



**SHEPHERD
OF THE PRAIRIE**
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**DECEMBER
2025**

**COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS**
NEWSLETTER

IN THIS ISSUE

**NOTES FROM
STAFF**

**ADULTS &
SENIORS**

- Decorate SOTP for Christmas

ALL AGES

- Artist Series Christmas
- Blue Christmas
- Christmas Eve
- Volunteers & Bakers Needed
- Children's Christmas Program

**CHILDREN,
YOUTH &
FAMILY**

- Family Bingo

MORE INFO



FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN

November 8th members and friends of SOTP had an amazing time packing 300 boxes (64,800 meals)! We also presented a check for \$1,889 from the money raised when we sold apple butter in October!

**CHRISTMAS EVE
WORSHIP**



3:00 PM CHOIR, HANDBELLS & STRING QUARTET	5:00 PM PRAISE BAND	11:00 PM PIANO & ACOUSTIC GUITAR
--	----------------------------------	---



See pg 16 for large print.

A NOTE FROM PASTOR MARK

Many of us will be surprised this Christmas with eye-popping, heartwarming gifts. Maybe a new electronic gadget or game? Jewelry? An engagement ring? A puppy? A special drawing from a grandchild?

What have your wishes been in the Christmases of your life?

There are those who receive nothing, not even a card.

Have you been in that situation?

And, of course, many will forget the gift of Christ.

Have you ever experienced that?

God gives us life in this baby, this Savior. This is everything we need, yet sometimes we don't seem to think it's enough. Or maybe it's too farfetched to believe.

Instead we go our own way, sometimes turning to destructive habits like drugs, alcohol, smoking, gambling, overeating, facebook or technology addiction, or other soul-eating vices, putting a distance between ourselves and our loved ones, between ourselves and the God who dwells among us.

In the Gospel of Matthew chapters 1 and 2 the Christmas story begins with the lineage of Jesus going all the way back to Abraham. This is followed by the Spirit intervening in a dream so that Joseph is reassured to not "dismiss" Mary but to take her as his beloved. Thus a name is attached to the Messiah, "God with Us, Jesus."

In the hustle and bustle of life it is so easy to lose our connection to God with us. As with Joseph we get so caught up in life and its worries, fears, anxiety and pain that we forget that God was born into that struggle and hardship. God knows it personally.

What are you looking forward to this Christmas season? Peace, health, new friends? How does Christ – the baby in that manger, and the God who is among us here and now – figure in to your celebration?

I'll see you in worship!

Pastor Mark





A Christmas Prayer

Holy and gracious God,
On this Christmas,
we remember Your Son
was not born into ease or comfort,
but into a world of
uncertainty, poverty, and fear.

You chose a manger instead of a palace,
a frightened young couple
instead of royal courts,
a night filled with questions
instead of answers.

Lord Jesus,
You entered our struggle
so You could walk with us in ours.
You knew the cold air, the crowded streets,
the weariness of a world longing for hope.
You came not above our pain,
but right into the middle of it.

So this Christmas, we bring You our burdens—
our worries, our griefs,
our strained relationships,
our searching hearts and our unmet hopes.
Be born again in the places of our lives
that feel forgotten,
in the rooms where fear whispers loudly,
in the corners where darkness lingers.

Let Your light find us
as it found shepherds in the night.
Let Your peace rest on us
as it rested over Bethlehem.
Let Your love hold us the way Mary held You—
close, steady, and full of promise.

Christ, who was born into struggle,
be our strength in struggle.
Christ, who came to a world in need,
come again to our hearts today.

Amen.

- Pastor Mark Boster

MINISTRY MUSING WITH DONNA

“It’s the most wonderful time of the year”, so the song goes. Christmas is a time of celebration and joy for some people. And maybe it used to be the happiest time of year for you as well, but for whatever reason, not this year. Sometimes all Christmas seems to do is remind us. Remind us that things aren't the way they used to be, that they may never be the same again, and we can feel like we are lost.



And that's no surprise because if you think about it, the way we celebrate Christmas in our culture is all about the past and what things used to be like. In a way Christmas is all about the past; our customs, the joy of our childhood, our favorite movies, all of which is great fun, but it's no wonder that when things change, Christmas seems to make us yearn for the past. the “good old days” and we just want the Christmas spirit back, the spirit we used to have.

We may even feel lost in a sea of celebration. That makes me think of the parable of the lost sheep we heard about earlier this year. In this story Jesus teaches us that God is like the shepherd who values each sheep in the flock. God treasures every child of the family. When one goes missing, whether by choice or by experience, God goes into search mode because that is part of the very nature of God.

And yet, some of us may feel far away and lost. What’s missing can seem much more acute at Christmas. While we may wish that Christmas would be the way it was in the past, what used to be doesn't come back. We are in the present, the right now.

So how can we celebrate Christmas this year?

We can celebrate the true meaning of Christmas which isn't found in traditions and special foods, in gifts and Christmas Carols. The true meaning of Christmas is a promise that God made to us, a promise God is fulfilling now; to always be with us. The promise that the people who lived in darkness would see light. The promise was never that things would be the way they used to be, but a promise that there can be new hope and new joy.

For the moment, think beyond Bethlehem, beyond the angels and the shepherds, the Magi and the star. It's a beautiful story,

(continued)

MINISTRY MUSING WITH DONNA

(continued)

an important story, a story of our faith. And if that story brings us comfort, then by all means we need to cherish it. But that story is about the past, and Christmas is about the present. The true meaning is even bigger than that story; the deepest meaning is closer to us than that.

In reality, Christmas isn't only about the baby Jesus born over 2000 years ago; not really, not directly. Christmas is about God coming to us; coming into our lives, then yes, but also here and now, coming into our hearts today.

It's about God tenderly gathering us in his arms, easing our burdens, our lostness, giving us life, forgiving us, gently enabling us to forgive ourselves and others; helping us to let go of our anger, our pain, our despair. Christ is born in us and among us today. The miracle of Christmas this year, just might be that God is opening our hearts to new hope, new light, new joy, new life.

