

# Newsletter

December 2023



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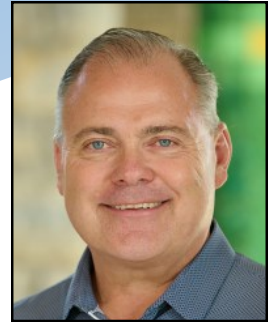
**Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church**

Huntley, IL   [sotp.org](http://sotp.org)   847/669-9448

*Photo: Confirmation Class of 2024*

# A Note

## From Pastor Mark



The season of Advent is upon us. Of all the seasons of the church year, for me, Advent is the one filled so many different messages. Hope, anxiety, fear, joy, peace, anticipation and so much more.

The Advent story from Luke 1:39-45 conveys all of these emotions found as we journey through the beginnings of a new church year leading up to the celebration of Christmas. I invite you to read the story before continuing.

Babies move around in their mother's womb, don't they? An arm here, a leg there. And it can be quite surprising! But nothing brings more joy than feeling your baby move.

Mothers and grandmothers, what was it like when you were pregnant with your first child? Do you recall your feelings, your hopes, and your dreams? What was your experience?



In the story, Luke tells of Mary's hasty trip to a Judean town in the hill country, around 80 miles away. But why the hurry? An angel has just told Mary that she, unwed and a virgin, will have a child. The angel says that Mary's cousin Elizabeth, considered too old to have children, is also pregnant. Mary can be killed for this. Being pregnant outside of marriage in ancient times is a social disgrace, and it's dangerous.

Not too long-ago unwed women who got pregnant were dismissed from school, hidden by their families or sent to homes for unwed mothers? Babies were adopted in secrecy. These mothers were

condemned as horrible sinners, and many carried that shame into their marriages and to their graves.

Despite the danger, Mary chooses to be excited by this news. Instead of scoffing at the messenger, Mary embraces the message.

In her excitement, she hurries to visit Elizabeth, someone she trusts to share in this good news. When Elizabeth greets Mary, the child she carries leaps in her womb. It's as if Elizabeth's baby, John the Baptist, recognizes the presence of his Lord in Mary. This movement from her own baby signals a deep connection for Elizabeth. Mary is not a troubled young woman, planning to stay in hiding until her child is born.

This visit is not about fear, but joy.

Elizabeth experiences the joy of her child at Mary's arrival. She can feel that something amazing and joyful is coming. "Blessed are you among women," she says to Mary, "and blessed is the fruit of your womb ... for as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy" (Luke 1:42, 44).

Wow!

Soon it will be Christmas. Does this story give you reason to feel the joy? How are

*(Continued on page 3)*

## A Note From Pastor Mark

*(Continued from page 2)*

you connected to the story of Elizabeth and Mary? Does it give you insight into our search for hope and joy today? Does this good news, that Christ has come for all of us, no matter what we've done, release you from fear? Does it give you hope?

We look forward to you joining us for worship during this season we call Advent. Let the emotions fill you, knowing God has come near to bring peace.

**Pastor Mark**



## A Note From Pastor Ryan

Thanksgiving has come and gone, December is upon us, and with it comes

the rich season of longing known as Advent. We are beginning a four-week journey as we reflect on what the world was like as it prayed desperately for God to send the Messiah that was promised to us through the prophets of our Hebrew scriptures. We imagine and feel what it must have been like, longing, and yet not knowing. It is the season of the already and the not yet. We know how the story goes, and yet there is power in its retelling.

Advent marks the beginning of a new church year. On Sunday, November 26, SOTP joined with churches of many denominations from around the world to celebrate Christ the King Sunday, the church's New Year's Eve. It was a festival of hymns and readings as we journeyed through the church year in

a single worship service. It is one of my favorite festivals because it helps us feel the rhythms of the of the year and the ways that our Sunday festivals and liturgies help us understand this thing called faith. We remember and relive the unbelievable gift of God's grace.

From now until the Day of Pentecost, which will be on May 19 in 2024, we will celebrate the highest festivals of our church year. From the Nativity to the visit from the Magi, from Jesus' temptation in the wilderness to the Last supper with his disciples, from Jesus' death to his resurrection, we will remember the most significant events of Jesus' life and ministry. The colors of the sanctuary change to signal the significance of each season, each color with its symbolic meaning (white to remind of our baptism, purple for repentance, red to signal the presence of the Holy Spirit, etc.).

The season that follows the Day of

*(Continued on page 4)*

# **A Note**

## **From Pastor Ryan**

*(Continued from page 3)*

Pentecost, known as Ordinary Time, is a reminder of God's presence in the ordinary times of our lives. God is not only present in the larger-than-life moments, but in everyday occurrences. During the season after Pentecost, we get to walk with Jesus throughout the Holy Land as he heals and teaches. We receive valuable explanations of what it means to live life as Christ followers and how God's kingdom works (or was designed to work).

All of this will come to pass as we embark on another calendar year, but for now, I invite you to lean into the meaning of this Advent season. It

is a time to push back against the busy-ness of the American holiday season, take a pause, and reflect on what the coming of the Messiah means to us, in our day. I invite you to spend some time with a good Advent devotional, or try a new and different spiritual practice as way o help you savor this season and grow in your anticipation and faith in Jesus as our long-awaited Messiah.

As always, I pray for you to have a safe and joyous Christmas and New Year celebration, and I look forward to seeing you soon!

Peace,

**Pastor Ryan**

## **Ministry Musings**

### **With Donna**

As I think about Christmas and all it brings, I am grateful for the decorated trees, twinkling lights, snow covered landscapes, Christmas cookies, gifts (to give and receive), friends and family celebrating...but most of all I give thanks for the incarnation. God loved us so much and wanted to live in close relationship so strongly, that God decided to come to come to earth and live as one of their creation! That is amazing and awesome beyond comprehension! That the God who created the universe could love us and desire to connect with us so

completely is beyond anything I can imagine!

We (or at least I do) tend to get so caught up with the baby in a manger, angels and shepherds, stars and wisemen that we don't stop to take in the magnitude of our God coming to earth to live as a human; to experience our joys and sorrows, our struggles and efforts, our successes and defeats, our hopes and



*(Continued on page 5)*



# Ministry Musings

## With Donna

*(Continued from page 4)*

our fears and even our death. This has come especially close to my heart as I walk through “the valley of the shadow of death” after my grandson’s death by suicide this summer. I find the Christmas lights and music soothing and comforting much of the time; yet sometimes, the sadness that Payton will never share another Christmas with us is overwhelming. At those times all I can do is sit in stillness and trust in that love of God that is more than I can fathom, and is walking through that valley with me. As we rejoice in the baby in the manger, let us remember the If we take away the prettiness, the stars and angels, the shepherds and wisemen,

we are left with an amazing gift of love! Love that was born in a messy, dirty, smelly stable. Love that grew up in poverty and walked with the poor, the other, the ‘less-than’ and loved all of these so much that he lived and died to show us what love is all about. For me, the Jesus that shares my pain, and weeps with me and for his people is the best gift of Christmas.

