



Church of the Good Shepherd
&
St. John the Evangelist
Episcopal Church

Parish PROFILE

*110 West Catharine Street
Milford, PA*

Table of Contents

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Letter of Introduction | 2 |
| Mission Statement..... | 3 |
| Our Civic Community..... | 3 |
| History of the Congregation..... | 4 |
| Worship/Current Ministries..... | 5 |
| Outreach..... | 7 |
| Programs..... | 8 |
| Church Building and Grounds..... | 9 |
| | |
| Vision and Growth..... | 11 |
| Financial Picture..... | 12 |
| Hopes for the Future..... | 13 |



Letter of Introduction

Greetings and Blessings!

The community of the Church of the Good Shepherd & St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church

(Good Shepherd Church) is filled with hope for the future and the confidence in the Spirit's guidance. We search for a new rector who will join our parish community in serving, not only our church family, but the broader Pike County community and beyond.

As you read this profile, we hope that we have honestly evaluated ourselves in order to provide an accurate description of who we are and who we would like to be. We are aware of the challenges that are ahead of us and the changes we need to make in the coming years. We hope you will consider being with us on this journey.

We are currently a small, older congregation, steeped in the traditions of the Episcopal Church. We remain willing to look beyond the past to explore ways to re-imagine our community for the future. We are the only Episcopal Church in Pike County, PA., a fast-growing community, a destination for tourists and a center for conservation and recreation. We would hope to become more actively engaged in the vibrant energy that exists in our community and stand as a witness for inclusivity, caring for God's creation, respect for all the diverse members of our community; and serve those who need us spiritually, socially, and emotionally.

We are currently looking for a half-time Rector who will be supported by the time and talents of our parish family to serve the needs of the community. Our intent and our hope is to expand this role into a full-time position in the future. We understand that our expectations of a half-time Rector must be realistic and reasonable.

We are presently making an extraordinary effort to organize our parish community into committees that will ease the burden of a half-time Rector. We believe we have the organizational talent and spiritual expertise within our community to make this possible. Worship, Newsletters, Volunteers, Fundraising, proof-reading bulletins, Pastoral Outreach, Altar Guild and other ministries can all be enhanced to ease the expectations of a half-time Rector. We will need and seek the Rector's advice and counsel. But we believe we will be able to implement these ministries in an effective and efficient manner.

In the absence of our Rector, we have learned a lot about ourselves in the last several months. We realize that communicating with all the members of our congregation is the only way to move forward into the future. We are hoping and praying that you would consider joining with us in discerning the exciting challenges that await us.

God's Blessings be with you!
The Good Shepherd Search Committee

Applicants for the position and questions about the diocese should be directed to:

The Rev. Cn. Melinda M. Artman
Northern Canon Missioner/Transition Officer
Diocese of Bethlehem
484-626-4381



Mission Statement

Good Shepherd is an Episcopal community that celebrates its traditions and diversity. We are a welcoming and nurturing community committed to devotion to God, spiritual development and service to the needs of the larger community. Our hearts and our community are open to all who are all seeking and searching for a deeper spiritual understanding of life. We support the gifts and ministries of all our members, and while we value our traditions, we are open to making the challenge of the Gospel more contemporary and understandable to the next generation. And, if we feel our table is too small, we will make it larger to include all who would like to join us on this journey.

Our Civic Community

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church is located in Milford, PA., which serves as the county seat for Pike County. It is the only Episcopal Church in all of Pike County. Situated along the Delaware River, we are only miles from neighboring New York and New Jersey communities.

Milford is the embodiment of small town, American charm with a multi-layered population of native residents, long-time transplants and thousands of visitors to this four season destination. Located 70 miles from the NYC metropolitan area, it has become a home to artists, authors, musicians, and lovers of its pristine natural beauty. It is home to The Artery (<https://www.arterygallerymilford.com>); sponsors the Readers and Writers Festival and the Black Bear Festival, along with several Music Festivals throughout the summer.



