



Shepherd
OF THE PRAIRIE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Caring For All God's Children

**Congregational
Newsletter
February 2021**

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE
"A Growing Church, For Growing People"

GOD'S WILL OR MY WAY

A series of services for the Season of Lent

Beginning Wednesday, February 17 (Ash Wednesday)

"Not as I will, but as you will," Jesus prayed to his Father the night before he went to the cross for our salvation. This is our prayer as well this Lenten Season as we seek to do God's will in our lives, as we draw near to the observance of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection.

This year we have the opportunity Wednesday to participate both in person as well as online. In person worship will be limited to 70 participants (this service will also be live streamed).

Join us as we focus on different aspects of God's will at work among us. Various Biblical characters will be used to invite us into struggles each of us face in submitting ourselves to God's will.

We pray you will be encouraged in following our Lord more nearly and dearly each day.

FEBRUARY 17 – Isaac (*Noon & 7:00 pm in person & online*)

FEBRUARY 24 – Moses (*7:00 pm in person & online*)

MARCH 3 – King David (*7:00 pm in person & online*)

MARCH 10 – Mary (*7:00 pm in person & online*)

MARCH 17 – Paul (*7:00 pm in person & online*)

MARCH 24 – Lydia (*7:00 pm in person & online*)



A Note From Pastor Mark

Pastor's
Corner

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,
During the season of Lent, beginning February 21, we are going to be using the Psalm as our preaching texts for Sunday worship. We will be focusing on the Psalms and how we might use the Bible's song book for prayer in our lives.

For instance, Psalm 34 expresses praise for deliverance from trouble. It is a psalm worshipping God who delivered God's people. I invite you to read it today.

Have you experienced a time in your life when something dreadful was overcome and good news came to you when you were expecting the worst?

What was that like?

I remember a number of years ago visiting an elderly patient in the hospital who was in intensive care. When I arrived, the physician came to explain that she would need to stay longer in order to have a medical procedure done that would be quite difficult. I could see the struggle in her eyes as the doctor was explaining this to her. The doctor concluded that he would need to talk with another physician about the proposed procedure and would return. I sat with this woman as we thought about what the surgery would mean for her.

There was a feeling of uncertainty and dread surrounding her.

Within a few minutes the physician returned. He had a smile on his face. He had conferred with the other physician who determined that the procedure would not be necessary. Not only that, she should be allowed to be released from the hospital into the care of her family as soon as possible!

The smile that broke out on her face was enormous! What relief was felt! At that moment she could have risen up from her bed and danced. She was in the mood for celebration and worship.

The longer we live we collect more and more memories of life experiences, struggles, difficulties, and challenges.

When we review our life, we can see that somehow through it all we have survived. We are still here to remember. We have lived through and overcome many challenges.

What challenges and difficulties have you survived? How were you



(Continued on page 3)

A Note From Pastor Mark (Continued)

(Continued from page 2)

delivered from the trouble you faced? What feelings do you have and what lessons learned do you cherish? Have you ever used Psalms in your lives of prayer to give praise and thanks to God?

Many of us experience a profound sense of gratitude when we look back and review our life experiences. Gratitude comes for good things received and difficult things overcome.

This is the heart of worship for us. We express our gratitude and thanks to God. We recognize our blessings that have come from God. I hope you will make worship a priority in your life during this season of hope filled reflection we call Lent.

Thankful to be your pastor in the ministry we share as a growing church, for growing people.

