

THE MESSENGER

Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
January 2025

Vol. 5 Issue 1



Pastor's Message

THE REV. JOSHUA N. SULLIVAN

Grace to you and peace from God our Beginning and the Lord Jesus Christ,

A Merry Christmastide and a Happy New Year to all members, friends, guests, well-wishers and on-lookers of Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church!

First, thank you so very much for the always extremely generous Christmas gift from the congregation, and for all the many thoughtful cards and sweet treats as well.

As we say good-bye to 2024, hasn't there been so much to celebrate?

The following is just a *sampling*—

- The Lord's Bounty Community Garden produced over **150 pounds** of fresh produce, and all was delivered to the Hamden Food Bank.
- **17 people joined the life of our congregation.** 13 were received by transfer or Affirmation of Baptism and 4 by Holy Baptism.
- On top of all our generous loose plate, memorial, envelope or mission giving in 2024, well over **\$18,000** has so generously been given toward Capital Improvements here.
- Our collaboration with **Grace & St. John's (GSJ)** continues to grow and grow:

- On Feb 14 we held our annual Hamden Ecumenical Ash Wednesday BONANZA;
 - On Feb 21 Bishops James Hazelwood and Jeffrey Mello (ECCT) came to our place to launch our 7 PM Lenten Evening Prayer Wednesday collaboration up on Shepard Ave.;
 - On the Monday of Holy Week, we had Evening Prayer and Lectio Divina down at Dixwell Ave.;
 - Led by Ms. Tanja Helmert, our Yale Divinity School intern, at 4:30 AM on Mar 31, Easter morning, we held an *incredible* Easter Vigil down on Dixwell Ave.;
 - On Sep 29 we packed our baskets and joined GSJ at Killams Point, Branford for their annual picnic and worship with Holy Eucharist;
 - In Advent members of GSJ joined us for 3 very meaningful midweek Devotions on Shepard Ave, and on Sun Dec 29 we all celebrated a wonderful service of Lessons & Carols commemorating the incarnation and birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- And this is not to mention all the amazing ministry of our **4 teams—Worship, Property, Outreach, Congregational Care**; as well as our congregation becoming a **Reconciling in Christ** community; our working with Yale Divinity School again via the Reimagining Church program and welcoming **Mr. Tim Bergeland** to lead a group in discerning what is next for our community.

Given all this, what can we look forward to in 2025?

(continued on page 3)

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

for sensitive mailings use:

PO Box 185531
Hamden CT 06518

The Rev. Joshua N. Sullivan
Office- 203-288-3196
Cell- 860-748-3837

pastor@christgoodshepherdlutheran.org

Organist: Caroline Henry

www.christgoodshepherdlutheran.org
office@christgoodshepherdlutheran.org

Council Members
1/1/25—12/31/25

- President: Cyndi Hansard
- Vice-President: Cathy Cahn
- Secretary: Steven Swanson
- Treasurer: Ruth Lye
- Financial Secretary: Lisa Ball-Goodrich
- Worship: Debra Mason
- Congregational Care: Jake Solomons
- Property: Leo Goodrich
- Outreach: Denise Lundgren

Welcome new council members!

PRAYER CONCERNS



- | | | |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Ruth P. | Christel | Elfriede |
| Sue | Carl | Kathy & Jessika |
| Mary Lou | Starr | Dustin |
| Rebecca | Bob | Katharine |
| Joshua P. | Chuddy | Alyssa |
| Ed & Carol | Randy & Karen | Pat |
| Gerry | Jillian | Paul |
| Elinor | Mike | Gerta |
| Lois | Dean | |
| Family of Palmer | | |

2025 CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES



Contribution envelope boxes for 2025 are labeled and ready for pick up. They are available in the narthex.

Another option for giving is by using the online giving portal called Tithe.ly. You can access it from the home page of Christ the Good Shepherd website.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE


Worship with us in person or online on Sundays at 10 a.m.

All-Ages Sunday Morning Learning at 9 a.m.

CLICK TO WATCH WORSHIP →

DOWNLOAD WORSHIP BULLETIN →

ONLINE OFFERINGS AND DONATIONS

Link to click for online offerings and donations 

PASTOR'S MESSAGE*continued from page 1*

For one, a new council! with many new officers and team leaders, as well as new goals for the congregation, which include but are not limited to: breaking ground on our Pollinator Garden out front; improving the efficiency and volunteer base for our Lord's Bounty Community Garden; focused ministry with young adults and men, and improving our music program.