Small-town charm aside, Milford is rich in history. It is also the home to the birthplace of the American Conservation Movement. These legacies are evident both in the well-preserved historic buildings throughout town, as well as its vast green conservation areas for the public to enjoy. One doesn't need to travel far for hiking, biking, waterfall exploring, or other outdoor adventure.

Milford boasts a population with wide ranging views yet a gracious tolerance for the diversity.



Our Tri-state area offers a number of employment opportunities for our half-time Rector such as education, counseling services and healthcare. Members of our community can assist, guide and advise our Rector to these opportunities. Others in our community are available to help search for affordable housing. If you consider this position, you have our pledge and promise to make your time with us a rewarding and gracefilled experience.

Milford boasts a population with wide ranging views yet a gracious tolerance for the diversity.

History of the Congregation

The Church of Good Shepherd originated in 1849 when the Reverend Stephen Trying held an Episcopal service in the Court House, (formerly the old jail; now Milford Municipal offices). He was the rector of St. George's Church in New York City. On the way back from a trip to upstate New York, he decided to visit Mrs. Burling and her family, parishioners that had moved to Milford a few years previously for a healthier environment. It was during this brief stay that the first service was held.

In July of 1866, the long desire of Bishop Alonzo Potter was realized posthumously when the Reverend Eliphalet Potter, Alonzo's son and rector of the church of the Nativity of Bethlehem, and Mr. Cortlandt Whitehead, his friend and a student at the Philadelphia Divinity School, arrived in Milford. They arranged to help at an evening Episcopal service. Due to the enthusiasm at this service, the Reverend Potter returned to Bethlehem but left Mr. Whitehead behind. He stayed at the Dimmick House and held services regularly at the Court House.

On Sunday, July 22, 1866 the first Sunday school classes were held with 8 or 9 pupils and several teachers. By the second Sunday in August there were 65 pupils and 14 teachers. As summer ended, the Reverend Mr. Elsegood of Easton arrived and administered the first sacrament of Holy Communion to the Milford Episcopalians and baptized 17 children and infants.



The Church of Good Shepherd was organized April 3, 1871. The corner stone of the first church building at Fifth and Catharine Streets was laid in June 1871 and on September 14, 1877 the church was consecrated.

This building burned down on September 28, 1913. The building burned so slowly that the parishioners had enough time to rescue the stained-glass windows for use in the new church. It was replaced by the present cobblestone building. The rectory was started in the spring of 1891. Around the same time, the parish hall was added for Sunday School, dinners, dances and other functions. The back wing, housing the hallway, bathrooms, offices and conference room, with a full basement, was added in the 1960's.



St. John the Evangelist, an Episcopal church in Dingmans Ferry, was built in May 26, 1887 and consecrated on September 7, 1888. It was a summer church until the early 1950's, when Bishop Fred Warneke instructed the Reverend Richard Aselford to hold services every Sunday or it would be closed.

On Sunday, July 16, 1972, St. John the Evangelist church, having been taken over by the Federal government for the Tocks Island Dam Project, was deconsecrated by Bishop Lloyd Gressle. After this service, the St. John's members processed to Good Shepherd in Milford. Bishop Gressle led them to the door, knocked and asked that St. John's parish be joined with Good Shepherd. The parish became known as the church of the Good Shepherd and St. John the Evangelist. St. John's altar cross

and their processional cross were brought to Good Shepherd., as was one of the original stained glass windows (pictured left). All the years since, both Good Shepherd's crosses and St. John's crosses have been used.

Each week Good Shepherd offers service of Holy Eucharist on Sunday. The early service at 8:00am is a quiet, spoken Eucharist while the later 10:00 am service is a more family-oriented service, including music from our concert organ. This is followed immediately by a coffee hour and fellowship in our Church Hall.

Celebration of traditional church liturgical dates include: Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Ascension Day, Pentecost, St. Francis of Assisi Blessing of Pets, All Saints Day, Thanksgiving Eve.

Suggestions for expansion of our worship life include: Advent Retreat Day; Candlelight prayer service on Winter Solstice; Friday Lenten prayer services and reflection; Memorial Day morning prayer service prior to town parade; Quiet remembrance prayer service on All Souls' Day; Ecumenical Church services on Thanksgiving; Bible Studies; more opportunity for prayer.

