

The Shepherd's Voice

DECEMBER 2021

Serving Rockland County, NY, and
Northern Bergen County, NJ



“I am about to do something new; even now it shall come to pass, suddenly you shall perceive it: I will make a road through the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” - Isaiah 43:19 (JPS translation)

This is one of my favorite passages in scripture. Because it has images of resurrection, of hope, of new promise when so much around us seems to be turning toward exhaustion and death. I grew up in a Church (global sense of that word—not local congregation) that was wrestling with fears that it was dying. Fewer and fewer people were coming to church. The doomsday predictions were about the death of the Church, about how it wouldn't make it 20 more years (low and behold, it has). Some spoke these words with glee and some with dread. It's not all that different than the conversation that continues today about the survival of the Church, really.

And something in me, as a child, heard these words in scripture and heard hope. Because in the church I'd found loving community. In the church I found a bigger story about the purpose of creation being for love. In the church, I learned about grace—that I was loved even when I felt like I wasn't worth that love. And so a new thing sounded really good. It meant to me that the old things that were dying weren't the end of things. That God was not done.

And so I still hold these words of hope today, while at the same time, this year, really craving some old things. This year has been one of transitions and change and new things around every corner. We've all experienced a good bit of trauma, honestly. And we are weary. Change takes work and energy. If you've ever moved, you know this. Not just how exhausting the move is, but then about how exhausting everything becomes because nothing is in “a place” yet and there are no habits yet and so everything requires energy and attention. You have to even think about where your toothbrush is and which drawer did you put the utensils in and where are the coffee filters now? That was this year.

So, I'm finding myself looking for old things to anchor myself. I pulled out Rutter's Magnificat the other day (because the second chorus in the oratorio was floating around in my head). It was something I sang in high school and I found myself listening and singing through the work again after years ... just to re-root myself—to remind myself of who I am, who I was. I'm looking forward to singing Holden together. There's something about it, the way it reconnects me to something simple, something abiding, something that I've sung in communities gathered together around the world. It reminds me of who I am and whose I am.

I think that's what traditions do for us, or can do for us at their best. They root us back to who we are and whose we are. They connect us to the communities that have surrounded us. And I think liturgy connects us to the community that preceded us and will come after us, too. Not to mention, of course, connecting us to God.

This is the time of year of traditions. Even as we celebrate God's radical newness in the incarnation, the outrageous hope of a world made new begun in the Word made flesh, we have it wrapped in tradition. We root this amazing act of love all the way back to the very creation of the world. We celebrate the same way again and again, with candles and carols we know and love. We might add a few new things here and there that grow into new traditions as some older things may fade away, but this time of year we cling to traditions. And I think that is good. I know that's a strange thing to hear from me, but this year, especially, I invite you into the traditions. I invite you to re-root yourself in who you are and whose you are. I think it might help you to perceive what God is up to anew.



Pastor Lena

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Thanks to all who have made their commitments (pledges) in pursuing the mission of Good Shepherd, for 2022. For those who have not yet submitted their pledges, I urge you to pray regarding the role you will be playing next year, as we carry out God's work, and either bring your commitments (of time, abilities and financial support) to church during a worship service, or mail them to the church office.

As you heard during the Annual Meeting on November 21st, Good Shepherd continues to be challenged from a financial standpoint, resulting in a deficit budget for 2022. In these hopefully waning days of Covid and Delta, let each of us determine the role we will play during the coming year, to continue to bring God's word to those in our congregation, in our community, and in our world, as we reach out in lives of service. As faithful Christians, we are called to be God's hands. That is our mission, as a church and as individual believers.

Let's, all of us, respond generously to that high calling, acknowledging all that God has given us, blessing us daily with His love.

Thank you again for your faithful support.

