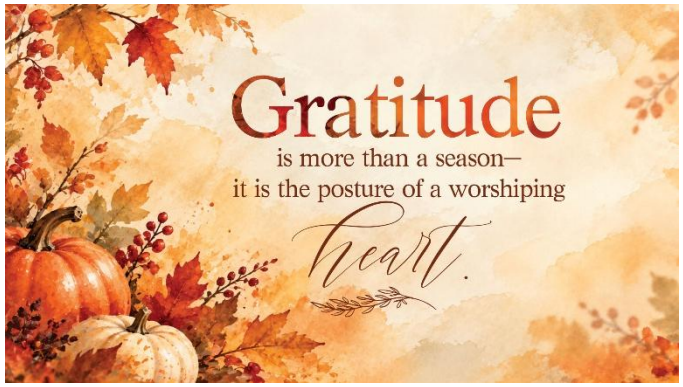


THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF

The Memorial Church of the Good Shepherd
November 18, 2026

Our mission: To **Worship** God, to **Serve** our neighbors, to **Proclaim** the Good News

*Please check out the **church calendar** available on our website:* www.goodshepherdwv.org

From the Rector

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light – Isaiah 9:2

In the United States, Advent falls in the darkest season of the year. In scripture, darkness is often viewed as chaotic, symbolic of ignorance, or a metaphor for sinfulness. Yet this is not all that darkness is. As Barbara Brown Taylor writes, "Anyone who knows the story of Abraham remembers the night God led him outside to look at the stars. […] 'Count the stars, if you are able,' God said to Abraham, for 'so shall your descendants be'" (*Learning to Walk in the Dark* 44). Taylor also points out that God speaks to Moses from within a dark cloud that none else should enter, lest they die. "While this darkness is dangerous, it is as sure a sign of God's presence as brightness is," she writes (47). All of this to say, the concept of darkness in scripture is much more nuanced than we have often given it credit for. Yes, we are to be children of the light, but we should not fear the dark. Darkness allows us to appreciate the true brightness of God.

It is in this spirit that we, too, will consider what it means to learn to walk in the dark this Advent. Using Barbara Brown Taylor's book of the same name as our guide, we will have three Advent formation series during which we contemplate darkness and light in scripture as we prepare ourselves for the coming of Christ. The formation series will start at 6 pm with soup and bread provided by the church (if you would like other dishes, you may bring them, but we explicitly made this **not a potluck** since it's such a busy season). We will have a brief formation session similar to our Lenten style with questions and time for contemplation and discussion, then we will move to the church for evening prayer with singing (led by a cantor). Do come and join us on Wed. Dec. 2, 9, and 16th at 6pm.

Katie Beth+



Advent Daily Reflections
We have purchased *Phaino Advent, 25 Days of Remembering the Light* by JL Wright. We would like you to join us in this daily Advent practice. The books will be available Sunday in the Welcome Center for a donation of $5. Advent begins Sunday November 29.

Do we have your pledge card?
Thank you if you have returned yours. If not, please return it as soon as possible. The finance committee is already working on next year's budget and having a better estimate of expected donations from our members will be most helpful since those donations account for most of our income.

Adopted Families:
Because our shoppers buy specific gifts for each child, we do not collect toys/gifts. However, we do welcome donations of toiletries (the list of needs is available now outside the office), hats and gloves for all ages but especially gloves in men's sizes, rolled Christmas gift wrap, and coloring books for kids and teens. We reimburse our shoppers who buy the gifts, food for food baskets and other items, so financial donations are also an option. You can give cash, by check or online – just make sure we know that your donation is for Adopted Families.

Save the Date!
Plan to attend an Advent Open House at Katie Beth's home in Williamstown on Friday December 11, 3 - 7 PM

Bell Tower
We are ready for new stucco. Pray for the stucco crew to come do our job.

