



# Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

December/January  
2025/26



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

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



Dear Friends,

We know full well this is the time of year to prepare for all the festivities at Christmas. We are reminded of this starting in September when Christmas trees and decorations start appearing in stores. I noticed Christmas music being broadcast on the radio the day after Halloween. We are told to buy, get our houses ready for the holiday.

But the message of the church is different. We also need to get ourselves ready. To that end, we are given a great gift, the season of Advent. The four weeks prior to Christmas help us hear about all that God did to bring Christ into the world: Gabriel visits Mary, Mary visits Elizabeth, John the Baptizer comes on the scene, Joseph has doubts about it all. It all captures our imagination and lives. These biblical accounts, our beautiful and striking Advent hymns, help us ask ourselves if we are ready to receive Christ, if we are ready to announce to others that there is a great hope in the world, that God has come to his people, that we have an eternal connection with God forever, through Christ.

Advent is a great benefit to our faith. We are given this time to use wisely, to hear and relearn the fact that the precious gift called Jesus is worth our spending the time to prepare our hearts to receive.

Blessed Advent, then Merry Christmas.

In Christ, Pastor Ernie



## **The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd**

112 North Main Street  
Pearl River, New York 10965

### **WORSHIP**

Sundays: 8:30 & 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Church School: 10:30 hour

### **CONTACT US**

Church Office: (845)735-2243  
Office closed on Mondays  
Tues.-Fri.: 1:30-4:30pm  
Fax: (845)735-0819  
E-mail: [office@gspr.org](mailto:office@gspr.org)  
Web site: [www.gspr.org](http://www.gspr.org)  
Creative Play Pre-School: (845)735-2737

### **AT YOUR SERVICE**

Pastor Ernst Moss  
Jeff Bergman - President  
Brian Burns - Director of Music  
Elaina Burns - Organist  
Renee Bucci - Creative Play Director  
Dale Damon - Church Secretary  
Gina Danialinia - Synodical Deacon  
Lisa Filatov - Bookkeeper  
Gisele Saldana - Sexton

## **LIFE STATIONS**

### **Deaths**

Carl Iseman  
Eileen Anne Vatter

October 24  
November 21

### **125th Anniversary Music Fund**

Donation given in honor of Elania Burns given by  
Marjorie Waltman  
In memory of Mary Olson, given by Linda & Jon Swift

### **General Memorial Fund**

In memory of Jack Meehan, given by Wendy Gates

### **Good Shepherd Fund**

In memory of Carl Iseman, given by Wendy Gates



## **SHOPRITE GIFT CARDS**

### **BUY A GIFT CARD** and Good

Shepherd receives 5% from each gift card purchase. The cards can be purchased in the Church Office. Cards can be used at any ShopRite location. We have \$25, \$50, or \$100 cards. CASH and checks will be accepted.



**Any questions, please contact the church office:  
845-735-2243**

## **PRAYER CHAIN**

If you, a loved one, or a friend experience difficulty and you desire prayer support, the Good Shepherd Prayer Chain may be helpful.

When you have a request or a thanksgiving to share, please call: Ione Mensing at 201-664-1235; email: [himensing@gmail.com](mailto:himensing@gmail.com) or Carol Westphal at 845-624-5732; email: [carolwestphal9@gmail.com](mailto:carolwestphal9@gmail.com)

The Prayer Chain will then be activated, and many will be praying with and for you.

## **2025 CHURCH COUNCIL**

Jeff Bergman, President  
Kristen Hanifin, Vice President  
Kim Arcidiacono, Secretary  
Michael McCambridge, Treasurer \*  
Werner Boecker, Financial Secretary\*  
Sue Baumeister  
Linda Hecker  
Carol Hoerter  
Carole Meehan  
Lulu Paolini  
Christopher Ryan  
Becky Tom  
(\*non-voting)

**ROCKLAND COUNTY CONCERT BAND HOLIDAY PERFORMANCE**  
**SPONSORED BY THE PEARL RIVER PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**DECEMBER 20 AT 2:30 PM**  
**AT GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**PEARL RIVER, NY**

## **BOILER FUND UPDATE**

Thank you for your generosity.  
 So far we have collected \$20,082 in  
 donations toward our boiler bill of \$31,690,  
 leaving \$11,608 to go!



