeck is working on crafting a statement, which would be put on our website. We'll talk more about this when it's crafted.
 3. Making Reconciling Works more official in our bylaws. We'll talk more about this next meeting.
- Sarah will do devotions for the next meeting.
- **Bob motioned to adjourn at 9:09 p.m. Pastor Jeff seconded; council passed unanimously.**

2021 Council Members

council@goodshepherdcares.org



Randy Koopman

President



Deb Casey

Treasurer



Dana Gillin

Secretary



Sarah McRae



Bob Frederico

Pastor Larson



Pastor Jeff

Council meets at 6:30pm on the 2nd Thursday of the month.

Meetings are open to all members of the congregation.

Email us to receive the Zoom link!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

keeping learners in the loop



SPECIAL EVENT: HOLY WEEK FAIR ON MARCH 28TH

You are invited to a special Holy Week celebration after the outdoor church service on Palm Sunday, March 28th at 11 am. This event will be a chance for children and families to learn more about Holy Week by engaging with activity stations about the final days of Jesus' life. Stations will include crafts, games, creative prayer activities and even a special service project benefitting Cathedral in the Night, a community in Northampton, MA with a mission to serve those struggling with

homelessness. This event will be held outdoors. All attendees are required to wear masks and practice social distancing.

FIRST COMMUNION CLASS

As the spring approaches, we are planning how to offer a First Communion class in 2021. While still in the preliminary stages, we are outlining a four-week instructional learning series. The class will meet on Sundays and include Zoom gatherings with some sort of bread making element and meeting with the pastors. The series will culminate in an outdoor, in-person celebration of First Communion.

Third grade families are invited to help us plan the class by taking the short survey below. We will adapt our plan according to families' needs and concerns, so share your thoughts by taking the survey! **I will be in touch with third grade families with more detailed information by mid-March.**

SURVEY: <https://tinyurl.com/1stcommunion2021>



CAMPERSHIP FUNDRAISING TEAM

Camp Calumet will be open this summer! We would like to support campers from GSLC and Concordia Lutheran Church who will be going to camp in 2021 by replenishing the campership fund. If you are passionate about Camp Calumet and interested in helping to plan a safe, creative fundraiser in the spring, please contact Samantha Menapace at samantha.menapace@goodshepherdcares.org. I am scheduling a planning meeting for the week of March 15. All are welcome to join and brainstorm ideas about events and other fundraising activities we can do this spring!

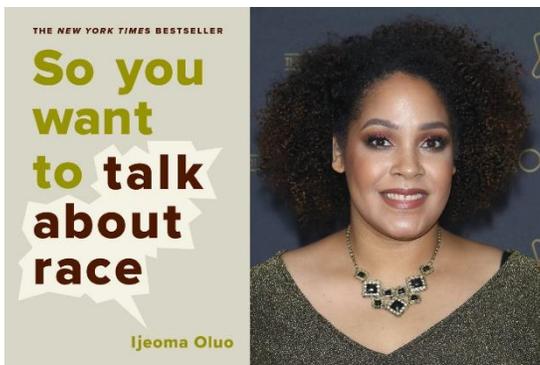
HOLY WEEK KITS

To continue practicing our faith at home during the final days of Lent, we are preparing Holy Week Kits for the congregation. The kits will include items for at-home services, such as Palms, tea lights, and bells, as well as additional crafts and activities to honor the events of Holy Week. Please pick up one kit per household. The kits will include crafts and activities for all members of the household - children, youth, and adults – to journey through Holy Week together.

MUSIC MINISTRY NOTES

With the success of our in-person choir at our outdoor Christmas Eve service, we will be having an in-person choir for our outdoor Easter Sunday service at 10:45. What better way to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus than to raise our voices in song. We will sing socially distanced and masked. The piece will be very simple and easy to learn, and we will have one rehearsal over zoom. Everyone is welcome to join us in celebrating the resurrection of Jesus through singing. If you are interested in joining the choir for our 10:45 Easter Sunday service please email director of music, Kirby Stalley, kirby.stalley@goodshepherdcares.org

RECONCILING IN CHRIST



We are about half-way through reading and discussing the book, ***So You Want to Talk About Race*** by Ijeoma Oluo. We

are finding that the book and discussion is quite challenging, and we are learning a lot about systematic racism and how it permeates our thought and culture.