And I invite you to trust that Christ is being born in you today, and that Christ is with you today, and every day and will bring you that hope, light, peace and life.

Donna Kelly

SUPPORT GROUPS

Small group for seniors to talk about changes and challenges in life and ideas on how to cope.

Meeting on the second Tuesday of every month.

Contact: Donna Kelly at donna@sotpmail.com

WHAT'S NEXT?

Group for seniors talk about changes & challenges & ideas on how to cope.

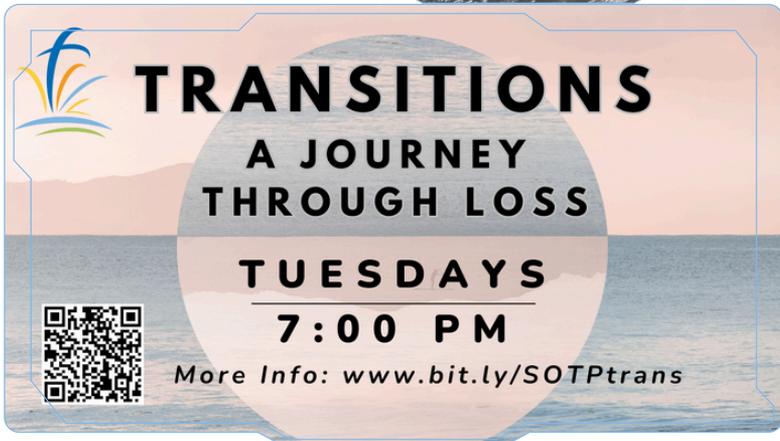
**11:00 AM
SECOND TUESDAY**

More Info: www.bit.ly/SOTPwhatsnext

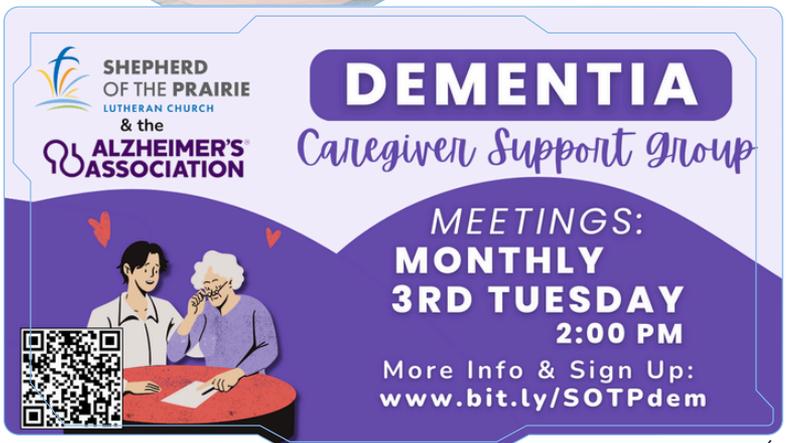
SUPPORT GROUPS



**GRIEF JOURNEY GROUP**
TUESDAY MORNINGS
10AM
Info: www.bit.ly/SOTPgrief



**TRANSITIONS**
A JOURNEY THROUGH LOSS
TUESDAYS
7:00 PM
More Info: www.bit.ly/SOTPtrans



 **SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE LUTHERAN CHURCH**
& the **ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION**

DEMENTIA
Caregiver Support Group

MEETINGS:
MONTHLY
3RD TUESDAY
2:00 PM
More Info & Sign Up:
www.bit.ly/SOTPdem



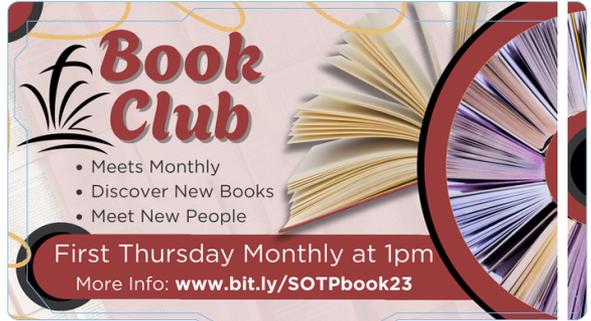
BOOK CLUB

Do you enjoy reading?
Looking for a way to
connect with others?
Then you just might
enjoy our Book Club.
We take turns reading
different genres .

Books being discussed
at our upcoming meeting:

- **January: THE
MAGIC HOUR by
Kristin Hannah.**

The discussion will be led by Diana Murphy and our meeting
will be on the 2nd Thursday (1/8) because of New Year's Day.



Contact: Dottie Bobzin at dbinil@att.net

POINSETTIA ORDERS



We are offering a 6" Red Poinsettia in gold-colored foil for \$15.00 each. Order deadline is December 7, 2025 to order your poinsettia for Christmas.

Contact: Lorraine Vallee at lvallee921@outlook.com

WOMEN'S COFFEE

The woman's coffee group meets on Fridays at 10:00 am at the Huntley McDonalds near Walmart in Huntley. There is no need to register or let anyone know if you are coming or not and you can come any time.

We have also been going to lunch at 12:00 on the second Tuesday of the month at a variety of local restaurants. On Nov. 11 we went to DC Cobbs. We have also gone to Papa G's and The Village Inn and continue to try new places.

There is a picture of the group attached when we participated in the Trunk or Treat activity for Halloween. We all dressed up and decorated our car—we saw lots of kids and had a couple of games for the children. It was a lot of fun.

Please join us! See you soon!

Contact: Phyllis Thomson at phyllisthomson@aol.com



DECK THE SOTP HALLS

Each year, a mighty group of helpers make the sanctuary and gathering area beautiful for Christmas.

Please join in the fun of decorating SOTP for the Season. **Friday, December 5th, starting at 9am** we will gather to make all things Christmas and beautiful.



Contact: Carolyn Cuttle at ednca@comcast.net

HELP NEEDED

SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE LUTHERAN CHURCH
Helping our Neighbors!
GRAFTON FOOD DRIVE
FILL THE SHELVES
FOOD & Necessities DRIVE
1st Sunday Monthly
8:30 to 11:00 am
Donations Needed
MORE INFO, ITEMS MOST NEEDED & DONATE:
www.bit.ly/SOTPGAFTON

SECOND MONDAY MONTHLY
7:00 pm
Volunteers Needed
MINISTRY NIGHT
More Info: www.bit.ly/SOTPministrynight

QUILTERS INVITE YOU TO JOIN THEM

Here we go again - we're starting all over again.

