



THE MESSENGER

Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
December 2022



Pastor's Message

THE REV. JOSHUA SULLIVAN

Grace and peace to you from Christ Jesus our ending and our beginning,

Advent, our season of preparation, is here! And so we prepare for the coming of Christ on the four Sundays of Advent. Especially this year we prepare by telling the story of God's coming in Christ in a special joint-congregation Christmas Pageant at Grace and St. John's Episcopal Church on Sunday, December 18th at 10 AM. And we prepare as well on Thursday evenings at 7 PM in our sanctuary with contemplation and prayer.

But preparing for what? Is it like getting ready for a birthday party? To be frank: no. I find that when I tell people that December 25th is *not* Jesus' birthday, I'm met with confusion or disbelief—"What do you mean it's not his birthday! It's the day we celebrate his birth, isn't it?"

Well, yes and no. No one knows when Jesus of Nazareth was born, that living, breathing, bleeding and dying man who we believe perfectly embodied God's compassionate and merciful will. And I've also found that when I inquire with folks why they think the Western Church picked December 25th for celebrating and remembering Jesus' birth, they usually reply with some comment about co-opting or rerouting pre-existing pagan celebrations of the Winter solstice. Actually, the Mothers and Fathers of the Church chose December 25th as St. Mary's so-called due-

date because they decided that the Spring equinox was the right moment to *first* celebrate when the Holy Spirit "overshadowed" Mary and Christ was conceived.

And using all this calendrical, cosmological stuff is the Church's way of saying: God comes *here*. God comes to creation, to *this* earth that rotates around *this* sun, this home of ours that (in the Northern Hemisphere at least) flows from light to dark to light, from cold to warmth to cold. Christmas (and Advent leading up to it) is not really about celebrating Jesus' birthday, but remembering and reliving the reality that our God is a God who *comes to us*.

Jesus of Nazareth was born once. But Christ, the Word, "overshadows" us again and again, year after year, moment after moment—as new people come to faith or long-time believers are revitalized and encouraged anew. And Christ is born into this world again and again as we, the Church, turn our hearts toward others, or when we do crazy, unthinkable things like look past the vitriol of political polarization and see the humanity of *all* our neighbors. Christ comes when we do really beat our swords into plowshares—when we give up on our own selfish dreams for the future, and set instead our hands to the work of mercy.

Thanks be to God that Christ is coming!

Pastor Josh



Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Mission Statement

Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is called and committed to building a vibrant, welcoming community to proclaim Christ, nurture the faith, serve others and bear bold witness to God's love throughout the greater Hamden region and beyond.

**CHRIST THE GOOD
SHEPHERD LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
**600 Shepard Avenue
Hamden CT 06514**

The Rev. Joshua N. Sullivan
Office— 203-288-3196
Cell— 860-748-3837
pastor@christgoodshepherdlutheran.org
www.christgoodshepherdlutheran.org
office@christgoodshepherdlutheran.org

Council Members
1/1/22—12/31/22

President: Ken Watson
 Vice-President: Leo Goodrich
 Secretary: Brenda Samal
 Treasurer: Ruth Lye
 Financial Secretary: Lisa Ball-Goodrich
 Worship: John Downs
 Fellowship: Linda Kapitan
 Inreach: Ursula Hunter
 Outreach: Sharon Napolitano
 Property: Durbin Hunter
 Learning: Krista O'Brien
 Stewardship: Rob Landino

***In Our
Thoughts & Prayers***



Ruth	Anna	Janice
Paul	Elfriede	Christopher
Palmer	Lois	Jim & Joanne
Kathy	Jessika	Elinor
Phil	Greg	John
Sue	Florence	Geneva
David	Barbara	Family of Peggy

Help Decorate Our “Winter Warmth Tree”

As the cold weather returns, we will be resuming our tradition of collecting winter-weather wear for those in need.

Beginning on Sunday, Dec. 11, and throughout the Christmas season, the congregation is invited to help decorate the branches of our “Winter Warmth Tree” with new outerwear for women and children, including hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, socks, slippers and throws.



Donations to our Winter Warmth Tree will benefit those served by New Reach Life Haven Shelter, an emergency shelter for single women with children and single pregnant women, and will be delivered to the shelter in January.

If you have any questions about this project, please speak with Sharon Napolitano, project chair.



Council met 11/16. Pastor relayed there is much to be happy about -community involvements and facility renewals continue and we have welcomed many guests at worship.

Forward Leadership— Team attended a seminar in Worcester on Community Engagement. Next retreat in January 2023 at Calumet.

