

Winter Happenings

THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF
The Memorial Church of the Good Shepherd
January 24, 2024



MISSION STATEMENT: Good Shepherd is growing in: Faith and knowledge of God, ministry in our neighborhood, love for one another and support for those seeking Christ.

*Please check out the **church calendar** available on our website.*

www.goodshepherdwv.org

Reflections by the Rev. Lou Hays: Past, Present and Future

Last Sunday about 40 parishioners gathered in the Great Hall for *Celebrating Our Heritage*. This Sunday, I hope at least as many will gather in the Great Hall to hear largely good news about the finances of the church. And in less than three months, we will once again gather in the Great Hall for the most significant event in the transition, *Envisioning Our Future*. What do these three events have in common?

All of these events will tell (or in the case of last Sunday, have told) wonderful and important stories of the past, present and future of the Memorial Church of the Good Shepherd. Last Sunday the Great Hall was filled with joy and laughter along with a few tears as experiences over the past decades were remembered and re-lived. I was impressed by how many positive experiences and events were shared and how relatively few negative ones were mentioned. It is clear that we have a congregation that loves and is committed to Good Shepherd. However, there is clearly a sense of loss and grief due to the fact that the parish is much smaller than in earlier decades, and with the loss of numbers there has been a commensurate loss of programs and activities. I pray that we can find ways of responding appropriately to this sense of loss and grief so that it won't interfere with what I believe is a bright future for Good Shepherd.

This Sunday we will hear some very positive news about the parish finances. The year-end deficit was less than projected and smaller than the previous year's deficit. And the deficit was appropriately and sustainably covered by the reserves of the parish which were larger at year's end than at the beginning of the year. The 2024 budget shows a larger year-end deficit, but the Vestry has adopted a worse-case scenario budget concerning the possible costs of a new Rector. Depending on the actual costs and the potential performance of our investments, it's possible that the 2024 results could be much better than currently projected. The bottom line is, we are in good financial shape, far better than many Episcopal churches.

Finally, on Sunday April 14, we will once again gather in the Great Hall for *Envisioning Our Future*. Together you will develop the hopes and dreams for the future of Good Shepherd and the characteristics of the person God is calling to help make those hopes and dreams a reality. Much more information about this critically important event will be provided later.

Past, present and future: all are important to this sacred time of transition. We celebrate the past but we aren't held hostage to it. We primarily live in the present. And we use the present, shaped by the past, to plan for the future: a parish that will be different than in previous decades but one that is loved by its members and does the important work of Christ the Good Shepherd in Parkersburg and beyond.

Thanks for Celebrating Our Heritage

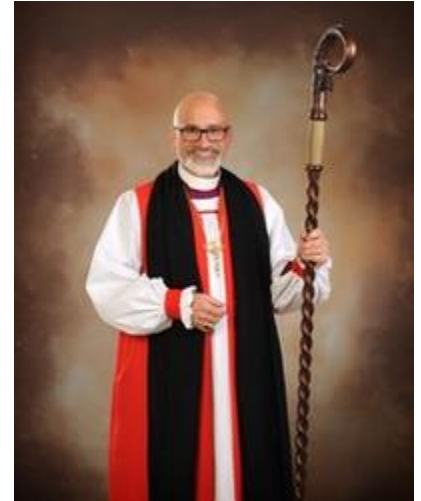
Thank you to the Discernment Committee for organizing this special event, to Lou for the plan, to those who helped with the food, and to those who attended on a very cold day. Over 40 of us were there to enjoy what ended up being a delicious light lunch, an informative presentation on Good Shepherd's early history, and then time to share our own memories of the decades from the 1950's to the 2020's. Many of us learned new things about our church's distant past and past local events and we all enjoyed reminiscing about our own GS past. A handout provided by Toni DeVore is attached to this issue of the Shepherd's Staff s in case you were not able to be present.

The Bishop is Coming! Would You Like to Be Confirmed?

Bishop Cowden will be visiting Good Shepherd on Sunday, March 17. If you have not been confirmed, or received into the Episcopal Church if you were confirmed in the Roman Catholic Church, this is your opportunity.

What is Confirmation or Reception?

Confirmation or Reception is the gold standard for membership in the Episcopal Church. Although Baptism is full initiation into the Church, Confirmation is the ultimate step and is required for certain positions in the Church. For those of us who were baptized as infants or children, it's an opportunity to make a mature affirmation of our faith that others made on our behalf at Baptism.