From,

The Stewardship Committee





Reaching out in inclusive love and generosity so that all may know the love of Jesus.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
112 N. Main Street Pearl River, NY 10965

Life Stations

MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Ken Merring, given by Veronica Merring.
In memory of William Duane Amundson, given by Dennis Dillon.
In memory of David Cranstoun, given by Margaret Cranstoun and all the Westchester Cranstouns: Alex, Annie, Jen, James and William.

THE BOB & DELORES BLANK VOCALIST MUSIC FUND

In memory of Bob and Delores Blank, given by Steven Blank and family.

AT YOUR SERVICE

The Reverend J. Lena Warren, Pastor
George Boothby, President
Michael McCambridge, Treasurer
Brian Burns, Director of Music
Elaina Burns, Organist
Renee Bucci, Creative Play Director
Dale Damon, Church Secretary
Lisa Filatov, Bookkeeper
Katy Wong, Communications Coordinator
Gina Danialinia, Volunteer Coordinator
Gisele Saldana, Sexton

2021 CHURCH COUNCIL

Rev. J. Lena Warren, Pastor
George Boothby, President
Michael McCambridge, Treasurer*
Werner Boecker, Financial Secretary*
Wendy Gates, Assistant Financial Secretary*
Kim Arcidiacono, Secretary
*Non-voting

Anne Baumann
Sue Baumeister
Jeff Bergman
Kristin Hanifin
Linda Hecker
Mark Olson
Christopher Ryan
Tom Vislocky
Don Widmayer

CHURCH OFFICE

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

 [YouTube .com/c/GoodShepherdPearlRiver](https://www.youtube.com/c/GoodShepherdPearlRiver)  [@GoodShepherdPR](https://www.facebook.com/GoodShepherdPR)

Hours of Operation M 2:30-4:30, T&Th 12-4:30pm, W&F 12-4pm *Call us before your arrival!

CREATIVE PLAY

845-735-2737 | renee@gspr.org | www.goodshepherdcreativeplay.com

 [@GoodShepherdCreativePlay](https://www.facebook.com/GoodShepherdCreativePlay)

Hours of Operation M-F 8am-4pm *unless otherwise noted

Masks are required to enter the church building, while Creative Play pre-school is in session, regardless of vaccination status. Strongly encouraged at all other times. Thank you for your cooperation, as we work to keep everyone safe!

SUNDAY WORSHIP

JOIN US, IN-PERSON!



SERVICES AT
8am & 10:30am

No sign-up necessary.
Please wear a mask!

*Watch the 10:30am service livestream on [YouTube.com/c/GoodShepherdPearlRiver](https://www.youtube.com/c/GoodShepherdPearlRiver)

Beginning on Sunday, January 2, the first worship service will start at 8:15am.

SUNDAY HOST SCHEDULE

Below is the schedule of council members who will be hosting our Sunday worship services, for the next two months. We hope you will join us! If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer, please contact Gina@gspr.org.

December 5, 8am: Don Widmayer | **10:30am:** Kristen Hanifin

December 12, 8am: Linda Hecker | **10:30am:** Mark Olson

December 19, 8am: Lucy Pinedo | **10:30am:** Chris Ryan

December 26, 8am: Werner Boecker | **10:30am:** Wendy Gates

January 2, 8:15am: Kim Arcidiacono | **10:30am:** Jeff Bergman

January 9, 8:15am: George Boothby | **10:30am:** Tom Vislocky

January 16, 8:15am: Anne Baumann | **10:30am:** Lulu Paolini

January 23, 8:15am: Don Widmayer | **10:30am:** Kristen Hanifin

January 30, 8:15am: Linda Hecker | **10:30am:** Mark Olson



Christmas Eve

Friday, December 24

4:30pm Join us, outdoors in the parking lot, for carols and communion.

8pm & 11pm We will gather in the Sanctuary for services of candlelight, carols, and communion.

