

Rooted in grace. Living out Christ's love.

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONGREGATION

1208 Rose Creek Drive | Woodstock, GA 30189 | gslutheran.org | 770-924-7286

2025



“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, AND PHYSICAL OR MENTAL CAPABILITY.

“We are called, gathered and blessed to be a community and instrument of grace for all sheep of the Good Shepherd.”

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Congregational Meeting Agenda

Congregational Semi-Annual Meeting of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church November 9, 2025

I. Call to order – Craig Stichtenoth

Reading of the Mission Statement-- All

“We are called, gathered, and blessed to be a community and instrument of grace for all sheep of the Good Shepherd.”

II. Opening prayer- Pr. Karen

III. Approval of Agenda - ALL

IV. Approval of June 8, 2025 Congregational Meeting Minutes – Craig Stichtenoth

V. Presentation of Council candidates and vote – Craig Stichtenoth

VI. Approval of changes to the Constitution – Craig Stichtenoth

GSLC changes – Second vote to affirm changes made by this congregation

Amendments to the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations – One vote required

VII. Thanksgiving and accolades

VIII. Results of the Council election – Craig Stichtenoth

IX. Q&A

X. Closing prayer- Pr. Karen

XI. Adjournment

Rev. Karen Boda, Pastor's Report

Luke 24:45-49, NRSVue

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, ⁴⁶ and he said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day ⁴⁷ and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

Dear Good Shepherd,

Last year I greeted you in the Annual Report as your interim pastor. This year, I greet you as the one called as your pastor to serve amongst you into the future. I am grateful beyond words for the opportunity to be in this place, to worship together, to care for each other, and to live out God's call on our lives and for Good Shepherd. Thank you for trusting me and letting me walk with you in your daily spaces and your holy spaces. It is a joy and an honor for both Alan and I to be here.

The verse above from Luke is one of my favorites and I even used it at my ordination. I call on it time and time again for two reasons: first, verse 45, *then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures*.

Long ago, your founders planted the seed of knowledge in your midst. That seed has been nurtured, watered, fertilized and now bears fruit repeatedly. This seeking of knowledge is visible in the numerous and very well attended Bible studies, in the commitment to sharing Jesus with our youth and children, and in the way that we live out the gospel by caring for those inside and outside of Good Shepherd. It has been a blessing to watch you bear fruit in our community by supporting caregivers, deepening a relationship with Child's Play preschool through monthly chapel, ministering through mission trips, and expanding our reach into Carmel Elementary, to name but a few. I am also thankful that this community asks questions of God and each other, wrestles with scripture, allows ourselves to be vulnerable, and then proclaims good theology – a theology that uses the scriptures to do good, and only good.

Second, I come back time and time again to verse 49: *And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised, so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high*.

The call on our lives to be a Christian and to live out the gospel, at this time and in this place, is not easy. There are competing voices and competing theologies, struggles in our lives, the lives of our neighbors, of our communities and nation. Verse 49 tells us to wait; to remember that we can't do life on our own; to stay until we have been clothed by the power on high. No matter how smart, good looking, hardworking, or committed we are, we need God. We need each other. We can't do life alone. We can't live out our calls alone. While we don't have to all be uniform in our thoughts and approach, we do need to be united in Christ.

Read this Annual Report from cover to cover. See the ways in which we are living out our call and doing life together, united in Christ.

Please know how thankful I am for each of you and your impact on my life and the life of this community. I am excited about our future together.

Much Peace,
Rev. Karen Boda, Pastor

Craig Stichtenoth, Council President

“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift.” (2 Corinthians: 9:15)

As I approach the completion of my second year as Council President, I stand in awe at all the ways that we have been blessed as a congregation throughout this year. Of course, most notable has been Pastor Karen accepting our call to be our permanent pastor after nearly 18 months as our interim. All the good things that I said about her in my report of a year ago are still true, and my appreciation for her leadership with Council, committees, and any number of ministries continues to grow.

I thank each member of our fine Good Shepherd staff. Michelle Provost joined the staff this year as Office Coordinator. In September we said farewell and Godspeed to Chase Petersen, who has gone to Germany to continue his musical education. And we have welcomed our new organist and choir director, Anna Kate Peed. Donna, Pam, Carrie, and Aaron continue to do a superb job in their respective and important roles at Good Shepherd. We are truly blessed to have them all as part of our staff.

This year has taught us that we must at times exhibit a great deal of patience. Such has been the case with our search for a Youth Coordinator since Mel departed Good Shepherd in 2024. Pastor Karen and the Personnel Committee have spent countless hours exploring different options for filling this important ministry need. They have thought creatively, sought coordination with other nearby congregations with a similar need, and advertised the opportunity aggressively. As of this time, we have not found the right person to fill this position. And still our Youth ministry thrives thanks to the efforts of many volunteers guided by the vision and plans of the Youth and Family Ministry Committee. A highly successful Vacation Bible School and other educational experiences, youth ministry that goes beyond our walls, and youth leadership in worship confirms for us that the Spirit is active in this congregation.

We are at the final stage in the process of affirming an updated constitution. I extend my thanks to the Constitutional Review Task Force, my fellow Council members and others who have helped in this important and lengthy process. It is quite an accomplishment.

Once again, Advent is nearly upon us. It is a time of anticipation. As we celebrate the birth of our Savior at Christmas, let us also celebrate our blessings as a congregation throughout this past year. We have welcomed many new members to our family of faith and grown in our ministries of service to those in need beyond our walls, while continuing to grow in faith in our Lord, the true ‘Good Shepherd’. We look ahead to what God has in store for us in the years to come, confident that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide us and dwell in this place we call Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Anna Kate Peed, Organist/Choir Director

It has been a joyful privilege for me to join Good Shepherd this past September. The congregation and staff have been so welcoming and gracious to me. Each Sunday I prepare the hymns, anthem/special music and lead the choir and handbell choir, as well as play the organ and piano for traditional services.

