

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

SHEPHERD'S VOICE



WORSHIP TIMES

Saturday

5:00 pm ~ Evening Prayer

Sunday

8:30 am ~ Traditional Service

11:00 am ~ Contemporary Service

FIFTH SUNDAY of MONTH

Combined 10:00 am service

(No Saturday service)

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P.J.'s Jotdowns

by Pastor Jamie Vannoy

Well, 2014 is upon us. During my Christmas vacation time I had a chance to do some reading and I've added a few of those articles to this newsletter for you to look over and see where it leads you.

I'm sure by the time this newsletter circulates you will have heard that our primary focus this year for GSLC is healing and year-round stewardship. The purpose for concentrating on the healing process is not to just bring up the past, but to bring it up and deal with it appropriately so that we can let it go and move forward. I've had some personal experience with healing as of late and one thing is for sure...if you don't deal with it and let it go, then it just hangs around and eats you up.

I've selected a nice little article to remind us of what we could be if we give this healing process the time and respect that it needs. The article is called "Now We're Cooking: Is Your Church a Microwave or Crock-Pot?" I hope you enjoy. 🌸

.....Our primary focus this year for GSLC is healing and year-round stewardship...



*To the glory of God,
Pr. Jamie*

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Witness & Outreach

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Financial & Administration

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Property & Facilities

OPEN

Communication & Public Relations

Sandy Rosholt

To contact any of the staff, council or commissioners, visit our website for contact information. You may also call the office or send an email and we will be glad to assist you.

GSLC ~ Our Common Goals

by Debbie Kempf

Our common goals at GSLC are articulated in our mission and vision statement. The ways we work together are expressed in our foundational beliefs, core values, and in a more detailed sense, in our constitution.

Mission

Created, saved and gifted by God, we seek, serve, and share Jesus Christ.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to grow Good Shepherd into a more loving, compassionate Christian community that is excited about actively living out our faith. We strive to form more faithful disciples by:

- ◆ Growing in our personal relationships with Jesus Christ through teaching, Bible study, and prayer.
- ◆ Supporting and serving all God's children both locally and globally.

Foundational Beliefs

- ◆ God the Father nurtures us daily with His Word, grace and sacraments.
- ◆ God the Son, Jesus Christ, is our Lord and savior, the redeemer of all people.
- ◆ God the Spirit calls us to love, empowers us to serve others, and to support one another.

Core Values

Because of these beliefs, we value:

- ◆ Personal relationships with Christ lived out in community.
- ◆ Life-long study of God's Word, prayer and worship.
- ◆ Service in Jesus' name to our neighbors.
- ◆ The power of God's transforming love.
- ◆ Respecting people as children of God.
- ◆ Being a safe place for people to come. 🌸

This newsletter is a publication of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
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The information contained in the *Shepherd's Voice* has been compiled using information and articles submitted by our members for publication. We regret any errors or omissions published in this newsletter, and inconvenience this may have caused. It is our intention to ensure that the contents of this publication are always as accurate as possible.

Now We're Cooking: Is Your Church a Microwave or Crock-Pot?

By Tejado Hanchbell

A few weeks ago, The Lord called our microwave home. It had fought a good fight and finished its course and now resides in that great kitchen in the sky. Of course, this gave my wife the perfect opportunity to remind me microwaves are bad for your health and she didn't want to have one in the house in the first place. (The CSI team is currently investigating her involvement in the microwave's death. Foul play is suspected.)

Instead of running out to purchase a new microwave, we've been trying to make it without one. As someone who was raised in the "microwave generation," the transition has been a bit difficult for me (to say the least). However, I've learned how to warm up my leftovers on the stove or oven, and have even become reacquainted with my old friend,

Mr. Crock-Pot.



As I've been enjoying the succulent, juicy meats coming out of my Crock-Pot (as opposed to the crusty, dry stuff we pulled out of that square

box with buttons on it), I realized the comparison between microwaves and Crock-Pots can teach us a lot about ministry and church growth.

Specifically, do you want to have a "Microwave Ministry" or a "Crock-Pot Church"?



Microwaves are good for a lot of things, chiefly convenience. It's so much easier to grab those leftovers out of the fridge, nuke them and have a hot meal in three minutes. However, the

microwave also has several drawbacks, which I believe can serve as a teaching tool for ministry.

Here are five reasons I believe we should seek to be a "Crock-Pot Church" instead of a "Microwave Ministry."

1. Microwaves don't cook anything.

Microwaves don't cook or create; they just reheat.

Similarly, a "Microwave Ministry" is one that is not intentional about creating new disciples. It is content with "reheating" old Christians who have become dissatisfied with their former church or pastor. Microwave Ministries are built on the backs of "leftover" church-hoppers looking for a quick fix. On the other hand, crockpots are designed to create new meals, and Crock-Pot Churches are intentional about reaching the unchurched and creating new disciples for the Kingdom of God.

2. Microwaves heat fast, but don't hold heat for long.

It may only take a microwave three minutes to heat a plate of food, but you better eat that food quickly because it won't stay hot for long.

Similarly, Microwave Ministries may burn hot and fast in the beginning, but they lack the sustainability for long-term growth and health. Crock-Pot Churches, however, are able to sustain their heat for a long period of time. While it may take them longer to heat up initially, they don't go cold all of a sudden. Microwaves measure time in minutes and seconds; crockpots measure in hours. There is no "one-minute" button on a crock-pot. They are designed for the long term – and so are Crock-Pot Churches.

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3. Microwaves don't heat evenly.

You can warm up a piece of meat in the microwave and one part is scalding hot, while another part is cold to the bone.

