
SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS
LUTHERAN CHURCH

2021
ANNUAL
REPORT

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WHERE WE ARE NOW

" to Reach, Ignite and Empower People for Jesus..."



Empower- our word for 2021. As you are reading through 2021's Annual Report, we hope that you will be able to see how Shepherd's ministries and missions were Empowered to continue to do our work. In 2022 we hope to *Reach* new heights together in our ministries.



In 2021, the world was still reeling from the Covid-19 virus, but Shepherd continued to move forward, streaming services, slowly opening the sanctuary for in-person worship, and reaching out to the community.

In January, the annual meeting was virtual, with members attending training sessions in Zoom before the call. The meeting included statements of gratitude and what staff and Governing Board members were looking forward to. Many were grateful for staff, whose creativity and persistence during the pandemic kept us all connected, for members who continued to support Shepherd by attending services online and giving, and for callers who dialed-up our isolated members when personal visits weren't an option. All were looking forward to attending worship in person and being able to sing and hug again.

We approved our new welcoming statement, which is now posted on our website:

Our Welcome Statement

We, at Shepherd of the Hills, welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of ethnicity or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to addictions, physical or mental health, imprisonment or former imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us. Our unity is in Christ.

The congregation also approved two changes to Shepherd's constitution that will allow youth and young adults to serve on the Governing Board. These changes must be ratified at the 2022 Annual Meeting.

After Easter, we returned to Parking Lot Worship for the 10:00 service. The Fix-it team built a semi-permanent outdoor structure for leading worship. People left their cars and sat on chairs in the lot and on the lawn as God gave us many Sundays of beautiful weather. The 8:00 service continued in the sanctuary and was livestreamed and available via Facebook and YouTube.

Throughout 2021, we focused on (re)connecting events and initiatives. How could we reach out to people with viral surges occurring every three months? With the Holy Spirit—and more creativity and persistence!

- Coffee and donuts between services
- Our amazingly successful Season of Service projects
- Book study "One Coin Found" speaker event with Emmy Kegler
- Vacation Bible School (VBS) was held with over 75 children
- The Preschool
- Shepherd's leadership of the community service at Slice of Shoreview in July
- Tuesday's Lunch on the lawn with staff
- Pour Theology
- Coffee and bagels with Pastor Brice
- Rally Sunday
- Virtual and in-person Bible study
- Trunk 'n Treat

Finances were a challenge at different points in the year, especially in March and August. Infection rates increased in August, and we had to reinstate masking requirements within the church. But the congregation responded to these challenges by following CDC and Minnesota Department of Health guidelines and giving generously to the Lenten fundraiser supporting students in Kidamali, the Holy Hammers Building Hope Matching Funds drive that benefitted both Holy Hammers and our general fund, and the Advent fundraiser for family farms. We were able to cover new HVAC and projector expenditures. Shepherd finished 2021 in a good position financially.

We can't report on the year without mentioning the preschool. At the end of the summer, it looked like attendance would be down, but overnight the numbers jumped, and the preschool added staff to cover demand. Our preschool staff created safe in-person and online programming for their preschool and school-aged children and families in their care. A new toddler classroom will be added in January. Looking back at a second year of the pandemic, we still feel empowered to "reach, ignite, and empower people for Jesus"! We know that the Holy Spirit is giving us what we need to move forward, to reach out, and to grow in community.

SHEPHERD'S GOVERNING BOARD

Dave Webb, Chair; Deb Kohen, Vice Chair; Elizabeth Kohen, Treasurer; Maria Miller and Gayle Nelson, Secretary; Members at Large-Kristen Goligowski, Chriss Latterell, Lynn Mears and Sally Peters; Pastor Renee Patterson

Empowered in 2021!

As a valued part of our church community, I want to thank you for taking the time to read our Annual Report. Within these pages you will find the story of a church that is becoming more like Jesus as we strive to serve God's church.

I have been searching for a phrase that describes this past year and all that we have been through as a faith community. A phrase used in the leadership world (and the teaching world as well) is something called "productive struggle." I think that is the phrase we have all been looking for to describe this past year! Productive struggle. Or, to use a Biblical term, fruitful struggle. While culturally we have experienced plenty of struggles, disappointments, and pivots, it has been an incredibly fruitful season for our church in so many ways.