The Bells of Good Shepherd are looking forward to several opportunities to perform before the end of this year. I have never worked with bells before, and this experience alongside these sweet people has been truly a blessing. I plan to have more performances with them. Collaborative worship is powerful!

The Chancel Choir are a great worshipful contribution to traditional services. They are easy to work with, quick to learn, and we look forward to all opportunities moving through the year.

Although I have had less than two months here, I am excited to provide a reverent atmosphere and grow with Good Shepherd.

Thank you all!
Anna Kate Peed

Pam Weinelt, Praise Team Coordinator

Vision and Mission

- To provide an inviting worship service that retains the theological and liturgical elements of the traditional Lutheran Church, delivered in a contemporary musical style and instrumentation.
- To make our worship service understandable and comfortable for people of un-churched and non-Lutheran backgrounds.
- To lead the assembly worship through music
- To provide an opportunity for musicians of various levels of proficiency to use their talents to participate in the ministry of planning and leading worship.

Accomplishments

We continued to expand the congregation's repertoire in 2025. We have focused on introducing songs that are current and more likely to be played on the FM radio stations or online streaming platforms (Spotify, Pandora, etc.)

We upgraded the sound system. It is now fully digitized. Sound for the sanctuary microphones and Praise Team have been integrated into one system and new speakers have been installed in the sanctuary and lobby area.

Equipment to upgrade and integrate sound for online streaming has been purchased.

2025 Goals

- Complete the online streaming sound integration
- Continue to explore all options to enhance the worship experience
- Recruit both instrumentalists and singers to lead services
- Work to expand musical styles and deliveries
- Explore and understand the use of technology in worship for Good Shepherd

I look forward to continuing to work with the Good Shepherd Staff and congregation in the upcoming year. It is a blessing to work with so many talented and committed people of faith.

Respectfully Submitted,
Pam Weinelt

Donna Garges, Media Coordinator

Every good film has its cast, crew, and story. My role at Good Shepherd is not about stepping into the spotlight in any way, but more about making sure the stage directions are clear, the cameras are rolling, and the story of our church is told with excellence. Think of me as part producer, part stagehand, part editor, part technician — always behind the lens, ensuring the production moves forward as intended.

The Script, Design & Storytelling (Weekly Newsletters & Communications)

Just like a film's success lies in how the story is told, each week, with a collaborative team of diligent staff, enthusiastic committees and committed Council members, we craft and publish our "scripts" through worship bulletins, newsletters, social media posts, updates and opportunities for engagement, making sure our congregation has the inside scoop on the next "scenes" being produced. These communications represent the trailer or maybe the blockbuster that guides our audience each week to engage with energy and excitement in service as good Christians.

The Production Team (Office Technology & Support)

Every production needs reliable equipment, and one role is making sure the tools of the trade work seamlessly. From supporting office technology to onboarding new "cast members" (our staff), I work diligently to keep the set running smoothly. Whether solving an unexpected tech glitch, learning a new software, or preparing the tools that help our staff shine and make our members happy, my backstage work helps keep the story moving without interruption.

The Live Broadcast (Worship Livestreams)

Think of the worship livestream as our live premiere each week. From cameras to streaming platforms, I facilitate the broadcast with a team of AV Operators, so our congregation — whether at home in Woodstock or across the country — could experience worship together. Behind the console, I made sure the production is ready each week to run smoothly for our extended church family. I am excited for updated enhancements coming soon!

Bonus Features (Projects & Extras)

Behind-the-scenes projects give added depth and creativity to our story. From compiling the annual report, building nativity sets, creating new electronic versions of Spiritual Gift Forms, and stewardship drives, these behind-the-scenes efforts ensured that ministry areas and committees have the tools and creativity needed to shine, ultimately driving members to engage.

Closing Credits

At the end of the day, my role is to serve as part of the crew that makes the story of our church possible. The year's work may not always be seen, but as a good production team, the behind-the-scenes efforts ensure that the big picture comes together beautifully. I thank the members of our congregation — your support, encouragement, and engagement are what make the story worth telling. You are not just the audience, but truly part of the cast in God's Greatest Story, shaping every scene of this ongoing production.

Michelle Provost, Office Coordinator

As the Good Shepherd Office Coordinator, I help keep our church running smoothly behind the scenes. Each week, I make sure attendance sheets are recorded, visitor information gets entered, and pew pads are refilled for Sunday services. I organize the Sunday Servant schedule, send reminder emails, and help find substitutes when someone can't serve. When repairs or maintenance are needed around the building, I coordinate with contractors on appointment times and insurance, track progress, and keep our committees updated. I also handle ordering supplies — everything from office and coffee supplies to altar guild and fellowship items — so our ministries always have what they need. You might see me checking copier numbers for accounting and filling out purchase orders.

I process new member paperwork, add profiles into our database, and make sure name tags and welcome materials are ready. Part of my week involves answering phones, sorting mail, and responding to the many emails that come through the church office. I also help keep our safety equipment up to date — things like first aid kits, AEDs, and CPR training. When there's a maintenance issue or preschool question, I help communicate and make sure everything gets handled quickly. I keep records for flowers, donuts, and building usage requests, and manage the forms that go with them.

