

The Shepherd's Staff

Monthly Newsletter of

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church at Swan's Trail
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MARCH 2022

WELCOME TO OUR INTERIM CARE PASTOR!!!!

The Rev. Helen McPeak moved to the Skagit Valley in 2013. A priest in the Episcopal Church, she brings with her that broad tradition combining elegance in liturgy and curiosity in relationship. Helen's BS degree is in Animal Physiology from University of California, Davis and her M.Div. from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (member of the Graduate Theological Union). Her experiences in congregational, educational, and healthcare ministries in northern California and southern Nevada eventually brought her bold preaching and articulate pastoral style to the PNW. Helen delights in the connections that arise in our lives together as neighbors. When she's not in church, you might find Helen basking in the amazing natural world with family, friends and her black Labrador Retriever, Ceniza Rose. (Her cat, Romeow, declines to join the adventures.) Helen is grateful to come alongside Pastor Erik Samuelson as we navigate this season of transition.



A Note from Pastor Helen – March 2022

I have finished 29 out of 30 days of yoga online. Woot! (“Yoga with Adriene” – you can find her on YouTube.) Some friends and I agreed to use this as our exercise discipline in the season at the turn of the year when the omicron variant was rampant among us. Going to the gym didn’t seem prudent.

You need to know about me that I prefer to exercise in community. I need a class, a coach, some accountability. If someone else puts on music and tells me what to do, I exercise well, stay strong and flexible, and steward responsibly this gift of incarnation. Dance, weights, yoga, hiking... I can do that. Left to my own devices, however, I come up with perfectly logical reasons to delay actually moving, to limit repetitions, to wimp out, to not work “too hard.” So, when normal habits haven’t returned in this pandemic, online yoga with the support of friends seemed a good choice.

The only thing is that I started at the New Year, January 1. Yep, it is taking me 61 days to do a 30-day daily yoga program. I mean, sure, there is the stuff of life: travel and family visits and holy days that got in the way and such, but really?! It is not a demanding program.

Yet here’s the thing. I really am celebrating. I completed it. Instead of giving up when I missed a day, I simply picked up where I left off, appreciated the hospitable welcome Adriene extends each and every time, and moved my changing body. I set my perfectionism aside, stayed honest with my friends, and have done the entire program.

As we enter the liturgical season of Lent, this time of humble, honest reflection as we seek to be more open to the reality of God’s stunning gift of sacrifice and resurrection, perhaps that is a good approach. Traditionally, it is a season of discipline, taking on a behavior to help us grow closer to the divine, more rooted in the ground of all being, nearer to the one who claims us, who loves us beyond all imagination. Like New Year’s resolutions, it is easy to think big, to reach high for Lenten disciplines, only to peter out as the weeks pass. Maybe it is better to do something than to give up since we can’t be perfect.

So, it is Lent. How will you change your rhythm of life in some way, large or small, to keep yourself mindful of God’s impending grace? What action or cessation, what study or prayer, what art or relationship calls to you for these weeks? How will you make yourself available to the Divine?

...Because if you make yourself available, God gleefully will take advantage of that opening with surprising generosity, power, and innovation! Come and see.

I really will get back into my yoga class now that the viral spread is decreasing. My body feels better when I do. And the instructor in my local class is creative and knowledgeable and challenging; I’ll push myself with her, and regain strength and flexibility I need. And I will do it with some kindness, with some gentle respect for this body which is changing and tightening and descending. After all, it is Lent.

Remember that you are dust.

Prayer Requests

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

***Pr. Helen, Pr. Erik, the Transition Team and our own Congregation as we work through
the transition process on the path to seeking our next Pastor***

Karla Kloes and family on the loss of her sister, Fara

The Eldridge’s on the loss of Fred’s father

Ron Walther and family on the loss of his wife, Joanne

Michele Coady on the loss of her mother

The Kloes family on the loss of Karla’s mother

For health concerns:

Kandi Eldridge

*Bob Amberson
Richard McCutchan's sister
Heidi Ferria, Pat Heifort's daughter
Bo Henderson
Juli Reed, who is struggling with MSA
For all others who are in need of healing and wholeness,
especially those affected by COVID 19 and war
For peace all around the world,
For 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.**

Please include in your prayers Karla Kloes and her family. Karla's sister, Fara, died on March 1st. Karla wanted to share with the congregation that that Fara's service will be on Saturday March 26th at 2:00 pm at Zion Lutheran Church.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

Remember that Daylight Savings time begins on March 13 so set your clocks ahead one hour before you go to bed on March 12.

FROM THE COUNCIL - It was decided that we would follow the State Mandates regarding masks. We will continue to have hand sanitizer available throughout the church building and use safe practices for Communion. Starting March 13, masks will not be required, however, all are welcome to continue mask wearing and social distancing at whatever level they are comfortable.

TRANSITION TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

The transition team meets regularly as we work through this "liminal season" of our congregation. As you discovered on this past Sunday, we are asking for the prayers of the entire congregation as we do the work of transition. Thank you everyone for holding us all close in prayer.

