

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church

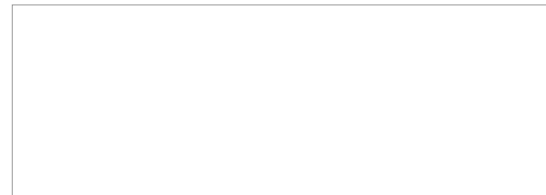
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To the family of...



Are you ready for VBS!



Vacation Bible School isn't just about crafts, games, and songs (though those are certainly part of the fun!). It's about nurturing faith, fostering friendships, and instilling values that last a lifetime. It's a place where children can explore the teachings of Jesus in a welcoming and joyful environment, where they can ask questions, express themselves, and discover the boundless love of God.

Vacation Bible School isn't just for kids. It's an opportunity for all of us to come together as a community, to support one another, and to deepen our own understanding of our faith. Whether you're a parent, a volunteer, or simply someone who wants to make a difference, your involvement in Vacation Bible School is invaluable. So let's join hands, open our hearts, and embark on this adventure together and get ready to pitch in for an incredible VBS program.

Stay tuned for more information, coming soon!

SHEPHERD'S STAFF

HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH



May 2024

Tending Those Inside the Flock...

Every time we worship, we affirm that part of our mission as Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church is to "tend those inside the flock." I want to highlight a couple of ways we work toward that mission.

First and foremost, I know you as a congregation care for one another in more ways than I could possibly know. The relationships that grow and flourish here mean we tend those inside the flock simply because it's who we are. What a blessing!

But we also have ways we work to embody this part of our mission together as a whole congregation. One is a new group the church council has laid the groundwork for. Borrowing from the mission statement, the group is called "The Flock Tenders." This group will gather to reach out to people we haven't seen in church in a while to see how people are. It's not about dragging people back in, but about maintaining relationships. It's about seeing what care and support we as a church can offer and asking how things are with people. If this is a way you would like to help tend those inside the flock, please reach out to Paul Nicolosi III or Nancy Walter.

For those who aren't aware, for almost six years now, we've also had an active Congregational Care Team. This dedicated group works alongside the pastor to reach out to people in the congregation who are homebound, who are facing chronic conditions, and people who have written in a prayer concern for themselves or a member of their immediate family (spouse, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, sibling). These faithful members beautifully live out this part of our mission - tending those inside the flock - with words of encouragement and prayer. If this is a way you would like to help tend those inside the flock, please reach out to me.

We are blessed with gifted leaders for several peer support groups that allow people facing similar life situations to tend to one another with experience and care. We have groups for parents of teens, parents of small children, people caring for their parents, people affected by cancer, and beginning this month, a group for veterans (watch the midweek email and listen for announcements before worship for specifics on this group). If this is a way you would like to help tend those inside the flock and receive the blessing of care as well, please contact the church office so we can connect you to the right person.

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INSERT CALENDAR WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

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.

COUNCIL



Let me begin by saying how honored I am to serve as one of your council members. Please let me know if there is ever anything I can do to help you.

Perhaps you have heard by now how successful our Lenten mortgage giving drive went. Our congregation generously gave \$27,752.01 towards our mortgage fund between February 14th and March 31st. That is nearly 4 months worth of mortgage payments! We will now have the mortgage debt paid off in June 2025, if not sooner. All I can say is WOW, what an amazing congregation we belong to and an even more amazing God we have moving within us!

Let's talk a little about generosity. Generosity is giving without expecting anything in return. It is a selfless act that comes from a place of kindness, empathy, and a desire to make a positive impact on others' lives. Often-times generosity comes from us freely sharing our resources, time, or talents with those in need. This can be by donating money to a cause (like our mortgage drive), volunteering for one of our church programs or missions, or simply lending a listening ear to one of our congregation members.

Generosity has the power to create ripple effects of goodness, spreading warmth and hope in communities. Sure, it benefits the recipients of generosity but it also uplifts the spirit of those who give, fostering a sense of purpose and fulfillment. Grand gestures are not needed for this to happen as it is often the small acts of kindness that can brighten the day of someone you may or may not know. Acts of generosity have a way of bringing out the best in us and creating a more compassionate world. Something we all can agree is needed in our world today.

