

# THE MESSENGER

Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
September, 2023

Vol. 3 Issue 9



## Pastor's Message

THE REV. JOSHUA SULLIVAN

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

This month my message to you all will be a little longer than normal! Please take the time to patiently engage with what the Holy Spirit is doing here in this place.

As some of you may have read in last month's newsletter, or have heard in an announcement in worship, there is a team of dedicated leaders that has stepped forward from our congregation with the hope of "Building an Inclusive Church." To accomplish this goal of sending a clear, meaningful message that we are a safe and welcoming church for all people, regardless of who they are, who they love, or what their identity is, Cyndi Hansard, Starr O'Connor, Ruth Knollmueller, Dave Brown, John Napolitano, and Linda Ibsen plan to use the resources of a national partner organization to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) called "Reconciling Works" ([www.reconcilingworks.org](http://www.reconcilingworks.org)).

This independent, non-profit organization and this process may be very familiar to some folks from one of our pre-merger churches. But as a *new* congregation it is imperative that we engage in this process anew, especially as it has changed somewhat in recent years, and craft a unique statement of welcome ourselves. When a congregation completes this series of prayerful conversations, learning opportunities, and finally crafts and approves a statement of welcome, then

we are granted the status of "Reconciling in Christ" and are listed on a national registry of Lutheran churches that strive to be safe and welcoming for all children of God—people of color, LGBTQIA+ folks, and people living with disabilities.

According to their website, the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program has, since 1983, been a public way for faith communities to see, name, celebrate, and advocate for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions in the Lutheran church. The RIC Program is made up of congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries, outdoor ministries, and other Lutheran organizations. But only since 2009 (though this was before even our nation recognized the legality of same-gender marriage, and explains the awkward language in the below quotation) has our denomination affirmed the identity and reality of same-gender loving people. The document adopted by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly named *A Social Statement on Human Sexuality*: Gift and Trust affirmed the diversity of theological and biblical views on sexuality, but, for the first time, it clearly stated what had been clear to so many children of God long before.

"...[S]criptural witness *does not* address the context of sexual orientation and committed relationships that we experience today. They believe that the neighbor and community are best served when same-gender relationships are lived out with lifelong and monogamous commitments that are held to the same rigorous standards, sexual ethics, and status as heterosexual marriage. They surround such couples and their lifelong commitments with prayer to live in ways that glorify God, find strength for the challenges that will be faced, and serve others..."

(continued on page 3)

**CHRIST THE GOOD  
SHEPHERD LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**

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**(for sensitive mailings:  
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**Organist: Caroline Henry**

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[office@christgoodshepherdlutheran.org](mailto:office@christgoodshepherdlutheran.org)**

**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:<br>Community Service | Sharon<br>Napolitano |
| Special Projects               | Leo Goodrich         |

***In Our  
Thoughts & Prayers***



|                        |           |          |
|------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Ruth                   | Anna      | Elfriede |
| Chris                  | Larry     | Gerry    |
| David & Paul           | Matt      | Pat      |
| Mike & family          | Carl      | Florence |
| Sharon & family        | Stephanie | Jessika  |
| Kathy & family         |           | Dustin   |
| Mary Lou & Christopher | Elinor    | Lois     |
| David                  | Palmer    | JoAnna   |
| Jim & Joanne           | Suzie     |          |



**Sunday, September 10**

9:00am-  
Cross-Generation Faith  
Formation classes resume  
10:00am -  
Holy Communion Service

Gracious God,  
As we gather today, we remember our role as learners and seekers on our journey with God. We give thanks for all those — present or away—who support the teaching and learning that takes place through our congregation. Be with all — children, youth, and adults—who will be participating this year in our bible studies, confirmation classes and small groups. Bless our times of study so that we may grow in faith and understanding. Bless our times of fellowship so that we may truly live as siblings in Christ. Bless our times of worship so that our confidence in your grace is strengthened by your Word and through your Sacraments. Amen.