Peace, *Pastor Mark*

Adult Education



How do we grieve? How do we express our sorrow when a loved one dies? How do we lament? Or even, do we? Some cultures lament very well. Others, not so much. For instance, in the Jewish tradition, people often "sit shiva", that is, they come and sit with the bereaved for up to 7 days. In Ireland people lament by "keening" which is an action of

loud wailing. Here in America, we more often than not adopt the British custom of "keeping a stiff upper lip." Admirable to some but not very healthy. During our Lenten Bible study this year, we'll spend time reflecting on how we lament. We'll look at the Psalms of Lament (there are a number of them). We'll explore the Hymns of Lament (there's a whole section in our hymnal). We'll open the book of Lamentation and see what help might be there. Lamenting, when our hearts are deeply sorrowful, is a strong Jewish/Christian tradition that's been passed down to us. It's an emotional and spiritual healthy thing to lament. So come join us, beginning the week of February 14, by looking for a blast email from the church, or by going to our website, www.sotp.org, or by joining us on Facebook. We look forward to having you join us!

Pastor Bill

Ministry Musings

There has been so much turmoil in our lives recently...Covid 19, family and/or friends sick or dying, political conflict, racial unrest, justice issues, contentious elections, loss of jobs/income, inability to be with friends and/or family, the inability to worship and meet together, our whole way of life upset. Many of us feel helpless, powerless, afraid, lonely, tired. We see hope at the end of the tunnel with the availability of a vaccine, but the time lag before we receive it may make us feel disappointed or impatient or even frustrated.



With all of that weighing on us, I offer the prayer attributed to Saint Francis:

Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring love.
Where there is offence, let me bring pardon.
Where there is discord, let me bring union.
Where there is error, let me bring truth.
Where there is doubt, let me bring faith.
Where there is despair, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness, let me bring your light.
Where there is sadness, let me bring joy.
O Master, let me not seek as much
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love,
for it is in giving that one receives,
it is in self-forgetting that one finds,
it is in pardoning that one is pardoned,
it is in dying that one is raised to eternal life.

May this come true in your life! May you find joy in walking with our Lord and faith to trust and face the future!

Donna Kelly

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Prayer shawls are still being made. If you are interested in making shawls at home, contact Jeanne Henley.

If you need a prayer shawl for a loved one, the church office is open Monday—Friday from 9am—2pm, please come by and pick one up.

Contact: Jeanne Henley cjhenley2003@yahoo.com

STEWARDSHIP

Your stewardship team wishes to thank all those who filled out their Estimate of Giving Cards for CY 2021. In a most difficult year with a full fledged pandemic, we're heartened by your response which gives our finance and council members a good idea of the financial support to expect from our congregation for next year. It helps them prepare a budget for our mission and ministry needs which we'll all vote at the end of January.

I have had the privilege and pleasure to serve as chair of this committee for 4 years. Effective February 1, Mike McCann has graciously accepted to be the new chair of our committee. I will remain engaged to serve this committee moving forward under Mike's direction and will be joined by Ralph Wehnes, Chris Brolsma, and Larry Newbanks.



Stewardship deals with how we respond to the blessing God has granted us through his Mercies and Forgiveness. Time, Talent, and Treasure are the three legs of the Stewardship stool, and moving forward we'll do our best to address how to engage each of you to use His gifts in the Time and Talent areas to benefit the Body of Christ at SOTP. Make it your desire in

the coming year to step out of your norm and serve Him and His church in a way that will make an impact on the lives around you. Return not only a portion of your financial blessings, but your Time and Talents as well.

May God continue to richly bless you in the year ahead....AMEN

Contact Rick Miller rlmiller3k@gmail.com

SPECIAL OFFERINGS—LENT & EASTER

For the convenience of our members you will now be able to make donations for Lent and Easter through our GivePlus+ online giving on the SOTP.org website. These special offerings are given to various organizations to be chosen by the Mission Team.

sotp.org

**DONATE
ONLINE NOW**

Contact: Sue Wehnes susanwehnes@sbcglobal.net

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

"Shepherd of the Prairie supports Habitat for Humanity in three different ways. One is financially, two is working at Habitat's Restore in Elgin, and three is actually participating in the construction and process of moving a family into the new home. Over the next few months I will be giving some insights as to the total picture of Habitat's efforts; from finding reliable home owners, to arranging loans and doing paperwork, to monitoring the responsibilities of ownership, to physically helping with shopping for first time tools, food, and basic furnishings.



