

The Shepherd's Voice

July/August 2024

PASTOR'S NOTE:

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord!

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

*a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones,
and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.*

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

(Continued on page 2)



Good Shepherd
Lutheran Church

As we enter the heart of summer, for many a time for breaks, vacations, or at least a change of pace, I do hope for each of you that you have the opportunity to relax, to recreate in healthy ways, and to reflect.

I wanted to share something I have been reflecting on lately. It seems to me that this world is in need of more wisdom, both individually and collectively.

The above scripture is from the book of Ecclesiastes, which is considered Biblical wisdom literature. Ecclesiastes is therefore meant to be a contemplative part of scripture that one would spend meaningful time reflecting on. Said another way, it is a book that is best read slowly, which seems like something to do in the heart of summer when we hopefully experience time to reflect and relax a bit. The book of Ecclesiastes addresses big topics like the meaning of life, as well as the pursuit of happiness and fulfillment. Again, the kinds of things it is good to reflect on during the slower days of summer.

This book of Ecclesiastes, and specifically Chapter 3, also fits with what I have been reflecting on more specifically, and that is the challenge of answering the questions of what and when. These questions seem very basic and that means we think that answering them should be easy, but if we look around our world today, it seems clear that we are having trouble arriving at good and healthy answers to the questions of what and when. Our culture struggles with both of these questions, while trying to give us easy answers. To the question of what, our culture tells us, do whatever you want. To the question of when, the answer of this world is, whenever you want. Added to all of this is that many of our businesses and almost all of our social media give us more specific answers to both these questions. To the question of what, everything, all of it. To the question of when, now.

We are constantly having to answer these questions of what and when regarding matters and decisions that range from big to small, and important to insignificant. Especially for those most significant of matters and decisions, the question becomes, how do we figure out the answers to these questions. What should I do and when should I do it?

A word we often use in the faith context related to figuring out answers to these questions is discernment. Discernment is the work of arriving at good judgment and understanding. In short, making wise decisions.

In response to the question of how we figure out the answers to the significant what and when questions in life, I believe the key is found in the answer to another question, which is, who are you going to listen to. As noted above, we already know what this world often gives us for the answers.

As people of faith, as Christians, we have what some people might call a secret weapon. The truth is, it is not a weapon, and we are supposed to help make sure that it is not a secret. As Christians we know who we are to listen to as we go about answering the what and when questions. We are to first listen to God. God gave us God's word, Jesus Christ, for a whole host of life-giving reasons, including helping us to make wise decisions. For all the questions we have, including the questions of what and when, we should take these questions to God, and then we should pause long enough to discern with God as we listen to God's reply.

It is good for each of us to be reminded that we should turn first to God for this discernment. It is also good to remember that God has provided us with one another, fellow siblings in Christ, to discern with as well. In future articles, I will share thoughts about what this discernment can look like.

(Continued on page 3)

For now, during the heart of summer, I invite you to relax, to recreate in healthy ways, and to reflect. Take time over these next couple of months and turn to God first, and listen to God's word in answering your questions of what and when.

Scripture tells us that "For everything there is a season, a time for every matter under heaven." In order to answer the questions for the whats and whens in your life, I encourage each of us to take the time to turn first to God in order to seek wise answers to these questions. And to then turn to our sisters and brothers in Christ to help us continue to discern God-centered answers to these most important of questions.

Blessings on these days of summer and on our conversations, prayers, and discernment with God and with each other.

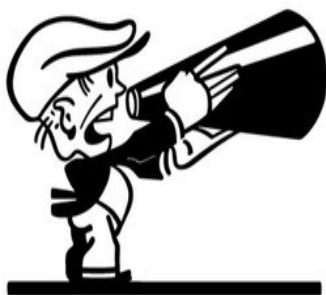
Grace and peace,

Pastor Ted



HELP WANTED

***The Christian Education Ministry Team
is in immediate need of a new Team Leader.***



Christian Education plays a vital role in the life of Good Shepherd for children, youth and adults.

The Christian Education Ministry Team is in immediate need of a new Team Leader, a Sunday School Coordinator, and Sunday School teachers for lower elementary ages for the coming school year.

If you feel God's call to serve in this important ministry, or if you have questions about what it means to serve in this ministry, please contact Pastor Ted or Kim Mosher.

Music and Worship

**WELCOME
ELENA!**

We welcome Elena Cressy to Good Shepherd as Music Minister for Classic Worship. Elena is currently pursuing a Master of Music in Choral Conducting at the University of Kansas under the guidance of Dr. Eduardo Garcia-Novelli and Dr. McKenna Stenson. Elena received her undergraduate degree in music education from Carthage College in Kenosha, WI and went on to teach elementary music and high school choir in the greater Milwaukee area before relocating to Lawrence, KS.

Elena was the choir director and director of music theatre at the Kettle Moraine School for Arts and Performance, where she was nominated three times for Outstanding Musical Direction and conducted an award-winning jazz choir. Presently, Elena is a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the choral department and assists with both the Treble Choir and Chamber Choir at the University of Kansas. Elena has participated as a chorister and section leader in vibrant choral ensembles that include the Cathedral Choir at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, the Chant Claire Chamber Choir, and the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus, and is featured on numerous studio recordings of Catholic liturgical music.

Elena is an active clinician at regional music conferences and is looking forward to presenting internationally for the first time in 2025 at the International Alliance for Women in Music conference in Bogotá, Colombia. In conjunction with her conducting studies, Elena is passionate about exploring the intersections of choir and social justice, and is an active researcher on music-making in United States prisons.