This is an enduring quality of Microwave Ministries. They may have a scorching hot worship team or preaching ministry, but if you turn the meat over, you'll find a discipleship or intercessory ministry that's cold to the bone. They're hot on top, but cold on the bottom. Crock-Pot Churches distribute heat evenly to all aspects of the church. Care and attention is given and heat applied to often overlooked areas of ministry that may not be out front or seen on the stage on Sunday morning.

4. Microwaves need monitoring.

Anyone who's ever used a microwave knows you often have to check the food to see if it's hot enough or make sure it doesn't get too hot. You can't just set the microwave on "10 minutes," then leave and forget about it. Unless, of course, you like food that tastes like charcoal.

However, you can leave a crock-pot on for up to ten hours and not have to worry about it. We often turn the crock-pot on in the morning, set it to the desired number of hours, go to work and, when we come home, we have a fully cooked meal.

Similarly, Crock-Pot Churches develop systems where the functions of the ministry don't have to be monitored or micromanaged. If everything in your church requires the senior pastor's approval, you are most likely a Microwave Ministry, and your system is not designed for long-term growth. In Crock-Pot Churches, decision-making is decentralized. The senior pastor places competent leaders in place so he or she can basically set it and forget it.

5. Microwaves are common.

There's a microwave in almost every house in America. You rarely see crock-pots on display in most kitchens. So when you see one, it stands out.

Similarly, there is a Microwave Ministry on every corner. If you want to stand out so your church can grow, become a Crock-Pot Church. Don't be afraid to be different. It may take longer for you to get hot, but when you do you'll stay hot longer. Remember, there's a microwave in every house (well, except for mine). That reminds me, anyone know where I can find a cheap microwave? P.S. Please don't tell my wife! 🌸

Summary of Special Congregational Meeting

by Wayne Weyhrauch, Council President

On Sunday January 26, GSLC had a Special Congregational Meeting, following four informational discussion sessions. The council felt a special meeting was necessary to present the results of two task forces and vote on adopting their proposals. Plus, we wanted to continue working toward fulfilling our recently adopted Mission and Vision Statements.



Scholarship Fund Task Force

First, the charter of the Scholarship Fund Taskforce was to re-evaluate the Scholarship Program at Good Shepherd. Their goal was to decide how we want to proceed into the future. The Congregation voted **unanimously YES**, to accept the Taskforce proposal. The Scholarship Fund Committee guidelines were added to the new 2014 Constitution/Bylaws.

Here are the highlighted results:

- ◆ Scholarship Fund Committee will manage the program and consists of three members with a three-year term. This committee will establish eligibility requirements as approved by council.
- ◆ Scholarship Fund is open to all GSLC students pursuing an Associate degree, Undergraduate degree, or Lutheran ordination at a not-for-profit public or private accredited institution.

- ◆ Monetary gifts and bequests contributed to the fund throughout the year will be a separate accounting line-item, and scholarships will be awarded based on money available.
- ◆ Students will complete an application process and may receive up to \$500 per year for four years while maintaining a 3.0 GPA; additional years are available when pursuing ordination.
- ◆ Public presentation of scholarships and blessings of recipients will occur annually.
- ◆ Scholarship guidelines and updates will be publicly available to congregational members.

Constitution Task Force

Second, the charter of the Constitution Taskforce was to update Good Shepherd's 2005 Constitution and Bylaws to match the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Model, and update it to support a pastoral-size congregation of 100-150 weekly worshipers. The Congregation voted **unanimously YES**, to accept the Taskforce's proposed Constitution/Bylaws.

Here are the highlighted changes:

- ◆ Constitution was rewritten to include the 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013 ELCA updates to the twenty-chapter model constitution.
- ◆ Bylaws were written to support the 2014 constitution and to be a daily guide to the unique details of how Good Shepherd programs, committees and organizations function.
- ◆ Congregational Committee roles and responsibilities were clearly defined:
 - Executive Committee
 - Nominating Committee
 - Audit Committee
 - Mutual Ministry Committee
 - Budget Oversight Committee
 - Memorial Committee
 - Endowment Bequest Committee
 - Scholarship Fund Committee (Approved during the Special Congregational Meeting)

◆ Commissions were expanded from five to seven, and the purposes and responsibilities of our Commissions were clearly defined as they are led by our Commissioners. Three-year terms with two-term limits were set for our Commissioners. As you can see below, we have an immediate need for a few new Commissioners. Please prayerfully consider filling an important and rewarding role as a Good Shepherd Commissioner. (See Pastor Jamie for more details.)

- **Finance & Administration Commission** – Jim Kempf (January 2009)
- **Worship Commission** – Michele Weyhrauch (November 2012)
- **Communications & Public Relations Commission** – Sandy Rosholt (January 2014)
- **Life-Long Learning Commission** – Mary Pierce (January 2014)
- **Parish Life & Response Commission** – OPEN
- **Witness & Outreach Commission** – OPEN
- **Property & Facilities Commission** – OPEN

A Time to Heal Initiative

Additionally, we took time to focus on our recently adopted Vision for Good Shepherd as we strive toward the future. Pastor Jamie Vannoy, Debbie Kempf, and Mary Pierce presented a proposed initiative entitled "A Time to Heal" that will begin later in February. It will consist of skits and small group discussions. This is an important area to all of us as we grow into the future. So please read the other articles in this *Shepherd's Voice* that cover this topic.

My First Quarter - WOW!

Finally, my first quarter as your Congregational Council President is complete and my initial assessment is: WOW! I did not realize there were so many people working behind-the-scenes to cover all the daily operations and create our family that makes up Good Shepherd. They often do this without any public knowledge or recognition. So on behalf of the entire congregation, I want to say a heart-felt "Thank You!" Your service to all of us is greatly appreciated! The future of Good Shepherd is exciting as we continue to grow in our relationships with each other and Jesus Christ, serving all of God's children locally in Kettering, as well as, globally. 🌸

Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University

by Martin Pierce



Martin Pierce will be presenting a seminar entitled "Financial Peace University" beginning on **Tuesday February 4**. The classes run for nine weeks and will be held in the small chapel from 7:00 to 8:30 pm.

