

The Shepherd's Staff

December 2009

Issue 117

Contact Information

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
P. O. Box 355
Plainview MN, 55964
(507) 534-3675
www.goodshepherd-elca.org

Pastor Kevin Woestehoff
Office Hours: 1-4 Tues & Thurs
Email: kevin.goodshepherd@embarqmail.com
Home Phone: 534-0122

Cong. Administrator Lynn Eversman
Office Hours: Vary
Email: lynn.goodshepherd@embarqmail.com

Shared Ministries Coordinator Deb
Weinrich
Office Hours: Vary
Email: deb.goodshepherd@embarqmail.com

Multiple Touch Ministry

Our mission is to reach out to congregation and community members in times of joy and celebration, pain, sorrow or whenever the need may arise. If you know someone needing a cheerful card, phone call, or food please contact Doris Johnson (534-3016) or Karen Anderson (534-3649) during the month of December.

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ADVENT/CHRISTMAS 2009

Advent is much more than the time that passes before Christmas day. Each week we gather in awe before God who has already come to us in the birth of Jesus Christ. Jesus comes and meets us in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. We live with joy and hope in the present, and look forward to the day of Jesus' return.

December Worship Opportunities

December 6 Advent 2

Worship with Holy Communion at 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
Witness Talk shared by Tara Schwantz

December 13 Advent 3

Worship at 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

December 20 Advent 4

Worship with Holy Communion at 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
*Sunday School Christmas Program during 10:30 a.m. worship

December 27 1st Sunday in Christmas

Worship with Holy Communion at 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
*College Student Sunday

Thursday, December 24th:

Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship
4:00 & 7:00 p.m.

Advent 2009 Midweek Worship

Holden Evening Prayer services Wednesdays
December 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd
7:00 p.m.

ENLARGING THE CIRCLE OF MINISTRY

Space Utilization Study: Selecting a Negotiating Contractor to Provide Pricing Information

The Space Utilization Study Team and Church Council is continuing to work with Kane & Johnson Architects. In November we reviewed the credentials and qualifications that were submitted by five general contractors. With a preference for local contractors, we selected three contractors who we will interview in early December. Again, the selected Negotiating Contractor will provide us information on the costs of the potential building projects.

Caring for our Building and Developing High School Leaders

Following Kirk Axelson's resignation from the custodian position, steps were taken for the ongoing care of our building. Tom's Lawn and Cleaning Service was hired to handle the weekly cleaning of the church. High school student Alex Jurgenson was hired to handle weekly incidentals like garbage removal, straightening of chairs, and Sunday morning snow shoveling.

Developing our Worship & Music Ministry

The Worship and Music committee is looking at the goals of Good Shepherd's music ministry and trying to make some decisions on what shape those goals will take. Part of that process involves developing our Adult Choir ministry and taking it to another level. We are working on a job description for an Adult Choir director as part of an effort to give our music ministry more structure and consistency.

MISSIONS & STEWARDSHIP

2009-2010 NEIGHBOR-TO-NEIGHBOR STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Thank you for your participation in the Neighbor-to-Neighbor Stewardship program. Stewardship is about God's people growing in our relationship with Jesus Christ through the use of the time, talents, and finances God has entrusted to us. We celebrate the many conversations and prayerful decisions that the people of Good Shepherd have made as we choose how to respond to God's blessings. Thank you for prayerfully considering your partnership in the mission of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church!

EDUCATION

ADULT EDUCATION

Sunday Morning Adult Education

Grab a cup of coffee and join your friends in faith for a study of the Gospel of Luke during the education hour! Luke's gospel is the main gospel reading for the coming church year which begins with the beginning of Advent. Class begins at 9:30 on December 6th and 13th.

No adult class will be held on December 20th so the Sunday school students can use the sanctuary space. Then we'll take a couple of weeks off for the Christmas holiday. Coming January 10th...Life Keys led by Deb Weinrich.