I am reminded of the Apostle Paul's words in Romans 5:3-4:

There's more to come: We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged. Quite the contrary—we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit! (MSG).



We have persevered as a people of God as we continue to seek new ways to be the church with each other and for the sake of the world. Jesus once said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18) In the book of Acts, we see the formation of that promised Church. It was a crazy time. Tongues of fire descended on people, the lame were healed, there were brushes with the law, people died, there were fights and disagreements. It was a messy but beautiful time, an uncertain but exciting time, a dangerous but fruitful time. And as you finish the book of Acts, you can't help but notice this one thing: Nothing is able to stop the Church as she moves forward in fresh faith and biblical truth.

**SENIOR PASTOR
RENEE PATTERSON**



This past year was a productive and fruitful struggle if it was anything at all. I believe that as a result of having to navigate the many challenges that seemed to have been hurled at us, we now have a clearer sense of who we are as a church—and of who we are not. I also think that this struggle has gifted us with a vision of how we can be the church God has **uniquely designed us to be.**

We are a church that is nimble enough to worship inside-outside and online...all on the same Sunday! We are a church that is seeking to live more fully into being a welcoming church for all people. We are (re)discovering that we are a church that values being together. We are a church that invites people to leave behind the polarizing way of our world as we strive to create space for voices that may not always align with each other, but that are valued and heard as fellow children of God. We are a church that seeks to live authentically generous lives. Our two Seasons of Service allowed for more people to participate in projects that benefit people outside of our walls.

What a privilege it is to be part of something so glorious! I'm so grateful for you all. You have remained faithful during an uncertain time. You have reached out in love during a fearful time. You have been the family of God to each other when it has mattered most. I'm honored to be called to serve alongside each and every one of you.

I remain beyond grateful for the steadfast leadership of our Governing Board, our Shepherd staff, and key ministry leaders this year – God used you to provide a way through the mess! Together, your tireless work allowed us to do more than simply endure the strain of worldly events; we were empowered to thrive during it. Thank you to all the ministry leaders who have contributed to this annual report and represent countless other faithful servants. We could not do this ministry without you. You have served well this messy year, and we are all blessed because of your labors.

What's Next?! Looking forward into 2022, our mission remains the same: We are a community of God that seeks to REACH-IGNITE-and-EMPOWER people for Jesus Christ in all we say and do. We will continue to be a people making a difference in God's world. We have shown firsthand how we are a prevailing church...no matter what (fruitful) struggles we face.

People of Shepherd of the Hills, this past year has changed us, as a church and as followers of Jesus. May we never be the same!

2021 IN REVIEW BY THE NUMBERS

197

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE
AVERAGE PER WEEK

576

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

3

FIRST COMMUNIONS

279

MEMBER HOUSEHOLDS

6

FUNERALS

6

CONFIRMATIONS

5

BAPTISMS



What a year 2021 has been, a roller coaster of sorts of celebrations and occasions to mourn. Shepherd of the Hills continues to be a source of light for me, shining into our community. Your eagerness to be open and affirming to all is a truly beautiful sight to see. There are always spaces where we can grow and challenge our own comfort zones so others can feel the same welcome that we do. I for one am unable to think of another group I would rather do this work with than you.

In the spring, many of us found ourselves on the receiving end of another stimulus check. Knowing that some who received those funds may have had space to use them for other than household budgets, we embarked on a matching funds campaign. This campaign, called Building Hope, would benefit both Holy Hammers as well as Shepherd of the Hills. We sought out to secure \$10,000 in pledged funds that would be matched. We quickly found that goal exceeded and \$12,500 pledged. Out of a place of deep generosity we raised a total of \$26,610 and were able to share \$13,305 with Holy Hammers while supporting our Shepherd budget with \$13,305. Praise God!

COVID-19 continued throughout the year to make life less than easy. That said, the visitation aspect of ministry remains a favorite space for what I have been called to do with you here at Shepherd of the Hills. Masking was still very much a normal part of life, especially for the first several months of the year. Then things happened, folks started getting vaccinated, testing became more available. By the end of April, in-person visits started happening more and more with people in their homes. For the bulk of time leading up to that, we had remained distant and away from one another, often opting to simply gather over the phone. As things loosened up, comfort built, anxieties waned, and vaccinations became more prevalent, we were able to be with each other. There is a richness in seeing each other face to face that Zoom, Google hangouts, and FaceTime calls simply cannot provide, and in those gatherings the joy is palpable. I look forward to continuing this part of our ministry together.

