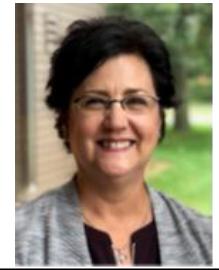


# Shepherd's Voice



**March 2021**



## Lent: A Time to (re)Connect with God

Have you ever gone a long while without touching base with a close friend? All too often disruptions from our normal routine (cue the pandemic) can lead us to be out of touch with ourselves, with God, and with our closest relationships. This does not mean that significant things were not happening (again... cue the pandemic)! Simply that it is work to create space for connection to happen and when the flow of life is interrupted, the effort can become all the more *challenging*.

Renee Patterson

Senior Pastor

651.288.2253

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This can happen to our life as followers of Jesus as well. Truth be told, the Christian life is not always easy, and sometimes we feel like our relationship with God is not as good as it once was. There are times in our lives when we have a disconnected feeling from God, like we have lost our passion for our pursuit of this faith walk. These inklings can lead us to feel stuck in our faith, not knowing how to find our way back on track.

So...what if this year, Lent was this intentional time to reconnect with God and to create space to deepen your awareness of how God has been present in your life through this entire struggle? We know that starting can be the hardest part of any journey. Rest assured, we are here to help! Throughout Lent we are offering guided ways for you to reconnect with God on a deeper level.

One way is by praying the Psalms. Our *Prayer of the Day* that we send out every day will offer a section of the assigned Lenten Psalm for the week. You are invited to ponder and pray that Psalm section in a lectio divina way (repeating in a calming, mantra kind of way) throughout your day. We will also be reading the entire Psalm for the week each Sunday as a culmination of that daily prayer and connection. We have also put together some *Lent-in-a-Bag* kits that have different creative ways for families of all shapes and sizes to connect with God. We will be talking about them in each of our Wednesday Evening Lenten ONLINE worship services. These will premier every Wednesday evening at 6:30pm throughout Lent. They can be watched then or at any later time/date that might be more convenient for you. We believe that these Lenten activities and practices will create space for a renewed connection with God. There are connecting activities for everyone!

We believe that the starting point, purpose and intentionality throughout Lent matters. You can suffer through Lent by giving up chocolate, but WHY?? How does that bring you closer to God? Or, you can choose to move through Lent toward a place of renewed connection, wonder and gratitude. Giving thanks for the serendipitous ways that God shows up, paying attention to what God might reveal in these Lenten prayers and activities and how growth can happen even in this dormant time that will feed you.

May this holy time of Lent reveal for you glimpses of new creation and (re)connections with God!

Holy One, make this so!

In One Peace, Pastor Renee

# **Shepherd's Governing Board**

*In the same way, let your light shine before others,  
that they may see your good deed and glorify your Father in heaven.  
~Matthew 5:16*

## **Worship:**

*We now have both in-person and online, livestreamed worship options available each Sunday at 9am. If you choose to worship in our sanctuary, please take time to read through the protocols in place and make sure to RSVP through the easy reservation system set up on our website: sohsv.org. You can also call the church office before 3pm on the Friday before at 651-483-5419.*

## **Lent and Easter Worship Scheduling:**

The theme for our Wednesday online worship this Lenten season is *(re) Connecting with God Through Worship*. These services can be viewed online each Wednesday at 6:30pm or can be watched anytime during the week that works best for you. Please pick up a Lent-in-a-Bag kit at the church if you have not yet done so to enrich these Lenten services.

Looking ahead to the weeks of Palm Sunday and Easter, we are hopeful for both in-person and online services with the possibility of adding parking lot services for Easter morning if the weather cooperates. Please stay tuned to the weekly eNews to get the latest updates on plans to celebrate again the renewed joy of life through our risen and glorified Savior, Jesus Christ!

## **Annual Meeting Highlights:**

The Governing Board thanks everyone who participated in our Annual Congregational Meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup>. We had a slow start due to the great turn out of congregants. We had to pause to temporarily extend our Zoom contract to allow for a larger number of participants, which is a great problem to have! We are grateful for those who attended and saw it through to the end for their patience and grace as we moved through all the pieces. We had some meaningful dialogue and in the end were able to get a lot done.