Wednesday Evening Adult Education

There will be NO Wednesday evening adult education classes during December, as Advent services will be held each Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. Adult classes will resume on January 13th at 6:30 p.m. The discussion topic for three weeks (13th, 20th, 27th) will be Holy Communion. This will be an intergenerational class (held with the confirmation students).

BRIGHTER TOMORROWS

Join us January 10th from 9:15 – 10:15 a.m. to hear Shanna Decker's extraordinary message of how her faith in God has given her the strength to face the challenge of her childhood cancer.

The Deckers are cofounders of the nonprofit organization "Brighter Tomorrows, Inc". Brighter Tomorrows is an outreach to families touched by childhood cancer by providing emotional, spiritual and educational support.

Sherrie Decker will talk about Brighter Tomorrows and how they touch the lives of families who are faced with the challenge of childhood cancer.

Sunday school grades 1st through junior high will be attending this presentation. We would like to extend the invitation to anyone who would like to hear this message.

The Sunday school teachers will be cooking for you (the 1st Wednesday of the Month meal) on Wednesday evening, January 6th, from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Proceeds will be given to Brighter Tomorrows, Inc. So, give your kitchen a break and join the Sunday school teachers for food and fellowship!

EDUCATION CONTINUED ...

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

You are invited
to our annual Sunday School Christmas Program

"Christmas Hang-ups"

This is a musical play, which will be held during the 10:30 worship service on December 20th, 2009. We hope you can join us for a little laughter, a little lesson, and some new and old favorite Christmas songs.

It's just before Christmas and the tree ornaments have been awakened from their yearly hibernation by the movement of their storage box. It's time! As they begin to prepare for another season on the Watson's Christmas tree, they are greeted by a rather strange and "un-Christmassy" ornament -- a Hula-Girl? The Stars, the Angels, Frosty the Snowman, the Reindeer and others don't understand what she has to do with Christmas and give her a rather cool reception until another significant figure from the mantelpiece shows up to explain to all of them what Christmas is about and how they each have a place in God's amazing plan of redemption through His Son, Jesus. This humorous and engaging story, created by Dennis and Nan Allen, will remind kids and congregation alike that Christmas is truly a time to celebrate!

Important notes for students & parents:

What to wear for the program: Costumes will be provided at the church. Three year olds thru 2nd grade students will be costumed in traditional Nativity clothes (angels, stars, wisemen, shepherds) that will cover most of their clothing, so it is your choice to send your child in t-shirt & jeans or Sunday best.

3rd-6th graders: Most of your clothing will show beneath your "ornament". Sunday best would be great. Nice jeans OK...Any questions feel free to call Linda Olson @ 534-0145.

Dress Rehearsal Dates:

Sunday, Dec. 13th
6:30-7:30 p.m.
(for main characters & all souvenirs)

Saturday, Dec. 19
1:30-3:30 Full cast, choir - 3rd-6th grades
2:30-3:30 3 yr-2nd grades (Nativity group)

Costumes/props needed:

grass skirts
Sleeping Beauty costume
Princess Jasmine costume
Mickey Mouse ears
Vikings Helmet (any size)
Gray/silver fabric
(would not cut)

EDUCATION CONTINUED ...

CONFIRMATION MINISTRY

7th & 8th Grade Confirmation Ministry

During the month of December, confirmation ministry meets every Wednesday night from 6:00 -7:00 p.m. Each night will begin with a meal in the fellowship hall and continue with activities and discussions in the sanctuary that are designed to nurture faith. Advent services follow at 7:00 p.m.

December Schedule

December 2
December 9
December 16
December 23
December 30

Host Family for Meals

First Wednesday Meal
Sackreiter Family
Schmidt Family
Simonson Family
No confirmation

WORSHIP & MUSIC

ADVENT

Advent, the season of watching and waiting for our Savior's birth begins on Sunday, November 29. Devotions will be available for families with children AND for adults. Pick up yours now. Take one home to help you reflect on the meaning of Jesus' birth.

