

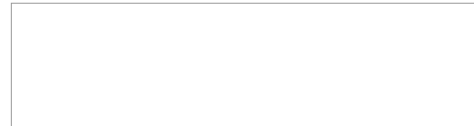
Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church

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St. John, IN
Permit No. 12

April 2026

To the family of:



Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we share God's love with all creation.



Weekly Communion Services:
Saturday 5pm, Contemporary
Sunday 8:30am, Traditional
Sunday 10:00am, Contemporary

SHEPHERD'S STAFF

HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

1st Quarter Spiritual Growth Activities, in Pictures

Thank you to all of our Holy Shepherd members and friends who've participated in the Year of Spiritual Growth activities so far. We hope the many special events have lead us to learn, connect and grow with others, and deepen our faith by helping in our community. Your involvement and enthusiasm has been truly inspiring! We're grateful for your presence and look forward to continuing to grow together in the coming months!



April 2026



MISSION STATEMENT

To fulfill our mission as Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, we:

Trust in God for guidance and support,

Thank God in word and deed,

Teach the good news of Jesus, and

Tend those inside and outside the flock,

Because the Holy Spirit: **Ties us** closer to God and to one another, and

Transforms us into devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.

Happy Easter

Maundy Thursday

7:00pm - Service with Holy Communion and washing of feet

Good Friday

12:00pm & 7:00pm - The Seven Sayings of Jesus from the Cross

Easter

Saturday, April 4th 5:00pm - Contemporary Service with Holy Communion

Sunday, April 5th 8-11:00am - Easter Appetizers & Sweets, in the narthex

8:30am - Traditional Service with Holy Communion

10:00am - Contemporary Service with Holy Communion

11:00am - Easter Egg Hunt

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!



FROM THE PASTOR

A Week of Weeks

Alleluia! Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

We greet each other with these words on Easter Sunday as we're surrounded by family and friends and the worship space is filled with flowers. It is the day that is the focal point of our faith - the day of the resurrection.



Easter is such a central part of our faith that it is not contained to a single Sunday. Easter Sunday begins a season that goes for 49 days - a week of weeks. We continue to greet each other with the good news that Christ is risen through this whole season, and we spend this whole season reflecting on the resurrection, what it means, how it changes us, where it leads us.

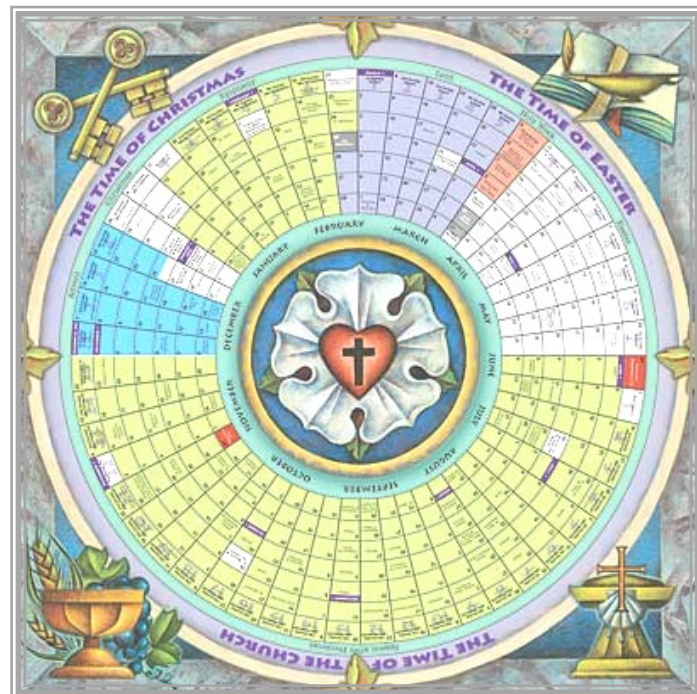
This year, the first reading in worship each week will come from the book of Acts. The disciples find themselves in the same place we find ourselves in the days after the resurrection - faithfully searching for meaning. We follow along as the disciples seek meaning through preaching, through changing how they live, through dying faithfully.

The Gospel readings reflect on the resurrection in other ways. The first three weeks of the season, including Easter Sunday itself, tell us about the disciples' encounters with the risen Jesus. They are learning to recognize him in new ways, yet he is also the same person they came to know and love before his death and resurrection. The following four weeks of the season, we hear from Jesus himself as he teaches about the resurrection and what will and will not change for the disciples when he's no longer with them the same way he is as he speaks.

As in the readings from Acts, we find ourselves in some of the same places as the disciples in the Gospel readings. As we grow in faith, we learn to recognize the risen Jesus and to recognize the resurrection in the people and the world around us. We too meditate on Jesus' words about how to live faithfully when he has gone back to his Father, as he says in John's Gospel.

