



HAPPENING NOW

- Two-Can Sunday, January 1
- OFFICE CLOSED, January 2
- Blood Drive, 8 a.m. —1 p.m., January 7
- FX3 and confirmation, 12:30 p.m., January 8
- Created by God class begins, 9:30 a.m., January 8
- Yarn Angels, 10:30 a.m. —12:30 p.m., January 8
- Church council meeting, 7 p.m., January 10
- Staff meeting, 10:30 a.m., January 11
- Worship Committee Meeting, 7 p.m., January 12
- Church Council workshop, 9 a.m., January 14
- Needlework Friends, 11 a.m. January 14
- Confirmation and FX3, 12:30 p.m., January 22
- First Communion Instruction, 9:45 a.m., January 29

News You Can “Ewes”

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2017

Freed & RENEWED
in Christ 500 YEARS OF GOD'S
GRACE IN ACTION

The 500th Anniversary of the Reformation Has Begun!

On October 31, 1517, Augustinian monk Martin Luther posted his “Ninety-five Theses” to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Through this document, which protested the sale of indulgences by the Catholic Church, Luther hoped to spur renewal within the church. However, his action had more wide-ranging consequences than he could have imagined at the time. The debate that Luther’s theses generated about Christian teaching and practice led to changes that shaped the course of western Christianity. Luther’s actions were so important that October 31, 1517, is now used by historians to mark the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.

Five centuries have now passed, and Christians around the world will be commemorating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. The ELCA is observing this event under the theme “Freed and Renewed in Christ: 500 Years of God’s Grace in Action.”

Good Shepherd will be participating in this commemoration throughout 2017, and you will see a wide variety of activities and events during the year, including learning and worship opportunities. We will be learning not only about the history of the Reformation but also how it has shaped—and continues to shape—our faith and our lives.

See more on how we are celebrating the Reformation Anniversary on the next page! Watch for Luther quotes of the week on Facebook, Twitter and Remind.

Blessings and Prayers for Use in the Home

Martin Luther's Small Catechism includes blessings for morning, evening, and around the household meal. As part of the ELCA's observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, these prayers have been updated with today's Christians in mind and in some cases are designed for particular situations, such as the beginning of the work day or school day and a table blessing for those who eat alone.

In the literature rack in the narthex at Good Shepherd you will find copies of these prayers, titled "Blessings and Prayers Based on Those in Luther's Small Catechism." A PDF of them can also be found at the GSLC website, gslutheran.org—look for the special "Reformation" area on the home page. We encourage you to use these prayers in your daily life as a part of your observance of the Reformation—and in the years to come.

Let Me Take a Selfie...

In observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, Good Shepherd is being graced with the presence of Martin and Katie Luther. You will find them in the church building, and they'd love to have you take a selfie with them or to be included in a family portrait of yours. They won't even mind if you post the picture to Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter! Welcome the Luthers warmly and enjoy their presence with us!

History in the Making...

Ecumenical Unity News During the Year of the Reformation

2017 is the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The commemoration has already begun in the global arena. In case you missed it, a recent historical event was held on October 31, 2016, where leaders of Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church held a joint commemoration of the Reformation in Lund, Sweden, under the theme *From Conflict to Communion - Together in Hope*.

The "Common Prayer" service held in Sweden was presided by LWF President Bishop Dr. Munib A. Younan, LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr. Martin Junge, and Rev. Pope Francis. The service and information about it can be found at the following internet links....

<http://www.lund2016.net/media/livestream/>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plkK6zNHP_0

The video is approximately two hours long, and a hard copy of the service can be found in the church entryway.

During this historical service five Catholic-Lutheran commitments were signed by both the Pope and the Lutheran ministers:

1. Catholics and Lutheran should always begin from the perspective of unity and not from the point of view of division in order to strengthen what is held in common even though the differences are more easily seen and experienced.
2. Lutherans and Catholics must let themselves continuously be transformed by the encounter with the other and by the mutual witness of faith
3. Catholics and Lutherans should again commit themselves to seek visible unity, to elaborate together what this means in concrete steps, and to strive repeatedly toward this good.
4. Lutherans and Catholics should jointly rediscover the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ for our time.
5. Catholics and Lutherans should witness together to the mercy of God in proclamation and service to the world.