I'll try to provide greater details and insights in my next article, but thought I would start by highlighting Jessica Mejia, a new Habitat recipient in Crystal Lake, Illinois. The following is an article by Tom Quinian of Habitat's Northern Fox Valley District.

Carl Hupert, Mission Team

Meet Jessica Mejia

There's a solution for everything — we just have to look for it. Where others see obstacles, Jessica Mejia sees opportunities, and this goal-oriented young woman won't let any problem stop her from securing a home for her 7-year-old daughter. Jessica, a 30-year-old single parent, has been on her own since she was a teenager. After working in various jobs (restaurants, hospitality and cosmetology), she's now employed as a personal loan specialist and is following a path to management. On the side, she works as an Uber driver and a hair stylist. Jessica and her daughter are excited to move to their new home in Crystal Lake built by Habitat for Humanity of NFV with the help of Thrivent Financial.

"My daughter has never had a room of her own, so this is our dream," Jessica said. "This home will give us stability and a sense of accomplishment." Jessica, who was raised in Carpentersville, has previous volunteer experience with Habitat for Humanity and PADS.

By working at the Habitat Restore in Elgin and at a couple of build sites, Jessica has added to her ever-growing skill set.

"You learn a lot of what goes into a house and you meet a lot of nice people who help others. I've learned a lot about painting, cutting tiles and other things."

- Tom Quinian of Habitat's Northern Fox Valley District

Contact: Carl Hupert carlhupert@gmail.com

NEW MEMBER GATHERING

NEW MEMBER GATHERING

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT OUR CONGREGATION

Sunday, March 7, 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Contact: Donna Kelly Donna@sotpmail.com

GRIEF JOURNEY GROUP

If you have lost a loved one and would like to be part of a group that can provide support, comfort and ideas for journeying through this season of grief, we here at Shepherd of the Prairie would like to provide that kind of opportunity for you. There are no requirements, or need to commit to a specific length of time to attend, nor that you must attend every session; you don't even need to speak except to introduce yourself and tell us who you have lost. There is no charge for participation in this group.

This group is for all who have lost a loved one whether it is a spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandchild, friend or any other relational loss. We meet in person, socially distanced, every Tuesday evening from 6 to 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

For more information, please contact Donna Kelly at donna@sotpmail.com or 214-676-1788.



Contact: Donna Kelly donna@sotpmail.com

DO YOU SHOP AMAZON?



Shop AmazonSmile, when you select SOTP as your nonprofit. Same Amazon you know & love, but Amazon donates 0.5% of your

eligible purchase to SOTP.

We have received **\$1,524.77** as of November 2020.

Contact: Michelle Rankin michelle@sotpmail.com

PUBLIC WORSHIP RESUMING FEB 14TH

Sunday, February 14, 9 am & 10:45 am



PUBLIC WORSHIP RESUMING

JOIN US FOR
WORSHIP

Limited to 70 people worshipping

Contact: Michelle Rankin
michelle@sotpmail.com

ONLINE
WORSHIP
CONTINUING
sotp.org

PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR



Members of Shepherd Of The Prairie, we have identified a new exciting volunteer opportunity! Our Community Outreach ministry is in need of a Public Relations Coordinator. This person would help ministries and staff gather information about ongoing activities that could be used for press releases and advertisements in news papers and Digital advertising on the Internet. The PR Coordinator would be a member of our Community Outreach team and responsible for sending this information to our church's newly obtained publicist. If this sounds like an interesting way for you to serve your church and the kingdom of God, please contact Our Community Outreach Chairman, Mike Yndestad by email, mike@sotpmail.com

Mike looks forward to hearing from you.