What is Financial Peace University?

Financial Peace University (FPU) is the most important step to changing your financial future. It is your Total Money Makeover Program. It takes the knowledge from God and turns it into real action in our lives through a step-by-step process taught by best-selling author and financial counselor Dave Ramsey.

FPU is a nine-week life-changing program that empowers and teaches you how to make the right money decisions to achieve your financial goals and God's plan for your life. The course is highly entertaining for everyone, with a unique combination of humor and informative financial advice, and includes practical lessons on eliminating debt, building wealth, giving like never before, and much, much more!

Who Is Financial Peace University For?

It's for EVERYONE! ... from the financially secure to the financially distressed. Over 1 million families and individuals have already had their lives changed by attending FPU. Applying God's Word radically changes your life. On average, FPU graduates have paid off over \$3,700 in debt and saved \$1,800 during the nine-week program!

What Will I Learn?

In this life-changing program you will learn:

Step-by-Step Cash Flow Planning – Luke 14:28: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it."

Debt Snowball Plan Technique to Eliminating Debt – Proverbs 22:7: "The borrower is slave to the lender."

How to Invest Wisely – Ecclesiastes 11:2: "Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land."

Testimonials

Here's what people just like you are saying about FPU:

◆ "We've actually relieved ourselves of over \$50,000 worth of debt in two years just from using these principles." – *Russ and Mary Lee*

◆ "It made us sit down as a couple and communicate ... and it gave us an instant pay raise!" – *Paul and Lynesa Benson*

◆ "This program made things so clear that have been so confusing to me. My husband and I are excited to start the "baby steps" and get back on our feet financially. This program is truly life-changing. I look forward to teaching my boys to manage money so they can start being smart about money from the start." – *Anonymous*

More information is available in the GSLC Announcements each week. You may also visit the Good Shepherd website at goodshepherdkettering.com for more information. Or you may go to the Financial Peace University website at daveramsey.com/fpu/home for more information and to register for the class. Or contact Martin Pierce at 287-4021 or Kathy Seim at 901-0532 if you have additional questions. 🌸

A Time to Heal

by Debbie Kempf

Ecclesiastes 3:1 tells us, "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." In the list of things that follow, verse 3 includes "a time to heal, a time to tear down, and a time to build."

During the congregational meetings in late August and early September, some very strong feelings and opinions were expressed by many members of Good Shepherd. While the comments were directed toward worship styles and music, underlying emotions likely include hurt, anger, and frustration that not everything has been done or worked the way it "should" over the past 10 – 15 years.

So, we want to be intentional about healing as a next step in our ministry together at Good Shepherd. To do this, we will be using material from the book "Healing Traumatized Churches" by Ronald H.

..... In order to heal from trauma, the human brain must process the trauma rather than burying it...

Wean, an ELCA pastor. In order to heal from trauma, the human brain must process the trauma rather than burying it. The use of language and sharing our experiences in a safe environment, where there are no right or wrong feelings or perspectives, can transform past struggles into growth and wisdom individually and as a congregation. (See also the following article, "Healing – The Bigger Picture" for more information on trauma theory and its application within congregations.)



To begin this journey at Good Shepherd, a series of three skits from "Healing Traumatized Churches" will be presented on Sundays, in the sanctuary, beginning in February. Through these entertaining skits, we will learn together about trauma language and the importance of processing struggles and challenging events within congregations. In the weeks following each of these skits, small groups will meet to discuss the material and to process our past.

Every member and friend of Good Shepherd is encouraged to participate and make a commitment to heal, whether a new member or a long-time member; whether you have experienced trauma and broken relationships at Good Shepherd, at another church, or personally; or if you just want to learn more about trauma theory and its application to ministry. The skits will be recorded and made available to anyone who is unable to attend one or more of the sessions. 🌸



Online Sermons

Make Impact

by Linda Newcomer

We have been making Pastor Jamie's sermons available online for the past year now. And we have heard from folks who are either homebound or cannot come to services due to work schedules or other reasons that they have found Pastor's online sermons very helpful. If you would like to listen to a sermon (or print a copy of the text) visit our website at goodshepherdkettering.com. You can also click the link to our blog from the website or go directly to the blog at blog.goodshepherdkettering.com/wordpress. 🌸

Healing ~ The Bigger Picture

by Debbie Kempf

I see healing as one piece in the larger fabric of what it means to be the Body of Christ. While healing is certainly a worthy goal, it is not the ultimate end for God continually gives us new life so that we may “seek, serve, and share Jesus Christ.”

I started reading the book “Healing Traumatized Churches” (Ronald H. Wean, 2012) from the perspective that I don’t need healing, but maybe it would offer some useful guidance on how we might move forward in our ministry together at Good Shepherd. In reality, I found the book too intense to read quickly. As I read, I recognized that, yes, I really do need healing. The real crux of this book is that unprocessed struggles and differences of opinion within a congregation can impact the ministry of the congregation for many years unless the congregation is intentional about healing.

At first, “trauma” seemed like too strong a word to apply to Good Shepherd. However, one of the paradoxes of the Christian faith is that we are each both saint and sinner. In our humanness, broken relationships and hurtful behaviors can and do occur in every church, even though we may think they “should” not among Christians. After reading this book, application of the word “trauma” to congregations really makes sense.

Using the language of trauma, Ronald Wean points out Christ can be viewed as the “Traumatized One” in His death on the cross. But, God redeemed this trauma through His resurrection, defeating death and bringing new life from trauma. So, the Christian church, as followers of the Traumatized One, is in a unique position to engage in healing discussions both within a congregation and outside.

