

The Shepherd's Staff
Monthly Newsletter of
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church at Swan's Trail
"A Community Celebrating God's Grace"
"Grace – Compassion – Service"
swanstrail@outlook.com www.swanstrail.org
5511 64th Street SE, Snohomish WA 98290

DECEMBER 2025

From the Pastor's Desk

Welcome to December, Church!

It's going to be a busy month as we prepare for the arrival of the Christ-child (in the midst of a busy holiday season). To that end, I want to introduce this month's theme of peace!

Last month we took a look at various forms and situations of conflict that arise, and we took some time to think about how to confront conflict. We'll flip the script and, in a month we could really use it, we'll focus on peace.

Peace shows up in the Bible in two places: The Hebrew Bible and the Greek New Testament. In the Hebrew Bible, the word, shalom, is used to encompass a broad definition that include:

Wholeness

Completeness

Well-being

Harmony

Prosperity/thriving

Safety

Rest

The idea behind shalom is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of fullness, where every part of our lives are put in right order to include: physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and even economic.

In the Greek New Testament, the word for peace is eirene, which also encompasses a broad definition to include:

Harmony

Conditions for prosperity and well-being

Security

Flourishing

Wholeness

Completeness

As I've shared before, the root word, eiro, gives us an image of a puzzle with the pieces coming together to produce wholeness and completeness. Like a Master Builder (Lego Movie reference), God brings the pieces into perfect unity to produce wholeness and well-being. That's what God wants for you. That's what God wants for your neighbor. That's what God wants for our world. And we'll have a month to discuss and identify how to cultivate it, where to get it, and God's invitation to spread it. So, if you need some peace in your life, December should be a helpful respite!

Last, as we look to the New Year, I am excited to announce next year's theme: Evangelism and Discipleship. We will spend a whole year defining, describing, and developing E&D in our lives and church! Keep an eye out for our end-of-year newsletter for more and let's get ready to grow in the New Year!

Peace be with you all,
Pastor JP

THANK YOU TO:

- Sam Danner for organizing the excellent CPR Class!
- All who helped provide the crafts and treats for the Advent Faire!
- Those who provided wondrous pies for the Thanksgiving Eve Pie Fellowship!
- Those who continue to care for our church home – inside and out
- All who fulfill Sunday needs – Supervisor to Open, greet and Close, Readers, Acolytes, Assisting Ministers and Fellowship – treats, set up and clean up!
- Don and Pat for hauling the greens for Advent Faire, Dell, Don and their friend Doug for getting the Tree, Donna for procuring the Poinsettias and all those helping Deck the Halls decorating the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall- Joni, Renee, Chad, Greta, Lilly, Kai, Noah, Pastor JP, Bri, Joy, Terry, Al, Marilyn and Pat.
- Those who donated Poinsettias to enhance our worship space for Advent and Christmas:

Memory of Alton Moen by Nancy Moen

Memory of Steven Moen by Nancy Moen

Memory of Family by Mary Nelson

Memory of Weston Robinson by Lisa Robinson

Memory of Barbara Keller by Lisa Robinson

Memory of Don and Pat Wheeler by Doug and Donna Garland

Memory of Louise Garland-Wheelen by Doug and Donna Garland

Memory of Dale H. Deierling by Dell and Renee Deierling

Memory of Nola Deierling by Dell and Renee Deierling

Memory of Flo Craven by Dell and Renee Deierling

Memory of Don and Martha Taylor by Joy Vaughn

Memory of Ken and Ellie Vaughn by Joy Vaughn

Memory of Stan and Irene McCutchan by Rich and Cheryl McCutchan

Memory of Bill and Mur Jensen by Rich and Cheryl McCutchan

Memory of Doc and Carol Pehling by Pat Pehling

ON LINE WORSHIP

Please remember and share with your friends and family that our weekly worship service continues to be recorded and posted on our Website and Facebook. This is a way to stay connected if you are unable for various reasons to attend. Just go to www.swanstrail.org