Indeed, I especially wish to highlight that, together with the Executive Committee and the Worship Team, for 2025 we have **reimagined the role of our Director of Music, Caroline Henry.**

As you may have noticed, some experiments with choir in the last half of 2024 have proven that perhaps a regular, choral music program is not a ministry we can sustain here in our community. But, meanwhile, there is an increased desire to experiment with other, more inclusive kinds of worship music styles, from contemporary, to jazz, to gospel, to classical. **PLEASE check out Caroline's article in this month's newsletter,** assess whether you yourself would like to offer your voice or your talent to our new musical ensemble/gathering/band/team, and if you are not musically inclined, to support this new thing with your feedback as it takes shape this year.

Once again, God's blessings to you and your dear ones! And may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Josh



At our congregational meeting on Sunday December 8th, the people of Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church unanimously voted to approve our new welcome statement and affirm our desire to become a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation. What a joy it was to see everyone's hand go up!

Here is our new welcome statement that was written by our RIC team, approved by our congregational council in October 2024, and approved by the full congregation in December 2024:

At Christ the Good Shepherd, we celebrate that all people are uniquely and wonderfully made in God's image. We respect the dignity and worth of all. Following Christ's example, we welcome everyone in the fullness of who they are: people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions; people of all ages and abilities; people of all races and cultural backgrounds. We strive to embrace the diversity of our community in the Greater New Haven area, and we commit to work toward both gender justice and racial equity through the ministries of our church.

Thank you everyone for your commitment to be a welcoming and inclusive faith community! Also, special thanks to Pastor Josh and our entire RIC team for leading us through the journey: Ruth Knollmueller, Starr O'Connor, Linda Ibsen, Dave Brown, John Napolitano, and team leader Cyndi Hansard.

**Happy New Year!**

Thank you to all for your thoughtful and generous Christmas gift.

It is such a blessing to be a part of this wonderful church community!

Brenda Samal



Congregational meeting held on 12/8 and council met on 12/9.

Financials– November reports were discussed. Year-to-date operating, missions and capital improvements showed an increase compared to 2023. Profit & loss comparisons were also promising. The net income deficit was lower than in 2023. The 2025 budget was reviewed and approved at the congregational meeting.

Pastor– CGS welcomed 17 new members and celebrated 4 baptisms. Pastor will be taking vacation 12/26-12/28 and 12/30-1/5/25.

Congregational Care– Calls continue to be made and cards sent. Women who attended the Calumet retreat the weekend of November 5 had a wonderful time. Coffee klatsch continues to meet the first and third Thursday of the month, 10:30-11:30am.

Outreach– Team obtained three quotes from landscape contractors for landscape renewal at the church. Council voted to approve using All Area Landscaping. 13 turkeys and 11 bags of Thanksgiving food was delivered to Hamden Food Bank. Donations of used coats and sneakers go to Bloom Initiative. Christmas gifts for New Reach will be delivered 12/14. A new outreach activity involves donating time for Grace & St. John’s Dinner for a Dollar. Some members of CGSL have already served.

Worship– Average attendance: 48. John Downs will order and pick up poinsettias and then assist Chris Trutnau and Deb Mason arranging them around the altar.

Property– A building sub-team formed– Leo Goodrich, Ken Watson & Kris O’Brien. Repairs and upgrades continue to our church building.

RIC– Statement was approved at the congregational meeting. (Statement on page 3)

Nominating Committee– The proposed slate of 2025 council was presented at the congregational meeting and approved.

New business– Council approved new member, Barbara Bouvier.

- * The 2025 council will be installed on Sunday, January 12.
- * Next council meeting– January 20.

- * Annual congregational meeting- February 9. Annual reports will be distributed.



SEASONS GREETINGS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

First of all I want to sincerely thank you all for your generous Christmas gift. I'm looking forward to another year of music at Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church!

As we enter 2025, the worship team and leaders of the congregation have a vision to form a small musical ensemble made up of members of our own congregation. Its purpose: to prepare and offer special music, from a variety of genres, during the part of Sunday service where the offering plates are passed (the time when you might typically have heard the choir). The choice of genre is up to the musicians available, but for instance we might explore contemporary, folk, meditative, jazz, or other genres. My plan is to approach each piece as a short-term project, to ease the potential strain of commitment, and so as to welcome all instruments available, from banjo to bongos to bells, or whatever instrument you play! Once we know of your instruments/preferences/availability, we can begin preparing our first piece!

