



The Shepherd's Staff

Embracing the diversity of God's creation and celebrating our oneness in Christ

Newsletter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,
Oak Park, Illinois

February 2010 Volume 43 Number 2

Mid Week Lenten Opportunities

Ash Wednesday service is Wednesday, 2/17 and then Lenten Services begin Wednesday, 2/24 and continue for 4 weeks. Come join us for this midweek simple supper and worship/learning opportunity. During the Wednesdays of Lent, we invite you to come and have a simple supper at 6:45pm to begin the evening. We're looking for volunteers who will put together a simple supper each Wednesday. Please think about doing a meal and asking someone to do it with you. Or, get a group of people to help out. It's a great way to make connections and offer a service to our congregation. Generally, there have been about 20 – 25 people for the meal. If you would be willing to coordinate one meal or work with someone else to prepare a meal, please contact **Gail Frost** at (708) 848-4785 or gsfrost@comcast.net. A free will offering will be taken to help offset the cost of the meals.

We will be having a soup supper on Maundy Thursday, 4/1 at 6:45pm. For this supper, we will be asking people to bring either soup, bread, fruit or cheese for the meal. Watch for sign ups on the YES! Sheet for all Wednesday evenings and Maundy Thursday events.

Ending Hunger Now

The theme of Lent will be hunger. The foundation of our work will be the book *Ending Hunger Now: A Challenge to Persons of Faith* by George McGovern, Bob Dole and theologian Don Messer. The book is a short series of essays on hunger and the urgent need to solve this global problem. Each chapter ends with discussion questions. It challenges readers, especially people of faith, to get beyond partisan politics and differing theologies, to work towards ending hunger. Each week we will discuss one chapter in the book, as well as share other book titles on the topic of hunger. Join us Sundays in Lent at 6pm, Monday at 10am, Wednesday at 8pm. For more information see Pastor Kathy.



Commitment Sunday

At Good Shepherd, we have a tradition of honoring those couples who have been married in years divisible by 5 (for instance, the year of your 5th, 10th, 15th anniversary, etc.). We will be celebrating that this year on Sunday, 2/14 in worship and at Fellowship Hour. If you would like to help with hosting, please let **Gail Frost** know.

Fun, Fellowship, Friends, Food

Join us at 5:30pm on 2/13 in Fellowship Hall to celebrate! What are we celebrating? Mardi Gras, winter, friendship, families, food! You name it – we will celebrate it. Before the season of Lent with its solemn atmosphere gets started, we thought it would be fun to have a winter party/congregational event with some fundraising and fundraising! Ever seen a cake walk? Well, here's to a little exercise before we eat dessert.

Our fun activities will include a cake walk and making Mardi Gras floats – so bring a shoe box to use as your float



along with anything to make it special (Barbie dolls or Beanie babies can make great kings and queens for floats). Families, couples, small groups – all can get together to work on their floats. We'll have some decorations to use as well. Floats will be judged on their creativity. Dinner will be served; a donation will be collected to cover the costs and to support the Oak Park Food Pantry. Sign up on the YES! Sheet or contact **Gail Frost** (708) 848-4785 or gsfrost@comcast.net) for more information.

The Shepherd's Staff

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod (www.mcselca.org) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (www.elca.org).

The newsletter is edited by Marilyn Huebel and designed by Karen Breitenbach. Submissions maybe edited for space. Send contributions to The Shepherd's Staff, address changes and Friends & Family news to the church office.

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Nick Jurczak, Youth Representative

In the Spotlight:

Featuring someone or something
around Good Shepherd

This month we feature some specific opportunities where you are needed.

Vacation Bible School

Yes, we are thinking SUMMER! And with summer comes VBS! This summer we are going on safari with Baobob Blast. Good Shepherd will hold its Vacation Bible School the week of June 14–18 in the evening. Come to a VBS planning meeting on 2/21 after the second service. We have run a successful VBS for the last few years and look for the same this year. We have lots of kids who come for the stories, music, crafts, games and snacks. We have lots of adults who come and help out. Will you and your family be a part of the fun?

