

THE SHEPHERD GAZETTE - January, 2024

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE (Thank You!)

Liturgists

Jan. 07 Lori Jones
14 Betty Bartlett
21 Gary Heusel
28 Shealyn Warrick

Acolytes

Jan. 07 Alayna Bailey
14 Levi Rikli
21 Ashley Bailey
28 Carson Mousel

Ushers

Jan. 07 Frank Schmal
Heidi Schmal
Eli Schmal
Kim Moeller
14 Jerry Hudgins
Sheryl Hudgins
Dianne Mota
21 Doug Obermeier
Daniel Gajardo
Ruth Gajardo
Luan Pitsch
28 Adam Martinez
Chris Hartley
Ed Hartley

Children's Message

Jan. 07 Joani Szudlo
14 Pastor Jeff Warrick
21 Dee Hughes
28 Joanie Szudlo

Greeters

Jan. 07 Myles & Rose Dymacek
14 Beth Languis &
Mary Stout
21 Sharon Buss &
Joyce Jensen
28 Norma Cummings &
Dorothy Megrue

Counting Offering

Jan. 07 Rose Dymacek & Gary Heusel
14 Dawn Bonness & Janet Latimer
21 Bill Rainey & Kitty Fynbu
28 Lyle Bender & Ed Schnabel

Deacon on Call

Dec. 24-Jan. 6 Ruth Gajardo
Jan. 7-20 Sharon Buss
Jan. 21-Feb. 3 Shannon
Dickenson

*Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church:
A welcoming, Christ-centered, community.*

GREETINGS FROM PASTOR JEFF

As a new year beckons, it warms the heart to consider the amazing Advent season we experienced as a church family. This special time of year, rich with anticipation, reflection, and celebration brings us closer together in our shared journey of faith. It is a spiritual journey to be sure, which culminates in a celebration on Christmas Eve. A grateful heart for God certainly moves us to celebrate the birth of the baby Jesus in worship.

During Advent, our hearts are filled with joy because we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior. In addition to commemorating the first coming of Jesus, Advent is also a time for Christians to anticipate the return of Jesus Christ. It is a season that holds a dual significance of past and future. Also, our Advent candle lighting takes place. Though the days get shorter and darker, an additional candle is lit each Sunday and the Advent light increases, reminding us of the hope, peace, joy and love that Jesus brings into our world. The flickering lights are not just symbols but also invitations to live these virtues in our lives and carry them into our community. Advent candle lighting is one of the great traditions of the church.

The Advent play that the Worship Team put on with the help of several members kicked off Advent on the right foot for sure. Thank you to Tammy and Shawn Mousel for playing Mary and Josph, Betty Bartlett for playing Elizabeth, Shealyn Warrick for narrating, April Barnes and Alayna Bailey for the beautiful music, Sally Docter for directing, Ashley & John Bailey, as well as Bethany Goossen for all the AV help. A second thank you to John Bailey for also writing the play.

We also enjoyed a Christmas Musicale courtesy of Alice Miller, a meaningful Advent devotional by John Piper, a congregational angel display and a wonderful Choir presentation of the history of some of our favorite Christmas carols. Thank you all!!

We were also blessed with opportunities to be a blessing to others this Advent season. Over 100 boxes were donated to Operation Christmas Child. Our Veteran's Giving Tree was generously sponsored (more than 900 dollars), we took a mission trip to Norfolk feeding the hungry, the Sunday School adopted family was well cared for, and we had the white gift offering for the hungry as well as donations to the deacons on Christmas Eve. It is all a powerful expression of God's love in action. The joy of Christmas isn't just found in receiving but much more profoundly in giving just as Jesus taught.

(continued on next page.)

On the challenging side, I am a sentimental person and caroling to the homebound is a favorite tradition. I derived such joy this year in caroling as did others. Yet, I cannot claim that the congregation is clamoring to carol. Outside of the church staff and families, only 4 members caroled this year (a sincere thank you to them). It is true that some traditions have a season, and you can't keep one going on good intentions and well-wishes, so perhaps it has had its season. We will see what 2024 holds.