Contact: Mike Yndestad mike@sotpmail.com

MEMORY GARDEN UPDATE

The application for a Special Use Permit was unanimously approved by the Planning Commission at the Village of Huntley on December 14th. We met with the Village Trustees on January 14th and received the final approval for the Special Use Permit. In the meantime, we received our Certificate of Exemption from the State of Illinois Comptroller's office for the Memory Garden. Once we are ready to start construction, we can apply for the building permit. We have completed the rules and regulations regarding the Columbarium. The cost for each niche will be determined after we receive approval from the Congregation. We are planning to sell niches and Memory Bricks starting on February 1, 2021. The Memory Brick order forms will be on the web site, and printed forms will be available at the Church office. A copy of the niche contract will also be listed on the web site. Still planning our opening in July 2021. More information and pictures on the SOTP web site.



Contact: Ralph Wehnes ralphwehnes@sbcglobal.net

DRIVE THRU FOOD DRIVE



Contact: Bob Malm c.r.malm@att.net



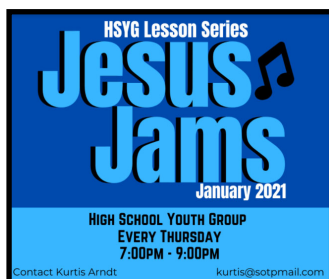
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HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH JANUARY RECAP

For the month of January 2021, the High School Youth Group did a lesson series with Youth Intern Kurtis Arndt titled, "Jesus Jams"!



This lesson series focused on a contemporary Christian/worship song each week. Then the students would spend 45 minutes to one hour discussing why the song was written, where in the Bible did the message come from, as well as how does the music apply to the students daily lives.

The songs that were covered in this lesson series were "Truth Be Told" by Matthew West, "Bleed The Same" by Mandisa, "Shoulders" by For King and Country, and "Rend The Heavens" - Rend Collective. Each week also included some type of activity or game related to the message of the song.

Contact: Kurtis Arndt kurtis@sotpmail.com

YOUTH SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

This month, the High School Youth & 8th Grade Confirmation Students will be volunteering at the February 20th, 2021 Food Drive being held at Shepherd of the Prairie from 9:00am to 1:00pm.

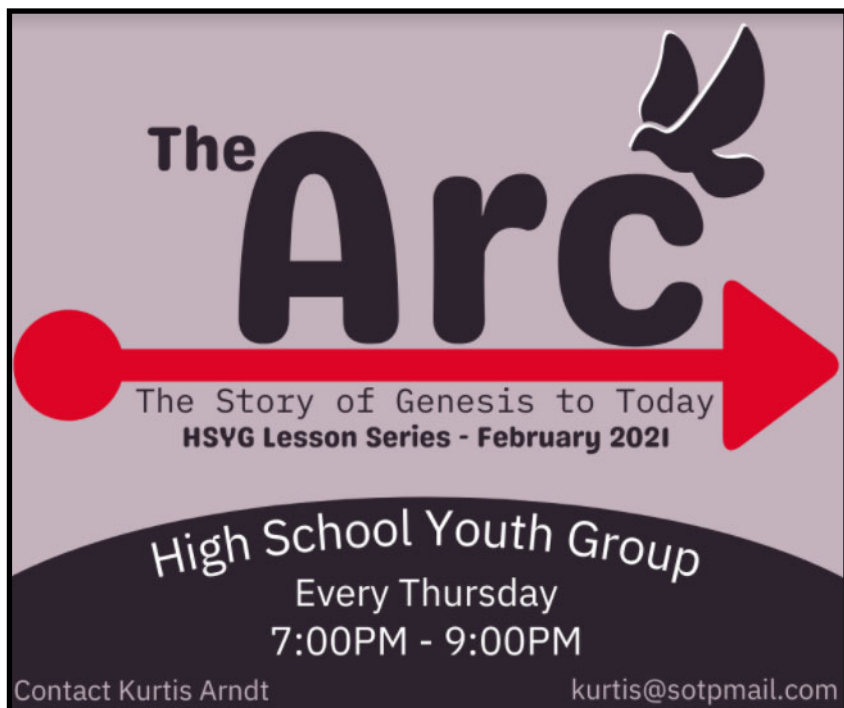
Volunteers are needed!