So again, thank you for your part in making our mortgage drive such a success, but please don't think it is only monetary giving that shows your generosity. I ask that you prayerfully consider what you may be able to do to show your generosity in other ways. For instance, VBS will be here before you know it and perhaps you feel moved to help coordinate or volunteer in some way for those 4 days. Those of us involved with Shepherds Super would love to see some new faces helping out or coming to join us for a meal. The Praise Team would welcome additional members, especially musicians. I could go on and on but any step you can take to show your generosity by whatever means best suits you will not only be pleasing to your heart but to God's heart as well.

Blessings to you all!
Kimm Maznaritz

Pentecost Geraniums



As we approach the joyous celebration of Pentecost, we are offering an opportunity to continue on with our tradition by adorning our sanctuary through donations of Geraniums.

Geraniums, with their vibrant colors and enduring beauty, are a fitting symbol of the Holy Spirit's presence among us. Your geranium donation will bring a touch of brightness to our church on Pentecost weekend. Each geranium can be purchased for \$3.50 and will be displayed in our sanctuary on Pentecost weekend, May 18 & 19. Following Pentecost weekend, we'll be planting the geraniums around the church to beautify our grounds.

To place your order, please fill out a geranium envelope located on the Opportunity Table in the narthex by Mother's Day, May 12th, and please remember to fill in your memorial tribute.

We thank you for your generosity and look forward to celebrating Pentecost together as a community filled with the spirit of love, unity, and joy.

Confirmation 2024



Confirmation rehearsal will be on Monday, April 29th at 6:30pm with parents and mentors. Rehearsal should last about an hour. Confirmation Sunday is May 5th at the 10am service. We will have a reception in the Narthex with cake and punch for the whole congregation following the service.

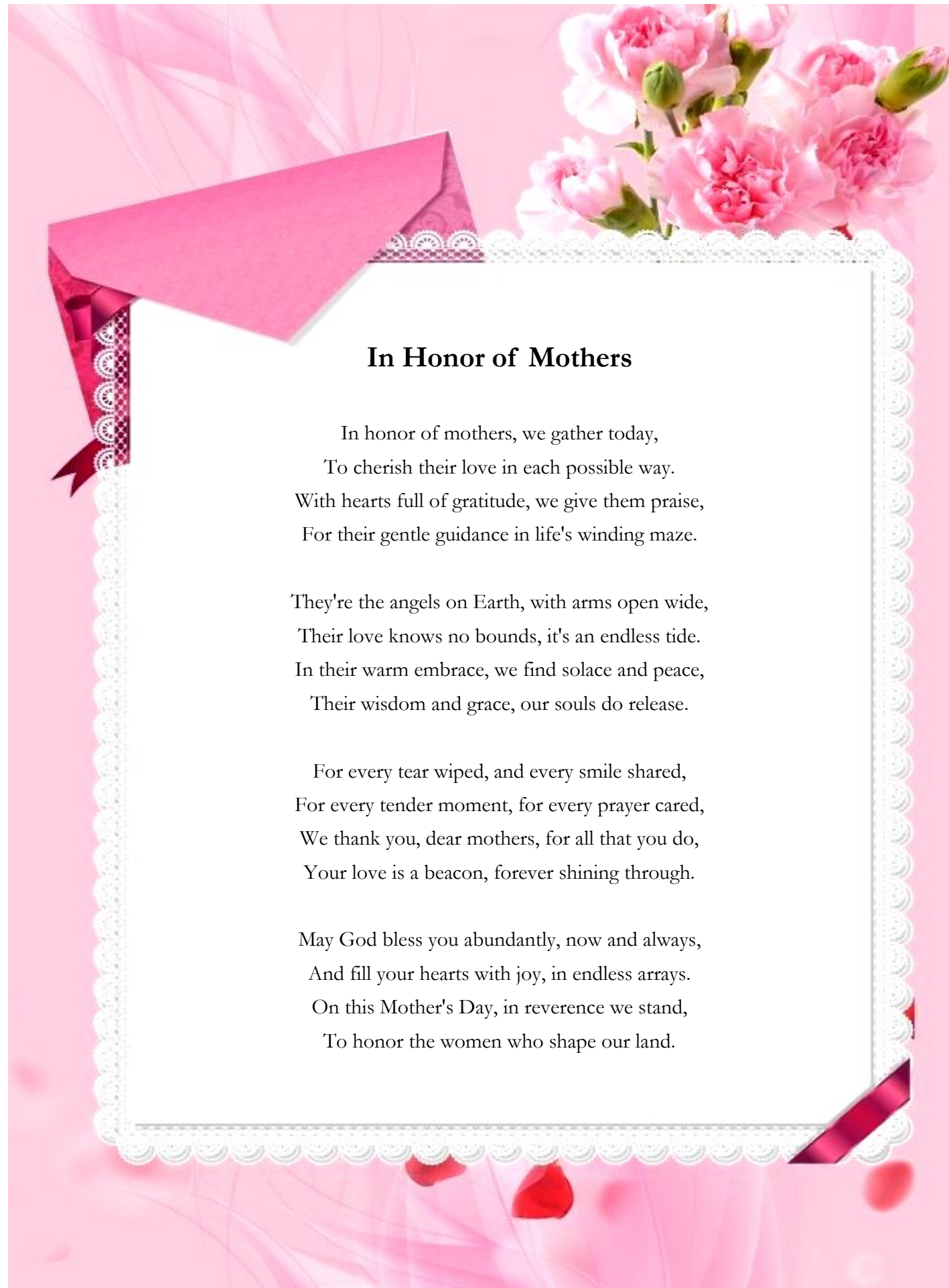
Thanks to our instructors who have given generously of their time and energy: Jim Weber, Nancy Walter and Pastor Eric. Thank you for showing our young people at Holy Shepherd that they are valued and important!