If someone has previously been confirmed by a Bishop in apostolic succession in another tradition such as Roman Catholic or Greek Orthodox, then instead of Confirmation the person is received into the Episcopal Church.

What do I need to do to be Confirmed or Received by the Bishop?

Please speak with Lou and then attend *A Lenten Journey Through Our Faith* program that will be held during our Wednesday evening Lenten series starting February 21. Look for details about the program in the next issue of the Staff newsletter.

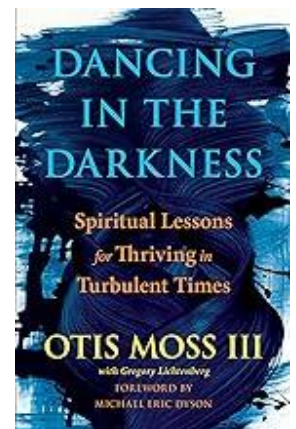
Annual Budget Meeting

The meeting to share the church budget for 2024 with the congregation will be this Sunday, January 28. We will have one service at 10:15 A.M. and the meeting will be immediately afterwards in the Great Hall. Please plan to be there to see where we are financially and ask any questions you may have.

Book Group

Winter sounds like a good time to learn 'Spiritual Lessons for Thriving in Turbulent Times'. Why not join the book group in reading *Dancing in the Darkness* by Otis Moss III? Dr. Moss is the senior pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, a professor of homiletics at Mercer University in Atlanta, a recipient of an NAACP Image award, and was "hailed as one of the twelve most effective preachers in the English-speaking world" by Baylor University's School of Theology.

There will *finally* be an introductory discussion next Sunday, January 28 at 9 AM (in person in the Jr Hi room or via Zoom), We will continue the following Sundays at the same time. If you need help ordering the book or you need the Zoom link, contact Linda Crocker. There are always seats at the table for more participants to come and grow from listening to and laughing with each other as we reflect on whatever book we are reading.



Souper Bowl Sunday

Our annual collection of food from our parishioners for the Food Pantry is held on the NFL's Super Bowl Sunday, February 11th this year. If you plan to participate, it is time to watch the local ads to find good deals on sale items. Items we need now or can always use include soup, granola/cereal bars, pancake mix and syrup, peanut butter, brownie or muffin mix, cases of water, potatoes (canned or boxed or fresh), canned pasta (ravioli, beef-a-roni, etc.), packs of individual applesauce or other fruit, spaghetti sauce and pasta (spaghetti, rotini, ziti, penne). We do not need canned vegetables or canned beans.



We will have the pink carts available on the 11th for your donations or you can bring them to the office the week before if you won't be able to come that Sunday. Of course we will also take monetary donations but the sight of those filled carts is a visible testament to our commitment to this ministry.

Guest Celebrant and Preacher

Lou is taking a short vacation next week. Larry James has arranged for the Rev. David Ruppe to be here for both services on February 4th. We have enjoyed visits from Father Ruppe during the last 2 summers and look forward to his return.

Shepherd's Closet Rummage

There will not be sales in January or February so the 'crew' can have a winter break. Donations of items suitable for the March sale are welcome now.



Altar Flowers



The only date left until after Easter is Feb. 4th. You may request one altar vase or both vases or donate a small vase to be placed in the columbarium. Each altar vase is \$50 and columbarium flowers are \$20.

If you donate by check, please keep it separate from your pledge and mark it Altar Flowers. Include information such as the date you wish to have and any wording you would like included in the bulletin. You can also call the office with that information and follow up with a check.

Last Sunday Supper

Our next free meal for our neighbors is this Sunday, January 28. We will begin set-up and cooking about 1 P.M. and serving begins at 5:30. Please come help if you can. Our February meal will be on the 25th.

Feeding the Hungry

More good news. We continue to receive donations and encouragement. This week a parishioner shared information on 2 grant opportunities coming up this spring. We also received 375 pounds of slightly dented or just out of date but perfectly good non-perishables from Piggly Wiggly.



Found on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansElCajon>

"The hallmarks of contemplative spirituality—solitude, silence, and stillness—have never been more important for our society:

In solitude, we develop the capacity to be present.

