

THE MESSENGER

Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
December 2025



Vol. 5 Issue 12



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

The Rev. Joshua N. Sullivan

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

Let us together welcome December in the year 2025 with all its contradictions:

We repent throughout Advent and celebrate at Christmas (5:30 Christmas Eve); at the darkest time of year in the Northern Hemisphere we burn our candles in order to behold the light; our worship celebrations are so public and yet so familial; we wait (not so) patiently for the coming of a Christ who already came as a child born to Mary; we bolster the mistrust of doubt; we beat our swords into plowshares; we proclaim the grace and mercy of God's judgment; we sit with the certainty of uncertainty; we are already but not yet.

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, let me say again: Look out this year for our **Advent Evening Devotions** in collaboration with Grace & St. John's Episcopal Church of Hamden. With scripture lessons, group discussion, silence, prayer and music, we will together sit boldly in our "uncertainty," waiting patiently for the Lord.

Join us at 7 PM at 2927 Dixwell Ave in Hamden on Wednesday, December 3, 10 and 17



(Park in the lot behind the large office building—the Dematteo Building—2911 Dixwell, enter GSJ using the long brown ramp and side door.)

I also look forward also to our Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 21st. And despite some changes in our income this past year (no more rent from the tenants at the parsonage), building our budget with the Finance Committee was an absolute joy. Why, you might ask? **Because your financial generosity this year has broken records!** Do come to our Congregational Meeting to learn more.

And speaking of uncertainty, over and over—year after year, despite what division, dismay, or disaster our world seems to throw at us—here, at Christ the Good Shepherd you continue to so generously give to God's mission made flesh here; God's mission of proclaiming release to the captives and good news to the poor; God's mission of mercy, justice and peace. So as our calendar and budget year comes to its close, let me say, on behalf of our Congregational Council:

THANK YOU!

And to use St. Paul's words: "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now." (Philippians 1:3-5)

With joyful expectation in the Lord,

Pastor Josh



**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

Director of Music: 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
- At-large representatives: Jake Solomons
John Downs
Ken Watson
Krista O'Brien



December Celebrations



Birthdays

- 1 - Chuddy Watson 23 - Phil Napolitano
- 2 - Krista O'Brien 25 - Paul Snyder
- 6 - John Napolitano 29 - Lynn Swanson
- 23 – Jess Hansard 29 - Rev. Dr Volker Leppin

Anniversaries

- 9 - Darryl and Linda Kapitan Johnson

Prayer Works



PRAYER CONCERNS

- Sharon & The Napolitano family
- Rebecca
- Erica & Adam
- Kathy, Mary & Jessica
- Richard & Family
- Bob
- Carl, Elfriede, Christal, Ruth K, and Sue Florence
- Paul
- The People of Tanzania
- The islands of Jamaica, La Española and the Bahamas

Council Update

Council approved the following actions at their November meeting:

Approved the 2026 budget that will be presented to the congregation for approval on December 21.

Approved the 2026 Council officers and At-large members that will be presented to the congregation for approval on December 21.

Approved Cathy Woade and Tessa Holk for membership.

Approved retaining Rev. Tim Hodapp to provide a report and findings on the congregational survey that was conducted in October. Rev. Hodapp will also lead a workshop for Council and the Congregation to discuss the survey findings and potential action items.

Notice of Congregational Meeting - Our next Congregational meeting will be on Sunday December 21 following church service. At this meeting, the Congregation will be asked to approve the 2026 Church budget and the 2026 Church Council Officers and At-large members.



- D** Delight yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart. (See Psalm 37:4)
- E** Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me. (See Psalm 23:4)
- C** Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. (See 1 Peter 5:7)
- E** Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights. (See James 1:17)
- M** May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him. (See Romans 15:13)
- B** Be still, and know that I am God. Psalm (See 46:10)
- E** Encourage one another and build each other up. (See 1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- R** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! (See Philippians 4:4)



Special Events



Mailing Address:
PO Box 8608
New Haven, CT 06531

Christ The Good Shepard Lutheran Church
600 Shepard Avenue
Hamden, CT 06514

November 24, 2025

Dear Sharon,

Thank you for helping raise \$791.00 at your recent event (Chilli Cookoff)! Your support enables us to help thousands of Connecticut residents in their struggle with homelessness and housing insecurity.

On any given night in Connecticut, over 3,000 individuals are homeless, and even more struggle everyday with housing insecurity. Last year alone there was over 27,000 requests for shelter in Greater New Haven County; 44% of Greater New Haven households live paycheck to paycheck (72% in Bridgeport!). We know 57% of children experiencing homelessness spend at least one day every month without food and 92% of women experiencing homelessness have also been the victim of significant domestic violence.