This whole season is our opportunity to reflect on the resurrection. Scripture will guide us in this for a week of weeks. I hope and pray that this time can help us all sense the blessing of the resurrection at work in our lives more, and equip us to share that good news with the world.

In Christ,
Pastor Eric



April 2026 Financials

Income	Feb-26	Balance
Operating fund	\$ 34,453.50	\$ (5,106.31)
Capital Improvement Func	\$ 4,514.45	\$ 72,386.10
Total	\$ 38,967.95	
Expenses	Feb-26	Expenses YTD
Operating Fund	\$ 29,545.71	\$ 77,186.79
Capital Improvement		
Total	\$ 29,545.71	\$ 77,186.79
Restricted Funds Income	Feb-26	Bal 2-28-2026
Altar Flowers Gifts	\$ -	\$ 788.48
Coin Folders	\$ -	\$ 342.25
Community Garden		\$ 971.44
Lutheran Disaster relief	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Major Mission	\$ 236.15	\$ 1,042.10
Memorial	\$ -	\$ 1,075.00
Mission of the month	\$ 1,817.95	\$ 2,880.19
Nat. Youth Gathering		\$ 11,509.75
Nipsco Gift of Energy	\$ -	\$ 977.05
Offsite Service Team	\$ -	\$ 7,021.18
Prime Timers	\$ -	\$ 755.42
Shepherd's Suppers	\$ 56.00	\$ 4,349.37
Staff Gift Collection	\$ -	\$ 350.02
Sunday School	\$ 98.85	\$ 350.02
Fees/Hall Rental/other	\$ -	\$ 560.00
VBS	\$ -	\$ 2,009.14
Women's Service Group		\$ 9,102.68
Youth Fellowship	\$ 75.25	\$ 2,350.88
Benevolences	Feb	YTD
Mission of the Month	\$ 1,391.12	\$ 3,192.64
	Feb	
Major Mission	\$ 236.15	\$ 3,464.43
ELCA Synod Benevolence	\$ 3,449.00	\$ 8,145.00

Happy April Birthdays!





**WE WANT YOU IN
DETROIT
JUNE 17-20**

Have questions? Need convincing?! Talk to Pastor Eric!
If you're ready to commit, use the QR code above.



**God's work.
Our hands.**

Evangelical Lutheran

April Collection of the Month: Socks for The Night Ministry

At our Night Ministry volunteer event in May, we'll be giving away hot meals and new socks. Why socks? Socks are the most requested but least donated item for homeless populations.

Clean socks are essential for maintaining health and hygiene. They prevent foot infections, and for those who spend much of the day walking and on their feet in all kinds of weather, they wear out quickly.

Never underestimate the psychological boost a fresh pair of socks can give! By providing support with something as simple as pair of new socks and a meal, we restore a sense of respect and dignity every person deserves, regardless of a person's circumstances.

Please donate new packs of men's crew socks, in M and L, in the baskets under the Opportunity Table in the narthex. Thank you!



"When is Mommy coming home?"

April's Mission of the Month will help a HSLC family facing significant hardship. Two years ago, the wife suffered a stroke and has since required full-time nursing home

care. The father is a loving Christian man, and does his best to work and care for both his wife and young child, but the family is struggling to deal with this heartbreaking, unexpected long-term illness and financial strain. Please consider supporting them this month, and indicate "Mission of the Month" on the pew envelope or in your electronic giving, and thank you for helping!



New Sundays and Seasons and Portals of Prayer Daily Devotional Prayer Booklets Available Now!



The daily devotional booklets for April, May, and June are now available outside the office. They're "spiritual tool kits" to help you build and stick to a meaningful daily habit. When you're stressed, upset, or just "stuck," they remind you

that others have walked this path before, and the current "chapter" you're on isn't the whole book! They include a lectionary to encourage you to read a wide variety of Bible scriptures and themes, rather than just your favorite parts. The best part: they're free! Please take them home to enjoy today before they're gone!

MAJOR MISSION COLLECTION

April - May - June to benefit



Lutheran Disaster Response Teams

Lutheran Disaster Response is one of the first groups on the scene with assistance when disaster strikes, at home or abroad. LDR continues to work with those in the affected areas long after the media attention has waned. To contribute to Lutheran Disaster Response, check "Major Mission" on your offering envelope or electronic giving.



A screenshot of a WGN newscast shows a LDR table set up in Kankakee, IL within a day of the tornado touchdown!



COUNCIL



From Lent into Easter and Beyond: Honoring Jesus' Sacrifice in our Daily Lives

We have come through these forty days of Lent exploring Jesus' journey to the cross, and how He prepared His followers for His death and God's plan for redemption through many pivotal actions and teachings. Prediction of His suffering and crucifixion, the symbolic sacrifice of His body and blood for the forgiveness of sin during the Last Supper, His final teachings of the trials and challenges the disciples would face following His death, and the importance that they remain steadfast in love and unity amongst themselves. Jesus offered His followers comfort and guidance, reassuring them that He would return, and He taught them about the Holy Spirit.