Slow but sure, we have six quilts done. After we had the quilts dedicated, packed up and driven to the warehouse, we took about seven quilts to Turning Point. They were thrilled to receive them and took our picture with one as seen here.

You can have fun and join us the first and third Tuesday of each month at 9:00.

Contact: Bev Kenny at krkbjk@comcast.net



ARTIST SERIES-BASKET FUNDRAISER

Your Artist Series committee is asking for your help with donations that we can use to fill baskets for our **TWELVE BASKETS OF CHRISTMAS SILENT AUCTION** which supports the Artist Series here at Shepherd of the Prairie.



These baskets will be auctioned at our Christmas musical on **December 7th**. This is the only true fund raiser that the Artist Series does on a yearly basis. New items can be donated by contacting Carolyn Cuttle for additional information. Cut off date is November 25th.

We thank you for your support over the past seven years and look forward as we start our 8th year of entertainment here at SOTP.

Contact Carolyn Cuttle at ednca@comcast.net

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

We hope you were able to attend the recent services where the Prayer Shawls were placed on the back of the pews. Thank you for giving them your blessing, and for keeping them from slipping & sliding!



The shawls are knitted or crocheted in the shape of a triangle or rectangle in many different colors and textures. We make them for you to give to those who need some comfort and joy. Please help yourself to a shawl on either "shawl rack" or in the upper cabinet A at the end of the ministry hall. We don't ask for anything in return, they are free for you to take and share.

We would like to invite you to come "Shawl" with us! If you're a beginner, an experienced "needle meister", or willing to learn, please join us!

We meet in the Library the 2nd Thursday each month at 9 a.m.

Contact: Jeanne Henley at cjhenley2025@gmail.com

ANNUAL MEETING-SAVE THE DATE

IN PERSON & ONLINE

annual meeting

SUNDAY
JANUARY 25
12:15PM



Join Online: www.bit.ly/SOTPzoom
Passcode: 1234

sotp.org



**SHEPHERD
OF THE PRAIRIE**
LUTHERAN CHURCH



START THE NEW YEAR WITH US

Would you like to begin the new year in a meaningful way?

Come join us in a time of meditation and prayer.

Release & Renew, a self-guided practice of meditation, practice and prayer, will take place in our Fellowship Hall in an open house format between **7am and 8pm on Tuesday, January 6th.**



For more information contact: Donna Kelly through the church office 847-669-9448.

Contact: Donna Kelly at donna@sotpmail.com

ARTIST SERIES CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Tis the Season to be Jolly with “A Bing Crosby Christmas” the Artist Series presents “A Bing Crosby Christmas with Jared Bradshaw”, featuring the music of the Andrews Sisters on **Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 5:00pm**. No tickets are required and freewill donations are gratefully accepted.



In the spirit of the holiday season, the SOTP Artist Series will also present a silent auction with themed gift baskets for the holidays starting at 4:00pm. Guests are invited to come early and join in the festivities.

Broadway’s Jared Bradshaw celebrates America’s favorite crooner in a concert that’s a humdinger of a good time. Bursting with charm, Bradshaw takes a walk down memory lane with warm, touching stories. His swinging band features a talented trio singing the joyful harmonies of the Andrew Sisters. Treasured hits include “Jingle Bells”, “Ac-cent-tchu-ate The Positive”, “Mele Kalikimaka”, and “White Christmas”.

Bradshaw starred as Willy Wonka (US/performance) in the original Broadway cast of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, also performing the role for the Tony Awards at Radio City Music Hall. He appeared in Jersey Boys, for an eight year run, swinging several roles in the Broadway, Off-Broadway, Chicago, and First National Tour Casts. He entertains audiences around the world aboard Disney Cruise Ships. And currently performs for Walt Disney Entertainment’s Finding Nemo: The Big, Blue, and Beyond as the actor/puppeteer for Great White Shark Bruce at Disney’s Animal Kingdom. Other credits include The Music Man, Guys and Dolls, Parade, Cabaret and many more. Bradshaw is married to Broadway actress Lindsay Northen.

Artists Lounge Live is a Chicago-based production company created by married team Executive Producer Michael Ingersoll and Artistic Director Angela Ingersoll. It presents captivating concerts nationwide, featuring singular talents singing classic pop hits, superb musicianship, and intimate storytelling.

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

We will be hosting our Blue Christmas Service on **Thursday, December 11 at 7pm.**

This is a simple service of readings and carols in remembrance of

the losses in our lives. If you have suffered any kind of loss (a loved one, a relationship, a job, purpose, a sense of self...) and would like to honor that loss this Christmas, please join us. Registration is not required.

For more information, please contact Donna Kelly
Contact Donna Kelly at donna@sotpmail.com



CRAFT TABLE – CHRISTMAS EDITION

A poster for a Craft Table Christmas Edition. The background shows shelves filled with various craft projects, including stuffed animals, Christmas cards, and fabric. A large green circle with a white border is centered on the poster. Inside the circle, the text "CHRISTMAS EDITION" is written in large, bold, red letters with a white outline. Below it, "CRAFT TABLE" is written in yellow, followed by "PAYING DOWN OUR MORTGAGE" in yellow. At the bottom of the circle, "DECEMBER 20 & 21" is written in large, bold, red letters with a white outline. Below the date, there is a list of two bullet points: "• Donate crafts" and "• Pay what you can to purchase crafts". Below the list, there is a line of text: "Crafts are donated so every penny goes directly to paying down our mortgage." In the top right corner of the poster, there is a yellow banner with the text "Donations Needed" in black.

GIVING TREE



TREATS NEEDED

We are in need of your amazing baking skills! On Sunday, Dec. 21, there will be a lovely Christmas cantata performed by your choir, the Immanuel Lutheran choir, and a symphony! They will be performing at both services this year, so we need treats for them during the break between services and for those attending the services.



