

THE MESSENGER

Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
April, 2023

Vol. 3 Issue 4



Pastor's Message

THE REV. JOSHUA SULLIVAN

Grace and peace to you in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord,

April begins just as we tip from the 40 Days of Lent into the Paschal mystery that we celebrate and remember each year during Holy Week. And the Paschal mystery of course is the very core of our faith. It is the movement from Jesus' last meal with his followers, to death on the cross, to his passing from death into new life on the Third Day. It is into this Paschal mystery we have been baptized, and in which we wade again every Sunday. It is for this mystery, by this mystery, that we exclaim together on Easter morning: Alleluia!

And so on both Passion-Palm Sunday and Good Friday we will hear not only of Jesus' ironic, triumphal entry into Jerusalem, surrounded by his gleeful followers, but also of Jesus' last days and hours. On Passion-Palm Sunday we hear Matthew's perspective, and on Good Friday, with the help of our friends from Grace & St. John's Episcopal Church, we hear from John.

In Matthew's Gospel, we are told that after their last meal together, Jesus and the disciples went outside, in the evening, to a place on the western side of the Mount of Olives. Matthew tells us it was called Gethsemane. In John's Gospel, it is written only that this place was a garden, and it was on the way to the Mount of Olives. Geography aside, this is a place where Jesus prays, and struggling with his painful fate, he

surrenders to it. And this got me to thinking: Why a garden?

Jesus struggled with his fate first in the Gospels in the wilderness, in the desert. But here it is a garden. When we think of gardens and faith, perhaps our minds go to another famous one: the Garden of Eden. According to the evocative images in scripture, this garden is where human life and culture began. In this first garden God gives God's first commands: for Adam to till and keep it, and to stay away from the Tree of Life. In this garden there grew not only food, but "the knowledge of good and evil," and even life too.

So, what is a garden? Maybe a silly question. A garden is a place where things grow. A garden is also an intentional space, a place where things are planted by human hands, a place set away, a destination to work and also to rest. A place that needs attention ("keeping" to use the biblical word) and a place that yields life and health, combining the bright sunlight from above and the mysterious and beautiful black soil beneath our feet. Both Gethsemane and Eden are gardens, outside places, places tucked away, where God's creatures seek God in prayer, and where they find connection as well. Lots to think about!

Lots to think about especially because our Congregational Council has recently approved a gardening experiment at our church! With the help of the leadership of Rob Hansen and the Outreach Team, we have connected with leaders at the Keefe

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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**

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**Council Members
1/1/23—12/31/23**

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
Special Projects	Leo Goodrich

***In Our
Thoughts & Prayers***



Ruth	Anna	Sandy
Paul	Elfriede	Gerta
Palmer	Lois	Matt
Kathy	Jessika	Mary Lou T.
Phil	John	Tonya
Stephanie	Florence	Geneva
David	Barbara	JoAnne
Jim & Joanne	Bruce	Family of Avis
Christopher & family		

SYNOD ASSEMBLY

*Theme: A Church Born in the Tomb: Death
& Resurrection in the 21st Century Church.*

The New England Synod Assembly will take place on Friday June 9 and Saturday June 10 in Worcester, MA. As a congregation we are allowed 2 voting members in addition to Pastor Josh. We can also register additional voting members who fall into the following categories - youth (14-18), young adult (19-30), person of color and person whose primary language is not English.

This is an opportunity to meet other Lutherans, discuss important topics facing our Synod and vote on a variety of items.

The congregation will pay for registration, hotel and meals. Please consider participating in this important gathering. Contact Pastor Josh or me with any questions. The registration deadline is May 19.

-Ken Watson

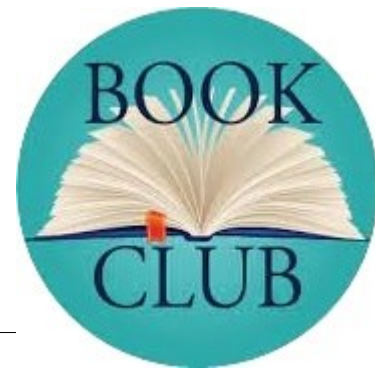


Palm Sunday Breakfast

**April 2
8:30-9:30am**

Leo Goodrich will be flipping pancakes and many people attending have signed up to bring other breakfast items such as fruit, coffee cake, assorted Danish, sausage, quiche, ham & cheese pockets and brownies.