...One of the paradoxes of the Christian faith is that we are each both saint and sinner. In our humanness, broken relationships and hurtful behaviors can and do occur in every church... the Christian church, as followers of the Traumatized One, is in a unique position to engage in healing discussions both within a congregation and outside...

Wean defines trauma as any event that overwhelms us or leaves us feeling powerless, vulnerable, or out of control. Even something small to one person, such as a prank, can be traumatizing to another. “Some survivors of trauma become thrivers and grow from the experience into a deeper understanding of self, connection to God, and others... Many churches, however, never leave survivor mode.”

Wean goes on to say that we find trauma unpleasant and have a natural tendency to bury it. Another normal response is to grab for control using one of three tactics: flight, fight or freeze. Those who respond with flight disengage from the situation and may leave the church. Those who respond by fighting take charge while the freezers become submissive. None of these natural responses are effective in the long-term because all ultimately block survivors from becoming thrivers.

Therefore, we need to process past trauma through open, honest dialog in a safe environment in order to transform it into growth and wisdom for future ministry.

Having been exposed to team building at several different times in my career, I find that some concepts from team building provide a helpful framework for then tying Ronald Wean’s perspective on trauma and healing into the bigger picture of our overall ministry. We typically think of a team as a fairly small group of people, say a basketball or baseball team. However, a congregation meets the very basic definition of a team: a group of people with common goals who work together to achieve more than any one person can accomplish on his/her own. Our common goals are articulated in our mission and vision statement, while the ways we work together are expressed in our foundational beliefs, core values, and in a more technical sense, in our constitution.

A very commonly used model of team development defines the stages that all teams (including congregations) experience:

- ◆ Forming
- ◆ Storming
- ◆ Norming
- ◆ Performing

This model is easy to remember and the words are very descriptive of what happens at each stage: Team members first come together politely with positive expectations. Then, teams get frustrated with each other and must figure out how to work together before becoming effective and performing well. The table below describes the characteristics of each stage in more detail.



| STAGE | CHARACTERISTICS/EMOTIONS |
|-------------------|--|
| Forming | Optimism, eagerness, positive expectations, politeness, attempt to define norms. |
| Storming | Disappointment, anger, defensiveness, questioning the wisdom of projects. |
| Norming | Less dissatisfaction, acceptance, attempts to avoid conflict. |
| Performing | Interdependence, mutual support, communicate feelings openly, focus on mission, confidence about outcomes. |

Any change, positive or negative, intentional or beyond the control of the team, drives the team back to the earlier stages of this model and the team must progress through the stages again, although the stages may be less pronounced. For example, when Good Shepherd called Pastor Jamie, we were excited and eager. We experienced a period of “forming” where Pastor Jamie was getting to know us and we were getting to know him. We then learned to work together, but differently from the ways we worked with previous pastors.

Good Shepherd has experienced a lot of change, but we haven’t necessarily processed it well. “Norming” has certainly taken place, but often by burying the trauma rather than processing it. With the unprocessed trauma, it is all too easy to jump back to “storming” and replay the debates and emotions from the past. Ronald Wean’s book provides a path for processing the past to transform our “storming” and “norming” into an exciting future, of “performing” as the Body of Christ. 🌸

Middle School Mix

by Don Bennett

On January 10 through 12, our five catechism students and I changed a long-standing tradition here at Good Shepherd. Instead of going to the Youth Quake retreat in Cincinnati, as we've done for almost forever, we went to the Middle School Mix retreat at Lutheran Memorial Camp. This change wasn't done on a whim. There were various reasons for it, but the big one is that last year, the Quake changed to a Quake/Zone, which meant that middle schoolers are now mixed in with high schoolers.

I was a little nervous about making the break, but it was definitely worth it. Instead of having hundreds of other youth running around, there were about twenty. Our guys thought that was the best part. Because of the small number, they were able to get to know everyone at the retreat. The small groups were led very well by camp staff and the free time activities were well organized. One of the best parts for me was that for the Saturday night campfire and the Sunday morning worship, the youth were expected to take a part in the planning and leading. Again, our guys did this quite well with minimal guidance from me. Our two eighth graders actually gave short messages on some Bible verses.

On the way home, the boys all gave the event a thumbs up and are looking forward to doing it again next year. 🌸



Spring High School Retreat

by Don Bennett

Several times in the past couple of years our high school youth have retreated at the Lutheran Social Services (LSS) distribution center in MacArthur, Ohio, where they've done mission work and bible studies. This year, on **Saturday April 26**, LSS is sponsoring a service day that will be open to the youth of the whole synod. Details will be coming soon, but I believe that we will be able to work this into a full weekend retreat also. 🌸

Financial Contributions to LYC - 2013

by Don Bennett

Several people have asked how the youth are doing with some of our on-going fund raisers. We always advertise how we do on special events, but we haven't provided results for the ongoing ones. To bring you up to speed on this, we have three ongoing fund raisers: Bob Evans, gift cards, and paper recycling. Here's the breakdown from last year on each of them.

Bob Evans - \$516 from the sales of meals on the first Mondays of each month.

Gift Cards - \$28,145 in sales for a net profit to LYC of \$1121.78.

Paper Recycling - we recycled 17.54 tons of paper for \$87.66.

