

Good News from Good Shepherd Church



Ponderings from Our Pastor

Dear Good Shepherd family:

It's been a busy time at Good Shepherd, and I would like to share some of what has been going on at our parish and in our building.

Since our last letter, our vestry met, and with the advice of the finance committee, we have made funding available to finalize several projects. New heating and cooling units have been installed in our fellowship hall. There will be no more minimal cooling or having to sit with cold air from a single unit that blows right on you because we did not dare to turn it down, just in time for next week's community luncheon and for a record-breaking week of heat. Funds have also been disbursed for the repair of our Food Pantry porch decking. That project will begin in July. Cory, our painting contractor, will return to complete the final sections of the painting and repair of the exterior trim, window frames, and doors. Cory has generously told us that he will take on the yearly care of all the window sills at no cost to Good Shepherd.

Whew! That was a lot of work, and it took a significant amount of money. These funds, which came from our capital campaign fund, were crucial in maintaining and improving our parish building. Now, it is time to begin refilling that account to ensure we can continue to invest in our community and its needs.

Old buildings always present us with new challenges. Two months ago, we faced a significant one when we needed to dig up our outside sewer line because it had broken free from our holding tank. Luckily, the issue was resolved quickly, with workers adding several upgrades from its original design and the materials available decades ago, ensuring the longevity of our building.

I am coming up on the one-year mark of my time with you at Good Shepherd, and I am amazed at how God has been at work among us. We have had four baptisms and have a new member's class underway. We have seen many folks

who left during COVID-19 return and many new faces in our pews, which have combined to make our Sunday attendance right around the fifty-person mark.

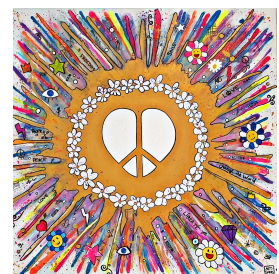
Good Shepherd has been part of a growing Ecumenical effort in Milford that has hosted holiday services and provided ashes to go and a community walk of the cross on Good Friday. We have also expanded our worship schedule with a traditional Wednesday Eucharist that has a healing litany and anointing each week. I have become a part of the newly established "Tri-State Ministerium" (a clergy group) that meets every other month in Port Jervis. What a blessing to meet all the clerics in the area and hear about what is happening all around us!

All these blessings are why I invite you to participate in planning and then attending our fundraising activities in the coming months. Our plate offerings are up because of our attendance, but having more folks each week is also a blessing because we can share the work needed to keep our parish going and open to growth among more volunteers.

Another goal of mine is to establish an actual team from our church to participate again in the actual work of serving the guests who come to the food pantry. We do manage the monthly community meal, and it would be wonderful to get to know the other volunteers and the guests we serve each week in a more in-person way.

Please pray about these requests. They are a part of our weekly challenge to "Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord!"

Peace and Prayers,
Bill+



Message from the Vestry

Dear Good Shepherd Family,

It is hard to believe that about one year ago, the Reflection, Renewal and Reimagining Team was in full swing. As you may recall and for those new to our church, we were deep in the search process for a new priest. The goal of the RRR team was to strengthen the current committees and ministries and begin work on new areas as well as those that may have fallen by the wayside. We knew that we needed to keep things moving ahead to prepare the way for a new priest.

The RRR team identified six broad categories that they felt were key in maintaining a vibrant church community: Worship, Building & Grounds, Outreach & Hospitality, Education, Publicity & Communications and Fundraising.

Parishioners were asked to complete a "Promise of Time and Talent" card, choosing one or more of the six categories that they might consider offering their time and talent to. The RRR team compiled the information from the cards, put them together and new teams were formed. And so, work began.

I write about this today, in the hope that it will remind you of the commitments that you made last year, remind you that the work we started is ongoing and that we must continue to remain active and forward looking. We must continue to support Fr. Bill Stewart, our part time priest - in-charge. Our continued work in the various lay ministries allows him to do his wonderful work as our part time priest in charge!


Together, lay and clergy, we will continue what we recommitted to last year and make Good Shepherd a vibrant, growing place of worship and community outreach. Be on the look out for emails and announcements about events or projects that we need some help with.

All are welcome to join any team, try a new team, bring innovative ideas, have fun....do God's work!