You Can Help with Worship

Behind the scenes: **The Altar Guild** is responsible for preparing the sanctuary for each worship service. This includes placing communion elements on the credence table behind the altar, preparing for baptisms, and putting hymn numbers in the holders on the wall. Members can be seen after the service washing the communion chalices and washing the altar linens. We give a special thanks to the members of the Altar Guild for this very important service to our church. If you would like to learn more about the Altar Guild, contact **Lynn Zamora** at (708) 383-7443.

Assisting Ministers help lead the worship service. Consider taking a leadership role by becoming an Assisting Minister. If you are concerned about singing, it is not unusual for certain parts of the service to be spoken rather than chanted, so do not let that hold you back from volunteering for this role. If you are concerned about writing prayers, some are already provided. **Communion Assistants** help communion be more efficient by helping the pastor and assisting minister distribute communion. There is a brief training session for these roles; contact **Judy Beisser**.

Greeters welcome people to worship. **Ushers** distribute the morning's bulletin and information sheets. They make sure that things are running smoothly, field questions from visitors and members alike. For more information about ways you can help with worship, contact **Barb Hunt**.



Kathy Nolte

pastor's column

The earthquake in Haiti was devastating. Pictures and videos moved us all towards acts of compassion. As I was preparing for our season of Lent I had searched the ELCA hunger site for materials.

One of the things I downloaded was an activity titled "Go and Do Likewise – ELCA World Hunger at Work in Haiti." The first activity helped introduce the causes of poverty in this county.

While it is only a short plane ride from the United States, the global hunger index of Haiti equaled Bangladesh in 2008. With a landmass that is not suitable for modern farming methods, local farmers cannot compete with subsidized prices of commodities from other areas. There is no public education system, and with 65% of the population unemployed most cannot afford to send their children to school. In 2008 Haiti was paying \$1 million a week in debt payments to other countries, including the U. S.

In the forward of *Ending Hunger Now*, ex-President Bill Clinton writes, "Hunger is not just a problem for politicians. We all have an ethical and moral obligation to help people who are suffering." More than that, the book outlines how the issue of hunger underlies vexing problems such as HIV/AIDS, over-population, education and global terrorism.

In 1996 the United Nations World Food Summit set a goal to cut global hunger in half by 2015. Unfortunately, hunger has increased in the last decade. According to the World Food Programme of the United Nations the number of un-

dernourished people in the world increased by 75 million in 2007 and 40 million in 2008, largely due to higher food prices (<http://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats>). Since then there has been a global economic recession which has hit the vulnerable in the world with greatest severity.

Feeding the hungry is a moral imperative in every religious tradition. All four Gospels report the miracle of Jesus multiplying food to feed the masses (Matthew 14:1-21; Mark 5:32-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:5-13). The prophets Isaiah and Micah speak of God's imperative to share our resources with the poor and act with justice in the world. Hebrew texts tell us that we are not to take everything for ourselves from our own labors, as God grants the hungry a right to glean food in the fields (Leviticus 19:9-10; Deuteronomy 24:19-21)

During the six weeks of Lent we will study the issue of hunger from a variety of viewpoints. Wednesdays will feature speakers who will both give a reflection during worship and a presentation during dinner. The topics will be nutrition, global hunger, local hunger and hunger advocacy. During Wednesday worship children will engage in hunger related activities. There will be opportunities to gather in a small group discussion of the book *Ending Hunger Now*. There is even our own version of "The Biggest Loser" in which participants will pay \$10 to enter. The person losing the greatest percentage of their body weight will choose where to donate the funds. To help you lose that weight we will have an instructor teach ballroom dancing, proving that being healthy and battling hunger can be fun!



Coffee with the Rev

Monday, 2/12, 7:30pm at Eastgate Café, 102 Harrison

Lunch with the Rev

Tuesday, 2/23, 11:30am at Ginos

Are You a Y.A.M.?