So I want to extend a warm invitation to any musicians in our congregation! If you are interested in participating in worship musically beyond the pews, either solo, with accompaniment, or together with others in an ensemble setting, please see me or Pastor Josh! As we grow and our musical offerings broaden, we hope to hear more of the musical gifts in our congregation, enriching our corporate worship together.

Musically,
Caroline

JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

Anniversaries-

9- Rob & Susan Landino



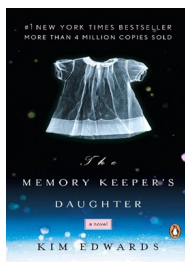
Birthdays-

- 4- Starr O'Connor
- 4- Larry Lundgren
- 5- Cathy Cahn
- 5- Ellen Frost
- 14- Emma Ingerson
- 15- Denise Lundgren
- 19- Chantel Leppin
- 20- Ken Watson
- 27- Deb Mason
- 31- Thomas Samal

CGS BOOK CLUB

As posted on Goodreads---

On a winter night in 1964, Dr. David Henry is forced by a blizzard to deliver his own twins. His son, born first, is perfectly healthy. Yet when his daughter is born, he sees immediately that she has Down's Syndrome. Rationalizing it as a need to protect Norah, his wife, he makes a split-second decision that will alter all of their lives forever. He asks his nurse to take the baby away to an institution and never to reveal the secret. But Caroline, the nurse, cannot leave the infant. Instead, she disappears into another city to raise the child herself. So begins this story that unfolds over a quarter of a century—in which these two families, ignorant of each other, are yet bound by the fateful decision made that long-ago winter night. Norah Henry, who knows only that her daughter died at birth, remains inconsolable; her grief weighs heavily on their marriage. And Paul, their son, raises himself as best he can, in a house grown cold with mourning. Meanwhile, Phoebe, the lost daughter, grows from a sunny child to a vibrant young woman whose mother loves her as fiercely as if she were her own.



The CGS book club will be meeting on January 29 at 6:30 on Zoom. Please join us for wonderful conversation. Hope to see you there!!!

CGSL OUTREACH IS A THREE-LEGGED STOOL

- ◇ Service to Others
- ◇ Stewards of the Earth
- ◇ Social Awareness

SERVICE TO OTHERS

On Saturday, December 14th, Christi Sharon and Denise Lundgren delivered the gifts you donated to the Gift-a-Family Angel Tree Project. Thanks to your generosity and outpouring of love, all the gifts from the angel tree were purchased. While at the New Reach administration offices we enjoyed a short tour and an orientation given by Joselyn, a program manager at New Reach. We were both impressed by the number of people being served by FISH, a food program that delivers food to homebound every 10 days, and by the aide that the New Reach organization provides people in their time of need.



OUTREACH- SERVICE TO OTHERS
(continued from page 5)



Joselyn proudly told us that they know how to end homelessness. They gave a hand-up to overcome homelessness to over 4,000 people again in 2024! But there are many that they can't help, due to funding shortages. The number of people living on the streets or on the verge of losing their apartment is growing every year. This is where volunteers and donations can help.

New Reach posted the following two updates in their emailed newsletter.

The Gift-a-Family was a big success.

*This week, our amazing case workers transformed into "Santa," delivering the gifts you donated to **576 children and adults in New Reach shelter and homelessness prevention programs**—a total value of over **\$30,000!***

*While the dollar amount is impressive, the joy it brought (and the relief parents feel knowing their children have gifts to open) is truly **priceless.***

To our donors, volunteers, and New Reach staff: thank you for spreading joy and holiday cheer to the families we serve.

A touching story of hope, generosity and kindness. Read about Keontraí Floyd, a New Haven teenager whose life has come full circle. After spending 12 years of his childhood without a permanent home, Keontraí is giving back in the most heartwarming way.

Watch TV news article: https://www.wfsb.com/2024/12/20/once-homeless-teenager-new-haven-is-now-giving-back-holiday-season/?blm_aid=150380545

How New Reach is Ending Homelessness



New Reach has been **preventing homelessness** for more than a decade by helping those who are at risk of becoming homeless.



