

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church

Non-Profit Organization
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PAID
St. John, IN
Permit No. 12

June 2026



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

To the family of:



SHEPHERD'S STAFF

HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

Make Sense of Our Broken World at VBS



Get ready for an exciting week at Vacation Bible School 2026: Junkyard Redemption: God's Plan to Remake Our Broken World!

It will take place Monday, June 22-25th, 5pm - 8pm. Dinner is served every night at 5pm. Cost for the whole week is just \$5 per child.

Kids will enjoy creative crafts like junk sculptures, picture frames,



and junkyard tic-tac-toe, along with games including obstacle courses and scavenger hunts. There will also be kid-friendly dinners and fun snacks like juice box robots and fruity frog creations!



We'll wrap up the week with our VBS concert and a huge outdoor foam party celebration, which will be a joyful reminder that God is continually at work washing away brokenness and bringing new life, hope, and redemption through Christ.

We can't wait to see everyone there!



There is still time to register, go the online form at:

www.tinyurl.com/HSLC2026VBS

or use the QR code here:



Remember to bring lawn chairs, hats, sunglasses, and water bottles.

Dress for the weather and your comfort.

See you there!

**Sunday
Sept 6th
10am**



Upcoming Dates:

- June 14, 11am: Sacred Places & Spaces: St Timothy, Gary
- June 14, 4pm: Shepherd's Supper: BBQ hamburgers & hotdogs
- June 17-20: Detroit Mission Trip
- June 21: Father's Day
- June 22-25: Vacation Bible School
- July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 6pm: Summer Choir rehearsal
- July 4: Independence Day
- July 4: **no Saturday night 5pm service**
- July 5, 8:30am, Indoor traditional service
- July 5, 10am, Outdoor contemporary service
- July 6: Independence Day (observed), church closed
- July 12, 4pm: Shepherd's Supper
- July 19, 11am: Sacred Places & Spaces: NWI Islamic Center
- July 24, noon-5pm: Red Cross Blood Drive
- August 2, 8:30am: Summer Choir sings
- August 2: Broadway Music & BBQ
- August 16: Lake Etta Park ecumenical worship
- September 13: Rally Day
- September 26: Rummage Sale

FROM THE PASTOR

Switching Tracks

For those who don't know, and as a refresher for those who do, the readings we use in worship each weekend come from the Revised Common Lectionary. Typically the First Reading and the Psalm each week are tied thematically to the Gospel reading. As we move out of the season of Easter and into the time after Pentecost, we'll be switching tracks from the Complementary readings (where the first reading "complements" the theme of the Gospel) to the Semi-continuous readings.