Our Y.A.M.s are scattered within the congregation and it's time to gather them. What is a Y.A.M.? A person who is a young adult and wants to meet with other young adults for fun and conversation. We have single Y.A.M.s and double Y.A.M.s (married); both are good. No books to read, no work to be done, but a healthy sense of playfulness is required. **Kelly and Mike Robers** will lead the first meeting of Y.A.M.s on March 5th at 8pm at the Ale House on South Oak Park Ave. Don't know who they are – just look for a couple carrying a big sweet potato!

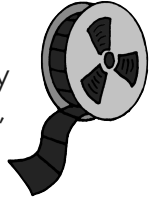


Daytimers to "Taste and Tour" Plymouth Place

On Tuesday, 2/16 at 10:45am, Daytimers will "Taste and Tour" Plymouth Place, a senior living care center, in LaGrange, and then go out for lunch nearby. "Taste" refers to 'coffee and' while "tour" means a informational tour of their residences and cottages. Please sign up on the YES! Sheet. Plans for March include a trip to Eli's Cheesecake Factory and lunch at the Jolly Inn and then later in the spring a tour of former member Dick Tribble's forge company. We hope you will join us whenever you are free during the day. For more information, contact **Shirley and Jack Christell**.

Potluck and Movie Night

Come to Fellowship Hall on 3rd Saturday of the month, September through May, for a potluck at 5:30pm with the movie starting around 6:30pm. Contact is **John Hayes**.



Flock o'Readers

Join a discussion on our current president when the book group discusses books by and about Barack Obama on 2/25 at 7:30pm in the kitchen. Contact is **Barb Hunt**.

Daytime Networking

Interested in daytime networking? A new group to share stories and build support networks for those un/under employed started in January. The emphasis will be checking in and building a support networks not career coaching. Interested or questions? Call **Jim Spencer** (708) 705-7027 for more information.



Feast of Friends

Feast of Friends is getting started. If you signed up to be a part of this, you should be hearing from your host soon to coordinate the date for your first get together. If you have any questions, please contact **Marnie Rourke** (708) 445-0239 or **Gail Frost** (708) 848-4785.

For more information on what's going on with Parish Life, check out the **Parish Life blog** at <http://gsgsfrost.blogspot.com/>.

OPRF Walk-In Ministry

Help the Walk-In Ministry expand its hour by becoming a volunteer. Beginning in February, Walk-In Ministry plans to expand its hours to be open on Wednesdays when the Oak Park Food Pantry is open. The additional Wednesday hours will be: 1st Wednesday of each month from 7-8:30pm and 2nd, 3rd and 4th Wednesdays of each month from 3:30-5pm. If you are available and interested in helping people living on the margins or those facing unexpected challenges receive appropriate support, please contact the volunteer coordinator, Brenda Matson at (708) 386-1946 or info@walk-in-ministryoprf.org

Food Pantry reminders



The baskets by the front doors are there for items you bring for the OPRF Food Pantry. Besides food items, remember baby diapers and wipes, toilet

paper, toiletries and pet food are always needed. Also, if instead of shopping, you prefer to make a monetary donation, you enable the pantry to purchase needed food items at a greatly reduced cost. For example, they pay the Chicago Food Depository only 15¢ for a box of cereal. Make out your check to the OPRF Food Pantry, put it in the collection plate and we will see that it gets to the organization. For more information, contact **Nancy Leonard**.

ELCA Global Barnyard Project for Lent

Once again the children of Good Shepherd will select an animal to purchase through the ELCA Global Barnyard, enabling a family in a developing area become self sufficient. For more than a decade this fundraising project has been a Lenten service project and previous purchases have included bees, pigs and goats. After the children have selected this

year's project, a piñata representing this year's animal theme will be available for adults to make their financial contributions as well. For more information, contact **Barb Hunt**.