We also know change is possible. Since opening our doors in 1990 as a single eight-bed shelter for women, we've continued to grow and innovate. Today, we provide a full spectrum of programming and support. In collaboration with our clients, community leaders, and generous donors like you, New Reach implements a continuum of support which centers the safety, autonomy, and dignity of families, women, and children as they transition out of homelessness into long term stability.

We're incredibly grateful for your participation in our mission to make homelessness brief, rare, and one-time. Your continued support makes it possible for us to co-create a better future in our community.

On behalf of the thousands of families and individuals we serve each year, **thank you.**

With gratitude,

Kellyann Day, LMSW
Chief Executive Officer

*No goods or services were provided in exchange for your generous donation.
Our federal tax identification number is 22-3037451. This organization is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization.*

Let us always remember that our Lord was born
without a home
And hold true to the words: "whatever you've done
for the least of these as you've done on to me"
As we count off the days for the coming of our Lord,
let us give thanks and praise to God who gave us this
opportunity to help those in need while blessing us in
our ability to help.

Holiday Outreach



Holiday toy drive - The Hamden kids holiday toy drive is an annual Hamden tradition that serves over 500 children and families. To help, we are collecting new and unwrapped toys or gift cards for children ages 0-12. Gift suggestions include dolls, trucks, Legos, gift cards, soccer balls, basketballs, footballs, ear buds, headphones, nail polish, craft kits, remote-control cars, etc. Please bring these items to church on November 30, December 7, and December 14.



ELCA World Hunger - For over 50 years, the ELCA has joined together as Lutherans to address the root causes of poverty and hunger around the world through ELCA World Hunger. Monetary donations can be made through the pew envelopes and marked as ELCA World Hunger.



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

It is time to sign up for poinsettia plants which have traditionally decorated our altar for Christmas services. A sign-up sheet has been posted on the hallway bulletin board. Please indicate the number of plants that you would like to order, your name, and (if you choose), who you would like to name as memorial.

The price is \$14.00 per plant. Payments can be put into regular church or separate envelope, labeled "Christmas Plant" on the front. Ordered plants may be taken home after services.



Our congregational "business card" is available on the white shelving in the narthex. Take a few and keep them in a convenient place. When you meet someone looking for a church, or if you have a meaningful conversation with someone, give that person a card with our worship time and contact information. It's a way to say "You're invited and welcome here." You might write your first name on the back of the cards. If someone does visit our church, he/she will have someone to look for!



WE SUPPORT THE HAMDEN KIDS HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

**Please bring new & unwrapped
toys or gift cards
to church on
Nov. 30, Dec. 7 & Dec. 14**



Gift suggestions: dolls, trucks, Legos, movie passes, gift cards, soccer balls, basketballs, footballs, ear buds, headphones, phone chargers, iTunes cares, nail polish, craft kits, remote control cars, etc.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP:

ELCA World Hunger - For over 50 years, the ELCA has joined together as Lutherans to address the root causes of poverty and hunger around the world through ELCA World Hunger. Monetary donations can be made through the pew envelopes and marked as ELCA World Hunger.

New Reach is looking for volunteers to help check in and organize gifts as they come into their facility during the first two weeks of December. Talk to Cathy Cahn for more info, or go to <https://signup.com/go/KgnZzrs> to sign up directly.





Greetings all!

As we enter this season of thankfulness and reflection, I look with gratitude on all the musical offerings of the past few weeks and months... From voice, to clarinet, flute, tambourine, piano, guitar, to saxophone, I'm grateful for each sound that has drifted through the sanctuary Sunday mornings. It has been wonderful to get to hear/play with you all! Also, I now have a church email address, which can be easily distributed:

musicdirectoratCGSLC@gmail.com

Please feel free to reach out with requests, ideas, availability, interest, or just to ask how/when you can get involved in Sunday music (or Christmas Eve!). I'd love to hear from you!

Musically,
Caroline

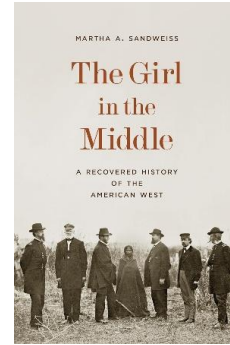


Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Mission Statement

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.

CGS Book Club

Our next meeting is December 10th and we will be discussing *The Girl in the Middle* by Martha A. Sandweiss. Though this book is difficult to get, it is available on Hoopla.