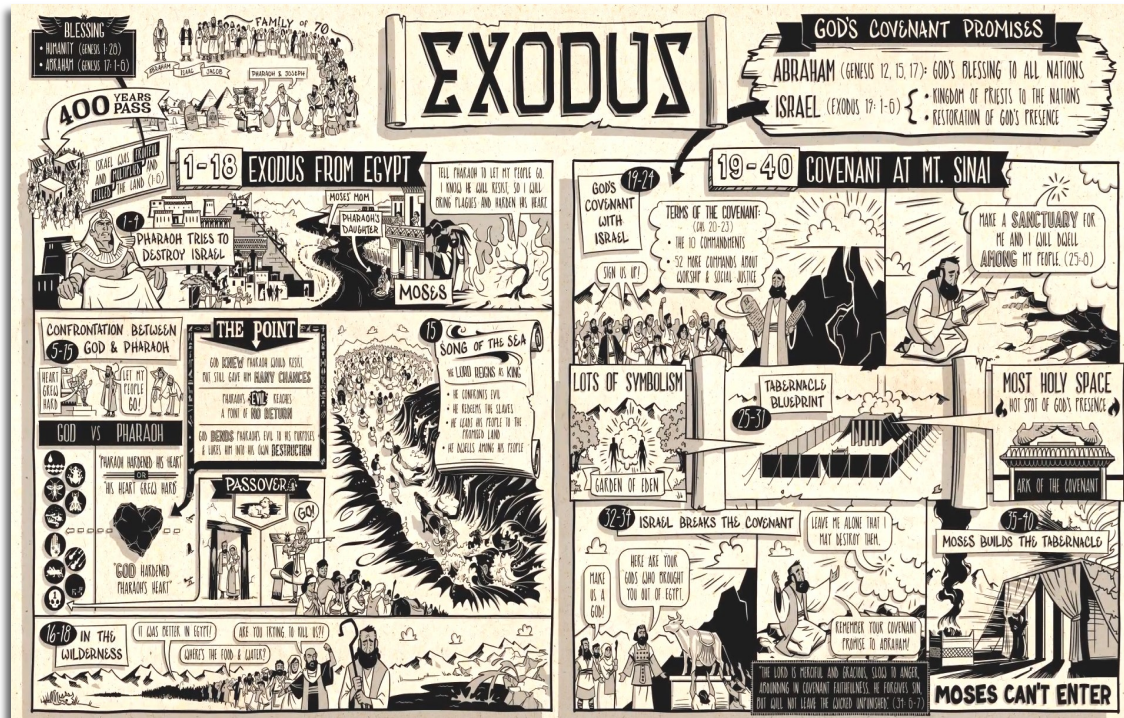
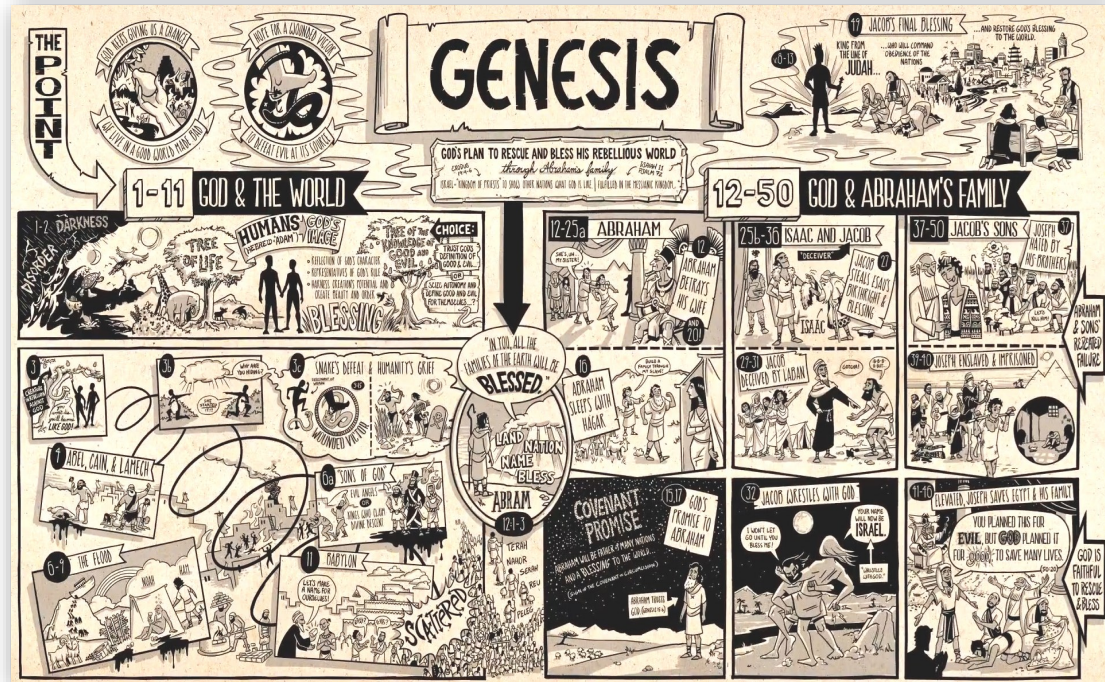
In short, this means the first readings each week throughout the summer and fall will come to us in "story order" out of the Hebrew bible. We'll begin in Genesis on June 7 and our text will be one that I consider among the most important in the whole bible, the call of Abraham. By the time we get to the end of the church year in November, we'll be starting to read about the Israelites moving into and settling in the Promised Land.

Following the story of God and his people in the Hebrew bible each week will refresh us in the history that prepares the way for Christ. Looking just to the story we'll hear the first weekend we use this set of readings, I can draw a line from God's promise to Abraham that "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" to the life of Jesus and the Holy Spirit's ongoing work to spread the gospel.

But hearing the story of God and Israel without the direct tie to the Gospel each week also allows us to listen to and appreciate this story more on its own terms. It is a rich, complex story of promise, faithfulness, failure, redemption and grace. It's also a story filled with interesting characters and this story is told with humor and humanity.

