

# Shepherd's Staff

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## SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY LUTHERAN CHURCH

A member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

SHARING  
GOD'S  
LOVE

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### CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

Please see the latest council minutes located on the bulletin board in the church library.

### Dear friends in Christ,

One of my favorite hymns of thanksgiving has always been, "**Come, Ye Thankful People, Come.**" In the rural parishes that I served in my early days of ministry, it was always such a blessing to stand with the farmers of my congregations on Thanksgiving Eve and sing with gusto, "*All be safely gathered in ...*" When we had come through the harvest season with a bountiful crop and no major injuries, these were great words to sing. I especially like the words in the first verse of the hymn:

***"Come, ye thankful people, come; raise the song of harvest home.***

***All be safely gathered in ere the winter storms begin.***

***God, our maker, doth provide for our wants to be supplied.***

***Come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home."***

(ELW, #693)

It's a wonderful hymn that calls us to be thankful to God for providing for our every "need." "Need" is my word. I noticed, as the familiar words and melody to this hymn have been running through my head recently, that the hymn writer says that God provides for our "wants" to be supplied. I'm thinking the word "needs" is more appropriate. After all, we all have wants, perhaps a long list of them. However, not all of our "wants" are really "needs" for daily survival, are they? We may "want" a bigger house, a new car, more clothes, or more electronic gadgets. However, we don't really "need" them to live. A modest home, an older car, and fewer clothes and gadgets may serve us just as well. As Christians, we have to constantly evaluate between "needs" and "wants" when making decisions about how to spend the money we earn and when and how to share out of the abundance we have.

This is the time of year when we are bombarded, more than ever, with requests for financial support. Many of the invitations to give come through our daily mail. Other invitations greet us at our front door when students are fundraising for their school sports or music programs. And yes, invitations to give even come through our congregation! Stop by the tables in the narthex and you'll see a variety of opportunities to give. It is also time to think about your annual pledge to Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church. We have set Sunday, November 16 as our Commitment Sunday, the day you will be asked to turn in your 2015 Commitment of Giving cards. This is the day we'll have a guest speaker, Pastor Gary Erickson, from the Northern Illinois Synod with us. It will be a day of celebration as we count our many blessings and also make a personal financial commitment as to how we'll respond to those blessings with our offerings in 2015.

Thankful people give generously to others ... not because they "have" to but because they "want" to. Sometimes it means personal sacrifice ... letting go of some of our "wants" in order to help provide for the "needs" of others. As a church, when we all pool our financial gifts together, we are able to do many more things than we could do alone. Through giving to the church, we not only ensure that our church doors will remain open and that quality programming will take place here. It also means that our church colleges, seminaries, Bible camps, missionaries and social service agencies will continue to prosper and thrive for a portion of our offerings also support the ministries of the synod and the ELCA.

I invite you to prayerfully take some time over the next few weeks to reflect on your "wants" and "needs" and consider what percentage of your income you will be able to set aside for God's work here in our congregation and beyond. Commitment cards will be mailed out in early November and you will be asked to present them at the altar on Sunday, October 16.

A blessed Thanksgiving season to each of you,

*Pastor Marilyn*

## OUR CHURCH FAMILY

**In Our Prayers:** Joyce Hunt, Nevagay Abel, and Stu Hoffman, undergoing treatment for cancer, Anne Teed (Pearson), Bruce Pearson's mother, under hospice care, Lisa (friend of Mark & Laurie Pellant), Mike, nephew of Anita Ralston (our custodian) diagnosed with leukemia, Layne Knight (friend of Carol Bailey) recovering from a heart transplant, Katie Ekebom (Eileen Ekebom's daughter-in-law) having tests, and all of our home-bound church members.

**We extend our sympathy** the family of Mary Wilson who passed away October 15. Services were held at church on October 20.

### **We also extend our sympathy to:**

- Adolph & Bev Wacker on the death of his brother, Rudy,
- Bob & Carol Bailey on the death of his father,
- Kevin & Lynn McWhirter on the death of her mother.

"Warm Feet Mission" will once again have socks available after both services on Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Donation is \$1.00 per pair. If you would like to purchase your own socks, there will be a box in the Narthex through the middle of December for your donations.