COLLEGE STUDENT CONNECTION

On Sunday, December 27th our college students will be recognized during worship.

In an effort to stay connected with our college students, we would like to update our files. If you have a son or daughter who is a college student, please e-mail their mailing address and e-mail address to the church office at lynn.goodshepherd@embarqmail.com.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

With the Christmas season fast approaching, poinsettias will again be available for purchase. If you would like to add to our Christmas decor by sponsoring a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a friend or loved one, they will be available at the cost of \$15.00. You may take your plant with you when we remove the Christmas displays from the sanctuary. Forms and envelopes are available on the table in the narthex next to the poinsettia box. Thanks for your help. Joanne Melbostad

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH

FIRST WEDNESDAY DINNER IN DECEMBER

On Wednesday, December 2nd, from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m., there will be a taco buffet with the proceeds going to Amber Benike of Elgin. Amber was diagnosed with osteosarcoma in September of this year and is currently going through chemotherapy. Amber is the wife of Jeremiah Benike and his parents are Don & Sheryl Benike of Good Shepherd. They have two young daughters, Emma age 4 and Olivia 18 months. Jeremiah was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2008. For more information on the Benike family you can visit caringbridge.org/visit/amberbenike or caringbridge.org/visit/jeremiahbenike. Anyone who would like to help with this dinner should contact Stacy Hutchison, 876-1174 or shutch@embarqmail.com.

If your group is interested in serving a meal, please indicate on the "Count Me In" form. Available dates are April 7 and May 5. Please consider joining the fun on *First Wednesdays* by preparing a meal for your church family at Good Shepherd.

The committees that will be meeting on December 2nd and the times they will meet are listed below:

<u>COMMITTEE</u>	<u>MEETING TIMES</u>	<u>MEETING PLACE</u>
Worship & Music	5:00 pm	Fellowship hall
Confirmation	6:00 – 7:00 pm	Fellowship hall/Sanctuary

GRADUATION MILESTONE

Work Day to Make Blankets for Graduates

Spend a cold winter day **Monday, January 11th** with Good Shepherd friends sewing blankets for our graduates! Meet at church for sewing, fellowship, fun, and of course food (warm soup and bread). We will start at 8 am and stop sometime in the afternoon. Come when you can and leave when you must.

Sewing skills are helpful, but not required. So if you can't sew, come anyway to cut, pin, and most of all have fun. Bring any of the following items that you have: sewing machine, scissors, pins, and needles.

Let me know if you want to help, but can't come that day. We will probably need another work day or you could take one home. For questions, contact Carole Joyce at carole35@charter.net or 269-9374.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH CONTINUED ...

COOKIE WALK DECEMBER 5 7:30 – 11:00 A.M.

HEAT UP THOSE OVENS! The cookie walk is only a few days away!

We ask each family to donate between 12-15 dozen Christmas cookies. They can all be of one recipe or a variety of recipes. **Please concentrate on cookies.** Breads, candies, fudge and other treats don't seem to sell as well as cookies; however, we won't turn any of these items away.

We ask that the cookies come on nice platters or decorative boxes (this helps in the cleanup). Also, please write the name of your cookies (or list flavors) so the buyers know what kind of cookies they are. Also, if they have nuts in them, please list what kind (walnuts, pecans, etc).

We need the cookies delivered between 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Friday night so we can have them all placed on the tables and ready to go by 7:00 a.m. Saturday morning. The doors don't open until 7:30 a.m., but it seems like every year we have buyers waiting at the door by 7:00 a.m.

We also need a lot of helpers for this event. It is a very short time commitment and it is actually very fun. Youth (4th grade and up) are encouraged to help. We need helpers on Friday night and Saturday morning. Contact Franny Schwantz (876-2253 or frannyschwantz@hotmail.com) if you have any questions.

Also, the Senior High Youth will be selling Christmas "treasures". All proceeds will help fund the 2010 Senior High Youth mission trip.