This gives us a total of \$1725.44 from the three. Thank you for continuing to support the youth through these fund raisers. If you'd like more information about any of them, contact Don Bennett. 🌸



"Just a Half Mile More"

by Don Bennett

Last May 18, one of the leaders of our scout troop, Pete Livingston, died while on an adventure campout with some of the older scouts. In honor of him and as a way to benefit some of the scouting programs he was involved with, the inaugural "Just a Half Mile More" Pete Livingston Memorial 5k Trail Run/Hike will be held on **Saturday April 5** at Sugarcreek Metro Park. Because of Pete's affiliation with Good Shepherd, some of our members will be taking part in this run/walk. If you are interested in joining them, you can register at speedy-feet.com/race-entry. It would be great to have a large contingent of walkers/runners there to honor Pete. Contact Don Bennett for more information. 🌸



Running/Walking Group

by Don Bennett

While talking with some others about the "Just a Half Mile More" 5K, it became apparent that there was some interest in having a group that would occasionally get together for exercise and fellowship. There are already some folks who are planning on getting together to train for and run in the 10K part of the Air Force Marathon and a "color run" in Dayton in July. (This sounds like great fun - check with Don to find out what a "color run" is.) I think the group will be getting together monthly for a walk or run and possibly for an occasional bike ride. If you would be interested in being a part of such a group, contact Don Bennett or Wendy Pierce. 🌸

Talent/Variety Show

by Don Bennett

We will once again have a Talent/Variety Show this spring. The date will be set as soon as our new Parish Life & Response Commissioner gets settled in. Please watch your GSLC Announcements and eBlasts for more details and the date. 🌸

Lenten & Easter Schedule

by Pastor Jamie

We will be lifting up the time of Lent with Lutheran Church of Our Savior (LCOS) and St. Paul Lutheran Church (SPLC) again this year. **Each Wednesday evening we will begin with dinner at 6:15 pm and a service beginning at 7:00 pm.**

The rotating schedule will be as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| Ash Wednesday March 5 | LCOS (NO Dinner) |
| Wednesday March 12 | SPLC |
| Wednesday March 19 | GSLC |
| Wednesday March 26 | LCOS |
| Wednesday April 2 | SPLC |
| Wednesday April 9 | GSLC |
| Maundy Thursday April 17 | LCOS |
| Good Friday April 18 | SPLC |
| Saturday Easter Vigil April 19 | GSLC |
| Easter Sunday April 20 | GSLC 🌸 |



Thinking Creatively About Being Creative

The SOS Northwest Clergy Cluster
& 5.5 Cluster of Central Ohio

The annual Conversations Retreat will be held
Monday, April 7 through Wednesday, April 9,
beginning with lunch on Monday and ending with
breakfast on Wednesday.

The Conversations Retreat will be held at the Spiritual
Center of Maria Stein (spiritualcenter.net) in western
Ohio. The cost for the two nights (single room – full
bath – linens – desk), six meals, and resources will
be \$175. We will spend time with a guest artist; take
time to get to know one another; share how creativity
plays a part in our ministry and mission; watch several
movies followed by discussion; have time for silence;
and enjoy late evening refreshments and informal
conversation. We will make
worship an integral part of each
day. There is also time to visit
the collection of relics at the
neighboring shrine.



Our guest for the retreat is
Columbus artist Cody Miller
(codyfmiller.com). Cody interprets scenes and
characters from scripture and presents them in a
mixed-media format. On Monday afternoon, Cody
will talk about how he looks at scripture – what he
sees in the stories – what he imagines as he envisions
the characters and stories – and then, what he tries to
bring to life on the canvas. Cody will fit in well with
our format of mutual conversation as he expects us
to engage him.

To register and/or ask questions about any
particulars of the retreat contact Pastor Al Debelak at
adebelak@redeemerluth.com or call 614.282.0799. To
register make checks out to Al Debelak, 2683 Berwick
Boulevard, Columbus, OH 43209-2917. Participation
is limited to only 30 rooms. We may be able to expand
as space is available. Deadline for registration is
March 10. 🌸

Welcome to Mark Shoemaker!

by Linda Newcomer

Even though Mark
Shoemaker has been
with us here at GSLC for
awhile now, we officially
wanted to mention how
truly glad we are to have
Mark here with us. He
will lead both the Chancel
Choir and the Praise
Team. His musical talents and his singing abilities are
truly a blessing to our congregation. Not to mention
his youth and vitality, which is a perfect match to
Pastor Jamie's enthusiasm!



Mark is a Dayton native. He attended Chaminade-
Julienne Catholic High School, and it was during this
time that he worked as a substitute pianist and first
became acquainted with the wonderful community
at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. Mark attended
the Conservatory of Music at Capital University,
where he was honored to serve as a section leader
in the Chapel Choir. During his years at Capital, he
was also the music director for the Catholic Students
Organization, which hosted several Masses on
campus throughout the academic year. Ever since the
third grade, Mark has been involved in church music
- either as singer, keyboard player, or director. He
is very happy to be back and making music at Good
Shepherd! 🌸



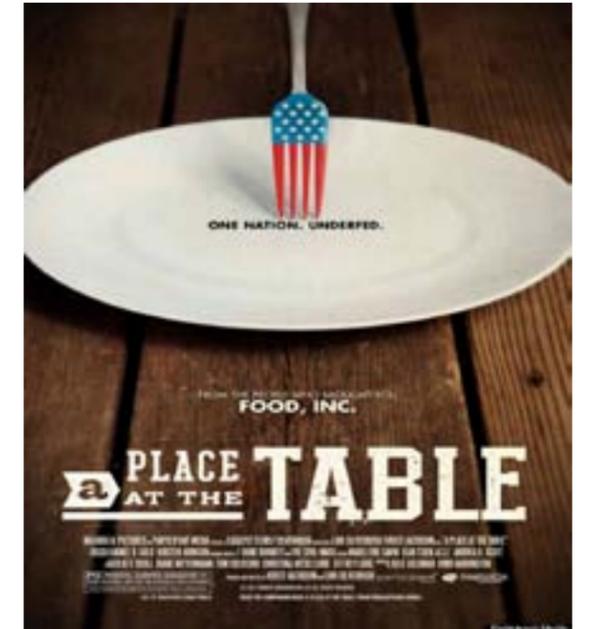
2nd Annual Congregational Hunger Leaders Day

