

# Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

September 2021 Newsletter

Dear People of God at Good Shepherd,

This past week I've noticed gold leaves falling from the birch trees "littering" the gravel road that I walk daily. This seems early to me, but maybe I think that every year! Or put another way, "Is summer almost over!?" The good news is that summer isn't over yet!

At the same time, the staff at Good Shepherd have been planning for the fall even as there is an increase of Covid-19 cases in our area. So even as we're talking about fall and Sunday School, Confirmation, Sunday worship, meetings and interest groups, we're also talking about how to use best practices at church to stay safe. For now, our best practices (as recommended by the SMART Team) include:

1. Continuation of mask-wearing for all people inside the LCGS building regardless of vaccination status.
2. To pause the practice of Holy Communion
3. To pause congregational singing.

These practices may be reevaluated in September in relationship to the level of new cases in our area. We'll keep you posted as we stay flexible regarding fall planning and as we strive for the well-being of our church and our neighborhood, walking in faith and with science!

Lastly, each Sunday we're including prayers of the gathered people. There's a basket for you to write out a prayer for someone or something in your world, or the world at large. What/who do you notice that needs prayer? Do you have something to thank God for? Or to ask God's help with? Bring your prayers to worship and we'll include them in the prayers of intercession!

God bless you as you enjoy these precious days of late summer, and as you prepare for fall!

In the peace of Christ,

*Pastor Nancy Hong*

## **We begin 2 worship services Worship on Sunday, September 12**

8:45 Worship will be inside the Sanctuary and

11:00 Worship will be outside in the Parking Lot (Just on Sept. 12 for now)

Please join us for the Blessing of the Backpacks during Worship on Sunday, September 12

8:45 Worship will be inside the Sanctuary

11:00 Worship will be outside in the Parking Lot



# Connection & Call: What's Your Story?

Stewardship Annual Financial Response 2021: October 10-24

*I have not hidden your saving help within my heart,  
I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation;  
I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness  
from the great congregation. -Psalm 40: 10*



During this year's Annual Financial Response, the Stewardship Committee invites the congregation to deeper discipleship and shared learning from the NE MN Synod lay leader program. We give financially to things in our life that have meaning and value in our lives. In our troubled times, our church's vital mission of personal transformation and salvation for the world is needed more than ever.

Psalm 40 is titled "Thanksgiving for Deliverance and Prayer for Help." As I was enjoying Pastor Dave's Sabbathical Psalm study this summer, I was struck how well verse 10 captured the importance of *not* continuing to keep our stories "hidden." Our stories are powerful to share our connection with God and others during difficult times. We also share our stories of thanksgiving and joy and calls to increased personal commitment to God's mission. We invite you to sign up for a 3-week small group in October to share (or listen) to our stories of struggles, saving help and faithfulness. Sign up will begin mid-September in the Gathering Space.

**We are very excited also to have Dr. Andrew Root as our guest homilist and adult forum speaker on Sunday October 10, 2021. Root puts together theology and storytelling to explore how ministry leads us into encounter with divine action. At the forum he will speaking on "Why are we all so exhausted? The Church in a Time Crisis" Childcare will be provided.**

Andrew Root has spoken several times in the NE MN synod and lay leader program and is the Carrie Olson Baalson Professor of Youth and Family Ministry at Luther Seminary, USA. He writes and researches in areas of theology, ministry, culture and younger generations. His most recent books are *Congregation in a Secular Age* (Baker, 2021), *The End of Youth Ministry?* (Baker, 2020), *The Pastor in a Secular Age: Ministry to People Who No Longer Need God* (Baker, 2019), *Faith Formation in a Secular Age* (Baker, 2017), and *Exploding Stars, Dead Dinosaurs, and Zombies: Youth Ministry in the Age of Science* (Fortress Press, 2018).



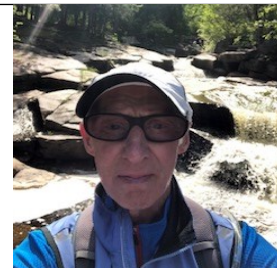
**Dr Andrew Root will be Guest Homilist at 8:45 & 11 Worship and Adult Forum speaker, "Why are we all so exhausted? The Church in a Time Crisis," Sunday October 10, 2021 at 10 AM**

## Join us at Pr. Dave's Sabbatical Celebration!

When: Monday, August 30 from 4-7 pm  
Pr Dave sharing his sabbatical story at 5 pm

Where: 6387 Homestead Road, Duluth, home of Rachael & Paul Perlinger

Who: All are welcome!



Please join in celebrating Pastor Dave's sabbatical! During his sabbatical, he delved deeply into hearing God's voice through the Psalms, the Superior Hiking Trail, and opera. At 5 pm, he will share his story.

We invite all to share their stories of how the Psalms have been meaningful to you, stories about how hiking or interacting with nature has been meaningful to you, and stories about how music has been meaningful to you. If you'd like to share the music, please bring it with you. We'll have a Bluetooth speaker available to play from your mobile device. We'll have a CD player and might even be able to find a working cassette player and record player as well.