Stay posted for more historical and resource information in next month's newsletter, and feel free to share this historical event with others who may be interested.

God's peace!

— Noel Rackie

(submitted per suggestion of the Reformation Task Force)

Thank You

Good Shepherd Congregation,

Thank you for the outpouring of love and affirmation you showed us in the many gifts you gave during the Christmas season. We are deeply appreciative of all of the support you offer us throughout the year and during the celebration of Christ's birth. We wish you all a happy new year and look forward to our continued partnership in ministry.

GSLC Staff

Staff Office Hours

Church Phone: 770-924-7286

Please call the church to be sure the staff member you wish to see is in the office. Sometimes they have training, meetings and other appointments.

**Kristin Brenneman,
Outreach Coordinator**

Tuesday & Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Thursdays by appointment

**Meredith Hale,
Media Coordinator**

**Mondays 9 a.m.—3 p.m.
Tuesdays—Thursday: 10 a.m.—3 p.m.**

**Kathy Gunn,
Office Coordinator**

**Tuesday-Thursday: 8 am – 4 pm
Friday: 8 am – 2 pm**

**Janice Swinford,
Sunday School Superintendent and Inreach
Coordinator**

Wednesday: 8:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.

Council Update, December 2016

Discussions

- Financial Secretary, Mike Angalet, reported that November giving was approximately 109% of budget. To date, we are \$52,000 behind budget.
- Appointed Treasurer, Mary McCoy reported that expenses were approximately \$31,000 favorable to budget, largely due to the vacant Associate Pastor position. Reserves are moving in the right direction, however, still not at recommended levels.
- 2017 Council Officer elections were held, see results on page seven. Council is actively moving to appoint a Treasurer as no current members of council feel qualified to serve in this capacity. Mary McCoy will continue to serve as Treasurer until someone is appointed.
- Council Committee Liaisons were also assigned, and are listed on page seven.

Accolades

- Everyone who donated items or funds for MUST Ministries Thanksgiving collection
- Everyone involved in the annual LSG shoebox Christmas campaign, especially Susan Epling and Jennifer Taylor for coordinating this ministry.
- All who assisted in decorating the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas, especially Bob Sheitlin, the Escamilla Family, Barb Kidder, and Steve & Beth Ebert.
- John Bost, Marci Heintz, Mary McCoy, Bettina Miller and Al Reynolds for their service on the Congregation Council.
- Everyone who contributed to the Caretakers of Community collection for the homeless in our county.
- Thank you to Steve & Phillip Ebert for organizing both the closets in the Fellowship Hall – your efforts are truly appreciated!
- Thanks to all the volunteers who prepared 100 sack lunches for residents of Hidden Falls mobile home park during Thanksgiving week.

Thank you for a great 2016!

Happy New Year! What a fantastic year of giving and serving we had at Good Shepherd during 2016. I am constantly amazed at the wonderful generosity of our congregation and can't wait to see what 2017 brings. I realize sometimes that our impact on the world around us may get lost in the hustle and bustle of everyday

life but let me assure you, with every donation you bring in on any given Sunday and every hour of your time you volunteer, we are spreading God's love and generosity to those around us who need it most. In the last three months of 2016 alone, the congregation of Good Shepherd —

**God's work.
Our hands.**

- Delivered five large gift baskets and multiple additional boxes of goodies to five local fire/rescue/and police precincts in our area to express our gratitude for the hard work and dedication these men and women share every day.
- Raised more than \$1,100 for the ELCA World Hunger Campaign in one Sunday in honor of World Food Day.
- Packed and delivered 125 sack lunches for the child residents of Hidden Falls mobile home park who may otherwise not have lunch during the school break week.
- Provided approximately 165 shoeboxes filled with Christmas goodies to the LSG Christmas Shoebox Campaign so that relocated refugee children can experience the thrill of their first Christmas in America.
- Raised more than \$367 in just four short Sundays through the sale of Gift Cards that will help us expand our Outreach ministry in 2017.

But probably one of the greatest impacts we had during the holidays was the one that benefitted MUST Ministries. This Thanksgiving season MUST had a total budget of \$1,700 donated funds to purchase turkeys for as many needy families in the area as possible. Thanks to donations from our congregation and Thrivent Action Team money provided by member, Pete Dumpis, Good Shepherd was responsible for providing 28% of the total donated funds. That means we provided a turkey to one out of every four families MUST Ministries reached this Thanksgiving! We also donated 67 cans of cranberries and 74 cans of yams. This is a great testament to what we at Good Shepherd can do collectively as well as just how much more we can do when we take advantage of Thrivent's Action Team Program.