In any event, a tradition that is alive and well is Christmas Eve worship. Hard to imagine any Christian forgoing worship on such a holy day. After all, the reason for the family get-togethers, the marvelous meals, the exchange of gifts, the sounds and sights, is God's great gift in the first place. Jesus is more than worthy of worship.

Christmas Eve is when we light the final center Christ candle in the Advent wreath bringing to fruition what began on the 1st Sunday of Advent, the church is made appropriately extra beautiful by adorning with poinsettias, the carols are joyful, the singing of Silent Night is lit by candlelight and special offerings are taken up. All these details contribute to a reverently celebrative atmosphere. We are, on Christmas Eve, regrounded in faith through remembrance of the humble beginnings of Jesus in a manger and the profound love of God that the nativity scene signifies.

As we reflect on these precious moments, let's carry the joy of Christmas past the threshold of the coming year. Let us remember that the birth of Jesus is not just a past event but a present reality that continues to inspire and guide us.

Wishing you all a blessed and joy-filled 2024!





FROM THE
YOUTH DIRECTOR

YOUTH NEWS

With Dee Hughes, Student Ministries Director

Happy New Year and prayers for abundant blessings in 2024.

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind.” Isaiah 66:22

Fresh starts are not just for January each new year. When God is our number one and His Word is our guide, we are consistently growing to be more like Jesus. Do we all make mistakes? Of course, but we are forgiven and are blessed with the opportunity to start afresh. Being a believer, a beloved child of God, is the greatest source of joy.

Can you make a commitment to read your Bible every day? Maybe you can have scripture sent to your phone or email. Some people read their daily verses before they are even out of bed. Grab a “These Days”, available at church, and read it daily. End your day by writing what you are thankful for and fall asleep with a thankful heart and greater peace.

God asks us to be in His Word. Are you? How do your actions show that you are a believer? As beloved children of God, our actions are to show our faith and trust in Him.

Here are some of the ideas to consider for January and February. What sounds good to you?

- **Ice Skating?**
- **Volunteer at the Eastridge Food Pantry?**
- **Snowman Golf in February with Westminster Presbyterian Church?**
- **Life sized Monopoly? With WPC?**
- **Thank you notes for parents, SS teachers, friends, Pastor Jeff? We could use rubber stamps and fun paper.**
- **Movie? Jonah? If the sound is fixed?**
- **Ripple Sunday School with parent(s)? - Scheduled for January 21.**
- **Mom’s Group?**
- **Bible Study? “Church of the Small Things”? Once a month, on Thursdays?**



Looking forward to hearing from you. I welcome your ideas.

Please be sure that you have VBS 2024 on your calendar. This year we will be co-hosting at Westminster, June 3-7. It’s not too soon to volunteer. Let me know which area(s) you prefer.

Make 2024 your best year ever!



The Christian Education Team has identified a family for our adopted family program this year - Mom (38 yr. old) female and her six kids (7 yr. old female, 8 yr. old male, 10 yr. old male, 11 yr. old female, 12 yr. old male and 14 yr. old male) are very excited we have chosen them to share some of our blessings!

Our regular Sunday School offering supports our giving to this family but we will continue to collect monetary donations.

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The Worship Team is gathering Lenten devotion entries now (in December) for publication of our GSPC Lenten Devotional.



Lenten Devotions

Pastor Jeff has compiled scripture readings to lead us through the Lenten season. Please write a brief one page or less devotional with a brief prayer to accompany the Scripture selection. Please sign up on the sheet on the table at the back of the sanctuary to write a devotion entry and brief prayer to accompany the Bible verses.

