



# *The Shepherd's Voice*



DECEMBER 2020

SERVING ROCKLAND COUNTY, NY & NORTHERN BERGEN COUNTY, NJ

Beloved of God,

As we begin the new church year, rolling into the month of December, I just want to tell you what is happening.

First of all, we're back online only for worship. We (the council and I) felt that it was the smart choice, given the increase in numbers of COVID infections, and given how hard we have worked over the last six months to be able to be open and safe. We would absolutely hate to have someone get sick now, especially with the promising news of vaccines being just on the horizon. We anticipate this "online only" being the case into January, and we will reevaluate then.

Of course, we still want to meet together. In person. As we can. So, the second Sunday of the month, we will have our drive-up service. I encourage you to come to that. I know it is a little different, but it's a great way to get to see each other safely.

Also, for Christmas Eve, we are planning (as long as the state isn't in lock-down or something) to be able to gather outside at 4:30 and 8:00pm for Carols and Communion. The service will be short. We'll gather outside our vehicles with burn barrels to keep us warm (and we'll have parking for those who want to stay in their cars too) and sing carols together, hear the Christmas story, and receive communion. A Christmas reflection from me will be available online. At 10:00pm, we will livestream (rather than pre-record) a traditional Christmas Eve service that you will be able to watch online and receive communion.



## THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

112 N. Main Street Pearl River, NY 10965

### OUR MISSION

"To reach out in inclusive love and generosity so that all may know the love of Jesus"

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## LIFE STATIONS

### OBITUARY

Annette E. Elfers November 11, 2020

Kenneth Merring November 30, 2020

### GENERAL MEMORIAL

In memory of Annette Elfers, given by Mary Olson.

In memory of Eleanor Ann O'Brien, given by Mary Olson.

In memory of Annette Elfers, given by Beatrice Horris.

### ELEVATOR FUND

In memory of Sandra Pfingst, given by Dorothy Urquhart.

In memory of Connie Daniels, given by Dorothy Urquhart.

## AT YOUR SERVICE

The Reverend J. Lena Warren, Pastor

Jake Daniels, President

Robert Bergman, Treasurer

Brian Burns, Director of Music

Elaina Burns, Organist

Renee Bucci, Creative Play Director

Dale Damon, Church Secretary

Lisa Filatov, Bookkeeper

Timothy J Chew, Coordinator of Faith Formation

Katy Wong, Communications Coordinator

Gina Danialinia, Volunteer Coordinator

Gisele Saldana, Sexton

## 2020 CHURCH COUNCIL

J. Lena Warren, Pastor

Jake Daniels, President

Anthony Armenio, Co-Vice President

Donald Widmayer, Co-Vice President

Kim Arcidiacono, Secretary

Robert Bergman, Treasurer\*

Jeff Bergman

Werner Boecker, Financial Secretary\*

George Boothby

James Cleary

Wendy Gates

Kristin Hanifin

Linda Hecker

Deanna Lauer

Carole Meehan

Mark Olson

Lucy Pinedo

Christopher Ryan

Debra Thaler

\*Non-voting

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## C O N T A C T U S



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The Church Office is open at half-staffing! Please call before your arrival so we know to expect you. Masks are required for entry, for your safety as well as the staff. There will be mandatory temperature checks along with a sign-in sheet. Hand sanitizer will be available at all entry ways.



### CHURCH OFFICE

845-735-2243 | (FAX) 845-735-0819 | office@gspr.org

www.gspr.org | @GoodShepherdPR  

Office Hours: Tues-Fri 10am-4pm, Closed Mondays

### CREATIVE PLAY PRE-SCHOOL

845-735-2737 | www.gscreativeplay.org | @GoodShepherdCreativePlay  

The rest of our services this season will be either pre-recorded or entirely online. Sunday worship and Wednesday evenings (Holden Evening Prayer) will be premiered on our YouTube channel so that we can at least say “hi” to each other on the chat feed. There is morning prayer on Monday, a centering prayer led by Tim Chew via Zoom on Tuesday mornings, and Compline on Thursday nights. Also, we’ll do Zoom coffee hours so we can check in. There will also be a Christmas Day service of Lessons and Carols that I encourage you to watch together next to your Christmas tree (or Christmas poinsettia, or over your Christmas coffee).