I can only imagine what each of them must have been thinking and feeling, and the questions and confusion that ensued. It is even harder for me to fathom what Jesus Himself was contemplating and all that He endured. Throughout the Old Testament we hear of the animal sacrifices God's people offered in order to maintain their covenant relationship with God, but in the New Testament we are presented with the knowledge that Jesus would become the ultimate sacrifice, offering His life to atone for the sins of all humanity. He would not just be another temporary sacrifice, but an everlasting one! Jesus' offering was perfect, sinless, and eternal, providing redemption once and for all. Eternal...it is difficult for us as humans to contemplate the vastness of His sacrifice.

So how can we honor Jesus' ultimate sacrifice in our daily lives? By being living sacrifices; dedicating our lives to God as an act of worship, and being willing to offer body, mind, and spirit to God's purpose. As humans we are inherently selfish and sinful; this is evident in our thoughts, feelings, and actions toward others. Dedicating ourselves to being a living sacrifice involves praying and practicing mindfulness regularly, making decisions that honor God through moral integrity and sincere worship, and embodying spiritual devotion through our intentional actions and choices.

Becoming a living sacrifice is a transformative journey, aligning ourselves with Jesus' example of 'selfless' not 'selfish' love and service. And we are not alone on this journey! The early Christians were instructed to bear one another's burdens and demonstrate God's love through acts of service; not merely through individual devotion, but by actively contributing to the well-being of others. God's plans are so much greater than our own. Start with making time each day for prayer and reflection. Read the Bible and allow His word to change your heart.

Invite God in! As humans we carry so much that we cannot control; lay your worries on Him and trust that He knows what is best. God is God, and we are not. Embrace the peace that comes from knowing that He's got this! At Holy Shepherd we speak of transforming us into devoted disciples of Jesus Christ. Let us share this amazing journey together.

Yours In Christ, Kristin Wood, HSLC Council Member at Large

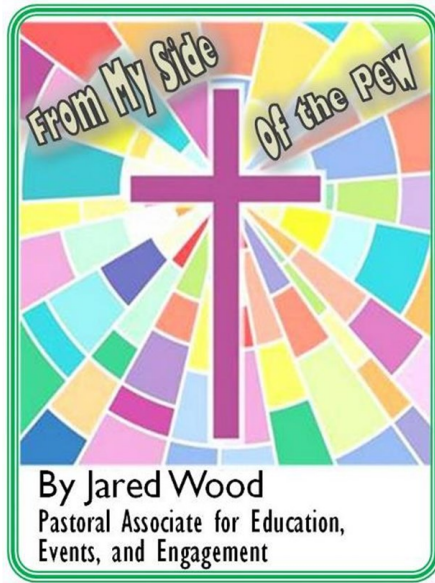
Upcoming Dates

- Mar 29 - Palm Sunday
- April 2, Maundy Thursday, 7pm
- April 3, Good Friday, noon & 7pm
- April 4, Easter service, 5pm
- April 5, Easter appetizers, 8-11am
- April 5, Easter services, 8:30am & 10am
- April 5, Easter Egg Hunt, 11am
- April 8, 5pm: Growing with Music: Songs of Easter
- April 10, 6:30pm: Parents Night Out
- April 12, 4pm: Shepherd's Supper: ham & potato casserole
- April 15, Wednesday Adult Ed/ Bible study resumes
- April 19, Sacred Places & Spaces: St George Greek Orthodox Church, Schererville
- April 27, Praying with Scripture: The Call of Samuel
- May 3, Growing Across Generations: Cookout Celebration

Shelf-Stable Meal Success!

Thanks to your food donations for the February Collection of the Month, lead by Dorothy Esch and several volunteers, HSLC was able to put together 41 family-sized meals, or 164 servings! They were donated in shoeboxes to the St John Township food pantry! The next shelf-stable meal collection will be held in May.





Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I want to take a moment to share my deep gratitude and encouragement reflecting on all that has been happening within our congregation. It is truly inspiring to witness so many of you actively participating in spiritual growth opportunities through Bible studies, worship, service, and fellowship. Your eagerness to grow in faith and walk together in Christ is a powerful testament to God's work among us.

Moments like these remind me that the Church is not just a place we attend, but a living, breathing community of believers who support, uplift, and strengthen one another. Seeing your engagement, your conversations, and your willingness to step into deeper discipleship has been nothing short of a blessing.

I also want to share some excitement and invite you to our upcoming cookout celebration on Sunday, May 3rd! It will be a wonderful opportunity to gather as a church family for food, games, and joyful connection. More details and signup information are coming soon. I encourage everyone to join us for this meaningful and fun-filled day!

