



December 2023

Good Shepherd Monthly News

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of South Hills

Volume 4, Issue 12

The piercing cry of a baby at birth. This is the sound that is so familiar to me now after the recent birth of my son. But it's a sound that is familiar to any mother who has given birth; including another mother who gave birth to her firstborn, a son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger. As new parents, Mary and Joseph likely had very similar thoughts about their newborn son who was lying there in the manger just as my wife and I did seeing our son laying in the hospital bassinet all swaddled. There's a big difference though between the son born to Mary and Joseph and my own son; and it's not just the fact they were born in completely different periods of history. Oh sure, my son Samuel was born in a modern hospital with doctors and nurses all around to attend to his needs and the needs of his mother, while the baby in the manger likely only had his parents to take care of him.

Inside this issue:

From the Pastor's Desk	1
The President's Corner	2
Advent and Christmas Worship	3
Sunday School Notes	3
Calendar	4
Birthdays / Anniversaries	5
Memorials Received	5
Prayer Requests	6
Follow Good Shepherd on Social Media	6

But the real difference is the fact that the baby in the manger, was not just a son to new parents. He was the light of the world, the Son of God. This baby boy, swaddled in strips of linen, was the promised Messiah; the Light of Grace that God himself had given to a world so in need.

Even before he was born, my wife and I chose the name for our son. The same was true but to a far greater extent for the firstborn of Mary in Bethlehem's manger. In fact, hundreds of years before the Spirit ever conceived in Mary's womb, the prophets of old spoke of the promised Messiah, the Christ. Isaiah specifically writes of the various names of Christ, known as Jesus, who would save his people from their sins. In Chapter 9, Isaiah prophesies that *he [Jesus the Messiah] will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace* (Is. 9:6b). All of these wonderful descriptors tell of how Jesus, the firstborn of Mary, was to be the one who would usher in God's Kingdom and plan of salvation for the world. Though not an actual phrase of prophecy from the Bible, there is no doubt that Jesus can be described as The Light of Grace (our theme for Advent this year). This Light of Grace, true God incarnate, was born as a babe in Bethlehem with all the realities of a human child with the exception of sin. This Son of Man and Son of God, was sent in by God's grace to be the light in a world walking in great darkness. As we begin this Advent season and our journey to Christmas, let us remember the fantastic Light of Grace that has been given to us through Jesus, the Son of God, who took on our flesh and was born for us. *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given* (Is. 9:6a).

*Blessings In Christ this Advent,
Pastor Josh*

The President's Corner

Dear Brothers and Sisters In Christ,

December is a month filled with anxiety created by all of the things that are not associated with the most important part of the month. Anxiety is created by us; you and me. Most often we create it for ourselves. But, sometimes we graciously create it for others. The birth of Jesus is the antithesis of anxiety. When you see Jesus, you see peace, calm, humility. Even in His birth, Jesus arrived without fanfare and spectacle. We have made a spectacle out of Christmas. Our traditions and their focus often detract us from recognizing all the Christmas is about. It is likely that we all know the Jesus Story; the story of His birth in Bethlehem. But do we know Jesus? People who recognized Jesus at the time of His birth were normal people; lowly people. The shepherds were among the first. The son of a carpenter. He chose normal people to be His Disciples. He chose you and me.

When I reflect on all that our dear Lord has done for us, it makes me realize that there is always more I can do. Our hearts, our minds, our bodies can never be too burdened to respond to the call we have been given. It makes my heart ache that we cannot find anyone in our Church who is willing to accept the leadership role for our Youth. Our Youth need direction and support; especially spiritually. Bishal Rai, the Nepalese Worship Leader, has invited our Youth to participate in their weekly Bible studies. I pray our Youth accept the invitation.

In John 14; as this Christ child nears the end of His journey here on Earth, He offers us the way to His Father. He promises us the Holy Spirit. He gives us peace.....John 14:27 "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.*" (NIV)

I pray that you, personally and individually, find peace in the birth of our Lord. I pray that our Congregational Family is up to the challenge that our humble Lord set for us through His words and His example. And I pray that the Lord will guide me as the current President of this Congregation.

Merry Christmas...

Your Brother in Christ, Ray Betler

The mission of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is to know and praise Christ, to grow in Christ and to share Christ with others.

Ministry News

Advent and Christmas Worship

We invite you to worship with us, in person or online, and share this invitation with your friends and family. Join us this Advent season and on Christmas as we focus on *The Light of Grace*; grace we freely receive from Jesus. Our services are livestreamed on our [YouTube Channel](#), and the recorded service is available within a few days.

December 3—1st Sunday in Advent

- 9 am Sunday School (children practice for Christmas Service) /Adult Bible Class
- 10:15 am Worship with communion

December 10—2nd Sunday in Advent

- 9 am Sunday School (children practice for Christmas Service) /Adult Bible Class
- 10:15 am Worship with communion

December 17—3rd Sunday in Advent—Children's Christmas Service

- 9 am Sunday School (final children rehearsal for Christmas service) /Adult Bible Class
- 10:15 am Worship

December 24—Christmas Eve Worship with Communion

- 10:15am
- 5pm

December 31—10:15am Worship with communion: Service of Lessons and Carols

January 7—Epiphany (celebrated)

- 9 am Sunday School / Adult Bible Class
- 10:15am Worship with communion



Sunday School Notes

The **Children's Christmas Service** is **Sunday, December 17** at **10:15am**. A reception will immediately follow the service. We are practicing for this program on Sunday mornings (Dec. 3rd and 10th) at 9am during Sunday School. We will have a **rehearsal on Saturday, December 16 from 10-11am**. Thanks to the teachers and families helping to support this service!