February 22
Abiding Christ Lutheran Church
326 E. Dayton-Yellow Springs Road
Fairborn, Ohio

All lay leaders, including youth, and rostered leaders
are invited to attend this event. This year we have The
Rev. Art Simon, founder of Bread for the World, as
well as Jon Gromek, from Bread for the World and
ELCA Educational Associate, Henry Martinez.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 9:00 - 9:30 am | Registration |
| 9:30 - 10:40 am | Keynote Address — The Rev. Art Simon, Founder, Bread for the World |
| 10:45 - 12:15 pm | Movie 'A Place at the Table' |
| 12:15 - 1:00 pm | Lunch & Discussion |
| 1:15 - 2:00 pm | Workshops — See choices below |
| 2:15 - 3:00 pm | Best Congregational Hunger Practices & How to Use the Movie |
| 3:00 - 3:30 pm | Blessing & Commissioning |

Abiding Christ Lutheran Church will provide lunch
and snacks. Vegetarian options will be available. Cost
to attend is only \$5, which includes lunch, snacks and
materials. Sodas will be for sale for \$1 each. Proceeds
to benefit World Hunger Appeal.



Workshops

- ♦ **Advocacy** – Nick Bates, Diaconal Minister
Candidate; The Rev. Art Simon; and Jon Gromek,
Regional Coordinator, Bread for the World
- ♦ **How to Organize a Congregational Hunger
Appeal** – The Rev. Henry Zorn, Chairperson,
Hunger Task Force
- ♦ **Youth Involvement with Hunger Issues** –
Henry Martinez, Educational Associate, ELCA World
Hunger

To register, email the names of your attendees, your
congregation name and city, and which workshop
each attendee has selected to Susan Barton-Nonno at
sbarton-nonno@southernohiosynod.org or call
614-464-3532. **RSVP by February 14.**

Limited onsite registrations will be accepted. Payment
for lunch will be collected at the door the day of the
event. Cash or checks accepted. Make checks payable
to Southern Ohio Synod. Please direct questions to
Pastor Henry Zorn, pastorzorn@lcsurrection.org or
513-474-4938. 🌸

“Catching Fire” Review and Discussion

*In the Meantime - Fifth Friday Film Forum:
“Catching Fire”*

SPOILER ALERT: If you haven’t read “Catching Fire” or seen the film, you may not want to read this.

I have to admit that when I first read *Catching Fire* and realized that Suzanne Collins was going to send Katniss and Peeta back into the arena to compete in another Hunger Games, I was disappointed. What seemed such a brilliant plot element in the last book suddenly seemed tired, as if Collins was a one-trick pony. But that feeling soon disappeared. Although there is indeed a second round of the Hunger Games competition in “*Catching Fire*,” the plot both inside and outside of the arena was different enough that it seemed a natural extension rather than repeat of the previous book.

Moreover, the characters you’ve come to care about deepen so that you are drawn not only to watch what they do, but also who they become. Their choices – as with our own — reveal their character and we are regularly curious about how they develop. Finally, the larger story of the oppression of Panem – the futurist totalitarian nation from what is left of the United States at some unspecified point in the future – grows thicker and more complex, and the issues of injustice, oppression, and rebellion come forcefully to the surface.

Indeed, the film version of “*Catching Fire*” makes that element all the more apparent. Perhaps because we no longer hear the story from the point of view of Katniss – which is a great narrative device in the book – we notice the larger system of oppression and injustice more deeply. In “*The Hunger Games*,” we saw the injustices of the system played out in the lives of individual characters, the young tributes set to fight and kill each other. In “*Catching Fire*,” we see the larger cost of injustice and our point of view is shifted from the individuals we’ve come to care about to larger questions about systemic injustice and violence.



When Katniss wants to flee, for instance, we sympathize with her. But when Gale wants to resist, we admire him. For we’ve realized as the film progresses that the “we” of the story is more powerful than the “I.” Individual liberty is balanced by individual responsibility for the larger whole, and the characters we admire most are the ones willing to sacrifice themselves – their safety and even their lives – for the sake of others and, indeed, the larger cause of freedom and justice.

This is just one of the reasons “*Catching Fire*” – even better, I think, that the first film (which I loved) – is a great movie to watch with your kids, grandkids, or with a youth group. Great questions for discussion abound. Four themes in particular stood out to me and I’ll both outline those briefly and offers some questions for discussion. These themes aren’t limited only to this book and film, of course, as they are part of our national story and at the center of our faith story as well. But reading the book or watching the film can bring these questions to the fore and invite us to think more deeply about our lives and faith as well as Collins’ wonderful narrative.

1. Sacrifice. The relationships in “*Catching Fire*” become more complex. One of the recurring themes of the book and film is that relationships involve some

measure of sacrifice, of looking out for the needs of others while caring for yourself. What role does sacrifice play in the relationship between the central characters? What role does sacrifice play in your own relationships? Do you expect others to sacrifice for you? Are you prepared to sacrifice for the ones you love? Are there limits to the sacrifices we make for those we love? And what kinds of obligations does sacrifice entail? What happens to the relationships between Gale and Katniss, on the one hand, and Peeta and Katniss, on the other, as they make conscious sacrifices for each other? Jesus says in John’s Gospel that there is no greater love than when one person lays down his or her life for another (Jn. 15:13). Where do we see that happening in “*Catching Fire*,” in the Bible, and in our own lives?