"Warm Feet Mission" is a Rockford based mission that was started in 2008 with the help of the church, family, and friends. All the socks are donated to several local ministries who, in turn, distribute them to the homeless and underprivileged, many of whom are children. Thank you in advance for your support. Ann Honer

## Food Drive

For many of us the holidays are a joyful time to enjoy our blessings. The Food for the Needy Drive is one way to share those blessings with families who really need our assistance to have a happy holiday. This year, can you help? We will be partnering with the Salvation Army's "Food for the Needy Drive" throughout the month of November. Food items most needed are **Canned Fruits, Canned Vegetables** and **Canned Meats**. Collection will be from November 2<sup>nd</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup>. Please no glass jars or bottles. Thank you for your generosity.

### **Tying Fleece Blankets**

Join us in tying fleece blankets on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup> in Moline Hall during the Sunday school hour. We have over 20 blankets ready for tying. The blankets will be blessed on November 23<sup>rd</sup> and given to **Rock House Kids**. Rock House Kids is an Outreach program that cares for at-risk children (ages 4 – 18) in the Rockford's inner City.

**Rock House Kids** are in need of our help to provide a hot meal on Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. Many of these kids come from troubled backgrounds and are at-risk. We, as a church, can help feed them spiritually and physically. See information in the narthex. "Help a child today and you won't have to repair an adult tomorrow." Special thanks to those who made our trial meal a success: Liz Beal, Linda DeGroff, Anita Wetzberger, Sherry and Dennis Scheider, Kay Brindle, and Kris and Bob Tukker.

**Library News:** There are new books on the south wall of the Library. On Sunday, November 16 there will be books available to check out for Thanksgiving and Advent on tables in Moline Hall. On Sunday, November 23, children are invited to come to Moline Hall and make a "How Man Days to Christmas" paper chain.

### October Church Council Highlights

- Re-affirmed Kay Brindle's position on the Church Council and appointed Chad Farris to fill Bruce Pearson's unexpired term on Church Council through January, 2015.
- Reviewed the Wedding Policy Guidance Vote taken at the congregational meeting on September 14 and affirmed that the vote will stand as is. Thus, our pastor may preside at wedding ceremonies for those who are gay or lesbian at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church
- Noted that Pastor Marilyn will convene the 2015 Nominating Committee consisting of Rod Bjerke, Laurie Pellant & Karl Anderson.
- Decided to have only one worship service on Sundays beginning, November 16. Sunday School for all ages will follow from 10:45 am – 11:45 am.
- Decided to hold only one worship service on Christmas Eve at 5:00 pm.
- Approved the purchase of a new vacuum cleaner for the church.
- Affirmed the 2015 Portico benefit package for the pastor.
- Appointed the following members to serve on the Call Committee of the congregation: Dyvone Freburg, Stu Hoffman, Mary Alice Peterson,
- Dennis Scheider, Deb Solko, John Wolf & Ted Woodcock. Sarah Thurber-Fiorenza was appointed as an alternate. It was also decided to invite one high school youth to serve on the committee and have voice, but no vote. James Woodcock will be asked to serve.

### Adult Education Opportunities

**Adults**, are you looking for an opportunity to dig into God's Word and engage in meaningful conversation with others about how faith and life connect? If so, come and check out what Shepherd of the Valley has to offer you!

**We hold a Wednesday morning Bible study each week from 10:00 am – 11:00 am.** This is a lectionary study which means we take a look at the three scripture readings that will be read the following Sunday at worship. A cup of coffee and a tasty treat are generally always available. However, what's even better is the great group of people and the lively conversations that we have as we wrestle with what the scripture has to say to us.

**On Sunday mornings, we hold an Adult Forum from 9:30 – 10:30 am.** Right now we are using a DVD series called, "The Power of Forgiveness." In November, we'll begin a new DVD series called, "Mudhouse Sabbath: An Invitation to a Life of Spiritual Discipline." The author of the series, Lauren Winner, was raised in the Jewish tradition but as a young adult she became a Christian. The series will challenge you to encounter the Jewish context that nurtured Jesus, explore various spiritual practices (such as hospitality, prayer & fasting), and deepen your Christian faith by incorporating these practices into your daily life.