**Bible Study - Thursdays @ 2PM**

***WILL RESUME MEETING IN JANUARY 2026***

**BIBLE STUDY TELECOM - MONDAY'S AT 8PM**

***WILL RESUME MEETING IN JANUARY 2026***

## **SANCTUARY OPEN FOR PRAYER**

**Our Sanctuary will be open for prayer on Thursdays, from  
 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm. Pastor Mossi will be there to welcome you.**



**Stenland Lodge #727**  
**Vasa Order of America**  
an Educational, Cultural and Fraternal organization  
invites you to our annual  
**Lucia Program and Christmas Party**

**Saturday December 6, 2025, at 2 pm**  
**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**  
**112 N. Main Street**  
**Pearl River, New York 10965**  
**Doors open at 1:30 p.m.**

**Enter through Fellowship Hall**

**Donation \$15.00**  
**Children 12 and under are free**  
**Come for good fellowship, refreshments, and a fantastic raffle!**

**For information, call the church office: 845-735-2243**





## ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT GOOD SHEPHERD

November 30	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent worship at 8:30 am and 10:30 am
December 6	St. Lucia Celebration & Christmas Party sponsored by Stenland Lodge No. 727 in Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary, 2 pm
December 7	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent, worship at 8:30 am and 10:30 am
December 13	Hudson Lyric Opera presents "Amahl and the Night Visitors" - 2pm
December 14	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent, worship at 8:30 am and 10:30 am
December 17	Labyrinth Walk in Fellowship Hall 6-7pm, followed by Vespers at 7pm
December 20	Rockland County Concert Band Holiday Concert—2:30pm
December 21	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent 9:30 service only - Sunday Church School Pageant during service German Christmas Service—2:00 pm in the sanctuary
December 24	Christmas Eve Services: 4:00 pm and 8:00 pm
December 25	Christmas Day Service: 9:30 am
December 28	Christmas I Sunday Service 9:30 am



**LABRYRINTH PRAYER WALK  
AND  
ADVENT VESPERS  
DECEMBER 17**

**6-7PM PRAYER WALK  
7PM ADVENT VESPERS**

**ALTAR GUILD  
IS LOOKING FOR  
LADIES WHO WOULD LIKE  
TO HELP PREPARE THE  
ALTAR EACH WEEK.  
PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH  
OFFICE IF YOU WOULD BE  
INTERESTED IN JOINING  
THESE DEDICATED LADIES  
(and two gentlemen)  
845-735-2243**

## **Men's Group Monthly Breakfast**

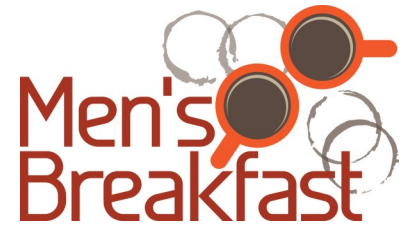
The Men's Group is Back!

It's been a few months, but indeed, the Men's Group, after a hiatus of close to a year, is back. We've had a couple of breakfasts, and our numbers continue to increase. This is good news for those men who enjoy a hearty breakfast, and at the same time, offers the opportunity to support the various causes the group has aided, both locally and beyond, over the last 20 years.

We typically meet on the third Saturday of the month, at 9am, in Fellowship Hall.

BUT...this month, our breakfast will be held on the second Saturday, December 13. All men of Good Shepherd are welcome. If you have any questions, I would welcome your giving me a call (201-664-1235). Hope to see you soon.,

Best to you all, Herman (Mensing)



### **INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF GOOD SHEPHERD...**

If you are interested in becoming a member of Good Shepherd, please contact the Church Office at 845-735-2243.