Please RSVP your student and which timeslot(s) they will be working come February 20th! It is greatly appreciated!

Contact: Kurtis Arndt kurtis@sotpmail.com



HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH THIS MONTH



In

February of 2021 the High School Youth Group will be doing a new lesson series called “The Arc: The Story of Genesis To Today”. This lesson series is directly from one of Youth Intern Kurtis’s favorite professors Dr. Justus Ghormley. Dr. Ghormley of Holy Cross College in Notre Dame, Indiana taught a New Testament class at Valparaiso University where Kurtis learned how important and how interesting the timeline of the Bible can be when able to understand how the very first pages of the Bible, all the way to last pages, connect and are relevant to today.

For the month of February, each week the students will be drawing an image once taught by Dr. Ghormley. The image that we will be drawing is essentially a timeline of events from the first pages of Genesis to Today, and into the future. As this is a High School Youth Group, Youth Intern Kurtis looks forward to answering the question of how does this huge book called the Bible all connect?!?

Once again, each week of this lesson series will have an activity or game to go along with the lesson or simply to get a good laugh as a community.

Contact: Kurtis Arndt kurtis@sotpmail.com

ONLINE GIVING



*Remember: your offerings are a blessing.
And blessings keep on giving.*

Online Giving Available at:

<https://bit.ly/SOTPgiving>

Questions? Contact: Michelle Rankin Michelle@sotpmail.com

GIVING TREE THANK YOU!

A big thank you to all who made Christmas brighter for Grafton Food Pantry and Turning Point families. This year, because of the virus, only gift cards were accepted. Many of you gave extra cards and I was able to fill in for the envelopes not returned.



Turning Point decided to just hand out the gift cards as the client came in and Grafton Food Pantry did it by families.

- ⇒ **Turning Point:** we collected 37 gift cards and a \$50.00 check donated by a private party.
- ⇒ **Grafton Food Pantry:** We had 15 families-52 people. Collected 52 gift cards, \$30.00 cash donation and a \$50.00 check donated by a Private party. Four extra gift cards. The gift cards were purchased from the following businesses: Meijers, Dunkin Donuts, Ace Hardware, Starbucks, Dollar Tree, Culvers, Walmart, McDonalds, Visa gift card.

Grafton Food Pantry and Turning Point are so thankful for the Mission work our church does for them.

A very Happy New Year to all.

Barb Hoppensteadt

Contact: Barb Hoppensteadt hoppen@sbcglobal.net

PRAYER CHAIN



We have updated our prayer chain to make it easier for you to send a prayer request. By using these methods prayers go out immediately without needing to wait for someone to see them

in their email and send them out; which can delay a prayer request getting to the chain.

You can either:

- go to our website (sotp.org) and look under New Content for “prayer request form”. You can fill out the form and then hit submit. Your prayer request will go out to the entire prayer chain directly from the website form
- send a prayer request directly to the email address sotp-prayer-chain@gaggle.email and it will go directly to the prayer chain.

2021 ANNUAL CHURCH PICNIC



Contact: Sharon Little sk155little@mac.com

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS



Do You Receive All Our email communications?

- ⇒ Daily Devotionals (Food for the soul)
- ⇒ Weekly Friday Flourish (Church info)
- ⇒ Monthly Newsletter (More detailed information)

To start receiving any of the above, please e-mail your request to: Admin@SOTPmail.com

If you aren't receiving other e-mail blasts from us, please reach out to Michelle Rankin at Michelle@sotpmail.com to be added.