*Dinner and refreshments will be available throughout the evening. Feel free to bring a camp chair if you have one readily available.*

**Logistical note** - Google Maps has a sense of humor and will often route people off the Homestead Road onto a dirt road. Don't believe it. Our driveway truly is on Homestead Road. If your GPS tells you to turn on Beck Road, you'll end up in our side yard.



### BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS - For all students!!

Please join us for the Blessing of the Backpacks during Worship on Sunday, September 12

8:45 Worship will be inside the Sanctuary & 11:00 Worship will be outside in the Parking Lot

We would love to see you at worship (8:45 or 11:00) for a special service, prayer, and gift as we celebrate the start of the school year. We have a new keychain this year, and a new plan because of Covid-19. One worship service will be inside (with masks) and the other will be outside. In between services we will have treats and games outside. Bring your backpack to church for this special day that is all about God's love for \*you\*! We are thinking about you, praying for you, and excited to see you soon.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School Starts in September! We are going to keep Sunday School flexible and creative this year. Worship is back in person, but things aren't "normal" yet. Right now, masks are required for all in the church building. We will follow the church and school district's mask recommendations throughout the year. And, we will also meet outside on nice days when the weather cooperates. All of September will be "Family Sunday School" – so all ages, all together, including grown-ups. One step at a time, one week at a time – we'll adapt and change as we go.

Our first Bible Stories will be Lost Coin, Lost Sheep, and Lost/Prodigal Son. We are excited for the Lost Coin Medallion Hunt on September 19 and Lost Sheep Hide and Seek on September 26.

### CONFIRMATION

7th, 8th, and 9th Graders at Good Shepherd: Save the date: \*Confirmation is Coming\* Starting Wed, October 6th

Hello Confirmation Families, Confirmation will start on Wednesday, October 6th with a Kick Off Night for all grades (7th, 8th, and 9th) and their parents. We might meet outside...We might meet one grade at a time... That's all "to be determined" but I promise to keep you posted. Just know that \*yes\* Confirmation will happen this year, but we are going to wait a couple weeks and let you adjust to the "new normal" at school first.

Thinking about you, praying for you, and hoping to see you soon...

Katie

Dear Members of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd,

We have been impacted by the pandemic but are also very blessed. Our staff has put in long hours and has shown a lot of resilience in making rapid transitions to new ways of communicating the word. Many of us yearned for a return to in-person service and our revenues have been affected by the building closure. However, despite being turbulent, our overall financial situation to date has been reasonably good and we acknowledge that many organizations are struggling to a much larger extent.

With this understanding, we seek to be vigilant but not greedy. We believe that it is time to consider sending half of our forgiven Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan amount to those in greater need. Having received that loan, and then loan forgiveness, has certainly provided more financial security. However, even the full amount of the forgiven PPP loan would only cover our expenses for about two months. Therefore, it cannot be thought of as a method to fund our mission as we look forward.

Leadership will review our financial position at the end of September. If our financial indicators continue to look good, the plan is to distribute \$43,100 to organizations facing more significant challenges than our own. If our financial indicators suggest increased financial risk, the distribution will be put on hold. Regardless of the outcome in September, we will undergo a similar review process at the end of December. At any point in time, if our financial position takes a more pronounced turn for the worse, the remaining forgiven PPP loan and Employee Retention Credit (ERC) fund monies could be used to help us operate in the short term.

If and when appropriate financially, leadership has suggested making up to five larger, more impactful, donations. With that in mind, we have created a preliminary list of organizations to be considered as potential recipients (alphabetical order by column):

Bethany Crisis Shelter	Rebuild The Block
Churches United in Ministry (CHUM)	Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank
Damiano Center	The Salvation Army
Entrepreneur Fund	Union Gospel Mission (UGM)
Northeastern Minnesota Synod	Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry (VLM)

If you would like more background on the PPP and ERC, please see the next two pages which contain frequently asked questions and answers.

We welcome your feedback on our recipient list from now through the end of September. We plan to host a forum after Sunday service on August 29<sup>th</sup>. However, feedback can be given at any time by either emailing Frank Wanner (Chair of the Resource Development Team) or calling Christine in the church office.

Frank Wanner's Email: [frank.wanner@gmail.com](mailto:frank.wanner@gmail.com)

Church Office Phone: 218-525-1922

Yours in Christ,

Resource Development Team and Vision Council

Thank you for Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd's combined donations of \$349.72. Your gifts have been designated for CHUM's Food Shelf.

CHUM is proud to be a diverse community that celebrates together, welcomes all comers, stands in solidarity with our neighbors, demonstrates generosity, practices fellowship, and spreads love in the world. Thank you for being part of that community.