I hope that as you take some time to reflect this Christmastime, you can experience the joy and love that comes to us in the astonishing miracle of love that is the incarnation of our God in Jesus.

Merry Christmas!

*Donna Kelly*

## Ministry Night

### Join Us!



SECOND MONDAY MONTHLY  
7:00 pm



# MINISTRY NIGHT

# ***Adult Education***

## ***With Pastor Roy Olson***

The Adult Education Class will resume sometime in January.

We will be studying the book **Future Faith** (Fortress Press) by Wesley Granberg Michaelson. In it he has identified 10 challenges the church must face this century. We will examine one per week.

Participants are encouraged to purchase the book and read along as we go. Please plan to join us when you can, even if you don't have the book, for these weekly conversations on Sunday mornings at 10:15 AM.

More details will be announced next month.



Contact: Pastor Roy Olson  
[olson612sr@sbcglobal.net](mailto:olson612sr@sbcglobal.net)

# ***Christmas Cantata***

## ***Join Us!***



You Are Invited To Our

# Christmas *Cantata*

**SUNDAY | DECEMBER 3 | 9:00 AM**

ADULT CHOIRS OF SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE  
& IMMANUEL OF CRYSTAL LAKE  
WITH FULL ORCHESTRA

Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church  
10805 Main Street  
Huntley, IL 60142

# Adult Education

## With Pastor Bill Waxenberg

We're ready for another "101" gathering!

**On Saturday, January 27, 10am-2pm,** we'll explore Judaism 101.

This introduction to the Jewish faith is a must! Why?

First of all, to really understand who Jesus was and is, we need to know something about the faith in which he was reared.

Secondly, after Jesus' death and resurrection, his first followers (called "Christians") were considered nothing more than another Jewish sect, like the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Third, two-thirds of our Bible is made up of the Jewish scriptures--what we call the Old Testament.

Fourth, almost all of the elements of the Christian faith have their roots in

Judaism--baptism (the Jewish rites of purification), Holy Communion (the Jewish Passover), monotheism (the belief in one God), the two greatest commandments according to Jesus (love of God from Deuteronomy 6 and love of neighbor from Leviticus 19); and our understanding what it means to be truly human--all from the Old Testament.

In addition, the rise in antisemitism today impacts us too as we speak up on behalf of our sisters and brothers from the House of David. So sign up today. We look forward to having you with us!

Register at:

**[www.bit.ly/SOTPjud101](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPjud101)**

*Contact: Pastor Bill Waxenberg*

*[bwaxenberg@gmail.com](mailto:bwaxenberg@gmail.com) Contact:*



## JUDAISM 101

*With Pastor Bill Waxenberg*

**SATURDAY,  
JANUARY 27, 10AM-2PM**



**Sign Up Now: [www.bit.ly/SOTPjud101](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPjud101)**

# Kids Academy

## For Elementary Youth

This program will provide workshops, classes and lessons in all sorts of areas. The SOTP Kids' Academy will offer various enrichment classes for kindergarten-5th grade. The Academy is bringing together adults in our church with talents and passions that they are passing on to the younger members. Some classes will have a small fee to offset the cost of supplies.

- 12/14/23 (K-3rd Grade) 5:00 - 6:15 pm - Art with Julie: Hanging Water Color Ornaments (K-3rd



grade)

(Sign up at [www.bit.ly/SOTPkidsAC23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPkidsAC23) now, space limited)

Contact: Amy Stech  
[amc\\_stech@yahoo.com](mailto:amc_stech@yahoo.com)

# Next Step Fellowship

## For Single Seniors



Pot Luck: Saturday, December 16, Noon

## NEXT STEP FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship Group for Single Seniors

*Please Register*



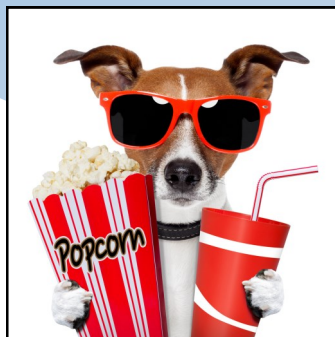
Info: [www.bit.ly/SOTPnext1223](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPnext1223)



# Children, Youth & Family

## Note to the Congregation

Thank you to everyone that participated in our Trunk or Treat, it was a great success!!! We had almost 200 people come and enjoy themselves. Congratulations to our 1st place winners the Stancils with their Cubs themed trunk and the Mackey Family that came in 2nd place with their Jurassic Park Theme trunk!!! (Please include some pictures)



**Save the Date!**

**January 19th Kids Movie Night 6:30 -8:30!!!**

**Attention:**

**Kids Connect December Schedule**

- ⇒ December 3rd 9:00 and 10:45
- ⇒ December 10th No Kids Connect (Christmas Musical 10:45am)
- ⇒ December 17th 9:00 and 10:45
- ⇒ December 24th No Kids Connect (Christmas Eve no morning worship)
- ⇒ December 31st No Kids Connect (New Years Eve)

Kids come in their pajamas and bring sleeping bags, blankets, pillows. We will serve popcorn and movie candy. Movie TBD.

*Contact: Jill Gillming  
jill@sotpmail.com*

## Food Drive

SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE HOSTS



**GRAFTON PANTRY  
FOOD DRIVE**



10805 MAIN ST. HUNTLEY

**MONTHLY  
1ST SUNDAY  
8:30 - 11AM**



**Collecting in Car Outside Main Office Entrance**



# Artist Series Concert



The Shepherd  
of the Prairie  
Artist Series  
Presents

## A Starry Night of *Christmas Classics*

With Lelm & Langford  
& the Mark Olen Orchestra

Friday  
December 1st  
7:00 pm



Shepherd of the Prairie Artist Series presents “A Starry Night of Christmas Classics” on December 1

The Chicago-based piano/vocal duo of Kristin Lelm and Paul Langford, backed by the talented Mark Olen Orchestra, brings “A Starry Night of Christmas Classics” free concert at 7:00pm on Friday, December 1, 2023 at Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church, 10805 Main Street in Huntley.

The public is invited to hear this entertaining holiday performance sponsored by the SOTP Artist Series. No tickets are required and freewill donations are gratefully accepted.