Good Shepherd’s Sanctuary is particularly beautiful during Christmas time and so to allow time to come and pray in the space (or simply to sit and be), with all the greens, the Sanctuary will be open on December 15, 17, 21, 22, and 23 from 4-7pm for you to stop by and pray. There will be prayer sheets available for you to use and take with you as you like. This will be in addition to usual prayer times.

I hope most of you know that Good Shepherd receives the majority of its financial contributions during December. Not meeting together is a rough choice for us financially even though it is clearly the best choice to keep everyone as safe as possible and care for our community so that fewer gatherings allow institutions like schools to remain open longer. I hope that you will consider being generous with the congregation at this time. I have never found this community to not be generous and you always open your hearts to the needs around you. Normally, we have a full page of giving opportunities during this time of year, but with so many fewer opportunities because of COVID restrictions, I ask you consider your own congregation. It will make a difference for how we will be able to do ministry going into our future. It will ensure we can continue to be a community that gives generously. It will allow us to live up to who we want to be as a congregation that welcomes everyone.

I am praying that this season of Advent, a season of hope and longing for a better world, will help us see a true hope dawning in each of our lives in new ways. I am also praying for the health and safety of so many—for those who serve as doctors, nurses, police officers, firefighters, EMTs. For those who are trying to make small businesses (and larger businesses) work in this difficult economic time. For those who are struggling to make ends meet. Know you are in my prayers.

Be well and be blessed this holy season and always,

Pastor Lena



For  
unto us  
a child is  
BORN, unto us  
a Son is given  
and his name will be  
called, wonderful, counselor,  
mighty GOD, the everlasting Father  
the Prince of Peace

There will be a Special Congregational Meeting on **Sunday, December 13th, at 1pm**, via Zoom to discuss the new solar panels. Here is the information to join:

**Meeting ID: 819 6879 5897 | Passcode: 256166**  
**Dial +1 929 205 6099 (New York)**

## STAY CONNECTED

During this time of social distancing, we have made it easier to stay connected online! Subscribe to our weekly e-newsletter, "By The Way," sent on Thursday evenings. Email [\*\*communications@gspr.org\*\*](mailto:communications@gspr.org) with your name to be added to our list.

Find us on Facebook and Instagram.



[www.facebook.com/GoodShepherdPR](https://www.facebook.com/GoodShepherdPR)  
[www.instagram.com/GoodShepherdPR](https://www.instagram.com/GoodShepherdPR)



Both apps can be downloaded on Android and iPhone operating systems. As always, you can visit our website at [www.gspr.org](http://www.gspr.org).



We are on YouTube! Check out our livestream schedule below. Once the video is uploaded, it will be available to watch anytime after! Pastor Lena also uploads regular reflections throughout the week. **During Advent, on Sunday and Wednesday evenings, Holden Evening Prayer will be premiered on our YouTube channel.**

Subscribe to receive alerts when new videos are posted:

[www.youtube.com/c/GoodShepherdPearlRiver](https://www.youtube.com/c/GoodShepherdPearlRiver)

**Sundays at 10:30am** So you can follow along, the bulletin for the service is available via a link below the YouTube video. A digital copy of Cross Connections will be sent in our weekly email, "By The Way."

**Mondays at 9:30am** Start your week with morning prayer. Pray wherever you are!

**Wednesdays at 7:15pm** During Advent, we will premiere Holden Evening Prayer.

**Thursdays at 9pm** We will be streaming Compline - an evening prayer with beautiful, ancient roots, and a wonderful way to calm your soul before bed.

# Worship

Due to the rising cases of COVID-19, we will no longer be meeting in person, in the Sanctuary Sunday services, for the time being. Think of this as a pause to keep us all safe! **We will continue livestreaming Sunday services at 10:30am on our YouTube channel. On Wednesdays in Advent, we will livestream Holden Evening Prayer at 7:15pm.**

Drive-up church will still meet on the second Sunday of the month and the Sanctuary will remain open for private prayer. The Church Office will continue operating at half-staffing.

Be on the lookout for more information on Wednesday Advent services as well as Christmas Eve services- we are planning to do some in person. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we work to keep everyone safe. Feel free to contact the Church Office if you have any questions or concerns.