Good Shepherd has always been a very generous and giving church that responds greatly to the needs of our community and for this, I thank you all immensely. As we turn our attention to 2017, I can assure you there will be several more opportunities to make a difference in our community and spread God's love. With the help of the Outreach Advisory Panel, we are currently finalizing plans for a few different avenues of accomplishing these goals and are very excited about the possibilities 2017 holds. I look forward to serving with each and every one of you in the new year to come.

God's peace be with you,
Kristin Brenneman
 Outreach Coordinator, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Under 18...

Confirmation and FX3 meet at 12:30 p.m. on **January 8** and **January 22**. Confirmation topic on January 8 is "Parables of Lost and Found," and the topic for January 22 is "The Last Supper."

God is Great!

In June of 2016 I was diagnosed with B-cell Non-Hodgkin lymphoma. I've completed chemotherapy over the past six months and am happy to say that I'm currently cancer free.

I would like to thank everyone in my church family at Good Shepherd who prayed for me and sent me cards. I can't tell you how much all of that meant and still means to me!!! The support has been phenomenal!

There is so much more to Cancer than just diagnosis, treatment and remission for survivors. So I've spent a lot of time trying to figure out what I learned from this experience... and I'm understanding more each day.

For me, Cancer was as much of a mental fight as a physical one. It stripped me of my youthful sense of invincibility and the weight of this diagnosis fell on my shoulders when I thought I had it all; a wonderful husband, terrific daughters and son-in-laws, a wonderful grandson and a wonderful precious granddaughter. Not to mention great close friendships in the church as well as ex-employees and neighbors. But....I know more than ever....God's grace and mercy provides strength and he helped me to overcome my sickness(es)!!!

Again, I would like to thank the members of Good Shepherd for praying for me, sending me cards and for Pastor Paul for visiting and providing the host.

God is GREAT!!!!

— Debbie Gardner

Youth Ministry Staffing Update

The Council is pleased to report that 58 pledges totaling \$29,000 have been received for youth ministry staffing for the congregation. We are so grateful for this generous response to our special appeal.

The Personnel Committee is currently preparing a job description for the position to present to the Council in January with recommendations for how that position might best be staffed. The congregation will receive another update in January.

It's not too late to make a pledge by filling out a form available in the entryway. They are needed as quickly as possible, however, since the position process is underway.

Sign Up for Altar Flowers

The 2017 Altar Flower Calendar is up and ready to be filled with dedications honoring your loved ones or celebrating special occasions.

After selecting a date on the Altar Flower Calendar (located on the bulletin board in the Administrative Hallway), it is very important that you fill out the Flower Dedication Form with all the information exactly as you would like it printed in the bulletin. Then: **PLACE THE COMPLETED FORM AND A CHECK FOR \$30** in Sharron Ryan's MAILBOX. Thank you!



God's Grace in Action — News from the Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee will be conducting our **God's Grace in Action with Offerings** pledge campaign in January. Your offering pledge will support the Good Shepherd fiscal year 2018 budget which begins July 1st, 2017 and runs through June 30th, 2018. While church stewardship includes our Service - time and talents, it also takes our Offerings - money, to operate the church facility

– **our church home**, just like it does our own home. There are utilities and staff to pay, there are unexpected expenses and repairs – just like in our own home. It takes money to fulfill the ministry we have from God.

The Finance Committee will begin meeting in February to develop the new budget for FY 2018. It is extremely important to return your offerings pledge card by the end of January – January 29 - so the Finance Committee has a complete offerings projection with which to develop an accurate and balanced budget for next year.

The pledge you make will be for one amount and will include your annual pledge, **plus** your November Youth Ministry pledge, and any increase you may wish to make. The offerings pledge cards will be handed out on two Sundays in January - the 8th and the 15th. Please take time during this month to consider what level of financial commitment you can make to **your** church home.

If you have not already, please consider signing up for Simply Giving, the automated way to submit your offerings. With Simply Giving, the church can count on a consistent level of offerings which makes planning and paying our expenses much easier. Simply Giving forms are available in the entry way. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Stewardship committee or Kathy Gunn in the church office.