Lelm & Langford are a Chicago-based piano/vocal duo, specializing in jazz, pop and orchestral performances.

They will be accompanied by the popular Mark Olen Orchestra, featuring trumpeter Mark Olen, which has provided previous popular SOTP Artist Series performances at Shepherd of the Prairie.

“A Starry Night of Christmas Classics” will include favorite Christmas Standards in exciting new arrangements, such as: White Christmas, Silent Night, There’s No Place Like Home for the Holidays, O Holy Night, and more.

Soprano Lelm has been thrilling audiences for more than a decade. Lelm is a regular member of the Chicago Symphony Chorus, Chicago Acappella, and a former member of the Grant Park Chorus

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# Artist Series Concert

(Continued from page 10)

(Chicago), and has made numerous appearances at the famed Ravinia Festival in Highland Park, IL and performed at Carnegie Hall in New York on multiple occasions. She has performed as a recitalist and soloist all over the U.S., including opera roles, jazz, musical theatre, pop and ensemble singing of all kinds.

Langford, whose career has spanned over 25 years, is a Chicago-based singer, arranger, keyboardist, producer and conductor. His work includes arranging for and performing with groups such as The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Chicagoland Pops, the Pensacola and LaCrosse Symphony Orchestras, and Walt Disney World. On the road, Paul is an in-demand music educator, clinician, guest conductor, respected band and vocal ensemble leader, and invited singer with orchestras and a cappella groups across America and

around the globe.

Olen's versatility is evidenced by performances with the American Jazz Philharmonic, Chicago Jazz Festival, Ravinia Festival Orchestra, to name a few. He has performed with a multitude of entertainers, including Michael McDonald and David Foster, plus the late Tony Bennett, Al Jarreau, Aretha Franklin, and Maynard Ferguson. As a studio artist, Olen has contributed to recordings of the Chicago Jazz Ensemble, VeggieTales, and countless television/radio commercials.

Visit the church website at [www.bit.ly/SOTPARTIST](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPARTIST) for further information on the Artist Series or email at [artistseries@sotpmail.com](mailto:artistseries@sotpmail.com).

20 years.

Contact: Jane McMullen  
[jane@sotpmail.com](mailto:jane@sotpmail.com)



Once again, we will be offering 6" poinsettias at a cost of \$14.00 each to help beautify Shepherd of the Prairie

for the Christmas season. You can order the poinsettias online at [www.bit.ly/SOTPpoin23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPpoin23) or with the offering envelope located in the church coffee bar/gathering area.

## Poinsettia Orders Due Dec. 5

Don't forget to indicate if you would like to dedicate your flowers to someone or offer them in memory of a loved one.

All orders must be received by December 5th.

Contact: Diane Mollis  
[dem910@outlook.com](mailto:dem910@outlook.com)

# ***Holiday Wellness Tips***

## ***From Your SOTP Wellness Team***

The holidays are often filled with time-honored traditions that include some of our favorite meals and foods. As you celebrate, think of little changes you can make this holiday season to create healthier meals and active days.

### **How calorie dense are my favorite holiday foods?**

High calorie-dense foods pack a lot of calories and tend to be heavily processed, low in nutrients and fiber, and high in fat and added sugars. Below is a list of high-calorie dense foods:

- Fatty meats such as sausage, prime rib, bacon
- Butter, margarine, lard
- Snacks and treats like potato chips, pastries and chocolate candies



Low calorie-dense foods have fewer calories per bite, a variety of vitamins and minerals, and are low in fat and added sugars. The fiber content of these foods tends to be higher,

leading to increased fullness and a lesser likelihood of overeating.

Examples include:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains and beans
- Lean proteins and low-fat milk products

When planning your holiday meals and snacks, try to include more low-calorie dense foods and limit items that are high-calorie dense.



### **Sneaky Holiday Calories:**

- Egg Nog (1 cup)  
343 calories
- Hot Buttered Rum (1 cup)  
218 calories
- Irish coffee (1 cup)  
220 calories
- Mixed Nuts (1/2 cup)  
440 calories
- Chips (1 oz) & Dip (1 tbsp)  
225 calories
- Fruitcake (1 average slice)  
324 calories
- Cheesecake (1 average slice)  
372 calories
- Pecan Pie (1/8 of 9-inch pie)  
480 calories
- Mashed potatoes (1/2 cup)  
& gravy (1/2 cup)

*(Continued on page 13)*

# Holiday Wellness Tips

## From Your SOTP Wellness Team

(Continued from page 12)

300 calories  
Green Bean Casserole  
225 calories

### **Better Options:**

Cider or sparkling grape juice  
2/3 cup 120  
calories  
Wine/Champagne (1/2 cup)  
120 calories  
Mixed Raw Vegetables (1/2 cup)  
25 calories  
Boiled Shrimp & Sauce (2 oz)  
80 calories  
Chocolate mints (2 pieces)  
60 calories  
Chocolate Covered Cherry (1)  
75 calories  
Gingerbread cookie (small)  
100 calories  
Snickerdoodle cookie (small)  
100 calories  
Pumpkin pie (1/8 of 9 in pie)  
180 calories  
Baked Potato & Sour cream  
150 calories

Portions have doubled in the last 25 years. Research shows that people eat more when they are given a larger amount. Eating smaller portions is another easy way to reduce some of the calories from your diet.

Keep an eye on portions at holiday parties

- Grab a smaller plate

- Load up only once
- Eat slowly and enjoy each bite
- Mingle away from the appetizers
- Once you finish your portion, play with the kids or walk the dog
- Chew gum instead



### **Low-Calorie Egg Nog**

Source: American Diabetes Association Holiday Cookbook by Betty Wedman

- 2 eggs, separated
- 4 cups skim milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 6 tsp sweetener such as Splenda
- ½ teaspoon brandy or rum flavoring
- Ground nutmeg to taste

Combine the egg yolks and milk in a saucepan. Cook over medium heat until the mixture coats a metal spoon. Cool.

Beat the egg whites until soft peaks form. Add the egg custard mixture with the vanilla, sweetener, and flavoring. Mix lightly. Cover and chill. Pour into serving cups and sprinkle with nutmeg.

