

*Mary,  
did you know  
that your Baby Boy  
has come to make you new?  
This Child  
that you delivered will soon  
deliver you.*



**GOOD SHEPHERD**  
L U T H E R A N C H U R C H

## **The Shepherd's Voice**

**Monthly Newsletter December, 2023**

**Give. Serve. Lead. Connect.**

**From Pastor Harald Bringsjord**

As Christians, we observe two important seasons during the month of December – Advent and Christmas. Advent marks the beginning of a new church year. It's a season that seeks to prepare us for the celebration of Christmas, the coming of Emmanuel ("God with us") in the form of Jesus Christ. Advent is about watching and waiting, about getting ready, about repentance and prayer, about keeping awake and alert, about living with expectant hope and rejoicing in the one who is to come.

This year, Christmas Eve and the fourth Sunday of Advent both fall on the same day. Since there is a lot of preparation for all these services, we will not be having Sunday morning worship that day of which we would have celebrated the fourth Sunday of Advent. Therefore, I decided to take a closer look at the gospel reading for the fourth Sunday of Advent which is Luke 1:26-38 where the birth of Jesus is being foretold to Mary and I hope this will fill us with hope in a world that has been and continues to deal with hatred and power grabs in the form of violence and wars in its different forms.

Mary's life must have been a mix of blessing and struggle. She knew the destiny Jesus would be facing, and although she rejoiced at the prospect of salvation and eternal life, as a human mother the pain of mortal loss must have grieved her deeply. A song that was

popular in the 1990s describes the struggle and joy of Mary, and it is called "Mary, Did You Know." The lyrics were written by Mark Lowry and the music by Buddy Greene. The words are as follows:

"Mary, did you know - That your baby boy would one day walk on water?  
Mary, did you know - That your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?  
Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?

This child that you've delivered, will soon deliver you.

Mary, did you know - That your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?

Mary, did you know - That your baby boy will calm a storm with his hand?

Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?

When you kissed your little baby, then you kissed the face of God.

The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again;

The lame will leap, the dumb will speak the praises of the Lamb.

Mary, did you know - that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?

Mary, did you know - That your baby boy will one day rule the nations?

Did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect Lamb?

This sleeping child you're holding, is the Great I Am."

*Continued on page 2.*



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Twitter.com/goodshepherdlse



GSlacrosse.org/voice

To access this and other publications online visit [GSlacrosse.org/voice](https://GSlacrosse.org/voice).

## Give Volunteering Within Church

### Flower and Bulletin Sponsorship

Sign up on the bulletin board in the concourse to sponsor the weekly bulletins or flowers in honor of a loved one or a special event. Please give us the reason you are sponsoring them. If you do not give us a reason, the bulletin will only have your name as the sponsor.

*If you wish to sponsor the chancel or pulpit flowers, you are responsible for ordering and paying for them directly. Please be sure the flowers are delivered to the church office on or before Friday at noon.*

### Readers & Ushers always Appreciated!

Readers and Ushers are always valued at our worship services. Please consider signing up on the sign up sheet in the welcome area at the back of the sanctuary. You can sign up to read for a time and day that works for you. The readings will be

sent (either by mail or email) to you early that week. Interested in ushering? Contact Kathy (608)788-0450. We really do need your help!

### Women Who Wrestle With The Word (W5)

If you would like to be a part of a regular gathering of Christian Women, you are always welcome to join W5. For info contact the office at (608)788-0450.



### Lydia Circle

Lydia Circle meets the first Tuesday of every month at 1pm in the quilting room. All women are welcome!

If you have any questions, contact Carol Abraham at (608) 787-0679.



*Pastor's article continued from page 1.*

Mary knows. As it says in the gospels, "His mother kept all these things pondering them in her heart." It also says when Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem, Simeon appears and says, "A sword will pierce through your soul also." As Advent and Christmas approach, let us ponder these things in our hearts. May we all experience God's blessings and be a blessing to those around us and may we be filled with the hope and love that Jesus gives.

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas Season.