The Annual Congregational Meeting re-cap --

- The 2020 Financial Reports and the 2021 Proposed Budget were reviewed and approved.
- A Welcoming Statement was brought forth by a team of people to further broaden our hospitality for those who may not have felt welcomed in the past. There was much discussion both for the given statement as-is and for the statement with amendments. A motion to send the proposed statement back to the team for further consideration of alternative texts was raised. This motion was rejected by a majority vote. A vote was then called to approve the proposed Welcoming Statement, which passed by majority. Shepherd of the Hills is now officially a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. More opportunities for discussions and learning will be made available as we learn more about what this means for us as a church of Christ.
- Constitutional Changes to allow for teens and young adults to be considered for election onto the Governing Board was approved after a motion passed to change the original model language, for consistency with the Synod's intent. This change will need to be ratified at the 2022 Annual Meeting.
- Governing Board elections approved all nominees for two-year positions:  
Deb Kohen to continue her role as Vice Chair, Lynn Mears to continue as Member at Large, Sally Peters to fill vacant Member at Large, and Maria Miller to continue role as Secretary.

Your Shepherd Governing Board,

Dave Webb, Chair  
Deb Kohen, Vice Chair  
Elizabeth Kohen, Treasurer  
Maria Miller, Secretary  
Chriss Latterell  
Lynn Mears  
Sally Peters  
Kristen Goligowski  
Pastor Renee Patterson

Hello Good People of Shepherd,

As we continue to weave our way through the church year we come upon some seasons that hold more weight than others, times when we give more focus to what is happening in the church and in our faith lives/relationships with God. Lent is one of those times. Just as Advent prepares our hearts and lives for Christmas, Lent is a time to prepare our hearts and lives for Easter. It is a solemn reminder of why the joy of Easter morning is such a miracle. Lent fills us with opportunities to remember our deep humanness, all broken and imperfect, our humanness that deeply needs a God that comes to us, a God that dies for us, a God that conquers death to live with us and stick with us in even the most trying of times.



Sister Tashina Good

Deacon

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sistertashina@shepherdshoreview.org

Last year at this time, we were blissfully unaware that our lives were going to be changing for the foreseeable future. And we were journeying our way through Lent focusing on the way sin leaves us *Disconnected from God*. We had begun a beautiful art piece tying a new color of fabric to our cross background each week, the colors representing something that disconnects us from God. It was a therapeutic community project of letting go, a piece of art that was left unfinished as a result of the global pandemic in which we still find ourselves. Talk about the irony of disconnect.

This year, as we continue through this time of distancing, from others, from a virus, from worship, from community, from [...place your answer here...], our Lenten focus is on (*re*) Connecting with God, re-connecting with worship and why we do the crazy things we do as we worship alongside one another. What is the point of a greeting, why do we pray so much, is song important in our communal praise, why do we do offering during the service? We hope to give space for you all to contemplate the purpose of these things in your life, in your worship, and in your relationship with God. We hope to give space for you to build and expand your understanding of worship as not just a thing you do on Sunday but as a way we as people of God live our lives (and yes a way we come together in communal celebration and praise).

There is at least one hang-up though (I am sure there are more, but here is where I will focus) re-connecting with God and worship cannot be done for you. We at Shepherd can give you space and tools, but the real work is done in you and among you. So, what is it that holds you back? What is it (outside of the current pandemic) that distances you from church, from worship, from God? What in your life needs addressing or focus during these intentional weeks of Lent to make way for you to re-connect? And how can we support you in that?

Whatever that looks like for you, know that your church is here. We are cheering you on. We would love to support you and accompany you on this strange and beautiful journey. So, give me a call, shoot me a text or an email. Let's grab a social distance coffee and chat about what it is that you need to re-connect with this community and with God in your life.

I am looking forward to it!

"See" you in church,  
Sister Tashina





Mark 1: 12 & 13 - <sup>12</sup>And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

<sup>13</sup>He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

*Brice Bloxham  
Associate Pastor  
651.288.2264  
pastorbrice@shepherdshoreview.org*

I had a Youth Director in high school who encouraged us to give up something for Lent. He always challenged us to tear off the bonds of TV. Which, at the time, living without the ability to stream Netflix shouldn't have been a problem. However, the rationale never really stuck with me. Why did he want us give this stuff up? I am

certain he told us. I am positive that my wonderful Youth Director shared the importance of developing spiritual practices that remove the places and spaces in our lives that take us from God, and from connections to our community. And, what removing those distractions can do for one's relationship with God. But I didn't hear it. I just took it as a common challenge.

These are good things I suppose, removing television from our daily grind. Imagine what we'd do with an extra three hours a day. Giving up meat on Fridays in favor of fried walleye (I'm good with that one). Sacrificing chocolate. If we're being honest, what good has that ever done anyone? To what end? Is the purpose of giving these things up just to say we did it? What happens after? What does one get out of giving up TV, chocolate, or meat for 40 days, aside a rested angry pescatarian? Just that and not much else, at least where spiritual and relational development is concerned.

