

The Shepherd's Voice

From The Pastor



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When the Magi arrived in Jerusalem, everyone was surprised and troubled. Few in Israel remembered God's promise through Isaiah that other nations would be attracted to them. They had forgotten that Gentiles would come bearing gifts to a future just and righteous King. Only after God worked faith in Saul/Paul's heart was the message clearly announced that all people share in the promise of Christ. This new year, God's Word calls us not only to see the light of God's love in Christ but also to emulate the Magi. With joy, our faith moves us to follow where God leads and to worship our Lord, in whom alone we have boldness and access with confidence to the grace of God. That is, Epiphany is not only a celebration of the past but also a call to shine God's light in our lives today.

The Epiphany season ends on the Mount of Transfiguration where Peter blurted out that it was good the disciples were there so they could build shelters for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Our being close to our Lord, though, is not good so that we might do something for Him; rather, it is good because we know He has done so much for us. Moses, the greatest prophet according to Deuteronomy, spoke God's Word, but Jesus is the Word, effecting our forgiveness and salvation in His sacrifice for us. His "departure," as Luke puts it in the Gospel, is literally His exodus, not from slavery in Egypt like Moses, but from sin and death through His sacrifice on the cross. Our Lord is the builder of His "house," the Church. Only because we have been forgiven is it good for us to be here, for as the psalmist reminds us, "the LORD our God is holy!"

— *Pastor Simpson*

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is turning 75 in 2025!!



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

75th Anniversary Celebration

November 16, 2025

“Led and Fed by The Good Shepherd for 75 years”



Congregational Christmas Party!



FOOD

FUN

FELLOWSHIP

FOOD

FELLOWSHIP

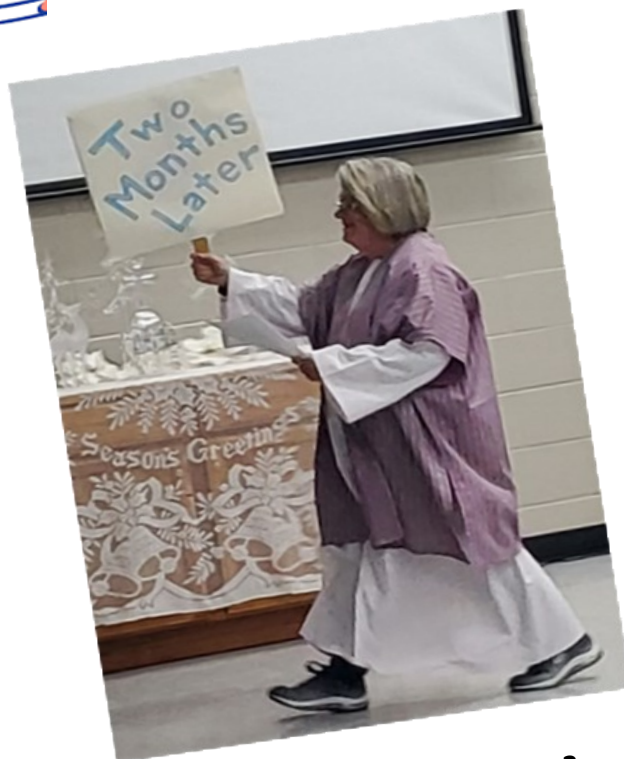
FUN



Singing Carols



**It's a
BOY!**



SHARE YOUR HEART AND SOLE

LWML Oklahoma District SHOE DONATION 2024 – 2025



We are hosting a local **SHOE DRIVE** to help raise funds for the LWML OK District Recycling Fund.




Help us collect previously owned/gently used/or new **SHOES**.

We will begin

collecting **November 1, 2024 – January 31, 2025**.

Our goal is mighty at **5,000** pairs – but for all these efforts we could receive close to **\$2500** towards our Recycling Fund: Which goes to Missions, Special Gifts Fund, and Leader Development expenses.

Please help us in our efforts by:

-  Setting aside now, any shoes you can donate
-  Sharing our efforts with family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc.
-  Getting the word out in your community, businesses, and on social media

The more people we reach the easier it will be to reach our goal! We believe in the power of community and have faith that God will lead us every step of the way.
Thank You!!!

- ✓ Please bring your gently used or new shoes to Good Shepherd as soon as possible. We need them by Friday, January 31, 2025.
- ✓ Men's, Women's and Children's shoes, boots, etc., are accepted. (Do not accept ice skates or roller skates.)
- ✓ Have Questions? Contact Peggy Tarr 405.613.5779 or Marguerite Christman at 405.570.5506. Thank you for all your support!