Throughout the week, I work closely with our Pastor and Media Coordinator, helping wherever I can. I also send out prayer requests during my office hours so those needs get shared with our Prayer Circle right away. There's a lot of coordination, communication, and care involved — and I truly enjoy being part of the daily heartbeat of our church. No two days look exactly the same, but that's part of what makes this work meaningful. In short, I get to help connect the people, programs, and details that make our church family function with grace and joy.

Carrie Escamilla, Bookkeeper

This year has been many incredible blessings here at Good Shepherd. I am so thankful to be a part of this incredible community of brothers and sisters in Christ. It has been my honor to serve as staff in this joyous place. I began as a member at Good Shepherd with my husband, Jaime, and our boys, Adrian and Sebastian, back in 2012. We were immediately welcomed and began serving wherever we saw a need.

I have accumulated so many experiences, friendships, knowledge, and sometimes challenges along the way. I can honestly say, I would not have changed anything. Our experiences bring us to where we are now. I believe nothing is by accident and have tried to take every part of my journey and use it to enhance my current role within our church.

I have served as your bookkeeper since January 2023. In my role, I perform various functions. There are the measured tasks of processing incoming bills, recording financial contributions and processing staff payroll. I also support our church Council, Treasurer and Financial Secretary, church committees and staff with reporting needs and special requests.

One of my favorite parts of my job though is fostering and building the relationships with our amazing congregation members. Talking about money is not always easy or come natural to all. It is my hope that I make that a little more comfortable.

I am excited for this upcoming year and look forward to serving my church and serving alongside each one of you.

Many Blessings!
Carrie Escamilla, Bookkeeper

Aaron Frink, Custodian

Aaron works behind the scenes to keep our worship, administration, fellowship, and education areas clean. Aaron begins his work week on Sunday after worship, by vacuuming, taking out the trash, and cleaning eight bathrooms. During the week, Aaron dusts, vacuums, cleans the glass and mirrors, mops the floors, blows off the porch, sanitizes keyboards and telephones, cleans the bathrooms, and sets up furniture for weekly Bible Studies and Sunday School Classes. For special events and celebrations, such as the Blood Drive, Ministry Fair, Lenten Soup and Suppers, Easter Brunch, Pony Express Luncheon, and Funeral Receptions, Aaron sets up the furniture in the Fellowship Hall before the decorating team arrives. After the event, he cleans the fellowship hall and resets the furniture for the week ahead. Aaron has been blessed with the opportunity to serve at Good Shepherd to support the congregation and the many missions we share.

Caring for Creation

Submitted by: Joella Molway

Members: Kathy Brill, Susan Epling, Clint Gruwell, Barbara Kidder, Melinda Mundis, Sharron Ryan, Monica Smith, Reba Sumner, Marge Westerville - Council Liaison: Ruth Clark

Purpose: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church affirms the gift of God's Creation in all its glory and beauty. We accept responsibility by using our God given gifts to care for all the earth.

This group is for the physical stewardship of our earth. We focus on recycling and reusing daily items to keep them out of the landfill and tend to the church garden

- Garden of Grace: 30 pick days that brought in a bumper crop of: 80 lbs. of tomatoes, 15 lbs. of peppers, 50 lbs. of squash, 60 lbs. of okra, 2 lbs. of green onions, 10 lbs. of carrots, 10 lbs. of green beans, 8 ears of corn, 5 lbs of cucumbers, 2 lbs, of radishes, 2 lbs. of lettuce. The blueberries were consumed by birds very quickly. We will complete the okra harvest for the rest of October and will plant garlic in November for the 2026 harvest. The apple trees went through the season with a serious case of blight that destroyed the harvest, and we had to do major pruning. Hopefully, we'll have better luck next year. The pollinator garden thrived nicely, attracting the necessary bees to pollinate our vegetable garden.
- Metal Recycling: 2 loads kept about 500 lbs. of metal out of the landfill and netted the church about \$80. The Metal Recycling Enclosure should be completed around November 1, 2025. We will begin accepting aluminum cans for recycling at that time.
- Battery Collection: We donated 300 lb. of batteries this past year.
- Hefty Bag ReNew Program: This program recycles hard-to-recycle plastics (codes 3 and above) and Styrofoam. Our County Waste Management Company processes these special bags through its recycling stream system and sends them to the Hefty Bag Company. We took 180 Hefty bags to the recycler this past year.
- Drake House Donations - slightly used women's clothing, shoes, and accessories to help women and children experiencing homelessness to achieve economic independence and long-term stability. This past year we have donated over 500 items as of May. We stopped counting after that number. Our total this year will exceed over 100 items. We continue to deliver items monthly. The list includes slacks, skirts, jewelry, suits, blouses, dresses, sweaters, shoes, purses and jackets.
- Eyeglass Donations - GSLC has taken a minimum of 15 of our taupe colored Good Shepherd recycling bags filled with eyeglasses to the Lions club which helps seniors in need.
- Oral Waste Collection - We have mailed 36 lbs. of oral care waste where it is made into plastic pellets that can then be used to make outdoor playground equipment and furniture. Since we started collecting it in 2017, we mail a shipment of seven pounds to TerraCycle every two months.
- Prescription Bottle Collection - Recycle used clean Prescription Bottles, approximately 2 boxes are sent to Matthew 25 Ministries each month.

Congregational Care Committee

Submitted by: Janice Swinford, Council Liaison

Purpose: In partnership with the church leadership and the congregation, to be responsible for supporting ministries that provide care and opportunities for involvement for the members of GSLC, always with the goal of facilitating the spiritual growth of the individual and their connectedness to the body of Christ.