**(Pastor's Message..continued from page 1)**

[Emphasis added. Scan the QR code or [click here for the full document.](#)]



While there are scattered references to same-gender sexual acts in Scripture, as the above states, I, along with the team of leaders here at Christ the Good Shepherd, strongly believe that this is not God's final word about the reality of human sexuality, human companionship and the radical welcome that was embodied by Jesus Christ in the gospels. Instead, we are inspired by how, at every turn, the overall message of Scripture is an emphasis of God's welcome of all people, the freeness of God's liberating mercy, and the redemption and healing of all creation accomplished in Christ. Here is just one bouquet of God's extraordinary and world-creating love:

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. —Genesis 1:31

I am the Lord, and I will free you from the burdens of the Egyptians and deliver you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm... —Exodus 6:6

How precious is your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings. —Psalm 36:7

Praise the Lord, all you nations! Extol him, all you peoples! —Psalm 117:1

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. —Psalm 139:13-14

Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the straps of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?  
Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them and not to hide yourself from your own kin? —Isaiah 58:6-7

This was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease but did not aid the poor and needy. —Ezekiel 16:49

Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as his own soul.... Jonathan made David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved his own life. —1 Samuel 18:3, 20:17

Then Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I am willing. Be made clean." —Luke 5:13

People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them, and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. But Jesus called for them and said, "Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs." —Luke 18:15

[Jesus said,] "Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him. —John 3:17

When they kept on questioning him, [Jesus] straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." —John 8:7

*(continued on page 4)*

**(Pastor's Message)** *continued from page 3)*

[Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross. —Colossians 1:15-20

And so forth and so on!

The final goal of the RIC process is to

- 1) Clearly state a welcome to people of “all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions” or “LGBTQIA+” and name our commitment to “racial equity” or “anti-racism” in a welcome statement.
- 2) Be open to calling an LGBTQIA+ and Black, Brown, Indigenous, Person of Color (BIPOC) Rostered Leader.
- 3) Allow sanctuary and/or community space to be used for LGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings. And;
- 4) Make a meaningful contribution annually to support the national RIC program.

In order to arrive at the four above goals our congregation will engage in many conversations and discussion in the months to come. And I invite you to bring the fullness of your experiences, your faith and your curiosity to this ongoing process. I do not anticipate these conversations to be rancorous debates, as modeled by the raging of our culture-war. No, in fact, I am confident it will be the opposite. For I know the Holy Spirit will

gather us together and empower the members of this congregation to bravely share about the intersection of their faith, their relationships and family, and the ongoing lived experience of those who identify as LGBTQIA+, BIPOC and people living with disabilities.

**“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.” —Matthew 18:5**

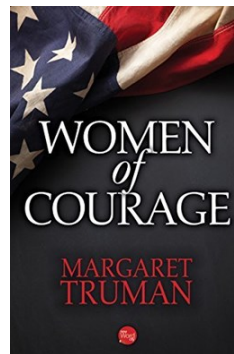
To God be all the glory,

Pastor Josh

## Christ in Our Home

*Christ in Our Home* is a quarterly devotional resource that encourages readers to live out their faith daily.

Copies of the October, November, December 2023 devotionals are available in the narthex.



The CGS book club will be meeting-

**October 12  
6:30pm**

at Christ the Good Shepherd.

If you would like to participate, please feel free to pick up a copy of the book and join in.

## 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.



## Community Garden Update

The garden team has been busy harvesting produce from the community garden this past month and delivering it to the Keefe Center. So far this summer, we've harvested tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, and butternut squash. As of August 27, the garden has yielded almost 70 pounds of produce, and there's more on the way!

The garden team plans to keep the garden going into the fall. As the season winds down, we will be doing some reflection on this year's garden while planning for next year.

A huge thanks, once again, to those who have helped out with this ministry or have expressed interest in doing so. If you would like to help out in this ministry, we would appreciate your help! Don't worry if you don't have a green thumb – training can be provided if you need it. Feel free to contact Rob Hansen, the garden coordinator, via email (robert.f.hansen2@gmail.com) or by any other convenient means.