Current Ministries and Outreach

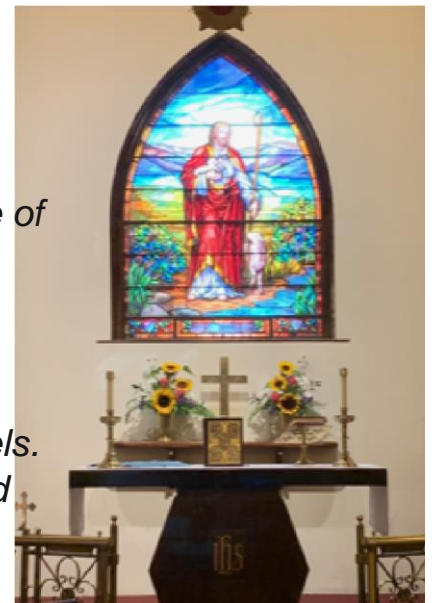
Ministries

Lay Eucharistic Ministers

Our Lay Eucharistic Ministers/Lay Eucharistic Visitors are trained and licensed by the Diocese. They are ready to be of service to parishioners who are homebound or otherwise unable to attend services.

Altar Guild

Our Altar Guild maintains a closet of vestments and vessels. They provide fresh flowers for the altar in memory of loved ones. They are responsible for care of the altar and paraments, providing for the celebration of Eucharist and decorating the church for festival Sundays.



Choir

Under the guidance of our Music Director/Organist, Jane Livingston, our concert worthy organ lends itself to traditional and contemporary pieces to celebrate and reflect. The choir is an opportunity for those gifted in song to use their talents to praise God and enhance our liturgy

Daughters of the King

The Order of the Daughters of the King is an Order for women who are communicants of the Episcopal

Church. Today our membership includes women in the Anglican, Episcopal, Lutheran (ELCA) and Roman Catholic churches.

The Order was founded in 1885 by Margaret J. Franklin at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in New York City (now the Church of the Resurrection). Our Anglican tradition includes episcopal oversight, recognizes that Holy Scripture contains all things necessary for salvation, acknowledges the gift of the Holy Spirit in Baptism, the real presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, and worship according to The Book of Common Prayer.



Members undertake a Rule of Life, incorporating the Rule of Prayer and the Rule of Service. By reaffirmation of the promises made at Baptism and Confirmation, a Daughter pledges herself to a lifelong program of prayer, service, and evangelism, dedicated to the spread of Christ's Kingdom and the strengthening of the spiritual life of her parish.

The mission of the Order is the extension of Christ's Kingdom through Prayer, Service and Evangelism. Meetings are on the second Monday of every month (except September) at 12:30 in the Parish Hall.

Lector Ministry

Members of the church community volunteer to be Lectors or readers. In accordance with the Lectionary for each Sunday, they present a reading from the Old Testament; a Psalm in which they facilitate the congregation's participation, and an Epistle. They also read and lead the congregation in Prayers of the People. This ministry is fulfilling, allowing Lectors to participate in the liturgy of the service.



Outreach

Good Shepherd Ecumenical Food Pantry

The food pantry, a self-sustaining ministry of Good Shepherd Church, has been serving our neighbors in need for over 30 years. Currently the pantry serves an average of 70 families each week. Given the economic challenges of our time, that number is increasing weekly. It is special because it is a choice pantry.

The mission is to reduce food insecurity in Pike County using the power of volunteers and the generosity of the community. Since access to nutritious food is a basic human right, we are committed to responding to the needs of our community through food distribution, education and advocacy.



The Coordinator of the Ecumenical Food Pantry, Nancy Potter, is a long-time member of our Community. Other members of Good Shepherd volunteer to help organize and distribute groceries. Families are served from 12:00-1:30 PM and 6:30-8:00 PM on Fridays. Able bodied volunteers from local churches and the community arrive earlier to help prepare the grocery supplies and guide clients. Volunteers also help unload food deliveries on other days.