Juliets
The Juliets (women from Trinity and Good Shepherd who enjoy meeting for a meal and conversation monthly) will meet at lunch time during the winter months. The next get together will be Tuesday Dec. 1 at 1 PM at I Don't Care at 6255 Grand Central in Vienna. Call Trinity to let them know you will be there.

Free Christmas Concert
Rockland Fellowship GMC church of Belpre is sponsoring Chosen Road's Appalachian Christmas at the historic Smoot Theatre on Friday December 18 at 7 PM. Admission is free, but you must have a ticket which is available at www.smoottheatre.com.

Thanksgiving Offering


This year we are supporting Circles of the MOV which is having a Thanks Giving fundraiser. The Circles program helps families transition out of poverty. It has been recognized as one of the most effective programs of its kind nationwide. Families in the program meet weekly with mentors for a meal, learning session and encouragement. Please use your thanksgiving offering envelope or give online or by check with Thanksgiving in the memo line.

Christmas Greetings for the Staff
It is time to begin composing your Christmas greeting to your Good Shepherd family for the Dec. 16 edition of the Staff newsletter. Please email them to Linda or write them on the sheet in the Welcome Center beginning Nov. 29. The deadline is Dec. 14.

Christmas Caroling

We plan to do our annual caroling to the homebound the evening of Sunday Dec. 20. If you or a relative or friend would like us to visit please contact Bob Crocker so he can put you on the list. His number is 304-893-2591.

Shepherd's Closet Rummage

The November sale raised about $300. The next sale will be December 4 and 5 and will be followed by our Adopted Families going through Dec. 7-9. Donations are welcome, especially Christmas items. Please get everything here no later than Dec.1 but earlier is better! If you can come in to help Deb price and sort, please give her a call to arrange a time. Her cell # is 518-637-1734.

Katie Beth's All Saints Day Sermon

If these walls could talk,
their voices would be raspy,
from the years of candles burning,
bearing the light of Christ.



If these walls could talk,
They'd speak of singing, the notes that linger in the air,
The faint vibration of organ pipes,
sound waves that never end,
but just grow weaker with time.

If these floors could speak,
They'd squeak like the cracks beneath your feet,
When you tread on them,
Telling of the marks that come from ladies' heels
Or the time the crucifer dropped the cross
Because of its heavy weight.

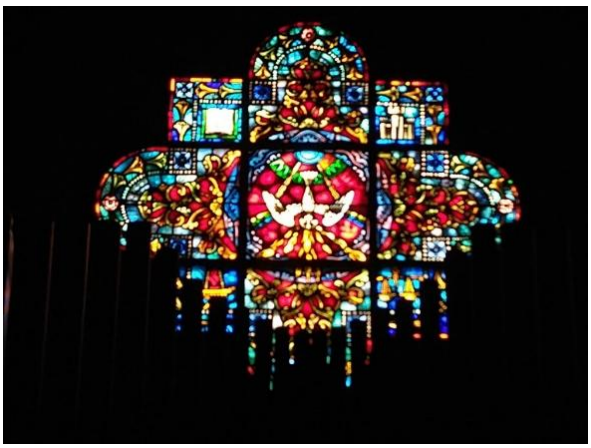
If these rafters could speak,
They would hum with the voices of the saints sitting on them,
Causing a little girl to laugh at their antics,
Reminding us we are never alone.



If these windows could speak, The 12 might come down,
And tell us what it is like to be in the presence of Jesus,

Would they declare
"Salvation belongs to our God,
Who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!"
Would angels face the throne singing,
"Amen! Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanks,
Honor and power and strength
Be to our God forever and ever?"

If these windows could speak,
Would their voices burn with he fire of the Spirit
The breath causing our faces to shine like Moses.



If this font could speak,
It would tell of the many individuals
Who joined the community of saints
Who recognized their status
As adopted into the family of God
As God is
With unveiled faces.

If this font could speak,
It would gurgle with the water of life
Reminding all who are touched by its wetness
God has promised to shelter them forever.

If this church could speak,
It would whisper of the saints sitting in these pews
Past, present, and future.
How they loved their Lord and their neighbor.