**ASSOCIATE PASTOR
BRICE BLOXHAM**



Kids' and fellowship events found their way back into our programming as well. Over the past several months we've had the chance to gather as groups in ways other than worship. We brought back the food truck event and had well over 250 attend. We convened for Cookie Dough Bliss and had dessert first, KCM Egg Rolls, hot dogs and sandwiches from Dine-1-1, and gluten free cheese curds from Crazy Puppy. Food is always good. Couple that with a chance to eat with friends and it's hard to top. We continue to gather for Coffee and Bagels every first Thursday and third Monday at Caribou off Rice St and 694. A light this past year has been children's programming coming back to in-person gatherings, with events occurring each month. The first was a year-end carnival in May, we closed out the summer with a water event and kicked off the school year with a drive-in movie night in the parking lot. Events like Trunk 'N Treat bring hundreds in from the neighborhood and leave our volunteers full of energy and out of candy. Trunk 'n Treat is one especially worth noting.

After taking a year off in 2020, we were hoping for 250 tricksters. At our best estimation we saw over 350 treaters! AMAZING!

This was our reach and restart year. You may remember that we committed to meeting with all of our members throughout the 2021 calendar year. Well, that goal unfortunately proved to be a little too lofty. We started strong but then lost steam as COVID-19 numbers climbed too high to meet safely, causing our momentum to stall. I am happy to report that we have picked that endeavor back up and I am back to visiting many of our people. I would love to gather with you over a cup of coffee to catch up. Don't be surprised if you see me order decaf, as I have nearly three hundred family units I'm eager to see. It seems the wisest choice. Let's get together!



The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments; for that is the whole duty of everyone. For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every secret thing, whether good or evil. – Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

Over the past few weeks, I have been trying to no avail to sum up this past year. To be honest it feels daunting, to ponder this strange year we have had. Yet, this morning, when reviewing our 2021 Confirmation calendar, I came across my notes for our January lesson on Wisdom and Poetry...the Psalms and stuff. During that lesson we learned about the book of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job. The book of Ecclesiastes tells us about the strange way time moves through our days, our part in the course of time, and the randomness in how things work out in life. Talk about appropriate for the year 2021. One word in particular stuck out as fitting for this past year: Hevel. This Hebrew word, often translated to meaningless or vanities, but more accurately translated to smoke or breath or vapor, is found almost 40 times in the book of Ecclesiastes. The very second verse in Ecclesiastes states, "Hevel of hevels, says the Teacher, hevel of hevels! All is hevel." (Ecc 1:2) This is the idea that everything in our lives is but like smoke. We can see them, but they are difficult to grasp and gone in an instant.

Now bear with me dear church, my intent is not to sound so down. The author of Ecclesiastes does not leave us in that despair of feeling that life is meaningless. Instead, as you read through the rest of the book you learn that the intent is to remind us that God is in control, not ourselves. We are called to let go, trusting God and living through the lens of God's commandments, knowing that God will bring all to the way it should be (my translation of Ecc 12:14).

The book of Ecclesiastes, when not read in its entirety, can seem daunting. Yet when looked at from the whole, we can see that it holds wisdom and hope for our lives as people of God. In the same way, this past year might seem daunting in small doses. But when looked at in its entirety, we can see it is filled with hope for who we have been and who we strive to be as people of God.

This past year seems to have gone by in a blink of an eye and yet has drawn out for far longer than any year I can recall. It has been as mysterious as Hevel surrounding us. We began our year with virtual-only worship services, adult education, and youth ministry. Knowing that we had financially accompanied our mission partners in 2020, we had no knowledge as to how we would be able to accompany them into 2021. With COVID-19 infection rates in flux, all we could do was step into the randomness of our world and trust that God would guide us.

We held monthly virtual youth parties with cookie baking competitions and Bob Ross painting experiences. Confirmation lessons were broken up into a four-week rotation to minimize screen time and large group gatherings. We voted to approve our Welcome Statement and held a virtual book study to continue learning how we could live into that welcome.