½ cup= 70 calories, 6 grams carbohydrate, 6 grams protein, 3 grams of fat

Contact Jamie Patel  
[jamie.patel@nm.org](mailto:jamie.patel@nm.org)

# Helping Homeless

## Dinner & More



Shepherd of the Prairie is taking dinner to and serving approximately 105 homeless neighbors at Willow Creek Crystal Lake on December 1st. Ways you can help:

- Premake a beef stew
- Purchase ingredients for beef stew and drop them off

- Help set up and serve in Crystal Lake
- Help clean up in Crystal Lake
- Donate warm clothes, coats and/or boots

Contact: Vik Bekeris  
[sydneyb1966@icloud.com](mailto:sydneyb1966@icloud.com)

## Christmas Offering

### JOY TO THE WORLD

All of Shepherd of the Prairie's Christmas offering this year will be equally split among the following charities:

- McHenry County PADS
- Elgin Community Crisis Center
- Pioneer Center Schroeder Group Home
- Mercy Ships

This is including:

- Christmas Eve Loose Offering
- Offerings in Christmas Envelopes
- Offerings made online under Christmas Offering at: [www.bit.ly/SOTPGIVING](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPGIVING)





# 2024 Offering Envelopes And Giving Numbers



We have heard from many members that are on

electronic giving, that they don't want or need envelopes.

We have implemented a new system, where there is an opportunity to opt out of receiving offering envelopes.

Besides electronic giving, if you are on annual or semi-annual giving, you also can opt out of envelopes. Contact Michelle Rankin to get set up.

With this change, many of you will have new envelope numbers for 2024. The 2024 envelopes will be issued sometime in December.

*Contact: Michelle Rankin  
michelle@sotpmail.com*

## Thank You! Craft Fair & Bake Sale



THANK YOU!

Our SOTP Bazaar was a success.

A special Thanks to all who helped to set up and take down our bazaar.

Another thank you to all who baked yummy treats and those who crafted

wonderful items for sale.

Of course I wouldn't forget all those who worked at the Bazaar. Everyone is part of our success.

We earned \$2003.50 and every penny has gone toward our SOTP mortgage.

THANK YOU!

## Thank You! Christmas Decor



A Big THANK YOU to everyone who helped

decorate the church on Monday, November 27. It takes a lot of helpers/elves to decorate and put up five trees.

The Worship Committee thanks you for a job well done!!!!

*Contact: Carolyn Cuttle  
ednca@comcast.net*

# Giving Tree

## Gift Cards Due by Dec 10

This is a reminder that all envelopes with gift cards inside must be returned to the box by the Giving



Tree by December 10. They will be delivered to Turning Point and Grafton Food Pantry on the morning of December 11.

We are overwhelmed by the generosity of our wonderful

congregation . Thank you all for your support. God bless you!

Bev Pinelli, Alice Miller and Barb Hoppensteadt

Contact: Bev Pinnelli  
at [imbev@hotmail.com](mailto:imbev@hotmail.com)

## Bible Study



Through  
12/14

# BIBLE STUDY

## WITH PASTOR MARK

### WEDS AT 11:00 A.M.

Info:  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPaded23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPaded23)



# SOTP Logowear



"players." The company we are using provides services to a lot of sports teams so that is why that word is there. Please skip any request to enter "player"

Shepherd of the Prairie has an online apparel store!

Our online store is available all the time moving forward so feel free to browse here as well:

[www.bit.ly/SOTPlogowear](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPlogowear)

While on the site, you may see that in some places, it asks about

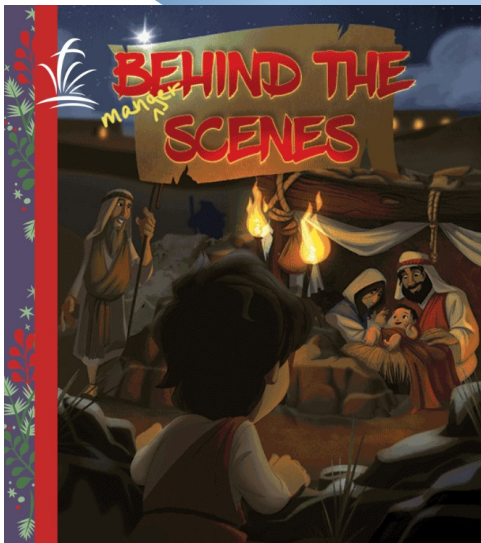
info.

SHIPPING All purchases help SOTP provide our outreach t-shirts for events like parades and events in the community.

Contact: Matt Morrison

[matt@sotpmail.com](mailto:matt@sotpmail.com)

## Christmas Program



WORSHIP WITH US  
**CHILDREN'S  
CHRISTMAS  
PROGRAM**

SATURDAY  
DECEMBER 9  
5:00 PM  
&  
SUNDAY  
DECEMBER 10  
10:45 AM

# Welcome to America

Pack



Mission Team is collecting NEW items to help furnish an apartment for a new refugee family.

Please see list of needs at [www.bit.ly/SOTPpack23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPpack23)

and sign up for what you will be bringing into church for the

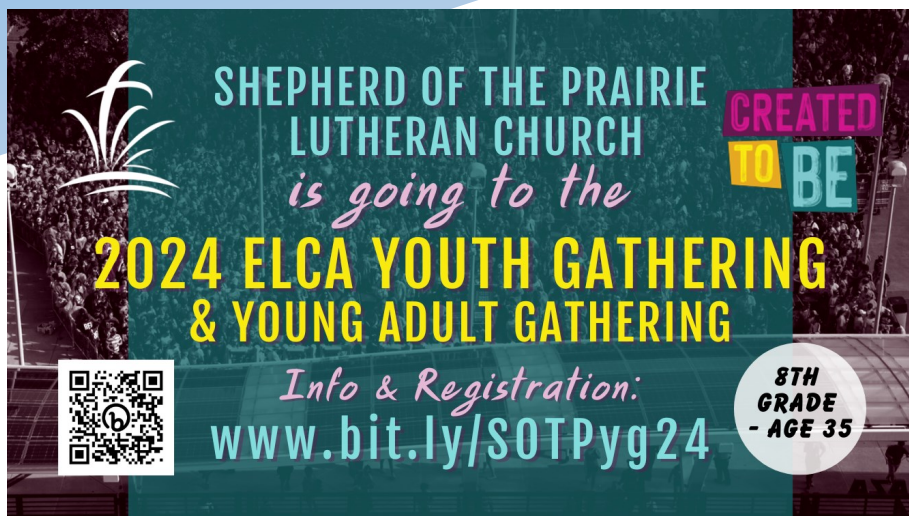
Welcome Pack. There will be collection boxes on blue tables by the office windows.