FINANCIAL NEWS

TREASURER'S REPORT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2020

Our congregation was generous especially during this year of Covid-19. First I would like to thank Sue Wehnes for her over 15 years of service as Contribution Secretary; she has devoted many hours to ensuring that your donations and memorials are correctly accounted. I would like to thank our Accounting Administrator, Melanie Chesny for keeping our Financial Records accurate this year. In addition to the Covid-19, she has accurately accounted for the Paycheck Protection Program and the new Giving Plus (Credit Card) program.

Assets include \$95,000 from the SBA Paycheck Protection Program received on April 24, 2020. These funds are expected to be forgiven at the end of the program. This does not affect the year to date Operating Fund.

General Fund Report The General Fund Balance is \$196,796. Income for the month was \$63,638 and Expenses for the month were \$59,048.

Mortgage Service Fund Report The Mortgage Service Fund Balance is \$63,048. Income for the month was \$22,190. The monthly mortgage payment is \$19,536.

This Month

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income:	\$ 63,638	\$ 63,129	\$ 509
Expenses:	\$ 59,048	\$ 63,792	\$ 4,744

Year-to-Date

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income:	\$ 730,507	\$ 757,680	\$ (27,173)
Expenses:	\$ 710,945	\$ 757,680	\$ 46,735

Mortgage Service Fund

Income for month: \$ 22,190

Fund Balance: \$ 63,048

Respectfully Submitted,
Cliff Dungey
Congregation Treasurer

faith and
finances

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL THROUGH 1/31

Bud Hansen, President **Matt Greene, Vice President**

Cliff Dungey, Treasurer **Sarah Wolf, Secretary**

Marlene Boehler, Carla Elam, Mike Luecht,

Ellen Nissen, Christa Serpe

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1..... Barbara Hoch, Oneida Wheeler
- 2..... William Kamphausen, Noel Lemke, Ivan Suski
- 3..... Steve Barnard, Jody Linton
- 4..... Ryan Gartzke, Bradley Linton, Brigitte Pelka, Emma Stegge
- 5..... Pat Darow, Abby Gillming, Judith Petropulos
- 6..... Don Kramlich, Judy Luecht, Sydney Patel, William Trudeau
- 7..... Brian Harvat, Arlene Kraaz
- 8..... Eileen Gerald, Susan Leshner
- 9..... Susan Blotch, Jordan DeBolt, Elaine Gillam, Conner Gillming, Jack Voss
- 10..... Judith Corole, Carol Fiandalo, Mark Kowalski, Joshua Symbal, Betty Tazbier
- 11..... Annika McNeal, Zachary Serpe
- 12..... Grace Boster, Addison Buesing, Aileen Zei
- 13..... Zoe Dowell, Zachary Zeimen
- 14..... Colin Glosson, Logan Glosson, Donald Kruto
- 15..... Silvia Forsythe, Sandee Keane, Elizabeth Raines
- 16..... Alexa Piskule
- 17..... Gail Barnard, Vernon Hansen, Ingeborg Heidorn, Donna Kelly, Maggie Kemblowski, Chuck Petersen, Karen Schimmel
- 18..... Karin Arndt, Robert Buesing, Kim Kowalski
- 19..... Carter Dean, Gregory Gillming, Linda Jahr, Nanette Ridgway, Ralph Scalise, Dave Shotick
- 20..... Halie Gartzke, Carol Kalbas
- 21..... Patty Driscoll-Shaw, Patty Opfer
- 22..... Heidi Dunfrund, Jerry Frank, Julia Hoving
- 23..... Nikki Bach
- 24..... Rich Douglas
- 25..... Justin Anderson, Raquel Lemke, Bernie Shafer
- 26..... Tim Papka, Hazel Peckels
- 27..... Alan Busch, Nicole Flanagan, Charlie Powe
- 28..... Jason Bloomfield, Linda Campbell, Jacob Elam, Joshua Elam, Lauren Hoster, Lois Jensen, Matt Konie, Orv McElfresh, Joan Rice, Mary Trodahl

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