



Photo by Sheng-lu Wu

The Shepherd's Voice

March/April 2026

PASTOR'S NOTE:

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

“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

— Matthew 22:36–40

“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all...”

We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.”

— Ephesians 4:1–6, 14–15

Over the next couple of months, we will be walking through some significant transitions.

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First, we are fully into the season of Lent. Ahead of us is Holy Week—Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday—before we reach the joy of Easter Sunday. Lent is a season of preparation and practice. We practice generosity toward those in need. We practice prayer. We practice fasting. Some of us give something up; others add something meaningful to our daily routines.

These practices are not ends in themselves. They are meant to draw us closer to God, to keep us grounded in God’s Word and centered on Jesus Christ. They help us transition from observing Lent to living as Easter people—people who walk in the light, who live in the fullness of new life found in Christ.

Another transition in these coming months involves our Justice Matters Solutions Briefing and our Nehemiah Assembly. We will move from being a people who have identified a solution to address Youth Trauma, to being a people who actively advocate for that solution with community leaders and elected officials. We will move from naming what is wrong to pressing forward toward what is just. That, too, is holy work.

But there is yet another transition that is urgently needed in our culture today: the transition from division to unity. The division in our society is real and deep. Somebody has to do something about it. Jesus tells us who that somebody is. It is you. It is me. It is anyone who claims to follow him.

As I write this, we have just begun the first week of Lent and the question we are asking is, “Who will you listen to?”

Jesus has something to say. When asked which commandment is the greatest, Jesus answers with love. We often hear the phrase, “God is love.” And that is true. But here Jesus shows us that love has direction and purpose. First, we are to love the Lord our God with everything we have—heart, soul, and mind. Second, we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. The two belong together. We cannot truly love God without loving our neighbor, and

we cannot truly love our neighbor without loving God.

The Apostle Paul gives further shape to this love. He urges us to live lives worthy of our calling—bearing with one another in love, practicing humility, gentleness, and patience, and making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. It is the same peace of Christ we share each week in worship. That peace is not meant to stay within our sanctuary walls; it is meant to shape our lives.

Like Paul, I am begging us—myself included—to examine our words and actions. The words we speak. The words we write. The posts we share. The comments we make. The actions we take—both intentional and unintentional. Are they rooted in love? Do they reflect the calling we have received to be a follower of Jesus Christ?

Paul tells us plainly: we are to grow up. We are no longer to be children, tossed back and forth by every wind of teaching, by manipulation, by deceitful schemes. That is the way of the world—and too often the way of our media, our politics, and our influencers.

But we are called to something higher. We are called to grow in our faith, to become mature Christians. That does not mean we will get everything right. It does mean we walk humbly with God. It does mean that we commit ourselves to building up the body of Christ. It does mean that we begin living according to God’s kingdom now—not someday, but now. And we do all of it in love—with God’s love.

This does not mean we avoid the truth. In fact, many times we must seek and speak hard truths. But we are to speak the truth in love. Mature Christianity is not easy. Bearing with one another in love is not easy. Maintaining unity in a divided world is not easy. But it is part of what it means to follow Jesus all the way to the cross.

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We live in a broken and divided world. Jesus is calling his followers to work for unity in him—right now, in the places where it is most needed. And we are to do that work in ways that build up, not tear down.

It is easy to read this and think about others who need to do this work. But recall that on Ash Wednesday, we stated that Lent is not about looking out the window at others. Lent is about looking in the mirror.

As the old expression says, we need to “check ourselves before we wreck ourselves.” We need to examine whether our lives reflect the calling we claim. Are we living in humility, gentleness, and patience? Are we making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

Lent is the season to practice. Today is the day to begin. Easter is the transition into a mature faith, living fully as people shaped by resurrection hope—

people who grow up into Christ and live in the new life he gives.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Ted

JUSTICE • MATTERS

Your Network Members met in February to select names of each person who attends Good Shepherd.

We will be issuing invitations to our annual Nehemiah Action Assembly which will be held at the DoubleTree Hotel April 26th, 2-3:30pm.

Many in our congregation have attended our Action Assembly In the past. Everyone again is invited to join us this year. Please prayerfully consider accepting your invitation when a Network Member contacts you within the next few weeks.

We will be presenting to officials a systemic change in Douglas County regarding Youth Trauma.



Your presence makes a difference.



THANK YOU!