Harald Bringsjord  
Pastor

## Serve Enriching Life, Sharing Talents

### Thank You All So Very Much...

**The Altar Guild.** We are up and running again. With a few changes. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, please contact the office or Ellen Klemp at 608-397-2139 or [klempellen@gmail.com](mailto:klempellen@gmail.com)

Thank you to Ann Hudson who sends out meaningful cards and handmade prayer shawls to bereaved families throughout the year. If you are interested in making Prayer Shawls, please contact the office.

**Care Ministries**—Thank you to all members who are serving as Good Shepherd Care Ministers! By bringing communion and care to those who are shut in their homes or in care facilities you truly are reflecting "God's work, Our hands" through this ministry. One person said it truly is a gift to get a visit with communion through my care minister, it makes me feel connected to the church.

**Prayer Chain Ministry**—Thank you to all the members of Good Shepherd's Prayer Chain. Prayer ministers pray daily for Good Shepherd intentions, special/urgent requests, the community and the world beyond. Call Kathy at the office to serve through prayer.

### Causeway Caregivers

Causeway Caregivers exists to help! Give Causeway a call if you need assistance in or around your home or if you have a few hours to volunteer helping those who do. (608) 775-9999 or visit our website: [causewaycaregivers.org](http://causewaycaregivers.org)





## Lead

### *Raising Up Spiritual Leaders*

#### Calling All Musicians!

Our "Sounds of Praise" worship band invites you to help us lead the worship here at Good Shepherd. "Sounds of Praise" is intended to bring together the greatest number and variety of instruments possible, presenting special music and enhancing our wide variety of hymn styles. Whatever type of instrument you play, "Sounds of Praise"

welcomes you! Please call Randy Lyden at (608) 792-1305 or email [randy@gslacrosse.org](mailto:randy@gslacrosse.org) to be a part of this growing and exciting praise band!



**Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!**

#### The Sanctuary Choir

The Sanctuary Choir rehearses between services every Sunday from September through May and new members are always welcome!! If you would like to join our Sanctuary Choir, please contact Karl Greenfield at 790-3785 or at [karl@gslacrosse.org](mailto:karl@gslacrosse.org)

#### Sunday School Choir

We rehearse as part of our 8:30am Sunday School program from September through May in the Mattes Center and new members are always welcome! If your children would like to be a part of the Gloria Dei Choir, please contact Darlene Lassig at 608-769-1499 or at [darlene@gslacrosse.org](mailto:darlene@gslacrosse.org).

#### Hand Bell Choirs

Practices are on Sunday evenings at 5:30pm from September through May in the Choir Room. If you have any questions please contact Linda Jerome at 317-1335 or email at [linda@gslacrosse.org](mailto:linda@gslacrosse.org).

#### High School Youth Group (Grades 9-12)

Good Shepherd Youth Group provides a chance to meet other awesome teens just like yourself. We meet weekly in the youth room of Good Shepherd on Wednesdays at 6:30pm. Come when you are able, during Lent we meet after the Wednesday Lenten Service.

*Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth, Ecclesiastes 12:1*

## Connect

### *Bridging Our Community To Our World*

#### Mobile Meals of La Crosse

**We are did 8 weeks for Mobile Meals throughout the 2022 calendar year and we will be doing 9 weeks in 2023!**

Remember that many of the people that our meal drivers deliver to may see no one else but the you that day, so please give them a big HI and a smile from you and Good Shepherd!!

Pick-up place is Franciscan/Mayo at the Market Street door and the pick-up time will be 11am.

Please allow 1 1/2 to 2 hours for deliveries. We are route #1.



#### West Avenue Food Emergency Relief

Food donations for WAFER may be left in the stewardship area in the concourse or you can support WAFER with a monetary gift. Simply make your check out to Good Shepherd, indicate WAFER in the check

memo, and mail your check to us or drop it in the offering basket if you attend one of our in person services.



#### Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts & Scouting for Girls Meet at Good Shepherd

**Cub Scouts—Pack 10** meets at 6pm, 2nd & 4th week on Tuesday's in the Mattes Center. Off over the summer.

If you have any questions, please call the church office at 788-0450 and we can connect you with the group leaders.

**Boy Scouts—Troop 22** meets at 6:45pm weekly on Tuesday's in the Mattes Center. Off over the summer.

# Stewardship

## Memorials & Special Gifts

Good Shepherd gratefully acknowledges and sincerely appreciates your gifts over and above your regular giving. The following gifts were received from September 19 through October 20.



### Jan Engen Memorial

Don & Darcey Skibba  
George & Judy Brockman  
Ed & Ann Keuper

### Patricia Potts Memorial

Roger Potts

### Sugar Creek Horse Project

Mark & Bridget Skolos  
Dave & Barb Foye  
George & Judy Brockman  
Jim & Jan Quinn  
Keith & Judy Engen  
Larry & Maree Smith

### Eldon Ellefson Memorial

Marilyn Groves  
Sharon Moline  
George & Judy Brockman  
Ed & Ann Keuper  
Katie Vongroven

Richard Seeks  
Fran Ellefson  
George & Judy Brockman  
Ed & Ann Keuper

### Food For Schools Project

Jim & Jan Quinn  
John Wood

### WAFER

John Wood  
Barb Hegge

### Giving Tree Donation

Tom & Phyllis Lynch



## October Monthly Benevolences From Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

ELCA / Synod Support	\$1,905
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$204
Companion Synod - Peru	\$10
Synod Seminary Scholarships	\$10
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$160
WI Lutheran Social Services	\$200
Community Thanksgiving Dinner	\$100
WAFER	\$60
Our Savior's Come for Supper	\$1,000

# Church Numbers

## Weekly Sunday Attendance

Date	8:30	10:30
10/01/23	90	47
10/08/23	95	56
10/15/23	88	42
10/22/23	105	84
10/29/23	107	42

## Weekly Envelope Offerings

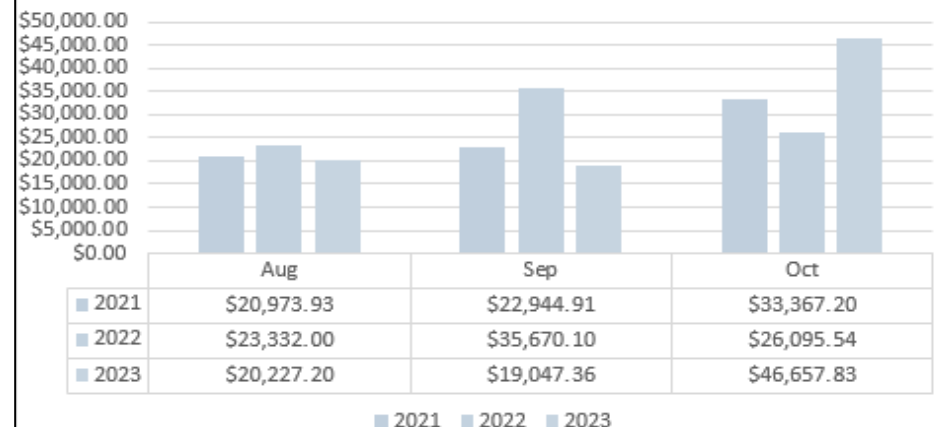
Date	Weekly	% Budget
10/01/23	\$16,114.50	276.2%
10/08/23	\$8,470.30	145.2%
10/15/23	\$15,497.41	265.7%
10/22/23	\$3,026.43	51.9%
10/29/23	\$3,549.19	60.8%
Total:	\$46,657.83	160.0%

## Envelope Offering Comparison

October 2023	October 2022	% Difference
\$46,657.83	\$26,095.54	78.8%
YTD 2023	YTD 2022	% Difference
\$251,311.22	\$242,775.13	3.5%

If you would like to view the complete financial statements that are shared with the Council, please contact Rick in the church office at 788-0450 or email [rick@gslacrosse.org](mailto:rick@gslacrosse.org)

## Envelope Offerings



## Around the Parish...

### Advent Luncheon

**Saturday, December 2, 2023 11am**

Good Shepherd Women WELCA will be hosting the Advent Luncheon this year for the women of Our Redeemer and Mary Mother of the Church Parish.