## THE SANCTUARY IS OPEN FOR PRIVATE PRAYER!

**Tuesday 4pm-7pm**

**Thursday 10am-2pm**

Come and pray as you like during these hours. Masks are required to enter the building - hand sanitizer will be available. Please sign in upon your arrival! Any questions, contact the Church Office at 845-735-2243

**+ DRIVE-UP CHURCH +**  
**Sunday, December 13th at 10:30am**



Join us for an outdoor, socially-distanced worship in our parking lot on the second Sunday of every month. Stay in your car as we broadcast the service right to you over the radio. No sign-up necessary; all are welcome! If you can't make it, this service will also be livestreamed on our YouTube channel and available to watch anytime after. **The January drive-in service will be on the 10th, at 10:30am.** Contact [Gina@gspr.org](mailto:Gina@gspr.org) if you have any questions.



*The light shines in the darkness, and the  
darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5*

*What's going on..*

## Centering Prayer

On **Tuesday mornings, at 8:30am, via Zoom**, Tim Chew will be leading a Centering Prayer. We will begin with prayer requests, followed by a 20 minute silent meditation, and guided centering prayer until 9am. For the Zoom log-in info, please email Tim at [timj.leman@gmail.com](mailto:timj.leman@gmail.com).

## Book Group

Pastor Lena's **Wednesday Evening Book Group** is reading Rachel Held Evan's book, "A Year of Biblical Womanhood." This is a lighter read, but also brings up some very challenging scripture about the role of woman in society and how women can live faithfully when the text that we ground our faith in so often contains and even seems to advocate violence against women. We are meeting on Zoom, weekly. Email [PastorLena@gspr.org](mailto:PastorLena@gspr.org) if you'd like to join!

## Coffee & Conversation

Coffee & Conversation with Pastor Lena will be taking a hiatus due to the cold weather. In the chance that the weather is nice, there will be an invitation to join. Check back for updates! In the meantime, join our virtual coffee hour (info below).

## Virtual Coffee Hour

Join us after **Sunday worship, around 11:30am**, for a virtual coffee hour (bring your own coffee). It'll be a nice chance to see one another, and catch up. The link to join can be found in your "By The Way."

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Dear Good Shepherd Families,



We hope that you are all staying well. We have enjoyed seeing you in church recently, and we look forward to continue to share music with you as we transition to our online services. We hope to see you at outdoor worship as well.

We will be sharing music from those within our congregation during our Advent and Christmas seasons. Brian and Elaina will share music for guitar and piano (and Danny will play the violin!), and we also have a few special guests lined up already! If you would like to offer any music that we can share online, please let us know. Keep an eye on our social media to see short video clips throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons.

We will miss seeing you in person, but we are looking forward to sharing music with you to warm your hearts and homes this season.

Thank you,

Elaina and Brian

# Christmas Services



Like everything else this year, Christmas will be a little different.

**The Sanctuary will be open on December 15, 17, 21, 22, and 23 from 4-7pm (in addition to usual prayer times) for you to stop by and pray.** Good Shepherd's Sanctuary is particularly beautiful during Christmas time, so allow time to visit our space, with all our decorated greens. There will be prayer sheets available for you to use and take with you as you like. Please dress warmly, as we will be leaving some windows and doors open to allow for proper air flow.

## **Christmas Eve: Thursday, December 24 at 4:30pm, 8pm & 10pm**

Join us for Carols and Communion! We will be outdoors, briefly, at 4:30 & 8pm, with burn barrels to keep us warm. You can opt to stay in your car as well, if it is too cold for you. We will gather, socially-distanced, with masks, to hear the Christmas story, sing carols, and receive communion. Look out for Pastor Lena's Christmas reflection on YouTube, as well. If you are not comfortable leaving home, join us on YouTube, at 10pm, where we will livestream a traditional Christmas service with Communion.

## **Christmas Day: Friday, December 25 at 10:30am**

There will be an online Christmas Day service of lessons and carols that you and your loved ones can watch together next to your Christmas tree or poinsettia, with your Christmas coffee!

*\*All outdoor events are weather-permitting. We will be monitoring the COVID cases in our area. Some events may be subject to change. Please be on the look-out for more information.*



## ***FIREWOOD WANTED!***

Help to keep us warm on Christmas Eve. If you can, please bring 5-6 fire logs to one of our outdoor services on December 24th for our burn barrels. Thanks for your help!