Christmas Day

Saturday, December 25, 10:30am

Christmas worship service in the Sanctuary of lessons and carols, with communion. **YouTube livestream available*

The Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, December 26, 10:30am

Communion service in the Sanctuary; this will be the only service for this Sunday. **YouTube livestream available*



Christmas Caroling on the Avenue

Friday, December 17, 7pm

Adults ages 21+ are invited to carol with us! Join us, as we bring tidings to our local restaurants and bars along Central Avenue, in Pearl River. Please dress warmly; Christmas attire strongly encouraged! Bring your ID and a mask. Meeting location TBA. Text/call **Gina at 845-587-0904** if you plan on joining us.

Join Us!

Holden Evening Prayer Wednesdays, December 1, 8, 15, at 7:15pm



Advent, a season of preparing our hearts and lives for the coming of God, is meant to be centering, calming, and reflective (HAHAHA...). Take a moment this Advent, to clear a little space, and join us for Holden Evening Prayer services in the Sanctuary. If you can't make it in-person, they will also be livestreamed on our YouTube channel, and available for you to watch, anytime.

Coffee & Conversation Thursdays, 3pm, 39 E Central Ave.



Warm up with a great cup of coffee at Dean's Coffee Co. in Pearl River. Meet Pastor Lena on Thursday afternoons and support our local coffee shop. Feel free to bring a friend!

Adult Forum Sundays, 9:30am, Church Parlor



Join our Adult Forum on Sunday mornings, for a seven-part series exploring the Bible called *Animate: Bible*. It is for beginners! If you have questions about what the Bible is about, and how we make sense of this ancient text for today's faith, this is a great forum for you. Feel free to attend any sessions even if you can't make the others!

WELCA's Christmas Luncheon Tuesday, December 7, 12:30pm, Fellowship Hall

All ladies of Good Shepherd are invited to our Christmas luncheon with music by Elaina. Please join us! If you have any questions or need a ride, please call **Barbara Bow at 845-521-2611** or **Mary Iseman at 845-623-7638**. God's peace to all.

Christmas Caroling Sunday, December 19, 4:30-6pm



Let's go caroling! Good Shepherd individuals of all ages are welcome. Meet us at the church and dress warmly. Contact PastorLena@gspr.org for more information!

The Longest Night Tuesday, December 21, 7:15pm



This season of the year, amid all the festivities, we often struggle with feelings of grief and longing. Perhaps, we are missing those we loved who are no longer with us. Perhaps, we feel inadequate when it comes to living up to the expectations of the holidays. Perhaps, we are wrestling with illness or loneliness, or we simply hate the short days and long nights. On the Longest Night of the year, we will gather to pray, take some time to breathe and grieve, light candles in the darkness, and to wait for God in the honesty of our hurting hearts. Join us and invite anyone you think might find such a service helpful.

Be a Volunteer!

Looking for ways to get involved? Whether it's delivering meals, running errands for our neighbors, or helping out with worship services, a little help goes a long way! We are always looking for volunteers at Good Shepherd. Check out our community events or contact Volunteer Coordinator, Gina@gspr.org, to find out how you can lend a helping hand.

Monthly Food Bank

Since we will be welcoming the Christ-child this month, we will be collecting **baby food, diapers, wipes, and dry milk** for *People to People*. There will be a box at the entrance of the Education Building for your non-perishable donations. **Thank you, Connie Frawley, for delivering our donations, this month!** As we are receiving an abundance of donations for our monthly food bank, we will be delivering food to *People to People*, every two weeks. Food delivery can be after church on Sunday, or during church office hours. Sign up at volunteersignup.org/BECRW, then call/text **Gina at 845-587-0904** to arrange a time.



Card Drive



Be a bright moment in someone's day! Join our card drive for *Meals on Wheels*. All you have to do is write a quick note of encouragement to a meal recipient. Get your own greeting card, or pick up blank cards at the church office. We will also have some available after service on Sundays! Drop them back off to us at anytime and we will deliver them to *Meals on Wheels*.

