



THE STAFF

LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

March 2015

Pastor's Message

Love, Love, Love, Love, Love!

Our Book Group chose "Proof of Heaven," by Eben Alexander, MD as our second book (and it's not too late to pick up a copy and join us in the parsonage on Wednesday March 18th at 7:00!). It tells the story of Dr. Alexander's Near Death Experience from his point of view as a neurosurgeon. I won't spoil it for you by telling you all the details, and it won't ruin it for you if I share the author's discovery that life after death includes being in the presence of God and having a complete and total sense of being absolutely, unconditionally loved. As a Christian, I wasn't the least bit surprised, and I suppose one of the reasons Dr. Alexander wrote the book is that he was.

As we approach the glory of Easter, we also near the day of great sacrifice – when God chose to die on the cross for us. Over the centuries, theologians have spent a lot of time trying to explain why. There are lots of theories; as for me, I like to think of Jesus allowing himself to be crucified in order to show that nothing can keep God from loving us - even putting God to death in a horrible, gruesome way. The resurrection is a celebration of what Jesus had been trying to tell everyone all along: God is love, God loves us, and no sickness, no social construct, no evil action - nothing can keep that love away. It's not that God doesn't care if we sin – of course God does, and as with any relationship, our acting in ways that hurt others or ourselves can cause a rift in our relationship with God. The good news is that those moments are just stops along the way - Jesus proved to us in his death and resurrection that ultimately, at the last day, God's love is greater and deeper and wider than any of us could possibly imagine.

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Holy Week and Easter Services



Lent has just begun, but just in case we aren't able to get a newsletter out before Easter (April 5), please note the following service days and times:

Sunday, 3/29 10:30am Palm Sunday

Thursday, 4/2 7:00pm Maundy Thursday
Celebration of the Last Supper, stripping the altar and foot washing

Friday, 4/3 7:00pm Good Friday
Quiet service remembering the crucifixion with prayers of intercession and reproaches from the cross and death of Jesus

Sunday, 4/5 7:00am "Sunrise" Easter Worship!

We celebrate the resurrection of Christ with communion as the sun comes up over Sleeping Giant.

9:00am Easter breakfast & egg hunt

10:30am Easter service
with full choir and festive worship setting, "Now the Feast and Celebration"

Church Events

- 3/7 Chinese New Year Family Fun Night
- 3/18 Book Club
- 3/21 St. Patrick's Day Dinner
- 3/22 Confirmation
Acolyte training
- 3/26 Council meeting

www.goodshepherdhamden.org/calendar

**LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

3680 Whitney Avenue
Hamden CT 06518-1516
(203) 248-7420

The Rev. Dr. Daphne Burt
Office— 203-248-7420
Cell—401-924-4673

www.goodshepherdhamden.org

The Staff Editor

Brenda Samal
E-mail: bsamal@sbcglobal.net

**Council Members
1/1/15—12/31/15**

President	Lisa Ball-Goodrich
Vice-President	Linda Kapitan
Treasurer	John Downs
Secretary	Brenda Samal
Christian Education	Emma Barnes
Evangelism/ Publicity	Deb Meydag
Fellowship	Lisa Martinell
Financial Secretary	Barbara Kuslan
Stewardship/ Missions	Sue Hartley
Property	James Learned
Worship	Ken Watson



Pastor Podgwaite
Daphne family
John W. Anna

Stacy Holly Jessika Mary Lou

Lou Elfriede Bernie Victoria

Joy Marianne CindyLu Pam

Harold Arnold Catherine Mike

Rex Gertrude Howard Barbara

Barnes Sue Amanda John
family

Kathy D.

*Members of Good Shepherd who are homebound
Family and friends whom we name in our hearts*

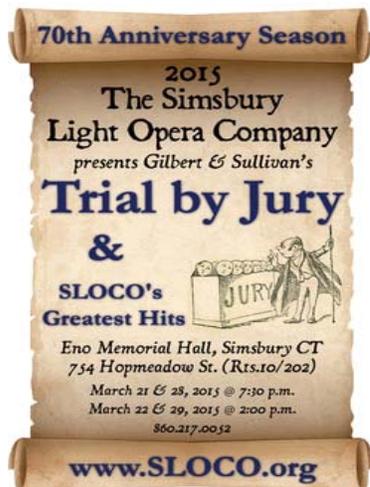
Military personnel

Pray for the mission of the church

*Alpha Podgwaite
passed to our Lord's arms
February 19, 2015*

Our thoughts and prayers are with her
family and friends.

The Simsbury Light Opera Company presents **Gilbert & Sullivan's, "Trial by Jury"** and SLOCO's Greatest Hits from the last 70 years.