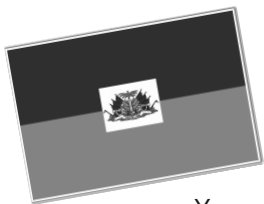
Super Bowl means more than football at Good Shepherd

February 7 is Super Bowl Sunday and a highlight of the year for football fans. For members of Good Shepherd it means:

Souper Bowl Sunday. Members are encouraged to **bring cans of soup** to worship that morning. All donations will be given to the Oak Park Food Pantry. Boxes will be in the Narthex for your donations.

Subs from the youth group, making it easy for you to entertain that day and an annual fundraising activity for them. Sub orders were due 1/31. For more information, contact **Mark Ledogar**.

ELCA Disaster Response in Haiti



While many humanitarian organizations have been unable to get aid into Haiti, ELCA Disaster Response partners were on the ground almost immediately assisting survivors.

Your help is needed now to continue to bring immediate relief and hope for our sisters and brothers in Haiti. One hundred percent of your gifts designated to Haiti will be used in this vital response effort. Donate online (<https://community.elca.org/NetCommunity/SSLPage.aspx?pid=538>) or put a check in the collection plate any Sunday and mark the check for ELCA Disaster Response – Haiti. Support will be needed for years to come.



On Sunday, 2/28 at 4pm there will be a "Battle of the Praise Bands" at Walther Lutheran High School, 900 Chicago Avenue, Melrose Park. Church praise bands will battle for your votes and bragging rights as the "Best Praise Band". Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door, and can be ordered by calling Belinda at (708) 594-7924 or by emailing her at battle_of_the_band_tickets@yahoo.com. Ticket pre-order deadline is 2/21. All proceeds will benefit the Scholarship Programs at Grace Lutheran School, 4106 W. 28th Street, Chicago

Thank you...

... Thanks and congratulations to the Good Shepherd choir members that participated in the community Epiphany Concert on 1/3. The choir's beautiful music was a highlight of the afternoon.

... to those who contributed words of support and who contributed monetarily to my trip to Honduras through the Global Brigades organization. I spent two weeks of my December break in Nuevo Paraiso helping with a medical brigade and a public health brigade. By the end of my first week there, our group got to see and treat over one thousand Honduran people by giving them medicine or extracting teeth that had cavities. The second week, we helped three families by building stoves, places to wash dishes, floors and latrines. The poverty and conditions in Honduras didn't surprise me since I've traveled and done service trips to other places where similar conditions exist. The attitude of the Hondurans did surprise me though and made me appreciate the trip. The people there were all so grateful and accepting. Thank you again. **Kristin Frost**, currently a junior at DePaul University.

... to **Linda Bernat** and **Pat Hayes** for coming to clean the kitchen on 1/9. We did a little straightening up and organizing. In trying to keep Parish Life expenses low, we are going to be looking for donations of dish soap, paper supplies and coffee hour supplies throughout the year. Please consider using real dishes when possible. Many times, plates and napkins as well as food show up in the kitchen as donations anyway – so thanks to those who donate.

... to **the confirmation class** for taking down the Christmas decorations and putting them back in storage.

... to the members and friends of Good Shepherd for their holidays gifts from the professional and volunteer staff.

Transitions

Honors

Ruth Reko is a Wheat Ridge Ministries' 2010 Chicago Seeds of Hope Honoree and will be feted at a celebration on 2/6. Ruth is the Director of the Department for Social Ministry Organizations, Program Unit for Church in Society of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In 1988, she joined the staff of the ELCA and has served in various positions over the past 21 years. Ruth was also shared staff member with Lutheran Services in America, Baltimore, Maryland from 1997-2002, serving as Director of Leadership Development and Ecumenical Liaison. Active on a number of boards and committees, Ruth holds current positions on the Lutheran Deaconess Community Mission Committee and the Board of Directors of the Center for Faith-Based leadership. She is also chair of its Research Committee.

Where are they now?

Robert Collin has been teaching in South Korea for nearly 20 years and will be heading Stateside soon. After finishing the winter quarter he hopes to extend his contract through June, take a relaxing vacation and then return to the U.S. His current plans do not include retiring in the Oak Park area, but he will be back here sometime later this year. Robert has been a member of Good Shepherd since the early 1990's.