Both the Bible study & the Adult Forum are held in Shepherd's Hall. Pastor Marilyn serves as the facilitator for both groups. **We'd love to have you come and join us!**



Dear friends,

The fall of the year usually brings changes to many areas of our lives: our weather, the changing temperatures, the bounty of the harvest, and many more examples we all may add. This season also annually brings an emphasis by the Stewardship committee for us all to consider our personal gifts to our church and our mission support. Hopefully, it also is a time for growth of faith in our lives as individuals, families and a congregation. The Northern Illinois Synod has titled this year's stewardship emphasis First, We Give of Ourselves. Bishop Gary Wollersheim asks us to consider "why we give. First and foremost, our reason for sharing gifts is because of God's abundant grace in Jesus Christ. God gives to us in grace and a thankful spirit moves us to give of ourselves in grace." Our congregation gives of itself in so many ways: all the volunteer efforts joyfully given many, many ways, our summer concert series, our Sunday School and bible study ministries, and many more including our financial support of our church and its mission. As we travel together toward Commitment Sunday on November 16th, the committee would invite the congregation to pray about our consistency in giving and to make plans to be present at worship on Commitment Sunday.

Sharing Ministry Together,

### PRELUDE TO CHRISTMAS

December 5 beginning at 6:30 pm we will be singing Christmas Carols as we trim the trees. This will be followed by the annual Christmas Party. This is a family event so bring your family and friends.

Sign up in the Narthex.

### The Giving Tree

Please help the less fortunate children of Rockford. The Giving Tree is set up in the narthex adorned with names of children that you can buy a gift for. Instructions will be with the tag. The tree will be set up in the narthex starting Sunday, November 23. Please have all gifts delivered to the church by December 14th. If you have any questions please call Carol Bailey 815-222-4935.

### Online giving is now available from our website!

Shepherd of the Valley is excited to announce that you can now manage your giving online! Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. Contributions can be set up to debit automatically from your checking or savings account. There is a nominal processing fee that the church incurs for the transaction, but you have the ability to offset this cost on the donation page. Our electronic giving program offers convenience for you and much-needed donation consistency for our congregation. Simply follow these easy steps:

- Visit the church website at [www.shep61.org](http://www.shep61.org),
- Click on the [**Give Online or Offering**] button,
- Click on the **Create Profile** button, then
- Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and to schedule your recurring contributions.



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**WE'RE ON THE WEB**

[WWW.SHEP61.ORG](http://WWW.SHEP61.ORG)

**Office Hours:**

Monday-Thursday  
 8:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

**Church Council**

Nevagay Abel, Youth  
 Kay Brindle, Outreach  
 Carol Dahl, Fin. Sec.  
 Janette Erickson, Fellowship  
 Chad Farris, Property  
 Lena Lund, Youth  
 Robert Maness, Finance  
 Vicki Nitz, Preschool  
 Sally Schrader, Christ. Ed.  
 Phil Smalley, Treasurer  
 Bruce Solko, Personnel  
 Soc. Min., Vacant  
 Bev Wacker, Worship/Music  
 John Wolf, Stewardship  
 Terri Woodcock, Sec.

**Staff**

Pastor Marilyn Hanson, Interim pastor  
 Judi Fields, Sec.  
 Lynn McWhirter, Accomp.  
 Linda Longardner, Accomp.  
 Phil Smalley, Treasurer  
 Susie Smalley, Music Director  
 Diane Kirkland, Bell Dir.  
 Patte Lund, Christ. Ed.  
 Carol Dahl, Fin. Sec.  
 Peggy Wenstrom, Nursery Attendant  
 Tabatha Scheider, Nursery Attendant  
 Anita Ralston, Custodian

**NEWS FLASH**

**Effective November 16**

We will begin holding only one worship service on Sunday mornings. It was felt that as we transition to the calling of a new pastor, it would be beneficial to unite together as one body in Christ for worship. The new schedule will be:

**Worship service 9:30 - 10:30 am**

**Sunday School for all ages 10:45 - 11:45 am**



**FIRST COMMUNION**

God's blessing to 3rd graders Ryland Farris, Avery Christenson and Logan Bailey who received their first communion on Reformation Sunday, October 26, 2014.