Contact:

Sandy Hupert

at [sandyhupert@gmail.com](mailto:sandyhupert@gmail.com)

## ELCA Youth Gathering 2024





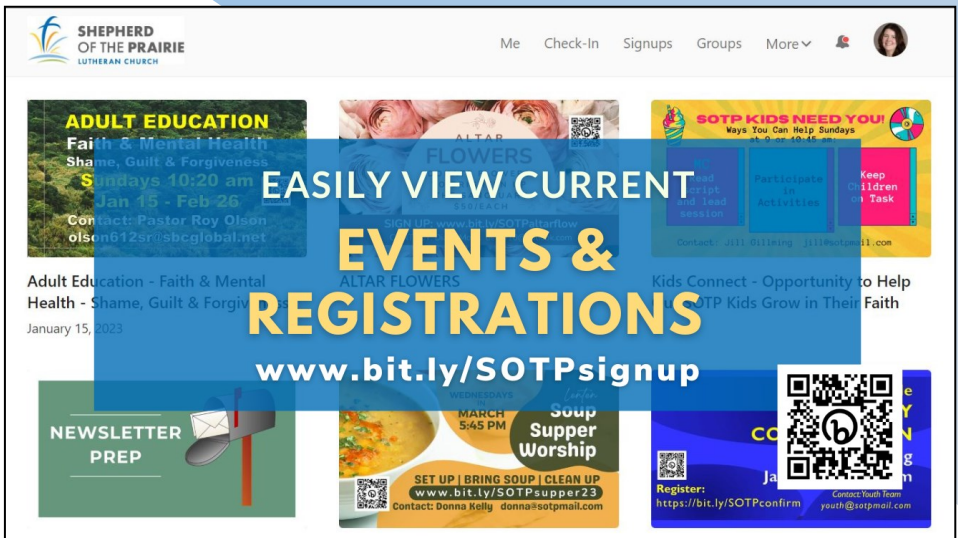
# Blue Christmas Service



**BLUE CHRISTMAS**  
Worship service for those  
who have lost someone  
Tuesday  
**December 12**  
7:00 pm



## See What's Happening At Shepherd of the Prairie



**SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Me Check-In Signups Groups More ▾

**ADULT EDUCATION**  
Faith & Mental Health  
Shame, Guilt & Forgiveness  
Sundays 10:20 am  
Jan 15 - Feb 26  
Contact: Pastor Roy Olson  
olson6125r@bcglobal.net

**EASILY VIEW CURRENT EVENTS & REGISTRATIONS**  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPsSignup](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPsSignup)

**ALTAR FLOWERS**  
Contact: Michelle Rankin (SOTPs) 2023-01-15  
www.bit.ly/SOTPsSignup

**SOTP KIDS NEED YOU!**  
Ways You Can Help Sundays 9:00-10:45 am

**Kids Connect - Opportunity to Help SOTP Kids Grow in Their Faith**

**NEWSLETTER PREP**

**Soup Supper Worship**  
MARCH 5:45 PM  
SET UP | BRING SOUP | CLEAN UP  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPsupper23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPsupper23)  
Contact: Donna Kelly donna@sotpsmail.com

**Register:**  
<https://bit.ly/SOTPsconfirm>  
Contact Youth Team youth@sotpsmail.com

Easily access current events & registrations at [www.bit.ly/SOTPsSignup](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPsSignup)

Contact: Michelle Rankin [michelle@sotpsmail.com](mailto:michelle@sotpsmail.com)



# ***Adventure Club***

*Register 4th & 5th Graders*

**4TH & 5TH  
GRADERS**

**Wednesdays**  
Starting  
**September  
20th**  
**5pm**

**Adventure  
CLUB**



**Info & Registration:**  
**[www.bit.ly/SOTPadv2324](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPadv2324)**

# ***Kids Connect***

*6th Grade—Adult Help Wanted*

**KIDS  
CONNECT  
HELP  
WANTED**



**Info & Registration:**  
**[www.bit.ly/SOTPKChelp23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPKChelp23)**

**SUNDAYS  
BOTH  
SERVICES**



# *High School Youth*

*Now Wednesday Nights*



## High School **YOUTH GROUP**

2023 - 2024

**WEDNESDAY NIGHTS**  
**6:30 - 8:00 PM**

Register: [www.bit.ly/SOTPHS2324](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPHS2324)



# *Little Lambs Preschool*

**AGES  
2-5**

Info: [www.bit.ly/SOTPLittleLambs23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPLittleLambs23)

# **Adult Choir**

*Sing With Us!*

A photograph of an adult choir rehearsing in a room. Members are holding songbooks and singing. The text is overlaid on the image.

 **ADULT CHOIR**  
REHEARSALS  
**WEDNESDAYS**  
**7:00 - 8:30 PM**  
Info:  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPchoir2324](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPchoir2324)



# **Youth & Adult Bells**

*Ring With Us!*

A photograph of a bell choir rehearsing. Large brass bells are visible in the foreground. The text is overlaid on the image.

 **YOUTH & ADULT**  
**BELL CHOIR**  
**REHEARSAL**  
**TUESDAYS 7:00 PM**  
**STARTING SEPTEMBER 12TH**  
Info: [www.bit.ly/SOTPbells2324](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPbells2324)





# **Confirmation**

*For Middle School Youth*



**6TH, 7TH  
& 8TH GRADE  
CONFIRMATION  
WEDNESDAYS  
6:30 PM**



Register:  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPconf23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPconf23)

# **Kids Connect**

*Join Us On Sundays!*

2023 - 2024

**Kids Connect**  
Registration



Register:  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPkids23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPkids23)

# **Men's Coffee**

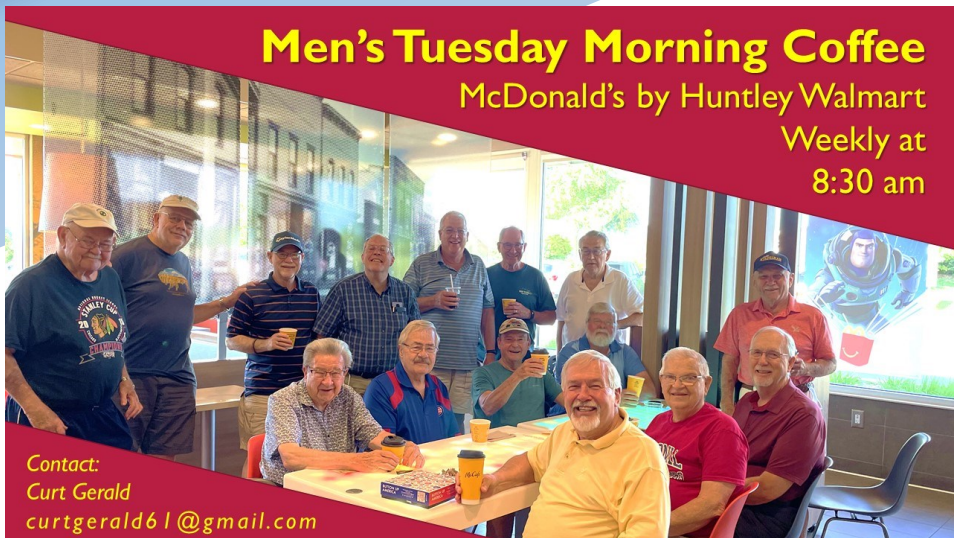
## *Weekly Fellowship*

### **Men's Tuesday Morning Coffee**

McDonald's by Huntley Walmart

Weekly at

8:30 am



Contact:  
Curt Gerald  
[curtgerald61@gmail.com](mailto:curtgerald61@gmail.com)