Finally, I want you to know how truly thankful I am to be part of this congregation. You are more than a community, you are family. It is a privilege to walk alongside each of you in faith, to share in both the joys and challenges of life, and to grow together in the love of Christ.

Thank you for who you are and for the ways you continue to build one another up. I look forward to all that God has in store for us in the days ahead.

Blessings, Jared Wood

Blessings, Jared Wood



MUSIC NOTES

By Will Akins, Director of Arts and Worship

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This year is just buzzing by, I'm sure time is moving faster these days. I have almost completed my first full year as a member of the HSLC family. My position here at HSLC has allowed for a lot of growth as a professional to fully maximize the extent of my ministry here. I have enjoyed jumping into music with you and spiritually growing through the experience. We just had a great discussion on songs of Lent and next month I am excited to talk about Contemporary Christian Music better known as CCM. This versatile style of Christian music is great for prayer and meditation. When we resume in the fall we will talk about Hillsong, which serves as a sort of predecessor to CCM. These "Growing with Faith" sessions have been just the thing I have needed as they inspire me to dive into biblical text in a different way to understand it fully. On a personal note, it has inspired me to write more music.

I crave growth and this is right up my alley.

Along with growth I love to teach and educate and I have several opportunities here to do that. The children have spent time learning how to read music during rehearsal so that we can all feel confident while singing and playing. The adult choirs are being motivated to sing in ways they haven't in a while. Whether it's learning the difference between a quarter note and an eighth note or singing in a foreign language, we can always grow somehow. As we move into the spring and summer I will be attending several concerts and learning opportunities and I invite you to join me. I will update a schedule so you can do something mentally stimulating this season. Kick off that stimulation with our Spring Concert May 17th at 4 pm. This concert will feature the children's choir and chimes, the adult bells, and adult choir.

I am happy to be here and love making music with you and for you. Thank you for your continued love and support.

The music ministry is looking forward to announcing that we will have a summer choir. It will start after the regular choir concludes in May and we will meet Wednesday nights from 6:00 - 6:45pm. I invite you to join us for this summer project. We will sing every first Sunday during the summer months.

NEW CHOIR REHEARSAL TIMES:
Bells: 6:00-6:55pm Adult Choir: 7:10-8:15pm

Song of the Month: Golden by: Cory Wong
Bible Verse of the Month: Isaiah 40:31: but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.



Morning appetizers & sweets served 8-11am



&

Easter Egg Hunt, 11:00am. Toddlers to teens welcome, bring bags or baskets!



PARENTS NIGHT OUT!

SAVE THE DATE! FRIDAY, APRIL 10TH 6:30PM

Leave the "Why?" at the door and bring your "Finally!" to the Fellowship Hall. Enjoy a meal that doesn't require three trips to the microwave and a negotiation over broccoli. Let's play some games and have conversations that don't include explaining why we don't put Legos up our nose.

Escape the orbit of little ones--sign up in the narthex!

GROWING WITH MUSIC
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8TH, 5PM

SONGS OF Easter

TOGETHER WE'LL EXPLORE THE FESTIVE SONGS OF TRIUMPH, AND WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON AMONG OUR SISTER CHURCHES DURING THEIR EASTER CELEBRATIONS!



Holy Shepherd, you have voted and spoken! Our original sixteen hymns have been whittled down to the final two! Watch as Lift High the Cross and Beautiful Savior go head-to-head in the championship round. Which one will come out on top?! Make sure to vote by paper ballot in the narthex, or online with the QR code:



SACRED PLACES & SPACES

ST GEORGE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, SCHERERVILLE

SUNDAY APRIL 19TH 11AM

YEAR OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- A Sun, 4/5, 8-11am, Growing Across Generations: Easter Appetizers and Egg Hunt
 - P Wed, 4/8, 5pm, Growing with Music: Songs of Easter
 - R Sun, 4/19, 11:30am, Sacred Places & Spaces: St George Greek Orthodox Church, S'ville
 - I Mon, 4/27, 5pm, Praying with Scripture: The Call of Samuel
 - L
-
- M Sun, 5/3, 11am, Growing Across Generations: Cookout Celebration
 - A Wed, 5/13, 5pm, Growing with Music: Contemp. Christian Music
 - Y Sun, 5/17, 11am, Sacred Places and Spaces: Cowles Bog, Indiana Dunes
 - Y Mon, 5/18, 5pm, Praying with Scripture: The Call of Isaiah
 - TBD - Growing thru Service: The Night Ministry
-
- J Sun, 6/14, 11am, Sacred Places: St Timothy Community Church, Gary
 - U Wed 6/17-Sat 6/20, Growing thru Service: Detroit Mission Trip
 - N
 - E