COMING SOON:

New Look to the Bulletin Board!! We encourage everyone to check out the bulletin board as you enter the fellowship hall. WOW...how are you feeling about the transition today? You will find a chart on which to "pin" your feelings on any particular day!! Feeling like things are going well, we are making progress, pin up a green sticker. Feeling a bit unsettled about where we are headed, pin up a yellow, orange or red sticker.

As you continue into the fellowship hall, stroll past Good Shepherd's "pages of history". When did you come to the church? When were important events in your life celebrated at the church? How do you remember from "the old days"? Take a few minutes to "add your piece of history" to the church timeline.

March 13...Pastor Erik Samuelson will be preaching!! He has a plan to share with us that will show Good Shepherd's role in the global/community history on display. Help add to our history as well as learn how our past will lead us into the future!!

Pat Davis, Chair – Transition Team

MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY SERVICE – Marilyn Errey

As COVID restrictions begin to lift, Evelyn Agostinelli reached out to Matthew House in Monroe and Everett Gospel Mission Men and Women's Shelter for items in need.

Matthew House serves families of those incarcerated at the reformatory and some others who are struggling.

The Everett Gospel Mission serves homeless men and the Shelter for Abused Women and Children.

Matthew House: clean and gently used clothing for women

Everett Gospel Mission: clean and gently used clothing for both men and women (please, no suits or dress clothes)

If you are unsure what place you want your contributions to go, Evelyn has kindly volunteered to sort them for distribution. Thank you, Evelyn!

Thank you for your donations to the food boxes in the narthex. Donations are continuously brought to the Snohomish Food Bank for distribution in our community. Your generosity is appreciated by those in need.

MINISTRY OF GIFTS – Dell Deierling

THANK YOU!

Thank you to all who are faithful in their offerings and support of Good Shepherd. Your generosity of time, talents and offerings are greatly needed and very much appreciated! Together we will succeed in supporting the needs of our ministry for 2022.

OFFERING OPTIONS

To help you with your gift giving we continue to offer a couple of options should you not be donating in person. Please feel free to mail your contribution to the church. As a second option, most banks will send out checks for you via a bill pay type application. Check with your bank or your on-line banking website. An additional option is a Tithe.ly donate link on our website, <https://www.swanstrail.org>. We will receive reports from the Tithe.ly site as the funds are transferred to the church bank account to be able to credit you for these gifts as normal for year-end reporting. With this option you can decide to cover the transaction fees for the church if you wish.

Please prayerfully consider all your gifts to our church community (both financially and time/talents).

MINISTRY OF CHRISTIAN LEARNING – Dean Kloes

Christian learning continues at Good Shepherd with weekly Sunday School classes for elementary age students.

Also, each Sunday evening at 6:00 PM, bible study continues at the Barstad home where the adult group is studying the book titled *Free To Be*.

The women's monthly bible study group is working through the study titled *Trusting God - A Life Without Worry*. This month they will meet in the Anderson Chapel on Friday March 18th at 10:00 AM.

MINISTRY OF WORSHIP - Donna Garland

Happy March to everyone. March highlights include Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten Season and Daylight Savings time.

The last Sunday in February we welcomed Pastor Helen McPeak, who will be our care pastor during our transition/interim period. It is a blessing to have her with us, leading our worship and faith lives. If you have pastoral needs you can contact her directly, her email and cell phone on the cover page of this newsletter. As our care pastor she is the second half of our interim/transition pastoral team. Please keep Pastor Helen, Pastor Erik, your transition team, and the larger Good Shepherd congregation in your prayers as we navigate this process. To help with this, Karla Kloes has been inserting prayers in the Sunday bulletins. These prayers are from the book, "Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive" by Thom Rainer. Thank you, Karla. If you are interested in reading this book, there are still a couple of copies on the table just inside the church entrance. Take a copy, read it and return it for someone else to read. Thank you to the education committee for purchasing these books for the congregation to read.

Just a heads up that there will be some changes coming in the sanctuary and in the service. These changes may or may not be permanent and are intended to make the flow easier for the pastor and the congregation. Some

amount of change is typical for churches during their liminal or transition time. For those of you not familiar with the term liminal, it is the “quality or ambiguity or disorientation that occurs during transition, when a person or group of people is in between something that has ended and something else that is not yet ready to begin” a quote from “How to Lead When you Don’t Know Where You’re Going: Leading in a Liminal Season” by Susan Beaumont (which I highly recommend). It is a time of ending, looking back, clarifying purpose, looking forward, moving forward, and most importantly, prayer.

If you are interested in attending Lenten services, either in person or streaming, here are some local options:

Christ the King Lutheran Church – 1305 Pine St Snohomish, WA 360-568-5704

Wednesdays at 7:00pm, in person, service will be Marty Haugen Holden Evening Service

Ebenezer Lutheran Church - 2111 117th Ave NE, Lake Stevens, WA 425-334-0421

Lenten Services – Wednesdays at 7:00pm, in person and on-line streaming, each Wednesday will have a different emphasis under the theme of “The Power of His Last Words”.