# **Women's Coffee**

## *Weekly Fellowship*



### **Women's Coffee Gathering**

Fridays 10am



MCDONALD'S BY HUNTLEY WALMART



# ***Prairie Pointe Quilters***

*All Are Welcome*

## **Prairie Pointe Quilters**

Monthly on 1st &  
3rd Tuesdays  
9:00 am

*No Experience Necessary*



## ***Friends Bible Study***

*Women's Bible Study*



## **FRIENDS' (Women's) BIBLE STUDY**



**Mondays at 12:30 pm**

More info: **[www.bit.ly/SOTPfriends](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPfriends)**

Currently the study focuses on the book of Exodus . Our study guide is **Be Delivered: Finding Freedom** by

**Following God** by Warren Wiersbe.

Contact: Linda Dungey  
[lindajsd88@gmail.com](mailto:lindajsd88@gmail.com)

# Altar Flowers

A promotional graphic for Altar Flowers. It features a background of pink and white roses. In the top left corner is a logo with a stylized blue 'f' and yellow and green swooshes. In the center, a light pink circle contains the text 'ALTAR FLOWERS' in large red letters, followed by 'DONATE FLOWERS TO BRIGHTEN UP THE SANCTUARY \$52/EACH' in smaller brown letters. Below the circle is a QR code with a small 'b' in the center. At the bottom, a dark brown banner contains the text 'SIGN UP: www.bit.ly/SOTPflower' in white.

  
**ALTAR  
FLOWERS**  
DONATE FLOWERS  
TO BRIGHTEN UP  
THE SANCTUARY  
\$52/EACH  
  
**SIGN UP: [www.bit.ly/SOTPflower](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPflower)**

Please consider signing up to donate flowers to brighten up the sanctuary. Each arrangement will be \$52.

The bouquets are delivered from the florist for the weekend worship services. The flowers are yours to keep after the Sunday services or you can pick them up on the Monday following. The church is open from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

There are several ways to place an order for altar flowers. You can do so online here, you can also order the flowers on the church website or you can contact Diane on [dem910@outlook.com](mailto:dem910@outlook.com). Payments can be made by credit/debit card or check/cash.

When you order the flowers, you will need to provide your name, the date you would like them, your phone number, and for whom the flowers are dedicated to or in memory of. You will receive a special offering

envelope for the payment in the mail if you choose to pay by check or cash. If you have any questions, please call Diane Mollis 224-654-6677.

Thank you for contributing to beautify the altar during our services at Shepherd of the Prairie.

*Contact: Diane Mollis*

*[dem910@outlook.com](mailto:dem910@outlook.com)*

# ***Grief Journey***

## *A Safe Place to Heal*



## **GRIEF JOURNEY GROUP**

**TUESDAY MORNINGS  
10AM**



Info: [www.bit.ly/SOTPgrief](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPgrief)

## ***Therapy Dog at SOTP***



John and Carol Sturz have been training their 5-year-old golden retriever, Rosie, to be a Therapy Dog. The first step in her training was to pass the American

Kennel Club Canine Good Citizenship test, a 10-skill test that teaches good manners to dogs and responsible dog ownership to their owners. The next part of her certification will be to make visits to schools, hospitals, nursing homes as well as to Shepherd of the Prairie Church and anywhere she is welcome. So far Rosie has been with us at many local restaurants and at SOTP Saturday night services.

Therapy dogs are not service dogs. Service dogs are dogs that are specially trained to perform specific tasks to help a person who has a

disability. An example of a service dog is one that guides an owner who is blind, or a dog who assists someone with a physical disability. Therefore Rosie is not given the same duties and privileges that a service dog has.

Since many people are familiar with the Lutheran Church Charities Comfort dogs, we want to clarify that Rosie is not part of that organization. LCC K9's places dogs with assigned handlers and the dogs live in homes with assigned caregivers. Rosie will continue to live with us and we will be her handlers. Our plan is to take her for visits to nursing homes, hospitals and other places like libraries, since we have both worked as school and college Librarians. John is also a retired Lutheran pastor.

John and Carol Sturz

# Regularly Scheduled



## SUNDAYS

1st Sunday Monthly **Food Drive**  
**for Grafton Food Pantry,**

8:30-11am

9:00 am **Traditional Worship**

9:00 am **Kids Connect**

10:15 am **Adult Education** with  
*Pastor Roy Olson*

10:45 am **Contemporary Worship**

10:45 am **Kids Connect**

1:00 pm **FBW**

6:30 pm (1st Tues), **Boy Scouts**  
**Patrol Leader's Council**

7:00 pm **Adult & Youth Bells**

7:00 pm **Cub Scouts, Tigers**

7:00 pm **FBW**

7:00 pm **AL-ANON Meeting**

## WEDNESDAYS

9:00 am **Little Lambs Preschool**

10:30 am **Women's FBW**

11:00 am **Bible Study with Pastor**  
**Mark** (*last day 12/13*)

5:00 pm **Adventure Club**

6:30 pm **Confirmation**

6:30 pm **High School Youth**

7:00 pm **Adult Choir**

## MONDAYS

9:00 am (3rd Mon) **Gazebo Valor**  
**Quilts**

10:00 am **Staff Meeting**

10:30 am **FBW**

12:30 pm **Friends (Women's)**  
**Bible Study**

6:30 pm **Boy Scouts Troop 200**

7:00 pm (2nd Mon) **Ministry Night**

7:00 pm (3rd Mon) **Council**  
**Meeting**

9:00 am **Little Lambs Preschool**

9:00 am (2nd Thurs), **Prayer**  
**Shawl Ministry**

6:30 pm (2nd Thurs), **Lions Club**

7:00 pm **Cub Scouts**

Times Vary **Volunteers at**  
**Habitat for Humanity**  
**ReStore**

## TUESDAYS

8:00 am **Men's Coffee** at McD's  
by Huntley Walmart

9:00 am (1st & 3rd Tues),  
**Prairie Pointe Quilters**

9:00 am **Little Lambs Preschool**

9:15 am **AL-ANON Meeting**

10:00 am **Grief Journey**  
**Meeting**

10:00 am (4th Tues), **Barnabas**

6:30 pm (1st Tues), **Scout Troop**  
**200 Committee**

## FRIDAYS

9:00 am **Little Lambs Preschool**

10:00 am **Women's Coffee** at  
McD's by Huntley Walmart

10:30 am **FBW**

## SATURDAYS

5:00 pm **Worship**



# Upcoming Events



## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1

Dinner for Local Homeless,  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPdIn23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPdIn23)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1 A Starry  
Night of Christmas Classics—  
Artist Series Event, 7:00 PM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2 Help  
Set Up for Cantata, 8:30 am  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPcantata23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPcantata23)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3  
Last Day to Order Poinsettias  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPpoin23](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPpoin23)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3 Food  
Drive for Grafton Food Pantry,  
8:30—11am