The operations of this church and the ministries we do cannot be accomplished without your financial support. Please begin prayerfully considering your offerings pledge. Thank you for supporting **OUR** church home, Good Shepherd.

Also, if you have not had a chance to return your **God's Grace in Action with Service** form, it is never too late to do that – they are welcome at any time! To date 146 members have returned a completed form. Thank you to all those who took time to return a service form and continue **God's Grace in Action with Service** in 2017! If you still need a form, they are available in the Narthex or from Janice Swinford, Inreach Coordinator.

“A Christian is a servant, completely attentive to the needs of all” – Martin Luther

At the December 13 meeting, the congregation Council elected the following officers:

2017 Church Council Officers

- President — Barb Blanke
- Vice President — Paul Christensen
- Treasurer — *To Be Appointed*
- Secretary — Karen Epstein
- Financial Secretary — Jaime Escamilla

Church Council Committee Liaisons

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| Worship and Music | Paul Christensen |
| Faith Formation | Karen Epstein and Hailey Hovda |
| Outreach | Ron Mixon |
| Stewardship | Jaime Escamilla |
| Fellowship | Marc Duclos |
| Finance | [Treasurer—TBA] |
| Facilities | Robert Luebke |
| Personnel | Mike Angalet |
| Congregational Care | Kristin Freeman |

First Communion Instruction

First Communion instruction, for first graders and older children who have not received communion yet, will be **Sunday, January 29** from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. First communion will be celebrated on **Sunday, February 5** at the 10:45 a.m. service. Parents or guardians are expected to participate with their child. Sign up at Sign-Up Central.



Handchimes

Celebration Ringers

A new hand chime choir is forming for beginners, grades 3 and up. At least five ringers are needed and the group

hopes to meet on Wednesday evenings. See Thomas Eisnor for details.

Created by God

This year GSLC again offers Created By God, a human sexuality class for children in 5th grade and older. Led by GSLC members Donna Garges and Tony Endozo, the class meets Sundays at 9:30 a.m. January 8 through February 12. If you missed the December information meeting, contact Janice Swinford or Tony Endozo for more information.



Above — Confirmation and FX3 families came out in full force to carol at Autumn Leaves December 18. Many of the residents sang along with the group as Thomas Eisnor played the piano. We left amidst smiles and applause and were asked to please return next year. Thank you all for a great way to wrap up the Advent season!

Give Blood This Year!

Good Shepherd hosts a blood drive from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Saturday, January 7. Start the new year by doing this good deed! Sign up in the entryway or just drop by!

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

1208 ROSE CREEK DRIVE
WOODSTOCK, GA 30189
770-924-7286
GSLUTHERAN.ORG



AN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (ELCA) CONGREGATION SERVING
NORTH COBB AND CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMUNITIES. JOIN US!

8 A.M. TRADITIONAL

9:30 A.M. PRAISE

11 A.M. TRADITIONAL

6 P.M. "THE BRIDGE" - CONTEMPORARY, LAID-BACK
SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:30 A.M.

"WELCOME ONE ANOTHER, THEREFORE,
AS CHRIST HAS WELCOMED YOU."

ROMANS 15:7

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH WARMLY WELCOMES PEOPLE OF ANY AGE,
RACE,
NATIONALITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, LIFE CIRCUMSTANCE,



Two-Can Sunday!

Don't forget the first Sunday of every month is designated as Two-Can Sunday. Bring your Two-Cans on **January 1!**

New Year...

Yarn Angels will meet on **Sunday, January 8** from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. in Room 120. *Please note the room change!*

Needlework Friends will meet on **Saturday, January 14** from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the home of Susan Epling (260 Orchards Circle, Woodstock) for needlework and fellowship. Bring your projects, learn something new, teach or help another friend. Knit, Crochet, Cross-stitch, Embroider, Sew, etc. Light refreshments provided. Contact Susan at 678-880-3056 or by email at susanfepling@hotmail.com.

Ladies Night Out will meet at Longhorn's Steakhouse on Towne Lake Parkway in Woodstock on **Tuesday, January 17** at 7 p.m. Please sign up and Sign-Up Central and leave your cell phone number. Thank you!



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