GOOD SHEPHERD WOMEN'S GROUP

Wine Tasting

Please join us on Thursday, December 17th at 7:00 pm for a wine tasting Christmas party. The party will be held at Deb Weinrich's home at 535 4th St. SW, Plainview. Please bring one bottle of your favorite wine, and a little information about the wine if possible. Also, please bring an appetizer to share. Not a wine drinker? Please join us anyway for fun & fellowship. Alternate beverages will be provided. We will discuss dates in January when our group will serve a dinner at the Salvation Army in Rochester. To share the joy this Christmas season, please bring a monetary donation which will be presented to the Plainview-Elgin area food shelf. All women are welcome. Please indicate on the "Count Me In" form if you plan to attend.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH CONTINUED ...

BOX PROJECT UPDATE

As has been done in the past, we would like to take up a collection of gifts to send to the Box Project families in Mississippi: the Johnson's and the Washington's.

The collection will run from November 29th through December 20th. The families consist of two moms, three grown daughters, one grown son, two girls in junior high, one girl in high school, a five-year-old boy and two toddler boys. You may choose gifts that do not have to be sized correctly. You may donate unwrapped gifts, or please wrap, label and put in a sack labeled Box Project. Gifts will be sent after Sunday, December 20th. Thank you for your kind donations. Call 876-2208 if you have any questions. Lonnie Yust

Following are emails sent from Lisa Washington and Jeanette Johnson. We will be ending our support for the Box Project families at the end of this year, as our church goes on to other mission projects. Thanks to all who have supported the Washingtons and Johnsons in the past. Lonnie Yust

Dear Lonnie,

My 16 year old baby is having a baby next summer. Lisa

Dear Lonnie,

Sha-Sha is the one. She is 16 years old and in the tenth grade.

I would like to say thanks to you and the entire Good Shepherd Church. I have appreciated everything that you have all done for me and my family when we couldn't do for ourselves. Thank you for your final donations for the upcoming holidays. Shaquitta, which is Quint's mom, is also having another baby in February. Love, Lisa

Dear Lonnie,

Sha-Sha is Lavonne. I will support her all I can. I am going back to school in the fall myself.

No one has had the flu. I thank God for that because the swine flu has been going around the school.

I appreciate everything you have done and will continue to do so. I promise that I will stay in touch. My break is over and I hear children in the hall.

Happy Thanksgiving. Send me some recipes. Love, Lisa

E-mail received 11-24-9

Dear Lonnie,

We thank all of you for our gift for Thanksgiving. We are always so grateful for what you have done for us. If you do not help us anymore, we will always be indebted to you all. We wouldn't have made it without your help.

Everyone is ok. Dedrick is still seeing his counselor. He is not working. His boys are getting so big. I hope he gets a chance to see them grow up.

Melissa works three days a week, but with the high cost of living it is hard for all of us. I am carrying the biggest load right now. But we trust in God and he will bring us through.

It is a good thing I put up food in the freezer. It really is helping us all.

Monique is out for Thanksgiving. She is in seventh grade this year.

We will always keep you and your family in our hearts. Thanks so much for all you have done for us. May God bless and keep you safe.

Jeanette, Melissa, Dedrick and Monique Johnson

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/YOUTH CONTINUED ...

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

Senior High Youth Ministry – A good thing growing! (Grades 9-12)

The senior high youth will not meet during the month of December. Meetings will resume again in January.

Aluminum Can Collection

The senior high youth continue to collect aluminum cans. Please place your bagged cans in the wood crate between the two sheds and we will take care of it from there. Thanks for your continued support!

MILESTONE MOMENTS

Baptism...

Blessings to William John Sadler, who was baptized on November 8, 2009. William is the son of Jeff and Jennifer Sadler

Wedding Vow Renewal...

Blessings to Rob and Robyn Wilson, who renewed their wedding vows on November 14, 2009, at Good Shepherd Church.