The sooner you sign up or contact the church office, the sooner you get to pick a verse that has meaning to you! Volunteer to write one entry or several. We were so enriched by our 2022 GSPC produced Advent Devotional, that we are branching out to a Lenten Devotional. Thank you for your quick response to this edifying opportunity.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR

#IlovePsalms

Thank you Lord fo this Past year. May your blessings and grace be upon us in this coming year. May our travels bring us closer to you, our weakness make us stronger in our faith, and may we rejoice in all things knowing you are in control. Thank you Lord. Amen.



- FROM THE RUTH BLECHA LIBRARY -

Winter is the perfect time to read a good book or a favorite magazine.

Thank you to Doug and Rhonda Obermeier for donating the book: **God Never Gives Up On You**. An anonymous person donated the book, **Then Again, Maybe I Won't**.

Georgia Raecke donated several magazines.

Book additions in the children's library are **Who is Jesus**, **A Snow Day for Hannah**, **The Snowman Storybook**.

The following magazines are available for your use. You do not need to return the magazines. All magazines are donated.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Threads | Decision Magazine |
| Guideposts | Nebraska Life |
| Golf Magazine | Horizons Magazine |
| Better Homes and Gardens | Readers Digest |
| Nebraskaland | |

“Reading is essential for those who seek to rise above the ordinary.” – John Rohn

The Presbyterian Women of GSPC wish to thank the congregation for their generous donation of \$675.00 for the Thank Offering on November 19th. Your outpouring of support for this mission is sincerely appreciated. This will support organizations in the United States and around the world. Thank Offering grants range from \$5,000 to \$50,000. At least 40 per cent of the offering funds health ministries. Special thanks to Pastor Jeff, Carole Beach, Vera Karel, Maggie Horak for their organizing the 2023 Thank Offering Sunday.



PW Future Dates

March 21st – Circle meets in the Parlor at 1:00 p.m. We will study lessons 5 and 6

August 8-11 – Churchwide Gathering, St. Louis, MO

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THANK YOU SO MUCH for the lovely Christmas cards, gifts, wonderful cookies, candies, pumpkin bread & cranberry bread! I'm so grateful for all the love and support I get from the wonderful people of GSPC. I'm so blessed to be able to continue to be a part of this great church!



WELCOME to the following who have been elected to serve on the Session, Deacon & Foundation Boards!

SESSION (Class of 2026): Lauren Doggett, Chris Hartley, Sheryl Hudgins, Doug Obermeier & Tammy Rikli

DEACONS (Class of 2026): Theresa Do, Diane Goranson, Naoma Hilligoss & Mary Stout

FOUNDATION (Class of 2026): Gary Heusel & Heidi Schmal

THANK YOU TO THE NOMINATING TEAM FOR THEIR DILIGENT WORK: Joni Calkins & Ed Schnabel (Co Chairs), Lyle Bender, Tim Calkins, Sheryl Hudgins, Naoma Hilligoss (Deacon Rep.) & Pastor Jeff Warrick (Ex-officio).

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Thank You to our out-going Session, Deacon and Foundation members for their years of service:
Tory Ford & Ellen Markham (Session);
Dianne Mota (Deacons) and Ed Hartley & Bill Rainey (Foundation).

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ALL NEW & RETURNING SESSION MEMBERS are asked to attend the Session Charge Saturday, January 13th, 2024 from 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. in the parlor. Breakfast will be provided.



SESSION CHARGE

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Just a word of thanks to those who donated to the Veteran's Giving Tree this year. Donations totaled an astounding amount of \$930. Your outpouring of love for your Veterans in Lincoln is much appreciated. The many veterans' requests will be able to be granted through your support of our Outreach not only for our local community, but for our Nation through support of our Depot project.

Thanks so much,
Ed Schnabel

Activity Time



The **Worship Team and Christian Education Team** plan to return to offering activity time for young children. Volunteers will be supervising activities for children 3-5 after the children's message until the worship service concludes. Please consider volunteering to be part of a rotation to serve our families with young children. We have many prepared activities and ideas for our volunteers to use and

welcome new ideas as well! Contact Kitty Fynbu or the Church Office to express your willingness.