Sunday morning worship continues in-person and it is also being live streamed.

[Click here](#) Sundays to join us in worship via our YouTube Channel.

Complete the [Online Worship Fellowship Record](#) to let us know you have joined.

December 2023

9Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

BCAP = Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh

BPFC = Bethel Prayer Fellowship Church (Nepalese Group)

IPMS = International Plastic Modelers Society

					1 3p BCAP 5p Preschool Family Fun Night 7p IPMS	2 9:15a Soccer Shots 10a Sound System Install/Orient 12:30p BPFC Musician Practice
3 9a Discovery Hr 10:15a Worship 11a BPFC Youth 11:45a GodConnects 12p Luncheon 12:30p BPFC	4 3p BCAP 7p Boy Scouts	5 3p BCAP 6p Scrapbookers	6 3p BCAP 7:30p Narc Anon	7 3p BCAP 5p Soccer Shots	8 3p BCAP 5p Private Use of FH	9 9:15a Soccer Shots 12:30p BPFC Musician Practice
10 9a Discovery Hr 10:15a Worship 11a BPFC Youth 11:45a GodConnects 12:30p BPFC	11 3p BCAP 7p Elders Mtg 7p Boy Scouts	12 3p BCAP 7p Council Mtg	13 3p BCAP 7:30p Narc Anon	14 3p BCAP 5p Soccer Shots	15 3p BCAP Articles Due: Jan. Newsletter	16 9:15a Soccer Shots Makeup 10a SS Christmas Practice 12:30p BPFC Musician Practice 3p Priv Use of FH
17 9a Discovery Hr 10:15a Worship 11a BPFC Youth 11:45a GodConnects 12:30p BPFC	18 3p BCAP 7p Boy Scouts	19 3p BCAP 6p Scrapbookers	20 3p BCAP 7:30p Narc Anon	21 3p BCAP 5p Soccer Shots Makeup	22 3p BCAP	23 12:30p BPFC Musician Practice
24 / 31 10:15a & 5p Christmas Eve Worship (12/24) 10:15a Worship (12/31) 11a BPFC Youth	Christmas Day 25 Church Office Closed	26	27 7:30p Narc Anon	28	29	30 12:30p BPFC Musician Practice 12 Private Use of Hall

No Preschool

Be sure to check goodshepherdpittsburgh.org for a live calendar and up-to-date information.

December Birthdays

12/1—Dominic Molinari

12/3—Jackson Reed

12/5—Jim Marlowe

12/7—Grace Chioda

12/8—Kaleb Arnold

12/10—Carole Shade

12/12—Bud Hoellein

12/26—Katelyn Marcovecchio

12/29—Mark Coleman

12/29—Charli Winters

12/31—Zoey Voland



December Anniversaries

12/23—Dominic and Carol Sue Molinari (44)

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior. — Titus 3:4-6

Memorials Received

Thank you to all who have given gifts to Good Shepherd in memory of loved ones including Ron and Dot Gerstacker who gave to the LWML Fund in memory of Joan Steigerwald and Barb Hentsch. Carole Shade donated to the LWML Fund in memory of Ruth Johnson's mother, Sara Sprowls.

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Prayer Requests for Members, Family and Friends:

Gina, Baby Miles, Baby Luca, Starlett Sawchak, Elaine Knerr, Patti Theriault, Marcia Colgan, Marilyn, Baby Hanson, Rachel Schaar, Cathy Cerminara, Karen Miller, Marian Maskow, Barbara Simmons, Bev, Jake, Pastor Chris Davis, Don Steward, Cathy Sayre, Steve Wutzke, Sarah Brooks, Peter Way, Denny, Michael Ayres, Sally Taccone, David, Rachel, Kelsie, Mrs. Deemer, Carol DeAngelis, Debbie, Pastor Bob McCanless, Larry Winker, Cindy Geis, Lorraine, Rob Welsh, Karen, Mike Brennan, Jim Stocker, Erika Similo, Jan Kleiser, Sherri, Lisa Brady, Don Matthews, Phyllis, Pastor Tim, Debbie Voland, Tiffany, Jennifer Meyer, Earl Richards, Mary Jane Forrest, Fred "Butch" Taylor, Dottie Tritsch, Hope Leydig, Dennis Lee, Sam Langol, Linda, Melissa Medved, Anne Malone, Gary Cooper, Carolyn Uhlyar, Norma Mikoleit, Tillie Koerth, Pam Spechtold, Joan Uhrinak

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Instagram.com/goodshepherdpg/



Youtube.com/channel/UC3Vho6JeoKM-rVRkXRRVpvQ

(or, go to YouTube and search for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of South Hills)

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