2. Hope. In the first film, President Snow (in a scene not in the book but that fits perfectly with the plot and characters) asks Seneca Crane why the Hunger Games must have a winner. Snow then answers that the reason is hope: to give the oppressed people of Panem some small hope that they might prevail. A little hope, Snow says, is a good thing; a lot of hope is dangerous. In “*Catching Fire*,” hope is beginning to spread, and we soon discover that hope is powerful but also dangerous in that it threatens the oppressors. What characters in *Catching Fire* are most transformed by hope? Why does Katniss become a symbol of hope? What role does hope play in our lives? What are some of the motivating hopes that we harbor? What is our source of hope? And how do we encourage each other in the face of setbacks? Paul writes that, “We also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces

...These themes aren’t limited only to this book and film... they are part of our national story and at the center of our faith story as well... [and] bring these questions to the fore and invite us to think more deeply about our lives and faith as well..

endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us” (Rom. 5:3-5). What do you think Paul means? Have you experienced challenges or suffering that have led to endurance, character, and hope? How does this connect with God’s love?

3. Memory and Story. Katniss would like to forget the games ever happened, but the Capitol won’t allow that because they want to perpetuate a particular message – fear – by telling the story of the Hunger Games over and over. How do we deal with damaging memories? At one point, Haymitch tells Katniss that the train they are on will roll on forever to serve the story and purposes of the Capitol, but is that the only story available to her? How do we not allow our past to dominate our present and future? How, that is, do we tell ourselves a new story and live into it? The victors who are reaped for the Quarter Quell Hunger Games in the film begin to tell a new story in their stage appearances and in how they act in the arena. Why? Paul writes that everyone in Christ becomes a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). How does our

life as Christians free us from the past and open up the possibility of telling and living a new story?

4. The Individual In Community. Katniss soon realizes that the issues at hand are much larger than only the safety of her and her loved ones. When she sees the oppression in the other districts and realizes the hope she has ignited, she discovers that she is part of a larger community and that her struggle is caught up in a much larger struggle for justice. But she hasn’t asked for that role or sought it out, so does she have a choice? What would we think of her if she fled? Are there limits to what we can ask one person for the sake of the larger community? It’s been said that when one person is oppressed, we all suffer. How do you understand that to be true? The Apostle Paul wrote that every member of the body of Christ is equally important, when one suffers the whole body is hurt, and when one is honored the entire body rejoices (1 Cor. 12:26). If we believed this is true, what would our relationships look like and how would we want to contribute to our families, schools, communities, and world? 🌸

Twenty-Five Simple Truths to Help Married Couples

by Jim Merhaut

Faith Formation Learning Exchange - BLOG

Marriage, family, faith formation at home... there is simply a mountain of evidence that tells us why we should be putting more effort into this arena of ministry. A key reason why families are so important for faith formation is because emotions are so important for long-term learning. Research continues to confirm that emotions are the glue of learning. People need to be in the right emotional disposition in order to learn and retain what they have learned. Emotional bonds are strongest in families. This is why the home is the ideal learning environment and it is also why kids from healthy families learn healthy habits and kids from unhealthy families learn unhealthy habits.

While efforts to help parents with parenting skills are important and need to continue, the core of a healthy two-parent family is a healthy marriage. Assess your ministry efforts. How much time is your ministry team putting into helping married couples? Assess your budget. How much money are you putting into helping married couples? For most churches, both of those numbers need to increase.

Here are some simple truth messages you can be sending to married couples on a regular and rotating basis. Get these messages out there and support them with programs and resources that teach the skills to make these twenty-five things happen.

1. Be generous with affection.
2. Don't just care; show it.
3. Practice gratitude daily.
4. Get into your spouse's world.
5. Be open to sexual learning.
6. Talk about sex.
7. Become an expert on what your spouse enjoys.
8. Negotiate parenting responsibilities.

9. Openly admire your spouse's accomplishments.
10. Balance your conversations – The talker needs to talk less, the listener needs to talk more.
11. Don't talk when you're angry.
12. Negotiate relationships with extended family and friends.
13. Discover and pursue mutual hobbies.
14. Negotiate household chores.
15. Block out at least 15 hours of couple time each week.
16. Save your best of everything for your spouse.
17. Be completely honest in a respectful way.
18. Share calendars.
19. Don't keep secrets.
20. Eat right and exercise.
21. Be fashionable in the way that pleases your spouse, not someone else.
22. Learn what annoys your spouse; stop doing it.
23. Negotiate a household budget that reflects your shared priorities.
24. Make a home that shelters and expresses your marriage.
25. God first; spouse second; children third; all else follows.

One final note. When you work with married couples, start by teaching proven skills for marriage rather than starting with doctrines or moral teachings. Good theology grows from thoughtful and inspired reflection on human experience. 🌸



Sudafed Christianity

By Shane Raynor - from "Ministry Matters"

A couple of years ago, I was dealing with a nasty cold, so I headed to my friendly neighborhood Walgreens for some Sudafed. This had been my over-the-counter decongestant of choice since college, and when I'd combined it with a decent antihistamine, I'd always been able to pretend I didn't have a cold, even when I had a severe one. It just worked, and it worked well.

So I bought some Sudafed for my cold, started taking it, and... nothing. Maybe this is just a weird cold, I thought. The symptoms just aren't responding to what's always worked in the past.

Then I read the box. Active ingredient: Phenylephrine. Wait, that can't be right. Sudafed isn't phenylephrine, it's pseudoephedrine. That's why it's called Sudafed! Hello, McFly?

So I went back to Walgreens to get to the bottom of this little pharmaceutical sham. It turns out, they had the "real" Sudafed behind the pharmacy counter. Apparently, some people like to take pseudoephedrine and make bad stuff with it. So laws have been passed to restrict the availability of it. And that's why Pfizer started marketing the fake Sudafed (which, according to some research, is no more effective than a placebo.) I was finally able to get the real stuff, but only after signing nearly enough paperwork to close on a house. But it was worth it, because my cold symptoms virtually disappeared. So what we have in the "fake" Sudafed is a product that looks real and still has the same name, but arguably isn't anywhere near as effective as the original formula.