THE SHARING TREE

As you may have noticed, our Sharing Tree is up and decorated with gift tags. This is our fourth year of supporting families through the Plainview Food Shelf. Due to the increased need at the Food Shelf, we felt that we would increase our number from 11 families last year to 15 this year. There are tags for 67 family members on the tree. Written on each tag is the person you are shopping for, their age, size if we know it, and possible gift ideas. We are given very limited information about each family member, so please feel free to use your imagination. There are also tags for several specific items for each family.

Simply take a tag or 2, shop for your gift or family item, and bring your **WRAPPED GIFT WITH THE TAG ATTACHED** (we must have the tag attached to make sure the gift gets to the correct family). All gifts need to be back at Good Shepherd no later than December 16th. Place your gifts under the Christmas trees in the front of the church. We will deliver the gifts to the Food Shelf after the Wednesday evening service on December 16th. **With your help we will be able to make the holidays a little brighter for 15 families in our community. Thank you for all your support.**

FINANCE

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH – FINANCE REPORT

Finance Update: January – October, 2009

YTD Budgeted Income	\$169,000
YTD Actual Income	\$158,192
YTD Budgeted Expense	\$169,780
YTD Actual Expense	\$138,523
Mortgage Balance	\$269,623
Benevolence YTD	\$ 11,465

Year-end Giving

Often folks request the opportunity to make a year-end contribution. For those who wish to make a designated gift, we have listed a few opportunities below. However, we certainly welcome other areas of Ministry needs for Good Shepherd that you may think of. Just mark your check with a designated notation. Those with a cost value are an estimate of full cost – one person would not need to contribute the full amount.

Partial list of 'Ministry Need' areas:

Vacation Bible School (VBS)	Video room camera (additional front camera – weddings etc)	\$3500.00
Sunday School Curriculum	TV Monitor – Video room	\$ 200.00
Confirmation Curriculum	1 year supply of DVD's Video room	\$ 35.00
Milestones Ministry	Office computer	
Microphone headset (pastor/guest)	Alter area speaker for sound system	
Building needs (carpet etc)	Others???	

Simply Giving Program

Not able to attend church, but still want to make your contribution? Good Shepherd has a program entitled '***Simply Giving***'. This program is an ACH program which allows you to automatically have your monthly contribution deducted directly from your checking/savings account each month. Currently we have six families utilizing this convenience. It is simple to sign up and easy to implement this program that will allow you to make your pledge or gifts as desired. If you want to take part in this program, we have brochures available in the narthex, or you can contact the church office.

COMMUNITY

PLAINVIEW COMMUNITY CHOIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The Plainview Community Choir will present their Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 6th at 7:30 p.m. in the PEM high school gym. Our new sponsor is the Plainview Community Theater, who are helping us present the Christmas Concert to the community as part of The Old Fashioned Country Christmas weekend. The cantata this year is "Shine On Us" by Robert Sterling. A combo will accompany the choir. They are Pam Randall – piano; Debbie Eggenberger – base keyboard; Barb Ferk – violin; Mary Chick – flute; Steve Erwin – trap set; and Darald Bothun – narrator. Soloists during the concert are Bryan Olson, Katie Simon, Mary Chick, Tim Pries, Caroline Klein and Chantel Walters; duet – Sara Olson and Bryan Olson; Women's Ensemble – Caroline Klein, Barb Ferk, Elizabeth Dewey, Pam Randall, Mary Chick, Betty Lais, Katie Simon, Bridget Eversman, Chantel Walters; Men's Ensemble – Bryan Olson, Jim Hanson, Don Fiskum, Tim Pries, Dick ahern, Anthony McClellan; director – Jan Fiskum. A variety of Christmas selections will be sun by the Choir also. A nice way to start the Christmas season – good music and in a good atmosphere.

"LIGHTS FOR LIFE"

On Saturday, December 5th 2009, Plainview will celebrate Olde Fashioned Christmas and "Lights for Life" the beautiful luminary display which raises funds for the American Cancer Society.