If this church could speak,
It would proclaim loudly, with the ringing of its bell,
The good news for the hungry, the homeless, and the downtrodden.

If this church could speak,
It would say, "my story is not finished.
Blessed are those who are searching,
Who want to be an active part of the kingdom,
For here you will find God".



Food Delivery – help wanted
Our food delivery from Mountaineer Food Bank is next Wednesday morning, Nov. 25, the day before Thanksgiving (we have no control over the delivery date). After the food is picked up at Erickson Field in our rented U-Haul, it arrives at the church sometime between 10:45 and 11:45 to be unloaded. Unloading and storing takes an hour or less. We know everyone is busy but the more help we get, the sooner we can all get home for our own preparations. If you can spare a couple of hours, please let Linda know that you will be here.

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. 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. (these are our normal hours as of September 1st). If you need pastoral care outside office hours, contact Toni DeVore or Linda Crocker (see below). 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.



- **Intercessory Prayers:**

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



Good Shepherd Parish Prayer List

Mary Gevas – healing
Gene Allander – healing
Peter Gevas – healing
Ann Stevens– healing
Sophie Sun - healing
Nancy Werry - healing
Kim Forrester – healing
Diane Cottrill – healing
John Currey – healing
Amanda Morris – healing
Paul Bostic - healing
Ian Israelsen – healing/strength
Marcia Doyle – healing
Jone Johnson – healing/strength
Buck Harris – strength/healing
Deb Hepburn-McKinney – healing

Safety for all those serving in the Armed Forces
Donovan Burns, Sterling Slusher, Peter Keiser

Those needing healing from cancer



John Stevens
Rudi Miksa
Charles Sterchak
Jeff Alkire
Alana Dailey
Mirtala Smith
Ellen Faymon
Kira Mace
Gary Greer
Faith Beha
Ben Buskirk
Buddy Lee
Lois Switzer
Everett Gilmore
Courtney Rodriguez

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 daily.



- **Little Free Library –** Filling the church neighborhood with books to read. Your donations are always welcome.
- **Last Sunday Supper –** The next meal will be Sunday, November 29. Set-up and cook at 1 PM or help serve and clean-up at 5:15 PM. We begin serving at 5:30 and continue until about 6 (or earlier if we run out of food). We are usually out of the building by 7 or 7:15.



- **Food Pantry –**Can you help hand out food bags to the unhoused or assemble food orders in the pantry for our housed clients? The current need is volunteers on Monday morning, Monday afternoon, and Thursday morning. We also need subs occasionally. Contact Linda if you can serve a few hours weekly or just as needed. Also, **we need your used bags**, doubled if possible.

Coming Up:
Nov. 25 – Food Delivery from Mountaineer Food Bank
Nov. 26 – Thanksgiving
Nov. 29 – 1st Sunday of Advent, Last Sunday Supper
Dec. 2, 9, 16 - Advent Gathering – Soup, Reflection, Evening Prayer 6-8 PM
Dec. 7-9 – Adopted Families Gift Distribution
Dec. 14 – Deadline for Christmas Greetings for the Staff
Dec. 20 – Christmas Caroling
Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve service at 7 PM (music beginning at 6:30 PM)

Contact Information:

The Rev. Katie Beth Miksa	304-428-1525, ext. 4	rector.goodshepherdwva@gmail.com
Ginger Smith, Parish Administrator	304-428-1525, ext. 1	gingersmith.goodshepherdwva@gmail.com
Linda Crocker, Parish Ministries	304-428-1525, ext. 5	LLBC100@msn.com or text 304-210-5591
Toni DeVore, Senior Warden	304-991-2259	drtld51@gmail.com

One Call system 1-877-698-3261

This is the way we notify our members of important announcements.
Caller ID will say that the call is from Good Shepherd, but it is really from One Call.
Call the number above if you need a message from the church repeated.
If you are not receiving messages, contact Linda to be added to our call list.

Support our Ministries