What a wonderful evening at our Mardi Gras-themed Pancake Dinner and Silent Auction! Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's event such a fun and successful gathering for our church family. Thanks to your generous freewill offerings and silent auction bids, just over \$3,000 was raised to support the ministries of GSLC.

We are deeply thankful for the many volunteers who gave their time and energy—mixing batter, cooking and serving pancakes, organizing auction items, decorating, setting up, and cleaning up at the end of the night. Your willingness to serve made the evening both smooth and welcoming.

A special word of appreciation goes to those who donated items for the silent auction. Your creativity and generosity added excitement to the event while providing meaningful support for our ongoing ministry.



Music and Worship

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE EVENTS!

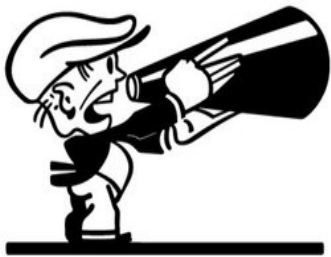
Lent is a season of prayerful preparation for Easter and an opportunity to reflect and go deeper with God. This year's theme is "Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith". We will have mid-week services every Wednesday during Lent. Please join us for meals at 6:00 and services at 7:00.

Upcoming Music & Worship Calendar*

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| March 4 | Midweek Lenten Meal & Worship | 6:00 pm meal; 7:00 pm worship |
| March 11 | Midweek Lenten Meal & Worship | 6:00 pm meal; 7:00 pm worship |
| March 18 | Midweek Lenten Meal & Worship | 6:00 pm meal; 7:00 pm worship |
| March 25 | Midweek Lenten Meal & Worship | 6:00 pm meal; 7:00 pm worship |
| March 29 | Palm Sunday | 9:00 am & 11:00 am |
| April 2 | Maundy Thursday Service | 7:00 pm |
| April 3 | Good Friday Service | 7:00 pm |
| April 5 | Easter Sunrise Service | 6:30 am, Pioneer Cemetery |
| April 5 | Easter Services | 9:00 am & 11:00 am |
| April 12 | Lutheran Campus Ministry at GSLC | 9:00 am & 11:00 am |

*The entire GSLC calendar is on our website – gslc-lawrence.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS DURING LENT



During the season of Lent, we will be giving up verbal announcements. This will help us focus on listening to God's Word. To share important information with our community, be sure to turn your announcements in written form to the office for Baa the Way, slides for Worship 2.0, or the bulletin for Classic Worship.

GOOD SHEPHERD CHOIR

GSLC Choir rehearsals are on Thursdays, 7:00-8:15 pm.

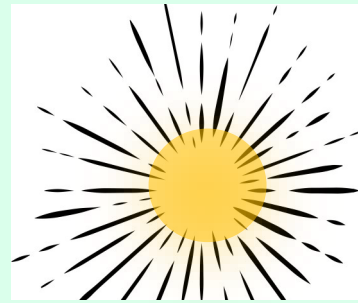
New members are always welcome! Contact María Gonzalez for more information or to be added to the email list. Worship and music contacts are listed on the following page.

ORDERS FOR EASTER LILIES AND TULIPS

Orders will be taken soon for white “Easter” lily and yellow tulip plants used to decorate the sanctuary for Easter (and the following Sunday(s), or until blooms are depleted). Cost is \$15. Watch for further announcements and order forms; forms will be available on the table outside the sanctuary doors, or in Classic Worship bulletins. **Order deadline:** Sunday, March 22, 2026. If you have questions, please contact Kris Sterbenz, 508-944-3068 or kris@sterbenz.org.

LCM AT GSLC

Lutheran Campus Ministry Sunday at Good Shepherd will be April 12th. Our congregation helps support this local ministry. Plan to join us and hear from Campus Ministry students and staff about how campus ministry is important for everyone.



EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

We hope you can join us for the April 5th Easter sunrise service at Pioneer Cemetery on the University of Kansas West Campus. We will gather at 6:30 am for a 6:45 am service and the service will be over by 7:30 am. If you wish to sit, please bring your own chair or stool. In the case of inclement weather, the sunrise service will be cancelled. Please check the church website, Facebook page or answering machine for any weather-related cancellations.