The service will be followed by salads and desserts in the Mattes Center. If you are interested in attending, would like to volunteer to help, or could contribute a salad or dessert, please sign up on the sheets on the bulletin boards in back of church.

If you have any questions, please contact Lori at 608-386-3388 or [Lori@gslacrosse.org](mailto:Lori@gslacrosse.org)

### Burrito Breakfast

Join us for a Burrito breakfast Sunday, December 3rd between services, while supplies last in the Mattes Center. Burritos can be filled with scrambled eggs, sausage, veggies and cheese. If you'd prefer, you can just have it served on a plate. A free will offering will be accepted to help send our youth to the National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. Come join us!

### Lydia Circle

Lydia Circle will meet again on Tuesday, Dec. 5th at **NOON** for a potluck in the Quilt Room. All ladies are welcome. Any questions please call LeeAnn Lyden at 788-7651. We hope you will join us for some good chats & always dessert & coffee.

### Good Shepherd Women-WELCA

WELCA welcomes all women from our congregation to be part of this committee. Our next meeting is Thursday, December 7th at 6pm on Zoom and in person.

### Game Night

Game Night for all ages is Friday, December 8th from 6 - 9pm. Bring your favorite game or learn a new one. Games vary, but include a variety of board, card, and other games. Contact Randy Page by email at [grimmcaf@hotmail.com](mailto:grimmcaf@hotmail.com)

### Grief Support

Grief support meets in the choir room at Good Shepherd twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays at 3pm. Our next and only meeting in December is on **December 14th**. All are welcome.

### Bunco Night

Our next Bunco night will be on Friday, December 15th at 6pm. Please bring a \$5.00 wrapped gift. The theme is Christmas. Bunco takes place in the Mattes center and is for ages 18 years and older. Contact Judy Christopherson @ 788-4335 or 769-3656

### Bible Study

There will **not** be a Bible Study in December. We plan to continue to meet monthly on the fourth Sunday of the month starting again in January.

### Good Shepherd Men's Group

Our men's group meets Sundays at 6:30pm in the Mattes Center. Simply show up if you would like to join us or contact Randy Page at [grimmcaf@hotmail.com](mailto:grimmcaf@hotmail.com) for more info.

### Special Thanks!

Thank you to everyone who helped with, and shopped at the Holiday Marketplace!

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
December 24th 4:00, 6:00 and 9:00pm.

Christmas Day Service 10:00am.

**Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Service**



## Around the Parish...

### 2024 Calendars

Please drop off any extra 2024 Calendars you may receive to the church office. We will get them to residents in our area nursing homes.

### Active Threat Presentations

Thank you to all of you who attended the Active Threat presentations hosted by Good Shepherd Women - WELCA. A \$100.00 donation was given to the La Crosse Police Department's K-9 Unit.

### "God's work. Our hands." Thank You!!

Thank you to all of the volunteers who used their time and talents "Getting GSLC Ready for the Holidays" and for everything that you accomplished on that Saturday!

### CHRISTMAS IS COMING!!!! GIVE THE GIFT OF A GIFT CARD!!!

Most of you know we have Kwik Trip cards, but there are so many other options as well!! Good Shepherd gets a cut of the cards sold. All you have to do is get your gift cards from Good Shepherd! There is a list on the back table in church of all the possible places you can get the cards from! We can order exactly what you need and have them back to you within a couple of weeks...All your Christmas needs in one spot AND it helps the youth with the National Youth Gathering and other fun activities.

The church office also has Kwik Trip cards available for immediate purchase.

### Good Shepherd Caring Tree

Our Caring Tree is now set up in our stewardship area in the narthex. On the tree you will find tags containing a nursing home residents name and items they would like as a Christmas gift. Please brighten their holidays by taking a tag and returning the wrapped present to the church by December 10th. For some of these residents, these may be the only gifts they receive for Christmas.