Left– Vegetables harvested 8/27

Below– Garden beds 1 and 2



Council met 8/16/23

**Pastor–** Tanja Helmert will be serving our church as a part-time intern, organized by the Office of Supervised Ministry at Yale Divinity School. Pastor has been exploring ways to revitalize the front exterior of the church. One possibility is a pollinator and butterfly flower garden.

**Worship–** Average attendance in July was 40. Cross Generation class begins 9/10 at 9:00am and worship service at 10:00am.

**Financial reports–** Year-to-date contributions for June and July are higher compared to previous year. Ruth reported that the church is in the black—rental property and investments helping.

**Property–** Council approved the replacement of the hot water heater in the parsonage which is over 12 years old.

**Outreach–** Website visits increased in July. Food drive for Hamden Food Bank continues. The Back-

to-School Backpack project ended August 13 with 23 new backpacks collected. (See article on page 6.)

**Special Projects–** This year, God's Work. Our Hands is on 9/17. (See information on pages 8 & 9)

**Congregational Care–** The pray-ground is working out well. Many are enjoying the coffee klatch that meets twice a month. Phone calls to homebound continue and cards sent when appropriate. Plans in the works to set up a child-friendly area in the fellowship hall.

**Old business–** Cyndi explained progress of becoming a Reconciled in Christ congregation. She will give an update at the September congregational meeting. Council approved a motion to use the Wakefield memorial funds towards a new sound system for the sanctuary. Council also approved Tanja Helmert to serve as part-time intern at CGSL, under the supervision of Pastor Sullivan, as part of the Supervised Ministry at Yale Divinity School. Council is looking for people to be part of a stewardship team.

**Next council meeting: September 20, 2023**  
**Congregational meeting: September 24, 2023**

## Thanks for Generous “Backpack Project” Support

As school bells ring this fall, Hamden children heading back to class need not go empty-handed. The Hamden Youth Services Bureau’s “Schools Supplies Closet” is open year-round to help fill the gap for Hamden families who demonstrate financial need.

This year, our congregation helped stock the shelves of the Schools Supplies Closet through our annual “Back-to-School Backpack Project.” Led by Jo Ann Isleb, this year’s campaign, which ran from July 16 to Aug. 13, resulted in a generous donation of 23 backpacks and other school supplies:

Surpassing last year’s donation of 18 backpacks, this year’s collection included:

- ◇ 23 Backpacks
- ◇ 2 lunch bags
- ◇ 20 spiral notebooks
- ◇ 24 folders
- ◇ 5 calculators
- ◇ 4 packages of pens
- ◇ 3 scissors
- ◇ 9 markers
- ◇ 6 packages of glue sticks
- ◇ 2 pencil sharpeners
- ◇ 4 tape dispensers
- ◇ 2 packages of erasers
- ◇ 5 rulers
- ◇ 14 boxes of crayons

The School Supplies Closet, located at the Keefe Center, 11 Pine Street, is free for qualifying Hamden Youth (preschool to college age). Learn more about The program requirements at <https://www.hamden.com/273/School-Supplies-Closet>.

Thanks to all who so generously participated in this year’s campaign, and special thanks to Jo Ann Isleb for overseeing the project. The school supplies were delivered to the School Supplies Closet on Aug. 15.

## Ongoing Outreach—Ronald McDonald House Charities

CGSL has a continuing tradition of collecting the pop tabs from cans to benefit the Ronald McDonald House Charities. The collection bin, which resembles a treasure chest, resides in the narthex. When a sufficient amount is collected, Dawn Tiedemann delivers them to the Ronald McDonald House.

Ronald McDonald House Charities takes the pop tabs to a local recycling center where they are weighed. The funds raised go right back into Ronald McDonald House programs and services.



## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

| Date | Worship Assistant  | Lector          | Ushers                    | Altar Setup    |
|------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| 9/3  | Lisa Ball-Goodrich | Paul Snyder     | Paul Snyder<br>John Downs | Starr O'Connor |
| 9/10 | Tanja Helmert      | Anna Hansard    | Cyndi & Anna<br>Hansard   | Jackie Menefee |
| 9/17 | John Downs         | Rob Hansen      | O'Brien family            | Ursula Hunter  |
| 9/24 | Durbin Hunter      | John Napolitano | Phil & John<br>Napolitano | Deb Mason      |
| 10/1 | Tanja Helmert      | Ken Watson      | Paul Snyder<br>Ken Watson | Starr O'Connor |
| 10/8 | Rob Hansen         | Durbin Hunter   | Durbin & Ursula<br>Hunter | Jackie Menefee |

*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



|      |   |
|------|---|
| 9/3  | Ken & Chuddy<br>Watson                        |
| 9/10 | Goodrich family                               |
| 9/17 | No coffee hour-God's<br>Work.Our Hands Sunday |
| 9/24 | Goodrich family                               |
| 10/1 | Jackie Menefee<br>Rob Hansen                  |
| 10/8 | Hansard family                                |

## Congregational Meeting

Sunday, September 24

Immediately following worship service

# WELCOME

**\* Steven and Lynn Swanson \***

# THE TIME IS HERE!

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday



A nationwide event of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), God's Work Our Hands Sunday is a day to demonstrate to the world that we are a loving, caring organization dedicated to serving our communities

Again this year, our church will be hosting the Greater New Haven Conference of the New England Synod, joining our six fellow Lutheran churches of the conference in service, so we want to have a strong showing of volunteers from our own congregation

There will be a variety of projects available, ones for participants of all ages and abilities, opportunities of every shape and size

Join us in spreading our Christian love as Lutherans in cheerful service to our brothers and sisters in the Greater New Haven region

Please sign up on the bulletin board at church, or contact:  
Leo Goodrich

Email: [leo.d.goodrich@gmail.com](mailto:leo.d.goodrich@gmail.com) ; Voice / text: (203) 710-4981





Congregations of the  
Greater New Haven Conference,  
New England Synod,  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



## WELCOME HOME KIT SUPPLY DRIVE

for God's Work Our Hands Sunday (GWOHS) - September 17, 2023

### COLLECT SUPPLIES FOR FAMILIES IN NEED

- Air Mattresses
- Blankets
- Bowls and Silverware
- Brooms & Dust Pans
- Comforters and Mattress Covers (full or twin)
- Laundry Baskets
- Pillows and Pillow Cases
- Pots and Pans






We can all play a role in ending homelessness. As a family leaves a shelter and enters a new home, they need supplies to make it a home of their own.

### Here's how to help:

- 1 Collect new and unopened supplies (in original packaging) from the list above. Donate as much as you'd like - every donation counts!
- 2 Bring your items to your home church by Sunday September 10 or make arrangements with your church's GWOHS Coordinator.
- 3 The items will be transported from your church to Trinity LC in New Haven before or on September 17 for assembly into kits.

**Questions?** Contact your church's GWOHS Coordinator or your pastor

| SUN  | MON  | TUES | WED                       | THURS   | FRI                                | SAT  |
|--|--|------|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
|  |  |      |                           |   | 1                                  | 2  |
| 3 14th Sunday after Pentecost<br>9:30am Holy Communion   | 4<br> | 5    | 6                         | 7<br>10:30am-<br>Coffee Klatch  | 8                                  | 9<br>   |
| 10 15th Sunday after Pentecost<br>9:00am Cross Generation<br>10:00am Holy Communion  | 11   | 12   | 13                        | 14<br>Holy Cross<br>Day   | 15                                 | 16<br>Finish line for<br>Calumet<br>"Walk the<br>Walk"                                     |
| 17 16th Sunday after Pentecost<br>9:00am Cross Generation<br>10:00am Holy Communion<br><br>~God's Work. Our Hands~   | 18   | 19   | 20<br><br>7pm-<br>Council | 21 Matthew,<br>Apostle and<br>Evangelist<br><br>10:30am-<br>Coffee Klatch | 22                                 | 23<br> |
| 24 17th Sunday after Pentecost<br>9:00am Cross Generation<br>10:00am Holy Communion<br>~Congregational Meeting~<br><br><div>Articles due for<br/>October Messenger</div> | 25   | 26   | 27                        | 28  | 29<br>Michael<br>and All<br>Angels | 30   |

**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.*