Kelley Witmer, Worship Committee Chair, kelley@wheatfieldtechnology.com, 785-760-0155
María Gonzalez, Music Minister – Classic Worship, mariadg@ku.edu; 785-917-8756
Thad Reist, Organist/Pianist—Classic Worship, tjreist@yahoo.com, 785-556-0333

Hospitality Committee

LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS

During the season of Lent, we gather each Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. for a simple meal and fellowship before our midweek Lenten worship service. This shared time of soup and bread offers a meaningful opportunity to connect as a church family in the midst of the season's reflection.

You are invited to help make these evenings possible by signing up in the entryway to provide soup or bread, or to assist with setup on one or more Wednesdays. Your hospitality and service are greatly appreciated.



What do you call a fake noodle in soup?
An impasta.

Why don't soups ever get into arguments?
They just simmer down.

My soup told me a secret...
but I promised not to spill the beans.



Why do people always eat clam chowder at seaside restaurants? — They feel *pier* pressure to order it!

Easter Morning Brunch

Join us for one of Good Shepherd's most joyful traditions—our Easter Morning Brunch! On Sunday, April 5, from 9:30 to 11:00 am, the fellowship hall will be filled with good food and warm conversation as we celebrate the good news of the Resurrection together.

In the weeks ahead, look for signup sheets if you would like to share in the preparations by bringing a breakfast casserole, fruit, pastries, milk, or another favorite brunch item. Thank you for helping create a welcoming and festive morning for our entire church family.



To the GSLC member who prefers to remain anonymous, a hearty and effusive thank you for funding the replacement of the flooring in the three main-level restrooms (male/female and nursery) and the sacristy. This is a huge improvement not only for members but visitors as well.

Our thanks go also to Monte Soukup for uninstalling and reinstalling the modesty walls and doors, and toilets, and to Anne Nichols and Mark Algren for painting. Again, what an improvement!

“Following Jesus: Love Your Neighbor” Vacation Bible School Is Coming this Summer

Get ready for a morning full of fun, faith, and friendship! Kids ages 3 through 5th grade are invited to join us for a one-day Vacation Bible School event as we explore the story of the Good Samaritan and learn what it means to love our neighbors as Jesus teaches.

This year’s theme, “Following Jesus: Love Your Neighbor,” will help children discover how to show kindness like Jesus, help others and be a friend, and live with a heart full of love. The morning includes:

- Uplifting songs
- A Bible story kids will remember
- Hands-on crafts
- A tasty snack
- Exciting games and activities

Stay tuned for the exact date, time, and all the fun details!

The SAM (Social Action Ministry) team continues to be active. Two projects have completed and 2 more are planned. January saw the congregation holding a very successful food drive for Just Food. Then in February we provided a meal for Family Promise on Sun 2/01 and Fri 2/06. At that time there were 5 families totaling 18 people with temporary housing at the Hope House. On January 31 Faith Friesen, Elaine Engstrom and Ann Nichols attended a Family Promise Annual Meals & Hospitality Training at First Baptist church

Upcoming in March we will participate in providing and serving food for LINK on Saturday March 7. Then probably sometime in late April or early May we will do a food drive for the LCM Westwood House food pantry to restock it in time for finals.

If you would like to be a part of this team, please reach out to Ann Nichols at koa-lahawkku@gmail.com or call/text her at 785-865-3433. We strive meet once a month for about an hour.



Green Pastures Preschool

Hello from the preschool!

Our school year is just chugging along, it's hard to believe it's almost March! Our kids are continuing to learn and grow. We are seeing God's love for us expressed in them every day as we continue to hopefully spread light and love in our community.

In February we celebrated Kansas Day! The kids dressed in their best western wear and sang songs like 'Home on the Range' and did the chicken dance for their parents. We took pictures in front of a big buffalo and covered wagon, and I think fun was had by all. We have some special visitors coming to the preschool soon. This week we had the dentist come and teach us about keeping our teeth strong and healthy. This spring we have the vet coming, the garbage man, the meteorologist duo and a basketball coach!

Enrollment has already begun for the next school year. So far we have the PreK class almost full and the beginner class $\frac{2}{3}$ full- hopefully we will continue to bring new students in. I'm trying hard to continue to grow a strong, loving community of families!

Thank you to Good Shepherd Lutheran for continuing to support our school. The smiles on the faces of the students and their families are a joy to see and help me to know we are doing important work. I was having a rough day this month and walked out of work to see a large group of families gathered on the hill for a picnic, and children and families having a wonderful time in fellowship, kids running up and down the hill. It turned my whole day around to see this strong community we are creating. Thank you to the church members for continuing to support us!

Day Beck
Director