I am so grateful for the hard work of each and every committee in this church! All the lay leaders and staff, working together to accomplish so much. We are a church with a variety of talents and are so fortunate that you give yourselves so generously to move our church forward in God's mission. Thank you!

What has been happening in the Congregational Care Committee this year? The funeral meals give such full support to the grieving families. We hear countless times from those attending these meals how meaningful this has been. We provided two funeral meals this year. Thank you, Monica Smith and all the members that contribute to make this ministry possible. Recently, Pastor Karen trained a group of lay leaders to visit members who cannot come to service regularly. Her detailed teaching allows Congregational Care to join with her to extend God's generous love into homes and hospital rooms. Thank you, Pastor Karen, the lay leaders in this ministry and those that welcome these lay leaders into their homes.

In *Names for the Messiah*, Walter Brueggemann shares that "society cannot prosper and flourish unless there is responsible attentiveness toward the needy and vulnerable". The first part of that statement sounds great. Who doesn't want society to flourish?! The way that he suggests, though, by taking care of the needy and vulnerable, makes me somewhat uncomfortable. I don't mind helping, but labeling some as needy and vulnerable, and what if that is me at some point?! I believe what he is saying, however, is don't shy away from the various challenges that God puts in your path. If things get messy, roll up your sleeves! Perhaps you aren't a hugger, but someone you are talking with in Fellowship Hall after service tells you how sad they have been. How about a pat on the shoulder and continuing to listen so they feel heard? This is Congregational Care! You are told about someone recovering from a surgery; why not offer to bring a meal? This is Congregational Care! It doesn't have to be huge to have an impact.

The more that we all embrace what we can do to care for each other through sharing a cup of coffee and listening, offering a ride to someone who can't drive to service at night, bringing a meal to those newly home from the hospital, we can acknowledge that it is more than okay to be the recipient of God's abundant care through the hands of sweet members at Good Shepherd. The words needy and vulnerable aren't always a permanent state of being, but often simply a temporary challenge. Allowing yourself to be in both the role of cared for and caregiver increases our capacity to help those within the congregation and those outside our walls. It's important work in God's kingdom! Thank you for doing your part for Congregational Care!

May God guide us as we care for all sheep of the Good Shepherd!

Facilities & Maintenance Committee

Submitted by Steve Frink – Chairperson, Council Liaison – Scott Panhorst

Purpose: In cooperation with the pastor of the congregation, to supervise and provide proper maintenance and repair to church property and the general protection of the congregation against loss or damage of whatever nature.

Thanks to the skills, time and materials generously donated by members of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and F&M Committee members, the committee has worked hard to operate within the facilities repair budget line where possible. Thank you for your continued support. The following are highlights of projects completed this year:

- The committee provided significant support to the Sanctuary Audio Upgrade project. This project encompasses a complete upgrade of the entire AV infrastructure supporting worship services at GSLC including:
 - A digital upgrade of all signal and control wiring for the Sanctuary and Streaming systems.
 - Installation of new speakers in the organ alcoves
 - A complete rewire of the stage cabling infrastructure that required several days of demanding physical labor. Specific thanks to Scott and Anna-Louise Panhorst, Drew Dickerson, Pam Weinelt, and Steve Frink.
- Two workdays were held to put down several hundred bags of mulch and remove overgrown shrubs and undergrowth around the property.
- Annual inspections for fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, alarm systems, AEDs, County water backflow testing, and others were conducted or supervised.
- A complete lighting upgrade to LED for the Rose Creek entrance sign. Thank you, Pete Dumpis.
- Coordination of regular HVAC contract maintenance and replacement of several AC compressors and inside units.
- Committee members replaced Wi-Fi network cables in the Admin and Education wings resulting in significant savings to our budget.
- Also, special thanks to Al Reynolds for managing and performing much of our ongoing minor maintenance.

The Facilities and Maintenance Committee welcomes willing hands to help complete our projects and maintain our facilities. If you have a special skill or talent, know how to swing a hammer or paintbrush, or just have a desire to help with the continuing maintenance of our facilities, please contact Steve Frink, Scott Panhorst, or the church office.

Technology Sub-Committee

Mission: The Technology Committee evaluates the current and future use of technology and maintains the inventory of technology for both the staff and the church.

The Technology Committee is a subcommittee of the Facilities and Maintenance Committee. If interested, the points of contact are Donna Garges and Rob Homer. The Committee conducts as-needed meetings to address the needs of both the church and staff.

The projects the Technology Committee was involved with this past year include:

- Organized and held two electronic recycling drives in conjunction with Men in Mission in April 2025, raising \$1,460 in total dollars. A second event was held on Nov. 1st. We do not have the

amount raised at the time of this publication. The next event is scheduled for April 2026. This money is primarily used to upgrade technology/software/hardware for our staff and building.

- Occasional publication of technology tidbits to help prevent identity theft or increase awareness of potential computer scams.
- New microphones to enhance livestream sound, and newly purchased PTZ cameras to allow for different views of the sanctuary.
- Continued programming and facilitating livestreaming of Good Shepherd's worship services each Sunday and mid-week services.
- A new organist computer was purchased, and software installations were configured for Michelle Provost and Anna Kate Peed.
- A new cell phone was purchased for Pastor Karen.
- A ring doorbell was installed for enhanced security for the staff.
- An internal group of members comprised of Alan Boda, Chuck Storla and Erik Storla has been formed as a web development group, tasked with upgrading the Good Shepherd website.
- Donna Garges remains the main point of contact for Carmichael Consulting Solutions, our outsourced Technology management company for computer security, hardware, software and troubleshooting.