Come and enjoy the food & fellowship before our Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday worship service.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

It is with great joy to announce that Christ the Good Shepherd community has once again grown! Welcome our newest members-

- * Jackie Menefee
- * Martin Cruz & Meagan Vann
 Brandon Cruz
 Olivia Cruz
- * Charlotte Beth DeSousa (*through Baptism*)
- * Deb Mason

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION

April 27
6:30pm
at
Christ the Good
Shepherd

The Good Life: Lessons from the World's Longest Scientific Study of Happiness

by
Marc Schulz and
Robert J. Waldinger

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Center, community gardening experts as well as with the Town of Hamden—and even with Grace & St. John's too—to begin piloting a community garden, up the hill on the forlorn grassy area behind our building.

Ever since the Stop & Shop on the corner of Putnam and Dixwell Avenues closed some years ago much of southern Hamden has become what experts call a “food desert.” That means a place where folks really do not have access to healthy, fresh food. According to recent studies as well from 2019 to 2023 the percentage of kids who qualify for free or reduced meals in Hamden public schools has increased by 3 points, while the total number of students in Hamden continues to rise. This is all to say people in Hamden are hungry, and they are hungry for real, healthy food. And so with the blessing of the Keefe Center, much of the produce of our little pilot garden will be made available to folks experiencing hunger and food insecurity in Hamden.

But more than just a tool for outreach and a tool for engagement (which the garden most certainly will be), I hope we can see this new project as a garden akin to those we encounter in Scripture. A special place where God's Spirit stirs, where we see grace in creation. A place to pray, a place to see the intermingling of life, death and new life. A place through which we can proclaim our trust in the Crucified and Risen Lord.

Blessings along the Way,

Pastor Josh



Spring Giving to Benefit New Reach Families in Transition

On any given night in Connecticut, as many as 3,000 people are homeless. This spring, Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is invited to help New Reach in its mission to inspire independence for all people affected by homelessness and poverty by collecting needed items for families in transition.

In January, our “Winter Warmth Tree” donations provided warm winter wear for women and children served by New Reach's emergency shelter in the New Haven area.

Current needs include new pillows, blankets, comforters, twin-XL sheets, towels and toiletries, such as body wash, shampoo and conditioner. Gift cards to Wal-Mart, Target, Stop & Shop, Shop Rite and Big Y, as well as Visa gift cards in increments of \$25, are also appreciated, as they allow families in transition to purchase food as well as clothing and household items.

Since opening its doors in 1990 as a single eight-bed shelter for women, New Reach, headquartered in New Haven, has developed a continuum of housing interventions and support to help thousands of vulnerable households and families throughout New Haven and Fairfield counties achieve stability and self-reliance.

At Christ the Good Shepherd, our spring campaign to benefit those transitioning from homelessness will run Sunday, April 16, through Sunday, June 4. Collection boxes will be set up at church for new bedding, towels and toiletries, while gift cards will be stored separately. If you have any questions about this project, please speak with Sharon Napolitano, Outreach Co-Chair.

To learn more about New Reach and its services, visit www.newreach.org.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

Date	Worship Assistant	Lector	Ushers	Altar Guild
Palm Sunday 4/2	Rob Hansen	Ken Watson	Durbin & Ursula Hunter	Starr O'Connor
Maundy Thrs. 4/6	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Rob Hansen	Paul Snyder Ken Watson	Ursula Hunter
Good Friday 4/7	John Downs	Sharon Napolitano	Durbin & Ursula Hunter	~
Easter Sunday 4/9	Durbin Hunter	Michael Lye	Paul Snyder Ken Watson	Sharon Napolitano
4/16	Sharon Napolitano	Paul Snyder	O'Brien family	Starr O'Connor
4/23	Rob Hansen	John Napolitano	Emily Cui Starr O'Connor	Ursula Hunter
4/30	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Anna Hansard	Cyndi & Anna Hansard	Deb Mason
5/7	Linda Kapitan	Michael Lye	O'Brien family	Sharon Napolitano

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

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS



4/2	Palm Sunday Breakfast
4/9	Easter Sunday- No coffee hour
4/16	Durbin & Ursula Hunter
4/23	Goodrich family
4/30	Grace & St. John's
5/7	Linda Kapitan

ALTAR GUILD

We are looking for parishioners to help with altar set up before services. Its easier than you think!

- * Promising personal training sessions.
- * If we get enough people; you will only be called to set up once every two months.
- * If you are unable to serve on an assigned Sunday....there is always someone available to cover for you.

Our congregation is growing and "many hands make light work". If interested, please email Starr O'Connor, (starrlo@att.net).

No Blarney—St. Patrick's Day Luncheon Takes Aim at World Hunger

On Sunday, March 12, a St. Patrick's Day-themed coffee hour following the morning worship service raised more than **\$500** toward the ELCA's World Hunger relief campaign. The luncheon, hosted by the Napolitano family, featured a menu of corned beef and cabbage, soda bread and other Irish fare, and was attended by 41 people. A free-will offering brought in donations totaling \$553 and will be matched by a generous gift to the New England Synod, bringing the event total to more than \$1000 toward the fight against world hunger.