Jen and Matt Guncheon are on their way to Hawaii! After a year's tour of duty in Iraq, Matt returned to Colorado and continues in his ordination program with plans for ordination this summer. Jen completed a teaching certification program and now subs at a high school. Matt has left for his new assignment in Hawaii and Jen will join him soon. Jen is a former Good Shepherd youth and Christian Ed director.

First Communion Class

Does your child seem interested in communion? Is she or he asking questions? Parents and their children whom they believe are ready for the sacrament of communion are invited to a First Communion class. This class is planned for the younger elementary students and a parent. When? March 6, 2010 from 9am until noon in the Kitchen. Please let **Pastor Kathy** know that you will be taking the class.



Spirituality Workshops

John Bell, a member of the Iona Community in Scotland and a widely known spiritual leader and songwriter, is leading two workshops on Thursday, 2/11, at First United Church of Oak Park. "Making Friends with God," from 1:30-4:30pm will focus on spirituality. Then from 7-9:30pm musicians and non-musicians alike can participate in "Singing with the World Church." The cost is \$15 for one or \$25 for both workshops. For more information, contact Leah Fowler at lfowler@firstunitedoakpark.com.

Experience the Gospel of Mark



Experience the Gospel of Mark as you've never heard it before. Master storyteller and theologian

Tracy Radosevic will share the Gospel of Mark the way the first believers heard it. Come to the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1100 East 55th Street on Wednesday, 2/3 at 6:30 p.m., to be inspired by the good news. Admission is free; freewill offering will be taken at the door. For more information, email Jason Chesnut at jchesnut@lstc.edu or visit www.lstc.edu/events.



Easter Flowers

Coming soon...sign up on the YES! Sheet for tulips and lilies for Easter.

The Liturgical Year: Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, 2/17 marks the beginning of Lent. Why Wednesday? Why ashes? Way back to the earliest days of Christianity, there has been a period of preparation for Easter. From quite early on, fasting was a part of the discipline of Lent. And the fasting could be quite strict — only 1 meal, in the evening; no meat, fowl or fish; and in many places no eggs or dairy products. The practice has relaxed considerably. But even today, some people decide to give up something for Lent, perhaps meat, or sweets, or chocolate. (Giving up broccoli doesn't count — it really should be something you would miss.)

Up to the 7th century, Lent started on the 6th Sunday before Easter. The extra 4 days were added later to increase to 40 the number of weekdays in this time of preparation. Why 40? The number 40 appears several times in the Bible, most notably the time of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

Now back to the question of ashes. Throughout the ages, nations at war would burn down the cities they captured. Reducing something to ashes is total destruction. And sitting among the ashes is a sign of sorrow. We experience the feeling of sitting among the ashes when we receive ashes on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday as a symbol of our sorrow over our shortcomings. And so we begin our time of preparation for Easter.

Lutherbrook Bowl-A-Rama



Would you like to have fun and do it for a good cause?

How about bowling? The 23rd Annual Lutherbrook Bowl-A-Rama will be held on 2/13 & 14 at Stardust Bowl in Addison. Bowlers sign up to bowl either afternoon and collect pledges from friends, family or co-workers (or fellow members). You can even sign up on-line and create your own web page that people can donate to.

Lutherbrook is Lutheran Child and Family Services' residential treatment facility for youth and adolescents with severe emotional or behavioral difficulties. This year's proceeds will go toward the Child Safety Initiative to install exterior lighting for the safety of students, staff and visitors in addition to replacing all doors with fire safety doors and installing a communications system to increase safety measures within the Lutherbrook campus.

Visit www.lcfs.org/bowlarama to register online, create or join a team and design your own personalized Bowl-A-Rama webpage. For more information contact Lauren Glatthorn at (708) 488-5555 or Lauren_glatthorn@lcfs.org for more information.

Exercise Can't Be Fun - Try Ballroom Dancing in Fellowship Hall!