Fellowship Committee

Submitted by: Tracy Lauanders, Cathy Mattocks - Chairpersons, Mary Wilson - Council Liaison

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” Matthew 18:20

Purpose: To provide ways to strengthen the fellowship between congregation members; to bring new members into the life of the congregation; and to build cooperation, trust, and enjoyment among the members of the congregation.

- The Annual Thanksgiving meal was served after the Congregational Meeting on November 10, 2024.
- Desserts were served prior to Wednesday Advent services.
- In January and August 2025 we participated in the Stewardship Ministry Fairs.
- We held a New Member Reception in September 2025.
- We served soup and salad every Wednesday night prior to the Lenten services.
- We held the Easter Pancake breakfast and brunch between services on Easter Sunday 2025
- We had a reception for our Confirmand on June 8, 2025
- We held a Going Away Reception for Chase in September 2025.
- We served a quick hot dog, chips, and cookie lunch prior to serving on God's Work, Our Hands on September 7, 2025
- In September, we held a meeting with other committees to look at ways we can support each other and build collaboration.
- We had a Pastor Appreciation reception, to celebrate Pastor Karen and her birthday in October, 2025.
- We continue to serve coffee and doughnuts each Sunday after both services.

As we reflect on the meaning of fellowship - “shared participation within a community” - we see many opportunities for fellowship to build and strengthen our community. It has been a busy year and we are so grateful for the many people that continue to serve on the fellowship committee. We want to thank Jenny, Lily and Paul Champion, Ruth Clark, Marlene Durst, Max and Susan Epling, Eleanor Fevola, Alice and Elizabeth Fennell, Jeff and Carrie Finney, Pat Freeman, Tammy Frink, Clint Gruwell, Ken and Barb Kidder, Linda Martin, John and Diane Mau, Scott Panhorst, Sharron Ryan, Monica Smith, Gail and Steven Setzer, Joyce Snow, Karen Wertz, Marge Westerville, Tom and Mary Wilson and Karen Yerkes and all those who see a need and jump in and help!

Finance Committee

Submitted by: Gail Setzer (Committee Chairperson)

Members: Rob Homer, Treasurer; Carrie Escamilla, Bookkeeper; Peter Dumpis; Ken Eggers; Raelene Swordsma; Pastor Karen Boda

Purpose: In cooperation with the Treasurer and pastor of the congregation, to support the ministry of the church through financial planning and oversight.

For the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, GSLC's total offerings and other income amounted to \$518,512. Total expenses amounted to \$460,296, providing a positive cash flow of \$58,216. Recent data for the first quarter of the fiscal year ended June 30, 2026, indicates that positive cash flow is continuing into the current fiscal year.

The Finance Committee voted to apply \$35,000 of the favorable cash flow for the for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, toward the property Major Maintenance Reserve Fund and \$28,216 toward the Synod Pledge for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2026.

The major reason for this positive cash flow was unfilled staff positions, particularly relating to Youth/Christian Education. Also, income for the year was 1.3% above budget, and there were savings in program and administrative costs.

Pastor Karen Boda was called in February 2025. Since she was called as our permanent minister, attendance has risen. The only full quarter since she became our permanent minister was the April – June 2025 quarter. Attendance during the April – June 2025 quarter averaged 167 for the two services combined, an increase of 11% over the attendance (151) in the corresponding quarter of 2024. We have been pleased with this favorable trend.

For the category of Senior Pastor, the budget comparison shows that actual payments were less than budgeted by roughly \$34,000. The primary reason for this saving relates to the call process and physically moving a new pastor here. Pastor Karen was already our Interim Pastor when the Call Committee decided that she would make an excellent permanent pastor. This eliminated the Call Committee's expenses for visiting various candidates and bringing at least one candidate back for a visit with the congregation. Also, Pastor Karen has elected not to move closer to the church, so we have not paid moving expenses for her.

GSLC maintains reserve funds, allowing the church to temporarily spend more than its budgeted income. As of June 30, 2025, GSLC had \$214,107 in such funds. This amount is apart from designated funds. It is inclusive of several amounts earmarked by the Finance Committee for special purposes.

Funds not needed for immediate purposes earn interest in a government insured money market account managed by Thrivent. The amount of money market income earned in the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025, was \$7,227.

Under the constitution, GSLC has an Endowment Committee, separate from the Finance Committee. This committee is charged with the many aspects of soliciting and taking in large gifts, often of stock or physical property. Members appointed in early 2024 are Patrick Swinford—Chair, Margaret Mixon, Tracey Homer, Chuck Storla, and Jaime Escamilla. Initial tasks were to pull the current Endowment Policy out of the Constitution to address changing needs. The second such vote is taking place at the November 2025 Annual Meeting. Rev. Ana Lugo of the ELCA Foundation visited GSLC in March 2025 to explain options available for potential givers to donate in a way that helps the donors save on taxes. As of June 30, 2025, the total funds in Mission Endowment accounts were \$36,511.

