



Rod and Staff

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

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Living and Sharing Jesus!

July 2021

July in-person worship is 9:00am every Sunday!

Online worship is available by phone toll-free: +1 833-333-0881

and on YouTube on this channel: www.youtube.com/user/Lemonholm

Luncheon and Conversation!

Sunday, July 11, 11:30 AM

Good Shepherd's Church Council invites you to a lunch and conversation about our partnership with the YMCA, the Rockford Public Library, Voices of Inspiration, and other partners. Lunch will begin at 11:30, followed by a presentation and conversation.



We remember with love Good Shepherd's longest serving pastor and church member, Pastor Orlyn Huwe, who died on June 20. We will hold a Memorial Service for Orlyn on **Friday, July 2**, with visitation at 9:30 AM and worship at 11 AM.



Wednesday All-Age Softball and Open Gym!

Wednesdays from 6-8pm all summer, join us at St. Bernadette's Church for All-Age Softball and Open Gym!

This is a joint ministry of the churches of Northwest Neighbors to the families of our congregations and the neighborhood. We will also have arts and crafts and fun learning lessons for children. All are welcome!



Church Staff

Pastor

Eric Lemonholm

Adm. Assistant

Susan Contreras

Director of Music

Mary Shore

Ministers

All of you!

Church Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

8-12:00 pm

Celebration of Life for Marvin & Margie Schultz

Saturday, July 17, 4:00 PM

At Good Shepherd

The beloved couple died during this past COVID year. Family and friends will remember them together this month.



Pastor's corner

Dear members and friends of Good Shepherd,

We have exciting opportunities before us. Our partnerships with the YMCA, Voices of Inspiration, the Rockford Public Library, and more, are starting to bear fruit for us and our neighborhood. The Holy Spirit is opening doors for us in major ways! God is good. Today, I want to lay out our situation clearly, and hopefully set your minds and hearts at ease. There is time to come together and envision the possibilities, and commit to continuing God's mission in our community of living and sharing Jesus. Recently, I preached on Jesus' parable of the farmer sowing seed. The following is based on that sermon.

Good Shepherd was founded in 1947, soon after World War 2, when hundreds of new family homes were built in the fields around West High. With the post-war Baby Boom and church attendance expectations in society, many young Lutherans moved into our neighborhood and joined Good Shepherd. Seeds were planted, and the church grew. Our current sanctuary was built in 1959.

Dick Wibom once told me about how, soon after he and Mercedeas arrived in the neighborhood, a pastor from Good Shepherd knocked on the door and asked Dick if he would teach junior high boys' Sunday school, which met in the coal room in the basement. Dick said yes. Jean Richmond recently told me a story about how she and two other women oversaw the preschool class for Vacation Bible School one summer in the early 60s. They had 150 preschoolers show up, crammed into the old sanctuary – the House of Philoi.

If you look at our confirmation pictures in the back of the room, you can see the Baby Boom in action. The number of confirmation students grew until the highpoint in 1968, when there were 54 students in one class. After that, the numbers steadily declined (the very next year 1969, there were 33 students), to the point where Good Shepherd had zero confirmands in the year 2000. (*continued*)

(continued) Since I arrived in 2011, we have had confirmation classes of three or four students, confirmed once every three years or so. That pattern is very common in churches around the country.

We live in a very different time today. We live in a very different neighborhood. What worked in the 1950s won't necessarily work today. This beautiful, large building built for the Baby Boom won't be filled today by the same practices used then. A large migration of Lutherans to this neighborhood is unlikely. And yet, we still have assets as a congregation: Wonderful, warm, caring people. A beautiful, functional building. A large parking lot. So, how do we plant seeds *today*?

At Good Shepherd, our work with the YMCA and Voices of Inspiration is a way to plant seeds of God's kingdom. So are our Northwest Neighbors pick-up softball games and neighborhood redevelopment. So is the Community Garden that Intern Pastor Paul is helping set up at West Middle School, with students and staff from our Y program, developing 10 raised beds that we moved from MercyHealth, with the help of teachers and Voices of Inspiration's truck. So is our satellite youth library *The Book Nook*, with books and shelves donated by the Rockford Public Library, set up with help from our church volunteers and the youth and staff from the Y.