Soon spring arrived with Easter kicking off outdoor worship. We had the privilege of a fully outdoor Confirmation spring retreat and an amazing spring Season of Service. Spring led into summer that was missing youth trips for the second year in a row, but we boosted monthly youth gatherings doing service projects or meeting with congregation members around specific topics. We hosted the Reverend Emmy Kegler, author of our spring book study selection for an evening of learning and awe.



Pour Theology brought community and connection each month, as we filled the patio outside Shore96. Vacation Bible School filled our souls with a week of outdoor fun as more than 15 of our youth joined the ranks of adult leaders accompanying our children in learning and fun. Then with over 200 donuts in tow, we had the privilege of hosting the Slice of Shoreview Sunday morning worship service at Island Lake Park. Even though it was not a normal Shepherd summer it was filled with moments where the Holy Spirit wove through and shown Light in beautiful and unexpected ways.

We moved into fall with the approach of sticking to local school district policies around COVID-19 procedures for our youth ministry gatherings and events. With that we were back to completely in-person Confirmation and ReFuel. We have maintained the option of hybrid for all of our Confirmation gatherings to provide space and comfort for our families. It has proven to be both useful and welcomed. Technology can be such an amazing resource!

This fall we hosted both a Confirmation Retreat and high school Peer Ministry Leadership Retreat. We began a deep dive into contemplative practices with a small group of Shepherd folks, through an amazing grant from St. Catherine University, and look forward to bringing that to more of our congregation in 2022.

We hosted Rally Sunday outside with guest speakers from mission partners, food trucks, kicking off our fall Season of Service, a bouncy house, and packed outdoor worship. Our fall Season of Service hosted onsite projects again. And plans for the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering and a youth mission trip to Milwaukee, WI have kicked off.

As fall gave way to winter, we celebrated our first fully indoor worship in over a year with the Affirmation of Baptism of five of our young people. Within the span of what seemed like the blink of an eye, we were delivering Advent Family Faith Moment Kits and recording our annual PJ Lessons and Carols service, diving into the Simplicity of Advent with guest preachers and Sunday morning Advent Candle lighting families. With over 350 people joining us for in-person Christmas worship, it seemed like a full spin from where we began 2021.

As we look forward to 2022, I am so excited for the possibilities. Letting go of control and allowing God to guide us is always a difficult but rewarding thing. We have so much opportunity between youth trips and mission partner connection expansions and adult education opportunities and family faith experiences. I am not sure how they will all work out, but I know that God will blow through them and through us in wonderful and unexpected ways. Looking forward to journeying through that with you all!

**SISTER TASHINA GOOD,
DEACON**

Imagine a bracelet with the words: “Everything changes and that changes...” If you turn the bracelet around and around, you read, “Everything changes and that changes...everything changes and that changes....everything...”

It feels like change HAS changed everything – globally, locally, culturally, spiritually, etc. So grateful that God, however, never changes and we can rely on that!

One of the biggest changes here at Shepherd was Joe Trucano leaving to go to Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis in August. We miss him a lot – and, in recent conversations with Joe, he misses Shepherd a whole lot, too!

Pastor Renee asked me to step in as Interim Director for Music and Worship until we could find a permanent replacement. I’m grateful.

These past few months have seen changes – in the way we livestream worship, how we are back inside (wearing masks and providing social distancing), how we are learning to bring back other in-person experiences, like using Shepherd’s Hall for donuts between services and others.

Both Celebration Choir and JuBELLation Choir have rehearsed and provided special music. Thanksgiving Eve worship and HomeStyle Christmas Sunday worship were enhanced by their music. Rehearsals for a few weeks preceded these worship services to keep as safe as we could be for one another. Going into 2022, we are foregoing rehearsals until a few weeks before Ash Wednesday in order to again safely provide special music.

Also, a few rehearsals prior to Palm Sunday and Easter will give us a chance to enjoy musical offerings at those times. Our faithful Praise Band continues leading worship at 10:00 – and enjoyed leading worship outside during the summer and early fall. Thanks to each of them for their commitment.

We have had different cantors since Koreann Martin left in October. Many thanks to Jennifer Gravdahl, Sarah Koeppe, Elsa Keeler, Ginny Altman and Ronni Winn for their assistance. If you are interested in serving as cantor for a month or so in 2022, please contact me.