Would you please donate either: 2 dozen cookies OR a large quick bread loaf (maybe no nuts for allergy purposes!)? If you can, please drop your baked goods at the church by 3pm on Friday in the kitchen.

We will have trays to serve your items, so if you bring bread, we would appreciate it if you would slice it.

If you have any questions, please contact Donna Sorensen, Annette Petersen, or Joyce Shotick.

THANK YOU and hope you join us on Dec. 21 between services! 14

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM



NEW DATES

SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE LUTHERAN CHURCH

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

CRAZY, BUSY, PEACEFUL, HOLY NIGHT

DECEMBER 13 AT 5PM & DECEMBER 14 AT 10:45AM

CHRISTMAS CANTATA



SING TO THE CHILD

A Christmas

CANTATA

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 9AM & 10:45AM

Featuring Combined Choirs from Immanuel Lutheran Church, Crystal Lake & Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church, Huntley



Cantata featuring combined choirs from Immanuel Lutheran Church in Crystal Lake and Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church in Huntley.

Will be the same for both the 9am & 10:45am services.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

3:00 PM
CHOIR, HANDBELLS & STRING QUARTET

5:00 PM
PRAISE BAND

11:00 PM
PIANO & ACOUSTIC GUITAR

CAROLS, CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION AT ALL SERVICES



ONE SERVICE SUNDAY 12/28



DECEMBER 28, 2025

ONE

SUNDAY SERVICE

10:00 AM

END THE YEAR WITH US

IN PERSON & ONLINE AT WWW.BIT.LY/SOTPSTREAM

Still having Saturday service at 5pm.

NOTE FROM MISSIONARIES

The All-Africa Youth Congress gathers in Nairobi, with the theme “Africa: My home, my future.” A delegation of 11 African diaspora young adults from the ELCA will attend. To show what it means to bring young people together like this, I talked with a



friend, Ola Mohamed (pictured), who attended the 2022 event. To read more on this, go online to: www.bit.ly/SOTPmission102025

Church Cooperation:

ELCA is not alone among Lutheran mission agencies from the global North. Several northern European countries also have them. In this era, mission agencies who are engaged in working with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania pool some of their funds for common interest in serving with the Tanzanian church. Much of those funds go to pastors’ scholarships and vehicles for dioceses. Another function is as a clearinghouse for bilateral funds so that we can know who is funding what. This transparency is like an alarm for inequitable partnerships, where a few churches would get most of the external funding.

In Tanzania, one of the biggest such meetings of the year happened Oct 2-3 in Shinyanga. It is called the Lutheran Mission Cooperation Roundtable, where the European partners, ELCA, ELCT national staff, and bishops from all 28 ELCT dioceses get together. Since 2024 I have held ELCA’s spot on the LMC board, which makes policies for fund usage and oversees the secretariat that handles the daily administrative work.

For the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church, Joint Mission Cooperation Kenya has a similar function, though since KELC is a much smaller church, JMCK is a much smaller operation. Together with Kenyan and German partners, we had our annual meeting in Nairobi the last week of September.

Pray for us! Also pray for the lives and ministries of our dear companions in East Africa and beyond.

(Taken from Msseemmaa’s Mission Update as ELCA East Africa Regional Representatives)

Contact: Steve Legel at sjvet@yahoo.com

NO KIDS CONNECT 12/28

SPECIAL NOTICE

 **KIDS connect**

NO KIDS CONNECT DECEMBER 28TH

PreK-5th Grade



CONFIRMATION WEEKEND AT LOMC

We had a great weekend of fellowship and learning at Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Center the weekend of November 22nd! The theme of the weekend was "The World Around Us" and we discussed the natural area around LOMC and also talked about our global neighbors in faith.

Saturday was filled with worship, team building games, an Eco of the Cross hike, a campfire worship with smores...and a little bit of stargazing!



FAMILY BINGO NIGHT!

Family fun night playing Bingo! We will have snacks, drinks, and small prizes for each game.

Children and youth 8th grade and under are invited to join us with their families!

Please sign up here so we know how many to plan for.



Volunteers needed (please sign up here):

- Set up, arrive before 6pm, get Fellowship Hall ready with tables & chairs. Help set up snacks & drinks
- During event, arrive before 6:50pm, help pass out Bingo cards, refill snacks, hand out prizes
- Following event, arrive before 8pm, clean up Fellowship Hall & kitchen

Contact: Jill Gillming at jill@sotpmail.com

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH



HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS

FRIDAY, DEC 5

- DECORATE SOTP FOR CHRISTMAS

SUNDAY, DEC 7

- ARTIST SERIES CONCERT "A BING CROSBY CHRISTMAS", 5PM
- LAST DAY FOR POINSETTIA ORDERS

THURSDAY, DEC 11

- BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE, 7PM

SATURDAY DEC 13

- CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MUSICAL 5PM

SUNDAY DEC 14

- CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS MUSICAL 10:45AM

MONDAY, DEC 15

- LAST DAY TO TURN IN GIVING TREE ITEMS (SOTC)

WEEKEND OF DEC 20 & 21

- CHRISTMAS EDITION OF CRAFT TABLE

SUNDAY, DEC 21

- CHRISTMAS CANTATA 9 & 10:45 AM

CHRISTMAS EVE

- WORSHIP 3, 5 & 11PM

SUNDAY, DEC 28

- NO KIDS CONNECT
- ONLY ONE SERVICE, 10AM

VIEW ALL:



REGULARLY SCHEDULED

SUNDAYS

- 8:30-11AM (1ST) FOOD DRIVE
- 9:00 AM TRADITIONAL WORSHIP
- 10:10 AM KIDS CONNECT
- 10:20 AM ADULT EDUCATION
- 10:45 AM CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP
- 1:00 PM FBW
- 2:00 PM CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM REHEARSAL

MONDAYS

- 9:00 AM (3RD) GAZEBO VALOR QUILTS
- 9:00 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) MINISTRY NIGHT
- 7:00 PM (3RD) COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAYS

- 7:30-8:30 AM MORNING MOVEMENT
- 8:00 AM MEN'S COFFEE (MCD'S BY HUNTLEY WALMART)
- 9:00 AM (1ST & 3RD), PRAIRIE POINTE QUILTERS
- 9:00 AM LITTLE LAMBS PRESCHOOL
- 9:15 AM AL-ANON MEETING
- 10:00 AM GRIEF JOURNEY GROUP
- 2:00 PM (2ND) WHAT'S NEXT FOR SENIORS
- 2:00 PM (3RD) DEMENTIA CAREGIVER SUPPORT
- 6:30 PM (1ST), SCOUT TROOP 200 COMMITTEE
- 6:30 PM (1ST), BOY SCOUTS PATROL LEADER'S COUNCIL

- 7:00 PM TRANSITIONS JOURNEY THROUGH LOSS
- 7:00 PM CUB SCOUTS, TIGERS
- 7:00 PM FBW
- 7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING
- 7:00 PM BELLS REHEARSAL

WEDNESDAYS

- 9:00 AM LITTLE LAMBS PRESCHOOL
- 10:30 AM WOMEN'S FBW
- 11:00 AM GOD'S GIRLS (DEL WEBB) BIBLE STUDY
- 11:00 AM ADULT BIBLE STUDY
- 5:45 PM WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS
- 7:00 PM CONFIRMATION
- 7:00 PM ADVENTURE CLUB
- 7:00 PM ADULT CHOIR REHEARSAL

THURSDAYS

- 7:30-8:30 AM MORNING MOVEMENT
- 9:00 AM LITTLE LAMBS PRESCHOOL
- 9:00 AM (2ND), PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY
- 1:00 PM (1ST) BOOK CLUB
- 6:30 PM (2ND), LIONS CLUB
- 6:30 PM HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP
- 7:00 PM CUB SCOUTS

FRIDAYS

- 10:00 AM WOMEN'S COFFEE (MCD'S BY HUNTLEY WALMART)
- 10:30 AM FBW

SATURDAYS

- 5:00 PM WORSHIP

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1 --Dec Julian Stangle
1 --Dec Richard Arsinow
Mark Frendreis
1 --Dec Tim Bueschel
Tim McMullen
Mike Ulmer
1 --Dec Raquel Hess
Jackson Moretti
1 --Dec Lisa Berens
Diane Mollis
Amanda Stenson
1 --Dec Barb Douglas
1 --Dec Mike Maraviglia
1 --Dec Miranda Hoeft
Donna Schnepff
Scott Seibert
1 --Dec Bennett Coots
Cynthia Jones
1 --Dec Gordon Leahy
1 --Dec Megan Juergensen
Sean Walker
1 --Dec Devin Burg
Carolyn Cuttle
1 --Dec Bob Dirks
1 --Dec Susan Puls
1 --Dec Doug Sandberg

16-Dec Carol Sturz
17-Dec Martha Bergman
Seth Boster
Kendra Coots
Doreen Dwyer
Glen Graff
Shane McGuine
18-Dec Lisa Gruver-Kamps
Morgan Kindle
Elaine Mucibabich
19-Dec Kendall Eck
20-Dec Sandy Frank
Karen Gollhardt
Richard Heidorn
Elizabeth Liotus
Ethan Wright
21-Dec Tristan Mathiesen
Dona Nicklas
22-Dec Chuck Little
Carrie McCabe
Andrew Raistrick
Hannah Riley
23-Dec Alexandra Adams
Robert Henderson
Susan Lewis
Lynn Meyer

23-Dec Sandra Seibel
William Waxenberg
Daniel Wills
Nicholas Womac
William Womac
24-Dec Marina Reicher
Lydia Seibert
Mary Ann Wiek
25-Dec Jim Henley
Emmett Kenyon
Lydia Kenyon
Jake Satalino
27-Dec Jack Ary
Carol Lilla
Matt Stech
Darrel Thompson
28-Dec Annette Boster
Ernie Clifford
Mike McCann
Sharon Trampf
29-Dec David Holzwarth
30-Dec Carol Farnam
Michael Grabs
31-Dec P.J. Knudsen
Pat Milford
Christine Schurhammer

STAFF

Pastor Mark Boster

SENIOR PASTOR
pastormark@sotpmail.com

Pastor Ryan Mackey

PASTOR
pastorryan@sotpmail.com

Kendra Coots

ASSISTANT PRESCHOOL TEACHER
kendra@sotpmail.com

Jill Gillming

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND
FAMILY MINISTRY
jill@sotpmail.com

Josh Harding

A/V AND OFFICE SUPPORT
josh@sotpmail.com

Donna Kelly

MINISTRY
donna@sotpmail.com

Jane McMullen

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
dave@sotpmail.com

TREASURER'S REPORT

TREASURER'S REPORT SUMMARY FOR THE PERIOD ENDING OCTOBER 31, 2025

UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUND

	MONTHLY ACTUAL	MONTHLY BUDGET	MONTHLY ACTUAL VS. MONTHLY BUDGET	YEAR TO DATE ACTUAL	YEAR TO DATE BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL VS. YTD BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET	YTD PERCENT RECEIVED	YTD PERCENT EXPENDED
October 1, 2025 Beginning Balance	\$ 404,196.29								
Monthly Income	69,581.43	80,290.00	\$ (10,708.57)	807,267.32	828,659.00	\$ (21,391.68)	\$ 1,008,800.00	80.02%	
Monthly Expenses	95,960.28	100,454.00	\$ (4,493.72)	809,305.08	844,010.00	\$ (34,704.92)	\$ 1,008,800.00		80.22%
Income vs. Expenditures	(26,378.85)	(20,164.00)		(2,037.76)	(15,351.00)				
October 31, 2025 Ending Balance	\$ 377,817.44								
Average Monthly Expenses (Budgeted)	\$ 84,066.67								
Approx. Months Covered by Fund Balance	4.49								