We would love to have you join us on Wednesday evenings at 8:00-9:00 pm.

Email RIC@goodshepherdcares.org, and we will send you the Zoom link. Looking forward to having you join us!

TAGS – TEENS AT GOOD SHEPHERD

After a wintery hiatus, TAGS is slowly gearing up again for the spring! If you're a high schooler here at Good Shepherd, join us for a planning meeting and check-in on March 7th at 7:00pm [via Zoom](https://tinyurl.com/TAGSMarch7). (<https://tinyurl.com/TAGSMarch7>)

One of the first events of the year that we're preparing for will be an intergenerational Palm Sunday gathering at the church. Part of this event will include supporting the ministry of Cathedral in the Night, a worshipping community that cares especially for people experiencing homelessness in Northampton, MA. Stay tuned for more details!

And although we're not planning on a mission trip this summer, we've still got a weather eye out on the ELCA Youth Gathering that's been re-slated for summer 2022. Visit their website to learn the answers to some frequently asked questions, like: *Will vaccines be required to attend the 2022 Youth Gathering? What date will we know for sure the Youth Gathering will be held in 2022?* And more! [Here's the link for more information about the Youth Gathering](#).

Hope to see you on March 7th!

MARCH LECTIONARY

Date	Readings
<u>March 7th</u> 3rd Sunday in Lent	Exodus 20:1-17, Psalm 19, 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 & John 2:13-22
<u>March 14th</u> 4th Sunday in Lent	Numbers 21:4-9, Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22, Ephesians 2:1-10 & John 3:14-21
<u>March 21st</u> 5th Sunday in Lent	Jeremiah 31:31-34, Psalm 51:1-12, Hebrews 5:5-10 & John 12:20-33
<u>March 28th</u> Palm Passion Sunday	Mark 11:1-11, Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11 & Mark 14:1--15:47

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APRIL MESSENGER

The deadline is Friday, March 26, 2021

Please email your articles to Caryn Francese in the office at office@goodshepherdcares.org

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OUR PARISH SECRETARY, Caryn, is a Notary Public. She provides her services at no cost to the congregants of Good Shepherd. Call or email her to request an appointment.



GOOD SHEPHERD AT-A-GLANCE

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STAFF DIRECTORY

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The. Rev. Victoria Larson	103	pastorlarson@
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Kirby Stalley, Director of Music	106	kirby.stalley@
Yeon Soh, Organist	109	yeon.soh@
Stan Corbett, Financial Secretary		finsec@
Caryn Francese, Parish Secretary	101	office@
Steve Brevik, Sexton	108	Sbrevik01@

Visit our website to access our calendar, find past sermons and worship services, make a donation or adjust your giving, and more.
www.goodshepherdcares.org



ADULT LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (September through May)

Day	Learning	Time(s)	Contact
Sundays	Adult Forums	11:15 am on ZOOM	samantha.menapace@goodshepherdcares.org
Mondays	Bible Study	9:30 am	Joan Olson jeolson423@icloud.com
Fridays	Friday Group	9:30 am	Kay Devaprasad kanaga.devaprasad@gmail.com

See Calendar for more information, such as location.
Feel free to contact the office at 508.366.7095 with questions or email office@goodshepherdcares.org

Co-Pastors

Pr. Jeffrey Goodrich
1329 Main Street,
Concord, MA 01742
Cell: 508-808-1795

Pr. Victoria Larson
46 Summer Street, #2
Westborough, MA 01581
Cell: 302-897-4167

Can we pray for you?

If you or someone you know would like to be remembered in our community's weekly prayers, please call the church office or email prayercircle@goodshepherdcares.org

Find us on Social Media

Facebook:
"Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Westborough, Massachusetts"

Instagram:
[@gslcwestboro](https://www.instagram.com/gslcwestboro)



Good Shepherd is a "Reconciling in Christ" congregation; we welcome people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions.



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

During the pandemic, we offer digital services every Sunday. You can find them on our Facebook page and our YouTube channel—just search for "Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Westborough."