Performances will be staged at:

Eno Memorial Hall
754 Hopmeadow St.
(Rt.10/202)
Simsbury, CT 06070

Kari Lyn Strickland is in the production. See rehearsal video at www.sloco.org

March 21 & 28 @ 7:30pm
March 22 & 29 @ 2:00pm

Tickets are:
\$20.00 for adults
\$15.00 for students & seniors (65+)
\$10.00 for Children 12 & under

Tickets are available online at www.SLOCO.org
Questions: (860) 217-0052

INTERNET PERMISSION FORMS

*"The church is not a building...
the church is the people!"*

In order for our web page and Facebook group to truly reflect who we are, we need to have pictures of people at fellowship, choir, Sunday School, fellowship events, etc. Please fill out an Internet Permission form to let us know whether and how you want to be identified in group pictures. Parents: please fill out a form for your children!

DIRECTORY ADDITION:

Reggie Chang (reggie.chang@hotmail.com)
12 Valley Street 1st Fl
Wallingford CT 06492

MARCH CELEBRATIONS

Anniversaries

30- James & Sharon Knoob, Jr. 19 years

Birthdays

8- Anthony Papa III
10- Lee Olson
10- Micah Sharon
10- Sarah DeLong
15- Anne Knoob
15- Alicia Samal
16- Ruth Podgwaite
20- Patricia Rowold
23- James Knoob Jr.
23- Kate Lyn Aykroyd
25- Sylvia Wakefield
27- Paul O'Braonain
30- Elfriede Fleischmann



Baptisms

Emma Ingerson, Deb Meydag,
Gary Olson, Anthony Papa III,
Sophia Papa, Ken Watson

**WELCA (Women of the ELCA)
Spring Gathering**

For Southern & Greater New Haven Conference

Saturday, April 11, 2015
8:30am until after lunch (served at 12:15pm)

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
466 Elm Street
Monroe CT

"Empowering Women to Find Healing and Wholeness"

Speaker: Debra Greenwood from the Center for Family Justice

Registration will be \$15/person.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

DATE	ACOLYTE	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	READER	USHERS	ALTAR GUILD
3/1	Elizabeth Ingerson	John Downs	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Goodrich family	Starr O'Connor
3/8	Christopher Olson	Paul O'Braonain	Ken Watson	Deb Meydag Ken Watson	Chuddy Watson
3/15	Jonathan Goodrich	Linda Kapitan	Linda Kapitan	Lisa Martinell John Downs	Deb Meydag
3/22	Anthony Papa	John Downs	Barbara Kuslan	James Learned Sue Hartley	Liane Moreland
3/29	Elizabeth Ingerson	Linda Kapitan	Lisa Ball-Goodrich	Goodrich family	Starr O'Connor
4/2 Maundy Thursday	Christopher Olson	John Downs	Ken Watson	Deb Meydag Ken Watson	Chuddy Watson
4/3 Good Friday	Jonathan Goodrich	~	Deb Meydag	Goodrich family	Deb Meydag
4/5 Easter	Emily Olson	Linda Kapitan	Linda Kapitan	Lisa Martinell John Downs	Liane Moreland

*If you cannot serve on your appointed day, please find a substitute, and make the change on the master schedule.
Thank you for your service!*

Easter Flowers

Easter is the first Sunday in April, and once again Paul Barnes will most generously decorate our sanctuary with spring flowers. If you would like to make a donation in memory/in honor of a loved one, please fill out the form in your bulletin (last 2 weeks in March) and mark your check or envelope "Easter flowers".



Acolyte Training

Acolyte training has been rescheduled to Sunday, March 22 at 9:30 (before church). All young people who are big enough to carry the cross and can read (to follow along in the service) are welcome to be trained.

NEW THIS YEAR Acolytes will wear a special cross with a bead denoting how many years they have served. Current acolytes should see Pastor Daphne to get their cross.

MUSICAL NOTE

Springtime greetings, everyone! Yes, that's right, Spring is just a few weeks away, which for me means sunlight, warmer days, and an enormous sense of renewal. Normally when I write a "Musical Note" I provide some information regarding the choir, or give some updates as to where we'll be going on our musical journey in our worship services. This time is a little different.

I want to talk about that sense of renewal I mentioned earlier. Nothing pushes my reset button more easily than a big burst of sunlight on a surprisingly warm Spring day, or perhaps an unexpected and intriguing new musical experience. Both are like a jolt of lightening for the soul. While we journey through this physical and mental renewal during the Spring season, we also experience a spiritual renewal

during the season of Lent. We all experience the rejuvenations of these seasons differently, but I have found that a musical experience helps engage my mind more deeply in thought as I reflect during these seasons.