Melanie Ohnstad, former organist at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis (where Joe went!), provides exceptional organist skills and arrangements in leading worship at 8:00a. We are thankful to have such a gifted person with us!

Something that has NOT changed is the search for finding a permanent Director of Music and Worship. We posted a job listing in the fall which resulted in only a couple people applying for the position. The job posting will be listed again after the first of the year. Not many people in church musician positions want to move to something new before one of the busiest times of the church year – Christmas! Keep praying the right person feels a call to Shepherd.

In the meantime, community stays strong at Shepherd. Worship services continue to lift up the Good News. Music, sung or played or heard, can add a layer of trust and faith in God’s goodness. We continue to praise God that, “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” – James 1:17.



**JEAN JOHNSON, INTERIM
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC &
WORSHIP**

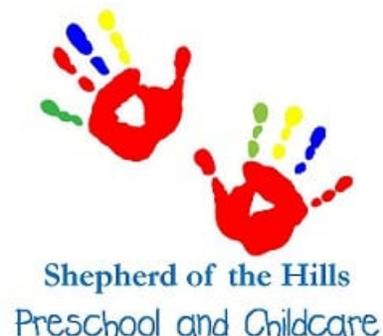
JILENE YLONEN, DIRECTOR OF PRESCHOOL

Shepherd's Preschool and Childcare is an outreach ministry whose mission is, "to Reach, Ignite and Empower people for Jesus." As we head into the 2022 New Year, I look ahead at what Shepherd's Preschool has become compared to what we once were. The preschool has been in operation since 1997, so that will be 25 years with our classes in the fall! The preschool was originally formed to reach out to the community by providing a quality preschool education program within a Christian environment for children ages 33 months – 5 years old and their families. Now we are serving children 18 months-5th grade. We originally had one classroom, running four half day, and part-time classes. Now we have five classrooms, running four half-day classes, three full day classes, a toddler class, an additional afternoon half-day classroom and an online preschool program. How did this happen? Our hours, days, weeks, months, and years have passed by SO incredibly quickly! I was recently reminded of this restart of the preschool almost 10 years ago. We were at a point where our leadership team had to decide to continue to run our preschool or to close. Thankfully, God was in this meeting and lead us to the decision to continue this ministry!



The ministry of Shepherd of the Hills Preschool has been referred to as a “gem in our community” and “the best place for our kids”. Our families and students continue to grow and support us while we discover ways to expand. I was reminded of this support while I was providing a tour recently for someone who had been a very active member here at Shepherd but left and recently came back to check us out for a young child. As I was walking through our space mid-tour, she happily teared up and thanked us for continuing this ministry and for the care that we continue to offer young families in our community. This tour reminded me of a quote by Mother Teresa saying, “I know God will not give me anything I can’t handle, but I just wish He didn’t trust me so much.” I am very blessed to know that He does trust us and has showed us ways to grow this ministry by bringing children and their families to us for these past 25 years.

This coming year will be entered into with open hearts and minds as we welcome our new toddler students. The students, staff and their families are very excited for this transition, and we can’t wait to get started! Please keep these members of our community in your prayers as we wish them a Happy New Year and many blessings in the year ahead.





In 2021, Shepherd was blessed with good financial health thanks to your continued generous support! Our staff, our community, and church members have also adapted to the many changes and sacrifices needed to keep all of us safe during this time of COVID-19. I hope that you felt EMPOWERED in finding new ways to worship, participate in fellowship, or in rethinking how to get involved in different ministry groups or missions.

Many members have been reevaluating plans for their futures, for their retirements, and have made legacy plans for donations to Shepherd. Others have made donations that assisted our community of outreach partners directly impacted by the pandemic, for instance the Building Hope campaign for Holy Hammers. Most of those same members were able to keep their giving consistent to Shepherd as well. In this past year, our building was able to have some of the necessary repairs done, such as: a new HVAC unit replacing one that was over 30 years old, adding a platform and then an outdoor gazebo for parking lot worship, and remodeling in preschool areas.



What will 2022 look like? What are my hopes for the year? My hopes are that the Shepherd community continues to come together to REACH out to do God's work. I also hope that we can find more ways to gather as a community for fellowship, respite, and faith whether that be physically together in our building or in other creative ways.