MORTGAGE SERVICE FUND

	MONTHLY ACTUAL	MONTHLY BUDGET	MONTHLY ACTUAL VS. MONTHLY BUDGET	YEAR TO DATE ACTUAL	YEAR TO DATE BUDGET	YTD ACTUAL VS. YTD BUDGET	ANNUAL BUDGET	YTD PERCENT RECEIVED	YTD PERCENT EXPENDED
October 1, 2025 Beginning Balance	\$ 66,630.60								
Monthly Income	16,893.80	18,807.00	\$ (1,913.20)	219,329.63	188,070.00	\$ 31,259.63	\$ 225,684.00	97.18%	
Monthly Expenses	22,807.00	18,807.00	\$ 4,000.00	194,709.57	188,070.00	\$ 6,639.57	\$ 225,684.00		86.28%
Income vs. Expenditures	(5,913.20)	-		24,620.06	-				
October 31, 2025 Ending Balance	\$ 60,717.40								
Average Monthly Expenses	\$ 18,807.00								
Approx. Months Covered by Fund Balance	3.23								

Respectfully submitted,

George Attaway, Treasurer

DONATE ONLINE

Online Giving



www.bit.ly/SOTPGIVING

CHURCH COUNCIL

Kathy McGuine, President
Bob Mollis, Vice-President
George Attaway, Treasurer
Ellen Nissen, Secretary

Jim Puls
Christa Serpe
Jim Stancl
Lisa Wondriska

INVOLVEMENT SCHEDULE

		Dec 6/7	Dec 13/14	Dec 20/21	Dec 24th	Dec 27/28
Communion Bread	Sat	Theresa Cox				
	Sun	Elizabeth Trout	Nancy Hammer	Tom Noesen & Bev Pinnelli	Jill Brown & Nancy Hammer	Elizabeth Trout
Counters	Nov.	Ralph Wehnes, Diana Murphy & Lori Malczewski				
Greeters	SUN 9AM	Carol Engstrom Elaine Gillam	Eileen Gerald Terry Halpin	Dottie Bobzin Susan Blumer	3pm Dottie Bobzin Elaine Gillam	ONE SERVICE 10AM Laura Attaway Cyndi Monson
	SUN 10:45 AM	Carolyn & Bob Malm			5pm Carol Engstrom Susan Blumer	
Ushers	SAT 5PM	Karen Eckert Lynn Meyers	Tom & Therese Cox	Carol Hartman Peggy Lynn Loiselle	3PM Andrew Szekely Bill Vallee Sue Blumer Stan Crissman Carol & Chuck Davis <i>(acolyte: Max Wondriska)</i>	ONE SERVICE 10AM
	SUN 9AM	WALTER LEMKE Tim Bueschel Jeff Stangle Bill Vallee Bob Henderson Mickey & Cathy Kappel	JACK CONTI Cheryl Rotermond John & Patti Witt Carol Engstrom Sue Blumer <i>(acolyte: Morgan Kindle)</i>	STAN CRISSMAN Wayne Schmidt Arja Kasper Dan Wentzloff Jeff Ottens Andrew Lick	5PM Andrew Szekely Vik Bekeris Stan Crissman Carol Engstrom Monica Wichtendaht	
	SUN 10:45 AM	BOB MCDUFFEE Tim & Karen Doyle	JIM STANCL Mike & Patti Kargol Andrew Szekely	DOUG NAGEL Don Koerner Judy Petropulos Max Wondriska	11PM Vik Bekeris Mickey & Kathy Kappel	
Welcome Center	SUN 9AM	Rick Miller	Tara Mackey	Karen Brodsky Elizabeth Liotus	ONE SERVICE 10AM	
	SUN 10:45 AM	Deanne Byers Marty Jacobson	Bob Malm			

NONPROFIT
ORG
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
HUNTLEY, IL
PERMIT NO. 16



**SHEPHERD
OF THE PRAIRIE**
LUTHERAN CHURCH

10805 MAIN STREET
HUNTLEY, IL 60142
(847)669-9448 SOTP.ORG

SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE LUTHERAN CHURCH IS A CONGREGATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA.

APPLE BUTTER WEEKEND—THANK YOU!

What a great weekend it was sharing in fellowship with all who helped make over 140 jars of apple butter!

We are so thankful to each and every person who participated, from peeling, to early mornings around the stirring pot, to those who purchased and helped us raise **\$1,638** for Feed My Starving Children!

What a powerful weekend to watch as our church community came together for a great (and yummy) cause!

A big thank to everyone who purchased Apple Butter for our Feed My Starving Children Fundraiser.

We would like to recycle the jars, just in case we ever do this event again in the future.

Feel free to return to the church both the jar and the ring which can also be reused.



A NOTE FROM PASTOR RYAN

As you know, we've been exploring the power of words this year. Starting with the word we received on the back of a paper star sometime in the first part of the year and continuing through our Lenten journey with *The Difficult Words of Jesus*, we have been wrestling with our words, growing into them, listening for God's voice to teach us something or for the Holy Spirit to guide us through them.



While I've been carrying the word from my star with me (which is youth), another word has crept into my life this year and taken hold. That word is curiosity.

We are living in a culture and society that seems to be more concerned with certainty and being right rather than keeping an open mind and approaching things with a desire to learn or an openness to be changed. All around us—in our families, in the public square, in politics, and in religion/faith—we can see people who have drawn lines in the sand, planted their flag in one camp or another (you choose the metaphor). They become certain of something and close their hearts and minds to anything that might push back against the line they've drawn or the flag they've planted.

The antidote to this, I believe, is curiosity. **Imagine how different our world would look if everyone approached everything with curiosity rather than certainty.** Imagine if we approached all people, belief systems, cultures, history, science, and yes, Scripture, God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and faith/religion with curiosity instead of assuming we've got it all already figured out. How different would all our interactions be? Think of how we could better connect with others, especially others who are different or believe differently from us, if we interact with them with a sense of wonder.

Imagine how Scripture could come alive in our hearts, minds, and souls if we approached every verse with a sense of curiosity rather than certainty. As a pastor, I have many conversations with people who hold a very rigid, certain view of Scripture. The fact is, Scripture is so ancient, so complex, so rich, and translated so many ways that we fool ourselves if we think we could ever be

(continued)

A NOTE FROM PASTOR RYAN

(continued)

definitively certain of the meaning of each verse. No matter how scholarly someone becomes, how well-versed in Biblical studies, there always comes a point when knowledge gives way to interpretation.