I am blessed with two jobs in which I make a great amount of music. Most of you know that I teach elementary and high school music, in which I have the great fortune of spreading the joy of music with students in grades K-12. Working with these students on a daily basis helps feed my sense of renewal that goes along with the Spring season. I am equally privileged to spend my Sundays making music with you at Good Shepherd, which enhances my spiritual renewal. In either case, the theme is renewal, and the method is music.

So, where does this leave all of you? Are you looking for a new sense of physical, mental, or

spiritual purpose? Do you need something to mediate on during this reflecting season of Lent? I encourage you all to seek out a new musical experience. I'm not saying that you should all go out and become a musician (however fun that would be!), but that you should go out and experience music! See a live performance, listen to a new CD, find some new music on the internet; this all leads to that promising sense of renewal. If you're like me, then this present time of waiting in the cold is absolute torture, knowing that in a just few shorts weeks we'll be celebrating the warm joy of the resurrection. Until then, we are left with this time for reflection. I encourage you to include music into your journey. I promise it will strengthen and enhance your Lenten and Springtime renewal!

St. Patrick's Dinner

Saturday, March 21
6:00pm

Corned Beef & Cabbage
Iris Soda Bread
Vegetables
Desserts and more!



Come and enjoy the fellowship of good friends and good food!

SAFE CHURCH

The safety and well-being of all of God's children is important to us! Members of the Council received Safe Church training during their recent retreat, and a committee is preparing a Safe Church policy to ensure that our younger members are safe and supervised. As required by both the Synod and our insurance company, all people who monitor / teach / drive our children will be required to have a background check, which will remain on file at the church. Current Christian Education teachers and helpers will be contacted soon for a release form and relevant information.

(Pastor's Message ... continued from page 1)

Which brings me back to the book. I am not surprised that Dr. Alexander had a profound experience of being loved during that liminal, in-between experience. I'm glad that he did, and it both doesn't matter and matters quite a bit. While I haven't spent a lot of time thinking about what life after we die will be like, I have never doubted that we would experience what he describes. Whether or not my experience will be the same as that about which he writes, I believe that God's desire is for God and I to keep getting closer and for me to know that I am loved. Dr. Alexander's book doesn't change that.

On the other hand, in these post-millennial days, I think it's helpful to remember that there are lots of people in the world who don't know or believe that they are loved. I think about children who are abandoned, neglected and abused and wonder if anyone cares about them. I think about parents whose children die and can't imagine that a loving God would allow that to happen. I think about people who lose their jobs, who struggle with depression, who live alone, who can't make friends, who are isolated because of a physical, intellectual or emotional disability – and who wonder why God won't rescue them from their misery. These and so many others all over the world desperately need to know how much they are truly, completely and unconditionally loved.

So what can we as Christians do? We have many choices - two of which are that we could hand them a copy of Dr. Alexander's book, and/or we can tell them about Jesus. The former is easier; I suspect that the latter would be more effective. Either way, the end will be the same – when people die they will know that they are loved. The difference is this: as believers, we know it now. We don't have to wait for the end of our days to know God loves us. We don't even need to wait until Easter. Jesus' ministry, life, death and resurrection tell us that that unconditional love of God is already ours. The question is – what difference will that make? Dr. Alexander reports that following his experience of superabundant love, his life, the way he looks at himself and the way he looks at others, has been irreversibly changed for the better. What about us? Will knowing that God loves us unconditionally make a difference in our daily lives? I hope so – and I hope that, like the disciples who saw that empty tomb, we will be moved to share our joyful discovery that God's love and life are given to all people, no matter.

Blessings and peace – and love!

Pastor Daphne +

FINANCIAL RESULTS - JANUARY, 2015

		1/12 of 2015 BUDGET	Over (Under) BUDGET
Receipts thru January	\$4,476	\$6,904	(\$2,428)
Expenses thru January	\$7,800	\$6,904	\$896
DEFICIT	(\$3,324)	\$0	(\$3,324)

Our total operating giving for January 2015 was \$4,476 and our expenses were \$7,800 for a LOSS of \$3,324.

Our January expenses were higher than normal because of seasonal expenses such as church heat of \$1,453 and snow plowing of \$900.

February should be better as our operating giving was over our budgeted \$6,904.

John E. Downs, Treasurer

As called Christians responding to the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20), we commit ourselves to nurturing the spiritual growth of our congregation by proclaiming the Gospel, bearing witness to God's saving grace, being stewards of the earth, and serving others, in our congregation, our community, and in all the world.

**LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
MISSION STATEMENT**

<u>Worship</u>	
Sunday School	9:30am
Holy Communion	10:30am



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Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
3680 Whitney Avenue
Hamden CT 06518-1516

FIRST CLASS MAIL