We celebrated the retirement of Judy Heller, Music Minister for Classic Worship on May 19th. Many thanks to Judy for her leadership for the last five years.

Enjoy retirement!

June 23rd was *Reconciling in Christ* recognition Sunday. As a Reconciling in Christ congregation, we welcome, include, recognize and advocate for our LGBTQIA+ siblings through worship as we celebrate God calling us to be an open and affirming faith community while making us all one in Christ.



Summer Music

During the summer months while the choir is on break, we would like to encourage the congregation to share their musical talents in the 11:00 am Classic Worship service. Let Thad Reist (tjreist@yahoo.com or 785-556-0333) know if you are interested.

Worship in the Park

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, September 1st (Labor Day weekend)**. We will be taking our Sunday morning worship to the park.

We will meet at Dad Perry Park, Harvard Rd. and Monterey Way, for our **10:30 am worship (ONE SERVICE)**, then enjoy a potluck picnic after the service.

We meet in the north shelter, entrance off Harvard Rd. There are restrooms, plenty of parking, electricity, playground equipment, nature trails, and room to play basketball, soccer, frisbee and more.

You might want to bring lawn chairs or folding chairs and insect repellent. In case of inclement weather—check our website, www.gslc-lawrence.org or call the church office, 785-843-3014. after 9:00 am for a change of location.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the outdoor service, please contact Elena Cressy, Megan Ebke or Thad Reist. Volunteer opportunities consist of coordinating and transporting worship supplies, playing guitar, and helping with the potluck.



Upcoming Music & Worship

- July 10, 7:00 pm – Joint Worship Committee meeting
- August 29, 7:00 pm – Choir rehearsals resume
- September 1, 10:30 am – Worship in the Park

Kelley Witmer, Worship Committee Chair, kelley@wheatfieldtechnology.com, 785-760-0155
Elena Cressy Music Minister – Classic Worship, elena.cressy@gmail.com,
Megan Ebke, Worship Leader – Worship 2.0, megan.ebke@gmail.com, 785-844-1830
Thad Reist, Organist/Pianist—Classic Worship, tjreist@yahoo.com, 785-556-0333

Hospitality Committee



Have you ever wondered if you have anything in common with someone you see every Sunday at church? Our Membership Spotlight will help you find out.

Our first two Spotlitged members both spent time living in Japan, for example.

Watch for the latest Member Spotlight profile posted on the easel in the narthex and find out interesting things about your fellow Good Shepherd members. If you haven't filled out the Member Spotlight questionnaire, please do! You will find the forms on the easel.



COFFEE AND FELLOWSHIP

Summer is in full swing and we've been enjoying a wonderful time of refreshments and fellowship between services.

Thank you to all who have provided and served treats in June. If you would like to provide simple treats on a Sunday in July or August, or if you would like to financially sponsor the treats for a Sunday, sign up in the narthex or call the church office. Guidelines for serving can be found on the signup board.



JUSTICE • MATTERS

Justice Matters Update

Good Shepherd Network Members joined in the 10 year Celebration of Justice Matters on June 10th.

We celebrated the following issues that Justice Matters has retired:

- The establishment of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund was achieved.
- The JailNo expansion in Douglas County was a success.
- Jail Alternatives, as stated in the VERA Report, are being used by CJCC.
- CIT training of law enforcement personnel in Douglas County was achieved.
- Treatment & Recovery Center is open and fully operational.

Restorative Practices will be monitored at least through the end of the 2024 school year. Research committees are still working on the issues of Ending Chronic Homelessness and Elder Care Workforce.

Justice Matters Network Members will choose an additional issue this year at our Solutions Briefing.

Please be sure to attend one of Good Shepherd's "Listening Sessions" this fall and share your stories about personal injustices in Douglas County. Each congregant will be invited by Team Leaders to attend a Listening Session.

Justice Matters will continue to work for Justice to flow down like a mighty river in Douglas County!

VBS



The Good Shepherd Adventure VBS was a fun day of crafts, games, music and snacks, all centered around learning about Jesus, Our Good Shepherd who cares for his flock.

Many thanks to Marilyn Resner and Monica Rethman who planned and organized the fun day and to all the volunteers who helped make it an exciting day!



Green Pastures Preschool

Hello from the preschool!

We had a wonderful end to our school year in May! Field day, our final field trip to the Baker Wetlands, and Graduation all went wonderfully. For graduation Office Depot donated some big posters of each of our graduates in their caps and gowns to decorate the fellowship hall. The children sang their songs, remembered the lines to their poems, and looked adorable in their caps and gowns on the big day. A big thank you to Kim Mosher who helped with the music and slideshow! I think the ceremony was beautiful and that the families felt it was really special!

We are having some summer play dates for our families and continuing to grow a close community of families. The kids are so glad to see each other after a month apart and new families are entering the mix! Hopefully they'll make new friends and get excited for the new year!

I'm continuing to do tours and talk to families about enrollment for next year. Our beginner class is almost completely full and we are working on our PreK class. Our new website continues to draw in new families and I am so thankful for our new look and web presence.

As always thank you to the church community for your continued support! I would like to especially thank Ann Nichols for all her hard work going over the financials and formulating our preschool budget for the year. Her hard work and support is much appreciated by all in the preschool community!

We are looking forward to a new school year!

Day Beck