None of us was able to walk with Moses or Abraham. None of us was able to walk with Jesus and witness his ministry firsthand (not even any of the New Testament writers). We must, instead, rely on the spoken and written accounts of who did, and interpret their interpretations of what they saw. This is where the beauty of curiosity opens up. The Scriptures are living documents, speaking in new ways to new people in new times and new places. God finds ways to speak people of every time and place through the Words that have stood the test of time, and when we approach them with curiosity, we find new ways of hearing God's voice, new ways of experiencing Jesus' calling, and new ways of feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Here is my challenge for you. There is a difference between embedded theology (the faith/assumptions we carry with us simply because it was taught to us by our parents/grandparents or by Sunday School teachers—the kind of faith we've carried since childhood and never wrestled with) and deliberative theology (the kind of faith/understanding we develop through reflection and learning, always giving deep consideration to new/unexpected/unusual/uncomfortable information). Think about any assumptions you have/are making about God, Jesus, and Scripture. What assumptions do you tend to make about faith/religion? What assumptions do you make about your neighbor or a stranger? How could you further shift your life to approach everything with curiosity? In what ways may God be trying to open your heart or mind to something new?

May you be blessed with a spirit of curiosity and wonder, and may the love of God go with you today and always,
Pastor Ryan

Imagine how
different
our world
would look if
everyone
approached
everything with
curiosity rather
than certainty.

A NOTE FROM PASTOR MARK

(continued)

A Christmas Prayer

Holy and gracious God, On this Christmas, we remember Your Son was not born into ease or comfort, but into a world of uncertainty, poverty, and fear.

You chose a manger instead of a palace, a frightened young couple instead of royal courts, a night filled with questions instead of answers.

Lord Jesus, You entered our struggle so You could walk with us in ours. You knew the cold air, the crowded streets, the weariness of a world longing for hope. You came not above our pain, but right into the middle of it.

So this Christmas, we bring You our burdens—our worries, our griefs, our strained relationships, our searching hearts and our unmet hopes. Be born again in the places of our lives that feel forgotten, in the rooms where fear whispers loudly, in the corners where darkness lingers.

Let Your light find us as it found shepherds in the night. Let Your peace rest on us as it rested over Bethlehem. Let Your love hold us the way Mary held You—close, steady, and full of promise.

Christ, who was born into struggle, be our strength in struggle. Christ, who came to a world in need, come again to our hearts today. Amen.

I'll see you in worship!

Pastor Mark

KIDS CONNECT SUNDAYS

All preschool (Age 3) - 5th Graders are invited to join us one time - or weekly!

NEW TIME: SUNDAYS
10:10-10:40 AM

* Parents check kids in and drop them off by the Fellowship Hall.

Register now at:
www.bit.ly/SOTPKC2526

Contact: Jill Gillming at jill@sotpmail.com



ADVENTURE CLUB

All 4th & 5th Graders are invited to join us weekly on **Wednesdays at 7pm** September 17 through April 22 from 7:00 - 8:00 pm with the exception of these dates that we WILL NOT be meeting:

- Nov 26
- Dec 24
- Dec 31
- Feb 18 -- Lent

Register now at www.bit.ly/SOTPadv2526

Contact: Jill Gillming at jill@sotpmail.com



TRUNK OR TREAT

Come one, come all to our annual Trunk or Treat!

Trunks needed, register here and let us know you'll be joining us. Please bring your own goodies to hand out.

You can start arriving **Saturday, October 25th at 11:30 am to set up trunks**. Everyone must be in their spots by 12:45 pm for safety reasons.

Volunteers needed, sign up at www.bit.ly/SOTPtrunk25 to:

- Set up
- During event
- Clean up

Contact: Jill Gillming
jill@sotpmail.com



FRIENDSGIVING DINNER CHURCH

We are beginning a new tradition with our FRIENDSGIVING DINNER CHURCH.

We will gather on **Wednesday, November 26th at 6pm** to share dinner together, worship and participate in the Lord's Supper.

It will be very much like our Lenten Dinner Church gatherings. SOTP will provide turkey, ham and drinks, and the sides, salads and desserts will be brought by attendees.



We are asking that if you would like to attend, please register at www.bit.ly/SOTPfriends25 and let us know what you plan to bring, either a side dish, salad or dessert. So get out your favorite family holiday recipes to share.

Contact: Donna Kelly
donna@sotpmail.com

RECYCLING PLASTIC

UPDATE!!!
Del Webb Group
now collecting at our
church for another
bench.

Contact: Tara Mackey
rtmackey10@yahoo.com

Recycling
PLASTIC BAGS
Creating a
BENCH
With **NexTrex**

Donations Needed
BENCH #2 DONE!

MORE INFO:
www.bit.ly/SOTPbench

A graphic with a green background, a white bench, and a QR code. The text is in yellow and white. A red banner on the right says 'Donations Needed' and 'BENCH #2 DONE!'. The background features a pattern of recycling symbols.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Please consider signing
up to donate flowers to
brighten up the
sanctuary. Each
arrangement is \$52.
Sign up & more info at
www.bit.ly/SOTPflower

Contact: Diane Mollis
dem910@outlook.com

SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS

Sign Up & More Info:
www.bit.ly/SOTPflower

A graphic with a background of colorful flowers. The text is in white and blue. A QR code is in the bottom left corner.

CRAFT TABLE

Monthly on the
weekend of the 4th
Sunday we will all have
the opportunity to
painlessly lower our
SOTP mortgage debt.
More info:
www.bit.ly/SOTPcrafts

Contact: Alice Hallett at
agrndmom3@gmail.com

CRAFT TABLE
PAYING DOWN OUR
MORTGAGE

4TH SUNDAY MONTHLY

- **Donate crafts**
- **Pay what you can to purchase crafts**

Crafts are donated so every penny goes directly to paying down our mortgage.