As we have the chance to spend time with this story that forms the foundation of our faith, I hope it can be a chance for us to grow in our knowledge of God's word and in our trust that the same God who saw his people through triumphs and tragedies so long ago continues to walk with us today.

In Christ, Pastor Eric



June 2026 Financials

Income	Apr-26	Balance
Operating fund	\$ 33,451.34	\$ 11,004.33
Capital Improve. Fund	\$ 4,543.00	\$ 92,932.32
Total	\$ 37,994.34	
Expenses	Apr-26	Expenses YTD
Operating Fund	\$ 29,545.71	\$ 77,186.79
Capital Improvement	\$ 9,750.00	\$ 9,750.00
Total	\$ 39,295.71	\$ 86,936.79
Restricted Funds Income	Apr-26	Bal. 4/30/26
Altar Flowers Gifts	\$ 20.00	\$ 788.48
Coin Folders	\$ -	\$ 342.25
Community Garden	\$ 25.25	\$ 996.69
Kitchen Supplies	\$ 100.00	\$ 78.02
Lutheran Disaster relief	\$ 74.75	\$ 25.25
Memorial	\$ -	\$ 1,075.00
Nat. Youth Gathering	\$ 85.25	\$ 11,615.00
Nipsco Gift of Energy	\$ -	\$ 277.30
Offsite Service Team	\$ 25.00	\$ 7,296.78
Prime Timers	\$ -	\$ 755.42
Shepherd's Suppers	\$ 108.25	\$ 4,628.62
Staff Gift Collection	\$ -	\$ 350.02
Sunday School	\$ 45.85	\$ 259.79
Fees, Hall Rental, other	\$ 150.00	\$ 710.00
Seasonal	\$ 2,260.25	\$ 2,721.10
Women's Service Group	\$ 55.00	\$ 9,122.89
Youth Fellowship	\$ 25.25	\$ 2,501.88
Benevolences	Apr-26	Balances
Mission of the Month	\$ 3,000.20	\$ 3,000.20
Major Mission	\$ 276.40	\$ 2,177.25
ELCA Synod Benevolence	\$ 3,341.50	\$ 3,341.50

Plant One Extra for Our Neighbors

You may be in the process of starting your summer garden soon. Our challenge to you: please consider planting one or two extra plants specifically for donating. The fresh vegetable donation box will be located outside the church office in a few weeks. People who utilize the St John Food Pantry love fresh produce, especially tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, zucchini, green beans, onions, carrots, potatoes, watermelon, and cantaloupe. Get growing and surprise us! Thank you!



Pentecost Geranium Memorials

- The Winiacki Family In memory of loved ones
- Donna & Brad Schlichting..... In memory of loved ones
- Ruth Carmichael..... In memory of loved ones
- Joddi Sortino..... In memory of Margaret Rivera
- Nick & Judi Van Swol..... In memory of Katie Coy and loved ones
- Brownell, Junkin, & Russel families..... Ray & Betty Brownell; Tom Clawson
- The Govert Family..... In memory of Grandpa Bill Quint, Grandma Ingrid Tuntland, Uncle Rollin Haseltine, Gma & Gpa Haseltine
- The Aharrah Family..... In memory of Dorothy "Nona" Posilovich, & Viola Welker
- Eileen Sturtridge..... In memory of son Michael Martin & loved ones
- Mark Minsky..... In memory of loved ones
- Rhonda Buhmann..... In memory of Jan Buhmann, Roxane & Wayne Engel, & Ramona Burns
- Joan Butler, Wood & Pettit families..... In memory of William Butler
- Kathleen Bushnell..... In memory of John & Mildred Mikenas, and Howard & Lucille Bushnell
- Audrey & Nick Prabhu..... In memory of loved ones
- Terri & Dan Kowalski..... In memory of loved ones
- Mark Minsky..... In honor of all mothers
- Maryann Soderquist..... In memory of Jerry Soderquist and loved ones
- Jayne & Dan Sullivan..... In memory of Bob Barsic & Sue Sullivan



MISSION of the MONTH

for June

This month the St John Township has asked if we could help out a local senior. She lives in Schererville and is struggling to get by on Social Security, with no family to lend any extra help. She stretches every dollar as far as it will go, yet still finds herself coming up short every month. Despite careful budgeting, she is forced to choose between groceries, medication, and keeping the lights on. I think Holy Shepherd can help her bridge the gap and live with the dignity and security that every person deserves! Please consider supporting her this month and indicate "Mission of the Month" on the pew envelope or in your electronic giving, and thank you for helping!



