

Rod & Staff

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

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Living and Sharing Jesus!

What's Happening

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Hello everyone! Welcome to the "new" look of the Rod & Staff. We have added color and a few other elements. The majority of the previous newsletter features will remain the same, although their placement might be slightly different. We welcome feedback and would love assistance in this creation!

Sunday Worship is live at Good Shepherd at 9am.

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

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

Church Staff

Pastor
Eric Lemonholm

Intern Pastor
Paul Willey

Director of Music
Mary Shore

Ministers
All of you!

Church Office Hours

Varied, call ahead first!





Pastor's Corner

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus the Christ, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

If someone were to ask you about our congregation, how would you describe it? Often, when we think about our church, we think about a building. And that's natural. Our buildings, and especially our sanctuaries, are the focus and locus of our life together. The early church had no buildings: they met in homes, or in the marketplace. In the past century or two, congregations have built buildings for very practical reasons: it's hard to worship, fellowship, and learn together, in person, week after week, without a stable location. But as we all know, in our heads if not our hearts, the church is not a building. As the song *We Are the Church* says, "The church is not a building, the church is not a steeple. The church is not a resting place, the church is a people." Our buildings are mission stations, centers for mission, outposts for living and sharing Jesus. If our buildings are not functioning as mission stations, something is wrong.

So if *we* are the church, who are we? I appreciate this way of describing us, which, I believe, traces back to Lutheran theologian Walter Bouman: *We are a passionate, grassroots Jesus-community that witnesses to the Resurrection for the sake of the world.* Let's unpack that. First, it's 'We': the church is not just isolated individuals; the church is first-person plural. Also, we are passionate: no one wants to be part of a dispassionate, uncaring community. 'Passion' in our society has sometimes been reduced to one kind of passion: romantic passion. But 'passion' originally means to suffer, undergo, or experience something powerfully, whether positive or negative. So, being passionate means that we care deeply, love with abandon, and walk with others in their suffering. Third, we are grassroots, not top down. That means that if we do not reach out to and include the people in our neighborhood regardless of caste, class, race, or sexuality, we are doing something wrong; if anyone is unwelcome, we are not fully the church. Next, we are a Jesus-community. We gather around Jesus' table of fellowship; we eat the bread of justice and the wine of peace together; we tell Jesus-stories and live out our calling as the body of Christ. We also witness to the Resurrection: death on the cross is not the end of Jesus' story, but the end of the beginning. Jesus' story continues in the beginning of the end: Resurrection, life after death, new life sprouting from seemingly dead soil. Finally, we exist and act for the sake of the world. Not just for us, not just for our tribe, but for all people and all creation.

This is a time of rapid cultural change and anxious stress for many of us. Both Trinity and Good Shepherd have faced challenges and lost members during this time. I'll be honest: it's been hard to see people leave Good Shepherd over our sharing our building with the YMCA. The children of our neighborhood are in our building learning and growing from 3:30-7:30 Monday-Friday. What a blessing – and you are invited to volunteer as you are able for any time during the week or for special events – just as Jan and Barb did last week, helping the children make fleece hats. You are invited to come and see! See how the children are being blessed in the space we have built and cared for all these years. See how God's mission is happening seven days a week. And join us in sharing Jesus with these kids just by loving them.

For Trinity, we are just beginning a partnership with the Food Pantry, and reigniting active work with our Ecumenical partners, including monthly community lunches. My new schedule is that I will be at Trinity on Wednesdays, so we are starting an in-person and on-Zoom Bible study (for both congregations) at 10 am Wednesdays starting October 27. Because of the pandemic and cultural stress, it has been a challenge to chart the way forward. That is why we need to go back to the basics and live out our identity: *We are a passionate, grassroots Jesus-community that witnesses to the Resurrection for the sake of the world.*

Walking together, Pastor Eric Lemonholm

H A P P E N I N G S

October 17 More about Race, Ethnicity, and Culture
10 am Following Services in Sanctuary

October 17 Slow Roll
3 - 6 pm - Northwest Community Center

October 24 Homecoming
9 am - Bring a date (friend) and join us for worship

October 30 Trunk or Treat
1 - 4 pm - Parking Lot

October 31 Come to Church in Costume & bring your
noisy offering.
9 am - bring your loose change to church to throw in the pot
during worship

YMCA Teen Reach Program

Sign up at Good Shepherd M-F, 3:30-7:30 pm

Voices of Inspiration and Spark Center



LET'S RIDE! MEL ANDERSON SLOW ROLL

The Mel Anderson bike path is one of the greatest "Secrets" of the Northwest Rockford area, running from Anna Page Park all the way south of Auburn on a paved bike path. Northwest Neighbors helped establish a "Slow Roll" where kids, neighbors, friends and families come together to enjoy time on the path. This year's event being held on **October 17th from 3-6 PM at the Northwest Community Center, 1325 N. Johnston Avenue, Rockford, IL**



at times they might be more wondering than pondering!

Where did the time go? It is incredibly surprising to look at the calendar and realize that I have been at Good Shepherd for 4 months already. So much has happened in my life in that time. I started in June as a part-time chaplain and part-time intern; on August 31, I completed my first month as your full-time intern. It has felt like a rollercoaster at times as I have adjusted to the changes, but I have truly appreciated the welcome I have received here.