### **PEOPLE TO PEOPLE COLLETION FOR DECEMBER**

Since we will be welcoming the Christ-child this month, we will be collecting **BABY FOOD, DIAPERS, WIPES, AND FORMULA** for *People to People*. There is a box at the entrance of the Education Building for your donations. Thank you for your support for this most important ministry.



### **SOUPERBOWL SUNDAY February 8th LET'S FILL THE SHELVES OF PEOPLE TO PEOPLE WITH CANS OF SOUP, AND BRING WARMTH AND SMILES INTO HOMES IN ROCKLAND COUNTY**

We are collecting cans of soup for *People to People* in January. Bring your soup to church or drop off at any time during office hours. As we snack and feast while watching the Super Bowl, let's remember those who are hungry for the very basics, especially this



## **Council Capsule**

Your Church Council met on November 18th.

Among the topics discussed were the following:

**Pastor's Report** – Pastor Ernie highlighted the visits he has done and upcoming visits. He noted that he had Chapel Service with Creative Play and story time with the classes, as well. Bible study and Confirmation Class continue and they are going well. Regarding transition, there were 87 responses to the CAT survey and there is an interpretive meeting 11/25. It will be via zoom. The new Assistant to the Bishop (Rev. Nicole Schwalbe) will be with us on 12/14 to preach and meet the congregation.

**Financial Update** - Total fiscal year-to-date receipts through October 2025 were \$250 thousand. Total fiscal year-to-date expenses through October 2025 were \$323 thousand, resulting in net expense for the fiscal year of approximately \$73 thousand. The largest expenses year to date, outside personnel related expenses (which are approximately 60% of expenses), were for supply pastors, gas and electric services, grounds maintenance and attempted boiler repairs. Total expenses were approximately \$12 thousand over budget. Cash requirements to pay the expenses of the Church required the movement of \$41 thousand from the Chase savings account and \$15 thousand from one of the investment accounts. Starting December 2025, the Church will receive approximately \$6,000 to \$6,500 monthly from the Thrivent investments. This amount represents a monthly draw down of principal of \$5,000 and the movement of interest and dividends received on the investments, which fluctuates based on payments received. These funds will be drawn from the unrestricted balances at Thrivent and will be placed in the Chase checking account for general use. Carol also noted that at the Annual Meeting, Jeff mentioned that if everyone would increase their weekly giving by \$5, it would help us bring down our deficit. That comes to just 71 cents a day and it would help tremendously.

**125th Anniversary Update** – There was a question as to whether we could use ShopRite fund money to supplement the costs of the celebration, and also help pay for people who are not able to fund participation on their own. Carol Hoerter said they want to keep the price of the tickets down the best they can. It will be a brunch at the Saloon Restaurant. The committee would like to do table arrangements and a gift for each family, but still keep the price as low as possible. Kristen Hanifin suggested having someone at church sell ShopRite gift cards on Sundays. We look into doing this on certain Sundays of the month. Save the date notifications will be going out soon.

**Parsonage Update** – The Rotio family is moving in on November 29<sup>th</sup>. As noted at the Annual Meeting, we will be donating half the rent they are paying to the Synod, reestablish our contributing to synod.

### **Property Update** –

*Old Computers* – Rich Baumeister will attempt to salvage the old computers that were updated and also offered to update Windows on Gina Danialinia's computer.

*Chimney on Education Building* – Pictures were shared of the chimney and it looks like it needs repair. Mark Olson is going to get us a quote.

*Pews* - It was suggested to remove four (4) half pews to make room for wheelchairs farther up in the sanctuary. It was agreed to make this known to the congregation before making any decisions. It was noted that providing space to people in wheelchairs in the congregation is important.

CONTINUED ON P. 8

**Small Group Meetings** – When used years ago, they were called “cottage meetings.” It has been decided that these should take place at the church in the near future. We will try to start mid to end of January, but the time is TBD and

we can better decide this after the CAT interpretation meeting.

**Name Tag Sundays** – We are going to try to do name tag Sundays a couple times a month because it helps people get to know each other.

**Coffee Hour** - It was requested to have a coffee hour between services on occasion, so the early service parishioners can have the chance to attend. It was also suggested to occasionally hold coffee hour in Fellowship Hall which is accessible to all via the ramp.