### Simply Giving

Good Shepherd offers this electronic giving options for making donations on a scheduled, automated basis. Pick up an authorization form from the information area in the back of the church, or call Rick at 608-788-0450.

### 2024 National Youth Gathering

The National ELCA Youth Gathering will take place next July 16-20<sup>th</sup> in New Orleans and the theme is "Created To Be." This event is open to all our youth entering grades 8-12. The Youth Gathering brings thousands of ELCA teens together to celebrate their faith, volunteer in the community, and see how God can work in each of their lives. It is a powerful opportunity to hang out with teens from all over the country and discuss their roles in this crazy, beautiful, and sometimes scary world. If you are thinking about sending your child, please email me ASAP at [jen@gslacrosse.com](mailto:jen@gslacrosse.com)

### My Time and Talent Gift!

By: \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Name)

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

Time Given: \_\_\_\_ hours \_\_\_\_ minutes

Gift Description: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Each person should share their Time and Talent gift (individually, not as a group or event) and place in the box.

**Your Gift Makes a Difference!**

This Stewardship Year you will be seeing "Time and Talent Gift" Stations around Church in common meeting and gathering areas.

Please complete a form for each *Gift of Time and Talent* you share within the church, your ministry beyond the church, and put it in the box.

The Time and Talent Thermometer in the Welcome Area of Church, will be a visible display of this Time and Talent ministry of sharing our gifts in love as Jesus taught us!

# December 2023



**Sunday School Choir**  
Meets in Sunday  
School each week.



**Bell Choir**  
Meets every Sunday  
each week at 5:30pm.








**Sanctuary Choir**  
Meets every Sunday  
each week at 9:30am.



**Sounds of Praise**  
Meets as scheduled on  
Saturdays at 4pm.

*In-person Worship Sundays at 8:30 and 10:30 . The 8:30 service is also live steamed on our website at [www.gslacrosse.org](http://www.gslacrosse.org)*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>November 26</b> 8:30am Worship 8:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 6:30pm Bible Study 	<b>27</b> 6pm Advent Luncheon Meeting	<b>28</b> 6pm Parish Ed Meeting 6:45pm BS Troop 22 Mtg	<b>29</b> 6:30pm Confirmation	<b>30</b> 3pm Grief Support 6pm Hospitality Mtg	<b>December 1</b> 5:30pm Adult Tree Trimming	<b>2</b> 11am Advent Luncheon
<b>3</b> 8:30am Worship/communion 8:30am Sunday School 9am Burrito Breakfast 10:30am Worship/communion 6:30pm GS Men's Group 	<b>4</b> 10am Before the After	<b>5</b> Noon Lydia Circle Pot Luck 6pm BS Troop 22 Adult Mtg 6pm Buildings & Grounds 6:45pm BS Troop 22 Mtg	<b>6</b> 6:30pm Confirmation	<b>7</b> 6pm WELCA Mtg	<b>8</b> 6pm Game Night	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 8:30am Worship 8:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship 3pm Cub Scouts Pack 17 6:30pm GS Men's Group 	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 1:15pm Dementia Support 1:45pm Hillview Communion 6:45pm BS Troop 22 Mtg	<b>13</b> 6:30pm Confirmation	<b>14</b> 3pm Grief Support	<b>15</b> <b>January Voice Articles Due</b> 6pm Bunco (Christmas Theme)	<b>16</b> 8:30am Christmas Program rehearsal
<b>17</b> 8:30am Christmas Program 10:30am Worship/communion 6:30pm GS Men's Group	<b>18</b> 6pm Membership Mtg	<b>19</b> 6pm Admin/Exec Meeting 6:45pm BS Troop 22 Mtg 7pm Church Council Potluck	<b>20</b> 6:30pm Confirmation	<b>21</b> 6pm Hospitality Mtg	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24 Christmas Eve</b> NO Sunday School 4pm Candle Light Worship 6pm Candle Light Worship 9pm Candle Light Worship 	<b>25 Christmas Day</b> Office Closed 10am Christmas Worship	<b>26</b> 6pm Parish Ed Meeting 6:45pm BS Troop 22 Mtg	<b>27</b> 6:30pm Confirmation	<b>28</b> NO Grief Support	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31 New Years Eve</b> 8:30am Worship NO Sunday School 10:30am Worship 	<b>January 1 New Years Day</b> Office Closed	<b>2</b> 1pm Lydia Circle 6pm Buildings & Grounds 6pm BS Troop 22 Adult Mtg 6:45pm BS Troop 22 Mtg	<b>3</b> 6:30pm Confirmation	<b>4</b> 6pm WELCA Mtg	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>