Detroit Mission Trip: Fuel Their Mission!

Donate a Meijer gift card to keep our Detroit volunteers fueled for the road ahead, in every sense of the word! There are many Meijer stores and gas stations between Merrillville and Detroit, making their gift cards the perfect way to help our thirteen HSLC volunteers cover gas, water, and lunches during their trip. Sign the sheet in the narthex, then drop off cards with Pastor Eric or Laura in the office before the team departs June 17th.



June Collection of the Month: School Supplies for St John Township

Didn't the kids just get out of school?! In order help the township sort and pack thousands of items into over two hundred backpacks by August, we need to roll out our school supply collection earlier than we have in the past. Let's help the less fortunate children in our community get off to a great start in the fall—keep an eye out for sales and use the list below as a guide. You may drop them off in the narthex. As always, thank you!

- backpacks
- art boxes (5in x 8in)
- black and blue pens
- Ticonderoga pencils
- pencil sharpeners
- pink erasers
- 1" or 2" three-ring binders
- binder page dividers & clear page protectors
- two-pocket folders
- loose leaf paper, wide-ruled and college-ruled
- composition note-books
- spiral notebooks
- washable Crayola markers
- school scissors
- crayons, 8 & 24 packs
- water color paints
- Elmer's white glue
- purple glue sticks
- colored pencils
- pencil pouches
- headphones (no ear buds)
- sandwich bags
- quart bags
- gallon bags
- slider 2.5 gallon bags
- index cards
- protractors
- rulers
- hand sanitizer
- disinfectant wipes
- paper towels
- tissues

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.

COUNCIL



Hello Holy Shepherd Members,

Summer will arrive at the end of June. Many people find that this is the time to take long vacations and rest.

I still want you to be aware that the church will be in full function without any change in church service times. If you have overnight visitors or family, encourage them to come with you to a Saturday or Sunday service. Everyone is welcome. Communion is offered to all who are baptized and believe in the triune God.

Some of the events that are scheduled to occur in June are:

--Sunday 6-14-26 @ 11 am Sacred place visit to St Timothy Community Church in Gary

--Wednesday 6-17-26 through Saturday 6-20-26 is our Detroit Mission Trip. Volunteers are needed! If you are not able to go, then please pray for those that are going that the Lord gives them the ability to do the work that is needed.

Children, we will be having our Vacation Bible School starting Monday June 22 to Thursday June 25th, with the theme "Junkyard Redemption." We ask you to invite your friends and neighbors to this event.

--Our choir director Will Akins will be hosting a summer choir starting Wednesday, July 1st. Please let him know if you are interested in joining this group.

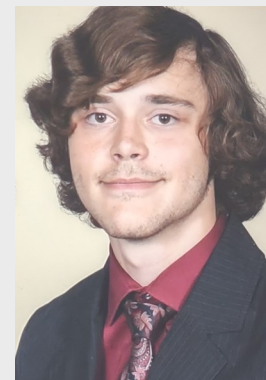
May God bless you all in everything that you do, Robin Hasselgren

CLASS OF 2026 Congratulations!



Colleen Winiiecki, daughter of Jim and Nancy Winiiecki, graduated from Indiana Wesleyan University with a degree in Early Childhood Education. She holds a teaching license for preschool through third grade. Colleen is currently gaining valuable experience as a substitute teacher within the Lake Central

School Corporation, and at a preschool in Crown Point. She is seeking a full-time teaching role at a local elementary school soon.



Tristan Douglas, grandson of Guy and Lynette Estes, graduated as valedictorian from Merrillville High School. A well-rounded student, his activities included leadership and athletic roles in JROTC, cross country, and student council. He is set to attend the Purdue University School of Engineering this fall.



Yarn Donations & Summer Projects!

HSLC H.A.N.DS (Hook And Needle Discipleship) has recently received several generous donations of yarn, and we extend a huge thank you to everyone who contributed!

If you love having a crafting project on hand during summer ball games, road trips, or relaxing afternoons, please come grab some yarn. We have a wide variety of colors available in several totes and bags, located in the office directly across from Will's music office.

As a reminder, we will be assembling knitted or crocheted 9"x7" squares in January. Questions? Please reach out to Barb Okonoski at okieb12@yahoo.com or 219-718-1954.