### **Social Ministry Update -**

A Ribbons of Remembrance ceremony, recognizing 1500 gun violence killings, was held last Thursday evening and some people from our congregation attended.

The Turkey Run is this coming week, and Project Joy was announced and well-received this past Sunday.

Book Club will be starting again. Jenn Spero is working on getting that started.

The idea of doing Oktoberfest next year was brought up. We would like to do this again, but it will entail planning ahead. We need a chair and a planning committee.

After the suggestion to include more “fun fellowship” type events, Jen is looking into a painting event as something fun to do; she is going to gather more information on this.

Please reach out to Council if you have concerns, questions, or suggestions. We always welcome the Congregation’s input and feedback.

## **COMING SOON: YOUTH GROUP!**

A youth group is forming in the new year, as a way to have fun together and do some service projects.

We will have a preliminary schedule together in January in the newsletter and Cross Connections. Any questions or suggestions can be sent to Pastor Ernie at [emossl@yahoo.com](mailto:emossl@yahoo.com)





Merry  
Christmas



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

The children are excited that Santa will be arriving at the end of the month; what they do not know is he will be surprising them in their classrooms before the big day! The students will be decking the halls as busy elves in their classrooms, crafting Christmas creations. As they learn about the art of giving, the kids will be creating their own gifts to be given to their families. The best presents come from the heart.

Creative Play has organized our own "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 the less fortunate, to help warm up their winter. Donations this year will be shared with the women and children of *The Center for Safety and Change*.

Our Christmas recess will begin on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. We will return to learning on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026. UPK four-year-old parent/teacher conferences will be held in person when we return in January.

Registration for the 2026-2027 school year will begin as follows:

Alumni and Current Church members: Wednesday, January 14, 2026

General Registration for New members: Wednesday, February 4, 2026

Detailed information will be available in the new year. Please visit our web site [www.goodshepherdcreativeplay.com](http://www.goodshepherdcreativeplay.com) for specific program information. (see p. 13)

Having our school filled with happy, excited, rambunctious children has been a gift to all of us at Creative Play; they are our joy and our merry! We hope you all find happiness, excitement and yes, a little rambunctiousness this festive season.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Be merry, be bright & be happy,

Renee Bucci  
Director of Creative Play

**ORDER FORM**  
**CHRISTMAS GREENS, WREATHS & POINSETTIAS FOR THE ALTAR**  
**ON CHRISTMAS EVE**

Deadline for order: December 12, 2025



In Memory of

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In Honor of:

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Given by:

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Enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_ (suggested donation \$15 per memorial)

### THE GIVING TREE

Every year at this time, the parents of Creative Play express an interest in teaching their children how to give to those less fortunate. This year we will place a *Giving Tree* in the lobby of the education building.

We will decorate the tree with *new* gloves, mittens, scarves, and hats for children and women. These items will be shared with families at *The Center for Safety and Change* here in Rockland County. We hope these items bring some comfort through the winter.

All **hats, gloves, etc.** can be dropped off beginning Tuesday, December 2nd. The last day for **gifts** to be dropped off is Thursday, December 25th.

What a wonderful opportunity to show your children the true meaning of the season!





Hudson Lyric Opera Presents:

# Amahl and the Night Visitors

by

Gian Carlo Menotti

**Saturday,  
Dec 13, 2025**

**A HOLIDAY  
MIRACLE**

**\$20 Adults**  
**\$15**  
Students/Seniors

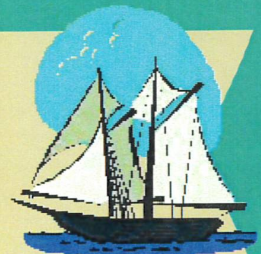
**2 PM**  
Good Shepherd  
Church

For more information  
Call: (845) 709-2273

**Good Shepherd Church**

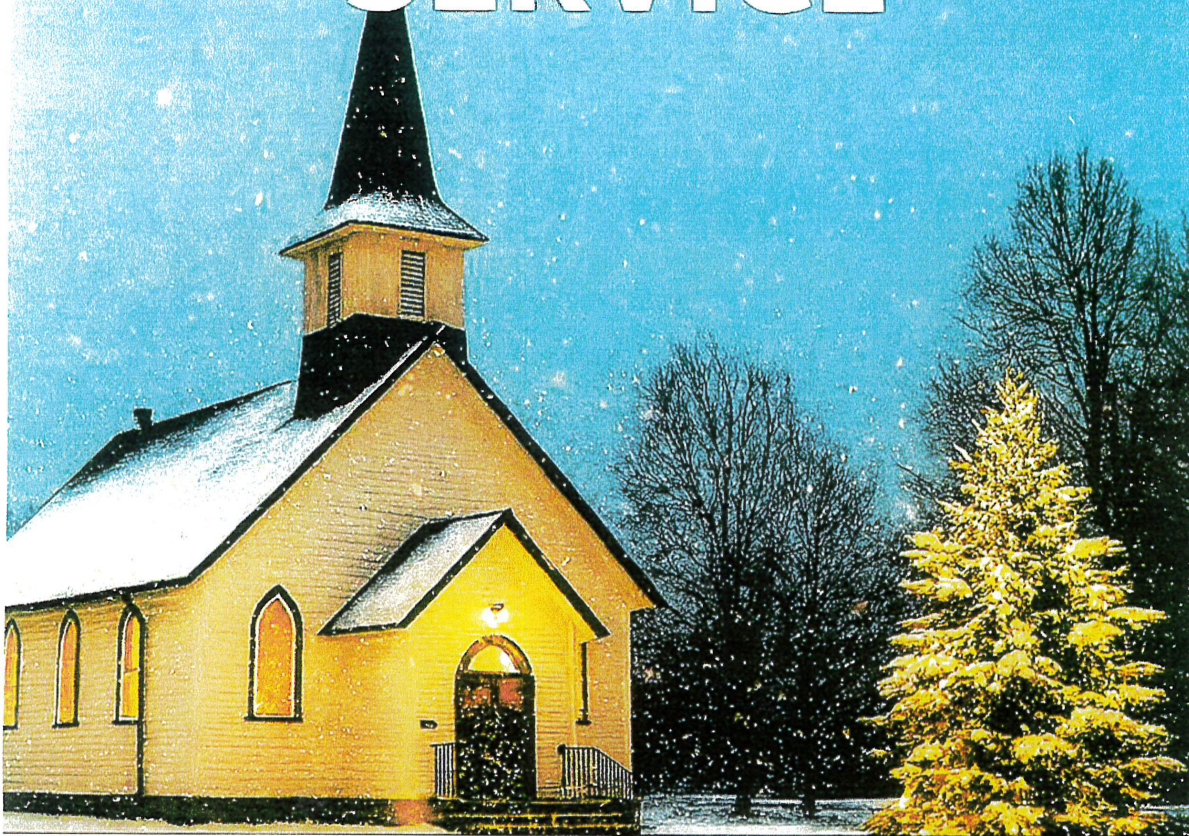
**112 N Main St., Pearl River, NY 10965**

[HTTP://HUDSONLYRICOPERA.ORG](http://HUDSONLYRICOPERA.ORG)





# GERMAN CHRISTMAS SERVICE



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025**

**SERVICE AT 2 PM  
REFRESHMENTS TO FOLLOW  
GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH  
112 NORTH MAIN STREET  
PEARL RIVER NY 10965  
For information call: 845-735-2243**



Good Shepherd Creative Play

112 N. Main Street, Pearl River, N.Y. 10965

845-735-2737—[www.goodshepherdcreativeplay.com](http://www.goodshepherdcreativeplay.com)

## **ALUMNI & CHURCH MEMBER FAMILIES**

Applications for the new school year 2026-2027 will be sent home with your current enrolled child if applicable beginning January 5, 2026.