Fact of the matter is, these things that were mentioned above really don't mean much. For you, my siblings, who were raised in a Catholic tradition, I do not intend to minimize any part of your past. Eating fish on Friday instead of meat is a nice tradition that has ties to long ago, but as far as a spiritual practice goes, not so much. Forty days of fasting is a tradition that we as a church body have done for centuries as a way to remember the fasting Jesus was forced into after his baptism. The thing is though, Jesus staved off temptations from the Devil. Can our temptation of delicious cocoa flavored sweets really compare? Not really.

The season of Lent is an opportunity to set aside things that pull us from God, to focus in on our Lord and Savior. It is an opportunity to work on the relationships and various communities in our lives. We have a chance to strengthen our relationship with God and care for the communities around us. It's no small task. It takes practice. Hence, this forty-day season. It isn't meant to be a one-off or something to do then quit, but rather it's an ongoing thing. And in order to make it a habit, it needs repetition.

I read the Bishop's recent message about Lenten practices and it struck a chord with me. It resonated with me and offered another reminder that we aren't in this alone. Bishop Lull states, "This Lent we will be staying home, just as Jesus sent the man he had healed back to his own family and friends. While some congregations are opening up for in-person worship with safety protocols in place, most of us will continue to worship from our homes. We don't even need ashes this year to remind us of our mortality. The news accounts and grim realities of the deadly power of this pandemic have taught us that life is fragile, and no one is naturally immune." No one is immune to temptation, loneliness, depression, starvation, and so many other things that would pull us from God and from our neighbor. Check in with one another find ways to remain vigilant in the care of your neighbor and yourself. May the peace of Christ that surpasses all understanding sustain you this Lenten season.

Found with you, in Christ.

PB

### **1st Communion Class: March 21 @ 11:00**

Do you have a student in your house who has been asking about communion or maybe they haven't but you know they're ready? If yes then perhaps it's time to take the first communion class. We'll convene at 11:00 on March 21. Our hope is to be outside but if the weather prevents we'll gather in Shepherd's Hall. Our time will focus on the meaning, its origin, and the importance to us now in 2021. Each child will also be decorating their own paten and chalice to use at the time of their first communion. We typically commune 3rd and 4th graders but there is nothing that says it can't be younger or older! If you have any questions please reach out to [Pastor Brice](#).



Dear friends,

I've said it before, but Lent is my favorite time in the liturgical year. Hands down. These weeks have always held a special place in my heart. It's a time when everything is stripped away, and we are left with the simple message of the Gospel:

*"For GOD so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*  
// John 3:16

**Joseph Trucano**  
**Director of Music and Worship**  
651.288.2254  
[music@shepherdshoreview.org](mailto:music@shepherdshoreview.org)

For me, Lent is this special time that we focus on what that love actually looks like. The music and solemnity leading up to Holy Week remind us that with all new life, there is sacrifice. The journey is long and hard, and yet one we are not on alone.

I've heard some people remark that Lent, for them, is too full of sadness and hardship. They instead prefer the joy that Easter and Christmas bring. Absolutely. I totally understand the sentiment. What good is the journey without the happy ending? But in my life, it's always been in those vulnerable moments of hardship and loss, that I've found connection and meaning. They're not easy, but they are necessary. They are the only way forward.

This whole year has felt like one long season of Lent. And I am tired. I am ready for this journey to be over. I am ready for newness. But within these long months of reflection, I've also found a deeper meaning in my life and with God. Everything has been stripped away, and that breath of life feels sweeter and more poignant than it ever has before.

I'm honored to be on this journey with you, and I can't wait to celebrate again in the weeks and months ahead.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Joe

**LENT**  
SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**CONNECTING WITH GOD**

**2/24 // GREETING IN WORSHIP**  
• PRAYING WITH OUR HANDS

**3/3 // PRAYERS IN WORSHIP**  
• PRAYING IN COLORS

**3/10 // CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS IN WORSHIP**  
• MEDITATION JAR

**3/17 // SINGING IN WORSHIP**  
• PRAISING GOD OUTSIDE

**3/24 // OFFERING IN WORSHIP**  
• BODY PRAYER

A VIRTUAL FAMILY-FOCUSED WORSHIP PREMIERING WEDNESDAYS IN LENT AT 6:30PM. AVAILABLE ONLINE ANYTIME AFTER THE PREMIERE!

# Check Out Our Church App!

Access sermons, prayer requests, events and more.