Discover the magic of ballroom dance as you learn classic social dances such as the Waltz, Foxtrot and Swing. Spice up your life by learning Latin dances such as the Rumba, Cha Cha Cha and Salsa. This beginner-level class will expose participants to the fundamentals of each dance including basic steps, musicality and lead/follow technique. Taught with patience, support and humor by Elisa Foshay, ballroom dance instructor with over 15 years experience. A fun way to warm up your winter! Classes start on Friday, 2/19 at 6:45pm and will run for six weeks in the Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$120 per person. For more information, contact **Kelly Robers**.



Let's be good neighbors

Parking next to the apartment building across Randolph Street from our building is reserved for residents after 9pm. Many of our evening activities are not over by that time. Besides, if you lived in that building, would you be happy about having to move your car to its parking spot after 9pm every night? So let's avoid parking next to the apartment building when attending evening activities. Thanks.

What Will You Participate in this year?

Get connected; get involved. Will it be altar guild, senior choir, Sunday school? Will you participate in one of the newly forming committees - Christian Education or Stewardship, Worship, Music and the Arts or Children, Youth and Family. We need you!

Lift Repairs

Good Shepherd has received a \$5,000 grant towards the repair of the lift. The funds are coming from Lutheran Charitable Funding as administered by Ladewig and Ladewig, P.C. of Crestwood, IL.

Wednesday Night Is Church Night

Dinner 6:45pm-7:30pm: contact Kelly & Mike Robers, Parish Life

Hunger Presentation 6:45pm - 7:15pm: Take your dinner into the library

Holden Evening Prayer 7:30 - 8:00pm: Mark Law, Church Music Director

Children's Program 7:30 - 8:00pm: Children learn about hunger with *Taking Root: Hunger Causes, Hunger Hopes*

Small Group Book Discussion 8:00 - 8:45pm: Youngman Room

Wednesday Night Hunger Presentation:

Each Wednesday from February 24th through March 24th a speaker in the area of hunger and eating will join us for a discussion during dinner. Speakers will include those with knowledge on local issues about hunger and food; as well as global hunger issues. A Nutritionist will speak about healthy eating and the dangers of overeating in the United States.

Wednesday Night Children's Program:

Are your children too young to sit through the quietness of Holden Evening Prayer? Then drop them off in the Sunday School room where they will learn about hunger through *Taking Root: Hunger Causes, Hunger Hopes*. They will make crafts and learn about children around the world. The class will be led by Confirmation Parents and their children. For more information contact Pastor Kathy.



Have a Heart Gala on Saturday, 2/27 benefits West Suburban PADS. It will be at the Hyatt Lodge, 2815 Jorie Blvd. in Oakbrook. Tickets are \$100; for more information visit

www.westsuburbanpads.org.

At a glance...

Lent 2010 (page 1, 3, 8)

- Hunger is the theme
- Book Group: Sundays at 6pm, Mondays at 10am, Wednesdays at 8pm
- Soup Supper on Wednesdays followed by Holden Vespers
- Program for the children during Vespers
- ELCA barnyard project
- Bring cans of Soup on Super Bowl Sunday

Parish Life (page 1, 4)

- Pre-Lent celebration, Saturday 2/13
- Commitment Sunday, Sunday 2/14
- New group for young adults – 1st meeting in early March
- New group for un/underemployed
- Daytimers to Taste and Tour Plymouth Place on 2/16
- Potluck/ movie night on 2/20

Social Ministry (page 5)

- ELCA response to Haiti disaster
- Help OPRF Walk-In Ministry
- List of needed items for Food Pantry
- Children plan annual ELCA barnyard project

Features

- Pastor's column – on the focus on hunger for Lent
- Where you can get involved – *In the Spotlight*
- Try Ballroom Dancing for exercise
- First Communion Class in early March
- The Liturgical Year – read about Ash Wednesday

Youth Group News

- Selling homemade cookies on Valentine's Day. Proceeds to Lutheran Disaster support for Haiti.
- Confirmation class and Youth Group are going on retreat to Wisconsin Dells in early February