Don't Get Scammed

Recently, a HSLC member received a text message appearing to be from Pastor Eric, urgently requesting hundreds of dollars in eBay gift cards to help a family at a hospital in need. "Pastor Eric" knew her name and phone number. However, the message was not actually from Pastor Eric.

It's a good reminder for all of us: if a phone call, email, or text seems unusual, always stop and question it. Does the request make sense? Ask a trusted friend or family member for a second opinion. Never click a link or share personal information until you are absolutely certain the request is genuine.

Church congregations are frequently targeted by scammers because members tend to be trusting and eager to help those in need. Those are wonderful qualities that bad people try to exploit. Please stay alert and look out for one another!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I want to begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to all of you who have participated in the many spiritual growth opportunities here so far this year. Whether through Bible studies, fellowship events, worship participation, youth activities, service opportunities, or simply encouraging one another in the faith, your dedication has been deeply inspirational to me. It has been spiritually fulfilling to witness this congregation continue to grow together in Christ and in love for one another.

As we continue moving through the year together, I would also like to remind everyone about our Annual Rummage Sale happening on September 26th. This event is always a wonderful opportunity for fellowship, generosity, and support for the life and ministry of the church.

This year, I would also like to ask for a specific kind of help connected to both the rummage sale and Vacation Bible School. Our VBS theme this year is Junkyard Redemption: God's Master Plan to Remake a Broken World. As we prepare decorations and visual elements for the week, I am looking for tasteful items that could fit within that creative theme. Things with a worn, industrial, vintage, mechanical, or "repurposed" look could be incredibly helpful as decoration pieces.

I do want to be very clear: I am not asking people to bring literal trash or unusable junk, nor do I view donated items as "junk." In many ways, the theme itself reflects the beautiful truth that God redeems and restores what the world may overlook or discard. There is something meaningful in creatively reusing ordinary items to help tell that story throughout VBS week.



Because we are limited on storage and decorating space, I do need to be selective with what we can accept before VBS begins. If you have items you believe would genuinely fit the theme, I would appreciate receiving those donations as soon as possible so we can begin planning and decorating. However, if your donations would not fit the VBS theme, I kindly ask that you wait until after VBS to bring them for the rummage sale so we can utilize our space as effectively as possible and avoid becoming overwhelmed with storage needs.

I would also like to remind everyone that volunteers are always needed for VBS. If you are interested in helping in any capacity, please come speak with me. It takes many hands working together to create a welcoming, Christ-centered environment for our children, and I would love to have you involved.



Thank you again for your continued support, encouragement, and faithfulness. It is a blessing to serve alongside all of you.

Blessings, Jared Wood hslcjared@gmail.com

Volunteers are needed for both VBS and the Rummage Sale. Donations and help are needed to be successful!

MUSIC NOTES *By Will Akins, Director of Arts and Worship*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

"Bees'll buzz and kids will blow dandelion fuzz, and I'll be doing all the same things in summer." The summer is here! Time where we reconnect with our outdoor activities and projects and feel the sun on our face. I enjoy the summer, the music and street fairs and the water! I love being on or near water anytime I can. I find lots of clarity and inspiration sitting and listening to the waves crash on the shore. My world is filled with a lot of noise, noisy noise at that. Between conversations and shows I have come to enjoy silence as I have gotten older and look forward to those nice long summer nights at the beach.



What do you do to relax? I find that in relaxing I allow my world to go quiet and that's when I reconnect with God, I hear his voice loud and clear. Connection with God, and ourselves, is something most of us don't do until we are forced to (age, health, etc.). Even Jesus took a day of rest and sabbath, and we are allowed that rest as well.

SUMMER CHOIR
Rehearsals every Wednesday, starting July 1st, 6:00-6:45pm.
We'll sing at the 8:30am service on August 2nd.

During the summer months as we move into "vacation mode," find time to reconnect with God and yourself. Start a new hobby, find a new social group, push yourself to find the thing that brings you peace and unapologetically set aside intentional time to do that. If that is in your garden or nose deep in a book, disconnect from the world and you will hear God's voice bring you peace and comfort.

During the summer the music office will be in planning mode and rest mode. Pulling back the throttle to idle power and prepping for the coming year. Stay tuned for lots of exciting things with your music ministry and I'd love to see you join us.

Yours in spirit, Will Akins



Here are a few photos of our musical groups performing on May 17th. They sounded great, and we hope you'll consider joining our Summer Choir!