We will accept the return of your child's application as follows:

Registration for Alumni & Church Members begins: **January 14, 2026**

Registration for New Members begins: **February 4, 2026**

If you would like to register a sibling for a program for the next school year that is not currently enrolled in our program, please stop by the office to pick up an application. To ensure placement in your preferred class, please apply by **January 30, 2026**. After this date we will open enrollment to new members. Please keep in mind, as in the past, we fill our classes on a first come first serve basis.

For the 2026-2027 school year the following classes will be available to your family *providing we have the minimum enrollment required* to proceed with each of the classes:

1-day a week Toddler Classes (currently meets on Tuesdays or Wednesdays)

2-day a week Toddler Class (2 hours, 9:30am – 11:30am, Tues. & Thurs.)

3-day a week Toddler Class (2.5 hours, 9:30am – 12:00pm, Mon., Wed. & Fri.)

2-day 3-year-old classes (2.5 hours, 9:30am – 12:00pm, Tues. & Thurs.)

3-day 3-year-old class (3 hours, 9:00am – 12:00pm, Mon., Wed. & Fri.)

5-day 3-year-old class (2.5 hours, 9:15am – 11:45am, Mon. – Fri.)

5-day 4-year-old classes (3 hours, 9:00am – 12:00pm, Mon. – Fri.)

1 - Morning & 1 - Afternoon UPK (Universal Pre-Kindergarten) classes (TBD) with morning ½ hr. extension for a fee

Creative Creations, Enrichment afternoon classes (3 sessions per year)

Summer camp *will not be held* this summer as we reconfigure our classrooms

For the school year 2026-2027 we are again making available to all families an "opt-out" choice. By selecting this "opt-out" choice, you will pay a predetermined amount to cover some or all your workdays in the classroom. The office will arrange to have your workdays covered after speaking with you and determining your needs. We understand many families who would love to attend Creative Play, but due to work and other obligations cannot participate in the cooperative workdays.

We have traditionally relied on families to help share the information regarding our school, we would appreciate you continuing to help us by sharing the above information with family and friends. While our classrooms will continue to reflect our mission of play with a purpose, we are excited to incorporate some new opportunities as well!

If you have any questions regarding registration, please feel free to speak to me.

Be well, be safe, and be happy,

Renee Bucci

Director



Dear Good Shepherd Congregants,

Our choirs are growing as we celebrate the beautiful seasons of Advent and Christmas! We hope you will join us and we look forward to welcoming you!

Adult Choir rehearsals:

**Thursday evenings at 7pm and Sunday mornings at 9:30am**

Children's Choir rehearsals:

**Sunday mornings at 10am**

Band rehearsals:

**Sundays at 11:45am**

(The Band will generally lead worship on the second Sunday of every month)

### **Christmas Pageant**

Our children's choir will lead our Christmas Pageant on Sunday, December 21st. We have been rehearsing each week and we are excited to share the Christmas story with our community! We thank our Children's Choir for their beautiful singing on Reformation Sunday and on the first Sunday in Advent!

### **Good Shepherd's 125th Anniversary Year**

Thank you all for your support as we celebrated Bachtoberfest, Spanish Music and Dance, and our Resonance Piano Recital! We invite everyone to attend concerts and to participate in the music ministry in any way that you can! Join the choir, play with the band, play the bells, invite your children or grandchildren to sing with us!

Our next 125th Anniversary concerts will be our Resonance Piano Recital on Sunday, December 7th at 2pm and our Burns Family Band concert on Sunday, January 4th at 2pm. Suggested donation of \$20 to help fund our 125th Anniversary Grand Piano Goal. We thank our Good Shepherd community and the music communities all over Rockland County for their generous support of this project!

Thank you,

Elaina and Brian Burns



## COMING IN JANUARY!

Sunday, January 18th  
12-1:30 PM—Fellowship Hall  
\$30 per person

We all paint the same image (it will be a winter scene).  
We need 15 people minimum to run the event,  
so folks should sign the list at the back of the  
sanctuary or email me at  
[Jalliss28@yahoo.com](mailto:Jalliss28@yahoo.com)

Jenn Santucci-Spero