The Activity Training is scheduled Sunday, January 21st following the worship service in the parlor.

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WANTED: Welcome Center Volunteers

Applicants must have a big smile, be friendly, and willing to meet new people. Good Shepherd has a very welcoming church family. Help us show that to new people! Contact Dianne Mota or Carole in the church office to volunteer.



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Your Legacy: Family, Church, and Charity



A few years ago, the GSPC Foundation hosted the “Wills and Estate Tailgate” financial workshop which was well received and attended by members of the church. On January 7, 2024, the Foundation is hosting a financial workshop entitled, “[Your Legacy: Family, Church, and Charity](#).” The event will take place soon after the

church service and include a “Soup and Salad Lunch” prepared by Olive Garden compliments of Thrivent Financial. Thrivent Financial Professional Jason Obermeier will be the featured speaker at the event.

Attendees will learn strategies around sustaining the church’s ministry, supplementing an endowment fund or leaving an inheritance for your family or favorite charity. This will benefit all ages who have a desire to plan and/or help secure an inheritance for your children as well as charitable organizations important to you. Jason will also discuss how Thrivent’s Action Team can support the church by helping leadership teams maximize this opportunity through individuals who decide to take part in this benefit. There will be an insert in the bulletins leading up to the event with more information and space where you can submit questions for Jason.

There will be a sign-up sheet on the back table of the sanctuary, or you can call the office to have your name added to the list. Everyone is encouraged to attend and submit questions and/or topics you would like to discuss at the workshop or workshops in the future.



The following Motions had been approved by Session:

- to approve Building & Ground Team's request for expenditure for Church Elevator Repair for an estimated cost of \$5,825.60, be paid from Church Maintenance Funds. This will cover all necessary parts, labor, and hydraulic oil to ensure the elevator meets safety standards and operates reliably.
- to approve Building & Ground Team's request for Parking Lot Lighting Repair and Upgrades, the total cost estimated to be \$10,00, with funds to come from our remaining 2023 Maintenance Budget. This cost will cover repair, upgrade and maintenance on the 15 lights for all necessary parts, labor, upgrade all lights to LED and add caps to prevent damage from birds/mice.

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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



03 LEVI RIKLI

25 BRAD RIKLI

05 GARY LATIMER

26 ELLEN MARKHAM

09 CAROLYN DIETZ

30 JIM VOSICKY

18 MARK LANGRUD

31 ED SCHNABEL

23 ANDY BONNESS



**GOOD SHEPHERD
PRESBYTERIAN**

2024 January Pantry Report



Give A Gift For The New Year!

There is No Hunger Problem We Can't Solve...

Going into the New Year, many households in Lincoln continue to experience food insecurity issues. The continuing support from **Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church** helps so *much* to serve a large number of individuals. The **Eastridge Pantry** welcomes any additional support from the **Good Shepherd Congregation**, including additional help with volunteers who could spare some time on Wednesday or Sunday afternoons to help with food distribution - or on Thursday afternoons, to help with filling of boxes.

There is a SignUp Genius account for volunteers; just CLICK on the Link(s) below:

Distributions: <https://bit.ly/FPDistFood>

Filling: <https://bit.ly/FPFillingBoxes>

(or use the QR Code Below)

(or use the QR Code Below):

Of course, what the Pantry needs most, is food! They can accept any shelf-stable food items but, their biggest needs remain pretty much the same -- volunteer help, cash, or food donations, including oil and cleaning products. These are flour, snacks, breakfast cereals, and things they can *always* use.

And, Don't Forget! You can always plate, or mail it to:

GSPC
c/ o Food Pantry Donation
8300 East Pointe Road
Lincoln, NE 68506



place a check in the offering

Place Donations in the Pantry Box by the Elevator.