**MIRANDA OLIVER,
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**



The Joy Team works to provide opportunities for people in our community to give to/ serve others. Each month we focus on a nonprofit in our community that is in need of our donations and time. We share information on these organizations and provide a suggested list of their needs. One of our team members then deliver the gifts to the organization.

We also organize our two Day/Season of Service events each year. We have 12-14 organizations each time that we assemble items for, plus providing non cash suggestions on ways to serve our community. We have learned to be very flexible during COVID-19, but it has also provided us with opportunities to be creative in our planning. We are overjoyed with how people have responded and look forward to how these events will look in 2022.

The Christmas Giving Tree annual event was again a tremendous success. We packed 2 SUVs with the donated toys, provided over \$400.00 in gift cards and over 250 pounds of food items to Ralph Reeder Food Shelf for distribution.

This year our Thrivent members submitted 70 grants (at \$250.00 each) for our ministry uses. Even though the number of grants is down from previous years, we appreciate those members who took the time to submit these grants. This money is essential in so many ministry areas....money that is above and beyond our budgetary limitations. We need more Thrivent members to step up and assist us with grants...PLEASE!!! Staff assistance is always available.

Loni Baumgartner, Chair
Members: Gayle Nelson, Sue Oltman, Amy Hahn, Lynette Palmgren, Karen Saari, Nancy Timp and Robb Clasen.





Here are some of the highlights of our partnership with Kidamali in 2021.

- We continue to correspond via email. They always mention that they are praying for us. They watch some of our services on YouTube.
- The money we gave them last year for the construction of the Parish house and for wages and supplies for the new kindergarten was put to good use. The new kindergarten opened with 23 students and construction was begun on the Parish house.
- Kidamali held a three-day youth camp at the Kipera Preaching Point where the youth played sports, learned about faith and did some communal work including brick making and cutting grass.
- Bishop Gaville visited Kidamali in August. He laid the foundation stone for the Parish house and consecrated the new kindergarten. In his message he thanked Shepherd of the Hills for our contributions to these projects and blessed us.
- Pastor Kisoma will be mentoring a Pastor in training for the next year, her name is Doreen Nyamoga.

- We changed the way we fund scholarships for Kidamali. In the future we will base the scholarship and the expected costs of funding students for their entire post-secondary studies. This year we funded 11 scholarships. Scholarship donations have a three-fold impact. They fund individual students. They also help the schools with their budgets, so they can educate many students. And finally, they help society at large in Tanzania as students make an impact on the world.
- Please include Kidamali in your prayers this upcoming year asking for good weather for their agricultural growing, for success in their projects and programs and for the students.



KIDAMALI PARISH IN TANZANIA



Open Hands Midway mission is to serve the St. Paul Midway and surrounding areas by leveraging contributors' gifts in providing a means for those who are economically challenged to obtain nutritious meals and groceries and fresh produce. As hunger, statistics show that 1 in 13 Minnesota households deal with hunger issues.

In 2021, Shepherd supported Open Hands with a monthly donation from our outreach budget. This gift alone provides one family a week of groceries from their food shelf. For 2022, Shepherd plans to continue with the same monthly giving directed to Open Hands.

Open Hands also participated in our Fall Season of Service and Open Hands Executive Director, Kay Kuehn, came to Shepherd to talk about the impact that Shepherd's monetary donations and donation of time make to the organization.

Starting again in 2022, we will provide volunteers for the 4th Monday of the month serving food. If interested, please reach out to Sister Tashina or myself.



**OPEN HANDS MIDWAY
OUTREACH**

RALPH REEDER FOOD SHELF OUTREACH

The Ralph Reeder Food Shelf is a Community Education Program of the Mounds View Public School District. It was established in 1982 when teachers and staff saw children coming to school hungry. Ralph Reeder Food Shelf serves low-income food insecure children, adults and seniors who live in the Mounds View Public School District. This District includes the following communities: New Brighton, Shoreview, Arden Hills, northern Roseville, North Oaks, small areas of Vadnais Heights, and the Ramsey County area of St Anthony.

Beginning in 2016, every building housing kindergarten through middle school created a community garden. Through this effort, students learn about growing food and are able to contribute to their community. Thanks to the gardens, the food shelf has seen a sharp increase in the amount of fresh produce it is able to offer.