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3  
Christmas Cantata, 9am

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9 5pm &  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 10:45am  
Children's Christmas Program

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10  
Giving Tree Gift Cards—  
Last Day to Turn In

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12  
Blue Christmas Service, 7pm

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13  
Last Day of Pastor Mark's Bible  
Study for the Season, 11am

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

Kids' Academy—Art with Julie,  
5pm  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPkidsAC](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPkidsAC)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16 Next  
Step Fellowship Potluck, Noon

DECEMBER 22-25, Church Office  
Closed, Christmas

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23  
Saturday Evening Service, 5pm

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24  
Christmas Eve Services:  
Family Service, 3pm  
Contemporary Service, 5pm  
Traditional Service, 11pm

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24  
Caroling in the Square, 8pm

DEC 29-JAN 1, Church Office  
Closed, New Years

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27  
Judaism 101, 10am  
[www.bit.ly/SOTPjud101](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPjud101)

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28  
Annual Meeting, Noon



# ***Birthdays***

*December*



1-Dec Julian Stangle	16-Dec Doug Sandberg	23-Dec William Waxenberg
2-Dec Richard Arsinow	Carol Sturz	Daniel Wills
William Chapman	17-Dec Seth Boster	Nicholas Womac
Mark Frendreis	Kendra Coots	William Womac
Tess Miller	Doreen Dwyer	24-Dec Marina Reicher
3-Dec Tim Bueschel	Glen Graff	Lydia Seibert
Tim McMullen	Shane McGuine	Mary Ann Wiek
Mike Ulmer	Nancy Ramirez	25-Dec Jim Henley
4-Dec Brady Allegretti	18-Dec Morgan Kindle	Emmett Kenyon
5-Dec Raquel Hess	Elaine Mucibabich	Lydia Kenyon
Jackson Moretti	Ella Trudeau	Jake Satalino
6-Dec Lisa Berens	19-Dec Kendall Eck	27-Dec Jack Ary
Diane Mollis	Emma Johnson	Amy Johnson
Amanda Stenson	Susan Mattiucci	Shelby Kowalski
7-Dec Daniel Black	20-Dec Jack Bloomfield	Carol Lilla
Barb Douglas	Sandy Frank	Matt Stech
8-Dec Mike Maraviglia	Karen Gollhardt	Darrel Thompson
9-Dec Miranda Hoeft	Richard Heidorn	28-Dec Annette Boster
Donna Schnepff	Elizabeth Liotus	Ernie Clifford
Scott Seibert	Enrique Rojas	Mike McCann
10-Dec Bennett Coots	21-Dec Tristan Mathiesen	Sharon Trampf
Cynthia Jones	22-Dec Chuck Little	29-Dec David Holzwarth
Wendy Ottens	Carrie McCabe	Chuck Lamb
11-Dec Sherry Perkey	Andrew Raistrick	Robert Weldon
12-Dec Megan Juergensen	Hannah Riley	30-Dec Carol Farnam
Sean Walker	23-Dec Alexandra Adams	Michael Grabs
13-Dec Devin Burg	Susan Lewis	Karen Mulcay
Carolyn Cuttle	Lynn Meyer	31-Dec P.J. Knudsen
14-Dec Bob Dirks	Deanna Moore	Pat Milford
15-Dec Macy Luedtke	Sandra Seibel	Christine Schurhammer
Susan Puls		

Our amazing heavenly Father knew you before you were born. May His precious love and care warm your heart as you celebrate another year.



# Get Involved

## Ways to Serve

### GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

**Are you looking for ways to use your talents and participate in our church family?**

**Here are some ideas and who to contact for more information for each one:**

- AARRK Garden – Ronda Shoemaker  
rondapatton313@gmail.com
- Adult Choir—Jane McMullen, jane@sotppmail.com
- Adventure Club—Jill Gillming  
jill@soapmail.com
- Annual Church Picnic – Sharon Little  
skl55little@mac.com
- Assisting Minister (9am) – Jane McMullen, jane@sotppmail.com
- Artist Series – Jane McMullen  
jane@sotppmail.com
- A/V Team – Mike Yndestad,  
mike@sotppmail.com
- Barnabas Ministry—Donna Sorensen,  
sorensensid@comcast.net
- Bell Choir (Adult) —Jane McMullen,  
jane@sotppmail.com
- Bell Choir (Kids & Youth) – Jane McMullen, jane@sotppmail.com
- Communion Assistants—Jane McMullen, jane@sotppmail.com
- Communion Set Up & Take Down—Judie Symbol, judie.symbol@att.net
- Community Outreach—Tara Mackey, rtmackey10@yahoo.com
- Counters—Ralph Wehnes,  
ralphwehnes@sbcglobal.net
- Crafting Gifts for Sr. Citizens & Homeless Blankets—Alice Hallett, agrndmom3@gmail.com
- Greeters—Elaine Gillam, suggillam@aol.com
- Habitat for Humanity – Sandy Hupert sandyhupert@gmail.com
- Mission Team – Sandy Hupert sandyhupert@gmail.com
- Newsletter Mailing Prep—Michelle Rankin, michelle@sotppmail.com Sign up at: [www.bit.ly/SOTPFolders](http://www.bit.ly/SOTPFolders)
- Next Step Fellowship (Single Seniors Fellowship) – Dave Stangle, dstangle.ds@gmail.com or Phyllis Thomson, phyllisthompson@aol.com
- Prairie Crafters – Lori Paeth
- Property Team—Mark Frendreis, SOTpproperty@gmail.com
- Prairie Quilters—Bev Kenny krkbjk@comcast.net
- Prayer Shawls—Jeanne Henley cjhenley2003@yahoo.com
- Public Relations—Matt Morrison matt@sotppmail.com
- Readers—Jane McMullen jane@sotppmail.com
- Ushers—Ed Cuttle edschn28@comcast.net
- Vacation Bible School – Jill Gillming jill@sotppmail.com
- Welcome Center—Tara Mackey, rtmackey10@yahoo.com
- Worship Band (Singing & Instrumental)—Jeff Moore, jeff@sotppmail.com