July 2024- June 2025 Income Statement

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Statement of Activities-Summary (Annual Report)

Date Range: Jul 1st 2024 - Jun 30th 2025

Accounts	Actual Jul 01, 2024 - Jun 30, 2025	Budget Jul 01, 2024 - Jun 30, 2025
Revenues		
Offerings	476,415.02	470,563.00
Other Income	42,097.00	41,253.00
Total Revenues	\$ 518,512.02	\$ 511,816.00
Expenses		
Benevolence	36,250.00	36,250.00
Facilities		
Fixed Facilities	14,173.00	14,300.00
Utilities	27,695.39	27,800.00
Planned Facilities Upkeep	10,834.00	16,200.00
Other Facilities	37,125.62	35,000.00
Total Facilities	89,828.01	93,300.00
Administrative		
General Office Admin	5,635.57	11,100.00
Other Administrative Expenses	3,980.31	4,200.00
Total Administrative	9,615.88	15,300.00
Compensation		
Senior Pastor	117,993.63	152,077.00
Music Staff		
Organist/Choir Director Comp	26,062.37	26,000.00
Music Staff Other	25,750.22	22,528.00
Total Music Staff	51,812.59	48,528.00
Support Staff	95,699.04	131,880.00
Custodial Staff	20,788.44	20,800.00
Other Personnel Costs	17,428.26	21,432.00
Total Compensation	303,721.96	374,717.00
Programs (54)		
Faith Formation	6,427.03	15,700.00
Fellowship	5,280.78	4,000.00
Stewardship	1,653.50	2,000.00
Outreach	1,700.39	3,650.00
Worship & Music	4,176.51	9,900.00
Congregational Care	0.60	30.00
Other Programs	1,640.95	3,450.00
Total Programs (54)	20,879.76	38,730.00
Total Expenses	\$ 460,295.61	\$ 558,297.00
Net Total	\$ 58,216.41	(\$ 46,481.00)

Mutual Ministry Committee

Submitted by: Trina Hutchinson, Holly Jones and Jeff Nugent

1 Peter 4:10 – “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”

The Mutual Ministry team serves as a trusted circle of support for Pastor Karen, offering a confidential space for reflection, encouragement, and strategic dialogue. In 2025, the group prioritized strengthening communication pathways, including a monthly meeting and the implementation of a text-based protocol for urgent support, ensuring timely and flexible responses to pastoral needs. Through ongoing conversations, the team has helped navigate leadership challenges, foster emotional and spiritual well-being, and reinforce a culture of care and collaboration.

Outreach Committee

Submitted by Molly Maher, Cathy Mattocks and Sharron Ryan - Current Outreach Coordinators and Jenny Truesdale-Past Outreach Coordinator

Purpose: To promote, in cooperation with the Pastor and Outreach Chairperson, all welcome, awareness, promotion, advocacy, and outreach service of this congregation. Or alternately, to share the Good News with those outside of the congregation and those in need.

The Outreach Committee has responded faithfully in completing the following outreach opportunities:

- Diapers and baby wipes drive for Inspiritus for the month of July, 2025. We received \$500 from Thrivent which allowed us to purchase 40 boxes of diapers PLUS we received an additional 20 boxes of diapers donated by church members.
- God’s Work, Our Hands on September, 2025 gave 125 church members the opportunity to help at Cherokee County Homeless Vets Thrift Shop and Mostly Mutts. Additionally, we packed Trunk or Treat bags, decorated place mats for The Oaks and Sunabella Assisted Living facilities and treats for Child’s Play.
- Coin boxes donated to Carmel Elementary generated a total of \$2,724.39. The collections were during the Lenten season and were designated to help with the negative balances of school lunch accounts.
- The blood drive in August, 2025 collected a total of 54 units.
- Hunger Walk total amount raised was \$3202.45 from walks in Atlanta and locally.
- Care givers support group was started this year and is set to meet twice a month. The focus of the group is to give caregivers a small break and new ideas and a support system for a very hard and sometimes isolated position.
- The card ministry has generated a total of \$2208 over the past two years. All donations are designated for youth missions. Card kits were put together and donated to the Encouragement Project. Donated homemade cards are also sent for prayer requests.
- Yarn Angels continues to keep our church supplied with prayer shawls for Pastor to distribute to church members as needed. In addition, Yarn Angels sends hats, mittens, scarves, wash cloths, baby blankets, baby sweaters, large blankets and quilts to the Encouragement Project.
- A media support program started at Carmel Elementary. The volunteers work in the media center helping the children choose books that would interest them and help develop a love of reading.
- Angel Tree coordinated with Carmel Elementary Christmas gifts for 26 children, Dec. 2024. Church members brought an abundance of gifts.

We have a few additional ideas to deepen our relationships with Cherokee County Homeless Vets, Mostly Mutts and MUST Ministries.

Personnel Committee

Submitted by: Jenny Champion, Kristin Freeman, Gordon Swordsma, Gina Crittenden, Tracy Lauanders, Pastor Karen Boda, and Deborah Ezell, Council Liaison

Purpose: To make recommendations to the Congregation Council, in cooperation with the pastor as head of staff, that will enable decisions to carry out the obligations of the congregation as an employer.

- Planned and conducted Annual Performance reviews for staff
- Each member of the Personnel committee conducts quarterly one on one meetings with individual staff members to check in and have conversation
- Personnel budget recommendations submitted to the Finance committee and Congregation Council
- Began providing partial healthcare funding for our full-time staff
- Welcomed Alissa Wells for a short term as office coordinator in early 2025
- Welcomed Michelle Provost as our new office coordinator
- Welcomed Anna Kate Peed as our new organist and choir director
- Welcomed Pastor Karen's call to be the full-time permanent Pastor upon recommendation from the Call committee.
- Wished Chase Petersen safe travels as he ended his term as the organist and choir director upon his acceptance into a program studying the organ in Germany

The Personnel Committee expresses gratitude for the ongoing support from the congregation and Pastor Karen during a year of significant change. We commend our staff for their adaptability and dedication to the ministry of Good Shepherd. Donna Garges has provided exemplary guidance to our new office coordinator facilitating a smooth transition. Aaron Frink continues to maintain our facility to a high standard, and we appreciate the valuable contributions of Carrie Escamilla. Pam Weinelt has been instrumental in supporting our music ministry through staff transitions, including welcoming our new organist and choir director.