Members can view our birthday list by:

- Viewing our emailed version of our monthly newsletter. (Let the office know if you'd like to receive an emailed copy.)
- Viewing our hardcopy version located at the Welcome Center.





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As I give thanks to God for the ways the Holy Spirit is here and hard at work helping us live out this part of our mission statement, I find myself in need of “tending” and want to ask for you to pray for me for healing and wholeness. About two years ago, I was diagnosed with clinical depression. With the love of family, the guidance of health professionals, the support of a circle of friends, and the firm faith that God is walking alongside me, I’m in a healthy enough place to share this with the congregation. To me, it matters that I share this for a few reasons. One is that I’m growing to understand this is one piece among many of who I am, and being up front with it is a matter of authenticity and integrity. Another grows from our theology of the cross, which, as Luther wrote, “calls a thing what it is.” Naming depression, calling it mental illness, puts it in the proper place - just one more way the brokenness of the world manifests itself among some of us. This also means Jesus died on the cross to break the power of mental illness to define who I am, or who anyone else is. Finally, it matters to share this with you because of the way so many people here live out that mission to “tend those inside the flock.” I hope that God will be at work to gather people around me for support here in my congregation.

I want to briefly speak to some of the questions that might arise for folks.

“What does this mean?”

This means I’m managing a chronic health condition, similar to diabetes or high blood pressure.

“Do I need to hold back or tiptoe around hard things I want to talk to my pastor about?”

No. Anything you are living through that you might want or need to talk to me about is fair game.

“Can you handle the role of pastor while managing this condition?”

Yes. I’ve been handling it for a few years now, and have a good support system in place. If I was going to reach a point where I couldn’t continue as the pastor, it would have been two years ago before I was on the path back toward health and wholeness.

“Can I share my experience of depression or mental illness with you?”

Yes. There is something to be said for learning from one another in confidence.

“Do you want the phone number for my (fill in the blank with any variety of healing professional)?”