1. Download  
Church by  
MinistryOne  
in App Store



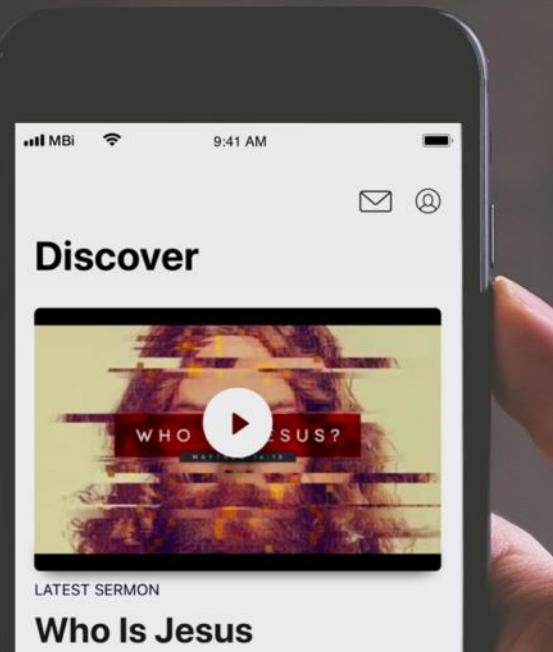
2. Search for  
Our Church



3. Select &  
Explore!

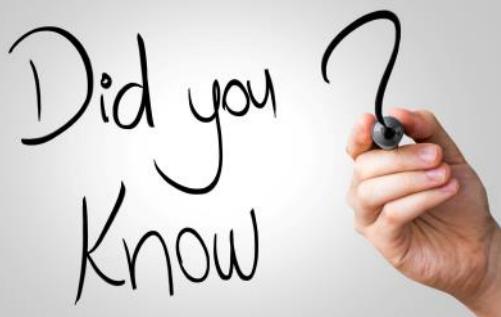


MinistryOne



Miranda Oliver  
Director of Operations  
651.288.2255  
Operations  
[@shepherdshoreview.org](mailto:@shepherdshoreview.org)

Here's the [link](#) with the information to download the app.



- Shepherd's building is just over 45,000 square feet and on just shy of 5 acres.
- On Shepherd's payroll are approximately 18 staff members. This includes pastoral, program, operations, preschool and childcare.

## How can one support Shepherd financially?

- Mail in your offertory envelopes
- Give [online on our Giving Page](#)
- Text To Give - Simply send a text with the word GIVE to 651-412-7495 with the amount you would like to contribute.
- List Shepherd as your beneficiary
- Transfer Stock to Shepherd

With any questions regarding giving, please contact [Miranda](#).

FINANCIAL  
GIVING





**Shepherd of the Hills**  
Preschool and Childcare



**Jilene Ylonen**  
**Preschool Director**  
651.288.2256  
[preschool@shepherdshoreview.org](mailto:preschool@shepherdshoreview.org)

Lent is a time to focus on God and prepare to remember and celebrate Jesus dying on the cross and resurrecting to save each of us. During Lent, in preschool we focus on doing good things, just like Jesus did.

We talk with our students about good things we can do, things that we need to practice doing, or new things we want to try. Our students love to have jobs or roles in the classroom. They love to be the line leader, calendar helper, meteorologist, teacher helper, door holder, and many more! They truly enjoy doing good things for others! As teachers, we enjoy watching them do specific jobs, but also the small acts of kindness they do on their own.

In our classrooms, we have kindness awards and kindness jars. Our students who are doing kind things for their teachers or classmates are awarded and then add to the kindness jar. Those jars sure fill quickly!! As we continue with our school year during this time of Lent it is our goal to continue to fill our kindness jars by continuing to be kind to those around us.

We can help a friend write their name, find their book bin, clean up toys, help a teacher, help a friend get dressed for outside, and so much more! Below you can see we have already started focusing on doing the good things!



# Youth Ministry @Shepherd

## CONFIRMATION IN MARCH

Wednesday Evenings 6:30PM—8:00PM

FOCUS: Jesus: birth, death, and resurrection

3rd—Lesson—Large group via zoom

10th—Small Group Time in-person

17th—Individual Project Week

24th—Project Presentation Week—in-person

31st—No Confirmation Holy Week

## ReFUEL IN MARCH

### BONFIRE IN THE BACKYARD!

Join us on March 28th 6:30-8pm in Shepherd's backyard for a time to hang out IN PERSON (safely) with snacks and games and fun and a little bit of Jesus too! All High School youth are welcome!