# Involvement Schedule

## December 2023



		December 2 & 3	December 9 & 10	December 16 & 17	December 23 & 24	December 31
Counters	Mon	Ralph Wehnes, Diana Murphy & Rick Miller				
Communion Bread		JoAnn Ward	Lynn Broederdorf	Jacque Stashwick	Tom Noessen & Bev Pinelli	Eileen Gerald
		Extra Bread for December: Nancy Morbeck				
Greeters <a href="#">Interested in Serving Here?</a> Contact: Elaine Gillam suggillam @aol.com	SAT 5:00 PM	<b>Interested in Serving Here?</b> Contact: Elaine Gillam suggillam@aol.com				
	SUN 9:00 AM	Elaine Gillam Terry Halpin	Eileen Gerald Terry Halpin	Dottie Bobzin Candace Beck	<b>3pm:</b> Elaine Gillam <b>5pm:</b> Dottie Bobzin <b>11pm:</b> Eileen Gerald	10am: Carolyn & Bob Malm
	SUN 10:45 AM	Bob & Carolyn Malm	Bob & Carolyn Malm	Bob & Carolyn Malm		
Ushers <a href="#">Interested in Serving Here?</a> Contact: Ed Cuttle edschn28@ comcast.net	SAT 5:00 PM	Tom Cox Lynn Meyer	Jim & Diana Murphy	Carol Hartman Sue Mattiucci	Steve Murphy Peggy Lynn Loiselle	Tom Cox Therese Cox
	SUN 9:00 AM	<b>WALTER LEMKE</b> Art Ryden Tim Bueschel Mickey & Cathy Kappel	<b>JACK CONTI</b> Pete Thompson Frank Cesario Cheryl Rotermund Jeff Ottens	<b>WAYNE SCHMIDT</b> Nancy Wilson Arja Kasper Dan Wentzlof Mike Malczewski	<b>3pm:</b> Andrew Szekely Vik Bekeris  <b>5pm:</b> Andrew Szekely Vik Bekeris  <b>11pm:</b> Mickey & Cathy Kappel Vik Bekeris Barb Hoppensteadt	<b>10am:</b> <b>RALPH WEHNES</b> George Attaway Jerry & Pat Darrow
	SUN 10:45 AM	<b>BOB MCDUFFE</b> E Chuck Peterson Annika Yndestad	<b>MARK FRENDREIS</b> Sandi Stewart Jessica Panella	<b>DOUG NAGEL</b> Don Koerner Judy Petrooulos		



## Follow Us



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**@shepherdoftheprairie**



**SHEPHERD  
OF THE PRAIRIE**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

And NEW  
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@sotpmedia10805 40 subscribers 107 videos

Statement of Purpose >

[shepherdoftheprairie.com](http://shepherdoftheprairie.com)

**@sotpmedia10805**

## Stay Connected



**Do you receive  
our email communications?**

- Daily Devotionals (Food for the soul)
- Weekly Friday Flourish (Church info)
- Monthly Newsletter (More detailed information)
- Weekly Videos from our pastors

To start receiving any (or all) of the above, please e-mail your request to Michelle Rankin at  
**[michelle@SOTPmail.com](mailto:michelle@SOTPmail.com)**

# Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Report as of October 31, 2023

**General Fund Report:** The Unrestricted General Fund Balance is \$370,927. Total income for the month was \$78,456 and total expenses for the month was \$73,883. Approximately 4.6 months of General Fund reserves.

**General Fund reserves. Mortgage Service Fund Report:** The Mortgage Service Fund Balance is \$43,694. Income for the month was \$17,404. The monthly mortgage payment is \$18,807. Approximately 2.3 months of Mortgage Service Fund reserves.

This Month				
General Fund	Actual	Budget	Difference	Percentage
Income:	\$78,456	\$70,840	\$7,616	10.75%
Expenses:	\$73,883	\$75,194	\$1,311	1.75%

Year-to-Date				
General Fund	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Difference	Percentage
Income:	\$785,199	\$804,160	(\$18,691)	-2.36%
Expenses:	\$783,031	\$793,127	\$10,096	1.3%

## Mortgage Service Fund

Income for Month:	\$17,404
Income YTD:	\$165,253
Payments YTD:	\$188,070
Ending Fund Balance:	\$43,694

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy McGuine  
Congregation Treasurer

*faith and*  
**finances**



# ***SOTP Staff***

## **Jane McMullen**

*Traditional Music &  
Worship Director*  
jane@sotpmail.com

## **Jeff Moore**

*Contemporary Music Director*  
jeff@sotpmail.com

## **Matt Morrison**

*Operations Manager*  
matt@sotpmail.com

## **Michelle Rankin**

*Operations and  
Communications Assistant*  
michelle@sotpmail.com

## **Dave Shotick**

*Accounting Administrator*  
accounting@sotpmail.com

## **Mike Yndestad**

*Audio Visual Coordinator*  
mike@sotpmail.com

## **Pastor Mark Boster**

*Senior Pastor*  
pastormark@sotpmail.com

## **Pastor Ryan Mackey**

*Pastor*  
pastorryan@sotpmail.com

## **Kendra Coots**

*Assistant Teacher—  
Little Lambs Preschool*  
kendra@sotpmail.com

## **Jill Gillming**

*Director of Children and  
Family Ministry*  
jill@sotpmail.com  
LittleLambs@sotpmail.com

## **Donna Kelly**

*Director of Connections  
Ministry*  
donna@sotpmail.com

# ***Church Council***

**Bob Mollis**, President

**Joyce Shotick**, Vice President

**Kathy McGuine**, Treasurer

**Cheryl Adams**

**Mike Luecht**

**Ellen Nissen**

**Christa Serpe**

**Sara Wolf**

Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church  
is a congregation of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

### **"A Growing Church, For Growing People"**

For information, please call (847) 669-9448  
or go to our website at [sotp.org](http://sotp.org)

## **WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**Saturday 5:00 pm**

**Sunday 9:00 am Traditional  
& 10:45 am Contemporary**

*Worship with us in person  
or online at [sotp.org](http://sotp.org)  
and Facebook Live*

Shepherd of the Prairie  
Lutheran Church  
10805 Main Street  
Huntley, IL 60142



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