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship

(Resources for the Congregation)

NEW

[Online Giving Pew Cards](#) — The physical act of collecting the gifts and bringing them to the altar has been a part of Christian worship since the time of the apostles. Now, parishioners who give offerings electronically may participate in the Divine Service by placing a card in the offering plate in lieu of an envelope. LCMS congregations may print online giving pew cards for members.

Square One Resources

It can be a struggle to know where to begin when it comes to congregational stewardship. Here are four ways to get started.

[Stewardship Under the Cross](#) — *Stewardship Under the Cross: Stewardship for the Confessional Lutheran Parish* by the Rev. Heath Curtis includes a book and a planning guide. The [book](#) tells the story of a real LCMS congregation and how they went from financial chaos to faithful, Lutheran, biblical stewardship. The [planning guide](#) will help your congregation lay out the steps it takes to do the same in your congregation. Reading this book together is a great place for a pastor and board of elders to begin.

[Stewardship from A to Z](#) — The A to Z collection of resources includes a lot of content. If your congregation needs to start at square one, check out the Bible study section for ideas on how to introduce biblical stewardship. If your congregation already has a yearly stewardship focus, you'll find resources to help bring new and fresh ideas to each year's program.

[Stewardship Basics](#) — An in-depth, 8-week Bible study to introduce stewardship to a congregation.

[Philippians Workshop](#) — Resources like those above are great. But there's never been a shortage of great resources, and it's still hard for congregations to get off of square one. **Here's what we have found to work best:** face-to-face workshops for pastors and lay leaders. We conduct several of these each year all around the Synod. If your congregation would consider hosting a workshop for your local circuit congregations, check out the "Philippians Workshop" flier and email us at stewardship@lcms.org.



STEWARDSHIP

“How Good a Caretaker of God's Gifts Are We?”

**Even so, Lord, quickly come To Thy final harvest home;
Gather Thou Thy people in, Free from sorrow, free from sin,
There, forever purified, In Thy garner to abide:
Come with all Thine angels, come, Raise the glorious harvest home.
(LSB 892, vs. 4, public domain)**

**“GIVE & IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU. GOOD MEASURE, PRESSED DOWN,
SHAKEN TOGETHER, RUNNING OVER, WILL BE PUT INTO YOUR LAP.
FOR WITH THE MEASURE YOU USE. IT WILL BE MEASURED BACK TO YOU.”
LUKE 6:38 (ESV)**

**All we have is God's! “The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it” (Ps. 24:1)**

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (Matt 6:21)

**God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance,
so that you may always have enough of everything.
What does this mean? Your heart always goes where you put God's money.
Stewardship is not an optional subcategory of the Christian life;
it is the living out of a Christian's dependence on God.
“God loves a Cheerful Giver!” 2 Corinthians 9:7**



REMEMBER GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN IN YOUR WILL!



"PLACE OF REFUGE"

Written by Dr. Kari Vo

Lutheran Hour Ministries

December 11, 2024

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ... And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." (Luke 1:39-43, 45)

I am so happy that God took such gentle care of Mary, to prepare a safe place for her to spend her first three months carrying Jesus! For she would need a refuge away from prying eyes that might notice morning sickness and other signs of pregnancy. Elizabeth was already carrying a miracle baby—she would surely believe Mary's story and welcome her into her home, to rejoice together. And so the angel planted that idea in Mary's mind, because God is gracious.

God is gracious to us, too, when we are going through some difficult time. He knows our weakness, and we can always pray for His help and wisdom. And He has become our place of refuge, the safe Rock in which we can hide when things are too much. He Himself became our safety when He laid down His life on the cross for us—and took it up again on Easter morning.

WE PRAY: When I am afraid, Lord, be my hiding place. Amen.

Reflection Questions:

- * Why do you think Mary's family was willing to let her go to Elizabeth?
- * What benefit did Elizabeth get from Mary's company?

When has Jesus provided a safe place (or person!) for you?



God cares and is always with each of us!

SUICIDE & Crisis HOTLINE: 988

Lutheran Hour Ministries

Learn more about LHM's Rose Parade float at:

<https://www.lhm.org/newsroom/enewsstory.asp?ArticleID=40560>

“Behold! Jesus the Savior is Born”

The only Christian float in the annual parade!



HAPPY NEW YEAR— Building the Body of Christ

Let's put aside the old and ring in the new!

Put away grudges and hard feelings—forgive, because God has forgiven us.

Resolve to treat our brothers and sisters in Christ in “love” and with “kindness.”

How would Christ handle the situation?

Jesus on the cross said, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!”

When anger remains it turns into bitterness,
which harms our Faith, our Health, and our Gospel Message!