In silence, we cultivate the ability to listen.

In stillness, we acquire the skill of self-control.

Contemplative prayer helps us discern the voice of God, uncover our true self, and live a life of meaning and purpose."

~Phileena Heuertz



Staying Connected, Continuing to Serve

Intercessory Prayers

During your prayer time please use the lists below to remember those who have asked for our prayers:



Parish Prayer List

The People of Israel and Gaza	Mary Gevas – healing	Colleen Parsons – strength-healing
The People of Ukraine	Joe Martucci – healing	Jone Johnson – healing/strength
Dee Milhoan – healing, surgery	Larry Hand- healing	Ann Stevens– healing
Marcia Doyle – healing	Eric Dailey - healing	Chris Heckman – healing
Peggy Roberts - healing	David Cottrill – healing	Vickie Dilley – healing/strength
Peter Gevas – healing	Diane Cottrill – healing	Bill Riner and crew – safe sailing
Becky Winans – healing	Judy Williams - healing	
Diana Quick -healing	Deb Hepburn-McKinney – healing	



Safety for all those serving in the Armed Forces
Sterling Slusher, Joe Slusher, Lauren Fielder, Peter Keiser

Those needing healing from cancer

Glen Kirk	Steve Wilson	Jean Singer	Sherry Shepler
Judy McCoy	Paul Rutledge	Tabitha Arceneaux	Tammy Marks
David White	Roy Trembly	Alana Dailey	



Outreach Programs

- ♥ **Donuts** - We make day-old donuts available to our neighbors and the homeless. Thank you to McHappy's and to those who make sure the donuts are picked up each week.
- ♥ **Little Free Library** – Filling the church neighborhood with books to read. We have plenty of books right now. Help yourself if you spot a good one.
- ♥ **Last Sunday Supper** – The next meal will be January 28th. Come help set-up and cook beginning at 1 PM or come help serve and clean-up at 5:15 PM. We begin serving at 5:30 and continue until 6/6:15 or earlier if we run out of food. We are usually out by 7 or 7:15.
- ♥ **Food Pantry** –We can always use more help handing out the bags. The current 'holes' are Monday afternoon and Tuesdays, morning and afternoon. We also occasionally need help when our regular volunteers are not available. Contact Linda or Ginger if you can serve a few hours weekly or bi-weekly or just as needed.



Inreach Opportunities

We show our care for other members as we listen to each other, spend time together, support each other in our church ministries, share a hug during the peace, help in times of need and celebrate special moments.

Those who can't be here in person are also valued members of our congregation.

If you or a loved one would like a card, a visit, a meal, or a home communion, please call the office and we will connect you with someone who would love to be asked to help.



♥ Pastoral Care

Someone is in the office Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If you need pastoral care outside office hours, contact The Rev. Lou Hays, Larry James, or Linda Crocker (see the end of the Staff for our contact information). Lou will be available on most Sundays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and at other times for emergency needs. Additionally, the Eucharistic Visitors can offer a visit and/or home communion to those who can't come to church – just ask!



♥ Prayer Chain

We have a group of people who pray for those having emergency situations – surgery, accidents, or other crises. Linda Crocker makes the calls using the One Call system when she is notified by a church member of an immediate need. If you want to be added to the prayer chain let Linda know (304-210-5591). **God hears all our prayers** – you don't need a special gift to pray for healing and comfort for those in distress. All prayer chain calls remain confidential.



Important Upcoming Calendar Dates:



January 28 – One service followed by Annual Budget Meeting; Last Sunday Supper
February 4 – Guest celebrant and preacher - the Rev. David Ruppe – both services
February 11 – Souper Bowl Sunday (see above)
February 14 – Ash Wednesday – services at noon and 7 PM
February 16/17 – EYF Lock-in
February 21 – Lent Course begins
March 17 – Bishop Cowden's visit
March 31 - Easter
April 14 – *Envisioning Our Future*

Contact Information:

The Rev. Lou Hays	304-428-1525, ext. 11	louisbhays@gmail.com
Ginger Smith, Parish Administrator	304-428-1525, ext. 10	gingersmith.goodshepherdwva@gmail.com
Linda Crocker, Parish Ministries	304-210-5591	LLBC100@msn.com
Larry James, Senior Warden	304-482-9661	blesense@suddenlink.net