To access on-line streaming go to www.ebenezerlakestevens.org

Online resource:

www.luthersem.edu – Prepare Your Heart During Lent

As always there are opportunities for you to help with the worship on Sundays, please consider reading, greeting, and/or Sunday Supervisor.

Lastly, if you would like to donate an Easter Lily for the sanctuary, there is a form included in this newsletter.

MINISTRY OF YOUTH & ADULT FELLOWSHIP – Karla Kloes

Bike Ride - On April 10th at 2:00 PM, the youth and friends of Good Shepherd are invited to go for a bike ride on Centennial Trail in Snohomish.

Hosts for Fellowship after worship are needed. Coffee is already provided. Just some treats (can be very simple) and juice are all that is needed along with clean up afterward. Please sign up in the notebook in the Fellowship Hall....share with someone if you don’t want to do it alone!



From the Bishop:

I’d like to intertwine two thoughts below. Bear with me as I lay out some rather disparate thoughts.

One) I don’t know my family history very well. Looking in the mirror, I assume that at some point my ancestors came from northern Europe. I do know that the famous frontiersman Daniel Boone is my 13th great-uncle (his sister, Sarah Boone, was my 13th great grandmother). The story is that Grandma Sarah ran off with a peddler and the Boone family disowned her. I have been tempted to take one of those DNA tests just to narrow down the areas in Europe where my ancestors historically lived but I haven’t done it yet.

Two) I am intrigued with the new field that sociologists, therapists, and scientists are exploring: epigenetics. This scientific field postulates that just as physical characteristics are passed down, so are times of trauma and loss. A growing body of research suggests that trauma (like starvation, war, a pandemic, etc.) can be passed from one generation to the next. (This is much more complex than I can write about here and it is not a definitive thing. Some scientists dispute these findings or think more research needs to be done. It is, however, intriguing.)

As I reflect on these two thoughts, I am caught with the idea that we all come from something, from somewhere, from someone. We all carry the DNA of our ancestors. We see this when we look at one another – the differences in height or hair color or the length of one’s second toe all show differences in DNA. But it is more than that. We also carry the cultures of our ancestors – the ways that we see the world, the ways we celebrate, the ways we grieve, the ways we worship, and so much more. And, perhaps, if we follow recent science, we are all also carrying the trauma that our foremothers and forefathers lived through. It is a part of us – perhaps more deeply embedded than we can understand.

Now, I am not a sociologist or a scientist or a therapist or a doctor. What I am is a pastor. And so, I will speak from that perspective.

First, I am amazed how God formed each of us for resiliency and for community. All of us – a jumble of cells, a jumble of our ancestors’ DNA – all of us beloved children of God, uniquely and carefully made. Second, I am struck that we are broken. We are carrying scars – individually, historically, and as community. We desperately need healing. We desperately need each other. We desperately need Jesus. In other words, we are both saint and sinner – individually and collectively. So, how do we move forward? How do we, individually and as community, heal?

Fundamentally, we need to acknowledge our own brokenness. Healing comes when we acknowledge our own pain and our own complicity in the pain of others. Healing comes when we see each other’s pain. Healing comes when we admit that we have – knowingly or unknowingly – added to someone else’s pain. Healing comes when together we confess our sin, receive forgiveness, and step forward into new life in God’s Spirit together.

While it might seem easier, we cannot expect that this healing will take place immediately. And perhaps this is a good thing. For healing and growth go hand in hand. As therapist and author Resmaa Menakem writes, “In today’s America, we tend to think of healing as something binary: either we’re broken, or we’re healed from that brokenness. But that’s not how healing operates, and it’s almost never how human growth works. More often, healing and growth take place on a continuum, with innumerable points between utter brokenness and total health.” *My Grandmother’s Hands: Radicalized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies.*

During this Lenten time, may we all enter into a time of reflection, contemplation, confession, and ultimately, healing. May we live into God’s Spirit of true peace.

+ Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee
bishop@lutheransnw.org

SPECIAL OCCASIONS IN OUR CONGREGATION:

(If we don’t have your family’s special dates, please write them down and pass it along to Pastor Tom or Pat Pehling - we’d like to include everyone!)

BIRTHDAYS

March 1 Pat Davis
2 Marge Griffiths
4 Ashley Holten
9 Ron Walther
12 Jane Melnyk
13 Cormac Fox, Aiden Flynn
16 Chris Reed
17 Jenny Toutonghi, Brian Melnyk
18 Cathy Karlsen
20 Jeff Day
21 Eli Fox
22 Mark Martina
26 Jeff Taylor
29 Leif Flynn

ANNIVERSARIES

18 - Paul & Jenny Toutonghi
29 - Alton & Nancy Moen
29 – Brian & Jane Melnyk

EASTER LILIES FOR THE SANCTUARY

I will donate _____ Lilies at \$10 each to decorate the Sanctuary for Easter

In Memory of _____

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____

Please put in Offering Plates or mail form and check for \$10 each to

5511 64th ST SE, Snohomish WA 98290

Notice of donations will be in the April Newsletter

Donated by _____