Show us how to forgive!

This Nighttime Behavior Can Be A Sign Of Dementia

There are plenty of reason you might feel off in the late afternoon and evening. Maybe you're mentally wiped after socializing all day, or your brain is fried from hours of work. If you got up early, it could simply be that you'd rather crawl under a blanket and watch Netflix than interact with other people—all of these are legitimate reasons to feel cranky during this time.

But in people with [dementia](#)—which is an umbrella term for mental decline and can be related to a number of diseases such as Alzheimer's—there's a phenomenon known as “sundowning,” where symptoms (such as being agitated or anxious) ramp up later in the day and evening. As you head into the holiday season, you're likely spending more time than usual with older loved ones. With that, it's worth it for any adult to better understand how sundowning presents, and what it might mean for the cognitive health of your loved one. We tapped two health care providers who treat older adults for more information.

Meet the experts: [Shannel Kassis Elhelou](#), PsyD, is a geropsychology and neuropsychology fellow at the Pacific Neuroscience Institute's Brain Wellness and Lifestyle Programs at Providence Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica, California. [Fred Kobylarz](#), MD, is co-director of the Center for Healthy Aging at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Also known as “**sundowner's syndrome**,” sundowning is a set of symptoms or behaviors that can be seen in some people with Alzheimer's disease and dementia, according to the [Alzheimer's Association](#).

“This usually happens as the dementia progresses,” says [Fred Kobylarz](#), MD, co-director of the Center for Healthy Aging at Rutgers Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. “It is not a disease, but a symptom of dementia.” Unfortunately, doctors “don't really know the cause of this,” he adds. It's possible that sundowning in dementia patients is caused by a combination of hormonal changes, brain deterioration or damage that has occurred, environmental factors, disruption to a person's circadian rhythm, and more.

SYMPTOMS OF SUNDOWNING CAN VARY BY PERSON, BUT THEY CAN INCLUDE:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| • Anxiety | Disorientation |
| • Hallucinations | Agitation |
| • Trouble sleeping | Pacing |

Sundowning “typically occurs in the late afternoon and evening in individuals diagnosed with dementia,” says [Shannel Kassis Elhelou](#), PsyD, a geropsychology and neuropsychology fellow at the Pacific Neuroscience Institute's Brain Wellness and Lifestyle Programs at Providence Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica, California. However, Dr. Kobylarz notes it can start as early as 1 p.m. for some people.

What Sundowning Looks Like

There's a difference between being totally over your day and sundowning. In addition to the symptoms listed above, sundowning can include verbal or even physical outbursts, Elhelou says. That may mean lashing out when dinner isn't what they thought it would be or getting frustrated when they can't find something.

Cont'd on page 9

Some people may even want to be physically closer than usual to loved ones, following them closely “for reassurance,” Elhelou says.

For others, sundowning can show up as confusion. “They will not remember conversations from earlier in the day or what they ate,” Dr. Kobylarz says. That can include wanting to eat dinner again right after finishing a meal they don’t remember. People also may not remember where their home is or the loved ones who take care of them, Dr. Kobylarz says.

“You can see [the person with dementia] change at a certain time of the day and almost become another person,” he adds.

Can sundowning be a sign of early dementia?

Sundowning is often a symptom that happens *after* someone is diagnosed with dementia or a dementia-related disease, but it can also be an early sign of mental decline itself. “There are changes taking place in the brain,” Dr. Kobylarz explains, that lead to the onset of dementia and continue as it progresses. So, it is possible for someone to exhibit sundowning behaviors who has not yet been diagnosed with dementia.

But Elhelou stresses that if you notice a loved one showing signs of sundowning, it doesn’t necessarily guarantee that they have dementia. “While sundowning is more common in dementia, it is not exclusive to it,” she notes. “Similar symptoms can occasionally be seen in older adults *without* dementia, particularly when they are ill or experiencing delirium.”

How To Distinguish Sundowning From Typical Aging

Again, it’s completely normal to feel like you’re not the best version of yourself when it’s later in the day, especially for older adults. That goes double over the holidays, when everyone is stressed and overstimulated. But sundowning has some unique signs that make it stand out from just being tired.

“Fatigue can occur at all times of the day. Sundowning is truly confusion,” Dr. Kobylarz says. “If you have fatigue, you can take a catnap and feel refreshed. With sundowning, they are not usually fatigued, and they are ready to go.”

Sundowning also tends to happen consistently around the same time of day, Elhelou says. “It often includes cognitive effects such as significant disorientation or impaired judgement,” she says. If someone is experiencing actual sundowning, they’re also likely to still display symptoms even after they rest, Elhelou points out.