New Reach provides **crisis services** to those who are already homeless, offering safe shelter, intensive support and guidance for the families and women we serve.



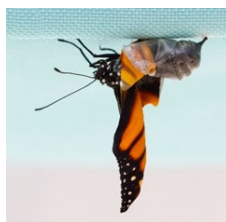
Our **housing** provides supportive, affordable living spaces for those who need short- or long-term assistance.



STEWARDS OF THE EARTH

Metamorphosis:

striking change of form or structure



CGS is going to experience a metamorphosis in the landscape. A butterfly cocoon may not look attractive, but from it emerges something beautiful. The current shrubs and trees in the front yard are overgrown and tired. In their place a

variety of shrubs, grasses and small shade trees will be planted that are both nature and people-friendly and will add beauty. We plan to consult with Kathy Connelly for advice. Learn more about her here: <https://www.speakingoflandscapes.com/>

(Outreach-continued on page 7)

OUTREACH- STEWARDS OF THE EARTH

(continued from page 6)

The first step is to remove the current shrubs and trees. Thanks goes out to Steve Swanson for gathering quotes from local licensed landscapers. After discussion, the council decided to hire *All Area Landscaping* from Hamden to do the work during the winter months when the ground is firm. Although the work will leave our building looking bare of greenery, that condition will only be temporary. In the end, our lawn and gardens will be beautiful and welcoming.

Change can create both excitement and anxiety. But this church family has a history of weathering change with grace. I feel confident that the change and improvements to the front landscape will be embraced with the same positive and hope-filled attitude. We look forward to sharing more about the plan in the weeks ahead.



Attention all who helped with the **Lords Bounty Garden**, or who are interested in the garden, please mark your calendar for our **Garden Review and Planning meeting on Tuesday, January 14th at 7:00 PM in the meeting room.**



SOCIAL AWARENESS

January is Human Trafficking Awareness Month

Data and Statistics

- * The Global Slavery Index (GSI) states that 1,091,000 people are human trafficking victims in the U.S.
- * The National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) identified 9,619 cases in 2023, which involved 16,999 victims of sex and labor trafficking.
- * The International Labour Organization revealed one in every 150 people were trapped in modern slavery worldwide in 2021, with

27.6 million in forced labor and 22 million in forced marriages.

- * Human trafficking involves the illegal trading and exploitation of people for forced labor, sexual servitude, and organ trafficking. This crime can start a domino effect of societal problems, from economic inequalities to long-term child trauma.
- * It is a global crisis mostly plaguing developing societies. However, the United States is no exception. Starting in 2010, the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month aims to educate and empower communities to disrupt trafficking networks.
- * Combating human trafficking requires efforts from governments, businesses, and individuals to address challenges such as victim identification. This awareness month is a call to action for everyone to help victims regain their freedom.

January 11th is National Human Trafficking Day, wear BLUE to show support and encourage awareness

Who It May Affect - Human trafficking victims can be any age, race, gender identity, sex, ethnicity, nationality, immigration status, or socioeconomic class. In many cases, victims do not come forward to seek help because of varying vulnerability factors that may include potential language barriers, a fear and distrust of authority, or they do not self-identify as a victim. Traffickers target vulnerabilities and will look to satisfy whatever need an individual has, whether it's providing basic needs like food or shelter or emotional support.

Physical or Behavioral symptoms. Does the individual...

- » Appear to be deprived of food, water, sleep, medical care, or other necessities?
- » Suddenly have more (and/or more expensive) material possessions, like purses, clothing, and or cell phones and/or large sums of cash on their person?
- » Have bruises or other signs of physical trauma?
- » Have tattoos or scars that would indicate branding by a trafficker? *(continued on page 8)*

OUTREACH- SOCIAL AWARENESS

(continued from page 7)

- » Have scars, cut marks, burns, or other signs of self-harm/suicidal tendencies?
- » Show sudden or dramatic changes in behavior?
- » Have unexplained absences from worship services?
- » Talk about or use language related to performing sex acts for money?
- » Suddenly become extremely quiet, avoid eye contact, and keep their head down?
- » Defer to another person to speak for them, especially during interactions with authority figures?
- » Appear to be coached on what to say, or their responses seem rehearsed?
- » Have a difficult time providing logical answers to basic questions?
- » Act fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, nervous/paranoid, or disassociated/"checked out"?