While we give thanks for Chase and his musical talents, we wish him well in his future studies. We are pleased to welcome Michelle Provost and Anna Kate Peed to our team and look forward to their continued contributions. The committee has had an open position for a Youth and Family Coordinator since August 2024. We continue to review resumes and interview candidates in our search to fill the position. In the meantime, we have looked to the Youth and Family committee to plan out family events and continue the work needed to lead our educational program. We thank Kristin Freeman and Karen Epstein for their leadership with that committee. We remain committed to listening to staff and congregational feedback and engaging in thoughtful discussions to meet the church's evolving needs, particularly regarding the search for a Youth and Family Coordinator. Our goals for the coming year include maintaining oversight of personnel matters and fostering a supportive and productive work environment.

Stewardship Committee

Submitted by: Valerie Whiteman, Chairperson

Members: Jaime Escamilla, John Mau, Joella Molway, Heidi Nugent, Janice Swinford,
Sharron Ryan, Council Liaison

Galatians 6:9 tells us not to grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. **With God's help, we can do this!** Please join the Stewardship Committee as we pray for Good Shepherd and our future. **How is God asking you to use your heart, your hands, and your treasures?**

Purpose: To nurture a culture of generosity and abundance mindset within the congregation. To share stories that inspire members to generously share their time, talents, and treasures to support the church's ministries and build God's Kingdom. To provide opportunities for members to discover and develop their gifts, and to encourage responsible and joyful financial stewardship.

Stewardship continues to meet on the third Thursday of every month at 6:30. We often meet via Zoom application, but during the summer, we typically meet in person at the church.

The team, led by Janice Swinford and Heidi Nugent, created a new and fun Stewardship drive this year. With a Pony Express theme, they kicked off the drive with the Annual Fall Festival celebration. Brats and hot dogs with wonderful side dishes brought by our members were enjoyed by everyone!

We had two Ministry Fairs this year, as current and future fairs will be held in conjunction with the start of the school year. It was very well attended, and many of our serving committees and groups ended up with new members. Serving is not a lifelong commitment, but we encourage everyone to be involved in some way, even for one or two years. Change is good, and we encourage everyone to be a part of God's Work at Good Shepherd.

Recently, we had a meeting with Thrivent to determine how they might be able to bring knowledge and understanding to our members regarding best practices in our daily lives, as well as our finances. John is heading up this new venture, and we look forward to some wonderful, engaging opportunities for learning on all levels and ages.

We continue to welcome new members to the Stewardship committee. Serve with us for a year and see what you think.

Thank you to each member of the Stewardship for their selfless generosity of their time and talents! A big thank you to Jaime, John, Janice, Joella, Heidi, and Sharron for all you do!

Worship & Music Committee

Membership: Kay Abramson, Paulette Alderfer, Pastor Karen Boda, Ron Ferentini, Carrie Finney, Barb Kidder (Council Liaison), Melinda Mundis, Anna Kate Peed, Ben Setzer (Chair), Debbie Radcliff, Don Vogt, Pam Weinelt

Purpose: *In partnership with the pastor and Director of Music, to provide input on and support for all worship services of this congregation, and all activities directly related to these services.*

The committee discusses many aspects of worship at Good Shepherd. This report will highlight several of the most important.

Why is worship so important to us? Here in this place and at that time we encounter God and others in a different way. In word and sacrament we find encouragement, we show gratitude, we experience joy, we gain direction, we connect.

Attendance at services has been around 167 per Sunday, both services included. Even though summer attendance has typically been lower than the rest of the year, attendance during this past summer remained steady.

This fall we welcomed Anna Kate Peed as Organist, Choir Director, and Bells Director.

We give thanks for Chase Petersen's leadership as Organist, Choir Director, and Bells Director for the past year. We wish him well in his studies in Germany.

We give thanks for all who serve during worship and enrich every service. We also thank those who over this last year updated descriptions of duties for Sunday Servants and conducted training sessions: acolytes, altar guild, lay readers, ushers, worship assistants, and greeters.

We have had several youth services this past year, alternating between the early and late service. These services are a powerful reminder of the faith of our youth and their ability to share that faith with us. Hearing the youth read and preach the Word, join us together in prayer, and serve communion gives us great hope in the future of the church. Youth services are a good way for all members of the congregation to support our youth.

Special services during Advent and Lent were thought provoking, solemn, and joyful. Christmas services were held at 4, 7, and 9 on Christmas Eve and at 10 on Christmas morning. Attendance was wonderful around Christmas as we worshipped together with members, family, and community.

Over the Summer, our services were enlivened with a special sermon series based on Richard Rohr's book *The Tears of Things*.

The planned updates to the sound system in the Sanctuary are almost complete. We thank those folks who spent so much time planning, purchasing, and installing the updates. We have received very favorable feedback from members of the congregation on the improvements.

We give thanks for those who help to live stream our services, a ministry which reaches those who are unable to attend.

In Christ,
Ben Setzer, Chair, Worship and Music Committee

Youth & Family Committee

Submitted by: Kristin Freeman, Chairperson

Committee Members: Tammy Frink, Jenny Champion, Karen Epstein (Council Liaison), Emily Provost (Youth Council Representative)

Purpose: Working with church leadership, create, support and aids in the implementation of the Youth and Family Ministry of the congregation.