The NW Synod website has much information that may be of interest, especially the resources page, which can be found at: <https://www.lutheransnw.org/resources>

PRAYER REQUESTS

**Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus
and for all people according to their needs:**

*Tom Dillard's family and friends upon his passing
The Deierling and Siewert families on the loss of Dell and Joni's father, Dale
Jane and Jack Melynk and family on the loss of Jane's father, Jack Gleeson
Suzanne Walters and family on the loss of her mother, Helen
The Fox family on the loss of Mead's father
The Moen family on the loss of Al Moen
For health concerns:
Joy Vaughn's friend, Jeff, for healing
Chris Homme's sister, Julie, as she faces breast cancer
Jon Tollefson, undergoing cancer treatment, cousin of Cheryl McCutchan and Chad Masche
John Veale as he recovers from heart surgery
Lucas Taylor, Joy Vaughn's cousin's grandson, as he battles a form of lymphoma,
Cathy Karlsen
Lisa Robinson's Sister-in-law, Debbie, as she continues to recover from an auto accident
Richard McCutchan's sister
For all others who are in need of healing and wholeness,
For peace all around the world,
For Pastor J.P., our Congregational Leaders and for all people according to their needs.*

**Into your hands, Oh, Lord, we commend all for whom we pray,
trusting in your mercy through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

MINISTRY OF WORSHIP & MUSIC – Karla Kloes

Emmanuel, God is with us! We are now in the season of Advent. It is a season of waiting, preparation and hope. It is the beginning of the church year which feels a little odd because it is the end of the calendar year. We focus on the coming or birth of Christ at Christmas and the anticipation of His second coming. We decided not to have Advent services this year after all. We will reach out to the congregation ahead of time next year and check for interest and ideas. Hope you can attend the Christmas Eve Service at 7pm.

It has been wonderful to hear the choir. Thank you all so much for your gift to us.

Please be looking for a new signup sheet in the book in the fellowship hall for communion assistant in the new year. We are bringing it back again to increase participation opportunities.

Pastor JP will be out of town on Sunday, December 28th. I am still trying to find pulpit supply and will let you know.

Please pray for our church and our ministry, for our vision statement and goals and for God's will to be done.

ANDERSON BENEVOLENT FUND COMMITTEE – Dell Deierling, Chair

In November we emphasized food assistance. We awarded \$700 each to: Snohomish Community Food Bank, Maltby Food Bank, and Marysville Community Food Bank. In addition to this we pledged \$750 for McDonalds gift cards to be distributed through Community Kitchen. We also provided \$400 to Our Savior's Lutheran Preschool and \$900 to a local community member in need of housing assistance.

Our remaining funds were to be reserved for other individuals experiencing financial difficulties during this last part of the year. We in fact helped another community member by paying \$1,068 in past due bills and yet another with \$300 in assistance with fuel and groceries.

This year's Committee members are Tim Danner, Karen Goodnight, Ron Walther, Richard McCutchan, and Dell Deierling. Please feel free to reach out to us with any needs that you identify in the community. Opportunity! Two of our committee members will be completing their three-year terms this year. This is your opportunity to be involved in a very special committee. Please consider joining us in 2026!

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY SERVICE – Chris Homme

Thank you for your gracious and generous donations for the Thanksgiving Holiday Baskets! A special thank you to Cheryl and Richard McCutchan in organizing and delivering the food to three Riverview Elementary School families. The families were very grateful and appreciative.

December is Christmas. Your donations will provide food gift cards as well as a toy or personal item and an article of clothing for the same families at Riverview Elementary School, plus an additional family who is being assisted by the Benevolence Committee. The sign-up sheet is in the Fellowship Hall.

Please bring the wrapped and labeled gifts to church no later than Sunday December 14th Because of your consideration and kindness to our neighbors in need, four families can experience a Christmas with food and gifts for their children.