## Church Council Members

- **Sara Wrobel** *President of the Congregation* [Sara@gslacrosse.org](mailto:Sara@gslacrosse.org)
- **Steve Stelzl** *Vice President of the Congregation*
- **Todd Holtz** *Treasurer*
- **Erica Pedrazoli** *Secretary*

### Other Church Council Members

**include:** Tim Knudsen, Karl Noll, Thea Johnson, Mark Skolos, Lori Lowell, Janette Dawson, Matt Heberlein, Mark Bronson, Tom Lynch, Pastor Bringsjord, and Maddy Fergot is our Youth Representative.



- **Rev. Harald Bringsjord** *Senior Pastor*  
[prharald@gslacrosse.org](mailto:prharald@gslacrosse.org)
- **Rev. John Stennes-Spidahl** *Assistant Pastor*  
[prjohn@gslacrosse.org](mailto:prjohn@gslacrosse.org)
- **Rick Laufenberg** *Office Manager*  
[rick@gslacrosse.org](mailto:rick@gslacrosse.org) (608)788-0450
- **Kathy Johnson** *Office Assistant*  
[kathy@gslacrosse.org](mailto:kathy@gslacrosse.org)
- **Brea Ellison** *Children's Ministry Coordinator* [breanna@gslacrosse.org](mailto:breanna@gslacrosse.org)
- **Jen Servais** *Coordinator of Youth and Family Ministry* [jen@gslacrosse.org](mailto:jen@gslacrosse.org)
- **Randy Lyden** *Music Director/ Organist* [randy@gslacrosse.org](mailto:randy@gslacrosse.org) (608) 792-1305
- **Linda Jerome Bell** *Choir Director*  
[linda@gslacrosse.org](mailto:linda@gslacrosse.org)
- **Karl & Jaime Greenfield** *Sanctuary Choir Directors* [karl@gslacrosse.org](mailto:karl@gslacrosse.org) (608)790-3785
- **Darlene Lassig** *Volunteer Sunday School Choir Director* (608)769-1499  
[darlene@gslacrosse.org](mailto:darlene@gslacrosse.org)
- **Cody & Kerstin Nedegaard** *Volunteer Parish Nurses*  
[Cody\\_Kerstin@gslacrosse.org](mailto:Cody_Kerstin@gslacrosse.org)
- **Bill Klein** *Custodian*  
[bkleinpackfan@yahoo.com](mailto:bkleinpackfan@yahoo.com)

**Questions? Don't know who to contact? Contact the Church Office.**

(608) 788-0450 | [office@gslacrosse.org](mailto:office@gslacrosse.org) | [www.gslacrosse.org](http://www.gslacrosse.org)  
4141 Mormon Coulee Rd. La Crosse, WI 54601 (Office hours 8am to 1pm)

## Your Health

### *From the desk of our Parish Nurses*

Greetings,

This month's article focuses on the thyroid and conditions associated with it. The thyroid is a butterfly-shaped gland that sits low on the front of the neck. The thyroid is rich in blood vessels and nerves for voice quality pass through it. The thyroid secretes several hormones with the main hormone being thyroxine or T4. Thyroid hormones act throughout the body, influencing metabolism, growth and development, and body temperature. Two of the most common thyroid conditions are hyperthyroidism and hypothyroidism.