A great deal of the work done those first few months was on my project, and I am very excited by the reception the first few sessions have had. There has been hiccups with the Zoom offering, such as, sound not working well and PowerPoint freezing. I have purchased a conference microphone that has a range of 20 feet, which I hope addresses the sound issues. I ran the PowerPoint off my student account the second presentation, which was what the Zoom folks recommended, and although some indicated it didn't advance, the recording showed that it did.

For those of you who haven't joined, please give it a try. Yes, it will cover some of the hot-button issues (race, sexuality, immigration) facing our country, community, and the church, but my intention is that it is a safe space for everyone to explore, test, and explore some more.. The last 4 sessions will be on Government and Civic Engagement. I will also be recording the sessions, so if you can't make it, but are interested, email me at pwilley@lstc.edu and I will send the recording to you.

I hope the month of October is a blessed time for you, your family, and Good Shepherd!

Peace!

Paul



Project Dates

Unit 1 – Race, Ethnicity, and Culture

Following Church for 1 hour

November 7

November 14

Unit 2 – Human Sexuality

Retreat 10am to 3pm (\$5 for Lunch)

Saturday, December 11

Unit 3 – Immigration

Retreat 10am to 3pm (\$5 for Lunch)

Saturday, January 22

Unit 4 – Government and Civic Engagement

Following Church for 1 hour

February 12

March 13

April 24

May 22

It's

Homecoming

October 24, 9 am

All participants* are

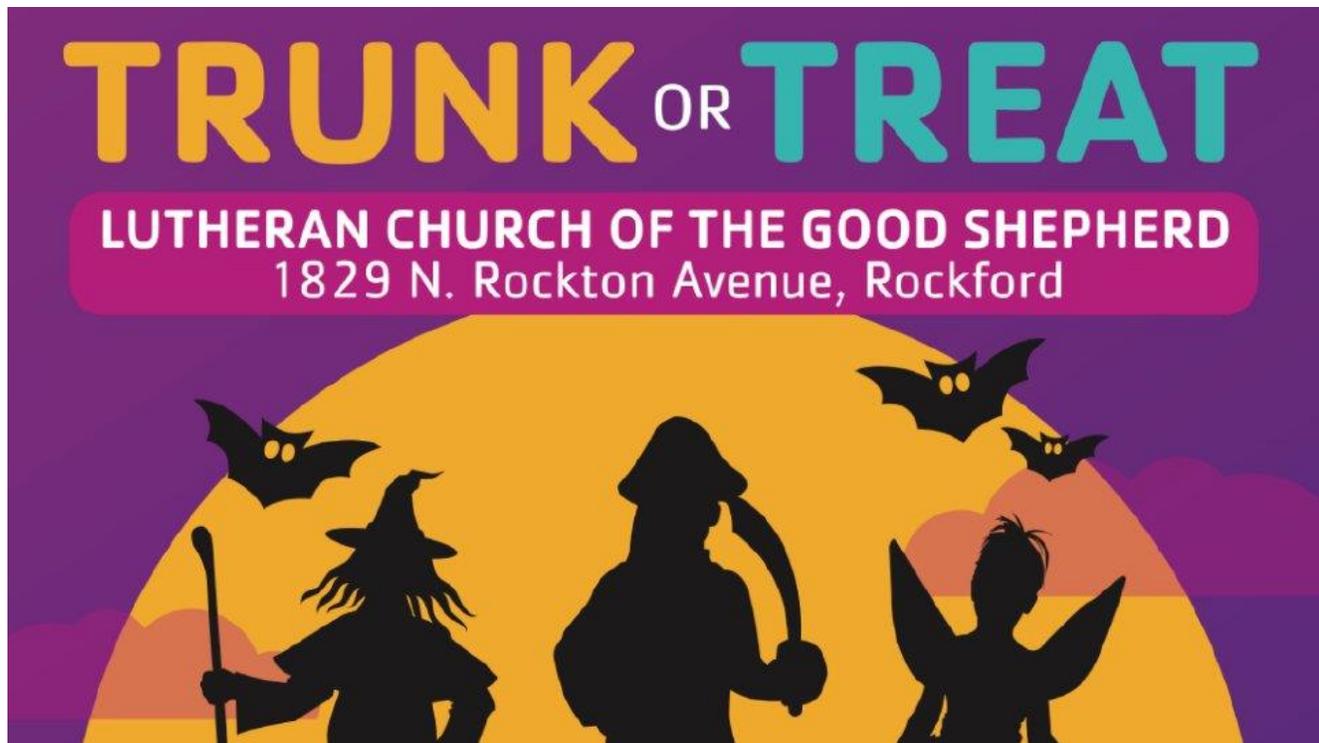
Challenged to bring a "date"!

Date option 1: Invite Someone you haven't seen in church lately.

Date option 2: Invite someone new to join you.

*** Fancy outfits are optional**





The YMCA, Stateline Church, Voices of Inspiration are partnering with us to provide a safe and fun family experience at Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 1829 N. Rockton Ave., Rockford, for families in our community this Halloween on **Saturday, October 30th from 1-4 pm.**

Living Jesus Bible Study

Wednesdays at 10am, beginning October 27
At Trinity Lutheran Church, Durand, IL and on Zoom:

Meeting ID: 822 5103 5321

Passcode: 522906

Dial by your location
+1 312 626 6799

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82251035321?pwd=VnhXM29Rc2tTb3VuU29MN0JOTTJGQT09>