## **A NOTE FROM YOUR COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR** 😊

Now more than ever, communication throughout the Church is so very important. Please let me know if there's anything you'd like to see more of in Good Shepherd's publications. Any articles to be included in "By The Way" and/or Cross Connections, please email to me by Wednesday evening. We have also decided that there will be a January Voice issue for 2021. **The deadline to send in your articles is Monday, December 14.**

I'd like to thank each and every member of the congregation who have lent me a helping hand! It is much appreciated, and none of you go unnoticed. If there is anything you need, please do not hesitate to reach out to me, or stop by when I'm in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Thank you and stay safe this holiday season! -Katy ([katy@gspr.org](mailto:katy@gspr.org))

# Creative Play News

We hope everyone enjoyed a time of thanks and giving and that the spirit will continue in all of us throughout this Holiday season!

Creative Play began the month with distance learning until December 4th in order to have a proper amount of time socially distant from one another, post Thanksgiving. The classrooms were deeply disinfected with a new defogger that gets into all the nooks and crannies that the children explore.

The children are certainly excited and thankful that Santa will be arriving at the end of the month! They will be decking the halls as busy elves in their classrooms creating Christmas creations while counting and sorting their jingle bells.

Our Christmas recess will begin on December 23rd and will return to in-person learning on January 6th, 2021. Four-year-old parent/teacher conferences will be held via telephone on January 4th & 5th.

Having the children in school has been a gift to all of us at Creative Play; they are our joy and our merry! We wish you all a heartfelt blessed Christmas and a beautiful, safe and healthy New Year!

Be safe, be healthy & be happy,

Renee Bucci, Director ([renee@gspr.org](mailto:renee@gspr.org))



## Boy Scout Wreaths

Boy Scout Troop #36 has received an overwhelming amount of wreath and grave blanket orders! Thank you so much for your help. We will be delivering and having in-person pickup **in the parking lot on Friday, December 4, from 4-6pm and Saturday, December 5th, from 10am-12pm.** If you have any questions please contact Cindy Sealander at 201-951-5715.

## Poinsettia Fundraiser Youth Gathering 2022

Thank you for supporting our youth! Due to COVID-19, this year, we will only be delivering the poinsettias. If you have any questions, contact Cindy Sealander at [Csealander@optonline.net](mailto:Csealander@optonline.net). ***Please note: these poinsettias are for personal and household use, not for the altar in the Sanctuary.***



**The ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis has been postponed to 2022.  
More information to be announced.**

# SUPPORT FOR GOOD SHEPHERD IN 2021



Commitment Sunday, November 8th, is well behind us. Many of our members have responded to the mailing the week before, asking all of us to return to Good Shepherd, our desire to support the work (God's work!) of our church in 2021, — not just financially, but also in giving of our time and our abilities in lives of service, through Good Shepherd.

The year 2020 has, of course, affected every one of us and our families, to some degree or another, — and we're still in the midst of this pandemic. Good Shepherd has felt the effects, as well, with limitations regarding worship services and every other activities, as we try to get back to some sort of "normal." Many of our members are making great efforts in bringing about indoor and outdoor worship; you know who you are, — and the congregation says thank you.

God's work, done by our hands, has not stopped, and with the support of all of us, will continue on. If you haven't yet returned your Commitment Card and the Time & Talent form enclosed in the mailing mentioned above, please consider doing that as soon as you have opportunity.

If you need an additional card or form, please stop by the church office, or call the office (845-735-2243), to have them mailed to you. Thank you to all who have already submitted their intent in supporting Good Shepherd next year.

Stay well and stay safe in these extraordinary times. The Church will go on, — and remember, you and I are the Church! Thank you.

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## Opportunities for Christmas Gifting

Due to all the necessary changes during the pandemic, there have been major changes to our annual opportunities of gifting.



1. There will be no White Gifts because we have no way to distribute them.
2. There will be no Mitten Tree.
3. There will be no collection for teens at the Psychiatric Hospital.
4. **Project Joy** – This year, *People to People* is asking for gift cards only, to Target and Kohl's...any amount \$10, \$25, \$50. Please bring or mail them to church **before December 6th**.
5. **Food Pantry** – We will continue to collect food for *People to People*
6. **ELCA Disaster Relief** – With all the hurricanes and fires, this ministry is needed:  
[www.elca.org/disaster](http://www.elca.org/disaster) relief or mail: *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116*
7. **Lutheran World Relief** – Works with local partners to provide lasting solutions to poverty, injustice, disasters, and human suffering.. [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org); call: **800-597-5972** or mail to *Lutheran World Relief, P.O. Box 17061, Baltimore, MD 21297*
8. **God's Global Barnyard** – ELCA Good Gifts – Buy an animal ornament that provides goats, pigs, honey bees and chicks for a needy family and make a difference in their lives. Available December 6th.
9. **Gifts from SERRV International or Ten Thousand Villages** - These organizations work with artisans across the globe, by marketing in a just and direct manner – [www.serrv.org](http://www.serrv.org) or [www.tenthousandvillages.com](http://www.tenthousandvillages.com)
10. **Good Shepherd Church** – Our church needs support during this difficult time in order to continue its work in reaching out to our congregation, and our community, with good news.