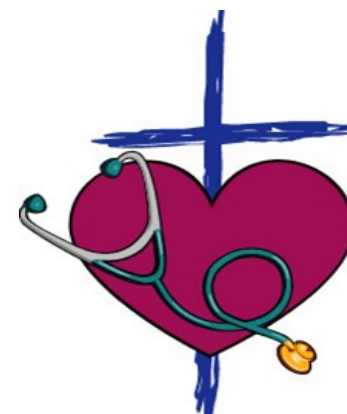
Hypothyroidism is a condition in which the thyroid gland doesn't produce enough of certain hormones. Hypothyroidism may be due to several factors, including autoimmune disease, thyroid surgery, radiation therapy, pregnancy, and medications (lithium). The signs and symptoms of hypothyroidism vary, depending on the severity of the hormone deficiency. Problems tend to develop slowly, often over several years. Signs and symptoms may include fatigue, increased sensitivity to cold, constipation, weight gain, hoarseness, thinning hair, and muscle weakness. This condition most often affects middle-aged and older women. See your doctor if you're feeling tired for no reason or have any of the other signs or symptoms of hypothyroidism.

Hyperthyroidism occurs when your thyroid gland produces too much of the hormone thyroxine or T4. Hyperthyroidism can be caused by several conditions including graves'

disease, plummer's disease, and thyroiditis. Hyperthyroidism can mimic other health problems, which can make it difficult for your doctor to diagnose. Symptoms can include unintentional weight loss, rapid heartbeat or irregular heartbeat, increased appetite, anxiety and irritability, tremor, and increased sensitivity to heat. Some of the most serious complications of hyperthyroidism involve the heart, so it is important to completely describe the changes you've observed to your doctor.

Take Care,

Cody and Kerstin Nedegaard



### Cody & Kerstin Nedegaard

*GS Volunteer Parish Nurses*  
[Cody\\_Kerstin@gslacrosse.org](mailto:Cody_Kerstin@gslacrosse.org)

**Health Questions?**  
Gundersen Telephone Nurse Advisor  
24/7 at (800) 858-1050.



# Sunday School Update

Pre-school thru Grade 5

Happy Holidays!

In Sunday School, we have just wrapped up our unit on David and Goliath. We learned that we must look at the traits people have on both the inside and outside. David may have been smaller than others on the outside, but he was kind, gentle, and quiet on the inside which was how he was picked to be a future leader.

We also have started practicing for the Christmas Program! Please try to have your children attend Sunday School regularly during the month of December as we practice for the program during Sunday School on December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Please remember that on December 10<sup>th</sup>, the children should come down to Sunday School at the beginning of church for the program practice.

We will have our final dress rehearsal Saturday December 16<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am, with full costumes. Then the official Christmas Program will take place December 17<sup>th</sup> during the first service!  
Just a reminder that there is no Sunday School on Christmas Eve or on December 31st, 2023.

Enjoy the holidays!

Brea Ellison



# Quick-Look

Upcoming Events At a Glance

December 3rd	Christmas Program Practice
December 10th right at 8:30	Christmas Program Practice
Saturday, December 16th at 8:30	Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal (8:30-10am)
December 17th at 8:30 service	Christmas Program at 8:30am service
December 24th	Merry Christmas! No Sunday School!
December 31st	Happy New Year! No Sunday School!
January 7th, 2024	PJ Sunday!



## Brea Ellison

Children's Education Coordinator  
Breanna@gs-lacrosse.org (608)788-0450

### Stay Connected!

Receive message alerts for Sunday School at Good Shepherd. Send the message @gs-Sunday to the number (608) 807-2784. All parents and children with a cell phone are encouraged to sign-up! Data charges may apply. Must age 13+ to sign up without parental guidance. This service is brought to you by Remind®.