As of January 2023, 177 families are depending on the pantry. This is a 39% increase from January 2022. The number will fluctuate up more throughout the year. Approximately 30% of pantry's recipients are children (ages 0-17), 49% are adults (ages 18-59) and 21% are senior citizens (ages 60 +). This represents an increase of adults and senior citizens, while the number of children has decreased.



The food pantry has been the fortunate recipient of many generous donations, including both cash and food items. These donations come from a wide variety of sources including individuals in our community, schools, federal and county agencies, civic organizations and businesses. Yet the large increase in the number of clients coming to us for help, along with the steep increase in food prices, make it difficult to cover current expenses.

Food banks, such as our parent food bank Second Harvest, are purchasing double the amount of food they did before the pandemic and are paying twice as much for those goods. To meet current costs, we have been withdrawing from our operating reserves during the past year.

Hospitality/Fellowship

Good Shepherd parishioners value spending time with one another in fellowship. Each week following the 10:00 am Sunday service we gather in the parish hall for refreshments and visiting. The event also provides an opportunity to welcome and include visitors. Other events include seasonal soup suppers, annual parish picnic, game nights and concerts. Fellowship is “food for the soul” and lends itself to rich and varied conversations which enhance our understating of one another. Other events include seasonal soup suppers, annual parish picnic, game nights and concerts.

Programs

Adult Forum

We are a group of individuals seeking a greater understanding of our faith through shared reading. We meet at the Church every Wednesday from 2:00-3:30 (or by Zoom). Contemporary spiritual books are chosen by consensus. Reading, discussion and sharing provides an enriched understanding of our faith.

Contemplative Ministry

Contemplative Meditation, on the premises of Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, as well as on Zoom, began meetings in September of 2020, and have continued without interruption since. We continue to meet weekly in mutual support, as we allow ourselves to enter a transformative silence in which the presence of God is summoned by stillness and quietude.

Meetings are co-facilitated on a rotation basis. Facilitators select and read from an inspirational text they select. They then monitor 20 minutes of silent meditation, then 5 minutes of slow contemplative walking, and finishing with another 15 minutes of silent meditation. All participants then discuss the reading, or their practice. The meeting, which is broadcasted over zoom, begins at 6 PM and ends at 7 PM. The rotation of facilitators has been a successful protocol in developing facilitators able to conduct meditation sessions. Currently we are 6 core members.

The future of this Contemplative Ministry is encouraging, as Christianity’s rich contemplative and mystical tradition becomes better known through the efforts of visionaries like Fr. Richard Rohr and Fr. Mathew Fox. There is also an explosion of lectures and musically enhanced readings from the Christian Mystics on Youtube. We anticipate that the Contemplative Ministry will be able to draw interested people from Milford and neighboring communities through publicized workshops and lectures in 2023. Zoom and other communication platforms will likely have a significant role in the ministry’s future.

Fun(d) Raising

A small, but mighty committee is the Fundraising Committee. They regard this ministry as “having fun while raising funds.” Several events throughout the year

are targeted to bring in financial support for our parish. Some of these events include: Souper Superbowl chili sale; winter soup carryout sales; Mother's Day Plant Sale; Memorial Day Rummage Sale; workshops on pie making or pasta making; Halloween pumpkin carving; Christmas Cookie Walk.

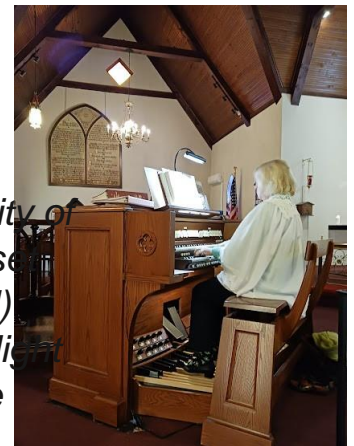
Church Building and Grounds

Located one block from the main street of Milford (Broad Street), our church sits on the corner across from Ann Street Park. Many of the town's events and festivals take place there.