Magnolia Meals

Magnolia Meals at Home is a meal delivery program that provides nourishing meals to households affected by cancer, so that loved ones can spend quality time together. We have partnered with St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Teaneck, and Trinity Lutheran in Bogota, to transport *Magnolia Meals* from *Meals on Wheels* in Nanuet, and bring them to St. Paul's. From there, they will be delivered to those undergoing cancer treatment.



Thank you, Virginia Montoya, for delivering this month! If you're interested in helping out, sign up online at volunteersignup.org/XRRJQ.

Telephone Reassurance Program



Meals On Wheels
Meals are just our first course!

Meals on Wheels has just launched an initiative called the Telephone Reassurance Program, which provides older adults who live alone, or who have limited ability to leave their homes, with regularly scheduled telephone calls. The goal is to alleviate feelings of isolation among our seniors. We are currently looking for volunteers to regularly call and check in on the health and well-being of our seniors. You will be assigned contacts to make calls once a week, or once every other week, depending on the client. The last step is to complete a response form. You will have an opportunity to hear their stories, and the conversation will be a gift to you both. If you'd like to help out, contact **Marie Louis** at mlouis@mowrockland.org or call **845-624-6325**.

The Season of Giving



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 supporting the work of Good Shepherd!

ONLINE: Go to our webpage, www.gspr.org/give and click the "give" button.

GIVE+ TEXT: Text **877-771-4850**, then follow the instructions.

MAIL: Send your offerings to **112 N. Main St. Pearl River, NY 10965**.

IN PERSON: Bring your offering to a worship service.



Use AmazonSmile to buy your personal gifts, while also giving to Good Shepherd! Agree to support us at <https://smile.amazon.com> and 0.05% of the profits will automatically be donated to us, in support of our Youth. Remember to use AmazonSmile, instead of Amazon, in order for Good Shepherd to receive the donation. Any questions, contact Cindy Sealander at csealander@optonline.net.



ShopRite

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.

Stay Connected



Subscribe to our weekly E-newsletter, "By The Way," sent out on Thursday evenings. Email communications@gspr.org.



Visit our website at www.gspr.org, and follow us on **Facebook and Instagram**, [@GoodShepherdPr](https://www.instagram.com/GoodShepherdPr), for the latest, up-to-date information!



Subscribe to our YouTube channel and receive alerts when new videos are posted! We will continue to livestream the 10:30 worship service, from the sanctuary. Go to www.youtube.com/c/GoodShepherdPearlRiver.

Go digital!



Having trouble receiving *The Shepherd's Voice* on time? Opt for our digital newsletter, instead. Email communications@gspr.org to sign up for our E-Voice.

Annual Boy Scout Wreath Sale

Boy Scout Troop #36 will be selling Christmas Wreaths and Grave Blankets at Good Shepherd! The wreaths and blankets are beautifully decorated with natural evergreens, pine cones, seasonal decorations, and a bow. We want to thank the congregation for their past generous support.



Wreaths are \$25 and Grave Blankets are \$30. Fill out an order form, which can be found in the Narthex, Education Building entrance, and return them to the Church Office. **We are having in-person pickup on Sunday, December 5 and 12, from 8:30-11:30am. If you have any questions please contact Cindy Sealander at 201-951-5715 or csealander@optonline.net.**

COAT DRIVE



We are collecting new and gently-worn adult and children's winter coats, for Afghan refugees. Drop your donations off, anytime, to the church through **December 31**. There will be donation boxes throughout the building. Thank you for your help!



Good Shepherd Prayer Chain

If you, a loved one, or friend experience difficulty and desire prayer support contact Lone Mensing, at 201-664-1235, or Carol Westphal, at 845-624-5732. The Good Shepherd Prayer Chain will be activated, and many will be praying with, and for you.



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!

The children are certainly excited 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 gifts to be given to their families, while counting and sorting their jingle bells.

A couple of our board members organized a "Photo with Santa" fundraiser at the beginning of December. Parents had an opportunity to sign up and take their own photo with a Christmas display, provided by Creative Play members. The stunning Church doors were the main focal point, and Santa of course!