To the many volunteers who have helped out at the Eastridge Food Pantry - you ARE making a difference right here in Lincoln!
THANK YOU!!!

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Praises & Prayer Requests Deacon on Call

(Dec.24-Jan. 6 - Ruth Gajardo;

Jan. 7-20 - Sharon Buss; Jan. 21-Feb. 3 - Shannon Dickenson)

.... For those with cancer

* Prayers for **Christine Read**, friend of Gary & Karen Heusel, has recently been diagnosed with lung cancer. She is currently undergoing treatment and her prognosis is good.

* Continued prayers for **Bill Rainey** as he recuperates at home.

Continued prayers for **Georgia Raecke** as she recovers and heals from eye surgery and follow-up appointments are much appreciated. Thank you so much.**Georgia's Family**

Update: The doctor has stopped chemotherapy for **Min Cha** for now because he is afraid it is doing more harm than good. Min's husband is taking her to MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, TX this month. Since her cancer is so rare they are hoping to get some answers there. Thanks for your much needed prayers.**Sally Docter**

Please continue to lift up **Lori Jones** in comfort and healing as she deals with a cancer diagnosis. Thank you for your prayers.

.... **For those with other health concerns**

* Prayers for **Linda Bitney** as she recovers from a fall at Southlake Village.

Thank you for the prayers for **Ron Hostetler, brother-in-law of Terry Hostetler and uncle of Heidi Schmal**, who is recovering at home.

Please continue to lift up **Ann Owens** in prayer as she needs to feel the loving arms of Jesus wrapped around her as she faces a difficult time. Thank you.**Jan & Dee Hughes**

Continued prayers for **Mike DeVries** as he deals with ALS progression. He uses a brace to support his neck when he drives and needs a ventilator at night while he sleeps. Thanks ...**Sally Docter**

... **Praises**

* Congratulations to **Bethany and Ryley Egger** on the birth of Hudson Nicholas who joined their family on Friday, December 15th! Hudson weighed in at 8 pounds on the nose and was 21.5 inches long. Please join in congratulating Bethany and Ryley and welcoming Hudson into the world.

.... **For those who mourn**

Condolences to the **family of Dwight and Beth Languis** on the passing of Dwight's father, Lester W. Languis on December 4, 2023, in Adams. Please lift the Languis family up in your prayers for God's comfort and solace to be with them. Memorial services were held December 8th..



Short Story by Ray: United States

This is my true life story. It starts with my being down on my luck in Los Angeles and ending up homeless for 3 1/2 years sleeping in alleyways, the subways, homeless shelters, in abandon buildings, and just on the sidewalks of Los Angeles.

One frigid night I was trying to sleep in between some office buildings in the city of Toluca Lake, but because I had not eaten in three days, I could not get to sleep. I was suffering so much, and I was so hungry that I said to myself that if I didn't get any food today, I was going to get it over with by killing myself.

An Angel to Help

So I got up around 6 am and hid my sleeping bag in the bushes, and it also was a very foggy day. I remember thinking to myself that if I could just get \$3.45, it would allow me to go over to the red building breakfast place on riverside blvd and breakfast to eat, but where and how could I get the money, \$3.45, at that time in my life was like trying to get \$1,000.

I started walking down the alley in the thick fog, and out of nowhere and an older man with a cane came walking toward me, stopped, and said hello. I speak back to him, and then he turns towards the direction he just came from and tells me that there is some money by the tree in the direction that he just came from by the red bricks on the left side of the alley. He then tells me that he can't get the money because he can't bend down due to his bad back.

Vanished

I was so excited that I started walking pass him about five or six steps, and then remembered that I didn't say thank you, but when I turned back to say thanks, he was gone. I tried my best to find him by going up and down the alley, but he had just vanished. He was walking more slowly than an old Turtle with that cane, so how could he disappear like that.