More Info: www.bit.ly/SOTPcrafts

Donations Needed

A graphic with a yellow background and a circular frame. The text is in blue and black. A QR code is in the bottom left corner. The background shows various craft items.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

This year's Christmas musical, "Crazy, Busy, Peaceful, Holy Night" will be presented on Saturday, December 6 at the 5:00pm worship service and Sunday, December 7 at the 10:45am worship service.

Here are some important dates to add to your calendar:

- Rehearsals will take place every Sunday 9/28-11/30 from 2:00-4:00pm
- NO REHEARSAL 10/12
- December 6- Dress Rehearsal 10:00am-11:30am followed by a pizza party!
- December 6-5:00pm Worship Musical
- December 7-10:45am Worship Musical

Contact: Annette Boster zsfg@comcast.net



LITTLE LAMBS PRESCHOOL

Preschool for children age 2 (by 9/1) through 5.

Program runs Tues, Wed & Thurs. Sign up for 1, 2 or 3 days a week. 9am to noon.

Go online to www.bit.ly/SOTPLLambs to sign up for more info.

Contact: Jill Gillming littlelambs@sotpmail.com



COFFEE GROUPS FOR MEN & WOMEN



DEMENTIA CAREGIVER GROUP

In collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association, we will be offering a support group for caregivers for friends and/or family members with Dementia. Our support group meets at SOTP in the library every third Tuesday of the month at 2pm to learn and support each other. For more information, contact Donna Kelly by email or through the church office.

SHEPHERD OF THE PRAIRIE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
& the
ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

DEMENTIA
Caregiver Support Group

MEETINGS:
MONTHLY
3RD TUESDAY
2:00 PM

More Info & Sign Up:
www.bit.ly/SOTPdem

An illustration of a caregiver and a person with dementia sitting at a table, with a QR code in the bottom left corner.

Sign up on Church Center to receive more information on this group.

Contact: Donna Kelly at donna@sotpmail.com

MEMORY GARDEN NICHES

Have you seen our Memory Garden on the West end of the Church building?

There are still niches available for members. Each niche holds one or two urns.

Contact Ralph or Stan Crissman for more information and pricing.

Contact: Ralph Wehnes at ralphwehnes@sbcglobal.net



Available for Purchase

MEMORY GARDEN NICHES

for one or two

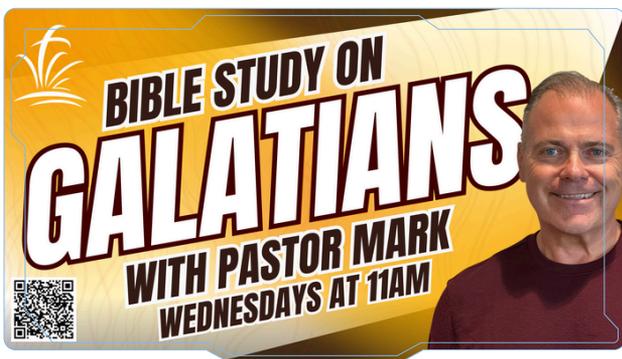
More Info Online at: www.bit.ly/SOTPmemgarden

BIBLE STUDY WITH PASTOR MARK

Join Pastor Mark for Bible Study on Galatians **Wednesdays at 11am** in the Maple Room.

Sign up for more information on Church Center or email Pastor Mark

Contact: Pastor Mark Boster at pastormark@sotpmail.com



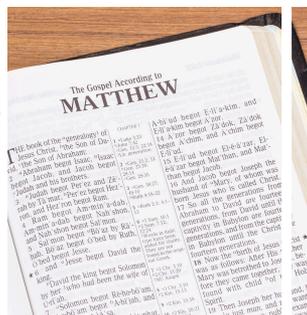
BIBLE STUDY ON GALATIANS

WITH PASTOR MARK WEDNESDAYS AT 11AM

MATTHEW 101 – ONE DAY CLASS

For centuries (literally) the Gospel according to Matthew was the primary gospel for the church. The majority of Sunday readings came from Matthew. Matthew was known as "the teaching gospel of the church."

It was like a catechism--until 1978 when the green Lutheran Book of Worship was published and then Mark and Luke got their just due! Each of the three gospels was pretty much given a full year. (The Gospel according to John has been used historically at Christmas and Easter.) For the past year, our Sunday readings have, by and large, come from Luke. But now, once more, beginning with the First Sunday in Advent (November 30), it's Matthew's turn again. So let's prepare! On **Saturday, October 4, 10:00-2:00**, we'll present "Matthew 101--A New Perspective." Come join us! All you need to do is go to www.bit.ly/SOTPmatt101 to sign up. We look forward to seeing you!



HELPING HANDS-THANK YOU!

On behalf of the Helping Hands Committee, we would like to thank all those that help make a funeral luncheon possible. Thank you for your donations of food and time. You are all greatly appreciated.

Contact: Marilyn Wilhelm
paxfm1971@gmail.com



CELEBRATION DINNER!

You are invited to our culmination of this year's stewardship Celebration Dinner **Saturday, October 25th at 5pm** with special guest speaker Dr. Persaud.

Dr. Persaud is Professor of Systematic Theology at Wartburg

Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa. He is a graduate of the University of St. Andrews, Scotland (Ph. D., 1980), Wartburg Theological Seminary (Master of Divinity, 1977), and the University of Guyana (BA, 1974). He is a native of Guyana, where he served his home congregation, Redeemer Lutheran Church, prior to joining the Wartburg faculty, in February 1984. His teaching and research are focused on defining and confessing the gospel of Jesus Christ in a world of religious and non-religious alternatives. Dr. Persaud seeks to speak of God's justifying grace in and through Jesus Christ in a way that makes the technical language of Scripture and the Confessions connect with the questions people are asking in everyday life.

Come enjoy a great evening together with God's people at SOTP with food from Cafe Roma.

No charge for the dinner thanks to a great deal from Cafe Roma and a generous donation.

Limited to the first 200 people.

Sign up now at www.bit.ly/SOTPcelebrate2025

Contact: Pastor Ryan Mackey
pastorryan@sotpmail.com