We also organized our own Christmas Giving Tree. Families are encouraged to participate by purchasing new hats, gloves, and scarves to decorate our Christmas tree in the front entrance of the Educational Building. We will be sharing our donations with Afghan refugees to help them through the winter.

Our Christmas recess will begin on December 24th and we will return to learning on January 3rd, 2022. UPK four-year-old parent/teacher conferences will be held in-person when we return.

Having the children in school has been a gift to all of us; they are our joy and our merry! Love, joy, and peace are the ingredients to a wonderful Christmas. We hope you find them all this festive season. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Be merry, be bright & be happy,

Renee Bucci

Renee Bucci, Creative Play Director
Renee@gspr.org



Dear Good Shepherd Families,

Thank you so much to Katherine Filatov, Inese Cederbaums, David Rothenberg, the band, and our wonderful Children's Choir and Sanctuary Choir for sharing their music with us in recent services. We are so grateful to them for offering their time and talents!

We will enjoy beautiful music during the Advent and Christmas seasons. If you can't make it regularly, but you would like to be a part of our musical offerings during Advent and Christmas, please let us know. We will be happy to have you involved!

Our children's choir is preparing for the Christmas pageant. Please join us every Sunday at 10:00am in the choir room as we prepare special music for the pageant. The Christmas pageant will take place during the 10:30am service on Sunday, December 19th.

The band will continue to rehearse two Sundays a month immediately following the 10:30am worship service. Join us in the sanctuary to make some music together as we prepare the band to lead a worship service!

We have been enjoying our rehearsals with the Sanctuary Choir and Children's Choir, and we would love to have you join our Bell Choir! Please drop in on a Thursday night! All are welcome!

Thank you,

Elaina and Brian Burns
music@gspr.org



SUNDAYS

9:30-10am Choir Rehearsal, *Choir Room*

10-10:20am Children's Choir Rehearsal, *Choir Room*

11:30am Band Rehearsals (12/5, 12/12, 12/19), *Sanctuary*

THURSDAYS

6:15-7pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, *Choir Room*

7pm Choir Rehearsal, *Choir Room*

GOOD SHEPHERD YOUTH

Youth who are currently in Grades 8 through 12 are eligible to attend the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Good Shepherd will be sending youth and adult leaders to the gathering from Saturday, July 23, to Thursday, July 28. This gathering takes place every 3 years, and provides our youth with opportunities to participate in community service, study, worship, fun, and meaningful, faith-based life experiences. The theme of the gathering is BOUNDLESS, celebrating God's boundless love, creation, forgiveness, invitation, and promise!

We encourage our youth to participate in this amazing, life-changing event. If you are interested in having your youth attend, please let us know as soon as possible, by contacting **Pastor Lena at the Church Office (845-735-2243)**, or the Youth Gathering adult leaders, **Rich Bowman or Greg & Cindy Sealander**.

ELCA Youth Gathering Volunteer Team

Rich Bowman, Greg & Cindy Sealander

rbbp@yahoo.com, csealander@optonline.net



Sunday School is in full swing! Each month we will be highlighting a teacher. This month's teacher spotlight...

Tom Vislocky

I started helping out at Sunday School in 2000 and I love it! Some things I do are collect attendance, hand out information for our students to bring home to their families, collect offerings, and set up DVDs for our kids to watch. Every year, I get to watch our students grow up from Pre-K to 5th grade, and then to their Confirmation. It's always awesome to see! Outside of Sunday School, I read at worship services and communion, and help to carry the cross on holidays. I am grateful for the opportunity to be involved in our Sunday School at Good Shepherd.





Opportunities for Christmas Gifting

There will be no White Gifts, this year, because we have no way to distribute them in the Bronx, but there are many other opportunities to bring joy into the lives of children and those in need.