What we are doing is planting seeds. We are also considering the *possibility* (it's not a done deal or a sure thing) of the Y someday taking ownership of our facility and founding a Youth Equity Center, with the provision that we can continue to worship here and serve the neighborhood as a community partner. Here are a few things to keep in mind. If that happens, there will be changes. And yet, the Y is committed to keeping and even enhancing the beauty of this building, as they modernize it for the third decade of the 21st century, including:

A commercial kitchen.

A licensed day care center.

Music, art, and dance studios.

Our sanctuary as both a worship space and a music and art multi-purpose space.

(continued) None of this is going to happen overnight. None of this is going to happen without our input and participation as partners in ministry. There are some other major community partners looking into joining us in this project. In fact, the Y wants us to continue to be partners with them as we explore ministry to the children and families of our neighborhood.

These partnerships will allow us to focus on our mission of living and sharing Jesus, without worrying about property issues, like resurfacing the parking lot for \$80,000 or more, or someday replacing the roof for... lots of money (not to mention boilers or AC). I can't think of a better way for us to be stewards of this space than to share it with community partners as a major youth center for our neighborhood. This is how the church can be the church now and into the future.

Major changes to our building and grounds will be down the road. Right now, we are engaging in real ministry seven days a week! Today, the Y Junior Achievers program has over 30 youth (and growing) attending Monday-Friday, 12-6 PM. The Book Nook is open for business, and the Mobile Library stops regularly at Good Shepherd. Voices of Inspiration is moving into the old Rockton Center Library on July 1, along with our Northwest Neighbors Technology Center. VOI will continue to serve food with the Y at Good Shepherd, but they are moving out of the Activity Center.

I cannot thank you enough for your willingness to take part in this exciting mission venture. During the time of COVID and beyond, we have helped birth Voices of Inspiration, a Y Youth Equity Center, and the Book Nook—and this is just the beginning. We also welcomed Intern Pastor Paul Willey in June to join us in ministry (in partnership with the Lutheran School of Theology), and we have begun a partnership with Trinity Lutheran in Durand. The adventure has just begun. I invite you to join in the journey.

Living and sharing Jesus,

Pastor Eric

YMCA Junior Achievers Wish List

The YMCA youth program at Good Shepherd needs supplies, and you can help! Here are some of the needs:

Crafts Supplies

3D Printer

Sewing Starter Kits (10)

Fabric Markers

Fabric/Material

Thread

Sewing Machines

Pin Cushions

Yarn

Patterns

Knitting Looms

Scissors

Key Rings

Embroidery Floss

Pony Bead Lacing

Beads

Straight Pins

Copy Paper

Construction Paper

Wood Popsicle Sticks (Craft)

Notebooks

Poster Boards

Glue

Fitness Equipment

Weight Rack (for free weights)

Weight Bar

Barbell Spring Clamps for Weight Bar (6)

Dumbbells (10-50lbs)

Leg Press Equipment

Treadmill

Portable Soccer Goals

Basketball Hoops

Tennis/Volleyball Net

Bike Racks (Outside)

Ankle Weights

Mirrors for Fitness Room

TV/Videos for Fitness Room

32in Tv

Air Hockey Table

Foosball Table

Ping Pong Table

Computers

Printer



Donate Non-Perishable Food Items to Voices of Inspiration!

Good Shepherd has a long history of collecting non-perishable food items and paper products and sharing them with food pantries and other community organizations. We are returning to this practice!

Our partners with Voices of Inspiration give out two thousand boxes of food each month—and more.



Most of the food they share with our neighborhood is perishable dairy and meat products from the Northern Illinois Food Bank. But there's always hungry people, and now that Voices of Inspiration will have a permanent home in the old Rockton Center Library space, they will have some room to store and share non-perishable items. We will have a shopping cart ready for goods in our sanctuary every Sunday.

Coming soon to a post-COVID church near you...



Neighborhood BBQ Picnic!

Saturday, July 17, 11 AM—2 PM

With Good Shepherd, the YMCA and Voices of Inspiration team up to host a Neighborhood BBQ Picnic! All are welcome to this family friendly event. It's like the Ice Cream Social with partners!

