

THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

November/December 2025

Advent: A Season of Holy Waiting

As we enter the season of Advent, we step into a sacred time of anticipation and preparation. The word Advent means “coming,” and it reminds us that we live between two comings of Christ—celebrating His humble birth in Bethlehem and looking forward to His promised return in glory.

In the four weeks before Christmas, the Church invites us to slow down, to light candles against the dark, and to wait with hope. Each flame marks our journey toward the Light of the world. Advent reminds us that God’s promises are not forgotten; they are quietly unfolding, even in the stillness of night.

This season calls us not only to look back at what God has done, but to open our hearts to what God is still doing among us. Through prayer, Scripture, and acts of love, we prepare room for Christ to dwell anew—within our homes, our church, and our hearts.

As we watch and wait together, may this Advent be a time of renewed hope, deep peace, and joyful expectation. For even now, in the darkness, God’s light is drawing near.

JUSTICE • MATTERS

Good Shepherd has thirty committed Justice Matters Network Members plus 2 Team Leaders. Most of us attended the Community Problems Assembly in October. We heard updates from the research committees and elected the Executive Board. Our own Pastor Janice Hawley led our Assembly in prayer. Pastor Ted is an at-large member on our Executive Board. We will attend our Solutions Briefing in March.

In the next few months, our dedicated network members will be inviting each of you to the Nehemiah Action Assembly held on April 26, 2026. Please mark your calendars! We will be inviting you to add your voice for justice for one and a half hours on a Sunday afternoon. You will also be supporting your Justice Matters network members. This will be an opportunity to turn our faith into action. By showing up, we demonstrate that people power can lead to change.

Help Spread the Word

GSLC is seeking a passionate and talented **Part-Time Worship Leader** to guide and grow our **Worship 2.0** service. If you know of anyone who might be interested or anyone who might have a connection to someone who might be interested, please share this information.

This part-time (approx. 10 hrs/week) role includes:

- Leading worship music with a live band
 - Planning services with a creative team
 - Rehearsing weekly with musicians
- Coordinating music, tech, and lyrics for services

We're looking for someone who:

- Has strong musical skills (vocal/instrumental)
- Is passionate about sharing faith through music
- Is familiar with contemporary Christian worship styles
- Works well with teams and volunteers



View the full job description and qualifications on our website:
gslc-lawrence.org

OUR MEMBERS IN THE COMMUNITY



Julie may be a bit of an anomaly in our campus ministry stories, since she made the first move to establish a relationship with LCM-KU. Arriving as a first-year student, Julie looked for a Lutheran community and she contacted the ministry, then located at Bethany House. And because she did not have a car, campus pastor Shawn Norris arranged for rides for her to worship and ministry activities. Her efforts to engage were rewarded – she found community and friendship. She remembers weekly spaghetti dinners and playing Guitar Hero in the back room at Bethany

House. Julie enjoyed just meeting friends there and hanging out. One special memory is attending the wedding of two LCM-KU students – Angela and Jake when they were married in Bethany House by Pastor Shawn. Another special memory for Julie is participating in the design process for Westwood House.

Julie especially appreciates LCM-KU for the opportunities she had to grow her skills. She is proud of the work she did as Spring Break Coordinator for three years. Julie organized the itinerary, housing and mission work for the annual trips students took to New York City. Julie says she “learned to talk fast!” as she communicated with the various people she needed to coordinate with for trip details. And, on one of the NYC service trips, she met her husband, Randy!

While Julie looked for and created new friendships through LCM-KU, she gained so much more in community, worship and new administrative skills.

With the fall semester underway, [Westwood House](#) has resumed ministry activities – open to all and a place to explore faith. These opportunities are offered because of your gracious generosity. We are so thankful you are an important part of our ministry. Thanks be to God!

Music and Worship



All Saints' Day

On Sunday, November 2nd, we will celebrate All Saints' Day at both worship services. We will give congregation members the opportunity to light candles to remember saints gone before (whether they died in the past year or at an earlier time), to celebrate living saints, or to rejoice in the life of a new saint born this year.

In addition, we will celebrate the lives of congregation members and loved ones who passed away in the previous year by reading their names during worship. Please join us.

Upcoming Music & Worship Calendar

Sunday, Nov. 2	All Saints' Day celebrated
Sunday, Nov. 30	First Sunday of Advent
Wednesday, Dec. 3	Advent Meal 6 pm; Worship 7 pm
Sunday, Dec. 7	Second Sunday of Advent
Wednesday, Dec. 10	Advent Meal 6 pm; Worship 7 pm
Sunday, Dec. 14	Third Sunday of Advent
Wednesday, Dec. 17	Advent Meal 6 pm; Worship 7 pm
Sunday, Dec. 21	Fourth Sunday of Advent; Greening of the church
Wednesday, Dec. 24	Christmas Eve services 5 pm and 8 pm
Sunday, Dec. 28	Lessons & Carols – 10 am – one service only

Christmas Worship Schedule

Wednesday, December 24 th	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 5:00 pm Worship 2.0 8:00 pm Classic Worship
Sunday, December 28 th	10:00 am – One service only—Lessons & Carols

You can see the entire GSLC calendar on our website: www.gslc-lawrence.org

Advent: Promises in the Night

Advent begins on Sunday, November 30th. During this time, we will work on making room for Christ by refraining from Christmas celebrations in worship until the evening of December 24th. Our theme for Advent is: Promises in the Night.