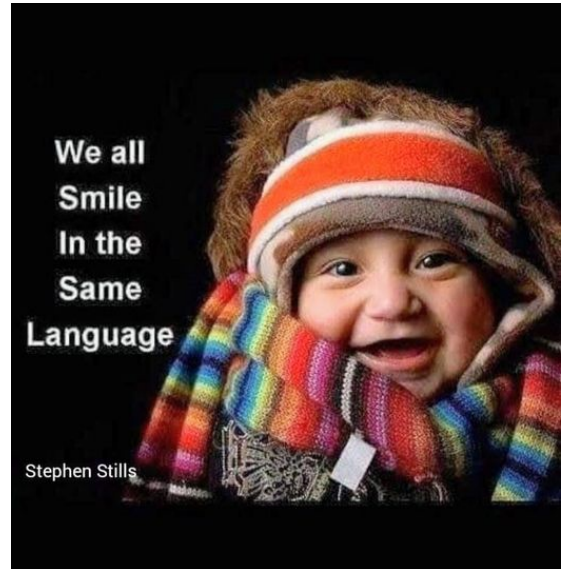
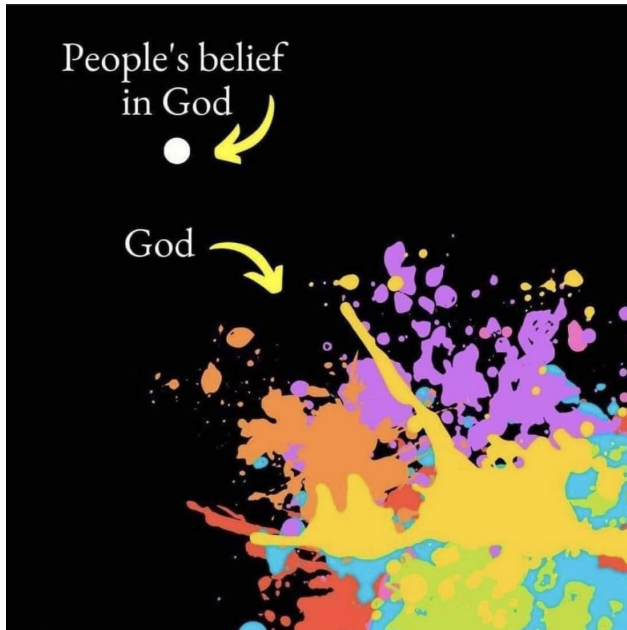
Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

*1 Peter 4:10

Thanking God for you,
Barbara Hartman, Sr. Warden



Our entire Christian
walk must be fueled
by the grace of God.



Save the Date!

***Hot Dog Picnic and Family Fun
Good Shepherd Courtyard
Saturday July 27***

***More details to come. Volunteers needed.
Call the church office or sign up on clip board in the Parish Hall.
Organizational meeting June 24 at 10 am.***

Many hands make light work!!



How did that get in there? (Report from the Worship Committee)

On Thursday, June 14th, the Worship Committee met focusing on our worship music. We had a great time learning how our music gets selected, and we had pizza!



Our talented organist and musical director, Jane Livingston, shared with us the process she employs to curate the hymns and other service music, anthems, postludes, and preludes. We learned a lot about the depth of this process and the kind of music it helps to discover. Here are some of the things we learned; The Revised Common Lectionary guides our music selection process. Our music choices reflect these themes.

At Good Shepherd, we have always used a TEC church publication called “Rite Planning,” which we now use online. Each week, Rite Planning gives you a list of all the hymns that tie into the readings for any given Sunday. The prayers of the people also follow the themes.

“Singability” and popularity of the hymns are always part of the selection process. Rite Planning gives us access to eight different music sources and hymnbooks that TEC approves. Our subscription fees also give us the legal right to reproduce the music and use it in our services.

Further instructions (from Father Bill) include using one hymn each week from a resource newer than the 1982 Blue Hymnal.

This process also requires several hours of consideration and work by Jane every week, including the consideration of the season and holidays that are approaching or that we have just observed.

As you can see, there is a lot more to the process than simply saying, ‘Who the heck picked that?’ Jane’s decades of experience with what will work or be acceptable, along with the system and its approved materials, combine to fill out our bulletin each week. The Worship Committee’s role is to provide the needed feedback, which is crucial in this process.

The committee would also like to make a few minor changes to our service music selections (music that is not a hymn). Starting in July, we will introduce a new “faction anthem,” or song that we sing after the breaking of the bread. Another change is that we will ask those serving as the weekly Lector to sit up with the altar server until after the end of the Prayers of the People.

Finally, the committee also wants to continue to stress that every Sunday is a time to come out of the world and should begin with time to relax and silently hear the “prelude.” Father Bill will invite the guests to do that each Sunday when he welcomes them.

The committee also discussed the end of our services and how they should finish with quiet listening to the postlude, just like the beginning of our worship. Father Bill will also inform the people that we request that they listen quietly from their pews and respond with a hearty AMEN, not by clapping. Applause makes Jane uncomfortable because she does not see her work as “performance,” and this clapping is also a divisive issue amongst parishioners.

Still, we realize that not everyone wants to sit there, may have after-church fellowship duties, or may need to use the restroom. Anyone wishing to leave prior to the postlude may leave during the recessional or final hymn. We are looking forward to our next meeting and to hearing your reactions to these small changes.