Worship— Average attendance in October— 36. Poinsettia plant sign-up sheet posted on hallway bulletin board. On Christmas Day, members of Mt. Carmel Congregational will be worshipping with us.

Financials— Reports are encouraging—even with loss of rental income from LCGS. Proposed budget for 2023 reviewed. It is based on growth and ministry.

Property— Ceiling and insulation in fellowship hall removed. The insulation will be replaced.

Facility Renewal— Painting will continue.

Outreach— Website views continue. In October, 12 bags of food delivered to Hamden Food Bank and in November, 12 frozen turkeys and fixings. Salvation Army “Angel Tree” set up in the narthex.

Fellowship— Next book club read is The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.

Inreach— Calls continue to those homebound.

Education— Average attendance at Cross Generation Sunday morning classes— 12.

The Nominating Committee presented the proposed slate of council for 2023.

A local Pentecostal church requested use of our church for evening worship services. Council raised many questions and Pastor will speak more with the Rev. and Deacon of that church.

Next council meeting: 12/7/22

Congregational meeting: 12/11/22

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING December 11, 2022

Items of importance on the agenda-

- ♦ Approve proposed slate of council
- ♦ Approval proposed budget for 2023

PROPOSED NOMINATIONS CGSLC COUNCIL 2023

(Submitted to current Council for approval on November 16, 2022)

President - Ken Watson

Vice President - Cyndi Hansard

Secretary - Brenda Samal

Treasurer - Ruth Lye

Financial Secretary - Lisa Ball-Goodrich

Worship - Starr O'Connor

Congregational Care - Linda Ibsen

Property - Durbin Hunter

Outreach:

Community Service - Sharon Napolitano

Outreach: Special Projects – Leo Goodrich

Memorial Poinsettia Plants



A Sign-up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board for poinsettia plants. Please indicate how many plants you wish to donate, your name/names, and who it is "in loving memory of."

The price of each plant is \$14.00. Plant payment checks may be included in ones weekly offering envelope, indicating a separate line item of "Christmas plant."

If so desired, plants may be taken home after December 25.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Please note that newsletter articles for the January 2023 issue of The Messenger are due Tuesday, December 27.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

Date	Worship Assistant	Lector	Ushers	Altar Guild
12/4	Sharon Napolitano	David Brown	Durbin & Ursula Hunter	Lorraine Brown
12/11	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Rob Hansen	Emily Cui Ken Watson	Sharon Napolitano
* 12/18 *	Worship service & Christmas Pageant at Grace & St. John's Episcopal Church			
12/24 Christmas Eve 5:30pm	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Michael Lye	Phil & John Napolitano	Ursula Hunter
12/25 Christmas Day	John Downs	Volunteer needed	Volunteers needed	Ursula Hunter John Downs
1/1/2023	Sharon Napolitano	Paul Snyder	Paul Snyder John Downs	Sharon Napolitano
1/8	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Ken Watson	Starr O'Connor Ken Watson	Starr O'Connor

If you cannot serve on your appointed day, please find a substitute, and let John, Pastor and Brenda know.
Thank you for serving!

* Worship change on December 18, 2022 *

Christ the Good Shepherd congregation has been invited to worship and participate in Grace & St. John's Episcopal Church Christmas Pageant. (See details on page 6) There will not be a service at Christ the Good Shepherd on that day—Pastor Josh will be presiding at Grace & St. John's.

Parking is available behind their building at 2927 Dixwell Avenue, or in the medical office lot nearby. We will be worshipping *only* there, so you may give a goodwill donation to their ministry, but regular December tithes and offerings for CGS can be given prior to or on Sun Dec 11 or after, etc. If anyone would like to participate, read, etc. they can get in touch with Pastor Josh.

Refuse & Recycling
December, 2022

Date bins out / in	Responsible Party	Recycling?
11/30 & 12/1	John Downs	No
12/7 & 12/8	Leo Goodrich	Yes
12/14 & 12/15	Phil Napolitano	No
12/21 & 12/22	Rob Hansen	Yes
12/28 & 12/29	Leo Goodrich	No



**Salvation Army
“Angel Tree” Gifts
Deadline December 4**

On Christmas morning, smiles will abound as children from across the Greater New Haven area open presents made possible through the Salvation Army’s “Angel Tree” program. Our congregation’s continued support of this program, which provides new clothing and toys for families in need, will be responsible for 10 of those Christmas-morning smiles.

Like last year, we are planning to provide all of the children on our list with a gift of clothing plus three additional gift requests. Each gift request—40 in all—was represented by one “Angel Tag” on our “Angel Tree.”