How To Help A Loved One Manage Sundowning

Managing sundowning means trying to figure out your loved one’s new rhythm. “Managing sundowning should include a regular routine with scheduling and caregiving—essentially knowing their best time of day,” Dr. Kobylarz says.

While Elhelou says it can be “challenging” to manage sundowning, she recommends creating a calm environment and routine as best you can. “Start by maintaining a consistent daily routine to reduce confusion and fatigue,” she says. “Encourage activities and exposure to natural light during the day to support healthy sleep-wake cycles.”

Large gatherings. “Address physical needs, such as hunger, thirst, or discomfort to ensure they feel secure,” Elhelou says. Again, showing symptoms of sundowning doesn’t automatically mean that your loved one has dementia—but it is something to get checked out. “As soon as you suspect sundowning changes in your loved one, bring this up with [their] doctor,” Dr. Kobylarz says. Cont’d on pg 10

SUNDOWNING Cont'd:

confusion and fatigue," she says. "Encourage activities and exposure to natural light during the day to support healthy sleep-wake cycles."

It's also crucial to try to avoid overstimulation in the evenings by limiting loud noises, bright screens, or large gatherings. "Address physical needs, such as hunger, thirst, or discomfort to ensure they feel secure," Elhelou says.

Again, showing symptoms of sundowning doesn't automatically mean that your loved one has dementia—but it is something to get checked out. "As soon as you suspect sundowning changes in your loved one, bring this up with [their] doctor," Dr. Kobylarz says.

The doctor can look for potential underlying causes, including dementia, medication effects, or environmental factors, Elhelou says. From there, they can suggest effective ways to help you manage the behavioral changes. By: Korin Miller (12/12/2024)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ♦ [2024 Annual Report: Officers & Ministry Leaders](#)
- ♦ [Summary Paragraphs are due in Church Office ASAP *](#)

Prayer list additions: Victor Ray (eye cancer)

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The Church Office was notified that Mark Zeckser, a long time member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, but inactive in recent years, was called to his Heavenly Home on 12/9/2024. Services were on 12/18/2024, through Barnes & Friedrich Funeral Home.

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We received a call from Tom & Bev Moran that Tom's brother David had died and they would be traveling to TN for the funeral.

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Christmas is a time we celebrate with great joy, the Birth of Jesus our Savior. But it is also a very stress filled time for most people. Be especially patient, thoughtful, and kind during this period, praying for strength for the weak

and that needs will be met according to God's will.

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Thank You to the Person, who made a cash donation to
GSLC as a "tithe to God."

No recognition was desired or requested,
but we can be grateful for their generosity!

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Epiphany: January 6, 2025. And behold "God in man made manifest." (LSB, 394)

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MIRACLES FOR MILLIE (12/10—12/16)

Millie is at clinic today for her monthly lab work and IV antibiotic! Her numbers are lower than they have been, but not quite low enough yet to hold chemo.

Please pray that our sweet girls' numbers would go up and for protection against any illness or infections! Christmas is 2 weeks out and we are praying all the prayers that we will get to wake up Christmas morning in our home.

**UPDATE**

Cancer didn't get the memo that Millie had her class holiday party today.



Our sweet girl woke up at 3am with fever and vomiting. Floor 10 here we come! Please pray that our sweet girl will get to go home so soon and that all her blood cultures come back negative for infection.

As odd as it sounds, Millie enjoys her hospital admissions because the nurses and staff always make it so fun. Here's to making some Christmas magic at the hospital! (From Facebook by permission.)



Bear witness to the sanctity of life at the March for Life

Jan. 24, 2025 • Washington, D.C.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On Friday, Jan. 24, 2025, LCMS President Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison and other Lutherans, including a leader from your district, will attend the National March for Life in Washington, D.C. As they march for life, they stand boldly together in the public square and confess our beliefs about the sanctity of life.

Prior to the march, President Harrison will speak at the March for Life Rally, which begins at 12 p.m. Eastern time. Your district leader will join President Harrison on the rally stage. The march is scheduled to begin at 1 p.m.

An LCMS presence at the march helps provide a public witness to our Lord's creation of life and His design for marriage and the family.

Are you interested in joining President Harrison, your district leader, and hundreds of other LCMS Lutherans at the March for Life?

- Begin the day with a Divine Service at Immanuel Lutheran Church (1801 Russell Rd.; Alexandria, Va.; 22301). A brunch will follow the service.

[Register online](#) to be notified about the meeting location of LCMS Lutherans prior to the march and stay updated on other pertinent details.