Christianity is a lot like that. More than two billion of us wear the "Christian" label, but how many of us aren't really much different than the rest of the world? 2 Timothy 3:5 mentions people who "look like they are religious but deny God's power." (It also says, "Avoid people like this.")

If we sin as much as the rest of the world, have as high of a divorce rate as everyone else, and insist on trying to solve the world's problems using the world's methods instead of Kingdom principles, what religion are we practicing?

Much has been written about why young people are leaving the church. From where I sit, lack of power is one of the biggest reasons anyone leaves. I want to see the power of God working more in my life, in the church, and in the world. That starts with a solid understanding of the cross, the resurrection, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Weak Christianity is boring and it doesn't really change anyone. If people can't tell that God is moving in a church, many of them will just go elsewhere. And who can blame them? 🌸



Art and the Gospels

by Bishop Michael Rinehart

The four gospels are a lot like pieces of art.

One of the things I love about the pictures of the “Flight to Egypt” is the backgrounds. It looks like they’re traveling through the suburbs. Or a castle sits in the background, along with typical medieval scenes and fjord in the center, sometimes complete with sailing ships.

What strikes the modern eye is the fact that the artist makes no attempt whatsoever to place Jesus, Mary and Joseph in their cultural context or time. Modern viewers will muse at how ignorant the painter is of the historical context. They might even call the painting inaccurate. The painter, however, does not care.

The painter is more interested in bringing Jesus, Mary and Joseph into his time and place. What if a Jesus and the events surrounding him happened today? What might that be like? Think Godspell. The point is not historical. We’re not doing a documentary. We’re conveying a message, telling a story, making a point.



The gospels are the same way. The authors are not really interested in writing a documentary. We misunderstand them if we read them in that way. They are painting a picture. They are telling a story for their communities, to help them see how the events surrounding Jesus come to bear upon the things taking place in their lives and Christian communities.

The earliest of the four gospels was written around 70 A.D., about 40 years after the crucifixion and 70 years after Jesus’ birth. Matthew may have been written around 80 A.D. and Luke around 90 A.D. John’s gospel was written sometime after 100 A.D. Some scholars date it at 120 A.D., which is over a century after Jesus’ birth. John is less interested than any of the writers of the canonical gospels in portraying a historically accurate Jesus. It would puzzle him to think of anyone expecting this. Luke imagines there are tiles on houses in Palestine (Luke 5:19). Don’t let this throw you. He’s painting a picture.

When people get into heated debates about the historicity of this or that, it’s an exercise in missing the point. Did Jesus feed 4,000 or 5,000? The gospel writers don’t care. They weren’t there and they didn’t

have counters. They want us only to know it was a huge crowd. Is the mustard seed the smallest of all seeds? Did Jesus say “Blessed are the poor” or “Blessed are the poor in Spirit”? It doesn’t matter. The gospels are four paintings of the inbreaking of the kingdom of God, from the perspective of communities in Rome, Antioch, Damascus and possibly Greece.



...The gospels are four paintings of the inbreaking of the kingdom of God, from the perspective of communities in Rome, Antioch, Damascus and possibly Greece...

When folks in my tribe say the Bible is authoritative, the source and norm for our faith, we mean that we draw our faith primarily from this collection of writings, rather than tradition or ecumenical councils. We don’t mean that the Bible is a history book, a geography book or a science book. It’s not authoritative when it comes to cosmology. In fact, there are several cosmologies in the Bible, a book written in three languages over two millennia.

We mean this book contains wisdom. It sheds light on the meaning of life, the human condition and our relationship with God. We mean this book paints pictures of Jesus who reveals the deepest truths about life. This book reveals something about ourselves and about life: that we are loved with an everlasting love that reaches beyond death, and loving God and neighbor is central to everything that matters.

Those who would try to treat the gospels as a strict history book create a caricature of Jesus, much like someone trying to reconstruct a historical Jesus from the paintings shown here. The gospels don’t tell us what Jesus looked like, sounded like or smelled like. They reveal the heart of one who so powerfully reflected the divine, they dared to call him the Son of God. ☼



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Also follow us on Facebook
and on Twitter



Ongoing Opportunities

Breakfast/Worship at St. Paul Lutheran Church -

Second Sunday (adults serve)

Fourth Sunday (youth serve)

Food Pantry Donations - First Sunday

Jeremiah's Letter Donations - Third Sunday

Quilting Group - First Monday - 9:00 am - Lounge

Knitters/Crocheters Group -

Second Monday - 1:15 pm - Lounge

Alzheimer's Support Group - Tuesdays

7:00 pm - Lounge

Fellowship Dinner & Devotion -

Wednesdays - 6:00 pm - Fellowship Hall

Choir Practice - Wednesdays - 6:15 pm - Sanctuary

After-School Achievement Club -

Wednesdays - 2:30 pm - Chapel

Bethany Communion - Third Wednesday -

2:00 pm - Bethany Lutheran Village

Men's Bible Study - Thursdays -

6:30 am - Bob Evans (Dorothy Lane)

Council Meetings - Usually third Thursday - Lounge

Kitty Hawk Square Dancing -

First, third & fifth Fridays 7:00 pm - Fellowship Hall

Saturday Morning Breakfast/Bible Study -

Saturdays - 8:30 am - Lounge

Praise Team Practice - Saturdays - 1:00 pm - Sanctuary

Alcoholics Anonymous - Saturdays - 7:00 pm - Lounge

MAC User Group - Second Saturday -

10:00 am - Fellowship Hall