One of the favorite Advent traditions of GSLC is the Wednesday evening mid-week worship using the Holden Evening Prayer setting. It was written in 1985-86 by Marty Haugen during his musical residency at Holden Village, a Lutheran renewal center in the Northern Cascades in North Central Washington state. Join us for the midweek meal at 6 p.m. in the fellowship hall followed by the 7 p.m. service in the sanctuary.

During the season of Advent, we will come together during the week to experience God's peace and listen to God's word. Please join us Wednesdays of Advent (Dec. 3, Dec. 10, and 17)

6:00 pm	Midweek Advent meal – meals are provided
7:00 pm	Holden Evening Prayer Worship

Advent Devotionals:

As we prepare for Advent, GSLC will provide devotional options to guide us through the season. On Sundays leading up to Advent devotionals geared to adults, teens, and children will be available on a table in the entryway of the church. You may pick up these devotionals when you come for Sunday worship or whenever else you find yourself in the church. If you would like Advent devotionals but are not able to pick them up in person, please contact the church office - gslc.ks@gmail.com; or 785-843-3014. Let our Office Administrator, Kirsten, know your specific needs, confirm your mailing address, and materials will be mailed to you.

Greening the Church

Join us following Classic Worship on December 21 for a simple sandwich lunch and a joyful time of preparing our sanctuary and narthex for Christmas. We will decorate the Christmas tree and hang greenery and other decorations. Many hands are needed to make the transformation, so save the date. If you plan to come, let Susanne or Mike Neilsen know (If you don't let us know, feel free to come anyway!). Mike and Susanne's contact info: smneilsen@gmail.com or Susanne 785-766-5393 or Mike 785-766-5612.



Gold Bags for Jesus

While Christmas Eve is still many weeks away, it is not too early to start thinking about how we can honor the gift of a savior whom we received as a baby in a manger.

As the three wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to honor Jesus, this year on Christmas Eve, we will have the opportunity to present a special offering of our own, either individually or as a family. Gold bags will be available starting November 9th to be used for your offering, which will be placed at the foot of the manger on Christmas Eve.

If you are unable to get a gold bag at church, let the church office know you would like one sent to you. Keep your gold bag in sight and in the weeks to come, you are encouraged to think of all the gifts you have received from God and to identify meaningful ways that you might give back to Jesus as you give thanks for all that you have received. It's not about what or how much we are giving but what God has given us.

The council has approved to donate half the contributions to local missions and half to overseas missions (such as Lutheran World Relief or something comparable) – specifics yet to be determined.

Can You Help?

We are looking for a volunteer(s) to select and deliver a fresh-cut Christmas tree for our sanctuary.

Please speak to Brian Judy for further details – 785-423-1244. Funds are available for the cost of the tree.

Christmas Poinsettias -

watch for further details in our weekly *Baa the Way* newsletter to order poinsettias for our sanctuary at Christmas.



Lenten planning? What? It's not even Advent yet!

We are gathering a Lenten planning committee, and we would like you to join. You will help in choosing a theme and have input into making the midweek Lenten services special. There will be 3 or 4 planning sessions (first in early Nov) so it is not a big-time commitment. Learning about how the service emphasizes and reflects the lessons has been meaningful to previous volunteers. If participation in this aspect of worship planning is calling to you, please let Kris Sterbenz know about your interest by Nov 8 and we can let you know more. Kris@sterbenz.org or text 508-944-3068.

You can see the entire GSLC calendar on our website: www.gslc-lawrence.org

Kelley Witmer, Worship Committee Chair, kelley@wheatfieldtechnology.com, 785-760-0155

Maria Dominguez Gonzalez, Music Minister – Classic Worship, mariadg@ku.edu, 785-917-8756

Thad Reist, Organist/Pianist—Classic Worship, tjreist@yahoo.com, 785-556-0333



Green Pastures Preschool

Hello from the Preschool!

We are having a wonderful start to the school year! Our goals for this year remain the same. We aim to educate our young learners, grow a strong community of preschool families and grow God's love for our preschool students. We are off to a strong start meeting these goals!

We are serving 23 families this school year. We hosted a very successful ice cream social on the playground in September. There was a lot of laughter and fellowship happening. We had our field trip to the pumpkin patch that I think everyone enjoyed in October. Last weekend was our fall festival in the preschool parking lot- and we had a wonderful time! We got some volunteers from KU and Bishop Seabury to help us run the bouncy house, pumpkin painting and other games. Thank you to all the church members that made baked goods for our cake walk! We will host our Halloween Party next week at Cedarhurst Living- a local retirement home. This was a good pairing last year that brought some energy and smiles to their residents.

We are looking forward to having pastor back to lead chapel in December! We will once again have our Christmas Pageant on one of the last days of school before break. We are thankful to get to teach our students about God's love and the birth of Jesus.

As always, thank you to Good Shepherd Lutheran for supporting us as a ministry of the church. I feel like we are doing good work that matters in our community. As the outside world seems to look bleaker and bleaker, I am thankful that I can look at our preschoolers as a light in this world and hope for our future.

Day Beck

Director, Green Pastures Preschool