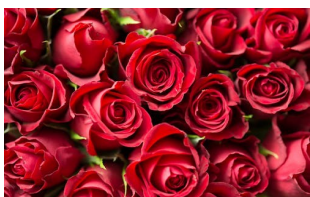
In Christ,

Deaconess Dr. Tiffany Manor

LCMS Office of National Mission

Managing Director, Human Care and Ministerial Support

January 2025



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

1/2 Tom & Beverly Moran
1/9 Bob & Peggy Tarr
1/14 Taylor & Linda Williamson



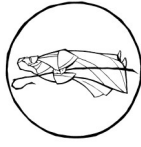
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1/1 Manny Vasquez
1/7 Valerie Calfe
1/10 Shondreya Toomey
1/14 Julia Staples
1/17 Kent Allsebrooke
1/19 Leslie Tucker
1/23 Peter Ewing
1/25 Cindy Simpson
1/28 Dianna Zeckser

1/1 Donna Lottman
1/1 Michael Parker
1/2 Janice Grundmann
1/6 Marla Junghanns
1/22 Marilyn Hall




***Baptismal
Anniversaries!***





January 2025



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Ministry Support through tithes, offerings, and donations can be given by either PayPal or credit or debit card. To access go to www.gs/cmwc.com scroll down to "Help Our Cause" and click on "Donate Now."	 REMEMBER GOOD SHEPHERD IN YOUR WILL!	 Go to www.gs/cmwc.com click on the "Play Video" arrow.	1 CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 6:00p NO Choir Practice	3 6:00a NO WEBS — Week End(ing) BS	4 1:00p School Workgroup
5 8:00a Worship w/Communion 9:15a Bible study/SS 10:30a Worship w/Communion	6 5:30p Trail Life & AHG 6:15p Bell Choir THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD	7 10:30a Staff Meeting 2:30p TABS — Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study 6:00p Elders 7:00p LWML	8 9:15a P-2 Chapel 10:00a DS Chapel 3:00-5:15p Free Food 5:00p Confirmation 5:30p Fellowship Meal 6:00p THE CHOSEN	9 6:00a TAMBS — Thursday AM Bible study 9:00a Mary Circle Bible study 12-3:00p Music Class—FH 6:00p NO Choir Practice 6:30p Homeschool BB	10 6:00a WEBS — Week End(ing) BS	11
12 8:00a Worship 9:15a Bible study/SS 10:30a Worship 11:30a Parish Education THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD	13 5:30p Trail Life & AHG 6:15p Bell Choir	14 10:30a Staff Meeting 2:30p TABS — Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study 4:00p Parochial Education	15 9:15a P-2 Chapel 10:00a DS Chapel 3:00-5:15p Free Food 5:00p Confirmation 5:30p Fellowship Meal 6:00p THE CHOSEN	16 6:00a TAMBS — Thursday AM Bible study 12-3:00p Music Class—FH 6:00p NO Choir Practice 12-3:00p Music Class—FH 6:30p Homeschool BB	17 6:00a WEBS — Week End(ing) BS	18 10:00a OK District Disaster Response
19 8:00a Worship w/Communion 9:15a Bible study/SS 10:30a Worship w/Communion 12:00p Council	20 5:30p Trail Life & AHG 6:15p Bell Choir MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.	21 10:30a Staff Meeting 2:30p TABS — Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study	22 9:15a P-2 Chapel 10:00a DS Chapel 3:00-5:15p Free Food 5:00p Confirmation 5:30p Fellowship Meal 6:00p THE CHOSEN	23 6:00a TAMBS — Thursday AM Bible study 9:00a Mary Circle Quilting 12-3:00p Music Class—FH 6:00p NO Choir Practice	24 6:00a WEBS — Week End(ing) BS ST. TIMOTHY, PASTOR AND CONFESSOR	25
26 8:00a Worship 9:15a Bible study/SS 10:30a Worship 12:00p Annual Voters' Assembly ST. TITUS, PASTOR AND CONFESSOR	27 5:30p Trail Life & AHG 6:15p Bell Choir	28 10:30a Staff Meeting 2:30p TABS — Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study	29 9:15a P-2 Chapel 10:00a DS Chapel 3:00-5:15p Free Food 5:00p Confirmation 5:30p Fellowship Meal 6:00p THE CHOSEN	30 6:00a TAMBS — Thursday AM Bible Study 12-3:00p Music Class—FH 6:00p NO Choir Practice 6:30p Homeschool BB	31 6:00a WEBS — Week End(ing) BS	 SUBMISSION DEADLINES Weekly Bulletin 12pm on Thursdays Monthly Newsletter 20 th of every month secretary@gslc.org