As posted on Goodreads--- In 1868, celebrated Civil War photographer Alexander Gardner traveled to Fort Laramie to document the federal government's treaty negotiations with the Lakota and other tribes of the northern Plains. Gardner, known for his iconic portrait of Abraham Lincoln and his visceral pictures of the Confederate dead at Antietam, posed six federal peace commissioners with a young Native girl wrapped in a blanket. The hand-labeled prints carefully name each of the men, but the girl is never identified. Spinning a spellbinding historical tale from a single enigmatic image, *The Girl in the Middle* reveals how the American nation grappled with what kind of country it would be as it expanded westward in the aftermath of the Civil War.

The CGS book club will be meeting on December 10th at 5:30. We will also be celebrating the holiday season with a Potluck. Please join us for wonderful conversation and food. Even if you do not read the book and are interested in what we are all about, please join us for the potluck and conversation.



SCHEDULE TO SERVE

DATE	WORSHIP ASSISTANT	LECTOR	USHERS	SACRISTAN
12/07/25	Rob Hansen	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Starr O'Connor Durbin Hunter	Deb Mason
12/14/25	Linda Kapitan	Cyndi Hansard	John Downs Cyndi Hansard	John Downs
12/21/25	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Mary Lou Knoob	Deb Mason Tyler Knoob	Sarah DeLong Jackie Menefee
12/24/25	Michael Lye	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Ken Watson Steven Swanson	Ellen Frost
12/28/25	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Durbin Hunter	John Downs Starr O'Connor	Ursula Hunter
01/04/26	Durbin Hunter	Ken Watson	Steven Swanson Tyler Knoob	Ellen Frost



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

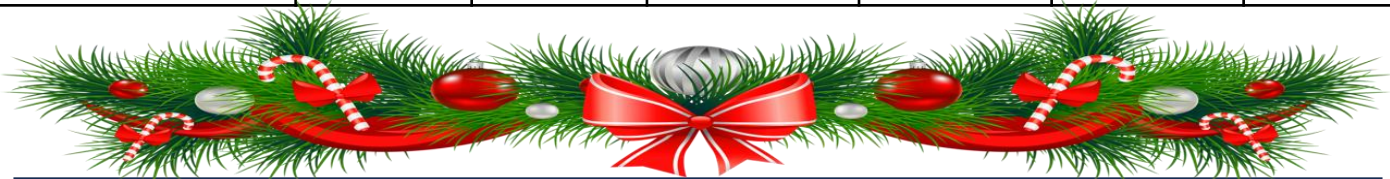
COFFEE HOUR HOSTS



12/07/25	Sarah DeLong and Rob Hansen
12/14/25	Linda Kapitan
12/21/25	Ken and Chuddy Watson
12/24/25	
12/28/25	
01/04/26	

12/07/25	Jonathan Goodrich
12/14/25	Rob Hansen
12/21/25	Cathy Cahn
12/24/25	Jonathan Goodrich
12/28/25	Jonathan Goodrich
01/04/26	Cathy Cahn

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3 Advent Evening Devotion 7pm at Grace & St. Johns 2927 Dixwell Ave	4 Coffee Klatch 10:30am	5	6
7 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> 9-9:45am Cross Generational Bible Class 10 am Worship Service	8	9	10 CGS Book Club 5:30. Potluck follows! Advent Evening Devotion 7pm at Grace & St. Johns 2927 Dixwell Ave	11	12	13
14 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> 9-9:45 am Cross Generational Bible Study 10 am Worship Service	15 Confirmation 5 – 6:30 Executive Committee 7 pm on Zoom	16	17 Council Meeting 6pm Advent Evening Devotion 7pm at Grace & St. Johns 2927 Dixwell Ave	18 Coffee Klatch 10:30am	19	20
21 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> 9-9:45 am Cross Generational Bible Study 10 am Worship Service Congregational Meeting 11-12pm	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Worship at 5:30pm 	25 Christmas Day 	26	27
28 <i>5th Sunday of Advent</i> 9-9:45 am Cross Generational Bible Study 10 am Worship Service of Lessons and Carols	29	30	31			



Advent Evening Devotions in collaboration with Grace & St. John’s Episcopal Church at 7pm at 2927 Dixwell Ave in Hamden on Wednesday, December 3, 10 and 17
Coffee Klatch is scheduled for Thursday December 4th & 18th at 10:30 AM
Cross-Generation Bible Class every Sunday from 9-9:45 AM
CGS Book Club Meets Wednesday December 10th at 5:30. Potluck follows!
Executive Committee meets on Monday December 15th at 7 PM
Council Meeting Wednesday December 17th at 6pm
Congregational Meeting Sunday December 21st after worship
Christmas Eve Service Wednesday December 24th at 5:30 pm
Worship Service of Lessons & Carols Sunday December 28th