If you didn’t get a chance to sign up for an Angel Tag, it’s not too late to participate. Monetary donations are still welcome and will help provide our volunteer shoppers with the funds needed to complete shopping for the children on our list. If you wish to donate, please speak with Sharon Napolitano, project chair, or contact her at snapolitano1@yahoo.com.

As a reminder, all unwrapped gifts of toys and clothing are due at Christ the Good Shepherd on Sunday, December 4; please attach the corresponding Angel Tag to the gift purchased for that child. The gifts will be delivered to the Salvation Army in New Haven by Friday, December 9, for distribution to our Angel families.

Thank you for your generosity and support!



The Salvation Army “Angel Tree” was decorated and placed in the church Narthex with 40 Angel tags on Sunday, Nov. 13.



Saturday,
December 24, 2022
Candlelight Service
5:30pm



Sunday,
December 25, 2022
Holy Communion
10:00am

**CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD
BOOK CLUB**

The book club’s next read is-

The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe:
The Chronicles of Narnia
By C. S. Lewis

Book discussion will be January 12, 2023.

Turkeys and Trimmings Help Fill Thanksgiving Day Meal Baskets

Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church joined local efforts to help feed those in need this Thanksgiving by participating in the Hamden Community Services Thanksgiving Food Drive. This year, we collected 13 turkeys and 10 bags of trimmings, in support of the Thanksgiving Meal Basket project.

On Wednesday, Nov. 16, Council Outreach Chair Sharon Napolitano and John Downs delivered the perishable and non-perishable food items to the Hamden Food Bank, where 550 meal baskets were being prepared for delivery in the Hamden Community prior to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Thank you to all for your support. Our collection of non-perishable food and personal care items for the Hamden Food Bank continues.



Turkeys and trimmings collected at Christ the Good Shepherd were delivered to the Hamden Food Bank on Nov. 16.

Christmas Pageant at Grace and St. John's Episcopal Church, December 18, 2022

A Christmas pageant is a wonderful way to bring people together over the Good News that God has come to be one of us, to share our life and our death, and to show us the way to live together in love.

We will use quite a simple script. It's called "A Child of Might," and it's based on the folk dramas called "mystery plays" that were put on by guilds of workers in many English towns in the late Middle Ages. It has four scenes:

- (1) the prophets;
- (2) the annunciation to Mary;
- (3) the birth of Jesus;
- (4) the shepherds.

Unlike "People Look East," it has speaking parts. These are: **God, four prophets (Moses, David, Isaiah and Daniel); Gabriel; Mary, Joseph, and up to six shepherds.**

God and the prophets can read their parts, but the others should memorize their lines. **Mary and Gabriel have the most lines; Joseph and the shepherds each just have a few.** All the lines are in rhyming verse, which makes them easier to memorize.

We also need an ox and donkey (who don't say anything!); and anybody who wants to not have to learn lines but still put on a costume and be part of the manger scene, can be an angel or an extra (non-speaking) shepherd, or a lamb. This pageant is short enough that we can include toddlers as lambs if they have a member of their own family as "their" shepherd, to take care of them.

And there's also a narrator who reads lines of scripture for the congregation to respond. That narrator can be one person for the whole pageant, or a different person for each scene.

(Excerpts from email from Gretchen Pritchard, Grace & St. John's Episcopal Church)

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
				1 7pm– Advent Vespers	2	3
4 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:00am Cross-Generation Faith 10:00am Holy Communion	5	6	7 7:00pm- Council meeting	8 7pm– Advent Vespers	9	10
11 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:00am Cross-Generation Faith 10:00am Holy Communion Congregational Meeting	12	13	14	15 7pm– Advent Vespers	16	17
18 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> 10:00am Worship & Christmas Pageant at Grace & St. John's Episcopal Church	19	20	21 	22 7pm– Advent Vespers	23	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 5:30pm
25 <i>Nativity of Our Lord</i> 10:00am Holy Communion	26 	27	28	29	30	31

Masks optional

In light of the changes in mask policy in the town of Hamden and decreased COVID cases across the state, the congregational council has voted to make masks optional during worship and inside the building.

Facebook Live will always continue to be available.

If you are immuno-compromised, unvaccinated, feeling sick, have been exposed to someone who tested positive, or you yourself have tested positive, or you just are not comfortable worshiping in-person—please join us via Facebook Live! Remember to say “Hi, from so-and-so!” in the comments section so we know who is worshiping with us.

Holy Communion continues.

The communion elements are prepared by our altar guild with masks and gloves. If you are not comfortable removing your mask to receive, come forward with arms crossed for a blessing. *Please wait at the first pew in the center aisle, and allow the person in front of you time to receive both bread and wine before you come forward for bread.*