The Youth and Family Ministry committee spent the past year diligently working to facilitate, plan, and execute events and learning opportunities for our youth with various congregational activities and events while the Personnel committee actively searched for a Youth and Family Coordinator to lead this ministry. The committee was able to continue to provide meaningful opportunities for youth and families to grow in faith and some of those highlighted activities included:

- Intergenerational Advent Craft Activity: Wooden Nativity Set
- Fundraising: Annual Cookie Walk, Envelope Giving with all monies raised to support all youth that attended the Service Trip in June
- Family Fun Activities: Gingerbread decorating, Monster Mini-Golf, Painting with Allison, Easter Egg Hunt, Lake Day at Lake Allatoona
- Service Projects: serving at Mostly Mutts Thrift Store, Hunger Walk
- Intergenerational Service Trip to Fort Myers, Florida with LutherSprings and Inspiritus which included 14 youth and adults
- AFFIRM event presented by the Southeastern Synod
- Youth Sunday Services where youth actively led all parts of worship including the sermon
- Vacation Bible School in June where we served 84 children with 50 volunteers
- Student Recognitions: Senior Sunday, Backpack Blessings, Youth Bibles
- First Communion with seven children participating
- Confirmed one youth
- Continued to offer Sunday School classes to children in grades K-5th and Middle School and High School as well as several adult Sunday School classes

The Youth and Family Ministry committee is so very grateful for the contributions by all of our congregation members that allowed our youth program to continue this past year, particularly in allowing the financial aspect of the summer Service Trip to be 100% covered for youth attending. This congregation is blessed with so many volunteers willing to assist in youth related activities. We had over 50 volunteers for our annual VBS week and Karin Storla did an amazing job of planning and organizing a fantastic week. We have volunteers that assist with weekly Sunday School lessons, attending "Family Fun" activities and engaging with our youth in conversation and community. Thank you for your love and support! We are also grateful for the youth and their families that remain active in this community, and we look forward to the person that God brings to us to lead this ministry into the future.

Appendix A - Congregational Meeting Minutes - June 8, 2025



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

Congregational Meeting Minutes

Sunday, June 8, 2025

- I. **Call to order- Craig** – 11:18am – Quorum confirmed; attendance sheets passed to both sides of congregation
Reading of Mission Statement - All
“We are called, gathered, and blessed to be a community and instrument of grace for all sheep of the Good Shepherd.”
- II. **Opening Prayer – Pastor Karen**
- III. **Approval of Agenda** – Jeff Finney made the motion to accept the agenda; Pastor Karen seconded and all approved.
- IV. **Approval of 11/24 and 1/25 Congregational Meeting Minutes and Pastor Call meeting minutes 1/19 – Craig Stichtenoth** – Jeff Finney made the motion to accept; Donna Garges seconded and all approved.
- V. **Budget Presentation and Vote – Craig Stichtenoth/ Rob Homer** – Thanks to the Finance Committee for their work to create and finalize a budget. All committees’ requests were granted. Staff budget was increased by 4%, health care assistance for full time lay staff, the synod pledge and reserve fund were all included in the budget. This year will end with a surplus, which will enable us to prepay the budget shortfall for the subsequent financial year. Pat Freeman moved to approve the budget, Linda Rowell seconded; all approved. Sharron Ryan thanked congregation for all their many gifts that they have shared with GSLC.
- VI. **Constitution Review and Vote – Craig Stichtenoth** – This is to align us to the model ELCA constitution and update our language. Thank you to the Constitution Task Force. There needs to be only one vote to approve the model constitution being adopted; two votes to approve the GSLC changes, the first of which is completed at this meeting.
 - A. Amendment – Discussion and Vote – The original wording to 10.10 that was sent to the congregation by Council was thought to be too restrictive and was reworded to allow flexibility based on the circumstances. The newly approved Council wording for 10.10 is: Staff and family members of the congregation’s staff who reside in the staff member’s household may be asked to leave and not participate or vote in the congregation meeting pertaining to the budget. Max Epling made the motion to approve; Pam Weinelt seconded and all approved.
 - B. Updated Constitution - Further discussion and Vote – Explanation given by Craig as to original wording sent out to congregation for review and proposed change and rationale. Overall vote approved.
- VII. **Presentation of Nominating Committee candidates and Vote – Craig Stichtenoth** – Candidates: Kay Abramson, Clint Gruwell, Kris Hebeisen, Barbara Kidder, Cathy Mattocks, Sharron Ryan – All approved
- VIII. **Thank you!**
- IX. **Closing Prayer – Pr. Karen**
- X. **Adjournment** – 11:50am

Appendix B - 2025 Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Leadership

Rostered Staff

Pastor Rev. Karen Boda

Staff

Bookkeeper Carrie Escamilla
Church Custodian..... Aaron Frink
Media Coordinator Donna Garges
Organist/Choir Director..... Anna Kate Peed
Office Coordinator Michelle Provost
Praise Team Coordinator..... Pam Weinelt
Youth and Family Ministry Coordinator..... Open

Council Members

President Craig Stichtenoth
Vice-President Scott Panhorst
Treasurer Rob Homer
Financial Secretary..... Sharron Ryan
Secretary Janice Swinford
Council Member Ruth Clark
Council Member Karen Epstein
Council Member Deborah Ezell
Council Member Barbara Kidder
Council Member Mary Wilson
Youth Council Member Emily Provost

Committee Chairpersons

Congregational Care Open
Facilities and Maintenance Steve Frink
Fellowship..... Tracy Lauanders & Cathy Mattocks
Finance..... Gail Setzer
Mission Endowment Patrick Swinford
Mutual Ministry Trina Hutchison - Holly Jones - Jeff Nugent
Outreach..... Molly Maher, Cathy Mattocks, Sharron Ryan
Personnel Jenny Champion
Stewardship..... Valerie Whiteman
Worship and Music..... Ben Setzer
Youth and Family Kristin Freeman