Be on the lookout for more information via:

Instagram: [@youthshepherd](#)

Website: [shepherdshoreview.org/high-school-youth-ministry.html](http://shepherdshoreview.org/high-school-youth-ministry.html)

Via your emails and via Remind texting

**ReFuel Len-stagram Challenge:**  
**Each week take time to ponder the word of the week and the scripture text. Snap a photo that connects to the word of the week and/or the scripture text and share it with Sister T. Prizes will be given for the most creative photo each week and for those who participate for each of the six weeks.**

Lent-stagram



# ADULT Faith FORMATION

All March Adult Ed events are subject to change. Please pay attention to weekly eNews for up-to-date information

**Weekly Bible Study:** Wednesdays throughout March at 1pm IN PERSON in Shepherd's Narthex and at 6:30pm via Zoom. Join us to discuss the upcoming scripture text and learn together.

**Virtual Donut Time:** Join us each Sunday in March for our Virtual Donut Time from 10:00-11:00am. Note the time of starting at 10am!

**Spring Book Study:** Join us for our Spring Book Study on 'One Coin Found' by Emmy Kegler. Contact Sister Tashina or Pastor Renee to get access to the Zoom links.

We will be gathering on both Wednesdays at 2:30pm and Thursdays at 6:30pm every other week beginning on February 24th and 25th. Both weekdays will have the same questions and focus so choose the time that works best for you.

Book Study Schedule:

February 24/25 – Prologue & Chap 1

March 10/11 – Chap 2 & 3

March 24/25 – Chap 4 & 5

April 7/8 – Chap 6 & 7

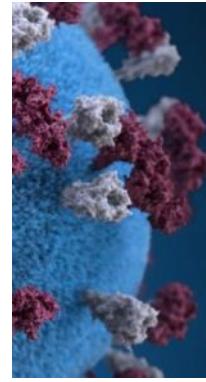
April 21/22 – Chap 8 & 9

May 5/6 – Chap 10



## Update 3.01.2021

This COVID-19 journey has all of us sounding like kids on long car rides...."Are we there yet?" We have come a long way since this all began and I suspect all of us also imagined this would be over long ago...but (\*sigh\*) it is not. But we DO seem to see a light in the tunnel as we venture into in-person worship and gatherings once again. We do remain grateful for the creativity and flexibility of our truly amazing staff as we all continue this journey together.



## OUR CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO **COVID-19**

LATEST UPDATE

**Here are the recent changes that Shepherd has adopted in these changing times.**

### **Our worship: We now offer **BOTH** Indoor Worship and Online Worship!**

We have moved to offering in-person AND live streamed worship on Sunday mornings at 9:00. We have implemented the same safety protocols that we had in place in early November. Those seem to be working well for us in our efforts to keep people safe. We will continue in this model while the infection rates remain within our established safe zone. As of this writing Ramsey County's infection rate per 10,000 is at 16.2, well below the guidelines that we established this past fall for safe gathering rates of 30-50/10k. If you would like to join us for our in-person worship on Sunday morning, please RSVP. This helps with our contact tracing. All of our SOH guidelines for in-person worship and our RSVP page can be found on our website at [sohsv.org/RSPV](http://sohsv.org/RSPV). Worshiping on-site is a decision you and your family will need to prayerfully make. Some of you will decide to return to the sanctuary for worship, and some of you will choose to remain at home for worship. Either way you choose, God is still speaking among us. Be well and know that you are greatly loved!

**Our building:** We have made some changes to our heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems (HVAC). We have added an ionizer onto our sanctuary system that will continuously be helping to provide cleaner air for all of those using that space. We have also installed many touchless hand sanitizer stations throughout the building and floor decals reminding all to stay at safely socially distant.

**Our (other) gatherings:** We can now allow our groups to gather at church once again! But there are guidelines surrounding this, please contact the office for more details. Our Wednesday 1:00 Bible Study will move to the narthex. Please enter in Door A and as a friendly reminder, masks are required. Our Wed 6:30 pm Bible study will still be available on Zoom each week. Book Studies are also on Zoom and information is on our website under Adult Faith Formation. Coffee & Donuts is also continuing and will be offered on Zoom at 10:00. See the E-News for more information on this.

As always, we appreciate all of your flexibility in the continuous changes and supporting each other in being the church.

In God's Peace, Your Shepherd Staff

Pr. Renee, Jilene, Pr. Brice, Joe, Sr. Tashina, Miranda, and Michelle



## Connect with Us

Website: [sohsv.org](http://sohsv.org)

Phone: 651.483.5419

Email: [staff@shepherdshoreview.org](mailto:staff@shepherdshoreview.org)

### Office Hours

Monday - Friday: 9:00am - 4:00pm

Please note that there will be no Easter Garden where we order plants for the congregation. We will still have a few Easter flowers but have decided to not order the flowers as a group as we have in the past. Any questions, please reach out to [Miranda](#).