The riverrock exterior is unique in the area. After the fire of 1913, parishioners used the proximity of the Delaware River to design this attractive exterior for economics. The most valuable treasurers of our church are, of course, our people! But, two other items are worth mentioning:

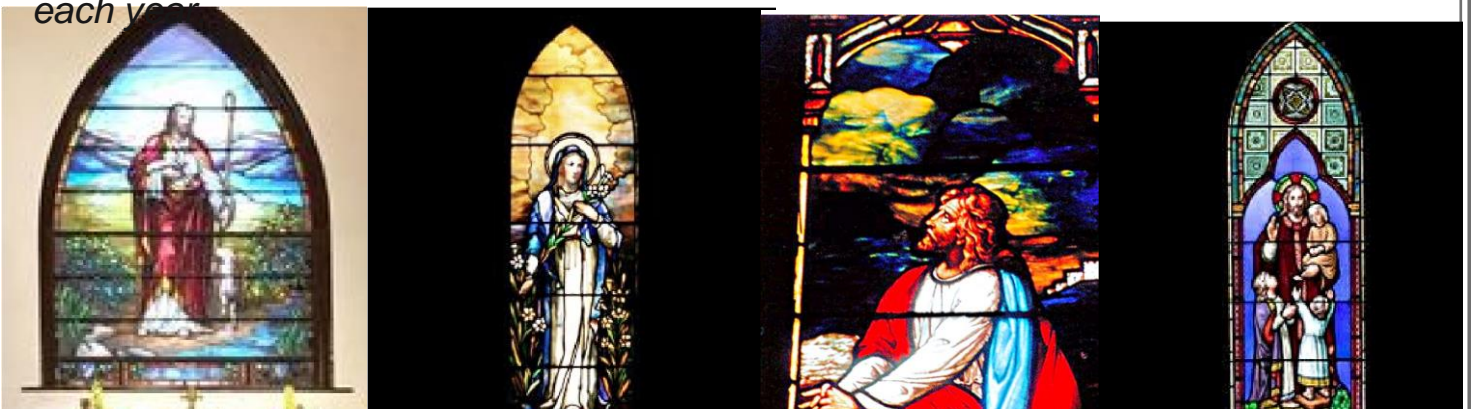
The Schantz pipe organ was installed at Good Shepherd Episcopal Church in 2007. The Schantz Organ Company began in 1873 and is owned by the fourth generation of the Schantz family. The organ at Good Shepherd has two manuals (keyboards), thirty-two registers (stop combinations), nineteen stops (sound types, ie. trumpet, etc.), and twenty-five ranks of pipes (rows of pipes at different pitches).

Schantz organs are especially known for their robust sound quality of the reed pipes (trumpets, oboes, etc.). The registration and pre-set combinations are all computerized. In addition, the blower (wind) system is extremely quiet. The organ at Good Shepherd is a delight to play and capable of playing repertoire from the Baroque to the sumptuous French Romantic and beyond! An absolute JOY!!



Our stained glass windows are renowned in the area. They were designed by J. & R. Lamb, Co.

Founded in 1857 by brothers Joseph (1833–1898) and Richard Lamb (1836–1909) in NYC, J&R Lamb Studios is the oldest continuously operating stained glass company in the United States. Some of our windows are original to the church; others were transferred from St. John's. The centerpiece of the collection is the Good Shepherd, which was gifted by Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Pinchot, uncle of Gifford Pinchot. Gifford was named as the first Chief of the U.S. Forest Service by Theodore Roosevelt. His ancestral home, Grey Towers, draws thousands of visitors each year.





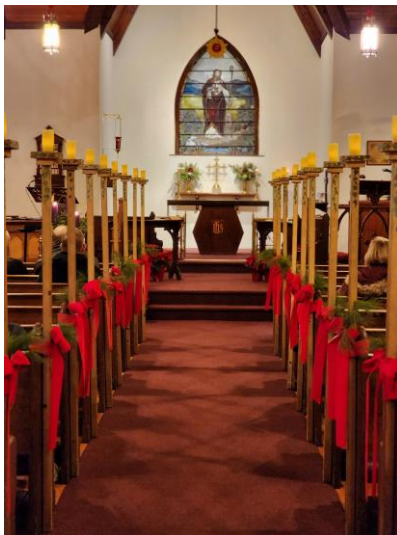
Souperbowl Sunday donation to Food Pantry



Townwide Halloween Outreach



Hospitality is at the heart of our community.