No. I’m all set on that front, and would ask you to respect my boundary of not discussing specifics of my healthcare with anyone.

“What do you need from us as congregation members?”

At the moment, I would ask you to lift up me and my family in prayer for continued healing and strength.

“If I have other questions or things I’m wondering about this news, should I just speculate about it?”

No. Reach out to me and we can find a time to sit down over a cup of coffee.

I am blessed to be part of a community that not only says tending those inside the flock is part of its mission, but works toward embodying that part of its mission so faithfully. I’m humbled at the way the Holy Spirit can work through me to help you embody that mission, and hope that your commitment to tending those inside the flock can be a support and blessing for me going forward.

In Christ,
Pastor Eric

Sunday School Update

There will be no Sunday school on Confirmation Sunday, May 5th. Our last Sunday school class will be May 19th. We want to express our thanks and deepest gratitude to all the Sunday school teachers and others that helped, for their unwavering commitment and dedication to our Sunday school program. Your tireless efforts, enthusiasm, and passion for nurturing the minds and hearts of our young learners truly make a difference.



Are You Graduating This Spring?



Congratulations to all the high school and college graduates! Your hard work, dedication, and perseverance have paid off, and we're incredibly proud of your achievements and would like to highlight

your accomplishments in the June newsletter. Please provide the following information, listed below, to the church (hslc@sbcglobal.net) no later than May 17th.

Congratulations on your achievement!

Please include this information with your email:

- Name
- School graduating from
- Major or favorite subject
- One or two extracurricular involvements
- Future Plans

Music Department

God's blessing to all of you. It is now time to begin planning for summer and for the next music season starting in September.

During the summer I would like to have a variety of musical groups or soloists to perform. If you are willing to help, let me know and I will rehearse and help you in any way that I can. We can work on duets, trios, solos, small groups and instrumentals.

During next music season, I would like to bring back the Junior Choir and Bells. Also small groups, soloists duets, etc.

I can only start these things with the help of the congregation.

Please consider helping me out with my plans.

Mr. Bob



CHURCH FINANCIALS

Members can view our church financial report by:

- Viewing our emailed version of our monthly newsletter. (Let the office know if you'd like to receive an emailed copy.)
- Viewing our hardcopy version located at the Welcome Center.

Psalm 104 Lord Send Out Your Spirit

Refrain
Lord send out you Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Verse 1
Bless the Lord, my soul, you are great indeed.
You are clothed with majesty and light
You are clothed with majesty and light. **Refrain**

Verse 2
Send your Spirit, Lord, and make new.
Create the face of the earth.
Recreate the face of the earth. **Refrain**

Verse 3
May your glory last till the end of time.
I will sing your praise while I live.
I will sing your praise while I live. **Refrain**

Community Garden Meeting May 5th at 11am

Calling all green thumb enthusiasts! Our local community garden is looking for volunteers to help cultivate and grow something beautiful together. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just eager to get your hands dirty, we'd love to have you join us! If you're interested in lending a hand in planting, picking or watering, please stop by our gardening meeting on May 5 at 11am.



Meet the Confirmands

This year two youth will be confirmed on May 5, 2024 at the 10:00am service. Here is a little about each of these young men.



Matthew Lisac

Matthew will be graduating from Wheeler Middle School in Crown Point and heading to Crown Point High School in the fall. Matthew is active with his school's robotics team. When he's not at school or building robots, you can find him enjoying the outdoors as much as possible and hunting when it's the season.

At church, Matthew feeds his faith by serving as an acolyte and running the AV in worship, and really enjoys helping with the younger kids in Sunday School.

Part of confirmation that has deepened Matthew's faith was when we discussed how to help people around us when they're struggling. He has been able to use this lesson in his life.

Matthew hopes to attend Purdue University, and hopes to surround himself with people who will help him stay on a faithful path.



James Weber

James will be graduating from Clark Middle School and heading to Mount Carmel High School in the fall. James has played the trombone in jazz band and pep band at school, and represented Clark at the Science Olympiad. Outside of school, James has been participating in fencing.