## Youth Update

**Confirmation (Grades 6-8) High School Youth (Grades 9-12)**

### G4Squad



*"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:13*

November was a busy month for our Confirmation kids. We finished up with our examination of the 10 Commandments and how they relate to the life of a teen in 2024! We talked about how the first 3 commandments are about our relationship with God and the rest are about our relationships with each other. The students have made some goals on how to be intentional with their relationship to God and showing gratitude to those around them. We also helped with setting up the Holiday Marketplace. I know I am very grateful for Pastor's wisdom and ability to answer the hard questions our teens ask. I am also very grateful for our small group guides who show up with a positive attitude and make the discussions so much more meaningful. Lastly, I am grateful for all the kids. They are an amazing, diverse group, with lots of ideas, questions, and comedic relief. Their willingness to participate and explore some important topics is bucket-filling experience. Our next, deep dive will be the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

After skipping the event due to COVID, next year the ELCA will resume the National Youth Gathering. It will take place July 16-20th in New Orleans and the theme is "Created To Be." This event is open to all our youth entering grades 8-11. The Youth Gathering brings thousands of ELCA teens together to celebrate their faith, volunteer in the community, and see how God can work in each of their lives. It is a powerful opportunity to hang out with teens from all over the country and discuss their roles in this crazy, beautiful, and sometimes scary world. Please be on the lookout for our kids

fundraising efforts! We are committed to ensuring that every student who wants to experience this amazing faith activity has the financial ability to do so! We currently have 11 kids attending this amazing event!!

On behalf of all our teens, we wish you a Merry Christmas! We pray that your holidays are full of intentional time with God, family, and friends. May the gratitude of all we have learned this past year, help us be better versions of ourselves in 2024!

In Peace,  
Jen



Follow the activities of the G4Squad on Instagram: [g4squadlax](#)

# Fundraising

## WHILE YOU Shop®



**CHRISTMAS IS COMING!!!!**  
**GIVE THE GIFT OF A GIFT CARD!!!**

Most of you know we have Kwik Trip cards, but there are so many other options as well!! Good Shepherd gets a cut of the cards sold. All you have to do is get your gift cards from Good Shepherd! There is a list on the back table in church of all the possible places you can get the cards from! We can order exactly what you need and have them back to you within a couple of weeks...All your Christmas needs in one spot AND it helps the youth with the National Youth Gathering and other fun activities.

The church office also has Kwik Trip cards available for immediate purchase.

### Jen Servais

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## Music Notes

### From The Director of Music

#### Joy to the World: a Christmas Carol?

Joy to the World is one of the most well known songs of the Christmas season, yet it is really not about Christmas at all. Written by Isaac Watts (1674-1748), it is a song about the second coming of Christ rather than the first.

Isaac Watts was born in South Hampton, England. The son of a dissenting pastor, he exhibited a gift for rhyme early on and wrote his first hymn at age fifteen. Isaac went on to become a pastor and served a large independent church in London. He also continued to be a prolific hymn writer, writing some 750 hymns during his lifetime. In 1719 he published a hymn book titled *The Psalms of David: Imitated in the Language of the New Testament and Applied to the Christian State and worship*. In this collection, he rewrote the Psalms to reveal their New Testament meaning and included specific references to Christ and his ministry. It is in this collection that we find the rewriting of Psalm 98 that we know as the hymn Joy to the World.

Often, the first line of the hymn is mistakenly sung: "Joy to the world! The Lord has come." What Watts actually wrote was: "The Lord is come!" Like Psalm 98, Watts is referring to the second coming of Christ, not the first. This is evident in phrases like "...the Savior reigns" and "He rules the world with truth and grace."

Antioch, the tune to which Joy to the World is sung, was created by an unknown individual who pieced together musical

themes from the oratorio *Messiah*, by George Frederick Handel (1685-1759). Such borrowing of musical ideas was common in those days and there is no autographed score by Handel indicating that he actually composed the tune itself. American music educator Lowell Mason (1792-1872), who had considerable influence in his day, published *Joy to the World* in 1836 in the U.S. and gave the tune Antioch its name.



#### Randy Lyden

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And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

LUKE 2:10-11, ESV



*Christmas blessings to everyone!*

*From the staff of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church*