Vision and Growth

A Vision and Growth Committee was established with the following mandate: To examine, excite and expand participation/outreach in the Good Shepherd Church Community; develop ways to attract new members; and provide opportunities for spiritual nourishment for all ages. The Committee believes our community should be one whose members take ownership in a plan of action. It would be best, when a new rector is hired, that there is a creative community with which to work.

This year, the committee created a survey that was distributed to all parishioners. The information received from the survey aided us in determining issues and concerns that the church should address. The survey helped the committee to realize and suggest the following recommendations for our community revival:

- Have a once a month listening session during coffee hour, or by Zoom, to discuss our future. This could result in a written summary that could be sent out with our newsletter.*
- Creation of active committees to develop and immediately implement effective programs.*
- Have each member of the Vestry take a group of names of parish members who have not been to services recently and contact them, to keep them abreast of current services and events.*

It is recommended that the following topics be explored and, with the approval of the Vestry, be implemented:

- 1. Look into the liturgical calendar and examine what holidays, feasts and events should be celebrated. Revisit music, prayer and other actions to enhance our worship service.*
- 2. Ministry to the Sick and shut-ins. Included should be reach-out to nursing homes, assisted living centers and 55-plus congregated housing community centers. This could be established by more effective utilization of our Eucharistic Ministers, Eucharistic Visitors and the Daughters of the King.*
- 3. Establish a committee to oversee facility maintenance until financial resources enable us to implement major repairs. This should include the Safety and Security committee input.*
- 4. Fund raising and event planning.*

5. *Facility oversight committee would explore the use of our facility more effectively and efficiently.*

6. *Institute programs for children including religious education during the summer with fun games and projects. Reach out to grandparents informing them of events for their grandchildren. Invite young children to participate in liturgical projects centered around different seasons and holidays.*

The Parish Financial Report is intentionally not included.

*For information contact us at
office@goodshepherdmilford.org.*

Our Hopes for the Future

As we look to the future of The Episcopal Community of Good Shepherd, we are extremely aware that our hopes and dreams for our small community must be tempered with reality.

We acknowledge that our financial resources are limited and our membership is aging. However our Church community serves a growing and dynamic area where many people are searching and asking for new expressions of spirituality and faith.

Since we are the only Episcopal Church in Pike County, PA, one of the fastest growing counties in Northeast PA, we feel that the message and the mission of Good Shepherd is more vital than ever. This message of inclusivity, acceptance, and respect, regardless of race, religion, sexual orientation or gender preference, is vital to the larger community. Religion and politics have become a source to divide the larger community over the last few years. We are proud that Good Shepherd has resisted this trend and has stood as a force of unity.

Our community is diverse and many of our members have very different views and ideas on how the church should lead into the future. But despite our various ideas we stand together as one Christian Family with our hearts wide open to welcome all. Our hands are ready to serve those in our community who are poor, those who are elderly and those who need our support and care. No matter how old we are, we have never been afraid to roll up our sleeves to answer the call of Christ's mission.

We are excited and hope that our next rector will journey with us, celebrating our rich history and heritage while also being open to new ideas on how to live the Gospel during these challenging times. We look for a pastor who can combine compassion with direction; spiritual inspiration with strategic planning; and a vigorous presence and witness in our church and in our civic community. But, above all, we are seeking a companion on the journey.

We are inspired by the words of Mother Theresa when she addressed her sisters, saying: Don't talk about Jesus, don't seek to convert people to Christianity, just be like Jesus.

We pray that you would consider joining us on this challenging yet rewarding adventure.

*Members of the Search Committee
On behalf of the Vestry*