The holiday season is among us! Christmas shopping can give twice; use AmazonSmile to buy your personal gifts, while also giving to Good Shepherd! Go to <https://smile.amazon.com> and agree to support us!

Remember to use Amazon Smile instead of Amazon in order for Good Shepherd to receive the donation. For more information, contact Cindy Sealander at [csealander@optonline.net](mailto:csealander@optonline.net). Thank you for your generosity!



Buy a ShopRite gift card and Good Shepherd receives 5% from each gift card purchase, in support of our Youth. Cards can be purchased in the church office and used at any ShopRite location. \$25, \$50, \$100 card amounts available - cash & checks accepted. Any questions, contact Cindy Sealander ([csealander@optonline.net](mailto:csealander@optonline.net)).

## Ways to Give

*This time of uncertainty has been, and continues to be very hard not just for our community life, but also for the financial health of the congregation. If you are able, please consider signing up for online giving. Even a one-time special gift would be helpful. Thank you for your generosity in giving to Good Shepherd!*

**ONLINE** Go to our webpage, [www.gspr.org/give](http://www.gspr.org/give) and click the "give" button. Then, follow the instructions on how to give.



**GIVE+ TEXT** Text **877-771-4850**, click on the registration link and enter your cardholder name and credit/debit card information. You will receive a text verification and a receipt of your donation via email. For future giving, send a text with the amount you wish to give, and it will process automatically! You can even text "repeat" to make it a recurring donation.



**MAIL** Send your offerings to our mailbox at **112 N. Main St. Pearl River, NY 10965**, or stop in during our office hours.



**Join  
our team!**

We are looking for people to join our counting team. If you are interested in helping us count offerings, please email Werner Boecker at [wrboecker@optonline.net](mailto:wrboecker@optonline.net). Thank you for your help!

If you, a loved one, or friend experience difficulty and desire prayer support, the Good Shepherd Prayer Chain is helpful. To activate the prayer chain, contact **Ione Mensing, 201-664-1235 or Carol Westphal, 845-624-5732.**



Ladies, as you all know, WELCA meetings have been put on hold for the next few months. This, of course, is due to COVID; leaving the windows open and fans on in Fellowship Hall makes it quite uncomfortable for all of us. This is what we need to do to keep everyone safe. **Call Barbara Bow at 845-521-2611 or Mary Iseman at 845-623-7638 if you have any questions.** Wishing all of you a Blessed Christmas. Be safe!

## **MARATHON FUNDRAISER FOR CREATIVE PLAY**

As part of the new 2020 running season, the New York City marathon is going virtual. As part of my new role at the Good Shepherd, I had grown very fond of all the staff and wonderful young people at Creative Play. These experiences, my love of running, and desire to raise money for good causes, brought these two wonderful concepts together; I will be running 26.2 miles for Good Shepherd Creative Play! I would love if you would consider fundraising towards our goal of \$126.2. Thank you for considering supporting Creative Play and helping educate our future leaders and young people! Go to <https://www.strava.com/athletes/70733814> to learn more. Any questions, feel free to reach out to Tim Chew ([timj.leman@gmail.com](mailto:timj.leman@gmail.com)).



## *10th annual* **TURKEY RUN**

**Saturday, November 21, 2020**



***From the Rockland Community Against Hunger:***

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Pearl River for donating 39 turkeys, 4 hams and \$575 in ShopRite Gift Cards to those in need this Thanksgiving, for MLK Multi-Purpose Center and several other food pantries in Rockland County!



# Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

112 N MAIN ST. PEARL RIVER, NY 10965  
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## ORDER FORM CHRISTMAS GREENS & CHRISTMAS TREES FOR THE ALTAR

Deadline for order: December 13, 2020



In Memory of:

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In Honor of:

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Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (suggested donation \$10 per memorial)

Due to Covid 19 and having to leave the windows open in the sanctuary during services, we will not be ordering Poinsettia plants this year. We will, however, have trees and greens decorating both inside and outside the church.

***Please make checks payable to Good Shepherd. Thank you for your donations!***