Thanks to all for their participation and assistance with desserts and sides as well as set-up, cleanup and kitchen detail. Special thanks to Jo Ann Isleb, for chairing this Lenten campaign.

From 2019 to 2022, the number of undernourished people grew by as many as 150 million, a crisis driven largely by conflict, climate change, disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, including the conflict in Ukraine, the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria and the severe drought in Africa. Currently as many as 828 million people go hungry in the world.



Throughout Lent, we can continue to contribute to the fight against world hunger. A generous \$100,000 matching gift has been made to the New England Synod for this purpose, with the opportunity for participating congregations to double their efforts. Please consider giving as you are able to this important cause. Options to donate:

- ♦ Write a check to Christ the Good Shepherd Church and write "World Hunger" on the memo line. On your envelope indicate the amount of your donation on the "other" line and place your envelope on the offering plate.
- ♦ Mail a check to Christ the Good Shepherd Church, 600 Shepard Ave, Hamden, CT 06514 and write "World Hunger" on the memo line.

Additional information is available on the **elca.org** website about ELCA's work with world hunger.



St. Patrick's Day hosts— Phil & Sharon Napolitano along with son John & friend, Ellen and Dottie.



Everyone enjoying the delicious food & fellowship.



Council met on 3/22/23.

Pastor— Over 200 people began their Lenten journey receiving ashes at CGSL's Ashes-to-Go. Channel 8 News was also present. In the evening, Ash Wednesday service was at Hamden Plains UMC in collaboration with Hamden Plains, Mt. Carmel UCC and Grace & St. John's Episcopal. We continue to welcome guests to Sunday service. We have been asked to present at Synod Assembly our journey to our consolidated merger. Council accepted Deb Mason as a member of CGSL.

Worship— Palms have been ordered and Easter flower sign-up sheet posted. Two people volunteered to serve on Altar Guild. Usher duties have been written.

Financials— \$163 in donations from Ashes-to-Go was sent to Columbus House. Year-to-date total contributions are higher in 2023 in comparison to same period last year.

Property— Durbin presented a list of property upgrades for review. Council approved most which ranged from miscellaneous fixes in the kitchen to baby changing stations in the bathrooms. Girl Scouts will be selling cookies from our parking lot. Council approved request from VASA to meet once a month at our church.

Outreach— Rob Hansen presented a Community Garden Proposal. The Hamden Food Task Force has funds and resources available and would build the raised beds. Council motioned to move forward with the concept. Food drive continues for Hamden Food Bank. At Souper Bowl luncheon, 81 cans of soup was collected. The St. Patrick's Day themed coffee hour raised \$553 for World Hunger relief. A Spring outreach campaign is proposed to benefit New Reach. (See article on page 4.) Wifi is now present throughout the church building.

Congregational Care— Council approved the purchase of 15 Lutheran Study Bibles for Cross-Generation class. Discussion will continue about re-dedicating the fellowship hall and dedicating the new meeting room.

Next council meeting: April 19.



FORWARD LEADERSHIP

Recognize familiar faces in the photos below?

Our Forward Leadership Team, Cyndi Hansard, Leo Goodrich, Rob Hansen and Pastor Josh, joined other outgoing cohort and incoming cohort at a weekend retreat at Calumet. The outgoing cohort share their wisdom learned over the past year. {These two photos were part of an email from New England Synod titled, *Forward Leadership Community celebrates.*}



SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Please note that newsletter articles for the May Messenger are due April 23.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
						1 1pm– Memorial service for William Wakefield
2 <i>Sunday of the Passion/ Palm Sunday</i> 8:30-9:30am Breakfast 10:00am Holy Communion	3	4	5	6 7pm- Maundy Thursday Service	7 7pm- Good Friday Service	8
9 <i>Easter Sunday</i> 10:00am Holy Communion		11	12	13	14	15
16 <i>2nd Sunday of Easter</i> 9:00am Cross-Generation Faith 10:00am Holy Communion	17	18	19 7pm- Council	20	21	22 10am- Memorial service for Janice Vann
23 <i>3rd Sunday of Easter</i> 9:00am Cross-Generation Faith 10:00am Holy Communion <div style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">Articles for May Messenger newsletter due</div>	24	25	26	27 6:30pm- Book club discussion at CGSL	28	29
30 <i>4th Sunday of Easter</i> 9:00am Cross-Generation Faith 10:00am Holy Communion						

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 worshipping 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 worshipping 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.*