During this past year, with COVID-19 a reality, food shelf users needed to make an appointment in order to receive food shelf drive-up service. This safe, fast and user-friendly service included non-perishables, meat, milk/dairy, bakery and produce items.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ralph Reeder Food Shelf has served an average of 180 households per week. This is a 35% increase from before the pandemic. 54% of those being served are children.



As COVID-19 restrictions have eased, people have been able to make an appointment, and wearing a mask, choose their own groceries for approximately seven days of food. Users are asked to show a photo ID and current mail for all adults in the household. People choose nutritionally balanced food items plus personal hygiene items and cleaning supplies. A typical family of four receives approximately 100 pounds of food. Families are also offered information about additional resources and referrals to other low-income programs and services.

Ralph Reeder Food Shelf relies on donations of food and cash from area churches, businesses, schools, clubs, and individuals who share concern for those less fortunate in our communities.

As of December 23, 2021, for the 2021 calendar year, Shepherd of the Hills has donated 3,433 pounds of food and 411 pounds of personal hygiene items. Each time a delivery is made volunteers greet us, weigh our carts of items and thank us profusely. Thank you for your generosity, good people of Shepherd.

Philippians 2:4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

LYN MINISTRY

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27

Mission Statement: To serve our Shepherd family and our neighbors during times of unexpected physical life changes, to provide friendship, support, and assistance with non-medical needs.

Our Love Your Neighbor (LYN) Ministry continues to evolve as we deal with the ever present, ever changing COVID-19 virus. This fall we were able to resume providing transportation, errands and communion for our homebound members. It is such a joy to be able to visit with many of the people that we haven't been able to see in the last year. Pastor Brice, Mary Evanson and I have stayed in contact with them by telephone.

We have continued to deliver goodie bags to our Lunch Bunch attendees. Each month we use a different theme. For example, in August we did orange bags with orange items inside with the saying: "Knock knock, who's there? Orange you glad we're friends." We are very grateful for the Thrivent Financial grants that we have been able to use to help us with this project. In April we were able to deliver spring flowers to 51 people and again this December we were able to deliver 48 poinsettia plants, thanks to Thrivent Financial.

Our hope and prayer is that we will once again be able to return to providing more of our LYN Ministry services. We plan to continue to be creative and hope that once again we will gather in person.

A huge "thank you" to all the volunteers that continue to make LYN Ministry happen!

	Transportation	Communion	Errands	Note Writing (Kathy Hoeschen)	Phone Checks	Baptisms	Monthly Treat Deliveries	
Jan				28	10		We Miss You Snow Much = 30	
Feb				28	26		Happy Valentine's Day = 30	
Mar				26	12	1	Happy St. Patty's Day = 30	
Apr			2	26	10		Delivered Easter Flowers = 51	You're So Sweet Bags = 30
May			2	25	2		Happy May Day = 30	
June				25	13	1	Red, White & Blue, We're Still Missing You = 30,	
July	6			26	25	1	S'more Love = 30	
Aug	1	7		26	10		Orange You Glad/ We Miss You = 30	
Sept	1	9		26	15	2	Back to School = 30	
Oct	3	5		26	12	1	"Bugs & Kisses = 30	
Nov		7	1	25	12		Thanksgiving cards = 30	
Dec		10		25	35		Poinsettia plants delivered = 48, 12/3/2021 by 9 people	

This year has been special in several ways. With the COVID-19 pandemic occurring, working with masks in the hot weather made routine chores difficult but still were completed. The supply chains made materials scarce and expensive, but the supplies needed were found. The bits of extra materials were carefully packed for reuse on other projects; even nails were pulled from the molding painting racks to save the wood.

At Shepherd we support with other churches Holy Hammers, offering volunteer time and talents. The many shifts were filled with people willing to help. The 10-week project was completed on time.

We also support Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity financially through our giving to Holy Hammers. This year was extraordinary in that regard compared to our usual donations, with special directed giving from the Building Hope fundraiser. Shepherd was the top donor to this year's project. Again, with the COVID-19 woes we do not yet know the family that has been paired with the project and it's likely that the dedication will be a very small group.

Thank you for the continued support of time, money and the weekly prayers. I believe that 2022 will again be a special year in many ways!



Holy Hammers™



**HOLY HAMMERS
OUTREACH**

NOTES



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