Sincerely, Scott Van Daele

Distributive Services Director



# LCGS Mission Vision Task Force (MVTF)

2021

## Why a Transition Task Force?

Great question! First some brief history. LCGS's first Transition Task Force (TTF) was appointed in 2002. The year prior, the Sr. Pastor had accepted a call to Benson, Minnesota and an Interim Pastor, Paul Svingen, was called to join associate LCGS pastor Tim Berdahl, provided both expertise and pastoral guidance through this transitional time. The early 2000s were a period of change for LCGS. The TTF agreed that LCGS had moved from a pastoral-size to a program-size church which meant that the church leadership structure might have to be reimagined and reorganized. The LCGS Mission, Vision and leadership structure we have today was the result of the work of the TTF. The [2003 Transition Task Force Report](#) provides significant additional history and detail of the work and outcomes - it's worth a read.

So why is a new Mission Vision Task Force (MVTF) needed at this time? The 2002 TTF's purpose was to develop a comprehensive plan as to how the LCGS congregation, staff and volunteers can best work together over the next 3 to 5 years to embrace and expand the congregation's ministry in accordance with its Mission Statement. That was 19 years and a global pandemic ago! Since that time, we know much has changed in the ways the Gospel can be shared and the ways people experience God.

From the publication "Temporary Shepherds", Pastor Warren Schulz introduces three concepts which are connected, but not synonymous.

**Change:** The inevitable movement of life's forces.

**Transition:** The process by which we must deal with the inevitable changes of life (the interim)

**Transformation:** The new shape that occurs after transition, toward which change is aimed.

## What's in scope and what's out of scope?

The Vision Council believes the current LCGS Mission and Vision statements ([see page 2](#)) are as relevant today as they were in 2003. The MVTF is being asked to reaffirm the Mission and Vision. Ideally, we won't need to go through a lengthy process of developing a new Mission and Vision for LCGS. That is not the intent of the MVTF. The MVTF is being asked to focus on the leadership team and staffing structure to ensure we have the right resources in place to achieve the Mission and Vision. They are also being asked to map out a plan, in coordination with staff and the leadership teams (Experiencing God, Reaching Out, Nurturing Faith, and Resource Development) for the next 3-5 years.

The MVTF will comprise the working groups detailed below and MVTF members will be asked to serve on one of these three working groups. Working groups will elect a chair and set their own meeting schedule. Working group chairs will ensure a written update of their group's activity, progress and findings is provided prior to each MVTF meeting.

### Mission/Vision

Identify current and prospective member's spiritual desires and personal vision for who we are, what LCGS should look like in the future, and what the role of the church should be. Review and make a recommendation to affirm or amend the current LCGS Mission and Vision statements.

### Staffing Needs

Identify and prioritize staffing and volunteer needs required in order to support, develop and grow LCGS's ministry. Review and update or develop new position descriptions as appropriate.

### Self Study

To uncover the identity (the who, what, where, and how) of LCGS in this place (Lakeside, Duluth, synod-wide, church-wide). Using templates from the 2003 Transition Task Force Report - modifying as appropriate - gather demographic information and conduct a survey of congregation to help identify desired changes needed to move us forward. A variety of methods will be utilized including questionnaires/surveys, demographic analysis, small group forums, and one-on-one conversations. **The Mission and Vision Team is:**

David Chura  
Sara Hendrickson  
Cyndi Venberg  
Pastor Dave Mesner  
Pastor Nancy Hong

Nan Asperheim  
Jennifer Julsrud  
Mike Klopp  
Tim Kreft  
Chris McIntosh

Katie Rich  
Julie Seidelmann  
Paula Tsufis  
Emma Johnson  
Amy Bergstrom

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (ELCA)

1325 North 45th Avenue East, Duluth MN 55804-1507

2021

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(new postal regulations)

Find us at [www.lcgsduluth.org](http://www.lcgsduluth.org) for online worship and information.

Sign-up on the homepage for weekly e-mails!

**Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd**

Office Hours: Mon– Thurs 8-4:00 Fri: 8-12pm

Phone: 218-525-1922

Website: [www.lcgsduluth.org](http://www.lcgsduluth.org)

## MEET THE STAFF

Pastor Dave Mesner, Lead Pastor  
(home) 218-529-9715  
email: [dmesner@lcgsduluth.org](mailto:dmesner@lcgsduluth.org)

Pastor Nancy Hong, Interim Pastor  
email: [hongnancy284@gmail.com](mailto:hongnancy284@gmail.com)

Katie Rich, Director of Youth & Family Ministry  
email: [kkrich@lcgsduluth.org](mailto:kkrich@lcgsduluth.org)

Christine Whitcomb, Office Manager  
email: [office@lcgsduluth.org](mailto:office@lcgsduluth.org)

Amie Abenth, Communications Coordinator  
email: [communications@lcgsduluth.org](mailto:communications@lcgsduluth.org)

### Music Team:

Linda Turpening, Organist email:  
[linda@archdirect.com](mailto:linda@archdirect.com)

Debbie Sanders, Good Shepherd Choir Director  
email: [debra.k.sanders@icloud.com](mailto:debra.k.sanders@icloud.com)

**Worship at 8:45 & 11:00am Sundays! Starting  
September 12th! All are welcome!**