1. Creative Play's Giving Tree



Every year, around this time, parents express an interest in teaching their children how to give to those less fortunate. Creative Play will be decorating our Christmas Giving Tree, in the entrance of the Education Building, with gloves, mittens, scarves, and hats. These items will be shared with Afghan refugee families, to keep them warm through the winter. If you are able, have your child find a place on our tree to leave their gift. What a wonderful opportunity to show your children the true meaning of the season! **Please donate NEW adult or children's hats, gloves, etc. through Thursday, December 23rd.**

2. Comfort & Joy

We are partnering with *People to People* to bring comfort and joy to hundreds of children this holiday season! **Please donate a new, warm, twin-sized blanket or throw through Sunday, December 5.** These blankets will be delivered to children from low-income families. We are also collecting **\$35 gift cards** to give to children living in households, struggling to make ends meet. Donate virtually at www.peopletopeoplein.ejoinme.org/comfortjoy.

3. Food Pantry

Since we will be welcoming the Christ-child in the month of December, we will be collecting **baby food, diapers, wipes, and dry milk for *People to People***. There will be a box at the entrance to the Education Building for your non-perishable donations.

4. Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Service

Now more than ever, there is need for food, housing, assistance, clothing, and other basic needs for our Afghan allies. Donate online at www.lirs.org/give-now or mail your donations to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, P.O. Box 17467, Baltimore, MD 21297-1467.

5. ELCA Disaster Relief



**LUTHERAN
WORLD RELIEF**

With all the hurricanes and fires, this ministry is in need of our help. Visit elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development/Lutheran-Disaster-Response/Ways-to-Give or send your donations by mail: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116

Please send your articles for the January 2022 Voice issue to Katy@gspr.org by Thursday, December 16. If you have any articles or photos you'd like to see, or share, on our social media pages, or weekly E-newsletter, feel free to email Katy. As always, you can call the Church Office if you have any questions.

HAPPY NEW YEAR.
2022

May God in His unceasing love send many gifts your way, and may He fill your heart with peace and be forever near, blessing and guiding you throughout the coming year.

SEARCHING FOR LEADERSHIP!

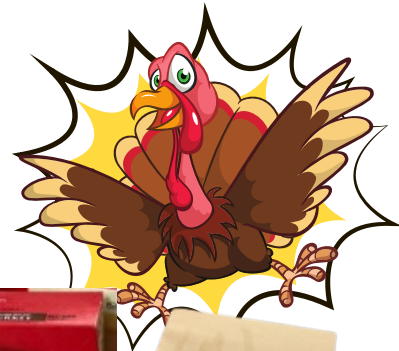
We are searching for leadership and volunteers for these potential upcoming events. If you'd like to see these events take place, please contact Gina@gspr.org. Thank you for your help, as we do our best to plan in advance!

- **St. Nicholas Festival** Sunday, December 12
- **Botanical Gardens Trip** Saturday, January 15
- **Potluck Lunch** Sunday, January 16
- **Winter Game Night** January (date TBD)



11th Annual Turkey Run

H I G H L I G H T S



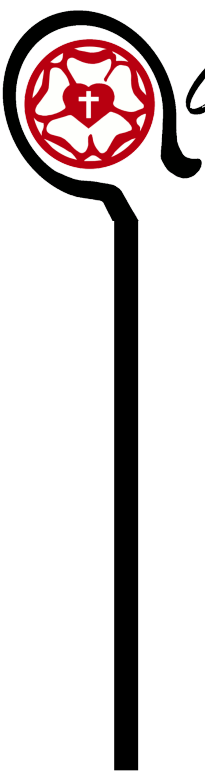
Thank you to all who helped make our 11th Annual Turkey Run a HUGE success! We were able to share 50 turkeys and 80+ bags of groceries with our local communities.



Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

We were so happy to gather, in-person, for our Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, this year! Here are some photos from the reception. Thank you to our volunteers for setting up Fellowship Hall and providing refreshments. We are so very thankful for all of you!





*Good Shepherd
Lutheran Church*

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