At church, James enjoys helping in worship by running the AV system.

Part of confirmation that has deepened James' faith was our lesson on the Trinity, especially the teaching about how the Holy Spirit is kind of like a little baby Jesus who's always with us. Corlin reinforced this lesson by handing out little baby Jesus figures that could always be with the students.

James hopes to attend college somewhere he can research physics and continue with fencing. He wants to continue to grow his faith in worship.

Help Needed: Geranium Pickup ~ Display ~ Plant



As we prepare to celebrate Pentecost, we are seeking volunteers to help with the important task of picking up, displaying, and planting geraniums for our church.

The beauty of geraniums serves as a wonderful symbol of the Holy Spirit's presence among us, and we want to ensure that our sanctuary and grounds are adorned with these vibrant flowers to mark this special occasion.

Volunteers are needed for the following tasks:

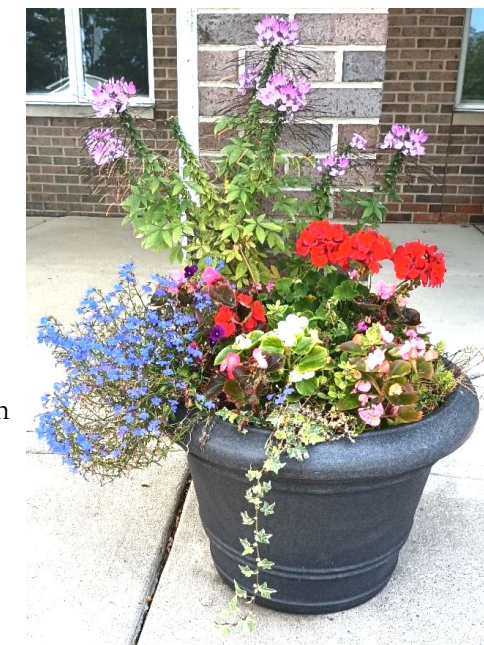
Pick-Up: We need volunteers to pick up geraniums from Van Kalker Farms and Greenhouses located in Lynwood, IL (about 10 miles from church) and transport them to the church.

Display: Once the geraniums are at the church, we need volunteers to help arrange them in the sanctuary with red pot covers for Pentecost weekend, May 18 & 19.

Planting: After Pentecost, we plan to plant the geraniums around our church grounds as a lasting reminder of our celebration. Volunteers with gardening experience or those willing to learn are encouraged to help with this task.

If you are able to volunteer for any of these roles, please sign up at the Opportunity Table. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated as we come together to make Pentecost a memorable and meaningful experience for our church community.

Thank you for your willingness to serve!



Deadline for Newsletter Articles

Please have articles for June's newsletter submitted by May 15 using the church email address: hslc@sbcglobal.net.

Holy Shepherd and The Night Ministry

Volunteers Once Again Provide Hot Meals Across The Night Ministry's Programs

In early 2023, The Night Ministry resumed a long tradition of having volunteers provide hot meals to the families and individuals served by the agency's programs. The service was paused during the COVID-19 pandemic for safety purposes, although supporters continued to donate food. As restrictions have eased with the pandemic's abatement, volunteers are once again offering hot meals.

Families, corporations, faith communities, community groups, and even individuals make up the roster of meal volunteers. They not only prepare meals, but many also serve them directly to clients at the Health Outreach Bus, alongside the agency's outreach at the CTA, and at The Crib, the agency's emergency overnight shelter for young people.

"Most people that see us haven't eaten all day," said CTA Outreach Professional Lauren Grudzien. "It's really important to have volunteers coming in from The Night Ministry wanting to share their time and show compassion through offering a hot meal."

The volunteers who serve hot meals for The Night Ministry build connections with those served.