So I went to the location that he told me about and found the tree in someone's front yard. I walked over to the tree and looked, and looked and nothing was there at all, so I gave up and walked across the street, but a little voice in my head told me to go back to the tree and try again.

So I turned around and went back to the tree and got on both knees. On the ground spread all around the tree were those red woodchucks that people put down, but as I looked again for the money, I saw nothing. That was it, and I had made up my mind, today was the day that I was going to kill myself.

That Small Voice

Weak, tired, cold, and still sleepy, I got up and made my way across the street again. But again that small voice spoke to me and said, go back and try one more time, so I turned in the middle of the street and went back for one last try.

As I made my way back to the tree, I had a quick vision of myself jumping off an office building somewhere or of jumping off the freeway overpass in Burbank.

When I got to the tree again, I got down on both knees and looked, but saw nothing. But just then that small voice said to me, why don't you take your hands and move some of the red woodchucks out of the way, and so I did, and to my great surprise, there were some coins.

After quickly grabbing up the coins and heading across the street to count it, and to my happiness, the total amount was \$3.45, just enough for my first meal in three days and saving my life!





JANUARY,

Sun	Mon	Tue
	<p>New Year's Day 1</p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p>2</p> <p>NO Lunch Bunch Bible St.</p> <p>Office Closed</p>
<p>Communion 7</p> <p>9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship - Installation of 2026 Elders, Deacons, Foundation 11:30 Jason Obermeier's Lunch & Trivent Presentation (Parlor) 1:00 Communion to Homebound</p>	<p>8</p> <p>6:30-8:30 Boy Scouts</p>	<p>9</p> <p>12:00 Lunch Bunch Bible St.</p> <p>7:00 Bldg. & Grounds Team</p>
<p>Cookie Sunday 14</p> <p>9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship</p>	<p>15</p> <p>11:30 Church Lunch Ladies (Stauffer's Café)</p> <p>6:30-8:30 Boy Scouts</p>	<p>16</p> <p>12:00 Lunch Bunch Bible St.</p>
<p>21</p> <p>9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 11:30 Activity Time Training (Parlor)</p>	<p>22</p> <p>6:30-8:30 Boy Scouts</p>	<p>23</p> <p>12:00 Lunch Bunch Bible St.</p>
<p>28</p> <p>9:00 Sunday School 10:30 Worship</p> <p>2:00-3:00 April Barnes Piano Performance Class (Sanctuary)</p>	<p>29</p> <p>6:30-8:30 Boy Scouts</p>	<p>30</p> <p>12:00 Lunch Bunch Bible St</p>

2024

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>3</p> <p>10:30 Staff Meeting</p> <p>6:00 Evening Bible St. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>4</p> <p>6:00-8:00 Star City Lions Club Meeting</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>10</p> <p>10:30 Staff Meeting</p> <p>6:00 Worship Team 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>8:30-12:00 Session Charge (Parlor)</p>
<p>17</p> <p>10:30 Staff Meeting</p> <p>6:00 Evening Bible St. 7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>18</p> <p>6:00-8:00 Star City Lions Club Meeting 7:00 Deacons' Meet</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>24</p> <p>10:30 Staff Meeting</p> <p>Deadline to Submit Articles to be Included in February Gazette</p> <p>7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>8:30 Men's Breakfast Fellowship (Stauffer's Café)</p>	<p>27</p>
<p>31</p> <p>7:00 Choir Rehearsal</p>			

THE SHEPHERD GAZETTE

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Return Service Requested



The Shepherd Gazette is published monthly as a service to the members & friends of Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church, Lincoln, NE.

If you would prefer not to receive this newsletter, please call or email the church office.

The Reverend Jeff Warrick - Pastor
Dee Hughes - Student Ministries Director
Carole Beach - Administrative Assistant
Terry Hostetler - Treasurer
John Bailey - Choir Director
April Barnes & Jen Bailey - Pianists
John & Bethany Goossen - AV Techs

January, 2024