Who Are Traffickers? There is no single face of traffickers. They can be from any background, age, or ethnicity and can be perpetrators of any gender. To victims, they can be:

- » "Pimps" or a romantic partner
- » Employers, co-workers, or other professionals
- » Individuals in positions of authority or power, community leaders, or people of prominence and influence
- » Family members
- » Friends or peers
- » Strangers
- » Connections of mutual friends.

Suspect an instance of Human Trafficking?

Do not at any time attempt to confront a suspected trafficker directly or alert a potential victim to your suspicions. Call 911 for emergency situations — threats of violence, physical assault, emergency medical needs, etc.

Call 1-866-347-2423 to report suspected human trafficking to the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Tip Line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.

Call 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) or go to CyberTipline.org to report suspected child sex trafficking, sextortion, online enticement, and sexual abuse material to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC).

Other ways to help:

BE A CONSCIENTIOUS CONSUMER Speak up and insist that the clothes you wear, the food you eat, and the products you buy do not come from those in forced labor situations. There are a variety of digital applications, such as the [DOL's Sweat and Toil app](#), and websites that are designed for consumers to research and make informed purchases with the confidence that their dollars are not supporting forced labor practices.

Donate to the Salvation Army [Bloom Initiative](#) The Salvation Army Bloom Initiative helps young woman survive human trafficking.

You can bring gently used coats, and sneakers, and new underclothes and socks to our church for the Bloom initiative.



Thanks to the many hands who decorated the sanctuary for Christmas Eve.



December 29– Lessons & Carols

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

DATE	WORSHIP ASSISTANT	LECTOR	USHERS	ALTAR SETUP
1/5/2025	Rob Hansen	Denise Lundgren	John Downs Steven Swanson	Ursula Hunter
1/12	Michael Lye	Dan Smolnik	Phil & John Napolitano	Sarah DeLong Jackie Menefee
1/19	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Paul Snyder	Cyndi & Anna Hansard	Deb Mason
1/26	Rob Hansen	John Napolitano	John Downs Paul Snyder	John Downs
2/2	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Anna Hansard	Cyndi & Anna Hansard	Deb Mason

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

**COFFEE
HOUR
HOSTS**



* Barbara Bouvier

1/5	Leo & Lisa Goodrich
1/12	Cyndi & Anna Hansard
1/19	Jackie Menefee Rob Hansen
1/26	Leo & Lisa Goodrich
2/2	Sarah DeLong Linda Ibsen




**February is-
Love Your
Neighbor
month at
CGSL church**

This year we are focusing on children. We are collecting diapers, diaper wipes and creams and baby food for the Hamden Keefe Center.

We also continue to accept single-serving, shelf-stable, healthy foods for children to eat over the weekend when schools are not open. A full list of 'backpack' foods can be found on the Outreach bulletin board.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Please note that newsletter articles for the February Messenger are due **1/26**.

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1 Name of Jesus	2 NO COFFEE KLATSCH	3	4
5 2 nd Sunday of Christmas 10:00am Holy Communion	6 Epiphany of Our Lord	7	8	9	10	11
12 Baptism of Our Lord 9:00am Cross-Generation 10:00am Holy Communion Installation of 2025 Council	13	14 7pm- Outreach mtg re: garden	15	16 10:30am- Coffee Klatsch	17	18
19 2 nd Sunday after Epiphany 9:00am Cross-Generation 10:00am Holy Communion	20 6:30pm- Council	21	22	23	24	25
26 3 rd Sunday after Epiphany 9:00am Cross-Generation 10:00am Holy Communion	27 Articles for February Messenger due 1/26.	28	29	30	31	CONGREGATIONAL MEETING February 9, 2025 Annual reports will be distributed

Masks are optional-

If you or a loved one is immune-compromised, or you just want to be safe, feel free to wear a mask.

Facebook Live-

Facebook Live worship will *always* continue to be available.

In-person worship-

Please do not come to in-person worship or other church events if you are feeling sick or you yourself have tested positive. Please follow the updated CDC guidelines for isolation/quarantine.

Holy Communion-

Holy Communion continues as before, with wine in individual cups and wafers. 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. If you are not comfortable removing your mask to receive, come forward with arms crossed for a blessing.