Luminaries may be purchased to honor a cancer survivor or remember a loved one who has passed. You may purchase a luminary or make a donation following church on Sunday, November 1, 8, 15, 22 or 29. Luminaries are \$5.00 each and are tax deductible. Donations are also accepted. Please contact Karen Jurgenson if you have any questions.

Please join us for the opening ceremony at Wedgwood Park on Saturday, December 5th at 4:15 p.m. Steve Wolf, a Plainview resident, will be our guest speaker. Steve is a long term cancer survivor who will share his story and positive message with us. Following the ceremony, we welcome you to stroll the path of lights from 4:30 - 8:30 p.m. and see how many lives cancer has affected in our area.

COMMUNITY Continued...**PLAINVIEW'S OLDE FASHIONED CHRISTMAS**

Start your day with.....

**Christmas with Elvis
Featuring Elvis Tribute Artist
Brad Boice**

**Christmas and Gospel Music
(Photos and memorabilia available following the show)**

**Saturday, December 5th – 2:00 p.m. show
(Doors open at 1:00 p.m.)**

Cost \$10.00

**Church of Christ
205 1st Street NE
Plainview**

**After the show – stay and enjoy sleigh rides –
Coffee/apple cider/hot chocolate at the local businesses –
Craft shows – Christmas carolers**

**Tickets are available from any
PEM Varsity Competition Cheerleader or
People's State Bank in Plainview or Elgin.**

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays

12/01	Thor Erickson	12/17	Sarah Rosckes
	Erin Bartz		Shelbey Ramthun
	Nicole Bartz	12/18	Rose Grover
12/02	Craig Steele	12/19	Roberta Kurth
12/03	Mary Ann Pett		Hunter Hassig
	Haley Gudmundson	12/20	Debbie Froemming
12/04	Angela Balcome		Olivia Amos
	Austin Pahl	12/21	Kirk Axelson
12/05	Jayda Schwantz		Gannon Olson
12/08	Alex Jurgenson		Nicolas Crudele
12/09	Karen Larson	12/22	Tyler Tesmer
	Michelle Klennert	12/23	Kevin Fuerstneau
	Blake Biers		Jeff Sadler
12/10	Anika Steele		Tyler Petit
12/11	Jake Thompson	12/24	Eric Peterson
12/12	Hope Peterson	12/26	Janice Haugstad
12/13	Joyce Christensen		Claire Henry
	Jo Anne Olmstead	12/28	Shane Holst
12/14	Garrett Hughes		Lauren Bartz
12/15	Adam Endres		Baden Fenton
12/16	Paul Bedney	12/29	Kelly Zimmerman
	Callie Ulwelling		Hannah Grabau
	Benjamin Suntken		MaKel Plenge
12/17	Linda Schmitz	12/31	Ron Peterson

Anniversaries

12/06	Clark & Shannon Olstad	12/23	Chad & Andrea Getschmann
12/08	Andy & Shasta Hassig	12/28	Al & Deb Ninas
12/15	John & Jane Folkert	12/30	Casey & Becca Snyder
12/22	Tom & Karen Anderson	12/31	Kory & Kareen Bigalk
12/23	Dennis & Carol Buntrock		

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

***Give not from the top of your purse BUT
from the bottom of your heart.***

**PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE IF YOU HAVE ADDITIONS
OR CORRECTIONS TO THE LIST OF BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES.**

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

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The Shepherd's Staff is a communication tool among our friends and members spreading the word of Jesus Christ with news of our church and related events. It is published monthly by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Plainview-Elgin.

VISION STATEMENT, GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

Claimed by God through Word & Sacrament, we move forward with a NEW VIEW:

Notice the needs of our congregation, community, and world with eyes of faith.
Educate all from cradle to grave.
Worship in thankfulness and joy.

Value all generations in passing on the faith.
Identify and affirm the gifts of God's people.
Energize God's people to use their gifts for ministry.
Welcome the opportunity to walk the talk with our youth.

The submission deadline for the January 2010 Newsletter is

Tuesday, December 22.