"We like doing the meal distributions so we can actually meet those we are helping in some way," said volunteer Kimm Maznaritz, a member of Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church of Saint John, Indiana, a congregation which has served with The



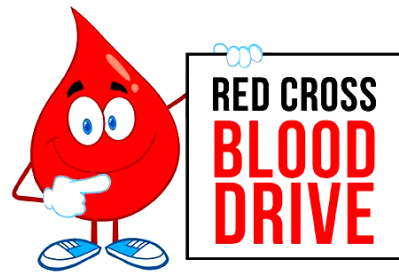
Volunteers serve a hot meal to visitors of the Health Outreach Bus in the New City neighborhood.

Night Ministry for years. "Sometimes just listening to someone can make such a difference."

Meal volunteers also act as a gateway to the agency's other services. As Volunteer Coordinator Andrew Hart explained, "Food is always a great way for us to start conversations with people. From there we can ask them if they need medical support or case management."

The Night Ministry is looking for groups and individuals interested in providing hot meals. Opportunities are available throughout the week at different locations in Chicago to serve between 25 and 175 meals. Find out how you can get involved by visiting www.thenightministry.org/meals or contacting Hart at andrew@thenightministry.org.

Blood Drive at Holy Shepherd



May's blood drive is scheduled for Friday the 31st, from 12:30 - 5:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. Those that want to sign up can do so online at:

<https://www.redcrossblood.org>

Once you've landed on the webpage, look at the top menu for "Find a Blood Drive," and put in zip code 46373, find Holy Shepherd using the date of May 31st...and choose your time slot.

They may be able to fit you in if you drop by, but there may be a short waiting time.



Holy Shepherd uses social media to help keep our members, friends and the community informed about events and happenings throughout the year.

Liking your church's Facebook page allows you to stay updated on upcoming events, and current activities. You'll be in the loop with what's happening in your church community.

Also, by engaging with your church's content, you contribute to promoting positive values and messages and potentially inspire others to explore their spirituality or engage with their own faith communities.

We hope you'll choose to "LIKE" Holy Shepherd on Facebook by using the QR Code or search: Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church, Saint **John, Indiana.**

Upcoming Opportunities

- **VETS - Veterans Engaged To Support** group ~ Join us for our first gathering on Tuesday, May 7 at 6:30pm.
Contact Karin Pettit with questions at: kpettit1800@gmail.com.
- **THE COMMUNITY NETWORK** ~ we'll be partnering with **Community Help Network**, whose mission is to help eliminate food insecurity and systemic poverty in South Lake County, IN. Needed are folks to deliver desserts, setup/serve a meal, help with the household pantry, and pack Buddy Bags.
All events take place on location at the: Community Help Network building, 550 East Burrell Dr., Crown Point, IN 46307, from May 17th -May 22.
**Check the Midweek email for dates and times available, or signup at the Opportunity Table.*
Contact Pastor Eric with questions at: hslcpastor@gmail.com
- **DETROIT MISSION TRIP ~ June 19-22, 2024** ~ Holy Shepherd youth and adults will be traveling to Detroit to work along side Cass Community Social Services, usually assisting with grounds cleanup, painting and repairs.
Contact Pastor Eric with questions at: hslcpastor@gmail.com

Additional Holy Shepherd Support Groups

Monthly Support groups at Holy Shepherd gather to provide emotional support to others experiencing similar difficulties or life challenges. Sharing experiences with others who understand can be immensely comforting and can foster a sense of belonging and camaraderie. Support groups often serve as a way to share stories, gain insight and access community resources, while listening with a confidential ear. Contact the point person listed if one of these groups speaks to your heart.

SPRY - Supporting People Raising Youth

Kristin Wood: wood-k@att.net - 3rd Wednesday, 6pm

POLO - Parents of Little Ones

Lyndsay Werner: gb12@sbcglobal.net - 2nd Sunday, 11am

CAPS - Caregiving for Aging Parents

Barb Bennett: cmbarb1@comcast.net - 3rd Sunday, 11am

MOST - Men Of Shepherd Together

Jack Walter: johnwalter3@gmail.com - 3rd Saturday, 9am

PAC - People Affected by Cancer

Gail Rodovich: grodovich@comcast.net -1st Tuesday, 6:30pm



The Power of
Connection