MINISTRY OF FELLOWSHIP – Lisa Robinson & Cheryl McCutchan

November was another busy month! What a pleasure to see everyone who attended the "Friendsgiving" lunch bunch, the Fellowship on Tap at Five Rights Brewing Company, the first aid class, the annual Advent Faire, and the Thanksgiving Eve pie social.

Thank you to all those who provided the after-service treats in November: Debbie & Cindy, Nancy H & Nancy M, Joni, Dean, Pastor JP, and Dell.

For December, Cindy & Debbie have claimed the 7th, the 14th and 21st are open, and the 28th is a group effort cookie extravaganza...bring a dozen of your favorite/specialty/leftover Christmas cookies.

Add December 14th to your calendar for fellowship on tap at the Garlands from 3-5pm. BYOB. Then on the 21st, after Sunday School there will be a movie, gingerbread house decorating and a thrift store mug exchange.

Looking forward to January, the youth will be bowling at Strawberry Lanes in Marysville on Sunday, January 4th at 2pm. Let Dean know if you would like to join in.

Merry Christmas everyone! If you have ideas for events we could add to the calendar for 2026, reach out to Lisa or Cheryl.

MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION –Dean Kloes

CHRISTIAN LEARNING - Sunday School for the youth is held each Sunday at 10:45 AM in the Anderson Chapel. The Sunday School for youth will be performing a Christmas skit during church service on December 7th. Also, there will not be Sunday School on December 28.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY - The women's bible study group will meet in the Anderson Chapel on December 19th at 10:00 AM.

SUNDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY - The Sunday evening 6:00 pm bible study group at the Barstad's home is working through the study titled *The Reason for God* by Timothy Keller.

MINISTRY OF GIFTS – Donna Garland

THANK YOU

Thank you to all who have been faithful in your offerings and support of Good Shepherd. Your generosity of time, talents, and offerings are very much appreciated! Thanks to your generosity we are ahead of our giving and lease budget as we enter the final month of 2025.

GIVING OPTIONS

- Contributing during our weekly service
- Mailing checks to: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 5511 64th Street S.E., Snohomish, WA 98290
- Utilizing your bank's bill pay option (Check with your bank or your on-line banking website)
- Using Tithe.ly donate link on our website, <https://www.swanstrail.org>

MINISTRY OF GOD'S HOUSE – Doug Garland

We have a new fire marshal in town now who paid us a visit earlier this month. He found a number of violations that need to be addressed. The biggest issue is that we are now required to have our fire alarm system monitored. I'm not sure how this will be done but I'm starting to look into it. If anyone is familiar with monitoring systems or has any ideas, please contact me and let me know.

The mower deck on our riding lawn mower has rusted out and is in need of being replaced. We are currently looking for a newer used riding lawn mower to replace the existing one. If you know of anyone looking to sell or donate a used riding lawn mower to the church let Dean or me know.

An item has been suggested by a couple of members that it would be nice to replace the thermostats in the sanctuary and narthex. There are three of them that we'd like to upgrade to newer, easily programmed and intuitive to use. If you have a suggestion or a little expertise in this area, please contact me with ideas and suggestions.

December 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>4-H Meeting 6-9pm</i>	2	3	4	5 <i>Project Linus 10-10</i>	6 <i>Project Linus 10-10</i>
7 Choir Rehearsal 8:30am Worship 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Bible Study 6pm	8	9	10 <i>Project Linus 10-3</i>	11 <i>Pilchuck Camera Club 6:30pm</i>	12	13 <i>Buay Bee Christmas Party</i>
14 Choir Rehearsal 8:30am Worship 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Fellowship on Tap 3pm Bible Study 6pm	15	16	17	18	19 Women's Bible Study 10am Anderson Chapel	20
21 Choir Rehearsal 8:30am Worship 9:30am Sunday School 10:45am Movie & Gingerbread House Making 11:15am Bible Study 6pm	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7pm	25 Christmas Day	26	27
28 Choir Rehearsal 8:30am Worship 9:30am Bible Study 6pm	29	30	31			

